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**More Info:
Road2Recovery.us.com**

Cloverfield and Cycling Stars to support Veterans on the Road 2 Recovery Tour de France and hip replacement cyclist Floyd Landis Joins Road 2 Recovery

Actor Mike Vogel (Cloverfield), chair of this year's VA National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans, is joining disabled veterans, cycling legends and supporters in the 2008 Road 2 Recovery on fund-raising rides for cyclists along both coasts of the United States. Held in partnership with the Fitness Challenge Foundation, the R2R rides will raise money to help injured OIF/OEF veterans as they return to their lives after military service and rehabilitation. Some of the funds raised will go to VA Voluntary Service to assist veterans healing in VA hospitals. Vogel will be joined by, among others, Tour de France and hip replacement cyclist, Floyd Landis.

The program will feature veterans, celebrities, athletes, and hundreds/thousands of participants coming together to help injured heroes return to a life free of the mental and physical toll that they have taken. Among those that are involved in the project include: Tour de France and hip replacement cyclist Floyd Landis, VA Volunteer Service Office, Afghanistan/ Iraq veterans Mike McNaughton and Major Jason Bryan (VeloNews fame), Former professional cyclist and brain injury survivor Saul Raisin, Olympic Silver Medalist and World Cycling Champion Mari Holden, and Olympic cyclist Wayne Stetina. Riders will donate a minimum amount in order to participate in a ride. Tour packages will be available to top fundraisers and special awards/prizes will also be given. The rides will be limited to 200 donating participants.

The fundraising will center on 2 rides in 2008. The first ride begins Armed Forces Weekend, May 17 in Philadelphia with the finish Memorial Weekend May 25 with a lap of Lowes Motor Speedway at the Coca Cola 600 near Charlotte, NC. The route will feature many US historical locations along the east coast. The second ride begins Sept. 28 and concludes Oct. 4 – San Francisco VA to the West Los Angeles VA along the scenic Pacific Coast Highway.

On Tuesday, May 20, the ride will leave Freedom Plaza in Washington DC with great fanfare as invited guests -VA Secretary Peake and Defense Secretary Gates will be joined by local celebrities, and others from the VA for the program sendoff. There will be an executive ride from DC to Arlington, VA home of Arlington National Cemetery and the Pentagon.

Additionally, there will be one-day events and promotional fundraisers including a Feb 14 kick off at the West LA VA Salute the Hospitalized Vets Day, Mar. 6-8 "Spin for Vets" with the San Diego VA at the Star Trac IHSA Booth, and participation in some of the Welcome Home Events for OIF/OEF veterans beginning in '08-'09.

The conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan has taken a toll on the mental and physical lives of our heroes. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as well as the physical injuries, burns and loss of limbs lead to an array of problems for the returning troops. The VA has begun to include cycling as an activity within their treatment. Cycling gives these men and women a sense of normalcy, accomplishment, pride, camaraderie, and provides relief from depression and other problems that accompany these issues. Cycling is the one activity that both patients with mental and physical disabilities can participate.

Through this partnership, the Fitness Challenge Foundation and the VA would like to expand this program to both active duty and those already discharged, and allow more vets to take advantage of this important program. This would include cycling programs of all types including Spinning. Trauma Recovery Program participants need counseling, special outings, equipment, bike skills training, and technical wear among other needs. The money raised will go to these needs.

Supporters include Star Trac, General Mills, League of American Bicyclists, Shimano, Santini Apparel, Sidi, Rudy Project, DeFeet, and Bicycling Magazine.

The Fitness Challenge Foundation is an official partner of "America Supports You", the official Department of Defense program encouraging support of US Military around the world, especially those fighting overseas and communicates that support to members of our Armed Forces at home and abroad.

VA Cycling Program Info: The Men's and Women's Trauma Recovery Programs focuses on a holistic bio-psycho-social approach to recovery from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Two years ago we started weekly bicycle rides, at first once a week, to help build more avenues to address symptoms of PTSD, such as Isolation, Depression, Avoidance, Anxiety, and Building Relationships with others, to name a few. Research suggests that physical activity and exercise can have a powerful impact on mental health problems such as Depression and PTSD as well as physical health benefits.

As a program we have noticed that patients who participate in the cycling program have decreased their symptoms of PTSD and have discovered a path to reconnect with their community when they discharge from the program.

The entire multidisciplinary staff has come to support the use of bicycling as an intervention for better psychological and physical health. Recreation Therapy, Readjustment Counseling, Social Work, Health Science, and Nursing staffs have participated as leaders of the rides. Since October 2005, over 110 patients have ridden over 8,200 miles with some individual patients completing as many as 35 rides and a total of 430 miles during their admission.

Patients with numerous physical problems, who had not been on a bicycle for over 40 years, have participated in and benefited from the program. One patient lost 25 pounds within the first month of treatment due to changes in both diet and physical activity.

**More Info and Event Sign Up:
www.Road2Recovery.us.com**

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