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Press Release

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WWII Veteran Celebrates 104 Years, February 17

WASHINGTON, DC— The Washington DC Veterans Affairs Medical Center will celebrate the 104th birthday of its oldest living Veteran, George Boggess, on Wednesday, February 17, 2016. The festivities will be held in the medical center's Community Living Center.

Originally from Waco, Texas, the WWII Veteran moved to Washington D.C. in the fall of 1936, and hasn't looked back since. He was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1942. That same year, he married Dorothy Marks, who is still by his side over seven decades later.

Boggess was promoted to the rank of warrant officer in 1944. He served at Fort Myer, Fort Meade and Camps Kilmer and Fort Dix both in New Jersey, before being deployed to help fight the war in Europe. Serving in England, France, Luxembourg and Germany, he was eventually stationed in the Belgium Forest during the German's final assault at the "Battle of the Bulge."

During this conflict, Boggess was hit by enemy fire and wounded in his right knee, yet was right back on the battle field only a couple of weeks later. Nonetheless, his resilience did not go unnoticed – Boggess received the Purple Heart for being injured in the line of duty, as well as the Silver Star for gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States.

Growing up in Texas, Boggess was no stranger to discrimination. For him, segregation was a way of life. "I had no choice but to go to a black school...it was all I knew", he remembers. Even in the face of adversity, Boggess continued to progress, earning his Masters in Social Work from Howard University and working for the government until retirement.

An avid supporter of civil rights, Boggess participated in several marches and was present for Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream" speech. When asked about the current state of African Americans in today's society, he admits: "Generally speaking, it's better. In *theory*, we can live where we want. In *theory*, we can work where we want. In *theory*, we can go where we want. But there's still so much to be done, especially for our young people."

Boggess credits his long life to walking. "Walking is man's best medicine," he said.

Members of the media wishing to interview Mr. Boggess during the birthday festivities, please contact the Office of Public Affairs, 202-745-4037, prior to the event date.