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**For Immediate Release**

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**Interview Opportunities Available**

## **New Veteran Mural Commemorates 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center**

### **Brushwood Center and Lovell Host Live-streamed Mural Ribbon Cutting**

The Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center and Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods invite patients, families, community partners and the public to a jointly hosted 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Mural Ribbon Cutting & Reception. This event will take place online on Thursday, October 29 at 1:30 p.m. The event will be livestreamed on Brushwood Center's YouTube Channel. The recording will also be available at Lovell FHCC's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/lovellfhcc/>, after the event.

"This mural symbolizes the hope and healing that Lovell has committed too since our inception, ten years ago. We celebrate the veterans and artists who made this project possible, especially Brushwood Center. This project has been a source of positivity for so many in our community," states Dr. Robert Buckley, Director of Lovell FHCC.

15 veterans worked with mural artists David Motley and Everett Reynolds and Brushwood Center to design and paint the mural over the last year. Using a combination of Zoom, social distancing measures, and creative collaboration, the group found comradery and inspiration during some of the hardest months of COVID-19. The collaboration gave participants an opportunity to express themselves and honor Lovell FHCC's service to the military and veteran community.

“Painting for me is a form of therapy that is meditative, calming and helps me focus better on a daily basis. Painting can foster healing through creative expression and allows people to communicate in their own way. It’s therapeutic, meditative, stress relieving, decompressing, and alleviates stored emotions that cannot be expressed verbally. For me it’s all of these qualities and simply just enjoying what my mind sees in a painting. No I am not perfect, but Art can also have unintended mistakes that result in beautiful masterpieces,” shared Leticia Knight, a contributing Veteran artist on the project.

The ribbon cutting program features the veterans and artists who created the mural, as well as special guests including Captain James A. Lovell, renowned astronaut of the Apollo missions and retired U.S. Navy Captain.

**WHAT:** Mural Ribbon Cutting with Lovell FHCC and Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods

**WHEN:** 1:30 p.m., Thursday, October 29

**WHERE:** Live-streamed; Visit [brushwoodcenter.org](http://brushwoodcenter.org) to register. The video will also be available at Lovell FHCC’s Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/lovellfhcc/> after the event.

**WHO:** The public is invited to attend.

The veteran mural is available for viewing at Lovell FHCC. The project was made possible thanks to partnership with Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods and funding provided by the McCormick Foundation and Illinois Department of Veteran Affairs Cash Grant. Brushwood Center provides whole health services through art and nature programs to military veterans and their families.

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***About the Partners:***

**About the Lovell FHCC:** Lovell FHCC is the nation’s only integrated medical facility between the VA and the Department of Defense. It serves active duty military personnel, their families, military retirees and other veterans. Lovell FHCC, which is located in North Chicago, operates four Great Lakes Naval Station clinics and three community-based outpatient clinics in McHenry and Evanston, Ill. and Kenosha, Wis.

**Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods**

Nestled in 565 acres of pristine woodland in the historic Ryerson home in Riverwoods, Illinois, Brushwood Center promotes the importance of nature for nurturing personal and community wellbeing, cultivating creativity, and inspiring learning. Brushwood Center offers world-class programming with nearly 200 artists each year to offer high quality nature-inspired art programs to improve the wellbeing of children, families, professionals, and veterans in our community.

***Veteran Mural Ribbon Cutting & Reception is presented in collaboration with Lovell Federal Health Care Center and Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods.***



**IMAGES: (higher resolution available upon request)**



Ribbon Cutting Preview (from right): Captain James A. Lovell, Dr. Robert Buckley, Catherine Game, Leticia Knight, Sean Gartland, Master Chief Petty Officer Nick Noviello





Ribbon Cutting Preview (from right): Captain James A. Lovell, Dr. Robert Buckley, Master Chief Petty Officer Nick Noviello, Michelle Franklin, Sean Gartland, Gail Sturm



Michelle Franklin paints the portrait of Captain James A. Lovell. Credit: Michael Kardas





Elizabeth LaCombe, Recreational Therapist at Lovell FHCC, Leticia Knight, and Lukan Ewing paint the new mural. Credit: Michael Kardas



Artist Everett Reynolds and Veteran Artist Leticia Knight paint the mural at FHCC. Credit: Michael Kardas