

### **Introduction to Heroes' Voices**

Heroes' Voices uses music and poetry to build confidence and community among veterans while advocating for services to meet veterans' needs.

Over 2.8 million United States soldiers have returned from service in Afghanistan and Iraq since 2001, and as many as 500,000 of them suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), and/or depression. Recent research has led to a new understanding of the promise of therapeutic music treatment for PTSD, TBI, and depression. Some VA hospitals have begun to offer programs. Heroes' Voices moves beyond those programs with these services:

#### **Veterans' Voices**

Our Veterans' Voices workshops encourage veterans to raise their voices in music and poetry workshops, classes, and performances. Some of those are open to the public, others are open only to veterans. We conduct workshops in closed hospital wards and hospices for veterans faced with more challenging life circumstances.

*Vets Singing with Vets:* Inspiring veterans with choral and solo singing.

*Guitar Corps:* Free guitars and/or free guitar lessons for veterans.

*Harmonica Corps:* Free harmonicas and/or harmonica lessons for veterans. We provide neck braces for those with limited use of their arms or hands.

*Poetry Slam:* Workshops that encourage veterans to write and recite poetry.

*Performances:* Veterans sing for others in public and private spaces.

#### **Voices for Veterans**

We seek to improve the lives of veterans with our Voices for Veterans activities. We bring live music into hospital and hospice settings and we work with government agencies and other organizations across the United States to build a better understanding of how music and music therapy can be of value to veterans.

*Advocacy:* On both the national and local level.

*Partnerships:* With other organizations serving veterans.

*Research:* On the effectiveness and best practices of music and music therapy for veterans.

*Music Soothes:* Music performances in hospitals and hospices.

#### **Veterans' Resources**

Our Veterans' Resources provide information and referrals about music, poetry, and music therapy for veterans available at <http://heroesvoices.org/resources>.

## How to help

- Donate to help support our services in the community at <http://heroesvoices.org/donations>.
- Volunteer to assist at an upcoming workshop or event.
- Direct veterans to our services and help them connect with other vets.
- Help us spread the word about our work by connecting with us online.
- Visit us at [www.heroesvoices.org](http://www.heroesvoices.org) for more information and to access our online database of resources.

## Quotes

*I enjoy the Heroes' Voices workshops because they give me the opportunity to break free of my shackles and wander freely as an open soul.*

--Robert Papineau, Army Veteran

*Focusing my life towards music is the only way that I am able to turn those war-time experiences into something positive, so that I can give back to my fellow man. I have a unique view on the power of music and what it can do to heal a person's soul after experiencing tragedy in their life. I believe in the mission of Heroes' Voices with every fiber of my being, and will be happy to lend my advice and support in any way that I can.*

--Richard B. Gibson, Marine Veteran