



January 2, 2017

To Our Friends and Supporters:

Another year has gone by and the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes continues to do good work providing financial aid and other various assistance to wounded veterans of the nation's wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and more broadly in the War on Terror. I believe I can fairly state that we have surmounted and put away questions that once dogged our footsteps and made our work more difficult than it should have been. Today even Charity Navigator – once our most persistent critic – awards us four stars for transparency and two stars overall. We were included in the Combined Federal Campaign for the third year in a row, which is a profound testimony to the importance of our work. The Great Nonprofits organization, which is aligned with GuideStar, The Huffington Post, TechSoup and Volunteer Match, continues to rate us a "Top-Rated Nonprofit." Thanks to the hard work of our Board of Directors and staff our credibility is stronger than ever.

But while our credibility is at high-mark, we do have a continuing problem with fund raising. We are finding it ever more difficult to maintain our revenue stream. This is not a problem unique to the Coalition. Charities across the spectrum report troublesome downturns in contributions, and those of us engaged in helping wounded veterans are among the hardest hit. There is a widespread perception that the wars are winding down and such support is no longer needed, or at least is not as critical as it once was. This perception is of course erroneous – we still have a steady stream of wounded warriors in need of support and encouragement – but the news media is focused elsewhere, most notably the political arena. Without the media spotlight, the public's attention is diverted to other issues.

Thus far, we have been able to maintain our level of direct financial support to wounded veterans in need and to continue most of our support programs at previous levels by cutting administrative costs and keeping salaries under control. In December, we even hosted our highly popular Road to Recovery Conference and Tribute (R2R) where more than a hundred wounded veterans, their spouses and children assembled for three days of fun in the sun, useful education sessions and delightful social get-togethers. Previous R2R events have brought testimony from many wounded veterans who were greatly empowered by these events where they are able to share experiences with other wounded veterans. Likewise, their spouses who often bear tremendous burdens associated with caring for wounded veterans draw strength and wisdom from each other, and take comfort in knowing they are not alone.

In sum, we face the New Year with a strong reputation for effectiveness and transparency, and can claim a growing audience of dedicated people who recognize the value of our work, and of course a growing throng who have benefited directly from our efforts. We will identify creative new ways to augment our revenue stream as we continue to serve those who need and deserve our support – the wounded veterans who have paid the high price of preserving our nation's freedom and way of life. Thank you for all you have done. I look forward to working with you in the New Year!

Sincerely,

David W. Walker
President & CEO
Coalition to Salute America's Heroes
www.saluteheroes.org