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## Information on our New Veteran's Writing Program Initiative

In 2019, AWA is implementing a new initiative we're very excited about. Working together with **Suzanne Rancourt** (a military veteran herself and an AWA facilitator who already leads workshops with veterans) and **Al Miller** (also an AWA facilitator and a Vietnam veteran), we are launching a three-part process to create and offer workshops for military service people and their families.

November 22–24, 2019 we will be holding a training session, led by Suzanne and Al (see more about these leaders below) for AWA facilitators who are interested in working with veterans and veterans' families (in separate workshops).

At the same time, we are developing relationships in the East, the West and middle America, as well as in Canada, with organizations who will be willing to host and sponsor AWA writing style writing workshops with these populations of military service people and their families.

In 2020 we will be rolling out the series of workshops for veterans and for veterans' families. We will be tracking the life circumstances, issues and coping skills of people entering these workshops and again when the series are finished, to determine what, if any, benefit the workshops will have been for participants.

We want to acknowledge that there are stereotypes and statistics about military personnel who have served and returned home and that we are aware that many military veterans are able to integrate back into society with relative ease. There are also some military personnel, however, who have had challenges with returning home. No matter what the issues facing workshop participants, it is almost a given that military personnel can feel isolated through their experiences when returning home. Some are afraid of upsetting others with stories of service. Sharing our stories is a powerful part of our identity and of creating community.

Here are some facts about military veterans:

