

## Emmy Winner Helps Wounded Warriors

December 10, 2007

Members of the **Wounded Warriors Battalion-West** reel in new career training skills and job placement in media through the new **Wounded Marine Training Center for Careers in Media** in San Diego. Instead of being assigned work at **Camp Pendleton** or the **Naval Medical Center**, the wounded warriors will be assigned permissive temporary active duty to attend the career center, preparing them for transition out of the military.



The [Wounded Marine Careers Foundation](#), founded by husband and wife team, **Key Lombard** and **Judith Paixao**, developed the center's three-year pilot program to instruct wounded Marines and Navy Corpsman in the art of working in media. The inaugural class of 25 students are set to hit the books on Jan. 10, but financial support is still needed to fund the program for the continuing three-year operation, which is at no cost to students.

Top award-winning professionals in the industry, including **USC Film Studies** Department Head **Mark Harris**, will school students in the art of media, film making, sound design, editing, graphics and photojournalism. Halfway through the program students will be encouraged to pick and focus on a specialty, meanwhile developing their resumés. The students also will receive complete training and certification in Apple, Panasonic, Adobe and Cannon. Students will attend six-hour classes, five days a week, for 10 weeks at the renovated 5,000 square-foot facility located on the **Stu Segal Productions Studio** lot. After students are transported to and from medical and physical therapy appointments in the morning, they will enjoy a catered lunch with faculty before receiving three 90-minute classes followed by a catered dinner and another 90-minute course.

Thanks to the generous support of the **Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund** who committed to giving the foundation 150 computers over the next three years, each student will receive and keep an Apple MacBook Pro and all of the editing software. If the foundation is completely funded for the next class, each student will also be able to keep a high-definition single-lens reflex camera, equipping them with the professional tools necessary for their new career. Upon graduation, each student will receive union membership to the [International Alliance of Theatre Stage Employees](#) (IATSE). Not only will they have their membership dues waived, which range anywhere from \$3,000 to \$10,000, but there is no film school in the nation where students are automatically accepted into this major labor union which represents motion picture technicians, artists and allied crafts.

Those who desire to attend the center need only apply for the program and show in essay form their passion to learn the craft. No matter the disabilities warriors have, Lombard is adamant that work is available for them. Currently, there are amputees, paraplegic and legally blind students signed up for the program. If students are willing to make the commitment, the foundation is 100 percent committed to finding and placing them in jobs. Some students will be hired to work at the center and Stu Segal has offered jobs to graduates of the program.

The idea of the program came to Lombard and his wife when they were asked by Vice Adm. **Barry Costello** in September 2006 to film a documentary on wounded Marines. Lombard countered Costello's proposal with his own—he would teach the Marines to film the documentary themselves. After receiving permission from the 1 Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Pendleton, Lombard and Paixao went to Washington, D.C., to plead their case at the Pentagon. With Marine Corps Commandant Gen. **James Conway** and Col. **Gregory Boyle**, commander of the Wounded Warrior Regiment on board, Secretary of the Navy **Donald Winter** acknowledged and accepted the gift from the foundation on Sept. 18, 2007. The students will be filming a documentary of themselves and their training at the school.

Paixao, experienced in real estate development, will be in charge of marketing, development and fundraising for the foundation. The foundation, which is privately funded, is looking to find more donors to financially back the project. Although they have applied for certification from the **VA** for sponsorship as a vocational rehabilitation facility, they have not received official word on funding. Both Paixao and Lombard hope to push the San Diego community to get on board with the training center.

Lombard, a three-time Emmy award winner, has 36 years of experience in the industry as a cameraman, cinematographer, director and producer. He will supervise the curriculum and faculty of the center as well as get his hands dirty teaching a four-hour filmmaking lab for students on Saturdays. A veteran himself of the Vietnam era, Lombard remembers loading the film of his father's motion picture camera when he was 10 years old. His father, a former Marine Corporal, was a self-taught still photographer who went on to win four Emmys himself. Taking the skills he learned from his father, Lombard paved his way in the industry and joined the IATSE at age 20. He feels inclined to give back and pass on his knowledge by mentoring other filmmakers. Lombard believes there wouldn't be an entertainment industry without a free country and no one should forget those who make the sacrifices to bring that freedom. – *Erin Murphy*