



OFFICE OF U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JULIA BROWNLEY

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BROWNLEY ANNOUNCES VA PARTNERSHIP WITH REINS OF HOPE FOR VETERANS' MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

THOUSAND OAKS, CALIF. — Today, Congresswoman Julia Brownley (D-Westlake Village) announced a new partnership between the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center and Ojai-based Reins of H.O.P.E to expand access to complementary and alternative therapy for veterans in Ventura County.

“I am very pleased that the VA has decided to partner with Reins of H.O.P.E. to expand veterans’ access to this innovative and effective mental health therapy,” said Congresswoman Brownley. “I am a strong supporter of expanding complementary and alternative medicine within the VA, and I look forward to continuing to work with Reins of H.O.P.E. and the VA to ensure that the brave men and women who served our country receive top-quality healthcare services.”

“We are pleased to announce this pilot program and to work with Reins of HOPE to bring yet another evidence-based complementary therapy to our Veterans,” said Donna Beiter, director of the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System. “Here at VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, we believe in providing patient-centered care, and our dedicated providers are leading the nation when it comes to offering integrative health and healing modalities such as tai chi, yoga, acupuncture, chiropractic care, and more. This new pilot program for equine assisted psychotherapy is the latest example of our passion for providing Veterans with personalized care that emphasizes healing relationships and recognizes each Veteran as a whole person. We are constantly enhancing the many complementary services available throughout our integrated healthcare system, and we appreciate the ongoing collaboration we have with Congresswoman Brownley and her office, who share our commitment to promote integrative health and healing programs for Veterans in Ventura County.”

“I am honored to partner with the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System for a one year pilot program offering Equine Assisted Psychotherapy and Learning to our Ventura and Santa Barbara County veterans and their families,” said Julie Sardonía, Founder and Executive Director of Reins of H.O.P.E. “Our H.O.P.E. for Warriors Program has been serving active duty, veterans, reservists, guard and their families since 2011 with this effective, cutting edge, solution focused equine modality which treats issues such as PTSD, MST, TBI, suicide, depression, anger management, substance abuse and grief. It develops coping skills to help

heal the invisible wounds of war. We are proud to be certified as a Designated Military Provider by EAGALA (Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association), and we thank Congresswoman Brownley for her continued advocacy of alternative therapy for Ventura County's veterans."

Congresswoman Brownley is a strong supporter of complementary and alternative medicine, and introduced the Expanding Care for Veterans Act (H.R. 4887), which would expand complementary and alternative medicine and mental health care options for our nation's veterans.

Congresswoman Brownley invited Reins of H.O.P.E. to testify at the February 2014 House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health field hearing on complementary and alternative medicine at California State University, Channel Islands. This emerging partnership comes as a result of that hearing and subsequent follow-up from Congresswoman Brownley.

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