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For Immediate Release: 08-08

20 March 2008

Washington D.C. – On Mar. 19, the Army’s Wounded Soldier and Family Hotline celebrated its first anniversary, having fielded almost 12,000 calls in a 12 month period. The hotline was created by the Army’s senior leadership as an additional resource for wounded Soldiers and their Families to help them resolve difficult medical-related issues.

“The hotline’s purpose isn’t to circumvent the chain of command,” said call center deputy chief, Col. Robert Clark. “However, the hotline reflects the Army’s determination to address and resolve Soldiers’ issues as rapidly as possible. We are able to interject at senior levels in all areas and work from the top down to get issues resolved quickly,” he said.

The almost 12,000 calls have come from Soldiers across all components, as well as veterans, family members, advocates and friends. Calls have come from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and from as far away as Afghanistan, Iraq, Germany, Korea, Japan, Philippines, Brussels, Italy, and Kuwait. The hotline has addressed almost 2700 issues and answered approximately 6700 other inquiries and requests for information during its first year. The remaining calls were referred to other more appropriate agencies for assistance. While not everyone can be satisfied with the outcome of their call to the hotline, 85 percent of the issues are resolved favorably.

The top issues resolved by the hotline include those related to health care, pay and benefits, chain of command issues, legal assistance, and awards questions. Not only has the hotline helped Soldiers resolve difficult issues, but hotline

employees have also intervened in several threatened suicides both in theater and at home.

During the year, hotline personnel have seen some changes regarding the number and types of calls coming into the center. During this same period there was an increase in calls following the activation of the Army Medical Action Plan. Soldiers assigned to Warrior Transition Units called to inquire about assignments, and wounded and injured National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers requested help with activation into the active Army. A comparison of the first six months of calls to the last six months shows an overall 29 percent reduction in the total number of calls. As the Army worked diligently to improve medical care this past year, medical-related calls fell by nearly 50 percent.

The Wounded Soldier and Family Hotline continues to meet the changing needs of the Army. "The Army cares about its Soldiers and Families. We are going to take care of them and ensure they have every single resource available to them in the United States Army," said COL Edward Mason, the hotline's chief.

The Wounded Soldier and Family Hotline, managed by the U.S. Army Human Resources Command, in Alexandria, VA, is available 24-hours a day, seven days a week at 1-800-984-8523.