

South Carolina veteran receives national \$10,000 entrepreneurship award



David Raad

DAV (Disabled American Veterans) has awarded the Arthur H. and Mary E. Wilson Top Venture Impacting Veterans Award and a \$10,000 prize to Army veteran David Raad, founder of Six and Twenty Distillery in Powdersville, South Carolina, for superior performance as part of the nationwide Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV) program. Raad will be formally recognized during the DAV & Auxiliary Virtual Salute, a program scheduled for Aug. 26 at 7 p.m. EDT on DAV's website (www.dav.org/virtualsalute).

"This award recognizes a disabled veteran who has taken on the challenge of starting his or her own business," said DAV National Commander Stephen "Butch" Whitehead. "We know employment is one of the most important factors in a veteran's successful transition out of the military, and we are excited to help provide a resource for Mr. Raad, who is an inspiration for others pursuing their own entrepreneurial goals."

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, entrepreneurship has taken a nosedive among the most recent generation, with just 4.5% of post-9/11 veterans launching their own businesses. This is down significantly from the 49.7% of veterans who went on to run or own businesses in the aftermath of World War II, and the 40% of Korean War veterans.

The Arthur H. and Mary E. Wilson Top Venture Impacting Veterans Award specifically recognizes businesses and nonprofits that excel in the EBV program's business plan competition, offering a \$10,000 cash prize that serves as a springboard for new veteran-owned businesses.

"I believe the largest way that Six and Twenty Distillery impacts veterans is their support and recognition in giving back to the veteran community," said DAV National Employment Director Jeff Hall. "While still growing, it is Dave's goal to increase his number of employees, and look in the veteran and disabled veteran talent pool to do so."

Also, it's not just the veteran community his business has an impact on. In March, the distillery showed what a veteran-owned small business can do when they started producing hand sanitizer and providing it to members of their local community at no cost to combat the coronavirus," added Hall. "Mr. Raad understands what it means to lead from the front and I couldn't be happier for him, as he is a very deserving recipient."

Since its beginning in 2011, Six and Twenty Distillery has been an industry leader in the craft spirits business in the South Carolina region, wherein Raad also serves as the vice president of the South Carolina Craft Distillers Guild. Raad also serves as a board member of the Sua Sponte Foundation.

About DAV:

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, providing employment resources to veterans and their families, and educating the public about the great sacrifices and needs of veterans transitioning back to civilian life. DAV, a nonprofit organization with more than 1 million veteran members, was founded in 1920 and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1932. Learn more at www.dav.org.