

VETERANS NEWS & NOTES

DAV Provides a Century of Care for Disabled Veterans

(NAPS)—From a World War I veteran who lost both legs to a Vietnam vet suffering the effects of Agent Orange to a young Marine with post-traumatic stress disorder finding her way after returning home from Afghanistan—many of America's veterans live with physical, mental and emotional injuries that impact their lives as a result of military service. They often need support with things such as navigating the complex Department of Veterans Affairs system to access veterans benefits, including health care and education benefits or identifying employment opportunities after military service. And because of their service-connected health conditions, they can be particularly vulnerable during health epidemics and economic downturns.

Fortunately, DAV (Disabled American Veterans) has been providing a century of care to help disabled veterans of all generations adjust to life back home. For the last 100 years, this nonprofit organization has offered a range of services from assisting veterans in accessing the benefits earned through their service to finding meaningful employment and supporting their families. DAV has continued to evolve and provide new care as veterans' needs have changed. However, one tradition remains a constant: DAV's services are provided to veterans and their families at no cost or obligation to them.

DAV's benefits advocates are located nationwide to assist veterans with accessing the health care, financial, disability and educational benefits they've earned. For those needing guidance on the transition to civilian life, DAV advocates provide benefits counseling at nearly 100 military installations throughout the country. They also assist veterans with filing initial claims for their VA benefits, as well as providing everyday support.

DAV is also committed to ensuring our nation's warriors have the tools, resources and opportunities they need to competitively enter the job market and secure meaningful employment. DAV helps facilitate more than 144 career fairs annually, including virtual and live events to connect veterans with employers who are committed to hiring them. DAV offers advice to job seekers on how to succeed in their careers while educating companies on the value they bring to the workforce. To find a schedule of DAV's career fairs, go to jobs.dav.org.

DAV also helps address the underlying issues of homelessness. Studies show that PTSD is a leading contributor to the homelessness of nearly 40,000 American veterans, with another 1.4 million at risk. DAV's Homeless Veterans Initiative promotes partnership between the orga-



From WWI through today, America's veterans get help, advice and support from DAV and you can be part of the solution.

nization and federal, state, county and local governments to develop programs to assist homeless veterans in becoming self-sufficient.

When natural disasters strike, from hurricanes to wildfires, the DAV team is on the ground to help our heroes. DAV provides financial assistance to help eligible veterans and their families secure food, warm clothes and shelter and distributes supply kits with basic comfort items. In the past five years alone, the program has provided more than \$3.6 million to assist nearly 10,000 victims.

Another growing need, particularly for the aging veteran population, is transportation to medical appointments. Since 1987, DAV has organized no-cost rides with volunteer drivers to get veterans to their scheduled care at VA medical facilities. During this time, DAV has donated 3,678 vehicles at a cost of nearly \$85 million to the program and has provided more than 615,000 rides annually.

For those needing a little household assistance or other services, DAV also offers a searchable online database, VolunteerforVeterans.org, where veterans and their caregivers can find the help they need, from local volunteers for basic tasks like doing yardwork or running errands.

Since 1920, DAV has been a leader in strengthening federal programs, benefits, health care and transition services for the men and women who served, their families and survivors. Its advocacy efforts on Capitol Hill are guided by DAV members through the adoption of resolutions at its national convention, and last year, with the strength of more than 1 million members, nearly 40 of these critical priorities were included in legislation or other means, with five becoming law.

We salute DAV for 100 years of tireless service and thank them for the work still to come in caring for America's veterans. To learn more and get the help you need, visit DAV.org.