

Resources for wounded warriors with major traumatic limb loss

Lynne V. McFarland, MS, PhD;^{1*} Anthony J. Choppa, MEd, CRC, CCM, CDMS;² Kendra Betz, MSPT, ATP;³ Jonathan D. Pruden, MPS;⁴ Gayle E. Reiber, MPH, PhD^{1,5}

¹Health Services Research and Development, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Puget Sound Health Care System, Seattle, WA; ²OSC Vocational Systems, Inc, Bothell, WA; ³VA Prosthetics and Sensory Aids Service, Washington, DC; ⁴Wounded Warrior Project, Gainesville VA Medical Center, Gainesville, FL; ⁵Departments of Epidemiology and Health Services, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

Abstract—Many resources are available for servicemembers who experience combat-associated major limb loss. Navigating print, Internet, and in-person information and services is key. This appendix identifies sources of information for individuals with major limb loss as follows: (1) resources for military personnel, (2) resources from the Department of Veterans Affairs, (3) other resources for veterans, (4) resources for family members, and (5) resources in the public domain. Five detailed tables identify some of the agencies, their contact information, and some of the services available in each of these five categories.

Key words: amputation, benefits, combat, limb loss, OIF/OEF, prosthetic resources, traumatic amputation, veterans, Vietnam, wounded servicemembers.

INTRODUCTION

Servicemembers and veterans who experience major limb loss are provided assistance in recovery and rehabilitation but are often frustrated when it comes to finding resources to help them along the way. More than 850 servicemembers and veterans from Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) [1] and more than 2,500 from the Vietnam war [2] have major limb loss. Many organizations are available to provide assistance and resources to these men and women. The needs of the servicemembers and veterans vary by level of limb

loss, severity of other injuries and comorbidities, stage of rehabilitation, need for financial support, benefits, and many other factors. Fortunately, many agencies established services for servicemembers and veterans with major limb loss.

This article identifies information sources for individuals with major limb loss as follows: (1) resources for military personnel, (2) resources from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), (3) other resources for veterans, (4) resources for family members, and (5) resources in the public domain. Five detailed tables identify the agencies, their contact information, and services available for each category. These resources were considered helpful by the participants of the *Survey for Prosthetic Use* ([Appendix 1](#),

Abbreviations: ACA = Amputee Coalition of America, ACAP = Army Career and Alumni Program, AMVETS = American Veterans, AW2 = U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program, DAV = Disabled American Veterans, DoD = Department of Defense, DTAP = Disabled Transition Assistance Program, NMFA = National Military Family Association, OEF = Operation Enduring Freedom, OIF = Operation Iraqi Freedom, SCI/D = spinal cord injury and disease, VA = Department of Veterans Affairs.

*Address all correspondence to Lynne V. McFarland, PhD; VA Puget Sound Health Care System, Health Services Research and Development, 1100 Olive Way, Suite 1400, Seattle, WA 98101; 206-277-1095; fax: 206-764-2935. Email: Lynne.McFarland@va.gov

DOI:10.1682/JRRD.2009.02.0017

available online only) and the Expert Panel members ([Appendix 2](#), available online only); are known by us to support servicemembers, veterans, and others with limb loss; and are in the public domain. This list is not all-inclusive; resources and organizations change rapidly.

RESOURCES FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL

Numerous support systems are in place for servicemembers with traumatic limb loss while on Active Duty—notably, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, DC; Brooke Army Medical Center, San Antonio, Texas; and Naval Medical Center, San Diego, California. Military and civilian organizations and agencies provide a broad spectrum of services. Several programs are described next. **Table 1** provides additional resources for military personnel.

Army Career and Alumni Program

The U.S. Army created the Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) (<http://www.acap.army.mil/>) to provide transition assistance to soldiers and family members separating or retiring from Active Duty with ACAP Centers located on most major U.S. Army installations. The program is mandated by Congress and part of U.S. Army/Department of Defense (DOD) policy. ACAP provides pre-separation counseling, employment workshops, VA briefings, employment assistance, tools for writing resumes and cover letters, advice, and support.

ACAP's Disabled Transition Assistance Program (DTAP) is offered for servicemembers who are leaving military service because of disability. This program encourages and assists servicemembers with their decisions about the VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service. DTAP facilitates applications for vocational rehabilitation benefits and services. Group sessions explain eligibility, benefits, and availability of educational and vocational counseling. DTAP sessions for hospitalized or convalescing servicemembers are coordinated by the VA Regional Office.

Hope For The Warriors

Established in 2006, Hope For The Warriors™ (<http://www.hopeforthewarriors.org>) is a civilian, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to enhance quality of life for wounded U.S. servicemembers and their families with short- and long-term care and to ensure that fallen

warriors are not forgotten, nor their families left in need. Its programs include the award-winning "Warrior's Wish," recreational outings, athletic events, transitional housing, financial support for immediate needs, support groups, professional development, and a rehabilitation center.

Military OneSource

Military OneSource (<http://www.militaryonesource.com>) has services and information for military personnel and their families who need help with child care, personal finances, emotional support, relocation information, education, elder care, legal advice, and other special circumstances. Face-to-face, telephone, and online counseling by master's-level consultants offer confidential support and practical solutions, 24 hours/day, 7 days/week. Online resources include a library; financial calculators; self-assessment tools; Webinars (interactive online seminars); monthly newsletters; discussion boards; and podcasts on life issues, including stress management, meal planning, depression, families, and relationships. Military OneSource is a civilian organization under contract with the DOD and has no cost for Active Duty, Guard, or Reserve servicemembers and their families.

U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program

The U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2) (<https://www.aw2.army.mil>) assists and advocates for wounded soldiers and their families throughout their lifetimes, unconstrained by location or rehabilitation timelines. AW2 embodies the warrior ethos "We will never leave a fallen comrade." Initially established in April 2004 as the Disabled Soldier Support System for the most severely wounded, injured, or ill soldiers returning from OIF/OEF, AW2 now serves more than 2,300 soldiers and their families. Focusing on those most severely injured, AW2 provides services such as helping wounded soldiers remain in the U.S. Army through education and application assistance, career planning beyond the U.S. Army, education choices, nonmedical benefits, VA and Army benefits, family healthcare, financial counseling for buying a home, local resources, life coaches, and receipt of awards earned during military service. AW2 advocates are located throughout the country at major military treatment facilities and VA medical centers. AW2 assistance requires meeting eligibility requirements (described on its Web site). Its online resources for wounded servicemembers with limb loss include financial assistance, employment opportunities, home improvement assistance, access to assistive technologies including computers, assistance to

Table 1.
Resources for military personnel.

Resource	Contact Information	Description
America Supports You	http://www.ourmilitary.mil	DOD program launched in 2004 that provides opportunities for citizens to show their support for the U.S. Armed Forces and to communicate that support to members of the Armed Forces at home and abroad.
Army Career and Alumni Program	http://www.acap.army.mil	Provides transition assistance to soldiers and family members separating or retiring from Active Duty with advice, support, preseparation counseling, employment assistance, VA briefings, tools for writing resumes and cover letters, and Disabled Transition Assistance Program.
Hope For The Warriors™	http://www.hopeforthewarriors.org	Nonprofit civilian organization established in 2006 to build hope beyond recovery with numerous programs such as award-winning “Warrior’s Wish,” recreational outings, athletic events, transitional housing, financial support for immediate needs, support groups, and rehabilitation center.
Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund	http://www.semperfund.org	Nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established May 2004 that has provided over 10,000 grants totaling >\$24 million to assist wounded OIF/OEF heroes and families. Financial support is provided for family travel to bedside of wounded Marines; mortgage payments; other immediate financial needs; and perpetuating needs such as modified transportation, home modifications, and specialized equipment.
Military in-Step	http://www.amputee-coalition.org/military-instep/index.html	Guide in partnership with Army Patient Care program and Amputee Coalition of America for adapting to limb loss with >40 articles to help with rehabilitation, common problems, military benefits, and sports and recreation resources (organized by sport type).
Military OneSource	http://www.militaryonesource.com 1-800-342-9647	Online library and resource center provided by DOD at no cost to military members and their families on education, benefits, housing, legal advice, moving information, caregivers, finances, health, career, parenting, and more. Consultants, counseling, and discussion groups are also available.
My Army Benefits	http://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil	Official U.S. Army benefits Web site serving regular Army, Army National Guard, Army Reserve, family members, and retirees. “My Benefits” section produces personalized survivor and retirement benefit reports for Active Duty soldiers and family members with complete financial forecast of investments, insurance, and service-member group life insurance. Also provides “what if” capability that projects how life events, such as getting married, having children, or retiring at a projected date, can affect finances.

Table 1. (cont)

Resources for military personnel.

TurboTAP (Transition Assistance Program)	http://www.transitionassistanceprogram.com	Provides information for servicemembers transitioning from military. DOD Web site also supported by Department of Labor and VA. Supplements services of Transition Assistance Offices located on major military installations. Topics include career changes, entrepreneurship, healthcare, education, personal finances, relocation, life insurance, loans, and VA benefits.
U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program	https://www.aw2.army.mil	U.S. Army program focusing on most severely injured servicemembers with wide range of resources, personal assistance in recovery, and help obtaining benefits.
U.S. Military Services		Official Web sites of U.S. military services.
National Guard	http://www.ngb.army.mil	
U.S. Air Force	http://www.af.mil	
U.S. Army	http://www.army.mil	
U.S. Coast Guard	http://www.uscg.mil	
U.S. Marine Corps	http://www.usmc.mil	
U.S. Navy	http://www.navy.mil	
Yellow Ribbon Fund	http://www.yellowribbonfund.com	Private, nonprofit organization providing volunteer services, transportation, and lodging to injured servicemembers and their families. Created in 2005 for injured military recuperating at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and National Naval Medical Center.

DOD = Department of Defense, OIF/OEF = Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom, VA = Department of Veterans Affairs.

military family members, outdoor recreational activities, and mobility devices such as Segways™.

RESOURCES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Of the 25 million veterans currently alive, nearly 3 of every 4 served during a war or an official period of hostility [3]. About a quarter of the nation's population (approximately 70 million people) is potentially eligible for VA benefits and services because they are veterans, family members, or survivors of veterans [3]. The goal of the VA is to provide excellence in patient care, veteran's benefits, and customer satisfaction. The VA provides an abundance of resources, a few of which are described next, with more listed in **Table 2**.

The VA's Web site (<http://www.va.gov>) is the starting point for links to VA benefits, VA healthcare, facility locations, employment, education, home loans, the Home Improvements and Structural Alterations program, automobile modifications, and more. The online version of

“Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents” is a comprehensive guide to VA benefits, with contact numbers and Web sites (<http://www1.va.gov/opa/vadocs/fedben.pdf>). Veterans may also call 1-800-827-1000. Veterans Service Representatives are available to work one-on-one with veterans and their families. The VA Crisis Intervention Hotline (1-888-899-9377) assists veterans who may be dealing with a mental health crisis or difficult issue in their lives. The hotline also aids family or friends who are assisting a veteran in crisis.

Veterans Health Administration—Veterans Health Care System

The Veterans Health Administration provides healthcare to veterans transitioning into the Veterans Health Care System (<http://www1.va.gov/health/index.asp>). A wide range of healthcare services are provided and many Web sites offer information. Eligibility, enrollment, and coverage changes for VA healthcare are described (<http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility>). Servicemembers from OIF/OEF can use the portal for “Returning Service Members”

Table 2.
Resources from Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Resource	Contact Information	Description
VA	http://www.va.gov 1-800-827-1000	Main Web site with links to VA benefits, locations, jobs, VA data, public affairs, Home Improvements and Structural Alterations program, automobile modifications, healthcare benefits, and more.
Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents	http://www1.va.gov/opa/vadocs/fedben.pdf	Online version of “Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents” brochure, comprehensive guide to VA benefits, with contact numbers and Web sites.
VA Compensation and Pension Service	http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/index.htm	Links to compensation, VA benefits summaries, health and dental insurance, and special OIF/OEF page for topics such as home loans, education, and PTSD.
VA Crisis Intervention Hotline	http://www.marion.va.gov/services/Veteran_s_Crisis_Intervention_Hotline.asp 1-888-899-9377	Crisis hotline established by VA Heartland Network to assist veterans who may be dealing with a mental health crisis or difficult issue in their lives. Also aids family or friends who are assisting a veteran in crisis.
VA Education Benefits	http://www.gibill.va.gov	Education assistance programs as provided by “GI Bill” to veterans, servicemembers, and some dependents of disabled or deceased veterans wishing to pursue education.
VA Facilities Locator and Directory	http://www1.va.gov/directory/guide/vetcenter.asp	Location of VA facilities by zip code or map.
VA Health Care Eligibility and Enrollment	http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility	Eligibility, enrollment, and coverage changes for VA healthcare.
VA Health Care—Veterans Health Administration	http://www1.va.gov/health	Overview of VA healthcare programs.
VA Home Loan Guaranty Services	http://www.homeloans.va.gov	Current updates on home loans for veterans.
VA Life Insurance Programs	http://www.insurance.va.gov	Life insurance programs for servicemembers and veterans.
VA My HealthVet	http://www.myhealth.va.gov	Portal to individual VA healthcare and concerns.
VA National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder	http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain	Information on PTSD such as coping with war, resources for families, effects of serving in OIF/OEF, diagnosis and treatment, and “PTSD Information Center” link.
VA National Programs and Special Events	http://www1.va.gov/opa/speceven/natpro/Default.asp	National annual events for veterans, including Winter Sports Clinic, Wheelchair Games, Summer Sports Clinic, Golden Age Games, and National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.
VA Polytrauma System of Care	http://www.polytrauma.va.gov	Care for veterans with multiple injuries and locations of polytrauma facilities.
VA Prosthetics and Sensory Aids Service	http://www.prosthetics.va.gov	Information on prosthetic devices and all other adaptive equipment and technologies provided to VA healthcare beneficiaries.
VA Returning Service Members (OEF/OIF)	http://www.oefoif.va.gov	Answers to questions and timely information for OIF/OEF servicemembers.
VA Veterans Service Organizations	http://www1.va.gov/VSO	Online database of chartered and unchartered veterans service organizations.
VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment	http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/index.htm	Vocational rehabilitation services for veterans with service-connected disabilities, including independent living, educational/vocational counseling, small business information, translating military skills into occupational skills, and employment opportunities through http://vetsuccess.gov .

OIF/OEF = Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom, PTSD = posttraumatic stress disorder.

(<http://www.oefoif.va.gov/>). My HealthVet (accessed from <http://www.myhealth.va.gov>) is the portal for individual healthcare and concerns.

VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program

VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (<http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/>) provides vocational rehabilitation services for veterans with service-connected disabilities, including independent living and educational/vocational counseling, small business information, translating military skills into occupational skills, and employment opportunities through <http://vetsuccess.gov>.

VA Prosthetics and Sensory Aids Service

The VA Prosthetics and Sensory Aids Service (<http://www.prosthetics.va.gov>) provides adaptive equipment, assistive technologies, artificial limbs, home and vehicle adaptations, wheeled mobility devices, and adaptive sports equipment to VA healthcare beneficiaries. The Web site provides information about the availability of adaptive equipment and technologies, upcoming events, important announcements, and links to new technologies, new prosthetic devices, the VA Benefits Handbook, and the "Veterans for America Survival Guide."

VA Polytrauma System of Care

Polytrauma is defined as two or more injuries to physical regions or organ systems, one of which may be life threatening, that result in physical, cognitive, psychological, or psychosocial impairments and functional disability (such as traumatic brain injury, hearing loss, major limb loss, fractures, burns, and visual impairment). Care for returning servicemembers and veterans with these injuries is provided at 4 polytrauma centers and 17 additional network sites by teams of healthcare professionals who develop individual rehabilitation plans to maximize recovery. The Web site (<http://www.polytrauma.va.gov>) has information on admission criteria, family support, polytrauma care news, "Frequently Asked Questions," and a locator for VA Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers and Polytrauma Network Sites.

OTHER RESOURCES FOR VETERANS

Many organizations outside of the VA provide support to veterans. Several are described here, and more are listed in **Table 3**.

American Veterans

American Veterans (AMVETS) (<http://www.amvets.org>) is a volunteer-led organization open to anyone who is currently serving or who has honorably served in the U.S. Armed Forces from World War II to the present. For more than 60 years, AMVETS has assisted veterans and sponsored numerous programs that serve the country and its citizens. Their national network of trained national service officers, accredited by the VA, provides advice and prompt action on compensation claims at no charge to the veteran. Additionally, this organization offers professional advice on veterans' benefits and is involved with legislative efforts in Washington, DC. Its Web site features news for veterans, lists of resources, and a career center.

Vietnam Veterans of America

Since 1978, Vietnam Veterans of America (<http://www.vva.org>) has been dedicated to Vietnam-era veterans and their families through advocacy for all issues important to Vietnam war veterans, creation of a positive public perception, community service, pursuit of an accounting for POW/MIAs (prisoners of war/missing in action), and support for the next generation of warriors. A Congressionally chartered, not-for-profit corporation, it was founded on the principle "Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another." Their hotline (1-800-273-8255) is available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week.

Veterans for America

Veterans for America (<http://www.veteransforamerica.org>), a nonprofit organization also known as Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, is an advocacy and humanitarian organization seeking to ensure that the needs of servicemembers and veterans from OIF/OEF are met, focusing on traumatic brain injuries and psychological traumas. Resources include the free 599-page "Survival Guide," a step-by-step road map for navigating the bureaucracies and services that aid veterans, as well as advice and strategies for dealing with difficult issues such as harassment and caregiving. Its Wounded Warrior Outreach Program sponsors one-on-one visits by OIF/OEF servicemember liaisons to troops suffering from psychological and neurological combat injuries to bring trends to military leaders.

Disabled American Veterans

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) (<http://www.dav.org>) is dedicated to creating better lives for disabled U.S.

Table 3.

Other resources for veterans.

Resource	Contact Information	Description
American Veterans	http://www.amvets.org 301-459-9600	Volunteer-led organization founded >60 years ago to support veterans and provide community service. Network of trained national service officers accredited by VA helps veterans with their benefits. Volunteers also work on legislative issues. Web site has links to resources and news updates for veterans.
American Veterans with Brain Injuries	http://www.avbi.org	Nonprofit organization begun in 2004 as Web-based peer-support network and information resource to support families of servicemembers and veterans who have suffered traumatic brain injury.
Disabled American Veterans	http://www.dav.org 877-I AM A VET [877-426-2838]	Nonprofit organization founded in 1920 to provide free support for veterans and their families. National Service Officers assist veterans in filing VA claims, free-of-charge. Educates veterans and their families on benefits and services, helps homeless veterans transition to a productive lifestyle, organizes volunteers to drive veterans to and from VA medical facilities, offers disaster relief, publishes magazine, hosts events such as Winter Sport Clinic, and advocates for legislation for veterans and their benefits.
Military Order of the Purple Heart	http://www.purpleheart.org 703-642-5360	Veteran service organization that assists all veterans (not just members), widows, and orphans with VA claims and appeals through education and outreach to rural, urban, handicapped, destitute, and homeless veterans.
National Veterans Foundation	http://www.nvf.org 1-888-777-4443	Nonprofit 24-hour hotline and Web site staffed by veterans from Vietnam, Cold War, Desert Storm, Bosnia, Iraq, and Afghanistan who are specially trained in crisis information and referral services for veterans and their families. Outreach services provide veterans and families in need with food, clothing, transportation, employment opportunities, and other resources.
Paralyzed Veterans of America	http://www.pva.org 1-800-424-8200	Congressionally chartered veterans service organization founded in 1946 that seeks to maximize quality of life for veterans with SCI/D. Advocates for and provides information on SCI/D health issues, SCI/D research and education, veterans benefits and issues, accessibility designs in architecture and construction, legal issues, sports, and recreation.
Segs4Vets	http://www.segs4vets.org	Program providing Segways™ to severely injured veterans through nonprofit organization Disability Rights Advocates for Technology.
U.S. VETS	http://www.usvetsinc.org	Nonprofit organization dedicated to helping homeless and at-risk veterans.
Vets Coming Home	http://www.vetscominghome.com	Offers resources, comfort, and aide to veterans returning home. Clearinghouse with links to books, counseling resources, Federal and state agencies, PTSD groups, and other veterans groups
Veterans for America	http://www.veteransforamerica.org	Nonprofit organization, also known as Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, to ensure that needs of servicemembers and veterans from OIF/OEF are met, focusing on traumatic brain injuries and psychological traumas. Resources include 599-page "Survival Guide" to help navigate bureaucracy.
Veterans and Families Foundation	http://www.veteransandfamilies.org	501(c)(3) nonprofit community service and support organization to aid veterans and their families in homecoming transition by helping veterans decompress from war and deployment, both mentally and emotionally, and transition back into family and civilian life.

Table 3. (cont)

Other resources for veterans.

Veterans of Modern Warfare	http://www.vmwusa.org	New nonprofit membership organization dedicated to meeting needs of most recent war veterans who served from 1990 to present, through benefits access, seamless transitions, healthcare, and advocacy. Emphasis is on timely communication and camaraderie.
Vietnam Veterans of America	http://www.vva.org 1-800-273-8255	Congressionally chartered, not-for-profit corporation since 1978 dedicated to Vietnam-era veterans and their families through advocacy for all issues important to Vietnam veterans, creation of positive public perception, serving the community, and support for next generation of warriors.

OIF/OEF = Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom, PTSD = posttraumatic stress disorder, SCI/D = spinal cord injury and disease, VA = Department of Veterans Affairs.

veterans and their families through a variety of free services. The DAV's National Service Officers assist and represent veterans in filing claims with the VA—free of charge—for disability compensation and pension, vocational rehabilitation, home loan guaranty, and any other benefit program.

The DAV also educates veterans and their families on benefits and services, helps homeless veterans transition to a productive lifestyle, organizes volunteers to drive veterans to and from VA medical facilities, offers disaster relief, publishes *DAV Magazine*, hosts events such as the Winter Sports Clinic, and advocates for legislation for veterans and their benefits.

Paralyzed Veterans of America

Paralyzed Veterans of America (<http://www.pva.org>), a Congressionally chartered veterans service organization founded in 1946, seeks to maximize the quality of life for veterans with spinal cord injury and disease (SCI/D). It advocates for and provides information on SCI/D health issues, SCI/D research and education, veterans benefits and issues, accessibility design in architecture and construction, legal issues, sports, and recreation.

RESOURCES FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

Families often require assistance immediately after a member of their family is wounded and may not know where to turn. Participants in the *Survey for Prosthetic Use* found the following organizations useful for family support. **Table 4** provides a detailed list for families, including transportation assistance programs.

Iraq War Veterans Organization, Inc

The Iraq War Veterans Organization, Inc, (<http://www.iraqwarveterans.org>) supports veterans and family members from OIF/OEF and the Global War on Terror. Information is provided for Active Duty military and their families on predeployment, deployment, and post-deployment issues. The Web site has links to information on VA healthcare; VA benefits; readjustment after deployment; education; employment opportunities; military discounts; posttraumatic stress disorder issues; support chat forums; family support; and other community-building resources, including a “Military Matchmaker.”

National Military Family Association

The National Military Family Association (NMFA) (<http://www.militaryfamily.org>) was organized in 1969 as the National Military Wives Association by a group of wives and widows seeking financial security for survivors of uniformed service personnel and retirees. Their efforts resulted in the Survivor Benefit Plan. Since then, NMFA has been at the forefront of advocacy for improvements in the quality of military family life. NMFA is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) association with support from the seven uniformed services and works regularly on common concerns with The Military Coalition, an umbrella organization of 36 military-related associations. NMFA educates the public, the military community, and Congress on the rights and benefits of military families and advocates with Congress and DOD agencies for an equitable quality of life for those families. NMFA's accomplishments, in conjunction with The Military Coalition, include improvements to medical and dental benefits, education for dependents, services for military children with autism, military housing allowances, relocation coverage, spousal

Table 4.
Resources for family members.

Resource	Contact Information	Description
Air Charity Network	http://www.aircharitynetwork.org 1-877-621-7177	National nonprofit organization that provides free air transportation to distant healthcare facilities or for other crises. Volunteer pilots donate flights through independent member organizations, organized by geographical area.
Family Information Services	http://www.familyinfoserv.com/crisis.html	Resources for professionals who help families deal with crises. Web site has library on topics such as trauma, death, violence, grief, and talking to children about crises.
Iraq War Veterans Organization, Inc	http://www.iraqwarveterans.org/family_support.htm	Civilian organization created to organize and represent OIF veterans. Web site has links to information about VA healthcare, readjustment after deployment, education, employment, military discounts, PTSD issues, support links, chat forums, family support, and deployment information.
Military Family Network	http://www.emilitary.org	Private organization that supports military families and increases their readiness and well-being by connecting them with their communities and services.
National Military Family Association	http://www.militaryfamily.org	Civilian nonprofit 501(c)(3) association founded in 1969 with programs to educate military families, public, and Congress on rights and benefits of military families and to advocate equitable quality of life for those families.
U.S. Family Health Plan	http://www.usfhp.com	Military health system's healthcare options in seven areas of the United States for eligible family members of Active Duty families, military retirees, and eligible family members.
USA Together	https://app01.usatogether.org	Civilian-based organization that uses the power of the Internet to help servicemembers who have suffered life-altering injuries. Injured servicemembers register their specific situation and then contributors donate to specific servicemembers through Web site.
Veterans Airlift Command	http://www.veteransairlift.org 952-582-2911	Nonprofit organization providing free air transportation to wounded servicemembers, veterans, and their families for medical and other compassionate needs through national network of volunteer aircraft owners and pilots. Priority is veterans of OIF/OEF, with other veterans as capacity allows.

OIF/OEF = Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom, PTSD = posttraumatic stress disorder, VA = Department of Veterans Affairs.

employment opportunities, and retiree and survivor benefits.

RESOURCES IN PUBLIC DOMAIN

Many public organizations are dedicated to helping wounded servicemembers, veterans, their families, and others with limb loss. Details on a few are described below, with more listed in **Table 5**.

Amputee Coalition of America

The Amputee Coalition of America (ACA) (<http://www.amputee-coalition.org>) is a national nonprofit con-

sumer educational organization representing people who have experienced amputation or were born with limb differences. The ACA network includes people with limb loss, their friends and family, support groups, professionals, limb loss-related agencies, and educational organizations. The ACA was incorporated in 1989 and is governed by a Board of Directors, the majority of whom are people with limb loss.

The ACA believes that education enables those with limb loss to play a central role in decisions about their care, services, and outcomes, a role that is crucial to achieving their highest potential and self-fulfillment. To empower the individual with limb loss, the ACA provides educational resources that include *inMotion* magazine, booklets, fact sheets, videotapes, and Military in-Step (in

Table 5.

Resources in public domain for people with limb loss.

Resource	Contact Information	Description
Above Knee Amputee	http://abovekneeamputee.com	Maintained by people with above-knee limb loss and their friends to help them achieve success with their prosthesis and related issues. Support includes dealing with emotional issues, message boards, links, and tips. Membership provides access to prosthetist rating page.
Active Living Magazine	http://www.activelivingmagazine.com	Features articles on adapted activities, travel resources, and tools for maintaining active life with amputation or other disability. Requires subscription.
Adaptive Sports Foundation	http://www.adaptivesportsfoundation.org	Nonprofit organization since 1984 that has provided both winter and summer sports instruction to children and adults with cognitive and physical disabilities.
American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists	http://www.oandp.org	For-profit trade association founded in 1970 assisting orthotic and prosthetic facilities, manufacturers, and suppliers. Membership required, but <i>Journal of Orthotics and Prosthetics</i> is available at this Web site.
American Amputee Foundation	http://www.americanamputee.org	Nonprofit educational organization established in 1975 as national information clearinghouse and referral center serving people with limb loss, their families, and care providers. Some information is free; newsletter and additional information available to members only.
American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association	http://www.aopanet.org	For-profit national trade association founded in 1917 with services and products for orthotic and prosthetic professionals. Requires membership.
Amputee Coalition of America	http://www.amputee-coalition.org 1-800-267-5669	National nonprofit consumer educational organization representing people who have experienced amputation or were born with limb differences and empowering them through educational resources, legislative advocacy, and National Peer Network. Resources include <i>inMotion</i> magazine, limb loss news, National Limb Loss Information Center, booklets, fact sheets, videotapes, online bulletin board, toll-free hotline, peer training, and links to other Web sites, organizations, and prosthetic manufacturers.
Amputee Coalition of America—en español	http://www.amputee-coalition.org/nllic_spanish.asp	Amputee Coalition of America Web site offered in Spanish.
The Amputee Network	http://homepage.mac.com/birdhouse-studios/AmputeeNetwork.htm	Web site to educate people with limb loss and their families and friends, with primary objective of helping with prosthetic rehabilitation. Site offers stories of people with limb loss, blog, and featured monthly links.
Amputee Resource Foundation of America, Inc	http://www.amputeeresource.org	Nonprofit Web-based information resource funded through public donations with resource links, articles, tips for finding prosthetist, published articles, and link to “Amputees in Hollywood.”
Arm-Amp.Com	http://www.arm-amp.com	Web site run by people with upper-limb amputations, featuring profiles of people with upper-limb amputations, tips, suggestions, chat room, and links.
Arm Amputee Program, National Rehabilitation Hospital	http://nrhrehab.org/Patient+Care/Programs+and+Service+Offerings/Outpatient+Services/Service_Page.aspx?id=121 202-877-1875	Private nonprofit program providing prosthetic training for service-members with upper-limb amputations in District of Columbia.
The Care Planner Network	http://www.careplanners.net/index.asp	Nonprofit organization dedicated to professionals in life planning and case management.

Table 5. (cont)

Resources in public domain for people with limb loss.

Challenged Athletes Foundation	http://www.challengedathletes.org 858-866-0959	Unique nonprofit organization established in 1997 to help people with disabilities pursue active lifestyle through physical fitness and support athletic greatness inherent in all people with physical challenges through grants for training, competition, and equipment needs. Operation Rebound specifically supports servicemembers and veterans.
Charleston Amputee Support Team	http://www.charlestonamputee-supportteam.com	Civilian support team for amputees in Charleston, South Carolina, area, offering support group meetings, events, and links to other services available. Part of Amputee Coalition of America.
Digital Resource Foundation for the Orthotics and Prosthetics Community	http://www.drforp.org	Nonprofit organization with mission to develop computer-based information resources and communication for worldwide orthotics, prosthetics, and rehabilitation community. Online resources are "Humanitarian Database" connecting communities of need with professionals and organizations that can help and "Virtual Library" of orthotics and prosthetics reference materials, available free to users worldwide.
Disabled Sports USA	http://www.dsusa.org	Nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established in 1967 by disabled Vietnam veterans to serve war injured through community-based chapters offering variety of recreation programs to anyone with permanent disability. Wounded Warrior Disabled Sports Project supports severely wounded servicemembers from OIF/OEF and Global War on Terror.
Fashion Magic Apparel	http://www.fashionmagic.bc.ca	For-profit company selling custom clothes to fit with wheelchair or with specific needs of people with limb loss.
The Given Limb Foundation	http://www.givenlimb.org	Nonprofit organization established in 2007 to help improve lives of persons throughout world with limb loss or diminished use of their limbs, from servicemembers to victims of land mines. Supports new initiatives, including tool kit for minor repairs for prosthetic devices.
Helping a Hero	http://www.helpingahero.org 1-888-786-9531	Nonprofit organization providing support for severely injured military personnel. Scholarship support, new homes, recreation, etc.
Hemipelvectomy and Hip-Disarticulation Amputee Support	http://www.hphdhelp.org	Private voluntary site for support of people with hip disarticulation and hemipelvectomies through peer support/communication, physical fitness, education, hints, and prosthetic/adaptive-technology information.
National Amputee Golf Association	http://www.nagagolf.org	Association started by 12 World War II veterans with limb loss incorporated in 1954 and supported by Professional Golf Association and U.S. Golf Association. Sponsors golf programs such as First Swing to teach adaptive golf to people with physical disabilities, brings golf to rehabilitation centers and hospitals for people with limb loss, organizes tournaments, and publishes magazine.
National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke	http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/tbi	U.S. government (National Institutes of Health) Web site with information and links on traumatic brain injury, including educational booklets, publications, organizations, research, and clinical trials.
National Limb Loss Center	http://www.amputee-coalition.org/nllic_about.html	See "Amputee Coalition of America."
National Peer Network	http://www.amputee-coalition.org/npn_about.html 1-888-267-5669	See "Amputee Coalition of America." Peer network to connect people with limb loss with trained peers and support groups.
O&P Digital Technologies	http://www.oandp.com	Web site providing comprehensive information and services for orthotics and prosthetics professionals, focusing on Web/software development and new technologies.

Table 5. (cont)

Resources in public domain for people with limb loss.

O&P Online Library	http://www.oandplibrary.org	Virtual library for orthotics and prosthetics community in partnership with O&P Digital Technologies.
Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing	http://projecthealingwaters.org	Nonprofit organization which introduces fly fishing to servicemembers and veterans with disabilities to aid in their physical and emotional recovery.
Team River Runner	http://www.teamriverrunner.org	Nonprofit, all-volunteer organization, established in 2004 by kayakers in Washington, DC, area to help Active Duty military and veterans find health, healing, and new challenges through whitewater boating on Potomac River, in partnership with The Wounded Warrior Project and Disabled Sports USA.
Warriors & Quiet Water Foundation	http://warriorsandquietwaters.org	Nonprofit corporation providing rehabilitative recreation through fly fishing on Montana's rivers and streams primarily for wounded servicemembers still in military hospital system.
Wounded Warrior Outreach Program	http://www.veteransforamerica.org/our-programs/	Run by Veterans for America nonprofit organization. Sponsors one-on-one visits by OIF/OEF servicemember liaisons to troops suffering from psychological and neurological combat injuries to bring trends to military leaders.
Wounded Warrior Project	http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org	Nonprofit organization that empowers severely injured servicemembers through peer support, community involvement and awareness, and programs and services such as career planning, family services, rehabilitative cycling program, transition training, and advocacy for positive changes in veterans benefits and policy.

OIF/OEF = Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom.

cooperation with the U.S. Armed Forces Amputee Patient Care Program). Its National Limb Loss Information Center (partially supported by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention) provides resources on diverse topics including surgery, people with new limb loss, statistics, financial help, prosthetics, infection, and help for children coping with parental limb loss. Links direct people with limb loss to other Web sites, organizations, and prosthetic manufacturers.

The ACA also advocates on behalf of people with limb loss through government legislation, community outreach, and the dissemination of accurate information about the U.S. population of people with limb loss to the government, industries, and general public. The ACA promotes full implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act and informs policy makers of the issues of people with limb loss.

The ACA promotes peer support through an online bulletin board, a toll-free hotline, guidelines for starting support groups, and a National Peer Network. A database of trained and experienced peers enables connections by telephone, fax, email, postal service, or personal visits. The ACA provides training seminars to develop the objectivity, listening skills, and appropriate techniques

that will enhance the possibility of successful communication. Trained peers are usually people with limb loss who have transitioned successfully to their new life. In addition, the ACA works collaboratively with support groups to provide peer training, training manuals, funding sources, and educational materials.

Wounded Warrior Project

The purpose of the nonprofit organization Wounded Warrior Project (<http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org>) is to honor and empower wounded warriors by raising public awareness and support for the needs of severely injured servicemembers; help wounded servicemembers aid and assist each other; and provide programs and services such as career planning, family services, a rehabilitative cycling program, transition training, and advocate for positive changes in veterans benefits and policy. Its core values are fun, integrity, loyalty, innovation, and service.

CONCLUSIONS

This article presents examples of the wide selection of resources available to support servicemembers, veterans,

and their families who are experiencing the challenges involved in recovering from major limb loss. A large variety of military and veterans benefits and organizations are available that assist in healthcare, transportation, housing and automobile modifications, emotional support, exploration of innovative prosthetic device technologies, recreation, and community building. We hope that this article acts as a portal for servicemembers, veterans, and their families to find the support they may need and to realize the wide diversity of resources that are available to them.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Author Contributions:

Study concept and design: L. V. McFarland, A. J. Choppa, K. Betz, J. D. Pruden, G. E. Reiber.

Acquisition of data: L. V. McFarland, J. D. Pruden, G. E. Reiber.

Drafting of manuscript: L. V. McFarland, A. J. Choppa, K. Betz, J. D. Pruden, G. E. Reiber.

Critical revision of manuscript for important intellectual content: L. V. McFarland, A. J. Choppa, K. Betz, J. D. Pruden, G. E. Reiber.

Obtained funding: G. E. Reiber.

Financial Disclosures: The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

Funding/Support: This material is based on work supported by the VA Health Services Research and Development (grant IIR 05-244) and a Career Scientist Award to Dr. Reiber (grant RCS 98-353).

Additional Contributions: We thank all the participants in the *Survey for Prosthetic Use* and the Expert Panel members for their valuable

assistance. We would like to acknowledge the assistance of Julie Bondzie, Koriann Brousseau, and Jane Emens for assistance in data collection and manuscript preparation.

The resources named in this article are recommended by the participants of the *Survey for Prosthetic Use* and by members of the Expert Panel. Our focus is government, voluntary, and nonprofit agencies. We recognize that these resources are dynamic and ever changing and that this list is not exhaustive. Inclusion of any organization or Web site in this article does not constitute official endorsement by the VA, DoD, or any of the authors and is for informational purposes only.

The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the VA or the DoD.

REFERENCES

1. Scoville C. Amputee patient numbers thru January 2009. Email to: GE Reiber. 2009 Jan 31.
2. Maynard C, Flohr B, Guagliardo TA, Martin CH, McFarland LV, Pruden JD, Reiber GE. Department of Veterans Affairs compensation and medical care benefits accorded to veterans with major limb loss. *J Rehabil Res Dev.* 2010;47(4):403–8.
3. About VA [Internet]. Washington (DC): Department of Veterans Affairs [cited 2009 Feb 23]. Available from: http://www.va.gov/about_va/.

Submitted for publication February 24, 2009. Accepted February 24, 2009.