We did it!

DAV has once again reached its national membership goal.

National Membership Director Tony Baskerville said numbers are important; he wants everyone to know there’s a deeper meaning behind them.

“We’ve met our goals and every new member adds another voice to our cause of serving veterans and their families,” Baskerville said. “I want everyone who recruited a new member to know I’m very proud of their efforts and they have my deepest gratitude.”

But the implications of what those numbers represent are far more critical.

World War II veterans have stepped down from leadership roles in DAV and many have passed away.

The needs of Vietnam veterans are just now starting to peak with many entering the VA health care system for the first time and discovering DAV’s free services, according to Baskerville.

“We have more than 500,000 Vietnam Veterans in our ranks,” said Baskerville. “This is largely due to many of them, as they age, find they need our help in regards to earned benefits and are eligible for VA healthcare.”

Recently in a speech VA Secretary Bob McDonald said our nation has been at war for more than ten years and our nation will need to continue care for wounded or ill veterans for decades.

“I couldn’t agree with him more,” said Baskerville. “It will take many years to realize the implications of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; but, DAV knows from 90-plus years of
experience all generations of veterans must unite under one
banner to fight to ensure promises are kept to America’s
bravest.”

Baskerville said most new members come to DAV through their
initial contact with a Chapter, Department, Transition or
National Service Officer and they happily realize they’re not
alone.

DAV’s Deputy National Membership Director agreed.

“That would certainly characterize my experience,” said
Leonard Harris, DAV Deputy National Membership Director. “When
I first transitioned out of uniform, and we all know that
transition is very challenging, I found that DAV would become
my second home. A CSO helped better my life with my initial
claim and after that I knew I wanted to get involved and give
back to fellow veterans.”

Ensuring DAV can continue its mission of service to veterans
and their families is the reason behind the importance of
membership numbers, said Baskerville.

“Every veteran who joins our ranks is another promise
fulfilled, another family receiving the help it needed or
another veteran who found they didn’t have to navigate the VA
claims world without help or transition from military life
alone,” he said. “I’m very proud we’ve met our national
membership goals, but we must continue to work hard at finding
and recruiting those veterans who could use our help and bring
them into our ranks.

“We owe it to fellow veterans.”