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American Legion Legacy Run to Help Families of Fallen Heroes

INDIANAPOLIS (Aug. 17, 2012) -- Hundreds of motorcyclists will take the concept of "veterans helping veterans" to a new level next week when The American Legion Riders kick off their seventh annual American Legion Legacy Run to raise money for the American Legion Legacy Scholarship program.

The riders, who are wartime veterans themselves, will travel 750 miles to make possible a college education for the children of those who have died defending our freedoms since September 11, 2001.

National Commander of The American Legion Fang A. Wong will lead the American Legion Legacy Run which will begin in Niagara Falls, N.Y. Tuesday, Aug. 21 and run through five states to the 94th Annual National American Legion Convention in Indianapolis, Ind. that convenes on August 28.

According to Wong, the American Legion Legacy Scholarship program is one way for all Americans to show their deep appreciation for those who paid the ultimate price for freedom.

"As an unfortunate consequence of America's war on terror, many children of our military personnel are now members of single-parent families," he said. "In most cases, this also means their chances to attend college have greatly diminished. Children of our heroes who die on active duty are entitled to receive some money toward a college education, but it is not enough."

The Riders' goal is to raise $450,000 in 2012 for the American Legion Legacy Fund.

"We are raising funds to ensure that higher education will be a reality for these families," Wong said. "Providing for the children of our military personnel left behind is our civic duty, and an education is a powerful way to show our thanks."

According to American Legacy Run event planners, more than 350 motorcycle riders are expected to make the entire three-day journey. Legionnaires at posts along the route will provide support in the form of food and bottled water.

Wong has also asked American Legion posts and Legion Riders from all over the country to conduct a national fundraising effort on behalf of The American Legacy Scholarship Fund.

"This is something that all Americans can support," said Wong. "If you ride a motorcycle, join us. If you don't, become a 'non-rider supporter,' get your patch and help these children."

Wong, accompanied by the 350 motorcycles, will stop at American Legion posts along the route to collect donations from riders, American Legion family members, business leaders and members of the public. Stops and events planned include:

- Monday, August 20 (Pre-run rally)
- Tuesday, August 21 (Niagara Falls, N.Y. to Vermilion, Ohio)
- Wednesday, August 22 (Vermilion, Ohio to Coldwater, Mich.)
- Thursday, August 23 (Coldwater, Mich. to Indianapolis, Ind.)

Upon arrival in Indianapolis, the riders will take a welcoming lap of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, home of the Indianapolis 500 race, before settling in to two days of rider activities at The American Legion Riders Expo, part of the 2012 National Convention activities.

On Sunday, Aug. 26, at 4:00 pm, The American Legion Riders will lead the 94th Annual National American Legion Convention Parade.

A small delegation of American Legion Riders will formally present the national donations for the American Legacy Scholarship Fund directly to Commander Wong onstage at the National Convention.

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Contact Bill Sloan (317) 473-3259 or Linda Eberharter (317) 697-5368, Legacy Run Media Outreach Team to schedule interviews, arrange live/taped coverage and to check on the progress of the Legacy Run. Complete details on the American Legion Legacy Run are available at http://www.legion.org/riders