National Disabled Veterans
Winter Sports Clinic

Stickney Veteran Hits the Slopes
Largest Disabled Ski Clinic for Military Veterans in the World

(SNOWMASS VILLAGE, COLO.) March 31, 2010 -- Gregory Rodriguez, a Marine Corps Veteran from Stickney, Ill., is challenging himself at the 24th National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, taking place March 28 - April 2 in Snowmass Village. Co-sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), the Clinic creates "Miracles on the Mountainside" by being the world leader in teaching adaptive Alpine and Nordic skiing to Veterans with disabilities, while also introducing them to a variety of other adaptive sports and activities.

Rodriguez, 26, is brain injured and is among more than 350 U.S. military Veterans and active duty personnel from across the Nation who are gathered in Snowmass Village to learn or improve their skills in winter sports. More than 65 active duty military personnel and Veterans from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan are participating in the Clinic this year. Some are still recovering from their injuries at military treatment facilities. Rodriguez receives care at the VA medical facility in Hines, Ill.

For many newly-injured Veterans, the Clinic offers their first experience in winter sports. The Clinic promotes rehabilitation by teaching downhill and cross-country skiing to Veterans with significant physical disabilities and visual impairments. For both Alpine and Nordic skiing, participants have the benefit, based on their level of ability and ski experience, to use a wide variety of specially adapted ski devices or methods taught by certified ski instructors. It also offers participants an opportunity to learn scuba diving, rock climbing, sled hockey, curling, snowmobiling, self-defense and other activities that they can continue when they return home.

Ensuring that Veterans receive world-class health care and rehabilitation is a primary goal of VA and DAV. When Veterans conquer the mountain, it proves to all that a disability need not be an obstacle to an active, rewarding life.

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Note: Much of the above information was provided by Veteran.

Note to Editor: Background information is available at www.wintersportsclinic.va.gov. If you would like to interview Rodriguez, please contact José Llamas, NDVWSC public affairs coordinator at (202) 461-7549 or (703) 969-9238.