



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

American Red Cross of
Central Texas
Austin, Texas 78723
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Media Alert
MEDIA ALERT

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Red Cross Reaches Out to Military Community for Volunteers New Operation Outreach Program Designed to Assist Women Veterans

AUSTIN, August 15, 2011 — The American Red Cross of Central Texas is launching a campaign to recruit 100 volunteers to assist female veterans reintegrate into civilian life.

“Our goal is to surround these heroes as they return to our community and ensure they can access every resource available to make their transition to civilian life a smooth one,” says Regional CEO Marty McKellips. “The American Red Cross was founded on the battle field in support of the military and we are continuing that long tradition of service to those who serve us.”

Operation Outreach is a part of Mayor Leffingwell’s community wide service plan, *Serve Austin*, www.serveatx.org, designed to proactively reach out to women veterans, help direct these women to community resources, and maintain contact with them over time.

Women veterans face special challenges that must be addressed locally. According to the Department of Defense, female service members are much more likely to be single parents than male troops, and women veterans are four times more likely than nonveteran women be homeless, per the *American Journal of Public Health*. Austin welcomes home an estimated 250 women veterans each year, and Operation Outreach strives to be there for each one.

The American Red Cross of Central Texas is calling for women with personal or family military experience to volunteer as a part of Operation Outreach. “Veterans have so much to offer our community, and Operation Outreach is a great opportunity to make a difference for other veterans,” said McKellips.

All potential volunteers are invited to contact Volunteer Services Coordinator Stephanie Cosmas for more information, or visit either [our site](#) or www.serveatx.org. New volunteers will need to complete the Military Veteran Support Orientation, and classes are available:

Tuesday **9/6**, 6-7pm & Thursday **9/8**, 6-9pm

OR

Saturday **9/10**, 9am – 1pm

Advance registration is required for training, please contact Volunteer Services Specialist Stephanie Cosmas to register, scosmas@centex.redcross.org or 512-929-1225.

Operation Outreach has been developed as a part of Mayor Leffingwell's community wide service plan, *Serve Austin*, www.serveatx.org, a plan made possible by a Cities of Service Leadership Grant from the *Cities of Service Coalition*, www.citiesofservice.org, which supports mayors in leveraging citizen service strategies, addressing local needs and making government more effective.

Central Texans who wish to make a financial contribution to the American Red Cross of Central Texas can call 800 or 512-928-4271, send a financial contribution to 2218 Pershing Drive, Austin, 78723 or make a secure online donation at www.centex.redcross.org. For information on Red Cross services or volunteer opportunities please call 800 or 512-928-4271 or visit www.centex.redcross.org.

About the American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies nearly half of the nation's blood; teaches lifesaving skills; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization — not a government agency — and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit www.redcross.org or join our blog at <http://blog.redcross.org>.

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Don't let that old car, truck, or boat sit there any longer! [Donate it today](#) to the American Red Cross of Central Texas and save the day for local families in need.