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Contact: (608) 266-0517  
Colleen.Flaherty@dva.wisconsin.gov

## WDVA Awards \$350,000 to Veteran Nonprofits

Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) Secretary-designee James Bond announced \$350,000 in grants were awarded to 12 nonprofit organizations that provide financial assistance, entrepreneurship training, or other services to Wisconsin veterans and their families.

“These grants directly fund the good work being done on the ground to assist veterans and their families,” said Secretary-designee Bond. “Thousands of folks are working across our state to serve veterans right now, and they deserve our recognition and support. I’m pleased that WDVA can help these organizations achieve our shared goal of improving veterans’ lives”

These grants are from two programs: the Veteran Nonprofit Grant, available to all registered nonprofits that serve veterans, and the Veteran Entrepreneurship Grant, open to nonprofits that specifically provide entrepreneurship or technical, business, or other assistance to veteran entrepreneurs to improve employment outcomes.

This year’s Nonprofit Grant recipients are:

**University of Wisconsin-Superior Foundation** (Douglas) received \$25,000 to support the Veteran and Nontraditional Student Center (VNSC) to serve adult learners, student parents, veterans, and their families by providing direct services throughout their academic journey while engaging and educating the campus and community through diverse events and activities that promote individual growth and success.

**The Highground Veterans Memorial Park-WI Vietnam Veterans Memorial Project** (Clark) received \$25,000 to support the Highground Veterans Retreats, Vets & Guitars and Ukuleles Program, and the Highground Veteran/Family Post-Traumatic Stress Peer Support Group.

**Courage Foundation** (Madison) received \$25,000 to empower veterans’ post-traumatic growth – such as improvements in depression, anxiety, and fear – and offer a supportive team community. This initiative provides certified Unbeatable Mind (UM) coaching, one-on-one and as a team while participating veterans work through the year-long UM Foundations course with the team's and coach's support.

**Trinity Equestrian Center Kids Kamp** (Eau Claire) received \$25,000 to help Trinity Equestrian Center effectively address the service needs of families of veterans throughout the state. This will be done

through a combination of support programs, therapeutic interventions, educational initiatives, and community collaborations.

**Wisconsin Veterans Network** (Milwaukee) received \$25,000 to support expenses associated with the Intake, Assessment and Advocacy Program, including Service Navigator salaries/benefits, emergency financial assistance and outreach efforts that help us reach more diverse populations geographically and ethnically.

**United Service Organizations** (Milwaukee) received \$25,000 to support the continuing improvement and expansion of programs, centers, and events at Fort McCoy. They are planning a \$418,000 expansion of the USO center at Fort McCoy in 2024. The improvement project at Fort McCoy includes adding a new kitchen, building a deck, updating furniture and appliances, and improving the internet and other technologies.

**Patriot Racing Project** (Brown) received \$3,700 to provide funding for a mechanical lift and harness necessary to assist veterans who may be disabled or elderly. In addition, funds will be used to acquire raw materials such as sheet steel, hardware, wood, paint, and other assorted materials necessary to assist in the restoration of the vessel. The restoration and use of these materials will be primarily focused on the ability to accommodate all veterans and their needs.

**Heroes For Healthcare** (Milwaukee) received \$25,000 to hire a part-time recruiter to increase the number of medically trained veterans utilizing their skills to enter the healthcare field. This would allow Heroes for Healthcare to develop and implement a recruitment plan to assist transitioning medics, corpsmen, medical technicians, and discharged Veterans to navigate higher education and requirements for healthcare jobs.

**Paralyzed Veterans of America – Wisconsin Chapter** (Milwaukee) received \$25,000 to support the expansion of PVA-WI's sports and recreational programming and a peer mentorship initiative designed for PVA-WI women members. The proposed project aims to enhance the physical, emotional, and social well-being of paralyzed veteran women by expanding their existing sports and recreational activities and establishing a comprehensive peer mentorship program for these women members.

**MKE Urban Stables** (Milwaukee) received \$21,300 to improve veteran's mental health and well-being, particularly those in Milwaukee through equine-assisted therapy. Engagement in equine-assisted therapy allows veterans to improve their functional skills, independence, and abilities to achieve optimal wellness.

**Milwaukee County War Memorial** (Milwaukee) received \$25,000 to support a statewide permanent exhibit honoring over 5,200 Wisconsin veterans who were held as prisoner of war from the Civil War forward and the 1,651 Wisconsin service members still classified as missing in action.

This year's Entrepreneurship Grant recipient is:

**Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative** (Milwaukee) received \$100,000 to provide outreach to a total of 165 Veterans and to purchase Military CEO: Guided Business Plan training for 25 Veterans. Funds will also be used to provide additional WWBIC Training for 25 Veterans including Start, Run, Grow Your Business and QuickBooks trainings. Additionally, WWBIC will distribute 16 laptops to Veteran Owned Businesses and provide \$20,000 in grants to Veteran Owned Businesses.

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