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**Two National Veterans Service Nonprofits Enter Partnership**

*Wreaths Across America and American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. build patriotic awareness*

**COLUMBIA FALLS, Maine and WASHINGTON, D.C. — Oct. 20, 2016 —** As of 2 p.m. today, two leading national veterans service nonprofits, Wreaths Across America (WAA) and American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. (AGSM), have entered into a formal partnership in an effort to build a stronger awareness for each group’s common missions, while supporting educational events throughout the nation that teach lessons of patriotism.

Founded in 2007 and headquartered in Columbia Falls, Maine, WAA is best known for its annual wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery and yearlong efforts to support its mission: “Remember the fallen, Honor those who serve and Teach the next generation about the true cost of freedom.” AGSM was established in 1928 and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1984 with the core purpose of supporting families of fallen and wounded soldiers, teaching lessons of patriotism and inspiring respect for the country.

The signed memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the two groups outlines nine key agreements, such as establishment of a steering committee with a representative from each organization, collaborative volunteer efforts and development of a partnership page on WAA’s website.

“For years, American Gold Star Mothers has played a crucial support role for thousands of families across this country,” said Karen Worcester, executive director of WAA. “This official partnership is truly an honor for me, and I’m eager to start our work together. Our combined efforts will no doubt help to shape and inform the next generation of patriots.”

Current AGSM president and retired U.S. military servicewoman, Candy Martin, has devoted her entire life to the service of others, whether through her active time in the Army or as a volunteer in her community. As a mother of a fallen soldier, she thinks of her role as more of a calling than a job. AGSM strives to keep the memory of their sons and daughters alive by working to help veterans and members of the armed forces, as well as their families and communities. Martin believes that WAA is a fundamental partner in AGSM’s broader community of service and remembrance.

“This is a perfect marriage to me because both organizations come from the same ideals as far as ‘Remember, Honor, Teach,’” Martin said. “The mission of American Gold Star Mothers is service to veterans, service to their families and patriotism. We want to teach the world – teach the general public – that freedom isn’t free and that there’s always a name, always a person, always someone that is the reason for the freedoms that each one of us enjoy every day. And to me, that mission goes hand in hand with Wreaths Across America.”

**About Wreaths Across America**

Wreaths Across America is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded to continue and expand the annual wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery begun by Maine businessman Morrill Worcester in 1992. The organization’s mission – Remember, Honor, Teach – is carried out in part each year by coordinating wreath-laying ceremonies in December at Arlington, as well as at more than 1,100 veterans’ cemeteries and other locations in all 50 states and beyond.

For more information, to donate or sign up to volunteer, please visit [www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org](http://www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org).

Follow Wreaths Across America on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/WAAHQ) and on [Twitter](http://twitter.com/WreathsAcross).

**About American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.**

American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. (AGSM) is an organization of mothers who lost a son or daughter in service to the country. AGSM is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, established in 1928 and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1984. As a Veterans Service Organization, AGSM supports veterans and their families through a broad range of activities and programs. Members also participate in patriotic events. To accomplish its widespread mission, members are active in chapters across the United States.

For more information, please go to [www.goldstarmoms.com](http://www.goldstarmoms.com). Follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/American-Gold-Star-Mothers-National-Official-108308072594520/?fref=ts) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/agsm_national).

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