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## **For Immediate Release**

### **Conference Addresses Challenges Facing Military & Veteran Families**

*- The Adjutant General, Arizona National Guard to Speak at Event -*

**PHOENIX** (June 23, 2010) — The public is invited to attend the 2010 *Statewide Symposium in Support of Military Families*. The three-day conference begins at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, July 14, at Desert Willow Conference Center at 4340 East Cotton Center Boulevard in Phoenix.

Maj. Gen. Hugo Salazar, The Adjutant General of the Arizona National Guard, will address attendees at the opening ceremony. Event participants will then be briefed on military culture and experience the cycle of deployment through an interactive program designed to provide insight into the experiences of military and veteran families.

“The Arizona National Guard is committed to caring for its families before, during and after the cycle of deployment,” said Maj. Gen. Salazar. “This is an opportunity for all involved to share issues, ideas and expertise with a mutual goal of improving the quality of life for our military community.”

The event brings community leaders and providers from all sectors together to focus on best practices and cross-sector collaboration in support of Arizona’s 625,000+ service members, veterans and their families. Any community member wishing to attend this event may register online at: [www.ArizonaCoalition.org/symposium](http://www.ArizonaCoalition.org/symposium).

Attendees may participate in briefing sessions on a variety of topics, including:

- Combat-related injuries
- Marriage & Family Issues
- Substance Abuse
- Post-traumatic Stress
- Suicide Prevention
- Legal Issues
- Spirituality in the Military/Veteran Family
- Healthcare Eligibility and Benefits
- Higher Education
- Veteran’s Issues
- Issues Specific to the Guard and Reserve
- Specialized intensive tracks on clinical skills, a faith-based response and working with military kids on Friday, July 16<sup>th</sup>

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The event will be experiential in nature, including a static display of military equipment by a local Army Reserve unit. Attendees will be able to don military gear and try their hand at qualifying on a Laser Marksmanship Training System.

The event is hosted by the Arizona Coalition for Military Families and a planning committee representing public and private sector organizations. The Arizona Department of Veterans' Services is the Presenting Sponsor. "We must work together as a team to find solutions to the challenges facing veterans and military families in today's world. This symposium allows us to do just that," said Joey Strickland, Director of the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services.

Additional sponsors include TriWest Healthcare Alliance, the Arizona Parents Commission on Drug Education and Prevention, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, Sonora Behavioral Health, the Greater Valley Area Health Education Center, Scottsdale Healthcare and Credit Union West.

"This conference provides our community with an opportunity to discuss challenges faced by Arizona's military families so that we can identify solutions that ensure the continuum of care they are entitled to," said David J. McIntyre, Jr., President and CEO of TriWest, which administers TRICARE, the military's healthcare plan, on behalf of the Department of Defense in Arizona and 20 other western states.

#### ***About the Arizona Coalition for Military Families***

*The Arizona Coalition for Military Families is a public/private partnership focused on building Arizona's statewide capacity to serve and support all service members, veterans and their families. The Coalition is managed by Empowerment Systems, Inc., an Arizona nonprofit 501 (c) (3). To learn more and receive updates, sign up for the Coalition e-newsletter at: [www.ArizonaCoalition.org](http://www.ArizonaCoalition.org).*

#### ***About the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services***

*The Arizona Department of Veterans Services assists Arizona veterans and their dependents in receiving all their federal and state benefits, and delivers quality services at the Arizona State Veteran Home located in Phoenix and the Southern Arizona Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Sierra Vista. Visit <http://www.azdvs.gov> for more information.*

#### ***About TriWest Healthcare Alliance***

*TriWest Healthcare Alliance partners with the Department of Defense to do "Whatever It Takes" to support the healthcare needs of 2.7 million members of America's military family. A Phoenix-based corporation, TriWest provides access to cost-effective, high-quality health care in the 21-state TRICARE West Region. Visit [www.triwest.com](http://www.triwest.com) for more information.*

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