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Facial Plastic Surgery Group Launches 'Faces of Honor' Program to Aid War Veterans Injured in the Line of Duty

New initiative offers pro-bono surgical care to soldiers deployed in Iraq or Afghanistan

SAN DIEGO, Oct. 1 /PRNewswire/ -- Today at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS), the organization announced the launch of their new humanitarian effort named "Faces of Honor," a program that will offer free surgical care for soldiers who have been injured in the line of duty.

Consistent with this theme of acknowledging our veterans who have contributed so selflessly to keep our country free, the AAFPRS meeting's esteemed guest speaker will be Bob Woodruff, the internationally-renowned journalist who was injured in a roadside bomb that struck his vehicle in Iraq. Mr. Woodruff will present a lecture, titled "Injuries of War. In an Instant," which he will deliver on Thursday, October 1st at 11:30 am PT at the meeting.

It is estimated that 20% of survivable injuries suffered in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts involve the face and neck. "We designed 'Faces of Honor' to show our unwavering support for those who protect America and other countries against terrorism threats. Our sons, daughters, husbands and wives are fighting selflessly on this front, and they have inspired us to take action," said AAFPRS President, Donn Chatham, MD. "Through 'Faces of Honor,' the AAFPRS will offer the expertise and compassion of our surgeon members to these brave men and women of our military. It is the least we could do."

The project was developed last year when Dr. Chatham suggested the AAFPRS recruit volunteer facial plastic surgeons to offer their knowledge and services to injured war veterans. "Most of us personally know soldiers and families, even relatives, who have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and we understand the personal sacrifice is high," said Dr. Chatham.

The idea of offering help to these veterans struck a deep chord among AAFPRS surgeons and the groundwork was laid to begin the "Faces of Honor" program. A new web site link has been developed and materials are available for volunteer AAFPRS doctors at www.facesofhonor.org.

This new program is intended to complement the existing medical care that the VA and military facilities have provided. Our goal is to work alongside VA caregivers whenever possible, but sometimes veterans may be geographically removed from specialty surgical care.

"In short," continues Dr. Chatham, "we want to say 'thank you' to this very special group of people and try to help in the best way we know how. Some of our surgeons are among the most gifted and skilled facial plastic surgeons in the world and are eager to help"

Using the Academy's own FACE to FACE pro-bono program as a model - the AAFPRS' non-profit organization (501(c)(3)) that works with the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence to offer complimentary consultations, surgery, counseling and support to victims of abuse - information on "Faces of Honor" can be found on the Academy web site at www.AAFPRS.org at www.facesofhonor.org. Eligibility guidelines and the process enabling veterans to apply for a consultation are described on-line. To date, the Academy has recruited 188 volunteers to aid in this humanitarian cause.

About AAFPRS

The American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery is the nation's largest society devoted exclusively to facial plastic surgery. The AAFPRS represents over 2,700 facial plastic and reconstructive surgeons who focus on the face, head and neck. The AAFPRS is a National Medical Specialty Society of the American Medical Association (AMA), and holds an official seat in both the AMA House of Delegates and the American College of Surgeons board of governors. The Academy's fellows are board-certified whose focus is surgery of the face, head, and neck. In addition, the AAFPRS provides consumers with free information and brochures and a list of qualified facial plastic surgeons in their area by visiting the AAFPRS Web site, www.aafprs.org

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