



FULFILLING OUR PROMISES
TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED

**Remarks for National Guest
Department Conventions
2018**

Acknowledge introduction, distinguished guests, and DAV Auxiliary officers and members, as well as others in the audience.

[Opening]

And knowing me, I may have left someone out. If I did, I hope you'll forgive me.

The opportunity to join you today as your national guest is a privilege, and I thank you again for letting me be here.

I'm proud to represent National Commander Metcalf-Foster and National Adjutant Burgess, who also extend their heartfelt gratitude to all of you.

The work that is going on here in _____ **(state)** is tremendous. It's no secret the men and women in this room take our organization's mission of service to veterans and their families seriously. It's a unique sight when you look out into a room and see a strong, unified organization that embodies the American values that are so precious to us. If you're here with us today, there's no doubt you are passionate about our organization and our nation's heroes.

You **are** DAV in the Department of _____ **(state)**, and the leadership you show to fellow veterans, families and neighbors by belonging to DAV makes our mission possible.

Make no mistake, by being in DAV you are still very much “in the fight.”

[Specific points related to the department the speaker wishes to address go here.]

[Closing]

DAV has a little over 260 professionally trained national service officers and 33 transition service officers, along with a little over 2,500 chapter and department service officers who are on the front lines serving veterans and their families every day.

These benefits experts are the ones who provide direct assistance to our injured and ill veterans—and they are the face of DAV to those who seek our help.

Our service officer training program is second to none. It is the only professional benefits advocacy career training program in the veterans service organization community to be accredited by the American Council on Education.

I'd like all our national service officers, transition service officers, and department and chapter service officers to please stand to be recognized.

< Applause >

You are the cornerstone of our mission of service. Many times, someone's first contact with DAV is when they meet one of you, and as many of you can personally attest, they come to us not knowing where else to turn. Thank you sincerely for what you do.

The nationwide DAV Transportation Network, which ensures ill and injured veterans can get to and from their VA medical appointments, needs some help. The baby boomer generation is working longer, and many of the volunteers who fuel our transportation network are getting older.

If you have just a little time, please consider becoming a volunteer driver. Even one day a month can make a huge impact in the lives of fellow veterans.

The people in this room know better than anyone else that there is life after an injury or illness incurred while in service.

It's not the same as before. It's different. But as we all know, when we surround ourselves with fellow disabled veterans, life starts to look a little brighter.

As I mentioned earlier, it keeps us “in the fight”—and DAV is deeply involved in the fight.

We're fighting for benefits for caregivers of all generations. We're fighting to ensure our nation keeps the promises it made to veterans. We're fighting to tell lawmakers and other elected officials to do the right thing by veterans and their families.

And just like when we were in uniform, we don't run from a fight.

<Pause>

I'm thankful every day I'm part of an organization where I get to enjoy the fellowship and camaraderie we have as veterans or as caregivers. We all earned it and it can never be taken away.

Our experiences during and after service fortify the bonds we share within the veteran community. And I'm proud, as I know you are, that DAV is the vehicle that allows us to continue our life of service to fellow veterans.

Being here with fellow DAV members shows that you still serve a cause greater than yourself—though we certainly don't do it alone.

I also want to thank our counterparts in the Auxiliary.

The leadership of Auxiliary National Commander Craig Johniken and National Adjutant Pat Kemper provides vital support for our programs. The Auxiliary truly is a blessing to DAV.

We've accomplished a lot, but there's more to be done/ I know we're all going to benefit from your efforts here in _____ **(state)**.

It is in the best interests of every veteran, caregiver, and his or her family to have a united and strong DAV.

That's why we exist.

I'm honored to share the bonds of fellowship and friendship with you. I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world.

Thank you for all you do to serve the veteran community here in _____ **(state)** and for your hospitality.

Thank you. May God bless the men and women standing watch today, our veterans and their families, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.