

DVNF **NEWSLETTER**

EMPOWERING HEROES: CELEBRATING SACRIFICE AND RESILIENCE

Dear DVNF Supporters,

In this edition of the Disabled Veterans National Foundation (DVNF) Newsletter, we embark on a journey through dedication, resilience, and the transformative power of compassion. At DVNF, our mission is fueled by the profound need to serve those who have selflessly served our great nation. We bring you heartwarming stories of heroism, announce exciting updates about our programs, and recognize professionals dedicated to our mission—all designed to empower and uplift our American heroes.

MEET A TRUE AMERICAN HERO: TJ, OUR WOUNDED WARRIOR

Before we dive into the exciting updates about our programs, let's take a moment to honor one of our very own, TJ. TJ is not just a hero; he is a living testament to courage and perseverance. As a proud Wounded Warrior and DVNF Board Member, TJ's commitment to our cause is unwavering, and we are privileged to have him as an integral part of the DVNF family.

TJ's journey began in El Salvador on April 20, 1980. At the tender age of four, he came to the United States, and his indomitable spirit found a home. Completing his grade school in Los Angeles, CA. TJ's journey continued when his family moved to North Hollywood, California. In June of 1998, he proudly graduated from Jack London High School. Driven by a deep sense of duty and patriotism, TJ enlisted in the United States Marine Corps shortly after.



Throughout his Marine Corps journey, TJ's dedication led him through the crucible of training, deployments to various locations, and ultimately, to a fateful day in Afghanistan. On November 11, 2010, TJ's life took a devastating turn. While on a Recon patrol in the Southern Green Zone, his unit sought possible landing zones for casualties. Tragedy struck as TJ identified a landing zone, and the patrol began its journey back to the Forward Operating Base. An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) detonated, causing catastrophic injuries—loss of both legs, a grade 3 concussion, a ruptured eardrum, severe trauma below the waist, and injuries to his left arm and hand.

Despite the chaos and peril, TJ's Marine training and sheer determination prevailed. Corpsmen applied tourniquets to both legs, and fellow Marines evacuated him to a potential landing zone. Under heavy enemy fire, air extract became impossible. But TJ's unit fought back fiercely, calling for fire and air support. Reinforcements arrived, and the tenacity of the Marines eventually repelled the enemy, allowing for a foot evacuation back to the Forward Operating Base, a grueling one-kilometer journey.

TJ's extraordinary resilience shone through as he stayed conscious and fought for his life throughout the challenging evacuation, ultimately losing consciousness as he was flown to the surgical unit in Afghanistan.

TJ's accolades and awards are a testament to his unfaltering dedication and valor, including:

- Combat Action Ribbon (2)
- Afghanistan Campaign Medal
- Humanitarian Service Medal
- Meritorious Mast
- Navy Unit Commendation (3)
- Bronze Star Medal
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal (4)
- Presidential Unit Citation-Navy
- Certificate of Commendation (2)
- Philippine Presidential Unit Citation
- Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (3)
- National Defense Service Medal
- Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal
- Purple Heart
- Marine Corps Recruiting Ribbon

TJ's heroism extends beyond the battlefield into his personal life. He is a loving husband to Veronica and a proud father to four children: Desiree, Guillermo Jr., Aracely, and Marisol.

HONORING OUR HEROES: THE DVNF HONOR WALL

We believe in preserving the memory of our heroes. That's why we invite you to explore the DVNF Honor Wall. It's a place where you can make a meaningful contribution to honor or remember a veteran or first responder. Each name added to this wall represents a story of courage, sacrifice, and service to our nation. Join us in commemorating their invaluable dedication.

Frieda Eastwood donated in honor of

SGT Louis
Eastwood

4 Years of Service

U.S. Army

EMPOWERING OUR AMERICAN HEROES: DVNF PROGRAMS

While we celebrate TJ's remarkable journey, DVNF remains committed to empowering all our American heroes through a range of impactful programs:

5th ANNUAL VETERANS RESOURCE FAIR

Mark your calendars for the most anticipated event of the year! DVNF is proud to announce our 5th Annual Resource Fair, taking place on November 8th, 2023, at the Silver Springs Civic Center in Silver Springs, MD. From 09:30 AM to 2:30 PM, veterans will have the opportunity to access a wealth of support and resources, including employment services, resource, new work attire, DVNF signature health and comfort kits, free food and groceries, raffle prizes, and gift cards.



Meet with organizations offering employment opportunities, housing assistance, financial assistance, veteran benefits information, physical and mental health assistance, and various veteran resources. A proud DVNF advocate, Montel Williams, will have a motivational message in celebration of our veteran's day and support for our Annual Resource Fair.

INTRODUCING THE MISSION POSSIBLE PROGRAM

ALL LIFE CHANGES CAN BE MANAGED
MIND. BODY. SPIRIT.

DVNF's groundbreaking initiative that empowers the Mind, Body, and Spirit. This FREE online platform equips you with essential tools to navigate life's changes. In response to overwhelming demand, DVNF is thrilled to announce that "Mission Possible" will be fully funded throughout 2024. Register now at dvnf.org/mind-body-spirit-course/ and share this opportunity with any veterans, first responders, and their families that you know.

MISSION POSSIBLE PARTICIPANTS BY GROUP:

1. US ARMY Veteran	625
2. USN Veteran	265
3. USAF Veteran	214
4. USMC Veteran	114
5. Veterans Family Member	108
6. USCG Veteran	20
7. First Responders	16
Grand total	1,348

Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to Dr. Marty Rossman, a shining beacon in our mission. Dr. Rossman's unwavering commitment has played a pivotal role in shaping "Mission Possible." With his expertise and dedication, this program was designed to empower veterans, first responders, and their families.



JOIN THE HIKE FOR HEROES CHALLENGE IN JUNE 2024

Get ready for an exhilarating challenge like no other! In August 2024, DVNF is rallying a team of veterans for the ultimate "Hike the Pike" fundraiser in picturesque Colorado Springs. Our mission? To raise an ambitious \$500,000 in support of critical suicide prevention and awareness initiatives.

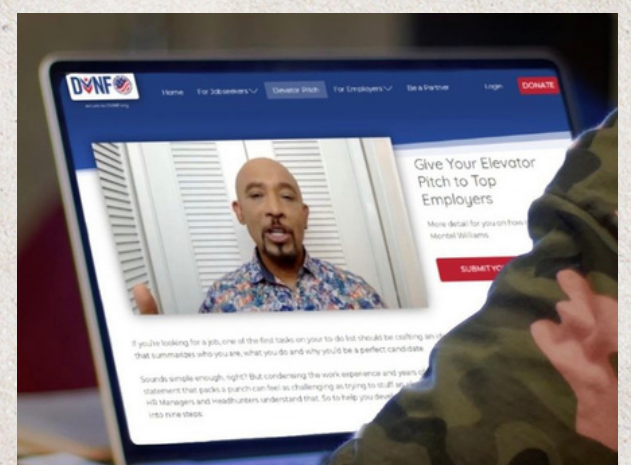


But here's where the excitement soars: We're not just calling on hikers; we're throwing down the gauntlet to everyone with a heart for heroes! We invite you to be part of Team DVNF and join us in reaching our goal. This is your opportunity to make an indelible impact and champion the cause of those who've selflessly served our nation.

Will you rise to the challenge and stand beside our American heroes on this incredible journey? Join the Hike for Heroes Challenge and be a beacon of hope for those who need it most. Together, we can conquer mountains, both literal and figurative, and make a lasting difference. Are you up for it? Follow us on social media and visit our website to learn more at www.dvnf.org. More will follow!

DVNF NATIONAL JOB BOARD CONNECTING VETERANS WITH LEADING EMPLOYERS

DVNF proudly presents our National Job Board, designed to connect the veteran community with leading employers. This platform, endorsed by Montel Williams, is open to the public and free for all users. Small and large businesses can upload job listings for FREE. "It's FREE. It will always be FREE, as it serves our veterans and service members that keep America FREE."



CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS: SUPPORTING OUR VETERANS

Exciting news! Starting October 1st, 2023, DVNF will be giving \$1 million in grants. Our next CBG open season begins on November 1st, 2023. These grants are dedicated to supporting the mental and physical recovery of veterans as they navigate their unique paths back to normal life. Learn more and submit applications at dvnf.org/capacity-building-grants/.



StableStrides, Mind and Body Healing Through Horses, one of our 2023 CBG Summer Grantees

STAY CONNECTED WITH DVNF

DVNF has more than 22,000 followers on Facebook, where you can witness the amazing work of TEAM DVNF. We need your support to spread our great cause to your friends and family members. Please direct veterans to our website at www.dvnf.org to learn more about our programs and services.



As we wrap up this edition of the DVNF Newsletter, we invite you to join us on our mission to empower and uplift our American heroes. Whether you're interested in volunteering, donating, or simply spreading the word about our programs, every action counts. Together, we can make a profound difference in the lives of those who have sacrificed so much for our country.

HONORING DEDICATION TO OUR MISSION

Before we conclude, let's take a moment to recognize a dedicated professional who plays a pivotal role in our mission. Delese Harvey, our Executive Director, has demonstrated steadfast professionalism and stalwart dedication to the mission of DVNF. With more than 25 years of experience in the nonprofit sector, Delese is a cornerstone of our organization. A graduate of Howard University in Washington, D.C., Delese has always been driven by a deep sense of compassion and commitment to making a difference in the lives of our veterans. Her leadership and tireless efforts are integral to DVNF's success.



Thank you for your loyal support. Stay tuned for more stories of compassion, dedication, and resilience in our upcoming DVNF News Letter.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Joseph VanFonda (USMC SgtMaj Ret.)
CEO/ Disabled Veterans National Foundation (DVNF)

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