It's that time of year again for all of the AMVETS Family to come together for our National Convention. Here is some important information:

- AMVETS National Convention **August 22nd – 26TH, 2023 in Pittsburgh, PA.** Convention pre-registration closes on **August 9th, 2023**

- AMVETS National Commanders & Presidents Banquet tickets are currently on sale via Eventbrite:

  [Banquet Tickets](#)

Still haven't booked your stay for Convention? Get your room today!

  [Reserve A Room](#)

AMVETS Reports Book is now available to view

  [NEC Reports 2023](#)

**Thursday, August 24th** - PNC Park AMVETS will attend the Pirates VS the Chicago Cubs Baseball game

*A big thank you to the Pirates for providing FREE tickets to attendees!*

AMVETS Reports Book is now available to view

Visit the AMVETS website to see all events and for access to more details and all ticket information.

  [AMVET Events](#)

We look forward to seeing you all at this year's National Convention!
A sneak peek at this year's KeyNote

Speakers:

Rocky Bleier

In the late 1960s, Rocky Bleier stood out as a rare case. He was double-drafted in the same year: first by the Pittsburgh Steelers as a Notre Dame running back, then by the U.S. Army for Vietnam. Unlike others, he didn’t go to reserves due to his 1-A status. He paused his NFL career to heed the nation’s call to serve.

Denis Richard McDonough

The honorable Denis Richard McDonough, appointed as head of the Department of Veterans Affairs by President Biden. The Senate confirmed his nomination on February 8, 2021. The next day, he was inaugurated as the 11th Secretary of Veterans Affairs.
Important Updates:

Programs Reporting
Congratulations to all Departments for accomplishing 100% Department reporting. Training will be conducted at the National Convention on the New Programs System, please bring a laptop to the training if possible.

Quality Distinctions (Post & Departments)
If a post applied for the Quality Post, your department should have received an email from Carol Hebert. If you have not, please reach out to Programs at programs@amvets.org for a status on your application.

VAVS
Please do not assume that we have your most recent Rep or Dep on file. Come by and help National Programs by providing them with your current Rep and/or Dep's information, their facility, and the chief/volunteer coordinator's contact information. Also, if your department would like to nominate someone for the AMVETS or AMVETS Ladies VAVS Volunteer of the Year, please contact Colondra at cetheredge@amvets.org before August 10, 2023. Time and location will be available at convention. Email us at programs@amvets.org.

Freedoms Foundation November 2nd-5th 2023
Registration packets will be mailed out to the Department Student Representatives August 7, 2023, via email. Please reach out to your parents and ensure they are receiving this information. Packets are due back no later than September 15, 2023. Additional student's nomination is now being accepted. Registrations packets will be sent via email September 1, 2023. Registration packets and conference fees are due back no later than October 1, 2023. We will be collecting forms and payments (conference fees $545) for additional students at convention. Time and location will be available at convention. Email us at programs@amvets.org.

***When submitting any National Programs Application or forms, be sure to check the “Revision” date on the bottom of the form. These documents contain important information we will need. Most of them are under the Resources and Forms https://www.amvets.org/resources-forms.

Would you like to have your story featured in our Newsletter?
Media inquiries?
Simply send an email to media@amvets.org

media@amvets.org
Difference Maker

Michael Emerson is a Marine Corps veteran with a huge heart and a soft spot for community

By Nathaniel Chambers

He started as a newspaper boy, at Burger King and KFC, and in tire sales at Montgomery Ward. But yet Michael Lee Emerson never felt as though those were his callings.

Born as the first of eight children to a French mother and Austrian and Hungarian father, Emerson was raised in the suburbs of Washington DC after his parents emigrated from Western Europe. They gave him and his siblings a better life, and he realized what a privilege it was to live in the US.

So, to show his appreciation to the US, Emerson enlisted in the Marine Corps back in 1982. The then-19-year-old was an Infantryman who was the 4th squad leader of his Platoon #2041. Emerson even graduated second in his class at Camp Lejeune a few months later, and received his primary Military Occupational Specialty of 0311.

Emerson was deployed to countries throughout his time in the Marines, and he even became a Golden Shellback.

Unfortunately, his time in the military was cut short, however, as Emerson suffered the final blow of his many injuries he racked up while enlisted. He became a Disabled for Life American Veteran, and while he may not serve in the battlefield anymore, he still serves his country and his fellow military servicemen in many other ways.

Emerson is part of multiple veteran organizations, and he spends a lot of time volunteering as well. He loves having the opportunity to give back as much as he can, and when he got the opportunity to join AMVETS, he did not hesitate.

“I had already joined several other VSOs and thought AMVETS was a good organization that is very open to allowing all honorably discharged veterans to join,” Emerson stated. “They want to help all veterans.”

That last statement makes Emerson the perfect fit for AMVETS. He wants to help veterans and people alike, and he has been doing that in many ways ever since his honorable discharge.

“Michael believes in giving back to his community and has been a community volunteer for more than 35-plus years,” his website says. “Michael’s volunteer philosophy is: ‘I believe to be a good citizen, you need to give back to your Community and Country for the common good.’”

That is why Emerson spends so much time volunteering and giving back. He believes that is the way you help build up the community, and it is a way to help show your support.

Every single place Emerson volunteers at, he gives it his all. He does not ask for any sort of monetization or praise in return. Instead, he focuses on truly helping these organizations by donating his time, expertise, designs, connections and contacts.

The memorial and veterans organizations Emerson supports are:

- Waller County Veterans Memorial
- National Desert Storm War Memorial
- Gold Star Families Memorial Monument
- Hayward 9/11 Memorial
- Oakland County, Michigan 9/11 Memorial
- Silent Heroes of The Cold War National Memorial
- The American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial
- Castro Valley Veterans Memorial
- Flight 93 National Memorial
- 2nd Marine Division Remembrance Monument

The Flight 93 Memorial

Again, Emerson does not support any of these organizations for recognition or monetary gain. He genuinely cares about each and every one of these organizations and what they stand for.

Emerson also believes it is a way of being able to serve even after not getting to serve as an active military member for as long as he thought he would. He shows day in and day out that he joined the military because he wanted to serve his country and give back.

In fact, just last month, Emerson got his hands dirty by serving firsthand, and it was an experience that he will take with him for the rest of his life.

“In June 2022, I volunteered with a friend and fellow US Marine to go to the country of war-ravaged Ukraine on a Humanitarian Aid Mission,” Emerson said. “We brought many needed items, such as battle rations, burn cream, food, pairs of Bombas socks, and much more medical equipment.

Also, while we were there we bought and donated more food, medical equipment and cleaning supplies. We met up with hundreds of Ukrainian War Widows, Orphans, Refugees, Military Disabled Veterans, Government Officials, Ukrainian Media, plus Soldiers of the Ukrainian Military.”

Emerson believes that to see the change, you have to be the change. That is why he continues to use his experiences from the war for good, and why he is a well-respected military veteran.

AMVETS and so many other organizations are fortunate to have Emerson in their corner, as he is a great addition to all their communities.
Joint Testimonial

On July 15th, we gathered in Massachusetts for a heartwarming joint testimonial to celebrate the remarkable leadership of National Commander Don McLean and National Auxiliary President, Karin Simmons. It was a day filled with laughter, joy, and camaraderie as we recognized their outstanding achievements during their tenure. Many AMVETS joined us along with Ladies Auxiliary and Sons members in this memorable event, sharing awards, delicious food, and heartfelt gratitude. We extend our sincere thanks to all who attended and commend our esteemed leaders for their unwavering dedication and service since taking office.

Central Alabama Veteran Health Care System

The Central Alabama healthcare system will be celebrating the Centennial Anniversary of the Tuskegee Campus of the Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System (CAVHCS) with two events: A concert on September 29 and a Parade on November 2nd. Details on the events can be found on the CAVHCS Facebook page.

For details in sponsorship opportunities, other philanthropic endeavors, volunteering, or Partnership, don’t hesitate to contact Erica Moore at 334-318-9173 or Erica.Moore2@va.gov
HEADQUARTERS STAFF

DONALD McLEAN
National Commander
Coast Guard Veteran

JOSEPH CHENELLY
National Executive Director
Marine Veteran

JAZMIN HERRING
National Executive Assistant
JHerring@amvets.org

CAROL HEBERT
National Programs Director
ARMY VETERAN
Programs@amvets.org

BUMI AYODELE
National Communications Specialist
Media@amvets.org

WARREN COX
National Membership Director
ARMY VETERAN
MemberSupport@amvets.org

RESOURCES

AMVETS MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONS
membersupport@amvets.org

FILE A VA CLAIM
https://amvets.org/filing-va-claims/

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE
https://amvets.org/prepare-for-employment/

MEDIA INQUIRES
media@amvets.org

VETERANS CRISIS LINE
Dial 988 (press 1)