The Greatest Gift

I want to take this time to remind everyone the importance of reporting your Local Veterans Assistance Program (LVAP) hours and why it’s important to volunteer for veterans.

First, let’s discuss the “why” behind the LVAP program.

The “why” is simply because it’s the right thing to do. The strongest commitment one single person can make to their community is to leave the comfort of loved ones, family and friends and answer America’s call.

There is no better gift than to volunteer to give back to your veteran neighbors and let them know their service and sacrifice hasn’t been forgotten.

LVAP was designed to empower fellow veterans and other supporters to use new and innovative ways to stand by those who stood by us.

Examples of LVAP initiatives are largely only limited by your own creativity. One can donate some time for the Forget-Me-Not fundraiser or other DAV functions, provide some hands-on direct assistance to veterans, their survivors or their families by helping with tasks many take for granted. Assistance with things like yard work, home repairs, grocery shopping or offering a caregiver some time to rest and rewind while someone else fills in for them in caring for their veteran are beyond priceless.

But there’s so much more for volunteer programs.

Are you a working professional? How about offering free services or use a skill or trade to train a veteran or provide some much needed support to a veteran using those skill sets you have?

One can also look for a homeless stand-down event in their
area and help continue the fight against veteran homelessness.

It’s also important to report the number of hours one volunteers. Why? Because it serves as a barometer to let us know how we’re doing. It can help provide analytic data on where we need more help. I can’t stress enough the importance of reporting this data. It is part of the process that lets us know where we’re doing well and where more volunteers are needed.

There are even award opportunities and earned recognition for very active LVAP programs, which we recognize every year.

If you want to start serving fellow veterans, or know someone who does, but need some help just getting started we’re here to help. Contact the DAV Department in your state or contact the National Headquarters Voluntary Services Department by emailing vavs@dav.org or call (877) 426-2838.

I promise you voluntary service in veteran communities is something many find themselves very passionate about once they get started. I invite you to join me in this very rewarding experience.