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Attn: News Desk

Prominent West Michigan Institutions Join with U.S. Department of Defense

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.—A unique research partnership between Grand Valley State University and Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital will allow some West Michigan wounded veterans to get the specialized care they need close to home.

The Wounded Warrior Traumatic Brain Injury Project (WWTBIP) offers opportunities for standard physical and psychological care, and community support enhanced with staff education to veterans who sustained traumatic brain injuries while they were deployed in either Afghanistan or Iraq. The project received a \$1.279 million grant from the U.S. Department of Defense.

Dr. Jean Nagelkerk, principal investigator and Vice Provost for Health at Grand Valley, said the idea behind this project came from area families with loved ones who received a traumatic brain injury. “Grand Valley and Mary Free Bed wanted to provide access to the latest effective, evidence-based quality care to wounded warriors and their families in West Michigan,” she said. “Our team will train an already highly skilled team of providers at Mary Free Bed to enhance their knowledge base to address the supportive care needs of wounded warriors and help reintegrate them into society.”

Dr. Jacobus Donders, co-investigator and Chief Psychologist at Mary Free Bed stated, “Our team will achieve the goal of helping wounded veterans gain greater hope. This program is fully customized to meet the unique challenges facing our soldiers who sustained a traumatic brain injury in the Iraq or Afghanistan wars. Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital will provide outpatient rehabilitation services to wounded warriors with traumatic brain injuries addressing their physical, cognitive, and psychosocial needs.”

What: Details of the Wounded Warrior Traumatic Brain Injury Project, how we secured the grant and how the \$1.279 million grant from the U.S. Department of Defense will be spent.

Who: Representatives from MFB, GVSU and the US Military

When: Thursday, November 11 at 10:00 am

Where: Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital

Media parking: Front of hospital

Media credentials: Please contact Meg Derrer for media credentials due to HIPAA

There is no cost to the wounded warrior for care received through this project. All clinical services are offered through Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital by clinicians with experience in the treatment of traumatic brain injury. The project also includes a research component with additional training of Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital staff with regard to the unique needs of those who sustained injuries during military service. These services are not intended to replace or duplicate existing care through the VA or Vet Center. Instead, this project offers complementary care, with an emphasis on returning wounded warriors to their home and work communities.

The unique purpose of this project is to provide opportunities for community-based intervention. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Driver rehabilitation
- On-site job evaluation and coaching
- Group and family support
- Project eligibility

For more information please contact the Wounded Warriors Project.
Phone 888.736.0208 – Email WoundedWarriors@MaryFreeBed.com
Website MaryFreeBed.com/WoundedWarriors

Fact sheet:

- Title – The Wounded Warrior Traumatic Brain Injury Project (WWTBIP)
- Partners - Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital and Grand Valley State University
- Funding is a \$1.279 million grant from the U.S. Department of Defense
- **Target - Afghanistan or Iraq warriors who received traumatic brain injuries**
- There is no cost to the wounded warrior for care received through this project
- The type of care will be standard physical and psychological care enhanced with staff education
- Enrollment – at least 34 area veterans
- Any veteran can enroll, but we assume most will come from Michigan and the Midwest
- Yearlong comprehensive program that will assess and treat their needs, in addition to helping them transition into their communities.

More about Mary Free Bed:

Founded more than 100 years ago, Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital is an 80-bed, not-for-profit, acute rehabilitation center. Its mission is to restore hope and freedom through rehabilitation to people with disabilities. Mary Free Bed offers comprehensive inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation for children and adults using an interdisciplinary approach. Also available are numerous specialty programs designed to increase the quality of life and independence of people with disabilities. For more information about Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital, please visit www.maryfreebed.com, or call (800) 528-8989.

More about Grand Valley State University:

Grand Valley State University attracts more than 24,500 students with high-quality programs and state-of-the-art facilities. Grand Valley is a comprehensive university serving students from all 83 Michigan counties and dozens of other states and foreign countries. Grand Valley offers 78 undergraduate and 29 graduate degree programs from campuses in Allendale, Grand Rapids and Holland, and from regional centers in

Muskegon and Traverse City. The university is dedicated to individual student achievement, going beyond the traditional classroom experience, with research opportunities and business partnerships.

This research project is being conducted by Grand Valley State University and Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital and is made possible by a grant that was awarded and administered by the U.S. Army Medical Research & Materiel Command (USAMRMC) and the Telemedicine & Advanced Technology Research Center (TATRC), at Fort Detrick, MD, under Contract Number:W81XWH-10-0607

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