



*For immediate release*

### **Specialized Veterans Unit Opens at the Indianapolis Re-Entry Educational Facility**

Indianapolis, Indiana (January 24, 2010) – *This We'll Defend, Semper Fidelis, Not Self but Country, Above All* – These are more than slogans painted on the walls of Unit 6 dormitory at Indianapolis Re-Entry Educational Facility (IREF). To the occupants of the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) newly implemented Veterans Unit, these mottos represent the creeds that once governed their conduct, their values, and their lives.

On Monday, January 11, 2011, 28 honorably discharged veteran residents incarcerated at IREF moved into the new Veterans Dorm where their case management will include special programming, mentoring, and other services that will aid them during re-entry and accustom them to benefits and other services available to eligible veterans.

“There are over 1400 incarcerated veterans in Indiana alone,” said Alexis Dean, the dorm’s re-entry specialist. “Having a program geared towards their needs is such a huge help in preparing them for their re-entry.”

In collaboration with the Veteran’s Affairs Center located in Indianapolis, the Department of Workforce Development, and other outside agencies, the residents will receive assistance with developing job skills and locating employment and housing.

The program at IREF is the first specialized veterans program in the IDOC and can provide services to up to 106 residents. The goal of this new program is to increase the chances that incarcerated offenders successfully re-integrate into society upon their release.

“We want to provide services to our veteran residents who may have otherwise been overlooked during their incarceration. Several veterans, through misinformation or various other reasons are unaware of all the services provided to them as Veterans of our Armed Forces,” stated Dean.

“Setting aside a dorm for incarcerated veterans lets me know that I am not forgotten about, that I am not excommunicated from society,” stated Resident William Dickerson, an Air Force veteran. “For the Department of Correction to recognized military veterans means more to us than words can express.”

#### **About Indianapolis Re-Entry Educational Facility (IREF)**

The Indianapolis Re-Entry Educational Facility is a minimum-security level facility, which maintains public safety while providing residents the skills required for successful re-integration into the community, with the ultimate goal of reducing recidivism.

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