

THE AMERICAN LEGION

Dispatch

December 2022

Veterans Strengthening America

LEGISLATIVE



GRASSROOTS ACTION CENTER

Report Meeting

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BE A VETERAN ADVOCATE

Through the Legion's Grassroots Action Center, Legionnaires can make their voices heard on Capitol Hill.

By The American Legion

The American Legion's Grassroots Action Center (legion.org/legislative/action) is a platform for connecting American Legion members and advocates with their members of Congress on Legion legislative issues. The Grassroots Action Center allows The American Legion to contact every member of Congress on large, national campaigns as well as target specific members on key committees that pertain to The American Legion's legislative priorities.

Visit legion.org/legislative.org to see the Legion's legislative priorities.

"This summer many of you participated in our campaign to pass the PACT Act (The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act), in which Legionnaires sent over 35,000 messages to Congress, calling for comprehensive coverage for veterans suffering

from toxic exposure," said Rick Oertel, Department of Virginia commander and National Legislative Council chairman, during the November Training Tuesday session on the Grassroots Action Center. "We lived history, and we wrote another chapter in the story of American Legion advocacy for veterans and reasserted our presence as America's most powerful voice for veterans."

John Kamin, a legislative associate in the Legion's Washington, D.C., office, was the main presenter for the Training Tuesday session. He shared how Legionnaires can support the Legion's legislative priorities, and make their voices heard on Capitol Hill through digital advocacy while engaging others to do the same.

Kamin said that nearly 41,000 Legionnaires

LAST PRINT DISPATCH

Remember to sign up for Dispatch newsletter

This is the final issue of the print American Legion Dispatch. Starting in January 2023, Dispatch will be more timely with improved content! Sign up for the free Dispatch newsletter at legion.org/newsletters.

And visit legion.org/dispatch any time.

Give blood this holiday season

The American Legion's annual Holiday Blood Donor Drive is currently underway and lasts through Dec. 31. During this time, American Legion Family members are encouraged to give blood and host blood drives as part of the American Legion Blood Donor Program.

For the 2021-22 membership year, the Legion's Consolidated Post Report showed that the holiday blood drive brought in over 92,000 pints of blood from more than 56,000 donors nationwide.

The American Legion Blood Donor Program honors those departments that best participate in blood-donation efforts, recognizing departments in two areas: post participation and individual Legionnaire participation.

Learn more at legion.org/security/blood.

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Share your Be the One story



Vincent J. Troiola
National Commander

Dear Legionnaires,
I have heard from many of you of the great work you are doing with The American Legion's Be the One initiative to prevent veteran suicide. Together, we will save the life of veterans by our efforts of letting let veterans know that it's OK to ask for help and by us reaching out to those in crisis.

American Legion Rider Larry "Grumpy" Haitz shared with us that he had to stop talking about the number of veteran suicides and do something about it. He endured the loss of a son-in-law who died by suicide, stood in flag lines for veterans who died by suicide, and supported a fellow American Legion Rider who lost his son from suicide. So Haitz, an American Legion Rider of Chapter 241 in Le Mars, Iowa, created a bracelet to help people who encounter a veteran in crisis quickly remember the suicide prevention hotline number so veterans know they are not alone.

The blue and white bracelet's message is: Call 988 Option 1

- UR NEVER ALONE. Haitz ordered 1,000 wristbands to hand out for free.

"Five years ago, when we started talking about 22 a day (veteran suicide numbers), that's all talk. If somebody doesn't pick it up and do something, it's only going to get worse. That's what Be the One is to me - it's I have to do something. I feel the need to Be the One to do something so this is what I'm doing."

Department of Oregon American Legion Family members distributed nearly 800 Be the One slipknot bracelets during the Portland Trail Blazers Military Appreciation Night last month. Printed on the bracelets were the words "Be the One" and the website URL, bethone.org. "The bracelets are an engagement tool. They are a way to reach out to the community," said Department First Vice Commander Cory Brockman. "They are designed as an engagement tool so the public can ask questions of us so they know what to do. And ask questions of veterans: Are you doing all right? Is your home life OK? Are you healthy? How can I help you?"

We want to hear your Be the One story. Please share on legiontown.org under the "Be the One" category. Like Haitz, let's Be the One to do something.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership excellence Be the One pin

American Legion National Commander Vincent J. "Jim" Troiola will award his national commander Be the One membership excellence pin to any Legionnaire who obtains three new members into The American Legion.

A new member is any eligible person joining for the 2023 membership year who was not a member of The American Legion during the 2022 membership year. Transfers do not count as new members.

Each member listed must be eligible for membership in The American Legion. Forward names of Sons of The American

Legion members or Auxiliary members to your squadron or unit for use in their respective incentive programs.

Only one pin will be awarded per individual. Upon receipt, national membership staff will confirm the names in the national database and mail the pin directly to the person who earned it.

Download the Be The One membership incentive pin form at legion.org/commander/pin.



Have a membership success story?

Share: legiontown.org

Dispatch

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