



## VETERANS DAY SPEECH 2022

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Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

**(Acknowledge any VIPs/special guests/event hosts)**

I'd like to start today by thanking all those among us who, despite the risk and sacrifice, raised their hand to serve and defend this beautiful country—our veterans, active-duty service members, guardsmen and reservists. Your service has helped keep our country and its citizens **safe and free**. If you're able, please stand to be recognized.

**<LEAD APPLAUSE>**

Let's also take a moment to acknowledge those families of service members and veterans who help shoulder the weight of war and the burdens of sacrifice.

To the mothers, fathers, spouses and children of our military men and women—***thank you***. Your love, support and resilience are the backbone of this nation, and that must never be forgotten.

**<PAUSE>**

Over a century ago, DAV was just starting its journey. Our founder, World War I veteran Judge Robert Marx, was beginning to shape an organization that would affect the lives of countless veterans and their families for generations to come.

Marx, who was severely injured in combat and had received the Distinguished Service Cross, had witnessed the challenges his fellow veterans faced after returning home from the war. Many of them were seriously disabled and unable to find work or access proper medical care. Few resources existed to aid those who served so honorably in the nation's defense, and Judge Marx vowed to bring about change.

He began to advocate for the men and women who risked all for the sake of this country, particularly those who were injured or became ill in the course of doing so. But he didn't do it alone.

Veterans across the country came together—not to help themselves, **but to help each other**. They knew that an organization **of** veterans, **by** veterans and **for** veterans had the best chance of keeping the promise to **all** those who sacrificed so much.

This year, as we mark Veterans Day, let's also celebrate Judge Marx and his fellow veterans for the legacy they left behind. They laid an unshakable foundation that enables us to still do the work we do for ***and with*** veterans today.

Veterans like Army Staff Sergeant Adam Alexander.

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On November 10, 2011—the eve of Veterans Day—enemy bullets rained down on Adam's remote firebase in Afghanistan.

As he was attempting to clear a mechanical jam of an automatic grenade launcher, a sniper bullet ripped through the center of Adam's forehead and exited the right side of his helmet.

**<PAUSE>**

Six days later, Adam woke up at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. He had lost his right eye, and there was extensive damage to the right frontal lobe of his brain. Doctors had to remove part of his skull to allow his brain to swell outward.

Over the course of 10 months, Adam underwent nearly every type of therapy the Minneapolis VA Medical Center had to offer. He had to relearn the basic functions most of us take for granted every day. His remarkable recovery is a testament to his determination and resiliency.

Today, Adam is a devoted advocate for DAV and his fellow veterans. A life member of Chapter 17 in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, Adam co-hosts a half-hour public access television show called “The Outpost” alongside retired Lieutenant Colonel Mike Hert. The pair served together in the 432nd Civil Affairs Battalion.

Together, they bring attention to DAV’s mission and give local veterans a platform to share their stories. For some veterans, it’s the first time they’re recounting their military experience.

**<PAUSE>**

Adam enlisted to make his time on this earth count. Enemy fire tried to cut that time short, but Adam overcame insurmountable odds. And fortunately for us, he found a way to keep serving.

[Another example of an inspiring veteran can be found here locally. <Insert brief description/introduction of local veteran/DAV member to honor>]

Eleven years ago on Veterans Day, Adam Alexander was fighting for his life. Today, he is fighting for his fellow veterans. He is a reminder and an inspiration to continue to support our brothers- and sisters-in-arms— ***every day*** of the year.

Our mission at DAV is to ensure everyone who served can lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. As veterans, it is our duty and our honor to be an active part of that mission.

But all of us—veteran and civilian alike—have a role to play in supporting those who bear the burdens of war. Sometimes just sitting down to talk with veterans or their family members can go a long way. Let them know they are not alone. And if you can, work with organizations such as DAV to donate your time to give back to those who served.

Thank you for taking the time to honor our heroes. God bless you all, bless our veterans and bless the United States of America.

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