**YMCA of Greater Indianapolis offers military memberships, programs, services geared for veterans, families**

By Kirsten Clark

**INDIANAPOLIS** – The YMCA of Greater Indianapolis offers military veteran and Title 10 memberships, a competitive 5K run series, several job fairs, yoga and walking groups and other fitness and wellness-related courses and workshops for all age groups.

The organization also recently opened the first and only full-service Y facility hosting a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Health Clinic inside its building. It is located in Pike Township at the OrthoIndy Foundation YMCA 5315 Lafayette Road, Indianapolis.

“We saw a need that wasn’t being met here locally and we wanted to reach out to our Central Indiana veteran community with services that make our facilities a great place to live, work and stay connected,” said Jeff Chapman, Association Director of Veteran and Military Services.

The YMCA here has more than 2,300 veterans, military service members and their families as part of their membership and the number continues to grow. To be eligible for a 20 percent reduced rate on regular Association-wide membership, the veteran needs to provide a DD214 as proof of service to receive the discount. For those serving under Title 10, Armed Services YMCA in partnership with the Defense Department, offers memberships and respite child care services designed to provide extra support during that period of time.

To continue to meet the needs of the veteran and military communities, the organization has partnered with Veteran Health Indiana to provide health and wellness classes.

“We have added yoga, guided meditation, a walking group, acupuncture, chronic pain support groups and healthy meal preparation classes,” Chapman said. “We have also incorporated a weight management program and a marriage retreat that are available to eligible members.”

The programing the YMCA offers includes diabetes prevention, blood pressure monitoring, fitness for those with mobility challenges, physical and social activities for those affected by cancer and a program called Moving for Better Balance, designed to improve balance, muscle strength, flexibility and mobility. Eventually the organization hopes to add therapeutic gardening to the list of available activities.

“Our goal is to make access to healthy living easier for veterans,” he said. “If that means helping someone living with arthritis pain or helping them find a job, we’re here to assist.”

The YMCA is host to several 5Ks this year including one at OrthoIndy in October. There is also a veteran social, military appreciation and movie night, and a job and volunteer fair on the calendar of events.

Other community partners include Team RWB (Team Red, White & Blue), the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana.

“The Y wants to ensure that we offer activities and services related to the overall spiritual, mental and physical wellness of our Hoosier veterans and military members,” said Chapman. “These ongoing efforts are a good start, but I hope to see more made available in the future. Only the best for those who served our great country.”