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PROCON and Easterseals NH break ground on 15-acre Military & Veterans Campus

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Shown is the PROCON design-build team with Maureen Beauregard, president & CEO of Easterseals NH and governor Chris Sununu.

Franklin, NH Affordable housing, continuum of care, retreat center, and therapeutic recreation are the centerpieces of an effort to serve those who have dedicated their own lives to service. Joined by veterans, military members, families, governor Chris Sununu, PROCON's design-build team and dignitaries from around the state, Easterseals NH broke ground for its new 15-acre Center of Excellence, designed to offer a variety of support services in one location. The Military & Veterans Campus will be operational in just over one year, and planning is underway to move into a second phase designed to expand the list of available supports and programs for veterans and their families.

During a special dedication, governor Sununu praised the state's lawmakers for supporting this critical investment for a population of Granite Staters who deserve the best of our efforts. Easterseals NH was awarded \$23 million from the State of NH through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State Fiscal Recovery Funds (S/fRF) to develop the campus and its programs.

"With the groundbreaking of the Military and Veterans Campus, New Hampshire is setting the gold-standard for care to our veteran community like never before," said governor Sununu. "With the health and wellness of America's heroes as the vision behind this campus, we have taken a 21st

century approach to at long last build a campus with all-encompassing supports and services in one central location. Today marks a trans/formative moment in New Hampshire's approach to veteran care."

"We stand here energized by the broad support we have received, and we are mission ready," said Maureen Beauregard, president & CEO of Easterseals NH. "It is truly humbling to see the strong and invested support from the veteran and military community. Your voices and your input have helped us shape the vision and design of this campus. Thank you for both your service to our country and to this project."

The first-of-its-kind center of excellence for veterans, military members, and their families will include affordable housing, hub of services, retreat center, and therapeutic recreation opportunities.

PROCON has formed a partnership with Easterseals NH to design and build the Military & Veterans Campus. This project will provide comprehensive services and support for military personnel, veterans, and their families, all while having a design conceptualized by veterans themselves.

The first phase of the project, construction of the affordable housing for veterans, hub of services for veteran service providers, and portions of the retreat center, begins in this month. The completion of the first phase of the project is in early 2025.

"As a 22-year Air Force veteran, I could not be happier to welcome Easterseals New Hampshire to our city to develop what I am confident will be a Veteran and Military Campus that will set the standard and model of care for all Veterans," said mayor Jo Brown. "The citizens of Franklin join me in welcoming Easterseals and all veterans and military members to our city."

Additional funds will be raised to complete the retreat center, build the multipurpose therapeutic recreation building, military-themed playground, makerspace, and outdoor performance stage. Easterseals NH is committed to completing the project and collaborating with stakeholders, partners, the state of NH, and the public. This has included seeking robust and thorough feedback from the community process, such as creating a Campus Taskforce, attending local and regional site visits of high-quality military and veteran programs, conducting interviews and outreach with state officials, nonprofits, and other providers, creating, distributing, and analyzing surveys sent to providers and members of the military and veteran community and more. This has been a community-wide conversation, and the input is feeding the final plans for the campus.

PROCON is proud to support our veterans and to design and build a center of excellence for Easterseals.

"Our family has long supported veterans and military in our community," said John Stebbins, PROCON CEO. "We have hired many team members who have served and continue to serve our country. We are honored to partner with Easterseals NH to design and build Easterseals NH Military and Veterans Campus in Franklin. Our entire team and veterans are excited to be able to give back to other veterans and the military by designing the best possible facility to support their needs."

“New Hampshire has one of the highest per capita populations of veterans in the country, so we know the need for access to programs and housing is high,” said Andy MacWilliam, chair of the board of directors for Easterseals NH. “We are confident with the support of our statewide community, the nonprofit sector, private businesses, and citizens that we can raise the remaining funds needed to fully complete this incredible campus. The Easterseals NH Military & Veterans Campus will change lives, support families, and offer a much-deserved way of saying thank you to all who have served or are serving in the military today.”

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