

## **For Immediate Release**

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# **Wounded Warriors to Receive Segways**

## **Charity Helps Restore Mobility to Injured Veterans Segs4Vets Winds Up Most Successful Year**

**WASHINGTON, D.C., December 9, 2008** – Segs4Vets will award Segways, personal mobility devices, to 43 wounded warriors who lost legs or sustained severe neurological injuries during combat in Iraq and Afghanistan at the Army Navy Country Club in Arlington today. The ceremony begins at 11:30 a.m. More than 30 recipients will attend the ceremony.

“Segs4Vets is honored to present Segways to these brave warriors to help them become more independent,” said Jerry Kerr, a founder of Segs4Vets. “The sacrifice of generations of American veterans dramatically improved conditions for the disabled in the United States. This is our way of saying thank you for your service and expressing our deep gratitude for their sacrifice.”

Many of the Washington recipients are still undergoing rehabilitation and treatment at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center. The recipients come from 22 states and the District of Columbia. Many lost one or both legs to an IED blast or sustained serious spinal cord or neurological injuries which inhibit the ability to walk.

Segs4Vets is a project of Disability Rights Advocates for Technology (DRAFT), a private non-profit all volunteer organization which promotes universal design and use of technology to improve the lives of the disabled. The organization has been certified as one of America’s best charities by the Independent Charities Seal of Excellence, an honor accorded fewer than 2,000 of the more than one million public charities in the United States. Segway Inc., manufacturer of the device, has no affiliation with the charity.

With this presentation, Segs4Vets will have given away more than 250 Segways to wounded warriors in the past two years.

“Many of us who are disabled are alive today because of the sacrifices made by disabled American veterans from World War II, Korea and Vietnam,” said Kerr, a quadriplegic and Segway user. Kerr became disabled after a diving accident ten years ago. “Veterans changed the world for people with disabilities. They are responsible for advances in rehabilitation technology and medicine and transformed society’s perception of the disabled.”

The Segway is not certified as a medical device by the Food and Drug Administration but it has found a loyal following among many disabled people who suffer from neurological diseases, lost limbs or spinal cord injuries. The device improves personal mobility without the need of a wheelchair.

More than 30 of the Washington recipients will receive final training in the use of the Segway by Segs4Vets volunteers at an all day session Monday in the ballroom of the Hotel Palomar Arlington, at 1121 North 19<sup>th</sup> Street, Arlington, Va. Training will run from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

All recipients suffered injuries while serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. More than 30,000 men and women in uniform have been wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan since the beginning of hostilities and hundreds of the injured have lost limbs to amputation. The autumn recipients were drawn from an applicant pool of more than 300.

Segways allow these military service members to perform everyday activities beyond the physical limitations of a wheelchair. The device not only frees them from wheelchairs but keeps them standing on their new prosthetic legs for longer periods of time, allows them to preserve their energy, and dramatically increases mobility and independence. Former recipients use Segways to travel between college classes, go to work, accompany their families to shopping malls, amusement parks and other outings and remain on active duty.

Many Segs4Vets recipients have already undergone assessment and initial training on the use of the transporter at military medical centers on Segways donated by Segs4Vets.

Segs4Vets, created in late 2005, is run entirely by volunteers as part of Disability Rights Advocates for Technology (DRAFT). General Ralph "Ed" Eberhart USAF (Ret), former Commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command, helped create the project to recognize the sacrifice of all of disabled veterans from all conflicts and honor the unique contributions of disabled American veterans to people with disabilities in the United States.

DRAFT is the first and only organization to ever receive a blanket waiver from the U.S. military allowing a gift in excess to \$1,000 to severely injured active duty military force members serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. DRAFT represent people with disabilities who refuse to be defined by their disability and whose passionate enthusiasm for participation in life's activities is supported by Universal Design and new and emerging technologies.

More information can be found at [www.segs4vets.org](http://www.segs4vets.org).