



DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

P.O. Box 14301 • Cincinnati, Ohio 45250-0301 • Phone (859) 441-7300 • Fax (859) 442-2090

FACT SHEET

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

Treaties are signed and the battles of nations end, but the personal battles of those disabled in war only begin when the guns fall silent. These men and women must struggle to regain health, reshape lives shattered by disability, learn new trades or professions, and rejoin the civilian world. At each step, they need help to help themselves. For three quarters of a century now, that aid has come from the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), a nonprofit organization of more than one million veterans disabled during time of war or armed conflict.

Formed in 1920 and chartered by Congress in 1932, the million-member DAV is the official voice of America's service-connected disabled veterans -- a strong, insistent voice that represents all of America's 3 million disabled veterans, their families and survivors. Its nationwide network of services -- free of charge to all veterans and members of their families -- is totally supported by membership dues and charitable contributions from the American public.

THE DAV'S MEMBERSHIP

Some people simply assume that any veterans' organization with a little history behind it is a politically conservative group made up of older, male veterans. Emphatically, the DAV doesn't fit that stereotype. Membership is open to any honorably discharged veteran with a disability incurred in wartime military service or under conditions similar to war.

Veterans disabled during the Vietnam War make up a third of the DAV's membership, and 24 Vietnam veterans have served one-year terms as national commander, the DAV's highest office. Veterans who served during Vietnam or later make up all of the DAV's management and professional staff at its headquarters in Washington, D.C., and Cincinnati, Ohio, as well as its offices nationwide.

The DAV is not a political association. Its members reflect all shades of American political opinion. They count on the DAV to advocate their needs as disabled veterans, and the DAV concentrates its attention and resources on this single, nonpartisan concern. Unlike some other veterans' groups, the DAV has no political action committee and does not endorse candidates for political office.

DAV programs and activities also enjoy the support of an Auxiliary that focuses its attention on disabled veterans' families. Women in the Auxiliary are all relatives of DAV members, Gold Star mothers or wives, or women who are also members of the DAV. For more information on the Auxiliary, write to: DAV Auxiliary National Headquarters, 3725 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, Ky. 41076.

THE DAV'S HISTORY

When the troops came home from World War I, 300,000 carried grim reminders of war: disabling injuries, battle scars, gas-seared lungs, and prolonged illnesses. Following a tumultuous hero's welcome, America wiped the horror of war from its mind almost as quickly as the ticker tape was swept from the streets of New York City. The nation's makeshift response to the needs of its disabled heroes soon broke down. These angry young veterans took matters into their own hands, starting local self-help groups that soon merged to become the DAV.

After forming a national organization headquartered in Cincinnati in 1920, the DAV began planning a Washington, D.C., office to work toward needed legislation and expedite veterans' claims. During its first six months of operation in 1922, this office handled 7,000 claims for veterans across America. These young disabled vets also worked with other organizations, initiating legislation that led to a centralized government agency to handle all veterans' affairs: the Veterans' Bureau, forerunner of today's Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

In 1935, the DAV began stationing veterans' benefits experts in Veterans' Bureau claims offices and hospitals across the country. When the specter of World War II raised its head, the DAV upgraded its facilities and training programs to meet the new demands about to be placed on its service programs. As the first disabled vets returned from World War II, a formal program to train DAV National Service Officers (NSOs) was started at American University. There, disabled vets studied the disciplines they'd need to help other returning veterans.

PARTNERSHIPS

HARLEY-DAVIDSON

The Harley-Davidson Foundation renewed a four year grant of \$1 million to support the Disabled American Veterans Mobile Service Office program, investing a total of \$2 million to support veterans since 2007. The special program dubbed Harley's Heroes® brings DAV's free professional assistance to veterans at Harley-Davidson dealerships. Since its inception, the program has visited over 300 dealerships and has provided free benefits counseling to 23,000 veterans.

HEWLITT PACKARD

In 2010, HP provided funds and equipped DAV Mobile Service Offices with HP notebooks and printers to allow DAV National Service Officers the ability to remotely process claims for veterans instead of using paper forms.

GENERAL ELECTRIC

The GE Foundation furthers its belief in the DAV mission by showing support for veterans through various corporate events and outreach, including providing funding to support recent wounded soldiers with items geared to help with their rehabilitation at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

FORD MOTOR COMPANY

The DAV's relationship with Ford can be traced back to 1922 when Henry Ford supported a caravan of 50 Model "T" Fords to help disabled World War I veterans attend the organization's second national convention.

The Ford Motor Company Fund has donated 148 vans for use in the DAV's nationwide Transportation Network since 1996. Those vans, along with others purchased by DAV, are on the road daily taking sick and disabled veterans to their Department of Veterans Affairs medical center appointments.

The Fund also supports the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program that recognizes students who generously volunteer their time in service to veterans through our Voluntary Service Program. Since its inception in 2000, this program has provided more than 131 scholarships for patriotic young men and women.

Ford Motor Company is also a Host Sponsor of the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic.

GOLDEN CORRAL

This year marked a decade of support by Golden Corral. Through its Military Appreciation Monday event where more than 374,000 veterans were served free meals, DAV Chapters and Departments raised more than \$1 million. In ten years, the event has served over 2.87 million free thank-you meals to veterans while generating more than \$5 million to support grassroots advocacy and services for disabled veterans and their families. Golden Corral also offers outreach and support to the national organization through co-sponsorship of the National Memorial Day Concert and other events.

THE DAV'S NATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAM

Since its beginnings in 1920, the DAV has never wavered in our commitment to serve our nation's service-connected disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors.

Our largest endeavor in fulfilling that mission is our National Service Program. In 100 offices throughout the United States and in Puerto Rico, the DAV employs a corps of approximately 240 National Service Officers (NSOs) and 30 Transition Service Officers (TSOs) who directly and tirelessly represent veterans and their families with claims for benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense and other government agencies. Veterans need not be DAV members to take advantage of this outstanding assistance, which is provided free of charge. With outlays of over \$38 million in 2010, these direct hands-on services make up the largest item in the DAV's budget for program services. Between January 1, 2010 and December 31, 2010, our NSOs and TSOs, all wartime service-connected disabled veterans, represented nearly a quarter of a million veterans and their families in their claims for VA benefits, obtaining more than \$4.5 billion for them in new and retroactive benefits

NSOs function as attorneys-in-fact, assisting veterans and their families in filing claims for VA disability compensation, rehabilitation and education programs, pensions, death benefits, employment and training programs. They provide free services, such as information seminars, counseling, and community outreach. NSOs also represent veterans and active duty military personnel before Discharge Review Boards, Boards for Correction of Military Records, Physical Evaluation Boards, the Disability Transition Assistance Program (DTAP), the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), and many other official panels.

DAV National Service Officers continually train throughout their careers so that they are cognizant of the changes in all laws and regulations affecting veterans benefits. This constant training assures that all DAV NSOs are at the forefront of veterans advocacy. Our NSOs are highly trained professionals and skilled experts

in developing and prosecuting veterans' claims through in-depth reviews of medical histories, in conjunction with application of current law and regulations. They also review rating board decisions, informing veterans and their families of the appeals process and of their appellate rights.

The extensive preparation for these essential services provided by NSOs begins with a 16-month on-the-job training program, which provides the foundation for new trainees. Trainees are instructed by tenured supervisory NSOs. The National Service staff at National Service and Legislative Headquarters administers and monitors the program and the instructors.

An NSO's training does not stop after completing 16 months of initial training. In fact, training never stops because the laws, regulations, and policies, which govern veterans' benefits, continue to change and grow in complexity. That's why equipping our NSOs with state-of-the-art computers and keeping their cutting-edge advocacy skills up to date is of paramount importance. The DAV is the only veterans service organization to have a training program certified for college credit by the American Council on Education.

In addition to these training programs, supervisory staff and selected NSOs from field offices across the country receive specialized instruction in management and leadership development. The goal of the DAV's National Service Program is to produce the most highly trained NSOs possible for veterans and their families.

NATIONAL APPEALS OFFICE

The Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) is the highest appellate level of the VA responsible for the final decision concerning entitlement to veteran's benefits. About 96 percent of the claims before the board involve disability compensation issues. DAV's highly skilled National Appeals Officers (NAOs) serve appellants in the preparation of written briefs for BVA review and conduct formal hearings before Veterans Law Judges. DAV maintains the largest staff of any advocacy group, representing 29 percent of all cases decided by the BVA in 2010.

JUDICIAL APPEALS OFFICE

DAV continues its pro bono representation program for veterans seeking review in the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. In fiscal year 2009-10, the BVA took action on more than 14,000 cases involving DAV clients. Each and every one of those cases was reviewed to identify those in which a veteran's claim was improperly denied. Thanks to DAV, more than five hundred of these cases were appealed to the court. While we are still working toward our goal of appealing each and every significant case, it is hard to believe that just a few years ago, we had yet to crack the two hundred case per year mark.

The substantial growth of this program would not have been possible without the coordinated efforts of two top-notch law firms — Finnegan Henderson of Washington, D.C., and Chisholm Chisholm & Kilpatrick of Providence, Rhode Island and Washington, D.C. Robert Chisholm (of the Chisholm firm) and Ron Smith (of Finnegan) are two of the nation's most accomplished members of the veterans bar, and DAV is proud and pleased to have them in prominent roles in our enlarged program at the court. By this time next year, we hope to be able to report still another substantial jump in the number of appealed cases.

TRANSITION SERVICE PROGRAM

For those servicemembers making the all-important transition back into civilian life, DAV participates in Transition Assistance and Disabled Transition Assistance programs. Due to a generous grant provided by the GE Foundation, we have been able to increase our staff of Transition Service Officers.

Our TSOs provide benefits counseling and assistance to servicemembers filing initial claims for VA benefits at military installations throughout the country. By filing compensation claims at separation centers where service medical records and examination facilities are readily available, we are able to provide prompt service to these future veterans. Over the last year, our TSOs conducted 3,000 formal presentations to 82,155 transitioning servicemembers. During that same time they filed 26,598 claims for VA benefits. Counsel and representation for active duty servicemembers during their transition was provided through the military's Disability Evaluation System. We devoted approximately \$1.8 million to this program in 2010.

MOBILE SERVICE OFFICE PROGRAM

The Mobile Service Office (MSO) Program continues to reach out to veterans in their own communities. Not all veterans are willing or able to visit a DAV office due to distance, transportation, health or other reasons. By literally putting our service offices on the road, assisting veterans where they live, DAV is increasing their accessibility to benefits. With 10 specially equipped Mobile Service Offices visiting communities across the country, this outreach effort generates a considerable amount of claims work from those veterans who may not otherwise have the opportunity to seek assistance at our National Service Offices. During 2010, our MSOs traveled more than 114,248 miles, visiting 815 cities and towns. Our NSOs interviewed 20,190 veterans and other potential claimants. The Harley-Davidson Foundation in August 2010 pledged a second \$1 million over four years to partner with the DAV to maintain the Harley's Heroes® program. During 2010, the MSOs visited 183 Harley-Davidson dealerships as part of this program. Nearly \$870,000 was expended for the Mobile Service Office program in 2010, which included 10 new MSOs replacing the aged fleet.

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

The National Service Department has the cooperation, support and assistance of Department and Chapter Service Officers across the country. Each receives the training and information necessary to assist those we serve. Our Department and Chapter Service Officer Certification Training Program guarantee's the vitality and growth of our local service programs. This provides an environment where our Hospital Service Coordinators, Department and Chapter Service Officers and volunteers work together for the common goal of service to disabled veterans. In 2010, DAV trained and certified 1,409 Department and Chapter Service Officers in 33 states.

During 2010, we conducted 42 Information Seminars at various Chapters across the country, with 6,603 individuals in attendance. These Information Seminars provide the opportunity for veterans to discuss VA benefits with our NSOs in their own community, giving Chapters an opportunity to recruit new members and encourage their involvement.

Since 2006, DAV NSOs have offered services at other community-based events, including participation with state and county fairs, air shows, Major League Baseball, the National Football League and NASCAR.

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Our National Service Program is responsible for the organization's employment-related program and works alongside the Department of Labor, the VA, the Office of Personnel Management, Congress and other government agencies to ensure that disabled veterans are treated fairly and equitably in the work force.

Historically, disabled veterans have not fared as well as non-disabled veterans and other workers in the job market. Our primary goal is to seek legislation and policies to enhance programs and services provided by the Departments of Labor and Veterans Affairs, the Small Business Administration, the Office of Personnel

Management and other government agencies. Our active involvement and oversight ensure disabled veterans get fair consideration in the job market.

WOMEN VETERANS

In historic numbers, women are serving our country with pride, patriotism and honor equal to their male counterparts. But women veterans use VA health care facilities and other earned benefits in lower numbers than their male counterparts. As a result, we advocate for women veterans on a variety of fronts. We have organized top-level forums designed to bring women veterans and government policymakers together to openly address topics of concern.

We are involved in the congressionally chartered VA Advisory Committee on Women Veterans. In addition, our own Women's Advisory Committee, primarily made up of women veterans from across the country, meets annually at our National Convention. We actively seek out and recruit women veterans for our National Service Officer corps.

HOMELESS VETERANS

Homelessness has been a constant presence in America's cities, towns, and rural areas for many years. Since the early 1980s, homelessness has been a regular focus of media interest and a topic of policy debate and remains one of America's most complicated and important social issues.

The DAV's Homeless Veterans Initiative is to seek legislation and policies to enhance programs and services to help homeless veterans break the cycle of poverty and isolation and move from the streets to self-sufficiency. Many of our Departments and Chapters are actively involved in the homeless initiatives in their respective communities as well, by participating in Stand Downs for homeless veterans.

THE DAV'S NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

It is the DAV's policy to seek only reasonable, responsible legislation to assist disabled veterans and their families. Our National Legislative Department advocates in support of federal legislation that creates, improves and protects programs for disabled veterans, their families and survivors.

This legislative activity requires an intensive effort throughout the year, advocating directly with congressional members and their staffs, providing testimony to congressional committees and using other means of communication as Congress debates the President's budget and various appropriations bills that incorporate funding levels into laws that support veterans programs.

The guiding principles of the Legislative Department are borne from our legislative agenda as set forth by the resolutions adopted by delegates to our annual National Convention and set forth in DAV's Constitution and Bylaws. Additionally, we must effectively articulate our position on other pertinent legislation presented during the congressional session. Through our focused advocacy, DAV, as the primary voice to Congress of America's wartime disabled veterans, advances their interests and works for their betterment.

Our advocacy progressed on multiple fronts during 2010, including a grassroots initiative aimed at assisting our newest generation of veterans and the challenges specific to their needs. Further, with grassroots support, we continued to face down proposals that posed real threats to service-connected disability benefits.

Simultaneously, we pressed Congress to move forward on other initiatives, which may enhance VA benefits to a level equal to the sacrifices disabled veterans made to earn those benefits.

DAV's Stand Up for Veterans initiative, begun in 2007, continues as a special advocacy campaign to generate broad public awareness and focus on areas that demand further action by our government to meet the needs of severely disabled veterans, especially those injured during wartime service. These concerns include sufficient, timely and predictable funding for veterans health care; improved diagnosis and treatment of traumatic brain injuries; screening and treatment for mental health problems; support for caregivers of disabled veterans; additional focus on the unique needs of women veterans; and reform of the claims processing system.

Veterans health care funding reform has been a top legislative priority for DAV for more than a decade and as part of our Stand Up for Veterans initiative, DAV placed added focus on solving this chronic problem and led the way in drafting, introducing and building support for funding reform legislation. In response to this intense pressure, Congress passed the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act and on October 22, 2009, the president signed it into law. Due to the commitment and dedication of DAV members, Congress is now required to approve funding one year in advance for VA medical services, medical support and medical facilities.

Subsequently, both the House and Senate approved the VA appropriations legislation for fiscal year (FY) 2010, which included advance appropriations for VA's three medical care accounts for FY 2011. Because of a government wide continuing resolution for FY 2011, the vast majority of federal programs have been operating at FY 2010 funding levels. VA however received a \$4 billion increase for FY 2010 through advanced appropriations. The Department has therefore been able to meet increasing demand for health care and continue to provide high quality, cost-effective health care to over 6 million enrolled veterans without having to worry about the interruptions or disruptions caused by budget breakdowns and short-term continuing resolutions.

DAV's success in its Stand Up for Veterans campaign resulted in a finalized agreement between the House and the Senate, which had separately approved a comprehensive health care package. Signed into law on May 5, 2010, the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 includes provisions that work toward our goals of proper diagnosis and treatment of traumatic brain injury, improved services for women veterans, support services for caregivers of disabled veterans and improved mental health services for post-deployment readjustment.

This new law is a step in the right direction, but we recognize more needs to be done. DAV must now ensure VA works with deliberate speed for proper and timely implementation of this comprehensive health care bill. Additionally, DAV is working to increase access to high quality VA care for women veterans, establish a comprehensive program for veterans suffering from traumatic brain injury and expand the eligibility for caregiver benefits.

Just as our efforts will also be spent on making sure that funding is spent wisely by enhancing programs and services to meet the needs of sick and disabled veterans today and far into the future, we will continue to work to ensure that the Administration and Congress fully meet our nation's obligations to the men and women who bear the physical and mental scars of their wartime service defending our freedoms.

No funds from charitable contributions are used to cover the expenses of the DAV's Legislative Program, with the exception of contributions donated explicitly to fund legislative efforts. All other legislative operations are funded from membership dues. During 2010, \$1.7 million was spent on legislative activities. While costs of the Legislative Program were only about one percent of total expenditures, it is an essential and part of our mission. The successes and ongoing efforts of this program demonstrate our dedication, strength and leadership in advocacy for the protection of veterans' rights and the benefits they have earned.

THE DAV'S NATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE PROGRAM

The DAV operates an extensive network of programs through which volunteers provide a variety of services to disabled veterans. During 2010, the organization devoted \$40,797,407 to these Voluntary Service initiatives.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

One of the largest of these programs is the DAV's nationwide Transportation Network, through which DAV volunteers drive sick and disabled veterans to and from VA medical facilities for treatment. This program fills a substantial community need, since the federal government terminated its program that helped many veterans pay for transportation to VA medical facilities. More than 195 Hospital Service Coordinators manage the transportation needs for disabled veterans to and from nearly every VA medical center in the country. In 2010, 105 vans were added to the Transportation Network. Ford Motor Company also donated \$200,000 for the purchase of an additional seven vans, representing a unique partnership between DAV and corporate America. Since 1987, 2,469 vans have been purchased by the National Organization, Chapters, Departments and the National Service Foundation Columbia Trust at a cost of \$53,680,312. These vans have all been donated to VA hospitals for use in the Transportation Network.

The National Organization devoted \$39,260,696 in contributed services to the Transportation Network in 2010. DAV and Auxiliary volunteers, and a growing number of generous nonmembers, provided \$1,883,007 hours and drove 27,221,727 miles, providing free rides to 702,796 veterans.

VOLUNTARY SERVICE PROGRAM

Volunteers contributed an additional 313,054 hours of service to veterans at VA hospitals, clinics and nursing homes through the VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) program in 2010. Based on our interpretation of generally accepted accounting principles, these-in-hospital volunteer hours are not recognized as contributed services; however, it is worth noting that this volunteer time has a value of \$6,527,175, according to the VA. The National Organization's 2010 investment was \$862,817 to coordinate programs through its VAVS and transportation efforts. In addition to services in VA facilities, volunteers annually contribute approximately one million hours at veterans medical facilities outside the VA, such as those operated by state governments.

NATIONAL DISABLED VETERANS WINTER SPORTS CLINIC

Working in cooperation with the VA for the 24th consecutive year, our organization co-sponsored the 2010 National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, devoting \$565,894 in direct expenditures to this program. That is in addition to other indirect expenditures, which are part of our ongoing VAVS program. This program has helped veterans overcome the impact of severe disability and empowered many to take their lives in new directions they might otherwise never have dreamed possible.

YOUTH VOLUNTEER SCHOLARSHIPS

To encourage our young people to get involved in volunteer work to assist sick and disabled veterans, we created the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program to honor outstanding young volunteers who are active participants in the VA Voluntary Service program. In 2010, a total of \$80,000 in scholarships was awarded to 12 outstanding youth volunteers.

CELEBRITY ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAM

Another volunteer initiative is the DAV Celebrity Entertainment Program, featuring Major League Baseball Umpires Larry Barnett and Jerry Layne, and professional athletes from the National Football League and Major League Baseball, who continue to visit hospitalized veterans in VA medical centers. In addition, Ultimate Fighting Championship star Rich "Ace" Franklin began visiting several VA medical centers during the past year.

LOCAL & STATE VOLUNTEERISM

Chapters, Auxiliary Units, state-level Departments and associated organizations work on behalf of disabled veterans in the communities they serve. These programs range from initiatives for homeless veterans to advocacy for the removal of barriers to handicapped people; from household chores to driving severely disabled veterans to the store or bank. The Local Veterans Assistance Program, created during the fall of 2007, offers volunteers the opportunity to provide valuable assistance to veterans within their communities. During 2010, 2,029 volunteers donated 146,015 hours of volunteer service to disabled veterans living in rural and underserved areas.

In an effort to encourage even greater involvement in the lives of veterans at the community and state levels, the National Service Foundation established the Colorado Trust. Through the Trust, well-funded Chapters and Departments are providing invaluable help to other Chapters and Departments lacking the funds to support their service programs. In addition to these contributions to the Trust, the DAV National Organization provided another \$37,375 in part for the purchase of Transportation Network vans in 2010. The National Organization has contributed \$4,312,870 to the Trust since its inception.

STATE SERVICE, DISASTER RELIEF, AND MEMORIALS

DAV operates a program of direct grants to needy disabled veterans and their families, as well as a plan to fund state-level services to these veterans and families. During 2010, spending on these programs totaled \$6,796,090.

DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAM

When disaster strikes, National Service Officers are dispatched to the affected area to provide monetary assistance, conduct benefit counseling and to offer referral sources. We provided disaster relief grants in the aftermath of natural disasters and emergencies in various areas around the nation to help disabled veterans secure temporary lodging, food and other necessities. Since the program's inception in 1968, \$8,762,831 has been disbursed.

STATE SERVICE PROGRAM

The DAV conducts a program to help fund services that state-level Departments provide to disabled veterans and their families. In some cases, these Department programs extend, supplement, or dovetail services the DAV provides through its nationwide programs. In other cases, Departments have created entirely new programs to meet the unique needs of veterans in their states. Grants to Departments under this program totaled \$3,779,001 in 2010.

PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

Today's fast-paced, hi-tech environment, social media like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other communications tools enable the Disabled American Veterans and its members to build an even stronger community that can help us carry out our mission, now and in the future. Of course, more traditional methods of communication are still essential to building awareness, appreciation and support for our services to the nation's disabled veterans and their families. The National Communications Department oversees media relations, publications, contact with other organizations and a variety of public outreach initiatives. It is responsible for producing news releases, speeches, op-eds, brochures, print advertisements, public service announcements and other materials that provide information about our full range of free services.

A full-color magazine informs our members about important issues and our government's policies affecting the federal benefits and services they've earned. This bi-monthly publication also highlights the many accomplishments of our state-level Departments and local Chapters nationwide.

DAV also has built and maintains a cordial, professional working relationship with media outlets, reporters and editors who cover veteran-related issues. The Communications Department identifies appropriate DAV spokespersons to respond to media queries, to provide in-depth research and resources to help explain issues more fully and sharpen the focus of news stories.

A comprehensive Internet Web site, www.dav.org, is another vital information and education resource for disabled veterans and the general public. Our Web site provides timely, easy access to legislative matters, service programs and critical issues. It also allows our members, as well as the general public, to make their voices heard on important public policy issues through an electronic mail feedback feature.

Special events such as celebrity visits to veterans hospitals and air shows at military bases and civilian venues help us reach the public to inform them of our free services and volunteer opportunities in their own communities. Now in its eighth season, the DAV's Airshow Outreach program works with the owners of two vintage B-25 Mitchell bombers to bring the DAV's message to these veteran-friendly audiences across the nation. Through this unique outreach program, the DAV has been able to reach millions of Americans with our message of service and volunteerism in support of sick and disabled veterans.

These educational public service and outreach programs continue to promote awareness of veterans' issues and honor disabled veterans' service to our nation. A total of \$5,697,335 was spent on publications and other communications in 2010.

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM AND PUBLIC AWARENESS OUTREACH

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

The strength of DAV has always been our individual members, the veterans we serve and those who support our mission. This support has made DAV what it is today.

The National Membership Department delivers a variety of services to maintain a large, strong and active membership base. By coordinating and extending our mission into communities where veterans and their families live, DAV members promote an agenda for the well-being of America's disabled veterans and their families. With 52 state-level Departments and more than 1,499 active Chapters nationwide, we closed the 2009/2010 membership year with almost 1.2 million wartime service disabled veterans.

Membership in DAV is valuable today for many of the same reasons it was worthwhile nine decades ago. DAV members stay educated on the issues and have a vested interest in the wellbeing of their fellow veterans. Our members are spreading hope and providing services which will assure them of their unique community and make certain they will not fall through the cracks like so many disabled veterans did at the turn of the last century.

Unencumbered by profit motives and constraints of government, we focus on value and relevance. Today, with the convergence of technology, globalization and social diversity, DAV will continue to play a vital role. As agents of change over the past nine decades, DAV will drive our organization's adaptation to emerging trends, and effectively respond to the needs of a twenty-first century disabled veteran and new issues.

We also offer membership benefits that provide real value in products and services that enhance the lives of veterans and their families. These include discounts on long-distance telephone and Internet services, Ford Motor Company vehicles, Dell and Apple computer products, rental cars, travel services and long-distance moving programs, a prescription drug plan, a legal services network, as well as Hickory Farms, Omaha Steak and DISH network discounts.

Funds raised from the general public are not used to pay for the \$9,016,206 spent for membership services.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AWARENESS

Too many disabled veterans remain in need of federal benefits and services they've earned but haven't used. Generally, these veterans aren't aware of their entitlements or the free help the DAV National Service Program can provide in filing for VA and other government benefits.

Further, many aren't aware of the wide range of other programs we offer for disabled veterans and their families. In a nontraditional approach, the Public Awareness Outreach Program asks our donors to help identify those veterans and get them into contact with us. In 2010, \$21,070,402 was spent on this large-scale outreach effort, an investment that's paying real dividends in the lives of disabled veterans and their families. This program supplements the outreach efforts already built into the DAV's other program services. It offers the American public an even greater opportunity to become personally involved in identifying and assisting those in need of our programs and services.

THE DAV STRUCTURE

The structure of the DAV is designed to vest control of the organization in its membership and to ensure the greatest degree of operational efficiency possible in the delivery of services to disabled veterans and their families. The National Organization funds and operates programs that service veterans throughout the United States and its territories and possessions.

Fifty-two DAV State Departments and more than 1,499 Chapters augment the service programs of the National Organization on a local level and, in addition, provide the essential framework for the fraternal activities.

Our national programs are administered by a professional staff under the leadership of National Adjutant Arthur H. Wilson, a disabled veteran of the Vietnam War. Mr. Wilson is the Chief Executive Officer of the National Organization and serves as Secretary of our seven-member Board of Directors. The board is responsible for approval of the annual budget, as well as for the responsible management and investment of all of the organization's assets.

Each member of the Board of Directors is a DAV member. With the exception of the National Adjutant, who is a DAV employee, board members are uncompensated volunteers. Two of these volunteers serve by virtue of their election to national office by the DAV's membership. The remaining four Directors are selected by the National Executive Committee from its ranks.

Our fraternal activities are an essential part of DAV's mission of service to disabled veterans. The National Commander, the official spokesperson, is elected each year by the membership at the National Convention. The National Commander chairs the National Executive Committee, which includes five Vice-Commanders and 21 District Representatives. All of these persons are elected at the National Convention. The immediate Past National Commander also serves on the committee, which receives support and guidance from the National Judge Advocate, which is currently held by Michael E. Dobmeier of Grand Forks, N.D. and the National Chaplain, Dr. Charles W. Edwards, Jr., of Austin, Texas. These positions are also filled by election of the membership at the National Convention.

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Disabled American Veterans is authorized to display the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance National Charity Seal in recognition of meeting the Alliance's 20 Standards for Charity Accountability. These standards apply to publicly soliciting organizations that are tax exempt under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code. The standards seek to encourage fair and honest solicitation practices, to promote ethical conduct by charitable organizations and to advance public support of philanthropy.

NONPROFIT STATUS

The Disabled American Veterans is a tax-exempt organization and contributions made to DAV are tax deductible. DAV is a federally incorporated, nonprofit organization. It was incorporated by an Act of Congress on June 17, 1932. The organization's Congressional Charter can be found at 36 U.S.C. §§ 50301 et seq. DAV is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as tax-exempt under 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(4). Contributions are deductible pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 170(c)(3).

08/11