

# News and stories

## **Governor to be keynote speaker at C of O dedication ceremony**

April 13, 2017

[Branson Tri-Lakes News](#)

Missouri Governor Eric Greitens will serve as the keynote speaker at College of the Ozarks during the dedication of The Missouri Gold Star Families Memorial.

The ceremony will be at the entrance to the campus at 2:30 p.m. April 19. This is the first memorial of its kind in the state of Missouri. The public is welcome to attend.

Before being elected the 56th governor of Missouri last fall, Greitens was a combat veteran and Navy SEAL, having served four tours of duty overseas, including tours in Afghanistan and Iraq. After coming home, he founded The Mission Continues, a Missouri-based non-profit that helps returning veterans get back on their feet and give back to their communities.

“We are honored to have Governor Greitens join us for this somber occasion,” said Jerry Davis, president of C of O. “We view this as our duty to honor all those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. Building this memorial is the College’s way of honoring families who sacrificed everything in the name of freedom.”

The ceremony also will involve participation by Missouri Gold Star

Families (those who lost loved ones in service to their country), comments by Davis, and performances by the college's music department.

Additional speakers will include Hershel Woody Williams, WWII Veteran and Medal of Honor recipient; Missouri Lieutenant Governor Michael Parson, U.S. army veteran; ret. Gen. Terrence R. Dake, USMC, former Assistant Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, Vietnam Veteran, and chairman of the College of the Ozarks Board of Trustees; Ryan Manion, president of the Travis Manion Foundation; and Dr. E. Bruce Heilman, WWII veteran and chancellor of the University of Richmond.

The memorial on the campus is presented in cooperation with The Hershel "Woody" Williams Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation. The foundation was established in 2010 and is a charitable 501(c)(3), not-for-profit organization that pursues specific endeavors and goals through the vision of Williams.

The purpose of The Missouri Gold Star Families Memorial is to honor Gold Star Families, to preserve the memory of the fallen, and stand as a stark reminder that freedom is not free.

For additional information, contact Public Relations Director Valorie Coleman at 417-690-2212.