



**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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WaterFire Providence Announces Details of the Second Annual Salute to Veterans

Alex and Ani, The Walmart Foundation, the Rhode Island Broadcasters Association, Bank of America and many other generous sponsors help WaterFire honor Veterans across Southern New England

Providence, RI: WaterFire Providence is proud to announce the second annual WaterFire Salute to Veterans on November 8, 2014. The fires will be lit at 6 PM after opening ceremonies. This fire is made possible by Gold Star Sponsor [Alex and Ani](#), presenting Sponsor of the Veterans Resource Fair [The Walmart Foundation](#), Silver Star Sponsors [Bank of America](#) and through the support of the Textron Charitable Trust, Bronze Star Sponsors [Dominion Energy](#) and [Chase Canopy](#), Media Sponsor the [Rhode Island Broadcasters Association](#) and other supporting sponsors.

The Second Annual WaterFire Salute to Veterans is a full WaterFire lighting solely devoted to saluting and honoring our veterans, officers, currently enlisted members of the armed forces and their families in the region's largest celebration of veterans of its kind. With the full support of Senator Jack Reed, the Rhode Island Congressional Delegation, Mayor Angel Taveras, Governor Lincoln Chafee, and special key note speakers, Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Sloan D. Gibson and President of the Naval War College, Rear Admiral Gardner P. Howe III, WaterFire looks forward to celebrating and thanking the brave service men and women in our community on a grand scale.

"In my current assignment as President of the Naval War College in Newport, I lead a distinguished faculty that uses the lessons of history to prepare leaders for future challenges. The "makers" of much of this history, America's veterans, have given their best to our great country for generations, and many are now returning to civilian life after more than a dozen years of war. We have a responsibility to recognize their efforts and sacrifice, welcome them

home, provide care and assistance to those of them in need, and thank them for all that they have done. Impressive ceremonies like this one honor the millions of military veterans who have served this nation with honor, courage and commitment for more than two centuries."

- Rear Admiral Gardner P. Howe III, President, Naval War College

Gold Star Sponsor [Alex and Ani](#) brings Steeple Street to life with the Alex and Ani Live Music Pavilion. Starting at 4:00 PM, Alex and Ani will be activating Steeple Street all evening long with an interactive photo booth, a signature Alex and Ani Bangle Bar and face painting. Alex and Ani artist and American Idol finalist, [Jimmie Allen](#) and the Colour of London will be performing along with other incredible local artists:

- 4:00 – 5:15 PM: The Terri Givens Trio
- 7:00 – 8:00 PM: Jimmie Allen and the Colour of London
- 8:00 – 10:00 PM: [Nightlife Orchestra](#)

"WaterFire Providence's mission of inspiring and revitalizing the Providence experience, in addition to encouraging community involvement, aligns perfectly with our commitment to the wellbeing of local communities. We are proud to support WaterFire Salute to Veterans."

- Carolyn Rafaelian, Founder, Creative Director and CEO of Alex and Ani.

The WaterFire Providence Veterans Resource Fair on Washington Street is presented by [The Walmart Foundation](#) and supported by contributing sponsors [Chisholm Chisholm & Kilpatrick LTD](#), [TACO](#) and [The White Family Foundation](#) and [Your Local Chevy Dealers](#).

Christopher Buchanan, Director of Public Affairs & Government Relations for The Walmart Foundation was happy to share his thoughts on the importance of supporting our veterans:

"Walmart is proud to support the veterans of Rhode Island and WaterFire for their contributions to the community. Our commitment to hiring 100,000 veterans nationwide and investing \$20 million in transition and employment programs has already resulted in many new job opportunities, management positions, and a better quality of life for Rhode Island veterans. Walmart's goal is to have a multiplying effect on the programs and services available to veterans and their families."

Opening at 4:00 PM, the Veterans Resource Fair will feature organizations from across Rhode Island dedicated to providing services to veterans and their families. WaterFire invites veterans, their families and the public to come and learn about all of the amazing resources available to them—from medical help and job transition services to educational programs and veteran's family services. Organizations include:

- Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) will be on site with their fully operational and connected job search assistance vehicle to allow veterans to search for jobs and to find employers that are advocates for veterans in the workforce.

- The Providence VA will have an entire tent dedicated to enrolling veterans in the VA healthcare system to address their health issues and ensure they are provided with the care and coverage they deserve.
- United Way 2-1-1 will also be on site with a fully functional RV to connect veterans with many resources available in RI including assistance in the areas of utility assistance, substance abuse and addiction, disability, housing needs, food assistance, child care, legal assistance and health issues.
- Stacy L. Pearsall, two-time winner of the NPPA Military Photographer of the Year Competition, and creator of the [Veteran Portrait Project](#) will be on the Washington Street Bridge taking photographic portraits of veterans and their families free of charge.
- Wounded Warrior will be on site to share their mission to provide programs and services to severely injured service members in active duty after September 11, 2002

As always, this event is free and WaterFire hopes to help ensure that our vets have the services and support they need to connect them with the resources available to them and to their families.

[Banneker Industries](#) helps to kick off the WaterFire lighting with a 150 Veteran Torch Procession and 300 Veteran Ring of Fire in Waterplace Basin. Starting at 6:00 PM, 150 veterans from our community will process into Waterplace Basin led by the RI Professional Firefighters Pipes and Drums. Here they will join their brothers and sisters in arms to surround the basin in a ring of fire ceremony with a presentation of the colors as the National Anthem is played by the Army 88th Band on the basin stage.

WaterFire lights and activates Providence war memorials and Memorial Park in honor of our veterans. Memorial Park will be alight with blue stars to honor the Blue Star Families of Rhode Island and families that have a loved one serving in the military. Visitors are invited to share their hopes, dedications and thanks for our veterans. Other special events in this area include:

- Starting at 7:00 PM WaterFire will highlight the WWI, WWII and Korean War memorials in downtown Providence with the playing of Echo Taps, recognizing the service and sacrifice of all generations of veterans.
- A “Welcome Home” tent to honor our Vietnam Veterans will serve as a place for Vietnam veterans to gather and enjoy one another’s company.
- A special Soldiers’ Cross ceremony for our Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom Veterans will be performed every half hour after lighting.
- A Missing Man Table will also be set up in Memorial Park to honor and recognize all those soldiers who have gone into battle and have not returned. Full of symbolism, this table contains many items that remind us of the sacrifices of both military and civilian lives lost and affected through combat and military service.

A special memorial ceremony will also take place on the rivers among the fires. Up to five memorial vessels will pass through the bonfires along the length of the river to honor and remember the service men and women that are no longer with us. Guests are invited to toss white carnations on

the water during this passage. The flowers are sponsored by [Deep Water Wind](#) in honor of those that have made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms.

RIPTA will be providing free rides to veterans to the WaterFire Salute to Veterans. Please have proof of service (military ID card or otherwise) and join us!

It is incredibly important that we, as a community, recognize the service and sacrifice of the men and women that have served in America's military. We look forward to celebrating through WaterFire all that they have done. Please join us to thank our veterans face to face as a community.

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WaterFire Providence is an independent, non-profit arts organization whose mission is to inspire Providence and its visitors by revitalizing the urban experience, fostering community engagement and creatively transforming the city by presenting WaterFire for all to enjoy. For more information or to donate, visit: www.waterfire.org