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A Quarterly Insight into Cause Programs and Events

December 2015

Cause SALUTES

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Farewell to Program Director Sarah Marshall

It was with a heavy heart that Cause bid farewell to our Program/Marketing Director, Sarah Marshall. Sarah and her family are now in England where her husband is stationed at RAF Alconbury.

Sarah provided direction and oversight for all of our program activities at eleven different locations. She was the talent behind our graphic design, marketing materials, and social media campaigns. Her final project was designing our new website which launched last week!



Kayla Walsh and Sarah Marshall.

We cannot thank Sarah enough for her dedication and hard work during her two years with Cause.

Before leaving she worked alongside our new Program/Marketing Director, Kayla Walsh. Kayla is also a military spouse. Like Sarah, she brings a broad knowledge of marketing, volunteer management, and event coordination to Cause. She is already proving to be a tremendous addition to our Team!

CAUSE Launches New Website

In the early morning hours of December 15, Cause unveiled its new website and revised logo!

Bold colors, a streamlined format, and a user-friendly interface make the site easier to navigate than our former site launched back in 2009. It also allows Cause to interact with Volunteers online, manage our special events, and it is compatible with hand-held devices. The new site gives us a better platform to share our story with the general public.

Former Program and Marketing Director Sarah Marshall began working with our new website provider late last Spring. Over the next few months she mapped out an effective site plan and developed most of the content for the site.

She also made a small but symbolic change to the Cause logo: the image of the standing soldier no longer shows a prosthetic leg. It represents our shift in mission to serving all “wounded, ill, and injured” service members to include those with the invisible wounds of war.

The website and logo projects were Sarah’s final gift of time and talent before moving overseas.

We invite you to visit our website at www.cause-usa.org

to see the changes and to check back frequently for the latest information about our programs and activities!



on the road >>>

Cause Attends Warrior-Family Symposium

Cause Staff and a group of our Massage/Reiki/Reflexology program volunteers attended the 2015 Warrior-Family Symposium in Washington DC on September 9. The symposium was sponsored by the Military Officers Association of America and Wounded Warrior Project.

The event featured several guest speakers and panel discussions focusing on mental health resource access and coordination, improving mental wellness, and awareness of mental health needs. One conclusion drawn by the end of the event: The nation must change its thinking about mental health, in particular the stigma that still surrounds seeking mental health services — both in the military and the civilian sector.

Cause participants raised several points during open discussions and encouraged researchers to pursue Alternative Modalities as part of treatment regimens. We also highlighted the Community Collaborative program hosted by Serving Together as a viable model for community based networking focused on veteran issues. The event provided the opportunity for our practitioners and staff to meet with like minded organizations and to contribute to the national discussion on improving mental health awareness, access and treatment options.



5th Annual Bridge for Cause Event

The main ballroom at Congressional Country Club was filled to capacity on September 29th as more than 130 players gathered for the 5th Annual Bridge for Cause event. What began as a small gathering of players to raise awareness and funding for Cause programs at Walter Reed has grown to an annual effort to inform and involve the local community. Cause Board Member and Bridge for Cause Event Chair Lesley Lavalleye assembles a committee of dedicated volunteers who manage every aspect of the event. It began by recruiting Professional Bridge teachers Leslie Schafer, Charlie Williams, and Hank Meyer who promote the event among their students and who also help raise funds throughout the year.



“Most people in the local community tend forget that we still have wounded, ill, and injured service men and women here in our community undergoing treatment and recovery,” said Lesley. “Bridge for Cause allows us to raise funds for some very important programs while enjoying fellowship and card play.” Planning is already underway for next year’s event which may have to change venues due to popularity. *Cause extends a special THANK YOU to following Volunteers for their time and effort: Alice Burr, Cheryl McGinniss, Sherry Phillip, Helen Chaikovsky, and Donna Duval.*”

Lyon, Conklin & Co. Host Benefit Golf Tournament



On October 9th, our friends at Lyon, Conklin & Company hosted a client Golf Tournament at Stonewall Golf Club in Gainesville, VA. Direct donations and proceeds from a raffle at the event generated nearly \$5,000 to support Cause programs and activities. Our Board Chair John Caldwell played on a team alongside Staff Sergeant Andrew Mills who is currently in the Warrior Transition Unit at Ft. Belvoir, VA. SSG Mills is facing his 6th surgery on his right leg which was injured in Afghanistan in 2012. Despite the protracted recovery period, he continues to stay active in the community and with his unit.

The Golf Tournament was organized by Lyon, Conklin & Co. Area Branch Manager Brandon Morgan and his local office team. “We are honored to be able to support such a worthwhile organization through our annual golf event,” remarked Morgan. “We appreciate all that Cause does to help our wounded service men and women.”

Massage/Reiki/Reflexology Program brings Comfort and Relief

Cause began using Massage, Reiki and Reflexology in 2007 in an effort to provide a supplemental treatment path for PTSD/TBI . Outcomes for the past few years show a positive trend in reducing anxiety, improving sleep cycles, and speeding up the physical and mental recovery process. We have documented an average 33% reduction in reported pain and a 35% improvement in sleep for those service members we see on a regular basis.

Cause currently conducts programs at three locations: Walter Reed in Bethesda, MD, Ft. Belvoir, VA, and Ft. Hood, TX. Even though we see a steady decline in the number of patients and family members seeking our services, we know we offer an effective alternative, cost-free treatment they cannot receive anywhere else. In addition to providing physical relief, our practitioners and staff offer a friendly smile, a listening ear, and a sense of belonging to the Cause Family:

"I look forward to Wednesdays. Not only is the massage awesome, but the staff are so nice and friendly! I am usually at 2-4 Doctor appointments a day, and I don't have a roommate and I get so lonely; the staff makes me feel welcome and loved. Thank you! "



MRR Therapists Ryoko Suzuki and Beth Armagost stand with Operation Homefront Transitional Housing Program Director Kyler Olejnik. Cause partners with the Gaithersburg, MD, facility to provide MRR services to residents one night each month. Many of these families are transitioning to the civilian sector from Walter Reed and are waiting for their VA benefits to activate. Operation Homefront manages 14 apartment units at the Gaithersburg village to ease the financial burden for transitioning military families.

Family Fun Night Expands

Cause Family Fun Night comes to Fort Belvoir! In September, we hosted our first Family Fun Nights (FFN) at the USO Warrior and Family Center at Fort Belvoir. The event was so popular that the line wrapped around the front of the USO building. We provided programming for over 80 children and 50 adults that night!

We have since started preregistration for this program which provides crafts, food, and fun for 50 children (and their parents). The program is conducted for wounded, ill, and injured (WII) families but Active Duty families, may participate if space is available.



Though the number of WII families at Fort Belvoir is decreasing – this program provides them opportunities to build relationships with other military families and a chance to relax and have fun! Fort Belvoir Family Fun Night is held on the 4th Thursday of every month at the USO.

Accenture Federal Donates

On November 13th, Cause accepted a donation of care packages from employees at Accenture Federal. Accenture asked a group of 30 new recruits put together these care packages as a team-building exercise during their orientation. Each care package contains personal care items such as tissue, snacks, sun block, playing cards, puzzles, and other small sundry items.

Program/Marketing Director Kayla Walsh attended the event to accept the donation on behalf of Cause.

Accenture Federal is a consulting firm that works with federal agencies including the Department of Defense. Several Accenture employees are Cause Volunteers.

The care packages will be sent to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany and Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland.



final thoughts...

Renewing our Commitment in 2016

As we come to the end of 2015, it is important for us to reflect on the impact of our work as an organization. There are certain things we can measure or count (reduction in pain and stress as a result of our Massage/Reiki/Reflexology program, or number of children attending our monthly Family Fun Nights). More difficult to measure is the impact we learn about through informal conversations with the men and women we serve.

Most people don't realize that some of our wounded, ill, and injured service members spend months or even years at medical facilities undergoing treatment to recover from a variety of wounds or illnesses. Over time, we come to know these individuals and families; we share their ups and downs, offering encouragement and comfort along the way. We regularly ask for feedback from program participants and are usually inspired by their responses. We'd like to share a recent response from one of our friends at Walter Reed:

"Thank you! I do not know how to sufficiently express my gratitude for the love and warmth you have shown me! Oct/Nov/Dec are my anniversary month[s] of when I lost all my friends in Iraq. The kindness you all show me is one that makes me feel as if I am part of your family! Thank you!"

These are the things that keep us going - we know we are making a difference in the lives of these service members and their families.

In 2016, we renew our commitment to providing programs that promote rest, relaxation and resilience. We are prepared to adapt to changing needs, tailoring the scope of our services as the mission dictates. We will continue to partner alongside agencies and organizations that share our passion for serving those is uniform. Finally we will continue to advocate for innovate approaches to alleviating the symptoms of PTS/TBI.

Our work would not be possible without your ongoing support and involvement. We are fortunate and honored that you have chosen to be a partner in our mission.

...here for those who are there for us!®

coming soon >>>

- ⇒ **2015 Annual Report Available in February**
- ⇒ **The Cause Digital Library**
- ⇒ **Eagle Scout Project Benefits Landstuhl Regional Medical Center**

Get the latest news and information:



/HelpWoundedWarriors



@HelpWarriors



Cause staff members participate in Caregiver Fairs, Wellness and Prosperity Events, and other activities to promote stress reduction, relaxation and activities that improve recovery and healing at military treatment centers.

In 2015, we distributed:

- ⇒ 75 Gift Packs for Nurse Appreciation
- ⇒ 150 Gift Packs for Caregiver Fairs
- ⇒ 215 Gift Packs for Warrior Wellness
- ⇒ 75 Gift Packs for Staff Prosperity Fairs



Each year, Cause receives nearly \$10,000 from individuals across the nation who participate in the Combined Federal Campaign or other workplace giving programs. Contact our office if you are interested in learning more about workplace giving opportunities or even different ways employee Volunteers can get involved!

Contact: marketing@cause-usa.org

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