

Summertime offers volunteer opportunities

As the weather is starting to get warmer across the country, you're all probably gearing up for summer and finalizing plans of what to do during the next few months. I'd like to encourage you as you make those plans to devote at least a few hours volunteering with our veterans and their families in DAV's name.

When we take time—our most precious asset—out of our schedules to help others, it makes a powerful statement of what our priorities are as humans and collectively as an organization. DAV is rooted in service, an idea that's reinforced as more veterans and others see us volunteering in our communities and in VA medical facilities. The benefit of volunteering goes both ways, too. Not only will you feel good doing it (I promise!), you're making a difference by providing hope and care to others.

Here are some of your ideas of ways to volunteer your time for veterans. Each of these is something we've seen or heard individuals and chapters doing:

- Organizing/hosting outdoor events and trips
- Peer-to-peer counseling
- Holding or supporting homeless veteran standdowns
- Holiday toy drives
- Art therapy and performance art classes and programs

Hopefully these inspire some ideas of your own. Keep them coming! There are countless ways we can improve the lives of veterans and their families. You can email them to VAVS@dav.org with "Chapter Volunteer Ideas" in the subject line. We'll continue to share what we hear.

Also, if you have student volunteers, remind them that their

service in DAV's name could help land them some money for school. We've got \$110,000 to give away this year, and we're accepting applications for anyone 21 and under who's accumulated at least 100 volunteer hours through the VA or the Local Veterans Assistance Program. The scholarship can be used to attend any accredited institution of higher learning including universities, colleges, community colleges and vocational schools. We have all the details and the application at davscholarships.org.

Lastly, most of us are familiar with the DAV Transportation Network and the dedicated team of volunteers who organize rides and drive veterans to and from VA medical appointments. To help them in their mission, we've requested 49 vehicles for 2022. Some are starting to arrive at our headquarters in Erlanger, Kentucky, and are being prepared for pick up.

We could always use more people behind the wheel though. If you're able, I encourage you to sign up to be a driver. If you don't have the time or health to do it, please feel free to recruit on our behalf. The people who participate in this critical program that ensure veterans have access to the life-saving care they've earned will tell you they get as much out of volunteering as the people they help. And that's saying something.

In all you do, we at DAV are extremely thankful for your continued time and dedication to our mission. The lives of veterans and their families we serve are better because of you.