

Keeping Our Promises

VETERANS DAY
2012



(Acknowledgment of introduction, distinguished guests, officers and members of the DAV and Auxiliary, and others who are present.)

On behalf of National Commander Larry Polzin, it is an immense honor it is to be here representing DAV today.

I am proud to be an American, the greatest country in the world. It is our freedoms that make it so, and those freedoms were won and defended by veterans – the men and women who put the ideals of our country before themselves.

Today we honor all who served and those who are still serving. Today we say, “Thank you.” Today we stand up for the men and women who fought for us and returned home with the scars and wounds of war.

Standing up to say thank you today is as important as standing up for them any other day they need us

On Memorial Day we specifically honor those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. Today, on Veterans Day, we honor the fallen, but we also honor those who were fortunate enough to make it home. For every service man and woman who pays the ultimate price, 10 more are severely injured or disabled.

In November 1919, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day to honor those who served in the First World War. In 1938, it became an official holiday.

It wasn't until 1954, after World War II and the Korean War that Congress, at the urging of veterans service organizations, changed the day to Veterans Day.

DAV has been standing up, giving back and truly saying thank you for nearly as long as the holiday has

existed.

Veterans making the transition back to civilian life must overcome many challenges, and we provide programs and advocacy that address their overall health and well-being.

Beyond helping hundreds of thousands of veterans each year obtain the government benefits they earned, DAV funds programs for injured and ill veterans, linking them to employment programs, fighting homelessness and connecting veterans with one another.

As part of DAV, I meet many amazing, courageous, motivating people all the time.

Marcus Kuboy enlisted at 27 years old to be a medic in the National Guard. He wanted to help others. Deployed to the frontlines in Iraq, his vehicle hit an improvised explosive device.

His legs were severely injured, broken in numerous places. His arm and jaw were smashed. His head was split open.

While working on his rehabilitation, he learned that life changing experiences, especially when so painful and traumatic, leave people with just two options.

“You will either get bitter or you will get better.”

Marcus was committed to doing anything he could to get better, to live a high-quality life.

He was determined to become a success story, and he has succeeded.

I am proud we were there to help Marcus and thousands of others like him every year, but I am more proud of the heart and focus so many wounded, injured and ill veterans show every day all over the country.

Of course, once these veterans achieve their goals, they often turn around and help others through DAV and other wonderful organizations. Veterans helping veterans is so important for both those helping and those in need of help.

Today, I ask you, as you honor veterans, to

remember the promises made to the men and women who were, and are, willing to give their lives to defend your families and the way of life we enjoy today.

I invite you to join DAV in honoring our nation's veterans by telling your story on how military service impacted your life. Veterans, caregivers, family members, survivors and advocates can contribute their stories by visiting [w-w-w-dot My Story D-A-V dot o-r-g](http://www.MyStoryD-A-V.org).

You can also join our Commander's Action Network, become a DAV member, volunteer at your local VA medical facility or make a donation.

From the bottom of my heart, I thank you for remembering our veterans whose sacrifices and service have ensured our way of life.

May God bless each and every one of you. May God bless and protect our men and women in harm's way, and may God bless our veterans who've kept our country free.

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