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### **Community Acupuncture Provides Relief and Recovery for U.S. Soldiers and Veterans**

In the wake of the recent tragedy of an American serviceman gunning down fellow troops in Baghdad due to stress, a 3,000 year old-medicine has emerged as a remedy for soldiers dealing with the psychological impact of war. Free community-style acupuncture, provided by volunteer-based organization Acupuncturists Without Borders (AWB) has been the relief that many servicemen and women have been searching for to combat the effects of the immense stress and trauma associated with the war.

AWB provided much needed hurricane relief with free community acupuncture for approximately 8,000 in the New Orleans area. Now, AWB has launched the Military Stress Recovery Project (MSRP) for active servicemen and women, veterans, and their families, throughout the country. The MSRP, which began in 2006, is now being implemented through locally run clinics nationwide. Treatments by AWB volunteers are based on the National Acupuncture Detoxification Association (NADA) ear protocol, which has proven to be extremely powerful in alleviating symptoms of stress and trauma. Military people who have attended these clinics are reporting improved mental clarity, less anxiety and a reduction in stress. Acupuncture is currently being investigated by the Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington D.C. as a viable treatment modality for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in returning veterans and the military has started using acupuncture in the battlefield to help with pain.

Diana Fried, Executive Director of AWB, says that the potential for this program is enormous. "History has shown that the long-term impact of war takes a tremendous toll for decades. By providing free acupuncture treatments to soldiers currently returning from war and their families, we can play a part in preventing history from repeating itself, and by providing treatments to veterans from past wars and conflicts, we can take part in helping mend the psychological wounds of the past." Marc Loi, a journalist in the Army currently serving in Iraq could not agree more. He recently shared his observations in a recent email to his sister, an acupuncturist and volunteer with AWB, "You have no idea how important your work (weekly acupuncture clinic for military) is ...because the trauma and stress level some of the Soldiers here face are enormous... I am sure the news has already reached the States, but yesterday, a Soldier in a stress center here shot and killed five other Soldiers, and while the Army is doing its best to provide stress relief for these Soldiers, it doesn't seem like its working."

The National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM), the certifying body for professional acupuncturists has teamed up with AWB to promote the benefits of acupuncture treatment for mental health issues faced by soldiers and veterans. Dr. Kory Ward-Cook, CEO of the NCCAOM asserts, "By bringing public awareness to this most crucial issue facing our military personnel today, we can potentially improve and even save thousands of lives with the proven efficacy of acupuncture treatment for stress, trauma, and psychological issues. The NCCAOM

can also serve as a resource for those seeking a nationally certified acupuncturist in their local community by going to [www.nccaom.org](http://www.nccaom.org) and utilizing the [NCCAOM Certification Registry Search Engine](#)." Active duty military, reservists, veterans and their families can find local free acupuncture clinics by going to [www.ACWB.info](http://www.ACWB.info) or calling AWB at (505) 266-3878.

*"The mission of the NCCAOM is to establish, assess, and promote recognized standards of competence and safety in acupuncture and Oriental medicine for the protection and benefit of the public."*

*"Acupuncturists Without Borders (AWB) provides immediate disaster relief and recovery to communities that are in crisis resulting from disaster or human conflict. AWB is committed to creating alliances with local community based organizations and treating all who have been affected - survivors, first responders, emergency personnel and other care providers.*

*AWB uses community-style acupuncture to provide caring, compassionate treatment in a group setting. This model of treatment allows everyone treated to experience relief from stress and trauma together. When the entire group feels calm and quiet, hope, determination and resiliency rises powerfully within it."*

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Soldiers receive community style acupuncture treatment (AWB )