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DESSERT WILLOW HOSTS - BEYOND THE YELLOW RIBBON

Dessert Willow Conference Center located in Phoenix, AZ was selected by the Arizona National Guard to serve as host site for its, *Beyond the Yellow Ribbon* efforts for 2009.

Originating in Minnesota, and growing in popularity with National Guard units across America, the mission of the program is to assist returning National Guard members in their efforts to reintegrate back into their respective communities upon return home from service in Iraq and Afghanistan. The program is called Beyond the Yellow Ribbon as a reminder that the support of returning soldiers cannot end when they are redeployed, and the proverbial yellow ribbons are untied.

The Guard is particularly focused in this area as they do not conduct combat deployments as frequently as other branches of the military. Therefore, Nation Guard soldiers are customarily provided with "intense briefings" about assistance that is available through government programs, such as the Arizona Department of Veterans Services and a plethora of non-profits. The Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program is focused on providing more specific information and detailed training to both returning soldiers and their families.

Dessert Willow has already hosted two specific Beyond the Yellow Ribbon events and expects to continue to serve as home base for the programs as future soldiers return home. Congratulations to the entire team at Dessert Willow for assisting the leaders of the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program in their important mission.

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