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Biographical INFO

JOY J. ILEM **National Legislative Director** **DAV (Disabled American Veterans)**

Joy J. Ilem, a service-connected disabled veteran of the U.S. Army, was appointed national legislative director for the more than 1 million-member DAV in August 2015.

Ilem is a member of the DAV's legislative team employed at DAV National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington, D.C. She directs the advancement of DAV's public policy objectives to promote and defend reasonable and responsible legislation to assist disabled veterans and their families nationwide, while guarding current veteran's benefits and services from legislative erosion.



Ilem began her DAV career as a member of Class III at DAV's National Service Officer Training Academy in Denver. She graduated in 1996 and was assigned as a national service officer apprentice at the DAV National Service Office in Phoenix, Arizona. In 1997, she was assigned as a DAV national appeals officer at the Board of Veterans Appeals in Washington, D.C. In 1999, she was promoted to an associate national legislative director serving with the national legislative team at DAV's National Service and Legislative Headquarters. Ilem was appointed assistant national legislative director in 2000 and deputy national legislative director in June 2009, holding that title until her current appointment.

A native of Shakopee, Minnesota, Ilem was raised in the greater Minneapolis area, and is a 1977 graduate of Totino Grace High School in Fridley, Minnesota. She earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Arizona in Tucson in 1994, majoring in archaeology, with a minor in religious studies.

Ilem enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1982. Following basic training at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina, and advanced medical training at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas, she was assigned as a medic to the 67th Evacuation Hospital in Wurzburg, Germany, where she underwent additional certification as an emergency medical technician (EMT). Ilem's military duties included assignments in the emergency room and as a non-commissioned officer in charge of surgical recovery room operations. She was honorably discharged from the Army in 1985.

A life member of DAV Chapter 10 Arlington-Fairfax, Virginia, Ilem resides in Alexandria, Virginia.