DAV Announces Retirement of National Adjutant Arthur H. Wilson

WASHINGTON (April 16, 2013) – DAV announced today that after nearly 50 years of service to the organization and 19 years in his current post, Arthur H. Wilson will retire as the organization’s CEO and National Adjutant effective May 31, 2013. DAV’s current National Headquarters Executive Director, J. Marc Burgess, has been appointed to become the new CEO and National Adjutant. Mr. Wilson, a 47-year DAV Life Member, will remain an active member of the organization.

Mr. Wilson, a disabled Vietnam veteran of the U.S. Air Force, was appointed CEO and National Adjutant of the 1.2 million-member DAV in June, 1994. As DAV’s highest-ranking staff member, Mr. Wilson led, on average, 650 employees while managing the overall operations for the organization, one of America’s largest and most respected veterans service organizations.

Mr. Wilson, the first Vietnam veteran to join the ranks of DAV’s National Service Program, began his career in 1966 as a National Service Officer Trainee in Atlanta, Georgia. He completed assignments in Buffalo and Philadelphia and later as a supervisor in Syracuse, New Orleans and Boston and the Board of Veterans Appeals Office in Washington, D.C. In 1979, he became DAV’s Chief of Claims at National Service and Legislative Headquarters. In 1981, Mr. Wilson was appointed as National Service Director and, 12 years later, was named Executive Director. Additionally, Mr. Wilson is also the President of the Disabled Veterans’ LIFE Memorial Foundation,
working to erect the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial in the nation’s capital. He is also a member of the Advisory Council for the Intrepid Museum Foundation.

From the start of his appointment as CEO and National Adjutant, Mr. Wilson tirelessly immersed himself in the business of transforming DAV and prudently building a stronger national organization. He is largely credited with increasing DAV’s net worth by 422 percent over a 10-year period and with charting the organization’s path to serving the nation’s veterans well into the future. Annually, DAV assists with more than 300,000 claims for benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs in addition to operating a free transportation network, volunteerism programs, legislative advocacy and other initiatives. Throughout his career, Mr. Wilson has been dedicated to welcoming and mentoring talented veterans from different generations to DAV, including his successor, Marc Burgess.

Mr. Burgess began his career with DAV in 1995. He served as a second class petty officer in the U.S. Navy from 1987-1992, when he was medically discharged. Mr. Burgess has served DAV as a National Appeals Officer at the Board of Veterans Appeals, National Service Office Supervisor, Appellate Counsel before the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, Associate and Assistant National Service Director and Director of Human Resources before his promotion to Assistant Executive Director and, subsequently, Executive Director of National Headquarters.

“It is with a heavy yet hopeful heart that I accept the retirement of Art Wilson, who has given a large part of his life to serving DAV and his fellow veterans,” said DAV
National Commander Larry Polzin. “He has helped build a solid foundation for the future, and with his recommendation, I have absolute confidence in appointing Marc Burgess as DAV’s next National Adjutant.”

DAV empowers veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. It is dedicated to a single purpose: fulfilling our promises to the men and women who served. DAV does this by ensuring that veterans and their families can access the full range of benefits available to them; fighting for the interests of America’s injured heroes on Capitol Hill; and educating the public about the great sacrifices and needs of veterans transitioning back to civilian life. DAV, a non-profit organization with 1.2 million members, was founded in 1920 and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1932. Learn more at www.dav.org.

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