



## **AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE DESK OF DAVID WALKER**

Greetings.

I am honored to address you as the new President & CEO of the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes.

Having served as the organization's volunteer Chairman of the Board for the last several years, I bring a unique perspective to my new full-time role. I am pleased to report, without any reservation whatsoever, that the Coalition has provided an invaluable lifeline to thousands of America's wounded veterans since its establishment in 2004. And I believe just as strongly that our best days lie ahead of us.

To be sure, the Coalition is undergoing a significant, yet smooth, transformation at the organizational level. Following the resignation of my predecessor, I have instituted several important changes that have improved our board governance, dramatically reduced our overhead, streamlined operational functions and increased the accountability of every member of our staff. We have eliminated some staff positions and added others, mostly in the field, to increase productivity and more effectively reach wounded soldiers across the nation.

I have reviewed virtually every aspect of the Coalition's operations, programs and services with a fresh perspective. Every decision the Board and I have taken to date has been made in the context of better fulfilling our stated mission of rebuilding the lives of severely wounded veterans of the War on Terror, and their families. The Coalition will continue to be distinguished by our direct financial assistance to America's wounded heroes. I have seen firsthand the powerful impact this program has had on so many individuals and wonderful families. The thank-you notes we receive on a daily basis are testament to the invaluable role we play in hundreds of lives, and further proof that we are serving our veterans in a unique and extraordinary way.

Our Emergency Financial Aid program has stopped foreclosure proceedings on veterans' homes and kept their vehicles from being repossessed. Our gift checks cover Thanksgiving and Christmas meals, medical and utility bills, clothing, car repairs and even baby diapers. And I have personally witnessed, and been directly involved in, marriage crisis and suicide intervention by the caring members of the Coalition's staff.

I am pleased to report that we will be holding our signature Road to Recovery Conference & Tribute again in 2013. Few national events have had such a tangible, life-changing effect on wounded veterans as this four-day, all-expenses paid program, which provides invaluable educational and motivational tools to assist wounded veterans in assimilating back to civilian life.

Unique among national veterans organizations, more than two-thirds of the Coalition's 32 employees are wounded warriors or their spouses. My goal is to double, perhaps even triple, that number by the end of 2013, as we continue to expand several of our most important services. Among them is our Partner Appreciation Program, in which veterans spend several hours each day calling donors to personally thank them for their support. They do not ask for more money; they simply offer a genuine, heartfelt thank you.

In short, we are making a profound difference. I am proud to lead the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes as we boldly address a national disgrace wherein thousands of wounded warriors - and their families - find themselves homeless, impoverished and/or unemployed upon returning from the battlefields of Afghanistan and Iraq.

You have my solemn assurance that while I am at the helm, every dollar contributed will be spent in the most prudent manner possible. In fact, now that we have successfully lowered our cost structure and upgraded our staffing, we have established an aggressive 2013 budget goal of increasing our direct support of wounded warriors and their families by more than 50 percent.

I invite you to learn more about the lives we are changing, as documented on the pages of this site. Then, I ask you to consider backing our continued work.

Thousands of brave men and women have laid down their lives to protect our freedoms. Countless more have returned with missing limbs, shattered and burned bodies and other severe wounds that have changed their lives forever. These true American heroes deserve our gratitude – and our moral and financial support to help them get back on their feet.

Please join us in our unwavering commitment to meeting the needs of these true American heroes.

In their service,  
David