

DMS Pharmaceutical Spearheads Effort

Fund-Raiser Will Benefit Needs of Recovering Armed Forces Personnel



Maj. Tammy Duckworth speaks with Sen. Daniel Akaka before testifying to the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee in 2005. Her husband, Capt. Bryan Bowsbey is at right. Duckworth will be the keynoter at the Fisher House fund-raiser.

Photo by Leo Shane III. Used with permission from *Stars and Stripes*, a DoD publication. ©2005 *Stars and Stripes*

DMS Pharmaceutical Group is once again mobilizing support for a project to benefit members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families in time of great need.

The Illinois-based full-line wholesaler of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies is spearheading a 2006 fund-raising event to benefit the Fisher House Foundation, a follow-up to a fund-raiser held last May. This time, DMS Pharmaceutical is specifically appealing for other companies and individuals in the health-care industry to join in supporting the project.

The Fisher House program provides "a home away from home" for families of patients receiving medical care at major military and VA medical centers. There are 33 Fisher Houses, with six more in construction or design. Families of military personnel can stay in the facilities free of charge in many instances, or at a low cost, such as \$10 a day per family.

Sam Lazich, president of DMS Pharmaceutical Group, urges whole-hearted industry support of the effort. "With drug manufacturers, pharmaceutical and medical products wholesalers, hospitals, pharmacies and health-care professionals rallying to this deserving cause as sponsors, this can be a powerful demonstration of the health-care industry's sense of social responsibility," Lazich said.

This year's benefit dinner will be

Wednesday, May 10, at the Park Ridge Country Club in Park Ridge, Ill., near Chicago, with all proceeds going directly to the non-profit foundation.

The keynote speaker will be Maj. Tammy Duckworth, a combat pilot who had first-hand experience with Fisher House assistance following devastating injuries sustained during a 2004 ambush in Iraq. She required a long recuperation following the loss of both legs and a shattered arm when her helicopter was ambushed.

Maj. Duckworth's husband, Capt. Bryan Bowsbey, was able to stay by her side at Walter Reed Fisher House III in

Washington, D.C., during 11 months of recuperation. "Having my family by my side was just as vital to my recovery as the medical technology and quality care that saved my life," Duckworth says. (See related article, page 21.)

Maj. Duckworth and Capt. Bowsbey, both of the Illinois National Guard/U.S. Army, are serving as honorary co-chairs of the Fisher House fund-raising event.

The chairs of the fund-raiser are Angie Lazich, Sam Lazich and Bill Anderson, all of DMS Pharmaceutical Group, the founding sponsor. Betty Stamatis, also of DMS, is the benefit coordinator.

For individuals and companies that wish to support the Fisher House benefit, a full range of sponsorship and contribution options are available, including tables at the fund-raising dinner.

All contributions are to be made out to Fisher House Foundation, Inc. DMS Pharmaceutical will provide a Fisher House Foundation Charitable Donation Form to accompany each contribution. The form, signed by David A. Coker, Fisher House executive director and vice president of operations, meets the criteria of Funds/Foundation.

For more information, or for invitation/registration forms and Fisher House Foundation Charitable Donation Forms, call 847-518-1100, ext. 234; fax 847-518-1105; or e-mail benefit@dmspharma.com. 



Angie Lazich, DMS Pharmaceutical chairperson, and Sam Lazich, president, discuss plans for the May 10 event in support of the Fisher House Foundation.

Following Devastating Attack in Iraq

Fisher House Program Was Vital in Maj. Duckworth's Lengthy Rehab

For most of 2005, severely wounded Maj. Tammy Duckworth endured multiple surgeries and intensive rehabilitation for the loss of both legs and a shattered arm suffered during combat in Iraq.

For the entire period of her treatment at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., the Fisher House Foundation made it possible for Duckworth's husband, Bryan, and family from Hawaii to stay by her side free of charge to support her through the life-altering crisis.

It was Nov. 12, 2004, and Duckworth, an Illinois Army National Guard pilot, was returning from a mission when her Black Hawk helicopter was attacked by insurgents. According to an account in *Stars and Stripes*, the Department of Defense-authorized newspaper, Duckworth remembered seeing a ball of flame when her helicopter was struck by a rocket-propelled grenade, and she next wondered why her legs couldn't work the control pedals.

"I found out later the pedals were gone, and so were my legs," she said.

In spite of the hole in the floor of the chopper, the helicopter was safely landed thanks to the efforts of the pilot

in command, Chief Warrant Officer Dan Milberg. Duckworth was rescued and taken to Germany for emergency surgery. During the experience, she had lost nearly half of the blood in her body, doctors later told her.

As part of her subsequent rehab program at Walter Reed, Duckworth moved in February 2005 to the Walter Reed Fisher House III near the medical center.

"The friendship, caring and normal home setting ... were just as vital to my recovery as the medical technology and quality care that saved my life," Duckworth says. "Having my husband and family by my side, plus staying at Fisher House between surgeries and during therapy actually sped up my recuperation.

"It was a huge difference in the quality of my life and my family's on so many levels," she adds. "It does that for all of the soldiers."

Duckworth explains that, "One of the benefits of having a Fisher House on a military medical center campus is that doctors are able to discharge you as an in-patient but you're near enough so they feel okay about letting you go. It keeps you from having to stay in a hospital bed that whole time.



Maj. Tammy Duckworth takes a reading break in the well-stocked library at Walter Reed Fisher House III in Washington, D.C.

"If it wasn't for Fisher House, I would have spent ... 13 months in a hospital bed and not progressed as well. Being at Fisher House enabled me to get used to cooking meals...doing laundry...all those everyday tasks that I have to be able to do again."

She adds, "Having a safe environment to practice tasks of daily living, and get help if I needed it, was a tremendous stepping-stone toward being able to live my life in the real world."

With the aid of two state-of-the-art prostheses, Maj. Duckworth is now moving on with her life with the determination reflected in her comment, "I will fly

See **DUCKWORTH** on page 22



Maj. Duckworth uses the laundry at Walter Reed Fisher House III, and, at right, she shares kitchen tasks with her husband, Capt. Bryan Bowsbey. "Having a safe environment to practice tasks of daily living and get help if I needed it was a tremendous stepping stone toward being able to live my life in the real world," she says.

DUCKWORTH, from page 21

helicopters for the Army National Guard again, someday ... I'm an assault pilot ... and I'm not about to let some guy who got lucky with a rocket-propelled grenade decide how to live my life."

And since her rehabilitation, she's testified before Senate and House committees on VA affairs and she's decided to run for a seat in Congress representing a district in suburban Chicago.

Duckworth and her husband, Capt. Bryan Bowsbey, National Guard/U.S. Army, are serving as honorary co-chairs



Maj. Duckworth enjoys the ride and Capt. Bowsbey guides the wheelchair as they exit the Fisher House where she spent 13 months of rehab.

Foundation is critical to the care of our wounded soldiers. These individuals come from all walks of life, and represent the very best of our nation. They deserve the very best we can do for them."

The Fisher House program is a private-public partnership that provides temporary lodging in more than 30 "comfort homes" for families of patients receiving medical care at major military and VA medical centers. Families can stay in the residences free of charge, or for a minimal fee. Families of service members hospitalized due to service in Iraq or Afghanistan do not pay a fee.

The residences may have eight to 21

suites and can accommodate 16 to 42 family members. They feature a common kitchen, laundry facilities, dining room, living room and library, and toys for children.

The Fisher House Foundation builds the residences and then donates them to the U.S. government. The foundation continues to support existing Fisher Houses.

Since the program began in 1990, it has served more than 70,000 families, has provided 2 million days of lodging and has saved military families some \$60 million.

Fisher House also administers the Scholarships for Military Children program and sponsors the "Hero Miles" program that awards airline tickets to hospitalized service members and their families. The foundation has a four-star rating from the Charity Navigator evaluation organization.

Kenneth Fisher, chairman of the Fisher House Foundation, expressed hope that "the health-care industry will support this major effort by DMS to raise funds for Fisher House programs to bring much-needed help to even more soldiers like Major Duckworth and their families throughout the United States and abroad..."

For more information about the May 10 fund-raising dinner and other opportunities to contribute, call Betty Stamatis, benefit coordinator, at 847-518-1100, ext. 234; fax, 847-518-1105; or e-mail, benefit@dmspharma.com. 

For more information about the Fisher House Benefit, contact Betty Stamatis at 847-518-1100, ext. 234

of the May 10 fund-raising event in support of the Fisher House Foundation. The effort is being spearheaded by founding sponsor DMS Pharmaceutical Group. Maj. Duckworth will give the keynote address at the dinner, which will be held at the Park Ridge Country Club in suburban Chicago.

Capt. Bowsbey comments, "Given that the best doctors now contend that patients recover best while outside the hospital, the mission of the Fisher House

Maj. Tammy Duckworth, shown narrating at a military ceremony in photo at right, will be the keynote speaker for the Fisher House benefit. She is sure to discuss the role her "home away from home" played in her intensive, lengthy rehabilitation.

Photo courtesy of Rudi Williams/Armed Forces Information Service

Below, Bill Anderson, DMS Pharmaceutical executive vice president, tours the Fisher House at Madigan Army Medical Center in Fort Lewis, Wash.





A Major Rehab Center

This model shows the Center for the Intrepid, the largest rehabilitation center for the military, which is being built at Brooke Army Medical Center in Texas. Two 21-suite Fisher Houses, at right in this model, will be part of the complex. The Intrepid Center is needed in response to the catastrophic injuries that have been suffered by military personnel in Afghanistan and Iraq.

DMS Pharmaceutical Plans Second Location

DMS Pharmaceutical Group, founding sponsor of the May 10 Fisher House benefit, reports that it is planning a second warehouse/distribution center as part of a long-term expansion plan.

The Illinois-based pharmaceutical supplier says it is scouting locations in Ohio for its second distribution facility.

“With our client account base continuing to grow, DMS now serves customers from all corners of the U.S.,” says Sam Lazich, DMS president. “Therefore, we are constantly exploring how we can provide them with the best possible turnaround and fill rates.”

The proposed Ohio facility would facilitate inventory buildup and deliveries for major contractual accounts, including government and hospital organizations.

The expansion plans coincide with the company’s achievement of some notable milestones during 2005. Last year, DMS became a prime vendor for Department of Defense Pacific Medical Pharmacies; a secondary prime vendor to the Defense Supply Center Philadelphia for the entire U.S.; and a U.S. State Department prime vendor worldwide.

Among earlier milestones, in 2002, the company qualified as a prime vendor to the state of Illinois, and in 2003, it achieved awards to service Department of Defense military installations.

The company states that it has “forged a strong role in the wholesale suppliers market with traditional American busi-

ness values and signature dependable, personal service for all of its customers, big and small.”

DMS Pharmaceutical is a member of the Healthcare Distribution Management Association and has formed alliances with group purchasing organizations such as MedAssets, Novation, Premier, Innovatix, MHA, HPG and PHS.

The company reports that its customers have access to over 20,000 brand and generic drugs, comprising all their forms and dosages, via current DMS inventories and industry relationships with over 350 leading U.S. drugmakers.

DMS was founded in 1995, with

Angie and Sam Lazich heading a team that built the firm from the ground up. According to a company profile, the two pooled their expertise in computer programming, business operations and medications, beginning the enterprise in a two-person office with a goal and a loan from a supportive friend and mentor in the drug industry.

Today, DMS serves customers across the U.S., including medical centers, hospitals, clinics, emergency facilities, and pharmacies, plus government healthcare, defense and correctional institutions. The company is headquartered in Park Ridge, Ill., and has a staff of 32. 



Among those planning the Fisher House benefit are, from left: Bill Anderson, DMS executive vice president; Charles W. Fox Jr., M.D., retired brigadier general, U.S. Army; Sam Lazich, DMS president; and Mark Ranger Jones, Fisher House Foundation trustee.