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**MAJOR MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATIONS JOIN TO SUPPORT GIVE AN HOUR**  
*Organization Provides Free Mental Health Services for Returning Troops and Families*

Washington, DC (November 10, 2008) – Four major mental health associations in the United States -- American Association of Pastoral Counselors, American Psychiatric Association, American Psychological Association and the National Association of Social Workers -- have joined to support Give an Hour's efforts to provide free mental health services to returning troops and their families.

Give an Hour is a non-profit organization that has created a national network of licensed mental health providers who have agreed to give one hour of their time each week to provide free counseling and other mental health services to military members, veterans and their families who are experiencing the psychological effects of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Currently, there are nearly 3,000 providers nationwide, more than doubling the number of providers in the last six months.

"The combined support of these four major associations underscores the magnitude of the psychological and emotional impact of war on our troops and their families as well as the urgency of getting these critical services to those who need them," says Dr. Barbara Van Dahlen Romberg, founder and president of Give an Hour. "We are honored to be able to announce this support in advance of Veterans Day; it is a great way to commemorate the service of our military members," Dr. Romberg adds.

Dr. Douglas M. Ronsheim, Executive Director, American Association of Pastoral Counselors states that AAPC is assisting Give an Hour by utilizing their national network of licensed mental health professionals and providing an array of counseling services. "Through our connections with faith communities AAPC is also piloting models to equip congregations, churches and mosques to provide support and care. One's faith community is often the first point of contact in times of stress and crisis. It is imperative that veterans and their families are supported and assisted in accessing appropriate levels of care."

Dr. Carolyn Robinowitz, immediate past president of the American Psychiatric Association, notes "Not all wounds are visible. Post-traumatic stress, depression and other mental health issues can have a devastating effect on those who serve in the military and their families. The American Psychiatric Association (APA) believes it is imperative to provide and expand on mental health support services for returning veterans. This is why we encourage psychiatric physicians to become a part of the Give an Hour network of professionals in providing mental health services to returning military members and their families. I joined the program to make a difference. I recognized how important it is to provide confidential, compassionate care that is available locally for all military, national guard and reserves. The military and Veterans Administration have expanded their programs for mental health and substance abuse treatment, but more needs to be done. Programs such as Give an Hour help veterans to heal the invisible wounds of war."

"The American Psychological Association is proud to support Give an Hour," says Norman Anderson, PhD, CEO and Executive Vice President of the American Psychological Association. "Psychologists and veterans have a long and rich relationship, and we are honored to be part of a program that fosters healing for military members and their families."

"We know that our colleagues in the military community should not respond to this national crisis alone," says National Association of Social Workers' Executive Director Elizabeth J. Clark, PhD, ACSW, MPH. NASW is proud that nearly one-third of all Give an Hour volunteers are professional social workers. Helping returning troops and their families successfully manage the stress and demands of post-war civilian life makes every community and our nation stronger."

Through this partnership, Give an Hour will be better equipped to reach the approximately 400,000 licensed mental health professionals in the United States with a call to action to join the Give an Hour network.

Mental health professionals interested in joining Give an Hour can complete an easy on-line form at [www.giveanhour.org](http://www.giveanhour.org).

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Give an Hour ([www.giveanhour.org](http://www.giveanhour.org)) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3), founded in September 2005 by Dr. Barbara Van Dahlen Romberg, a psychologist in the Washington, D.C., area. The organization's mission is to develop national networks of volunteers capable of responding to both acute and chronic conditions that arise within our society. Currently, GAH is dedicated to meeting the mental health needs of the troops and families affected by the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Give an Hour currently has nearly 3,000 providers across the nation – in all 50 states, DC and Puerto Rico -- and continues to recruit volunteer mental health professionals to its network.