



## DVNF Volunteer Program

### History

We are a nonprofit organization that was founded in 2007 by six women veterans, each with years of experience as State Women Veterans Coordinators in various states around the country. At work, these officials were confronted on a daily basis with the inability of an already overworked Department of Veterans Affairs to adequately deal with the considerable increase of disabled and at-risk veterans coming home from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. They created DVNF with the goal of addressing the chronic gap in services for these veterans.

### Our Mission

DVNF provides critically needed support to disabled and at-risk veterans who leave the military wounded—physically or psychologically—after defending our safety and our freedom.

We achieve this mission by:

1. Offering direct financial support to veteran organizations that address the unique needs of veterans, and whose missions align with that of DVNF.
2. Providing supplemental assistance to homeless and low-income veterans through the Health & Comfort program and various empowerment resources.
3. Providing a national job board that connects the veteran community with leading employers. It is free and it will always be free as it serves our veterans and service members that keep America free.
4. Providing an online resource database that allows veterans to navigate the complex process of seeking benefits that they are entitled to, as well as additional resources they need.

### Programs

DVNF provides two grant programs. These grants are intended for organizations who are making an impact on veterans in their communities. Whether they are doing this through programs that affect mental and physical wellness, hosting a stand down for homeless and low-income veterans, or having a free store for veterans to get items they need, DVNF grants are here to enhance those efforts. We currently have two different types of grants:

**Capacity Building Grants:** DVNF's Capacity Building Grant program provides financial grants to like-minded organizations who provide support to veterans and disabled veterans alike. There's no one-size-fits-all protocol for how a veteran overcomes the mental impacts of war, and outside of the initial recovery from physical wounds, it's often up to the veteran to navigate his or her own way back to a normal life. These grants are awarded to organizations around the country who are

addressing the mental and physical recovery of veterans. Service dogs, equine therapy, yoga, art therapy, and recreational therapy are just a few of the innovative programs that DVNF supports.

**Health & Comfort Program:** The DVNF Health & Comfort Program expands DVNF's reach into veteran communities throughout the United States, bringing tangible aid to veterans who are disabled, low-income, or homeless, in ways we otherwise could not.

Through our Health and Comfort program DVNF distributes our signature Comfort Kits to veterans throughout the country. These kits provide vital necessities such as health and hygiene items, clothing, and more to veterans of all walks of life. The contents of our Comfort Kits vary based on our inventory, but we always strive to include quality and full-sized items such as shampoo/conditioner, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, razors, deodorant, a t-shirt, a pair of socks, sunscreen, Band-Aids, etc.

DVNF has also recently created our own signature Women's Comfort Kits, these kits are targeted to our too often overlooked female veterans. Our Women's Comfort Kits always include feminine hygiene items which can be very difficult and expensive for low-income women to obtain. Whether it's a year-round homeless shelter, veteran stand-down event, or an outreach event like the Warrior Games, DVNF is there to make a positive impact on the lives of the men and women who stood in defense of our nation.

## **Events**

DVNF brings light to the fact that many military veterans are struggling just to survive. This is unfortunate, but should also create awareness of the need to reach out and help those most in need. DVNF's annual Veteran Resource Fair hosts not only employers and educators, but also organizations that can help veterans find housing, meals, physical and mental health assistance, donations, and more.

DVNF donates brand new work attire to veterans to assist in the job search after transitioning out of the military. DVNF also made sure to provide Comfort Kits and meals, both of which are invaluable when living on the street. While the event is a resource fair, DVNF has also incorporated a few Stand Down practices to ensure that every veteran's needs are met regardless of gender, race, living situation etc.

Due to the pandemic, the Foundation has been unable to host its regular event and shifted its method of supporting Veterans. The DVNF Veterans Grab N' Go is an abbreviated version of the annual Veterans Resource Fair where the organization provides bags and boxes of food and hygiene items to veterans in a walk up or drive through manner.

- Groceries & cleaning products like Lysol wipes and hand sanitizer
- Comfort Kits
- Face Masks
- Gift cards

## **How you can help**

This is where you come in.

Health & Comfort, the Resource Fair and our Grab N' Go events take the most manpower. Without volunteers, it's impossible for a small nonprofit to serve our Veterans as optimally as we can. We've recently restructured how our Health & Comfort program is run and we can only do it with the help of individuals willing to give their time to this worthy cause. We're hoping to build a partnership with your school that allows students the opportunity to volunteer. This partnership would include your students volunteering their time and efforts to assemble our general and women's signature comfort kits in our warehouse. We're also hoping when our events arise, your students will be willing to volunteer as well.

## **Volunteer hours available**

We have done our best to ensure flexibility in the time individuals can volunteer. Our warehouse is open to volunteers from Monday – Thursday 7am – 7pm and Friday – Sunday 10am – 4pm. Volunteers will have the flexibility of telling us when and how many hours they can donate. We accept all donations of time from a one-time volunteer to a recurring volunteer.

## **Warehouse location**

Lanham, Maryland

## **COVID measures**

We understand these are unprecedented times. DVNF is committed to taking the following measures to ensure the safety of all volunteers and employees:

- Keeping up with safety standards when it comes to COVID-19.
- Maintaining social distancing as much as reasonable.
- Requiring N95, KN95, or medical mask wearing at all times.
- Providing an anti-viral mask. This mask will only be provided once as it is reusable.
- Recommending the use of face shields while in the warehouse.
- Requiring frequent hand washing for 20 seconds.
- Providing hand sanitizer stations.
- Doing temperature checks for all volunteers and employees.
- Frequent ventilation of the space.
- Thorough and frequent cleanings using anti-viral and anti-bacterial cleaners.
- Monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19.