



# TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION

## Contact Information

Cheri Smith  
P.O. Box 12277  
Austin, Texas 78711-2277  
512-463-4828 / Fax 512-475-2395  
Cell/512-815-9499  
[cheri.smith@tvc.texas.gov](mailto:cheri.smith@tvc.texas.gov)  
[press@tvc.texas.gov](mailto:press@tvc.texas.gov)

## Press Release

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### Austin Nonprofit Awarded for Innovative Veterans Program

**TEXAS** – The Texas Veterans Commission presented the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Community Partnership Award to Hope for Heroes, a program at Samaritan Center for Pastoral Care and Counseling, at their 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Samaritan Golf Classic benefiting mental health programs for individuals and Veterans in Central Texas.

Through Hope for Heroes, Samaritan Center provides integrative mental health treatment to Texas Veterans in Central Texas, as well as hope and an opportunity for healing. The program, supported by a grant from the Fund for Veterans' Assistance (FVA), provides mental health treatment, integrative medicine and other supportive services like nontraditional therapies to address the emotional wounds of war for Veterans and military family members. These groundbreaking therapies include acupuncture, yoga, tai chi, and medical massage.

“Afraid of the impact it will have on their military career, Veterans fear the stigma associated with seeking services for mental health issues,” says Nancy Blauch, CEO of Samaritan Center. “Hope for Heroes offers immediate help in a secure, confidential environment.”

Since 2011, the Community Partnership Award has been awarded annually to recognize a FVA grantee for their meaningful contributions to the surrounding Texas Veteran community. These contributions are achieved through three program objectives: Service – the program has a unique solution to address an existing problem Veterans face; Community Partnerships – the organization is committed to working with others to benefit the surrounding Veteran community; and Impact – the program has successfully inspired and motivated others to act and support the surrounding Veteran community.

“We understand FVA grantees, like Samaritan Center, play an important role in making a significant difference in the lives of Texas Veterans,” said Kathy Wood, FVA Director. “The Community Partnership Award is our way of acknowledging local programs that go above and beyond serving Texas Veterans.”

The FVA supports Veteran-specific, community programs, like Hope for Heroes, throughout the state by providing over \$29.9 million in assistance through 145 grants to

100 local government and non-profit organizations. With these funds, FVA grantees have served over 150,000 Texas Veterans and family members. Other programs funded by the FVA include housing assistance for homeless Veterans, short-term financial assistance, legal assistance, and family and child services.

Individuals can help continue the support of Texas Veterans programs by making a donation on their Texas Department of Motor Vehicles registration form by specifying an amount at the bottom right corner of the form. The FVA also receives funding from the proceeds of the \$2 scratch-off lottery game, *Veterans Cash*, individual donations and the State Employee Charitable Campaign. Donations to the FVA are tax deductible under the provisions of Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.

#### Texas Veterans Commission

The mission of the Texas Veterans Commission is to advocate for and provide superior service to Veterans and their families in the areas of disability claims assistance, employment services, education benefits and grant funding. Over 200 skilled counselors in 75 cities provide one-on-one guidance to Veterans and their families to ensure they receive all of the benefits to which they are entitled.

More information about the Texas Veterans Commission Fund for Veterans' Assistance and grant application materials can be found at <http://www.tvc.texas.gov/Fund-for-Veterans-Assistance.aspx>.

#### Samaritan Center

The Samaritan Center has been saving lives, healing emotional wounds and giving hope to Central Texas families for nearly 40 years. The Center provides counseling, acupuncture, biofeedback, education and peer support to increase the mental, physical and spiritual health of individuals and families in Texas. Hope for Heroes, a Samaritan Center program, was established in 2007 to better serve the unique mental health problems of veteran and military family members struggling with the emotional wounds of war. All age groups and individuals from all walks of life are welcome. The Center strives to serve everyone regardless of the ability to pay.

More information about the Samaritan Center and Hope for Heroes can be found at [www.samaritan-center.org](http://www.samaritan-center.org).