



NAVY MARINE COAST GUARD RESIDENCE FOUNDATION

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(McLean, Virginia) July 27, 2016— Navy Marine Coast Guard Residence Foundation (NMCGRF) and Veterans Moving Forward, Inc. (VMF) announce their new partnership in support of disabled veterans. This collaboration will provide lodging for out-of-town veterans and their families accessing VMF programs during interviews and subsequent introductions to, and training with, their service dogs.

VMF have been bringing dogs in training and those already trained to Vinson Hall Retirement Community to visit our residents for several years. We have always appreciated the unconditional love that these wonderful animals bring to our residents. When approached by one of our Navy Marine Coast Guard Residence Foundation Trustees, Scott Slocum, about using our wounded warrior transitional apartments for veterans receiving service dogs, my immediate response was “definitely, yes”. This type of partnership meets our mission to provide transitional housing and builds a stronger bond between our two organizations. We look forward to playing a small role in the successful bond between a veteran and their loyal service dog.”

From its Canine Training and Veteran Support Center in Dulles, Virginia, VMF “provides service dogs and canine therapy services to veterans with physical and mental health challenges at no cost to the veteran,” whether the illness or injury was acquired during military service or subsequent to honorable service. Veterans from across the continental U.S. come to VMF to be interviewed and matched with a trained and certified service dog. The matching process includes an introductory interview/visit with VMF’s Veteran Canine Committee, including an initial meeting with potential service dogs. Upon deciding on the appropriate veteran-service dog match, the veteran returns home while the matched dog continues training, which includes training focused on the veteran’s specific needs. This advanced Veteran specific training takes place over a period of several months. The veteran then returns to VMF for training with their matched service dog, and upon successful completion returns to their home with their service dog.

Previously, VMF provided hotel rooms for veterans and their families during these visits and training sessions, diverting resources that would otherwise have been used to directly support canine raising and training. NMCGRF and VMF’s new partnership will provide veterans and their

families with apartments which have been designed for those not as physically mobile with features like wheelchair accessible showers and modified kitchens. These apartments are part of NMCGRF Wounded Warrior Transitional Housing located at Vinson Hall Retirement Community.

Insert quote from VMF. "We truly value this partnership as it allows VMF to focus its resources directly on canine raising and training, while providing our visiting veterans an extremely comfortable and inviting place to stay during their visits to VMF for interviews, training and quality time with their new canine partner."

Located in idyllic McLean, VA, and home to nearly 300 retired military officers and government employees, Vinson Hall Retirement Community and NMCGRF are uniquely situated to support wounded warriors' physical, mental, and emotional healing. The vision for Wounded Warrior Transitional Housing at Vinson Hall was established in 2011. The plan was to help young, wounded veterans who have returned home from conflict and require a special kind of care in an environment that is well-suited to their unique needs. NMCGRF began reaching out to donors and corporate supporters to help transform two apartments into handicap-accessible, fully furnished spaces for singles or families. In late 2015, the program expanded to provide housing for wounded, ill, or injured service members or veterans who are in need of temporary or transitional housing. Supported solely through donations made NMCGRF, Wounded Warrior Transitional Housing at Vinson Hall Retirement Community is the only program of its kind in the country.

Since 2013, five young wounded Marines have come to call Vinson Hall home. Two of those wounded warriors have brought their young children to live at Vinson Hall with them. NMCGRF continues to raise funds to support the monthly expenses associate with this program so the Foundation can continue serving wounded, ill, or injured services members and veterans.

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