



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Oklahoma City VA Medical Center
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Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73104

As the Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn Program Manager in a large VA Medical Center in the heartland, we have had occasion to send several veterans to the Honoring Our Veterans Program in Jackson Hole. Each veteran that we sent had been suffering from severe emotional and physical injuries rendering them incapacitated and hospitalized many times over the years. Each veteran was unsure about whether they could actually make the trip to Jackson Hole on their own. We knew that if they could just get there it would be a healing experience, especially after we sent the first veteran. The staff at Honoring Our Veterans provided encouragement from the initial contact and the veteran felt reassured that this would be a positive experience. There has been a remarkable change in all that we sent in that they are no longer using substances to medicate their emotional pain and they all have an added confidence in themselves. This confidence was regained through this program as they were welcomed into the community at Jackson Hole and treated as the heroes that they are. Each time an opportunity arises to send someone, we make every effort to find a veteran to send because we know it will be a healing experience. This is one of the most worthwhile programs I have seen in my 37 year career at the VA.

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