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We are honored and grateful to share the 2023 Report of the National Veterans Legal Services Program’s Pro Bono Program (NVLSP) Lawyers Serving Warriors® (LSW). This report highlights the outstanding work of our pro bono partners who have generously volunteered their time and efforts to help service members, veterans, and their families. Our pro bono partners’ exceptional dedication is evident in the hours they have donated in serving our veterans.

In 2023, NVLSP’s pro bono partners set a new standard by providing over 84,000 hours in pro bono time to veterans with an approximate value of more than $68 million dollars. This is the fifth consecutive year of growth in pro bono hours and the third year with over 50,000 hours in pro bono time. Our partners served a record high of 489 veterans and service members.

This report showcases NVLSP’s recognition of the outstanding legal work provided by law firms and corporate legal departments nationwide. We are grateful for the opportunity to leverage our expertise in collaboration with our pro bono partners to enable service members and veterans to obtain the benefits they are entitled to receive. We hope you will enjoy reading about the transformational effect of this exemplary pro bono work.

We look forward to continuing to work with our extraordinary pro bono partners.

Paul Wright
Executive Director
National Veterans Legal Services Program
This report honors the tireless dedication of Lawyers Serving Warriors® volunteers pursuing veterans’ claims before the Department of Defense and the VA. We celebrate the impact of top-notch pro bono legal advocacy which improves the lives of those who have served.

The caliber of Lawyers Serving Warriors® volunteers’ legal writing and analysis is striking in the dozens of life-changing success stories featured in the Victory Lap of this report. Even more prominent is the outpouring of respect and appreciation for the dangerous and often traumatic events our nation’s veterans have experienced and for the continuing impact of this trauma on veterans’ lives after service.

Each year brings new successes for different veterans, but the common theme is the continuing effort to pursue just outcomes through legal advocacy. NVLSP receives hundreds of veterans’ applications for pro bono assistance every year. We derive strength from knowing that with all of our pro bono partners, we will be able to continue our work of assisting veterans into the future.

On behalf of NVLSP, we are honored to work with all of you, our pro bono volunteers. We thank you annually in this report, but our appreciation continues every day. This report highlights numerous victories, but it is just a snapshot as there were many more impactful victories achieved in 2023 than we could summarize in a single report. We express our gratitude for the tremendous achievements we have been able to accomplish together.

Rochelle Bobroff
Director of Lawyers Serving Warriors®, Pro Bono Program of the National Veterans Legal Services Program
The National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP) is a national nonprofit organization that has worked since 1981 to ensure that the government delivers to our nation's 18 million veterans and active duty personnel the benefits to which they are entitled because of disabilities resulting from their military service to our country.
What We Do

The National Veterans Legal Services Program’s Pro Bono Program, Lawyers Serving Warriors® (LSW), assists service members and veterans with applications for disability benefits, both at the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs. Keep reading for the most common types of cases we handle.

**Military Medical Retirement**

LSW pro bono volunteer attorneys represent both service members and veterans who are seeking a military medical retirement. Military medical retirement benefits include monthly tax-free military disability payment benefits, medical care through TRICARE for the veteran and his or her spouse for life, TRICARE for the veteran’s children while they remain dependents, and a military retiree ID card that gives the veteran access to military bases and amenities. While still on active duty, service members applying for a military medical retirement are provided a formal hearing during the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) process. Pro bono volunteer attorneys gather medical and lay evidence, prepare witnesses and present oral arguments. In addition, volunteers submit a 5 to 10 page brief. Veterans who were improperly denied a military medical retirement during the IDES process can appeal by filing a brief at a military board, such as the Board for Correction of Military Records. Pro bono volunteer attorneys review the evidence in the veteran’s file and prepare a 12 to 15 page brief. If unsuccessful, these cases may be appealed to federal court.

**Combat-Related Special Compensation**

Medically retired veterans are eligible for an additional tax-free monthly benefit if their disabilities result from serving in combat. Pro bono volunteer attorneys assist veterans in completing the Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) application form. LSW volunteer attorneys also submit a 5 to 10 page brief and additional evidence that demonstrates the veteran’s disabilities satisfy the statutory definition of “combat-related.”
What We Do

Discharge Upgrades

LSW volunteer attorneys help veterans apply to upgrade their characterization of service, for example from “Other Than Honorable” (OTH) to a more favorable characterization such as Honorable or General (Under Honorable Conditions). The discharge upgrade may help veterans receive VA benefits and health care, improve employment opportunities, and restore reputation and self-esteem. Many veterans served through this project have Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injuries (TBI), or other mental health conditions that are related to military service, or are survivors of Military Sexual Trauma. Pro bono volunteer attorneys submit a 10 to 15 page legal brief to a Board for Correction of Military Records or a Discharge Review Board. When applying to a Discharge Review Board, pro bono attorneys may advocate for the veteran at a personal appearance hearing.

Discharge Upgrade File Reviews

Many veterans apply to NVLSP for free legal assistance to upgrade the characterization of their discharge. To help NVLSP in screening applicants to our discharge upgrade program, pro bono volunteers conduct “file reviews” for veterans who have applied for NVLSP services, but are waiting for NVLSP to screen their case. NVLSP screens every applicant to our discharge upgrade program, looking to see if there is a meritorious argument to be made, before referring the matter to a pro bono partner. The pro bono discharge upgrade file review project tasks the volunteers with reviewing and analyzing the files of veterans who have applied for a discharge upgrade so that NVLSP screening attorneys are able to review the files more quickly. This project is primarily administrative in nature and can be completed by attorneys or non-attorneys alike. Pro bono volunteers create a Word table or Excel spreadsheet cataloguing the veteran files.

Military Sexual Trauma

LSW pro bono attorneys represent veterans with claims for service-connected disability benefits for PTSD or other mental or physical conditions as a result of sexual trauma that occurred during military service. Volunteer attorneys submit a 7 to 10 page legal brief to the VA, asserting that the veteran’s disabilities are service-connected and should be compensated. When a veteran’s condition is “service-connected,” he or she receives a disability rating that corresponds with a tax-free monthly benefit check. Some Military Sexual Trauma cases may involve a personal appearance hearing.
What We Do

Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection Program (TSGLI)

In September 2022, LSW launched a pro bono assistance program for traumatically injured service members and veterans seeking TSGLI benefits. This benefit provides short-term financial assistance to traumatically injured service members and veterans in the form of lump sum payments from $25,000 to $100,000. LSW’s program—the first and only TSGLI pro bono assistance program in the country—provides free legal assistance and representation to TSGLI applicants filing initial claims or appeals. LSW volunteer attorneys assist traumatically injured service members and veterans with obtaining medical and lay evidence, completing the claims and appeals forms, and drafting 10 to 15 page briefs demonstrating the applicant’s entitlement to TSGLI benefits. Volunteers may also assist applicants with challenging denied claims directly in federal court, engaging in litigation to obtain improperly denied benefits.

Equal Justice Works Fellowship

Lockeed Martin and Lavan-Harris Charitable Fund are sponsoring two LSW Equal Justice Works Fellowships. Lockeed Martin’s fellowship focuses on systemic issues in military medical retirement cases. The second fellowship is dedicated to a new case type for LSW, The Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection Program (TSGLI), which provides financial assistance to service members traumatically injured during their service.

Appeals

LSW pro bono attorneys file appellate briefs for veterans at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals (BVA) and the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC). At the BVA, volunteer attorneys write an approximately 10 page legal brief and gather relevant medical and lay evidence in support of the veteran. Common issues include service connecting disabilities related to military service, earlier effective date for benefits, or higher disability ratings. If unsuccessful at the BVA, the cases proceed to the CAVC, at which briefs are usually 15 to 20 pages. Further appeal may be had to the Federal Circuit.

Systemic Reform Projects, Amicus Briefs and Comments

Systemic reform projects are an integral component of LSW pro bono partnerships. These projects include research memos, flyers, manuals, and FOIA requests, as well as systemic litigation. Volunteers further assist NVLSP with appellate amicus briefs and comments on proposed regulations.
Pro Bono Hours

Below is an overview, by year, of the number of hours pro bono volunteers at LSW law firm and corporate partners worked on LSW-referred pro bono matters.

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<td>2019</td>
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<td>80000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2023</td>
<td>84000</td>
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84k pro bono hours in 2023

57% increase in pro bono hours since 2019
Pro Bono Value

Below is an overview, by year, of the value of the pro bono work by volunteers from LSW law firm and corporate partners. The value has almost doubled since 2019.

94% increase in pro bono value since 2019

$68.6 million pro bono value in 2023
LSW engaged in extensive outreach, conducting 25 clinics for veterans, service members, and our pro bono partners, serving 282 individuals.

Clinics

25

The topics included discharge upgrades, discharge upgrade file reviews, medical retirement, IDES, CRSC and TSGLI.

Veterans

282

282 veterans were provided with brief service, advice, and individual consultations.
LSW engaged in extensive outreach, with LSW staff conducting 49 live trainings for 2,730 attendees at partner law firms and corporations throughout 2023. LSW further provided trainings to NVLSP state agency partners and other community organizations serving veterans.

### Live Trainings

49

LSW trainings addressed discharge upgrades, Combat-Related Special Compensation, medical retirement, IDES, and TSGLI.

### Attendees

2,730

Attendees came from partner law firms, state agency partners and other community organizations serving veterans.

NVLSP Director of Training and Publications Rick Spataro presents at Virginia State Bar Military Law Section’s Military and Veterans Law Symposium.
Victory Lap

This section provides examples of how service members and veterans were assisted through the dedicated work of our pro bono partners. NVLSP attorneys were grateful to collaborate with our pro bono partners as co-counsel and mentors to achieve victorious decisions in 2023. NVLSP attorneys include: Rochelle Bobroff, Amy Fulmer, Matthew Handley, Esther Leibfarth, Ashlyn McCall, Zachary Outzen, Abigail Reynolds, and Lora Vineberg.

Litigation

Military Medical Retirement

A Navy Airman Apprentice experienced PTSD from his Vietnam service in the late 1960s, but instead of receiving disability processing, he was wrongfully separated for “unsuitability due to personality disorder.” At the time of his discharge, PTSD was not a medically recognized diagnosis. Recent legislation and Department of Defense Guidance require the application of “liberal consideration,” which takes into account current medical knowledge of the symptoms of PTSD. However, the Navy argued that the statute and guidance requiring liberal consideration were not applicable to record correction applications seeking medical retirement. The Court of Federal Claims was persuaded by the Navy that liberal consideration did not apply to medical retirement. Michael Clemente and Adam Greenfield of Latham & Watkins appealed to the Federal Circuit. The Federal Circuit reversed the decision below and held that the Navy was required to apply liberal consideration to applications that seek medical retirement based on PTSD. In reaching that conclusion, the Federal Circuit separately addressed the applicable Congressional statute and DOD guidance, concluding that they both independently require that liberal consideration be applied to all requests to correct the narrative reason on a veteran’s discharge certificate or DD-214, where the correction sought is based in whole or in part on matters related to PTSD.

On January 25, 2023, the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit ruled in favor of Robert Doyon, a Vietnam era Navy veteran suffering from PTSD who was wrongfully denied military medical retirement. This holding requires every Board for Correction of Military Records to apply liberal consideration to applications, like Mr. Doyon’s, that seek a medical retirement for PTSD. Mr. Doyon is represented by NVLSP and Latham & Watkins LLP.

An Army Motor Transport Operator injured his back and leg in a motor vehicle accident while deployed to Iraq in 2003. He was provided disability processing, which found that both his back and leg were unfitting, preventing his continued service.
Military Medical Retirement

However, the Army provided no rating to his unfitting leg condition, resulting in a disability severance instead of medical retirement. This decision was upheld by the Physical Disability Board of Review (PDBR) and the D.C. District Court. Bradley Hyde, Michael David, Helen Kirkby, Carolyn Hudson, and Erik Jensen of Latham & Watkins appealed to the DC Circuit. Applying the arbitrary and capricious standard, the DC Circuit found that the failure of the PDBR to confer any rating on the leg condition violated the law. The court pointed out that both Army regulations and the governing statute “confirm an obligation” to rate conditions that contribute to an unfitting condition and are “collectively” unfitting. Because the PDBR had found that the leg condition was collectively unfitting with the back condition, it was “contrary to law” not to confer a rating. The Army asserted that the contribution of the leg condition was not “significant,” but the court rejected the Army’s “add-on” of a requirement of a significant contribution as contrary to law.

A Marine Corps Low Altitude Air Defense Gunner engaged in a firefight with the Taliban and also experienced blasts from improvised explosive devices (IEDs), suicide bombings, and other direct and indirect attacks from insurgents. Subsequently, while serving in the Army, he expressed suicidal ideations, and he was then quickly administratively discharged for a purported “personality disorder.” A few years later, the VA diagnosed him with PTSD from combat, rated at 30%. He applied to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records (ABCMR) for a retroactive medical retirement but was denied.

Megan Farooqui, Matthew Clark, and RoxAnn Mack of Faegre Drinker represented the veteran in an appeal to the Court of Federal Claims. In an initial voluntary remand, the ABCMR agreed he did not have a personality disorder, but nevertheless upheld the denial of medical retirement. The ABCMR concluded that the veteran had a non-compensable adjustment disorder due to familial problems. Back in court for full briefing on an amended complaint, the Court held that the ABCMR had failed to provide the required liberal consideration when it rejected the VA’s PTSD diagnosis. The Court found that Board acted arbitrarily and capriciously in failing to address conflicting medical evidence. The Court remanded the matter back to the ABCMR for review of the veteran’s diagnosis in accordance with liberal consideration. In the subsequent remand, the veteran was awarded a medical retirement for PTSD from combat, rated at 30%.

An Air Force Structural Journeyman’s deployment to Afghanistan exposed him to multiple mortar and rocket attacks and caused him to experience symptoms of anxiety and depression. He sought treatment and was diagnosed with a compensable mental health condition. However, the Air Force never performed a line of duty determination to assess whether his potentially disqualifying mental health condition occurred in the line of duty. As a result, he was denied medical retirement. Post-discharge, the VA diagnosed him with service-connected PTSD from his combat
Military Medical Retirement

An Army Infantryman deployed to Iraq for close to fourteen months. He witnessed a sniper kill his squad leader and was thrown from a vehicle after hitting an IED, which rendered him unconscious and caused him to suffer numerous shrapnel injuries. He was awarded a Purple Heart and Combat Infantryman Badge. Army medical personnel diagnosed him with, and treated him for, battle-related PTSD on more than twenty occasions and placed him on limited duty. Yet, he was administratively discharged for an adjustment disorder. Shortly thereafter, the VA diagnosed him with PTSD rated at 100% disabling. He applied to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records (ABCMR) for a retroactive retirement, but the ABCMR upheld the Army’s finding that he had an adjustment disorder. Sean Powell, Kate Middleton and Blake Lehr of Faegre Drinker filed a complaint in the Court of Federal Claims. In remanding the matter, the court stated that the ABCMR must: “Provide a reasoned explanation for its conclusions. Simply reciting applicable laws and regulations, the alleged facts, the parties’ arguments, and declaring a winner without explanation will not be sufficient.” On remand, the ABCMR applied liberal consideration to the evidence and granted a medical retirement for PTSD rated at 100%. The volunteers subsequently assisted the veteran with an application for Combat-Related Special Compensation.

An Army Infantryman deployed to Iraq in March 2004 with the First Cavalry Division. He participated in a historic ambush in Sadr City, sustaining a bullet wound to the left shoulder and another to his upper arm. He was awarded a Purple Heart, the Army Commendation Medal with Valor Device, and the Combat Infantryman Badge for his
Military Medical Retirement

honorable service in Iraq. He developed Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a result of these duty-incurred injuries and experiences. Despite overwhelming military and medical records demonstrating his medical condition, he was abruptly administratively separated from the Army for an alleged “personality disorder,” a condition dismissed as independent of military service and thus not eligible for military retirement or benefits. He applied to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records for a retroactive medical retirement and was denied. Former Crowell & Moring partner Joshua Pond and Risa Rahman of Crowell & Moring filed a complaint in the Court of Federal Claims, and the matter was remanded for full consideration of the evidence. On remand, the veteran was awarded medical retirement with an explicit finding that his PTSD was combat related. The volunteers subsequently assisted the veteran with an application for Combat-Related Special Compensation.

A Marine Corps veteran suffered a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) from motor vehicle accidents and then also developed depression. The VA concluded that the symptoms of the TBI and depression overlapped, rating the combined condition at 50%. The Navy found the veteran unfit for continued service, but the Navy separated out the TBI from the depression and gave the unfitting TBI condition a 10% rating, which was insufficient for medical retirement. Alexander Canizares of Perkins Coie challenged the low rating at the Court of Federal Claims. When the government sought a remand, the volunteer highlighted the delays resulting from the six month remand period sought by the Navy. The Court limited the remand period to just over four months, with no opportunity for extension. The day before the end of the remand period, the Board for Correction of Naval Records issued a decision increasing the veteran’s rating to 70%, with a 50% rating for TBI and depression and another 30% rating for migraines.

An Army Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic served for six years, but then developed depression during an acrimonious divorce. After he sought treatment from a psychiatrist, his unit called him “psycho” and wrote “psycho” on his helmet strap. His Commander expressed concern that he was at risk for suicide and sent him for an evaluation. On July 28, 2023, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled in favor of Jason Sissel, an Operation Iraqi Freedom Army veteran who was wrongfully denied military medical retirement. The court found that the Army’s decision was not entitled to heightened deference and that the Army violated the law when assigning no rating to his injured leg.
Military Medical Retirement Administrative Applications and Appeals

Despite his documented diagnosis of depression in service, he was discharged for a “personality disorder.” Post-discharge, the VA service-connected the veteran for depression, rated at 50% disabling, and explicitly found that he did not have a personality disorder. The veteran applied to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records (ABCMR), but was denied a retroactive medical retirement. Lee Whitesell, Tazewell Ellett and Rachel Buff of Hogan Lovells filed a complaint in the Court of Federal Claims, and the court remanded the matter to the ABCMR for reconsideration in conformity with applicable laws. A medical advisory opinion recommended against medical retirement due to insufficient evidence. The volunteers submitted a rebuttal highlighting the advisor’s failure to properly consider the evidence. By a two to one vote, the majority of the ABCMR agreed that the evidence supported a finding of unfitting depression, rated at 30%, sufficient for medical retirement.

A Navy Medical Corps Officer attending medical school began suffering from extreme levels of anxiety and panic attacks several times per day. She was placed on limited duty, and due to her mental health, disenrolled from medical school. She was referred to the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (“IDES”) process and was found to have a condition medically unacceptable for military service. However, the Physical Evaluation Board (“PEB”) found her fit for duty and denied medical retirement even though she was unable to perform common military tasks, was not worldwide deployable, and could not perform her specialized duties. She was administratively separated and received a 70% disability rating for her mental health condition from the VA within a month of separation. Brian Kavanaugh, Mustafa Abdul-Jabbar, and Stephen Chase of Sidley Austin appealed to the Court of Federal Claims contesting the denial of medical retirement. On remand to the Board for Correction of Naval Records (BCNR), the volunteers highlighted the voluminous medical records demonstrating that she could not perform her job in service. The BCNR determined that the PEB had erred in determining she was fit to do her job, relying on her ability to perform administrative research tasks and not the duties of a Navy Medical Corps Officer. The BCNR awarded medical retirement with a 70% rating for her mental health condition.

A Marine Corps Mortarman deployed to Kuwait and Iraq in 2003 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He engaged in multiple firefights, including providing a distraction during a high-profile rescue of a captured female soldier. Following his deployment, he experienced mental health symptoms, including suicidal ideations. His Sergeant refused to let him attend his mental health appointments because the unit was going out for exercises. Despite in-service diagnoses of PTSD and depression, he was administratively separated for a personality disorder. Shortly after discharge, the VA diagnosed him with service-connected PTSD and depression based on pre-discharge examinations.
Military Medical Retirement Administrative Applications and Appeals

Kayla Britton, Joshua Matushin, and Edan Shertzer of Faegre Drinker assisted the veteran with an application to the Board for Correction of Naval Records (BCNR), seeking medical retirement for his mental health condition. The brief explained that he should have been referred to the Disability Evaluation System for his mental health symptoms and found unfit based on his suicidal ideations and continued need for treatment. The BCNR applied liberal consideration to his statements about the traumatic events he experienced and their adverse impact on his service. The BCNR awarded medical retirement for combat-related PTSD rated at 50% disabling.

Also, the volunteers argued that her mental health symptoms resulted in inattentiveness which also rendered her unfit, meriting a 30% rating. The BCMR concurred, finding her unfit for both conditions at the requested ratings, conferring medical retirement for a combined disability rating of 60%.

An Army Specialist was injured in training and she subsequently suffered from fibromyalgia. In addition, while deployed to South Korea in 2004, she was the victim of a violent sexual assault committed by another service member. She was diagnosed in service with PTSD from military sexual assault and referred to the Disability Evaluation System. She was found unfit due to her fibromyalgia, but the condition was given a 20% disability rating, which is too low for medical retirement. The Army did not evaluate whether her mental health condition was unfitting. Just prior to discharge, the VA assigned a 40% rating for her fibromyalgia and a 30% rating for her PTSD. Chris Fitzpatrick and George Salter of Hogan Lovells represented the veteran in seeking a medical retirement at the Board for Correction of Military Records (BCMR). The brief presented the extensive evidence that her fibromyalgia met the criteria for a 40% rating.

An Army Infantryman deployed to Iraq where he “fought in fire fights … did house to house raids looking for weapons and insurgents … was attacked by mortars, rockets, grenades, artillery, and small arms fire on his base, on convoys, and on foot patrol.” He earned a Combat Infantryman Badge in recognition of his combat service. He subsequently developed mental health symptoms and was diagnosed with PTSD. Yet, the same doctor who diagnosed him with PTSD concurrently recommended that the Infantryman be administratively separated for a Personality Disorder. The veteran became homeless and was admitted to an inpatient VA facility, where he was again diagnosed with PTSD. The VA granted service connection for PTSD from combat. Amy Doig of Cozen O’Connor filed a brief at the Army Board for Correction of Military Records (ABCMR), seeking a retroactive medical retirement for the veteran. The brief argued that the Personality Disorder diagnosis was erroneous; instead, the veteran should have been provided Disability Evaluation System processing and

Victory Lap
Military Medical Retirement Administrative Applications and Appeals

a medical retirement for his PTSD. The ABCMR was convinced that the evidence supported disability processing and referred the veteran to the Office of the Surgeon General. The veteran was then medically retired for combat-related PTSD with a 70% rating. The firm is now assisting the veteran with an application for Combat-Related Special Compensation.

Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC)

An Air Force Technical Sergeant sustained physical injuries while deployed on a classified mission to an undisclosed area in Africa. There was no medical aid available at the forward operating location, nor any follow-on care in theater. He therefore sent text messages to an off-location flight surgeon. After he was medically retired, the veteran sought CRSC, but several conditions he sustained during the classified mission were denied CRSC. He sought further review at the Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records (AFBCMR) within three years of his initial CRSC denial. The flight surgeon who had texted him during deployment wrote a letter in support, but the details were limited due to operational security requirements. The AFBCMR refused to consider the merits of the claim, summarily dismissing the claim as untimely.
CRSC Litigation

Kevin Gaunt of Hunton Andrews Kurth appealed to the Court of Federal Claims, and the court’s remand order required the AFBCMR to “explain fully” the basis for any further determination that the claim was untimely and the reasons why the three-year deadline should not be waived. An advisory opinion ignored the timeliness issue but concluded there was insufficient evidence that the injuries sustained during the special mission operations were incurred as a direct result of armed conflict. The volunteer submitted a rebuttal arguing that under the proper evidentiary standard — “the preponderance of available documentary information” — the veteran was entitled to CRSC. The AFBCMR granted CRSC for several conditions caused by his classified mission.

An Air Force Acquisitions Manager injured his back in a combat training during a simulated Humvee rollover training exercise. He then received emergency surgery to remove a herniated disc compromising his spinal cord, including a bone graft and a fusion. He was medically retired for his back conditions, with an explicit finding that his disabilities were combat related due to being incurred under conditions simulating war. Yet, his application for CRSC was denied on the basis that he did not submit evidence from the date of the injury and the evidence he submitted did not “clearly indicate the applicant’s disabilities are the direct result of ... simulating war.” Timothy McHugh, Tim Bado, and Madeline Cane of Troutman Pepper filed a complaint in the Court of Federal Claims, asserting that the standard of “clear” evidence from the date of the injury does not comport with the evidentiary requirements in the Air Force Instruction, CRSC statute, and Program Guidance. On remand, the volunteers emphasized that the legal standard is the preponderance of available evidence, not limited to the date of the injury. The Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records (AFBCMR) awarded benefits based on the totality of medical records that “specifically tie his CRSC disabilities to combat training.” The AFBCMR further noted that there was no contradictory evidence indicating any other cause for the conditions, awarding CRSC after finding the conditions were incurred under conditions simulating war.

An Air Force Technical Sergeant participated in a special operations mission to raid an IED manufacturer in Iraq in 2007. His Humvee tank was struck by an IED blast and small arms fire in route back to base. His left side torso area was directly exposed to the IED blast wave, causing severe chest and body pain. He did not seek immediate medical treatment, due to concern for his career progression. Two years later, he was diagnosed with arthritis in his left hip, which continued to worsen. He also suffered from headaches and was diagnosed with a traumatic brain injury (TBI). His doctors linked these conditions to the IED blast. In 2014, he was awarded a Purple Heart, based on statements from eyewitnesses and the commander to whom the incident was contemporaneously reported.
CRSC Litigation

In 2016, he was medically retired for his hip injury, with the explicit determination that this condition was combat-related. He applied on his own for CRSC and was denied initially and on appeal due to the lack of medical treatment on the day of the blast. Tyler Domino, Frank Volpe, Ross Kloeber, and Emily Wexler of Sidley Austin represented the veteran in an appeal to the Court of Federal Claims, which was remanded to the Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records (AFBCMR). The remand brief emphasized that the legal standard is the preponderance of the evidence based on the evidence available in the record. The brief set forth considerable evidence, including the Purple Heart award and eyewitness statements, demonstrating that the veteran’s injuries were caused by the blasts. The AFBCMR agreed and concluded that the preponderance of the evidence substantiated his contentions and was sufficient to justify his hip condition and TBI meeting the definition of a combat-related disability.

An Army avionics and weapons mechanic deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, where his duty station was attacked by mortars thirty to forty times each day. The daily attacks required him to run for cover multiple times a day as buildings exploded around him. One evening, while riding back to the barracks, a rocket-propelled grenade narrowly missed his vehicle. He was medically retired for PTSD, with an explicit finding by the Physical Evaluation Board (PEB) that his disability was combat-related.

Leah Friedman, Andrej Novakovski, and Natalie Pita of Latham & Watkins assisted the veteran with an application for CRSC at the Army Board for Correction of Military Records (ABCMR), but it was denied. They filed a complaint at the Court of Appeals for Federal Claims, and the court remanded the matter with direct instructions to address the medical records and the PEB finding that his PTSD was combat related. On remand, the ABCMR awarded CRSC benefits for the veteran’s PTSD. The ABCMR “considered the PEB determination and ... agreed that but for the applicant’s time in combat, it was more likely than not that the applicant would not have been diagnosed with PTSD; therefore a causal relationship does exist between his time in combat and the subsequent diagnosis of PTSD.” The veteran received a back award of over $26,000 as well as prospective benefits.
**Victory Lap**

**CRSC Administrative Applications and Appeals**

An Army power-generation equipment repairer deployed twice to Iraq and twice to Kuwait, earning a Combat Action Badge. He applied for CRSC on his own and was approved for mental health and back conditions, with a total combat-related rating of 20%, but denied for several other conditions. Catherine Thomas of DLA Piper filed a brief seeking reconsideration. The brief highlighted the passage in the previous year of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (“PACT”) Act. The PACT Act acknowledged the deleterious effects of burn pits on veterans who served in Gulf War countries, such as Iraq and Kuwait, and conferred a presumption of service connection for 20 conditions. The brief advocated that the veteran’s PACT Act conditions, sinusitis and rhinitis, be found combat-related as due to the fumes and gases from burn pits under the instrumentality of war category. The brief further pointed out that the veteran’s sleep apnea had been coded by the VA as secondary to his mental health condition and noted that the two previously approved conditions had obtained higher ratings from the VA. The veteran was awarded CRSC for his sinusitis, rhinitis, and sleep apnea, with increased ratings applied to the two previously approved conditions. His overall rating went from 20% to 80%.

An Air Force Field Grade Officer deployed to Iraq where he enabled critical base life support, transportation, and personnel security services to over 90,000 soldiers, sailors, and airmen. He was subjected to enemy attacks on base. He was medically retired for PTSD, but the Physical Evaluation Board found his PTSD was not combat-related. He applied for CRSC for his PTSD and was denied. James Washburn and Alex Hill of Troutman Pepper sought reconsideration and submitted a Command Statement attesting to the veteran’s experience of daily mortar attacks on base. They further obtained a letter from a Chief at the History Office of the Air Force which stated that for the period the veteran was at the base, at the unclassified level, Air Force “records indicate that insurgents conducted 47 indirect fire attacks during the period in question, employing the following: 79 rockets, 24 mortars and 30 unidentified weapons.” The veteran was awarded CRSC for his PTSD with a combat-related rating of 50%.

The veteran was an Army intelligence officer and engineer who was deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, where he was exposed to burn pits. As a Horizontal Construction Platoon Leader during his deployment to Iraq, he was responsible for constructing and maintaining the burn pits, which burned 24 hours a day and were his base’s sole means of disposing of waste. A burn pit was also located just outside the perimeter of his base in Afghanistan, leaving a smoke cloud hanging above the base, along with the inescapable stench of burning waste. He was subsequently diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukemia, a disease that is predominantly found in the elderly and is very rarely diagnosed in individuals under the age of 40. The veteran responded well to medication, but the debilitating side effects
of his medication included chronic fatigue, insomnia and hand tremors. He was medically retired for this condition, which was rated at 100% disabling. Lauren Lifland and Michael Bongiorno of WilmerHale filed a CRSC application for his leukemia as covered by the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 (the “PACT Act”). The PACT Act lists lymphoma as a covered condition but does not specifically list chronic lymphocytic leukemia. The brief submitted with the veteran’s CRSC application explained that the veteran’s condition is a form of non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, and therefore it logically follows that his condition is a type of lymphoma or lymphomatic cancer intended to be presumptively service-connected pursuant to the PACT Act. The veteran was awarded CRSC at 100% for his leukemia condition with the explicit determination that it qualifies under the PACT Act.

An Army IT Specialist served in Operation Enduring Freedom with two deployments to Afghanistan. He suffered an accident during an airborne parachute training in which he landed on a stack of construction pipes, causing injuries to his right knee and shoulder. He further injured his right foot and both ankles in tactical exercises. After he was medically retired, he applied on his own for CRSC and was denied. Kefei Li and Allan Soobert of Paul Hastings represented the veteran in seeking reconsideration. They submitted medical evidence dated shortly after the bad landing, attributing pain in his right knee and shoulder to the incident. They similarly submitted medical documentation of the conditions caused by tactical exercises.

The veteran was awarded CRSC for these conditions as well as tinnitus with a combined combat-related disability rating of 60%.

A Marine Corps veteran served for over 8 years as an Artillery Meteorological Man and over 12 years as a Field Artillery Operations Man, earning numerous awards including two Combat Action Ribbons. He was retired based on years of service, and the VA awarded service connection for many conditions including PTSD as well as foot, shoulder, knee, and finger disabilities. He applied on his own for CRSC but was unable to complete the complicated form correctly, resulting in his application being returned for insufficient information. Virginia Callahan of DLA Piper compiled extensive documentation of his many combat-related conditions and filed an initial application for CRSC. He was awarded CRSC for his PTSD as a direct result of armed conflict and for several physical conditions as incurred through conditions simulating war, for a combined combat-related disability rating of 90%.

A Navy Master Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Technician was frequently exposed to blasts and explosions. In Iraq, he experienced an explosion within four feet of his body and was forced to make direct physical contact with a live IED. Later, while deployed to Afghanistan as the EOD team leader, a rocket propelled grenade hit a tree only six feet above his head.
Immediately after the blast, he began engaging the enemy in a firefight. He was medically retired for migraines, shoulder, neck and back conditions. He applied on his own for CRSC, but he was denied based on failing to complete preliminary eligibility requirements. Grace Carpenter of King & Spalding assisted the veteran with his CRSC application for multiple conditions, including PTSD based on his Combat Action Ribbon and direct engagement in combat. The veteran was awarded CRSC at a combined combat-related disability rating of 100% for multiple conditions.

An Army Translator Aide spent the majority of his service tenure in Iraq supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom and in Afghanistan supporting Operation Enduring Freedom providing cultural, interpretation, and translation support. In 2012, he was the left air guard in a convoy of Strykers when the convoy came under enemy fire. While returning fire to the enemy, he sustained an injury after falling from the Stryker hatch and landing on his head, neck, and back, causing him to dislocate his right shoulder and lose consciousness. He received a Combat Action Badge for his engagement in active combat. Subsequently, he developed PTSD and tinnitus. Hallie Balkin and Anne Martin of Microsoft assisted the veteran with an application for CRSC, highlighting his combat service. He was awarded CRSC for his PTSD and tinnitus, for a combined combat-related rating of 60%.

In Iraq, he conducted 27 combat reconnaissance operations, over 70 combat patrols, and executed over 90 “high-risk, direct action” combat missions in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn. He was awarded a Combat Infantryman Badge as well as other medals which explicitly mentioned his outstanding service during combat operations. He developed PTSD, which led to his medical retirement. Kelly Matthews and John Timperio of Dechert represented the veteran in filing an initial application for CRSC, which was awarded with a combined combat-related disability rating of 70%.

An Air Force Technical Sergeant had multiple deployments to Iraq and Kuwait. On one Iraq deployment, he was doing routine maintenance on a vehicle at the base when he heard several explosions. He immediately sought cover under the vehicle, where he waited as the final rocket flew directly overhead and impacted a parking lot outside the typically crowded dining facility, roughly 100 yards from his location. He waited for about 30 seconds before running to get a medical bag. Once he had the medical bag in hand, he ran towards the impact site, now engulfed in black smoke and fire, to assist in searching for casualties in and among the burning vehicles in the parking lot. It took several hours to secure the impact site, extinguish the burning vehicles, and ensure that all personnel were removed from the site.
Victory Lap

CRSC Administrative Applications and Appeals

He was medically retired for PTSD, but his initial application for CRSC was denied. He subsequently received a Combat Action Badge for the combat event. Aimee Ford and Nathan Kelley of Perkins Coie filed for reconsideration, based on the newly received Combat Action Badge. The veteran was awarded CRSC for his PTSD with a combat-related rating of 70%.

The veteran had enlisted in the Army upon graduation from high school, volunteering for the Infantry, and served two tours in Afghanistan and one in Iraq where he regularly participated in combat missions and often came under fire. During one of these missions, bearing a full load of weapons and other gear, he was prematurely dropped from a Blackhawk helicopter, falling about ten feet. Although in severe pain in his back, right shoulder and elsewhere, he soldiered on, obtaining only rudimentary medical attention in the field, and completed this mission. These and other injuries were incurred and exacerbated during his combat tours. After eight years of service, he was medically retired because of his many disabilities. Robert B. Yoshitomi, Peter Krusiewicz, and Amanda Przybycien of Nixon Peabody filed an initial CRSC application for the veteran identifying and documenting his several combat-incurred disabilities, including his back and shoulder, PTSD and tinnitus. The initial decision, overlooking a compelling record, recognized only tinnitus as combat-related. Nixon Peabody then sought reconsideration, submitting a sworn statement from the veteran’s company commander confirming the fall from the helicopter was during a combat mission. The brief reiterated documentation in his military records about frequent participation in combat, all of which had been submitted in the initial application. On reconsideration, the veteran was awarded CRSC for both his PTSD and tinnitus with a total combat-related disability of 70%. He now receives the maximum award to which he is entitled.

An Army Human Intelligence Collector deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom sustained lasting injuries. While the then-soldier was on foot patrol, an Afghani soldier in front of him stepped on an IED and subsequently died of those injuries. When the IED exploded, the veteran was knocked down, suffering a concussion that rendered him disoriented. Nevertheless, he assisted the medic in rendering medical care to the Afghani soldier while taking on enemy fire. He experienced hearing loss and loud ringing in his ears for about a week after the explosion. Brittanie Browning and Phil Slinkard of Akerman assisted the veteran with an initial application for CRSC, highlighting his Combat Action Badge and Physical Evaluation Board findings that his PTSD was combat-related. The veteran was awarded CRSC for PTSD and tinnitus, with a combined combat-related disability rating of 70%.

An Army Unmanned Aircraft System Operator had five combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, including leading an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle platoon in combat. In this capacity, he was responsible for leading a team of soldiers to find and kill enemy targets. He developed PTSD and was medically retired for this
After serving with distinction in the Air Force for 10 years, a recreation specialist received a bad conduct discharge due to one drug test. Thereafter, she rebuilt her civilian life—earning an associate degree, raising three children, and volunteering in her community. She applied on her own to the Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records for an upgrade, and the Board members unanimously agreed that she should receive an upgrade. However, the Acting Assistant Secretary overruled the Board and denied the request, asserting that her character evidence merely related to accomplishments before her court-martial. Kevin King, Emily Vernon and Daniel Randolph of Covington appealed to the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, Following cross-motions for summary judgment, the court found that the Acting Assistant Secretary’s characterization of the evidence was “unsupported” by the record, because the veteran submitted numerous character references and documents demonstrating her community contributions in the years since her discharge. The court held that the Air Force “failed to provide a reasoned explanation for its decision,” which therefore must be “set aside.” On remand, the Air Force upgraded her discharge to General (Under Honorable Conditions).

An Air Force Security Forces Journeyman deployed to Kuwait in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Her immediate supervisor sexually harassed her and encouraged other Airmen to do the same throughout her assignment. She reported
the harassment to her flight chief, but rather than following Air Force procedures following a harassment report, he shared her report with her supervisor/harasser. Subsequent to the veteran reporting the sexual harassment she experienced, she was written up for a series of minor infractions. She was discharged with a General (under Honorable Conditions) characterization of service and a narrative reason for separation of Misconduct – Minor Disciplinary Infractions. Post-discharge, she was service connected by the VA for PTSD from Military Sexual Trauma (MST), rated at 70% disabling. She applied on her own for an upgrade, but was denied. Greg Harris and David Lincoln of Verizon represented the veteran at a hearing before the Air Force Discharge Review Board. They also submitted a brief advocating for liberal consideration, under which her minor misconduct should be mitigated by her PTSD from MST. The Board agreed with the brief that liberal consideration applied. The Board noted that during the hearing, the veteran “provided clarifying testimony and details.” The Board found that the MST caused or substantially contributed to the misconduct that led to her discharge. Her discharge was upgraded to fully Honorable with a narrative reason for separation of Secretarial Authority.

A Marine Corps Field Artillery Man deployed to Saudi Arabia in 1990 in direct support of an Infantry division, preparing for the advance into Kuwait. In 1991, he was among the first wave of troops to breach the enemy line. He was tasked with ensuring the artillery was correctly aligned for the line of fire in each of their advances. He engaged with the enemy, shooting artillery shells to ensure forward movement. Their progress was quick, moving forward every few days, leading to grueling days engaging with the enemy in the midst of the oil fields. He drove through the Corridor of Death, witnessing charred bodies and military tanks burning along the highway. He was awarded a Combat Action Ribbon and a Kuwait Liberation Medal for his combat service. While deployed, his wife miscarried their first child and experienced a nervous breakdown. Soon after, his mother also became very ill. After returning from deployment, he experienced mental health symptoms and was disciplined for minor misconduct, such as failing to follow orders from his sergeants to change into his utility uniform and report to the mess hall and failure to report to his appointed place of duty due to traveling to be with his family. He was discharged with a Bad Conduct Discharge and a narrative reason for separation referencing court martial. He applied on his own for a discharge upgrade and was denied. Several years later, the VA determined that he was likely experiencing PTSD from combat during the time of his misconduct, awarding service connection and benefits for his PTSD. Brad Warner and Therese Detablan of Akin assisted the veteran in seeking reconsideration from the Board for Correction of Naval Records. The brief advocated that the veteran’s mental health condition in service mitigated and outweighed his misconduct, highlighting DOD guidance mandating liberal consideration. The Board agreed.
that his “contentions merited liberal consideration,” and found that his PTSD contributed to the misconduct for which he was discharged. The Board also noted his “meritorious record of combat service... outweighed the comparatively minor misconduct” which resulted in his discharge. The Board upgraded his discharge to General (Under Honorable Conditions) and changed the veteran’s narrative reason for separation to a neutral reference to the decision of the Secretary without mentioning court martial.

Subsequently, he suffered significant physical injuries in a motor vehicle accident, requiring surgery. Despite his continued experience of significant pain, he was hastily taken off opioid pain medications. He tested positive for ecstasy and methamphetamine on a drug test and then was discharged with an Other than Honorable characterization for drug use. The veteran applied on his own for an upgrade and was denied. A few years later, the VA found his service honorable for VA purposes and awarded service connection for PTSD, rated at 50%. Emma Leonelli and Haley Usenick Smith of McGuireWoods represented the veteran at a hearing before the Naval Discharge Review Board, also filing a brief, which highlighted evidence of PTSD symptoms and chronic pain in service. The volunteer asserted that the veteran’s PTSD mitigated and outweighed his misconduct. The Board concurred and further noted that the abrupt discontinuation of opioid medication for his pain led to self-medication. The veteran received an upgrade to Honorable with a narrative reason of Secretarial Authority.

After close to 20 years of flawless service, a Marine who served in the avionics field tested positive for trace amounts of methamphetamine on a urinalysis. At an administrative separation hearing, his superiors testified that he was one of the best and should be permitted to continue to serve. His discharge was suspended for 12 months, and he was allowed to reach twenty years of service, during which he had no more misconduct.
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Discharge Upgrade Administrative Applications and Appeals

Still, he was discharged with a General (Under Honorable Conditions) characterization and a narrative reason of Unacceptable Conduct.

William Cravens and Brendan Anderson of Morgan Lewis filed a brief at the Naval Discharge Review Board seeking an upgrade for the veteran. The brief set forth details of the veteran’s outstanding service, including three tours of duty in Afghanistan. They argued that the suspension of his discharge was a recognition of the isolated character of the one incident of misconduct amid otherwise exceptional performance. They advocated that the Board equitably consider the overall quality of the veteran’s service. Based on his completion of twenty years of service with no other misconduct on his record, the Board upgraded the veteran’s discharge to Honorable and changed the narrative reason to Secretarial Authority.

A Navy Culinary Specialist deployed on a ship off the coast of Iraq which came under a surprise Al Qaeda rocket attack while refueling and replenishing supplies at a Jordanian port. For this, the veteran was awarded a Combat Action Ribbon. The veteran also witnessed a mass of dead bodies around an Iraqi village that was hit by missiles while he was delivering meals to Marines on the shore. He began experiencing symptoms of PTSD and self-medicated with marijuana. After testing positive for marijuana on one test, he was discharged with an Other than Honorable discharge characterization and a narrative reason of Misconduct (Drug Abuse). Post-discharge, he was diagnosed with PTSD. Because the statute of limitations before the Naval Discharge Review Board was about to expire, Michael LaBattaglia and Daniel Hetlich of King & Spalding requested a hearing, rather than an initial records review.

They argued in a brief and at the hearing that the veteran’s PTSD from combat mitigated and outweighed his one instance of misconduct. The Board noted that prior to the misconduct, the veteran had been an “outstanding sailor” who was “hand selected for special missions.” The Board concluded that the veteran’s documented diagnosis of a mental health condition and quality of service mitigated and outweighed his misconduct. He received an upgrade to Honorable with a narrative reason for separation of Secretarial Authority.

A Marine Corps Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Specialist served with honor and distinction, earning several awards and commendations. Yet, shortly before he was to be Honorably discharged for completing his enlistment, his world came crashing down. Two other Marines were caught smoking marijuana on base, and they told authorities that he had helped them get it from “a civilian out in town.” Not one to make excuses, he realized that he had made a terrible mistake. He took ownership of his actions, displayed immediate remorse and wanted to make amends for his lack of judgment. So, he pled guilty to a “conspiracy” and received a bad conduct discharge. While he is Black, the two other Marines who were caught smoking weed on base are Caucasian, and those other Marines received more lenient sentences.

Matthew Scarvie and Thomas Stoever of Arnold & Porter represented the veteran in seeking a discharge upgrade. They submitted 6 character reference letters and highlighted the great post-discharge
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conduct of the veteran in the 20 years following his discharge, including working as a EMT, health care professional, and case manager for Human Services. The Board for Correction of Naval Records upgraded his discharge to General (Under Honorable Conditions). The Board noted that he received a “more harsh sentence than his co-conspirators” and that “marijuana offenses are considered to be relatively less severe today.” The Board “found it compelling that, after having been convicted of drug related offenses, the veteran has since dedicated his life as a social services caseworker to combating the effects of addiction in children and families.”

A Marine Corps Mobile Assault Platoon Driver deployed twice to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He responded as lead driver for a “quick reaction force,” providing fire to assist with taking out the enemies, and he was awarded a Combat Action Ribbon for his combat service. He reported mental health symptoms on his Post-Deployment Health Assessment, but no treatment was provided. He self-medicated by abusing alcohol, leading to a civilian charge for breaking into a vehicle, which was later dropped and expunged. Following his arrest, he was diagnosed with PTSD, and he completed a military substance abuse program. Nevertheless, he received an Other than Honorable discharge for misconduct. Monty Roberson, Matt DelNero, and Irina Danescu of Covington represented the veteran at a hearing before the Naval Discharge Review Board. They argued that the veteran’s PTSD mitigated and outweighed his misconduct pursuant to the liberal consideration standard. They further emphasized his exemplary service in combat and highlighted his good conduct post-discharge.

The Board concluded that there was a “mitigating nexus” between the veteran’s “misconduct and mental health.” The Board focused on his entire time in service, noting the numerous awards the veteran had earned during 7 years of service, including his Combat Action Ribbon. The Board upgraded his discharge to Honorable with a narrative reason of “Secretarial Authority.”

A Marine Corps Hygiene Equipment Operator was raped by another service member. Even though a hospital exam documented bruising from sexual assault, the Navy treated the incident as a consensual sexual encounter. She was threatened with criminal charges for filing a false written statement, and she became a target of sexual harassment and taunting by male Marines. Her request for a restraining order against the rapist was denied.

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She struggled with symptoms of undiagnosed PTSD and turned to alcohol to cope. She was diagnosed with alcohol dependence and charged with minor infractions such as not logging in and out of a log book. She was discharged with an Other than Honorable characterization and a narrative reason of “Misconduct – Minor Disciplinary Infractions.” Following her discharge, the VA determined that her service was honorable for VA purposes and provided service connection for PTSD secondary to sexual assault, rated at 50%. Lyudmila Bondarenko, Ivy Hunt, and Charles Pesant of Paul, Weiss filed a brief at the Board for Correction of Naval Records, seeking an upgrade. The brief argued that the veteran had been traumatized by the sexual assault, the conduct of her fellow Marines, and treatment by her command and the investigators. They advocated that she deserved an upgrade based on her mental health condition which resulted from the trauma she experienced in service. The Board noted that the veteran had reported the sexual assault shortly after the incident and requested a protective order against her assailant. The Board concluded that the veteran’s PTSD from military sexual trauma “significantly outweighed the minor misconduct which resulted in her punitive discharge.” She was granted an upgrade to Honorable with a narrative reason of Secretarial Authority.

An Army Combat Engineer sought medical attention for pain in his shoulder, obtaining a diagnosis of a painful shoulder condition. He was put on a physical profile specifically stating that he should not do push ups due to his shoulder condition. He continued to serve for several months with that restriction on his activity. Due to a mistake, he arrived a few days late to a new duty station, and his commander imposed a punishment of push-ups. He explained to his command his physical condition and proposed doing one arm push-ups instead. Despite his pleas and proposed solution, he was still forced to proceed with his punishment, which aggravated his shoulder injury. He was made to feel very isolated as a result of this treatment. After this incident, he asked to speak with the captain and chaplain to bring his physical condition to their attention and each request was denied. At this time, on a daily basis, he was struggling to endure the pain from his injury. His right arm and hand would go completely numb on many occasions. He had muscle spasms in his arm, as well as pain in his shoulder that would radiate hot stinging pain throughout the entire upper right side of his body. He felt that he had no one to turn to and his shoulder injury grew worse by the day. He went absent without leave (AWOL), spending several weeks homeless, living on the streets. He returned to base and was discharged with an Other Than Honorable characterization and narrative reason of in lieu of court martial. He applied on his own for an upgrade and was denied. Brittany Bolden of DLA Piper assisted the veteran with an application to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records, explaining that his misconduct was due to the fact that he felt that he had no support from his unit and was living in incredible pain.
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A medical advisory opinion stated that it was “more likely than not” the veteran’s shoulder condition “did significantly contribute to” the “AWOL offense, and it should be considered mitigating for the offense.” A 2-1 majority of the Board agreed, upgrading his discharge to Honorable with a narrative reason of Secretarial Authority.

A Marine Corps Field Wireman was lauded as one of the best during her initial years of service. Unfortunately, she experienced persistent pain in her back and shoulder, which did not resolve with extensive treatment. As a result of this chronic pain, she was given a “medical chit” and placed on duty protocols that limited her from running, wearing a ruck and protective gear on her back, and performing pullups, pushups, and repetitive lifting of more than 15-20 pounds. As a Black female Marine with a chronic medical condition, she found herself subject to ridicule by her fellow male service members. Following an incident in which male members in her unit were heard referring to their women comrades as “WMs”—short for “walking mattresses”—her unit began requiring female Marines to attend a women’s group. She attended a field training exercise in which the members of her unit practiced throwing live and non-live grenades. Due to her medical condition, she could not wear a “flak jacket” required to throw the live grenades. An officer confronted her and demanded that she throw live grenades despite her medical condition and her inability to wear the requisite protective gear. She tried to explain her medical condition, but the officer would not listen. She was charged with misconduct for not throwing live grenades, based on the officer questioning the extent of her medical condition. She was discharged with a General (Under Honorable Conditions) characterization and a narrative reason of misconduct. Eric Hilmo, Stephen Wolpert and Joshua Hess of Dechert represented the veteran before the Board for Correction of Naval Records. The brief argued that the totality of her service and more than twenty years of positive professional development and community involvement merited an upgrade. The brief noted that the officer’s refusal to believe in the severity of the veteran’s injuries was, unfortunately, typical of the experiences of many Black women, even in their interactions with health care professionals. The veteran was provided an upgrade to Honorable with a narrative reason of Secretarial Authority.

An Army Heavy Anti-Armor Weapons Infantryman deployed to Panama where he was shot in the ankle by Panamanian fighters, and in a subsequent incident, he jumped out of a plane with shots being fired all around him. He later deployed to Iraq as a “combat lifesaver,” assisting those who were injured or wounded. He was awarded a Combat Infantryman Badge. Following his deployments, he began to experience marital issues and requested “early out” from the military. Shortly after filing this “early out” paperwork, his acting platoon sergeant began to harass him incessantly, leading him to go absent without leave (AWOL).
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He was discharged with an Other than Honorable characterization. He applied twice for a discharge upgrade on his own and was denied. Post-discharge, he worked at non-profits focused on treating adolescent drug and alcohol use, including serving as the Program Administrator for the only anti-smoking program directed at American Indians in the entire country, and contributed his time and resources to many social justice programs. He was diagnosed with PTSD by the VA, based on combat stressors in both Panama and Iraq, but the VA determined he was ineligible for benefits due to his discharge characterization. Maggie Pope and Cliff Muller of Eversheds Sutherland filed a brief at the Army Board for Correction of Military Records seeking an upgrade. They argued that the veteran’s mental health condition from combat mitigated and outweighed his misconduct. They further set forth his outstanding post-discharge conduct. The Board upgraded his discharge to General (Under Honorable Conditions), even though there was no documentation of a mental health condition in his military service records. The Board stated: “Even if PTSD was undiagnosed at the time of service, it is reasonable that psychiatric sequelae of combat impacted the behavior ultimately leading to discharge.” Applying liberal consideration, the Board concluded that his PTSD mitigated his misconduct.

Ashley Harper of Hunton Andrews Kurth successfully assisted an Army veteran with his application to the Army Discharge Review Board (“ADRB”) requesting (1) an upgrade in the veteran’s discharge characterization from "General – Under Honorable Conditions" to Honorable," and (2) a change in the narrative reason for separation and separation authority be amended from "Misconduct (Serious Offense)" to reflect "Secretarial Authority." The veteran served as a field artillery tactical data systems specialist in the U.S. Army from 2004 to 2007. While deployed in Iraq, the veteran served in a combat role and experienced combat-related trauma and injuries, leading to the deterioration of his mental health and subsequent diagnosis with PTSD.

The veteran’s one-time use of marijuana while on temporary leave shortly after returning stateside is the misconduct that resulted in his discharge from the Army. The team filed an application with the ADRB arguing that the veteran’s PTSD diagnosis, service in combat, and post-discharge accomplishments mitigate the misconduct for which he was discharged. The ADRB agreed and granted the veteran the full relief and discharge upgrade.
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requested in his application, changing his discharge characterization to Honorable with a narrative reason of Secretarial Authority. The result obtained will allow the veteran to be eligible to obtain a higher security clearance he needs for continuing to pursue his career in the private sector working on government contracts.

A Navy Airman Apprentice was in a car accident and suffered a concussion. Subsequently, he was diagnosed with anxiety and tension headaches. While experiencing a panic attack, he smoked marijuana, testing positive on a subsequent drug test. He was then discharged with an Other than Honorable discharge characterization for misconduct. He maintained employment following his discharge, working as security staff. He applied for law enforcement jobs but was disqualified due to his discharge characterization. Days before the expiration of the 15-year statute of limitations to apply to the Naval Discharge Review Board, Katherine Clarke and Michael Bliss of Skadden filed an application for an upgrade. They represented the veteran at a hearing, also filing a brief. They advocated that the Board should find the veteran’s misconduct to be mitigated by the mental health problems he experienced during his service. The Board agreed that there was a nexus between the veteran’s misconduct and his mental health diagnosis in service. The Board noted that the veteran’s testimony during the hearing supported the conclusion that he had self-medicated with marijuana during a panic attack. The Board changed the discharge characterization to General (Under Honorable Conditions) with a narrative reason for separation of Secretarial Authority.

A Marine Corps Machine Gunner served in a Quick Reaction Force during the second battle of Fallujah, Operation Phantom Fury. His unit frequently engaged in firefights with the enemy, putting his life at risk. On his Post Deployment Health Assessment, he reported mental health symptoms. He was diagnosed with PTSD, prescribed an anti-depressant medication and provided some therapy. Still, his symptoms worsened, and he self-medicated with cocaine, testing positive on a drug test. He was discharged with an Other than Honorable characterization and a narrative reason of misconduct. Christian Curran and Jonathan Baker of Crowell & Moring represented the veteran at a hearing before the Naval Discharge Review Board. They advocated that the Board find his PTSD, diagnosed in service, mitigated and outweighed his misconduct under liberal consideration. The volunteers submitted evidence of his good service in the Marine Corps, other than his single instance of misconduct, as well as his employment and good conduct post-discharge. The Board recognized that the veteran was diagnosed with PTSD prior to his use of cocaine. The Board stated that his “single instance of misconduct is the only blemish on the veteran’s otherwise exemplary service record.” The Board praised his post-discharge conduct, including his engagement with “other veterans, including former members of his unit, in an informal support network to deal with his PTSD and help others like him.”
Discharge Upgrade Administrative Applications and Appeals

The veteran’s discharge characterization was upgraded to Honorable and the narrative reason changed to Secretarial Authority.

A Marine Corps Aviation Ordinance Trainee, who was physically and sexually abused by his stepfather as a child, learned that his younger sister was enduring similar abuse at home. He was distraught and sought help to process the difficult emotions and pain brought on by this news. He spoke about the abuse of his sister with a military psychiatrist, and a few days later, he was discharged with a General (Under Honorable Conditions) characterization for a “Personality Disorder.” Post-discharge, he sought psychiatric assistance for the purported personality disorder and was repeatedly informed by medical professionals that he did not have this condition. Aaron Crane and Christina Fell of Hogan Lovells filed a brief at the Naval Discharge Review Board, asserting that the veteran’s discharge was improper because he did not have a personality disorder. In addition, the Marine Corps failed to follow proper procedures in discharging him for a personality disorder. The brief also asserted that the veteran’s discharge was inequitable because the veteran’s records did not contain negative aspects of conduct or performance to warrant a General discharge. The Board upgraded the veteran’s discharge characterization to Honorable and changed the narrative reason to Secretarial Authority.

An Army Food Service Specialist was a single mother caring for two young children, on a junior enlisted service member’s salary, while balancing a deployment to Saudi Arabia in support of Operation Desert Shield/Storm. She received no financial support from the fathers of her two young children even though they were also service members and she desperately sought help from her chain of command. Finding herself unable to care for her two young children on the salary of a private first class, she passed a few bad checks to purchase necessities such as diapers and baby formula for her children. As a result of these bad checks, she requested a voluntary discharge for the good of the service to avoid a court-martial. She was discharged from the Army under Other than Honorable conditions. David Higbee, Matthew W. Modell and Gregory Taylor of Shearman & Sterling assisted the veteran at the Army Board for Correction of Military Records. The brief cited an Army regulation that requires soldiers to provide financial support for family members, including any minor child.
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The brief argued that the Army’s failure to ensure that the veteran received support for her children from the two fathers who were both service members was an injustice and a mitigating factor for her discharge characterization. By a 2-1 vote, the Board agreed and upgraded her discharge to General (Under Honorable Conditions).

A Navy Sailor initially worked in Logistics and then became a Hospital Corpsman, training in the Naval Special Warfare/Naval Special Operation Challenge program, specifically in Basic Underwater Demolition/Seal (BUD/S) school. He sought treatment for mental health symptoms and was diagnosed with PTSD. He was then disqualified from Special Operations due to his chronic PTSD diagnosis and dropped from the BUD/S Program. Though he contemplated leaving the Navy, he decided to rejoin the fleet and re-designate with the goal of obtaining a waiver in two years to rejoin the BUD/S program. He continued with mental health treatment and admitted that he had developed a drinking problem, accepting referral to the Navy’s substance abuse program, SARP (Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Program), for treatment. He served without incident for several years, but then he had a relapse. He was administratively separated with a narrative reason of “Alcohol Rehabilitation Failure.” That stigmatizing language caused significant difficulties for the veteran in obtaining employment after his discharge. The VA granted service connection for a mental health condition, rated at 70%. The veteran applied on his own for a discharge upgrade and was denied.

Keely McCarty and Emily Theriault of Sheppard Mullin represented the veteran at a Naval Discharge Review Board hearing. The volunteers detailed his excellent service and argued that his mental health condition mitigated his alcoholism. The Board agreed that the veteran’s mental health condition excused and mitigated his alcohol abuse. The Board changed the narrative reason to Secretarial Authority.

A Navy Yeoman served for 3 years with no misconduct in the early 1980s, when LGBTQ individuals were not permitted to serve. Near the end of his enlistment contract, while stationed in Hawaii, he disclosed his sexual orientation to the Naval Criminal Investigative Service. He was then discharged with a narrative reason for separation of “Homosexuality.” Madison Needham and William Burke of Williams & Connolly filed a brief at the Board for Correction of Naval Records, seeking a change in the narrative reason. The brief focused on the 2011 Stanley memo which set standards for discharge upgrades for veterans discharged based on their sexual orientation under prior policies barring their service. The brief noted that the veteran satisfied each of the factors established in the Stanley Memorandum, as he was discharged solely due to homosexuality and had no aggravating factors in his naval record. The Board agreed, changing the narrative reason to Secretarial Authority.
A Marine Corps Critical Skills Operator suffered traumatic injuries to his neck and spine during a nighttime military freefall exercise, during which he landed face-first on the ground and fractured his neck. These injuries resulted in, among other medical interventions, an emergency C2 to C5 cervical vertebrae fusion surgery and an additional surgery three weeks after his initial surgery to treat his infected surgical site. He applied on his own for TSGLI due to his inability to independently bathe and dress for sixty consecutive days but was denied. Jason Brown of Hunton Andrews Kurth filed a brief supporting the Marine’s application for TSGLI due to 60 days of limitations with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). The brief set forth evidence that for 60 consecutive days, the Marine remained in a hard neck brace that required him to depend on his wife to bathe and dress, as it restricted his mobility and made it “dangerous” for him to reach above his head. The brief highlighted a medical nexus opinion which explained that the Marine required hands-on assistance with bathing and keeping his PICC line dry while doing so. As to dressing, the opinion stated that the Marine required his wife to gather all clothing from his closet and dresser and required assistance to dress, due to his restricted mobility. The Marine’s wife submitted a declaration describing her extensive assistance during the 60 day period. The Marine was awarded $50,000 for ADL loss.

While deployed to Syria, an Army Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle Operator suffered a traumatic injury when a forklift’s brakes failed, causing the forklift to roll forward and strike him. One of the forklift’s tongs impaled his right ankle, causing a “severe crush injury” to his right fibula and transection of his peroneal tendons. The very next day, he underwent the first surgery intended to salvage his limb. He would have a total of 4 surgeries within two years of his injury. He would then go on to endure a 5th limb salvage surgery, enroll in an inpatient rehabilitation program and be fitted with a brace developed for limb salvage patients, all to save his foot and ankle. And these efforts worked – for several years.
Victory Lap

TSGLI Administrative Applications and Appeals

Ultimately, though, his ankle weakened to the point that he was in persistent pain and limb salvage was declared a failure, necessitating a trans-tibial amputation. Sara Richman and Alejandra Aponte of Troutman Pepper filed an application for limb salvage benefits for this injury. The brief argued that the soldier’s experience was textbook limb salvage, since the soldier underwent a “series of operations designed to save an arm or leg with all of its associated parts rather than amputate it.” The brief noted that one such operation was a bone graft, which the TSGLI Procedural Guide specifies as indicative of limb salvage. The application was granted, conferring $25,000 in TSGLI benefits.

VA Claims

Military Sexual Trauma

An Army Human Resources Specialist was sexually assaulted by a soldier at a gathering, and her friends immediately pulled the soldier off her and called her husband. Her husband reported the incident to the military police, and she was evaluated at a local hospital. The incident was also reported to the Army’s Criminal Investigation Command (CID). The soldier was recommended for court-martial and requested administrative separation instead of standing trial. She sought mental health treatment following the military sexual trauma (MST), and she was diagnosed with adjustment disorder with anxiety. She was administratively discharged with an Honorable discharge based on the adjustment disorder diagnosis, due to the military’s determination that she had a maladaptive adjustment to a situation. Post-discharge, she continued to experience mental health symptoms, including weekly panic attacks which began in service after the MST incident, and was diagnosed with PTSD related to the MST. A few years later, she began weekly therapy sessions and psychiatric treatment, including medications, for PTSD, anxiety, and depression. Matt Hershkowitz and Douglas Ryder of Kirkland & Ellis assisted the veteran with an initial VA application for service connection for PTSD. They highlighted the report of the sexual assault, the current diagnosis, and the nexus between her diagnosis and MST. The VA awarded service connection for PTSD with a 70% rating.

A Navy Seaman was raped during her service by a stranger, but she did not report the rape at that time. Due to the rape, she experienced symptoms of PTSD from military sexual trauma (MST). In the years following her discharge, the veteran was unable to maintain an occupation or healthy interpersonal relationships due to behavioral changes and emotional effects caused by her PTSD. After several years, she sought VA benefits for PTSD from MST. Her claim was initially denied due to her failure to report the rape during her service.
Military Sexual Trauma

Reymond Yammine and Elizabeth Hoadley of K&L Gates represented the veteran in an appeal to the Board of Veterans Appeals challenging the denial of service connection. The brief argued that there was ample evidence of a nexus between the veteran’s PTSD and MST. They pointed to a Disability Benefit Questionnaire ("DBQ") completed by a private provider who determined that the veteran’s PTSD could be traced back to her rape which occurred during her time in the Navy. Also, a licensed psychologist at a VA Clinic indicated in a separate DBQ that the MST the veteran experienced satisfied the criterion for a diagnosis of PTSD. The Board noted that a VA medical examiner who did not conduct an examination concluded it was unclear whether the veteran’s PTSD was due to in service stressors. However, the Board placed more probative weight on the opinions from the two providers who conducted an in-person examination of the veteran. Additionally, the Board noted that the veteran’s statement recounting the MST was consistent with the evidence of record. The Board accepted the occurrence of the veteran’s stressor as contended and found a medical nexus based on the two examinations stating that her current PTSD is related to her MST. The Board awarded service connection for PTSD.

Board of Veterans’ Appeals (BVA) Remands from the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC)

BVA Remands from the CAVC

NVLSP attorneys proudly joined our pro bono partners to offer representation at the highest level for service members and veterans who have been wrongfully denied their benefits. NVLSP’s attorneys who served as mentors include: Emily Woodward Deutsch, Rosalee Hoffman, Kenneth Meador, Abigail Reynolds, Dale Ton, and Stacy Tromble.

An Army veteran who served in Vietnam as a combat medic was exposed to Agent Orange during his service. Post-discharge, he was service connected for PTSD with alcohol abuse. He experienced Class II, Stage C heart failure and his symptoms...
Victory Lap

BVA Remands from the CAVC

Victory Lap

BVA Remands from the CAVC

included shortness of breath and reduced exercise tolerance. Sadly, he passed away and his death certificate listed his underlying cause of death as severe aortic stenosis. His widow sought service connection for the cause of his death for the purpose of receiving VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation ("DIC"), which was denied. Matthew Papkin, Clay Carlton, Bruno Restegui, and Justin Stern of Morgan Lewis represented the widow. They obtained an independent medical examination which concluded that PTSD substantially contributed to the veteran’s aortic insufficiency and heart failure which led to his death. The brief argued that the evidence supported service connection for the cause of death, and therefore, the widow was entitled to DIC. The Board awarded service connection and the widow received a back award of over $130,000.

A Marine Corps Vietnam veteran who was awarded the Combat Action Ribbon observed many traumatic events, including seeing many of his friends dying during combat. While in Vietnam, he also discovered body parts of injured or dead combatants. His trauma in Vietnam was so severe that he cannot bring himself to talk about the events he witnessed and to this day, he cannot even say the name “Vietnam.” Jason Keefus of Jones Day sought a higher rating for the veteran’s PTSD. The brief highlighted extensive evidence in support of a higher rating, including that the veteran would check the door four times to make sure it was locked and his severe memory loss. The veteran also had violent outbursts and suicidal ideations. The brief further advocated that the veteran be awarded Total Disability Based on Individual Unemployability (TDIU).

The Board increased the rating and conferred TDIU, resulting in a retroactive award of over $150,000.

After serving in the Air Force for 20 years, a veteran pursued “odd-jobs” until finding a career in woodworking. After almost 20 years at that job, the veteran could no longer continue his employment because of his service-connected disabilities. He was unable to secure and maintain gainful employment, but the VA denied Total Disability Based on Individual Unemployability (TDIU). Dane Jaques, Joe Bower, and Lillian Wallace of Steptoe represented the veteran, arguing that the veteran’s work history did not show he was capable of performing jobs that do not entail significant exertional requirements. The brief explained that the veteran’s numerous service-connected conditions, especially his knee conditions and heart condition, each physically prevented him from working.

Jason Domark of Cozen O’Connor represented a veteran seeking an earlier effective date for Total Disability Based on Individual Unemployability (TDIU). The brief argued that the veteran had been unable to work for over 20 years due to his service-connected mental health disability. The brief explained that the previous award of a later effective date was based on the fiction that the veteran’s mental health disability worsened on the very date of the VA examination. The brief set forth extensive documentation that the veteran’s mental health condition rendered him unemployable well before the examination.
Victory Lap

BVA Remands from the CAVC

U.S. Army veteran and NVLSP Appellate Attorney
Kenny Meador and NVLSP Legal Assistant and
Petty Officer Second Class Brianna Lefrere, USCG,
Retired at Arlington National Cemetery
participate in Flowers of Remembrance Memorial
Day 2023 honoring our fallen heroes.

The brief further pointed out errors in the
conclusions of VA medical examinations. The
veteran was granted entitlement to TDIU with
the requested effective date and received a
retroactive payment of approximately $88,000.

Matt Brown and Dominic Litz of White & Case
represented a veteran seeking an increase to his
disability rating for his service-connected
Coronary Artery Disease (“CAD”) from 30% to
60%. The issue was whether the veteran had
filed an earlier informal claim for an increase in
the evaluation of his service-connected CAD,
such that he would be entitled to an increased
rating with an earlier effective date. The brief
argued that previously, the Board did not
consider a private treatment record supporting
an informal claim submitted by the veteran. The
brief noted the veteran complied with the then
applicable law by submitting an informal claim
with supporting medical records within the
applicable one-year lookback period, which
medical records show that the veteran had

symptoms that his service-connected CAD
was 60%. The Board increased the rating to
60%, and the veteran received a back award
of over $60,000.

During basic training one day in 1974, while
performing 2,000 jumping jacks, a Navy
sailor experienced a lightning-like shooting
pain, starting from his lower back or waist,
and running down his legs into his feet. The
pain was followed by numbness. Jumping
out of his bunk the next morning, the
veteran did not feel his feet touch the floor
and fell flat. While the numbness improved
in the months that followed, it did not
completely resolve and the veteran
continues to experience altered sensation in
his feet. The veteran did not immediately
seek medical treatment and the veteran also
assumed there was no way to treat the
nerve damage he had suffered. After his
separation from service, the veteran was
not aware for several decades that he was
eligible for medical treatment through the
VA, and, both before and after realizing he
was eligible, continued to “just live with”
this particular foot condition for decades.
His application for VA benefits was denied.

Melissa Burgess of Davis Wright Tremaine
argued the denial was based on an
inadequate medical examination. The brief
advocated full consideration of the
evidence, including medical consultations
with an independent provider and the
veteran’s statements. The Board granted
service connection for nerve damage to
both feet and the veteran received a
retroactive award of approximately $74,000.
BVA Remands from the CAVC

Tara Hopkins of K&L Gates represented a veteran seeking a higher rating for PTSD. The brief highlighted the testimony of the veteran’s wife regarding his night terrors. She testified that the veteran “is very animated in sleep. He physically kicks and yells and hits and all of the things.” She further testified: “He exploded on a complete stranger for no apparent reason. It was beyond frightening.” The brief further set forth the medical documentation demonstrating the increased severity of the veteran’s condition. The Board increased the veteran’s PTSD rating and he received a back award of over $60,000.

Jordan Passmore of Clifford Chance assisted a veteran seeking an earlier effective date for a higher rating for her PTSD. The brief documented the veteran’s reports of suicidal ideations during VA examinations as well as her statements in appeals of previous denials. The veteran had reported near continuous panic and depression, unprovoked irritability with periods of violence, and an inability to make decisions or have successful relationships. The Board agreed that the veteran had reported severe symptoms earlier in both VA examinations and lay statements. The Board increased her PTSD rating for the earlier period to 100%. The retroactive benefits were eventually reported as over $125,000 for the veteran.

Teague Donahey of Holland & Hart represented a veteran appealing the denial of service connection for his foot condition. The VA had denied service connection on the basis that the veteran’s foot condition predated his service in the late 1990s. The brief documented that the veteran’s entrance exam indicated he was “asymptomatic” for pes planus, and subsequent records demonstrated that the veteran’s foot pain began after a Marine training session involving a lengthy “ruck march” in Okinawa. The brief cited medical records in service instructing the veteran to wear orthotics to alleviate the pain. The brief argued that the veteran’s foot condition was aggravated by his service, even if it predated his service. The Board agreed that the condition was aggravated by the veteran’s service and awarded service connection, and the veteran received a back award of approximately $44,000.
Victory Lap

Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC)

NVLSP attorneys welcomed the opportunity to leverage their expertise with our pro bono partners to achieve successful outcomes for service members and veterans in 2023. NVLSP attorneys who acted as co-counsel include: Amy Borgersen, Caitlin Milo, Carlie Steiner, and Stacy Tromble.

A veteran appealed the denial of VA benefits for psychiatric conditions linked to his combat service in Vietnam. Alan Schoenfeld and Anna Mizzi of WilmerHale filed a brief arguing that the Board had failed to provide an adequate statement of reasons or bases for its decision and violated its statutory duty to assist. The Court held that the Board erred in failing to address whether the VA examination it relied on was adequate. In its decision, the Court also stated that the Board failed to discuss whether the combat presumption applied to the veteran’s service in Vietnam and further failed to discuss the veteran’s in-service stressors with respect to his other acquired psychiatric conditions besides PTSD—including whether the in-service events underpinning those stressors were sufficient to establish the second element of service connection or warrant an explanation on whether they were related to his current conditions.

A veteran appealed the denial of service connection for a skin disorder, rhinitis, chest pains (including breathing issues), headaches, a psychiatric disability, a low back disability, a bilateral ankle disability, and a right knee disability.

Brooksany Barrowes and Joshua Davenport of Kirkland & Ellis filed a brief arguing that the Board had failed to provide an adequate statement of reasons or bases for its decision and violated its statutory duty to assist. The Court accepted the Secretary’s concession that the Board failed to provide an adequate statement of reasons or bases for its denial of service connection for the veteran’s migraine headaches and psychiatric disabilities. The Court then held that the Board failed to explain its conclusion that a medical examination to address the etiology of the veteran’s other disabilities was unwarranted.

A Vietnam War veteran was pursuing service-connection claims for hypertension and kidney disease before he sadly passed away.
CAVC

He asserted, among other things, that his hypertension was related to his exposure to herbicides in Vietnam and that his kidney disease was secondary to his hypertension. Jessica Ryan of Williams & Connolly represented the veteran’s surviving spouse before the Court. The brief argued that Board clearly erred in finding a VA medical opinion adequate and probative because the medical opinion barely touched on the veteran’s medical history and failed to provide any rationale linking risk factors to the veteran’s individual medical circumstances. The Court held that the Board relied on an inadequate exam in deciding whether hypertension was related to the veteran’s herbicide exposure, remanding the claim. The Court also remanded the kidney claim holding that it was inextricably intertwined with the hypertension claim.

NVLSP Senior Managing Appellate Attorney, Christopher G. Murray, successfully presents oral arguments before the CAVC in McBride v. McDonough.
Thank You for Your Generosity

We express deep appreciation for the contributions from our Lawyers Serving Warriors® partners that enable the National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP) to serve our warriors. Your financial support made it possible for our Pro Bono Program to assist thousands of veterans, service members and their families.

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Thank You for Your Legal Representation

LSW extends our sincere appreciation to all LSW partner law firms and corporations that accepted cases, projects, limited scope opportunities, and staffed clinics in 2023. With this pro bono support, LSW provided full representation to 489 veterans and service members and clinic services to 227 veterans and service members in 2023. LSW partners accepted 606 discharge upgrade file review limited scope matters and 13 projects in 2023. This report lists the names of volunteers who accepted matters in 2023 and provides a summary description of the matters accepted by LSW partner firms and corporations.

**Accenture: 14 matters**

Accenture accepted 4 discharge upgrade file review matters. Accenture also partnered with Kirkland & Ellis to interview 10 veterans at a virtual discharge upgrade clinic. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Julia Gilfillan**

**Akerman: 2 matters**

Akerman accepted 2 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Gina DelChiaro, Giselle Burke**

Katrina Flores  Jason Margolin  Chelsea Valente
Trish MacAskill  Kimberly Seay

**Arnold & Porter: 82 matters**

Arnold & Porter accepted 4 discharge upgrade matters and 63 discharge upgrade file review matters, partnering with a corporate client on 2 of the file review matters. Arnold & Porter also partnered with another corporate client to interview 15 veterans at a virtual discharge upgrade clinic. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Marsha Tucker, Rwanda Campbell, Lucy McMillan**

Sara Adler  Alexander Altman  Tyler Burgess
Stefanie Alfonso-Frank
Thank You for Your Legal Representation

Arnold & Porter (cont.)

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<td>Alex Natanzon</td>
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<td>Joe Galvin</td>
<td>Alyson Nickols</td>
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<td>Alex Gendzier</td>
<td>Stephanie Nygard</td>
<td>Steven Wickman</td>
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<td>Dina Hayes</td>
<td>Gabe Ossi</td>
<td>Nellie Wigfall</td>
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Baker Botts: 1 matter

A new LSW partner in 2023, Baker Botts accepted 1 discharge upgrade case with partner Amazon.

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Mark Speegle

Jennifer Smith
Mark Speegle
Thank You for Your Legal Representation

**Ballard Spahr: 1 matter**
Ballard Spahr accepted 1 discharge upgrade case.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Lisa Swaminathan**

Tegan Edwards  
Elliot Johnson  
Mark Levin

**Bank of America: 26 matters**
Bank of America partnered with Bradley to interview 19 veterans at two virtual discharge upgrade clinics. Bank of America also partnered with WilmerHale to interview 5 veterans at a third virtual discharge upgrade clinic. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases. Bank of America partnered with Bradley for full representation on 2 discharge upgrade cases.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Vince Doa**

Barbara Altimus  
Lucy Aude  
Judith Beall  
Donald Butler  
Kathryn Caimi  
Luanne Chu  
Gregory Couillou  
Elizabeth Crean  
Alyson Danner  
Guy DeMaertelaere  
Vincent Doa  
Victoria Donohue  
Patricia Dunn  
Yolanda Gamboa  
Matt Gellar  
Pamela Grotsky  
Marissa Halligan  
David Heaton  
David Holliday  
Karen Holness  
Mary Jones  
Allison Layson  
Aaron Longo  
Andy Margolin  
Ryan Rogers  
Gary Rosenblum  
Jessica Thorn  
Amanda Vaughn  
Thomas Yang  
Andrea Zambrano

**Bass Berry: 2 matters**
A new LSW partner in 2023, Bass Berry accepted 2 discharge upgrade file review matters.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Jennifer Michael**

Kristin Bohl  
Connie Delk  
Brendan Glynn  
Jennifer Michael  
Roee Talmor
Thank You for Your Legal Representation

Bradley: 21 matters

Bradley partnered with Bank of America to interview 19 veterans at two virtual discharge upgrade clinics. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases. Bradley partnered with Bank of America for full representation on 2 discharge upgrade cases.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Tiffany Graves**

- Delaney Beier
- Jay Bender
- Jera Bradshaw
- Maria Carisetti
- Mike Denniston
- Ginny Light Gibson
- Christy Hancock
- Kimberly Ingram
- Benjamin Johnson
- Dana Lumsden
- Tom Mostellar
- Christopher Odgers
- Kyle Owens
- Ted Pearce
- Grant Premo
- Elizabeth Sauer
- Nate Viebrock
- Grant Williamson

Brown Rudnick: 1 matter

A new LSW partner in 2023, Brown Rudnick accepted its first Combat-Related Special Compensation matter.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Meredith Joseph, Miranda Black**

- Eileen Citron
- Stephen Cook
- Natasha Ertzbischoff
- Nicholas Joynson

Capital One: 3 matters

Capital One partnered with NVLSP and McGuireWoods for a Know Your Rights presentation and an in-person discharge upgrade intake clinic in Richmond, VA.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Brent Timberlake, Alexandria Menosaba**

- Sarah Blankenship
- Charleatta Funnery
- Jacqueline Hayes
- Maisha Hughes
- Jennifer Joy
- Timothy Kennedy
- Katlyn Miller
- Leigh O'Neill
- Grahin Rollins
- Lisa Rossi
- Brent Timberlake
- Stephen Wieker
**Thank You for Your Legal Representation**

### CDW: 3 matters
A new LSW partner in 2023, CDW accepted 3 discharge upgrade file review matters.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Cynthia Cortez**

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<tr>
<td>Kathy Wassberg</td>
<td>Steve Whitmore</td>
<td>Amanda Zivich</td>
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### Cisco: 11 matters
Cisco accepted 4 discharge upgrade matters with partner Covington & Burling and 7 discharge upgrade file review matters.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Pablo Castro**

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<td>Tanjeev Thandi</td>
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### Citi: 1 matter
A new partner in 2023, Citi partnered with Perkins Coie on 1 discharge upgrade file review matter.

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<th>Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anna Andreeescu</td>
<td>Sofia Rahman</td>
<td>Marian Florio Persico</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Clifford Chance: 4 matters
Clifford Chance accepted 4 cases before the Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Celeste Koeleveld, Pierce Vo, Timothy Cornell, Jordan Passmore**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Name</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timothy Cornell</td>
<td>David Harris</td>
<td>Jordan Passmore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Hackett</td>
<td>Dennis Morrisroe</td>
<td>Sung Shin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Comcast: 14 matters
Comcast partnered with Morgan Lewis and NVLSP for a Know Your Rights presentation and an in-person discharge upgrade intake clinic in Philadelphia, PA. Volunteers met with 14 veterans seeking discharge upgrade pro bono assistance.

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Kathryn Bullard
Deborah Feman        Samantha Leib        Mitchell Metcalf
Jeremy Hsu           Saranne Louth       Johannes Wirtz

Covington & Burling: 47 matters
A leading LSW partner for discharge upgrades, Covington volunteers accepted 17 discharge upgrade cases. Covington further accepted 3 medical retirement administrative appeals, 1 medical retirement litigation matter, 3 TSGLI matters, 3 matters at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals, and 2 appeals at the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. Covington volunteers drafted a Federal Circuit amicus brief in Freund v. McDonough and also accepted a project submitting FOIA requests to assist NVLSP in obtaining service branch training guidance regarding TSGLI.

Covington hosted a virtual discharge upgrade clinic where volunteers interviewed 16 veterans from across the country. The veterans met with Covington pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Kelly Voss, Jorge Escobedo
Alice Ahn               Justin Burnam            Deepen Gagneja        Jocelyn Jezierny
Jay Alexander           Ian Carrico              Graham Glusman       Jad Khazem
B.J. Alvater            Jennifer Cieluch         Heng Gong            Joe Kresse
Scott Anthony           Dianne Coffino          Annika Graham        Denny Kwon
Paul Banks              Jacob Crump              Dan Grant            Nooree Kwon
Stephanie Barna         Fran Djoukeng            Kyle Haley           Andrew Leff
Brittany Benjamin       Paul Enriquez           Chip Hall            Jeffrey Lerner
Hunter Bennett          Dan Farnoly              Nick Halliburton     Scott Levitt
Jennifer Bentley        Ashden Fein              Matt Harden          Andrew Longhi
Ben Block               Jason Fowler             Krista Hekking       Erich Makarov
Chase Brennick          Brendon Francis          Larry Hobel          Kassie Maldonado
Paul Bryant             Scott Freling            Sandy Hoe            Patrick Mattina
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Covington & Burling (cont.)

Marianne McKeon  Noah Resnick  Brandon Tuell  
Alak Mehta  Megan Rodgers  Daniel Valencia  
Krysten Moller  Darby Rourick  John Veiszlemlein  
Marienna Murch  Morgan Schreurs  Majid Waheed  
Eli Nachmany  Nick Shepherd  Jonathan Wakely  
Jacob Pagano  Julia Shults  Fleet White  
Richard Rainey  Einar Stole  Chase Woods  
Cody Reeves  Sara Sunderland  Eugene Yoon  
Brian Reiser  Andrew Timmick  

Cozen O’Connor: 38 matters

Cozen O’Connor is NVLSP’s leading partner for appeals at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals, accepting 33 cases. Cozen further accepted 1 Combat-Related Special Compensation case and 4 discharge upgrade file review matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Melinda Levine deLisle

Jo Bahn  Mike Filbin  Neil Quartaro  
Michael Burke  Frank Gooch  Ralf Rodriguez  
Blake Coblentz  Brittany Green  Hayley Ryan  
Riki Collins  Abigail Green  Shannon Saks  
Kenneth Cushing  Chase Howard  Nandini Sane  
Mike DeRosa  Matt Howell  Keri Schaubert  
Jacob Diviney  Tracey Jordan  Rachel Schwartz  
Jerry Doctors  Christopher Josten  Katie Sobotta  
Amy Doig  Aaron Koury  David Stahl  
Jason Domark  Aaron Lukas  Josh Stein  
Greg Eisenstark  Doug Mackin  Chris Tramonte  
Kenn Eng  Joe Okon  Curt Trisko  
Jessica Erickson  Scott Pashman  Gustin Vandiford  
Jaime Fell  Stephen Pate  Rachel Wenger  
Paul Ferland  Adam Poliner  

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**Crowell & Moring: 25 matters**

Crowell & Moring accepted 7 discharge upgrade cases (with 1 involving Military Sexual Trauma), 4 discharge upgrade file review matters, 2 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases, and 3 cases at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals. Crowell also partnered with Microsoft to interview 9 veterans at a virtual discharge upgrade clinic. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Susie Hoffman, Tiana Russell, Anita Stephen**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lauren Arquette</th>
<th>Mary LaFleur</th>
<th>Liam O'Reilly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Stephanie Crawford</td>
<td>Robert LaFrankie</td>
<td>Josh Pond</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christian Curran</td>
<td>Timothy Laderach</td>
<td>James Reed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ellen Dwyer</td>
<td>Anne Li</td>
<td>Charlyenne Rejaian</td>
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<td>Olamide Fadahunsi</td>
<td>David Lindner</td>
<td>Adam Sussman</td>
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<td>Riley Flewelling</td>
<td>Laura Lydigsen</td>
<td>Nina Torres</td>
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<td>Laura Foggan</td>
<td>Olivia Lynch</td>
<td>Olivia Venus</td>
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<td>Christopher Garcia</td>
<td>Laura Martinez</td>
<td>Michelle Wang</td>
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<td>Michael Gruden</td>
<td>John McCarthy</td>
<td>Alexis Ward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aryn Gruneisen</td>
<td>Tashena Middleton</td>
<td>Yuan Zhou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellen Halstead</td>
<td>Hilary Ming</td>
<td>Jacob Zucker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brittany Kouroupas</td>
<td>Melissa Moravec</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Crown Castle: 4 matters**

A new LSW partner in 2023, Crown Castle accepted 4 discharge upgrade file review matters.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Van Bloys**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don Knight</th>
<th>Dorothy Pingley</th>
<th>Shannon Sullivan</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mark Mazzei</td>
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</tbody>
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Thank You for Your Legal Representation

**CVS Aetna: 18 matters**

A new partner in 2023, CVS Aetna partnered with DLA to interview 17 veterans at a virtual discharge upgrade clinic. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases. CVS Aetna partnered with DLA for full representation on 1 discharge upgrade case.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Chris Sparks, Laura Lehman**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marian Barilone</th>
<th>Robin Domonte</th>
<th>Chris Sparks</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rita Concepcion</td>
<td>Laura Lehman</td>
<td>Dave Valent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Erica Cox</td>
<td>Toshia Smith</td>
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**Davis Wright Tremaine: 7 matters**

Davis Wright Tremaine 6 matters at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals and 1 Combat-Related Special Compensation matter.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: KellyAnne Brophy, Rachael Morgan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Melissa Burgess</th>
<th>K.C. Halm</th>
<th>Jordan E. Thompson</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Anthony T. Caso</td>
<td>Richard Kim</td>
<td>Vidhya Prabhakaran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan B. Engel</td>
<td>Andy Lorentz</td>
<td>Barry A. Stulberg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dechert: 18 matters**

Dechert accepted 11 discharge upgrade cases, 3 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases, 1 matter at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals, and 1 appeal at the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. In addition, Dechert accepted a research project researching qualified pro bono programs across all 50 states and a research project regarding what benefits a Navy veteran’s surviving common law spouse was entitled to.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Suzie Turner**
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**Dechert (cont.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jeremy Arce</th>
<th>David Cosgrove</th>
<th>Ishani Kundu</th>
<th>David Pelaez</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedram Bararpour</td>
<td>Matthew Fischer</td>
<td>Parker Lacoste</td>
<td>Seth Ray</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beyond Bi</td>
<td>Jim Fishkin</td>
<td>Tricia Lee</td>
<td>John Rearick</td>
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<td>Jonathan Blaha</td>
<td>Bob Frink</td>
<td>Patricia Leeson</td>
<td>Andrea Reid</td>
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<td>Jessica Bula</td>
<td>Jennifer Gilbert</td>
<td>William Luciani</td>
<td>Nathan Richardson</td>
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<td>Stephanie Capistron</td>
<td>Lindsay Grossman</td>
<td>Kelly Mathews</td>
<td>Shyam Shanker</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Catano</td>
<td>Ian Hartman</td>
<td>Katarina McClellan</td>
<td>Turner Smith</td>
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<td>Jooyoon Chang</td>
<td>Joshua Hess</td>
<td>Mike McGrath</td>
<td>Devin Swaney</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solomon Choi</td>
<td>Caitlin Kelley</td>
<td>Abby Morenigbade</td>
<td>Gang Wang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kimberley Church</td>
<td>Insung Kim</td>
<td>Emily Parks</td>
<td>Laura Xie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura Ciabarra</td>
<td>Elise Kletz</td>
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</table>

**Deltek: 10 matters**

A new partner in 2023, Deltek accepted 10 discharge upgrade file review matters.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Stephani Antona, Colette Shotton**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stephani Antona</th>
<th>Carla Holpp</th>
<th>Richard Reed</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Bencic</td>
<td>Christine John</td>
<td>Tracy Schampers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie Crawford-Silva</td>
<td>Jon Knight</td>
<td>Colette Shotton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lori Der-Hacopian</td>
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</table>

**DLA Piper LLP: 102 matters**

DLA is a leading LSW partner for discharge upgrade and Combat-Related Special Compensation cases. DLA accepted 12 CRSC cases, 28 discharge upgrade cases (with 2 involving Military Sexual Trauma), and 25 discharge upgrade file review matters. DLA further accepted 1 appeal at the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims and 4 discharge upgrade and medical retirement litigation matters.

DLA Piper hosted 2 virtual discharge upgrade clinics where they teamed with in-house counsel, interviewing a total of 32 veterans. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases.
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**DLA Piper LLP (cont.)**

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Rich Gruenberger, Lisa Dewey, Gianni Minutoli, Margaret Austin, Donna Look, Lindsay Ayers, Aditi Eleswarapu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>James Berger</th>
<th>Nicolas Geraci</th>
<th>Jason Kornmehl</th>
<th>Gerald Rockoff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micala Bernardo</td>
<td>Elise Green</td>
<td>Lupe Laguna</td>
<td>Corey Scott</td>
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<td>Joe Blando</td>
<td>Negin Hadaghian</td>
<td>Erin Larson</td>
<td>Marc Siegel</td>
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<td>Ivo Bogdanovic</td>
<td>Merisa Hartung</td>
<td>Katie Lee</td>
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<td>Brittany Bolden</td>
<td>Bethany Hills</td>
<td>Melody Lilazy</td>
<td>Paulina Starotska</td>
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<td>Seth Bonnae</td>
<td>Reema Holz</td>
<td>Scott Luftig</td>
<td>Christian Stewart</td>
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<td>Karl Buch</td>
<td>Nicola Hosie-Man</td>
<td>Ishaan Madaan</td>
<td>Ryan Sugg</td>
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<td>Jennifer Buchanan</td>
<td>Kingman</td>
<td>Stephen Matthews</td>
<td>Sangwon Sung</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sidney Burker</td>
<td>Cara Hupprich</td>
<td>Steve Matthews</td>
<td>Joanna Sykes-Saavedra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikaela Colby</td>
<td>Elizabeth Jonas</td>
<td>Dan Moench</td>
<td>John A. Wei</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hayley Curry</td>
<td>Todd Jones</td>
<td>Benjamin Mueller</td>
<td>Sarah Walsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessica Daneshvar</td>
<td>Greg Juell</td>
<td>Lachlan Nichols</td>
<td>Joshua Wan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gianna DeLizza</td>
<td>Ethan Kenerson</td>
<td>Stephanie O’Byrne</td>
<td>Rob Williams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashley Escudero</td>
<td>Hekena Kiepura</td>
<td>Boris Pesin</td>
<td>John Wray</td>
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<tr>
<td>Henry Fildes</td>
<td>Katarina Kingston</td>
<td>Peter Phillips</td>
<td>Leonard Yoo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anna Finger</td>
<td>Megan Kinney</td>
<td>Hanna Pool</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drew Gallagher</td>
<td>Nick Klein</td>
<td>Rick Quarles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jay Gamble</td>
<td>Peter Klensch</td>
<td>Laura Quazzo</td>
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</table>

**Dykema: 13 matters**

A new LSW partner in 2023, Dykema accepted 2 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases, 2 discharge upgrade cases, and 9 discharge upgrade file review matters.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Heidi Naasko**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Danielle Rushing Behrends</th>
<th>Carrie A. Hazel</th>
<th>Jonathan A. Meulemans</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hannah E. Buzolits</td>
<td>Reed R. Heimbecher</td>
<td>Lisa M. Myers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peyton E. Click</td>
<td>Lyndsey D. Jackson</td>
<td>Victoria Remus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Cornwell</td>
<td>John A. Janiszewski</td>
<td>John F. Rhoades</td>
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<td>McKenna B. Crisp</td>
<td>Stacey L. McGraw</td>
<td>Maggi Robert</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew T. Green</td>
<td>Sherry Medley</td>
<td>Christopher T. Sakauye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marilyn M. Guichard</td>
<td>Victor T. Metroff</td>
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</tbody>
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Thank You for Your Legal Representation

Eversheds Sutherland: 6 matters
Eversheds Sutherland accepted 6 discharge upgrade matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Aileen Crowson, Rich Noland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chris Bloomfield</th>
<th>Kristen Martin</th>
<th>Paige Spraker</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stan Freeman</td>
<td>Rich Noland</td>
<td>Alex Stith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aleeza Kanner</td>
<td>Brighid O'Donoghue</td>
<td>Shenghao Wang</td>
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Exelon: 8 matters
Exelon accepted 8 discharge upgrade file review matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Lisa Luftig, Kelsey Bynum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kunle Adeyemo</th>
<th>Kelsey Bynum</th>
<th>Chervonti Jones</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eric Allie</td>
<td>Monay Chase</td>
<td>Lisa Luftig</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tat-Lin Angus</td>
<td>Kim Curry</td>
<td>Quentin McMahan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmen Armes</td>
<td>Cliff Glover</td>
<td>Doug Micheel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joanna Baltes</td>
<td>Gary Guy</td>
<td>Lauren Murray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor Beckham</td>
<td>Andrea Harper</td>
<td>Trever Neuroth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aneta Benja</td>
<td>Brian Hoffman</td>
<td>Connie Pierce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amy Blauman</td>
<td>James Holley</td>
<td>Shevon Rockett</td>
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<td>Dorothy Bonds</td>
<td>Dennis Jamouneau</td>
<td>Denise Wojcik</td>
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<td>Shawn Brant</td>
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Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath: 20 matters
Faegre Drinker accepted 4 discharge upgrade matters, 3 Combat-Related Special Compensation matters, 2 medical retirement administrative appeals, and 2 appeals at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals. Faegre additionally partnered with Optum to interview 9 veterans at a virtual discharge upgrade clinic. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Candace Whitaker, Megan McKinney
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### Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shane Anderson</th>
<th>Jacob Hauschild</th>
<th>Jaclyn Marasco</th>
<th>Hannah Reichenbach</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rhiannon Beckendorf</td>
<td>Abbey Hayford</td>
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<td>Coe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kayla Britton</td>
<td>Doug Heffner</td>
<td>McDonald</td>
<td>Rana Salem</td>
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<td>Mary Devlin Capizzi</td>
<td>Jennifer Hoffmann</td>
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<td>Matthew Clark</td>
<td>Patrick Hughes</td>
<td>Bethany Mihalik</td>
<td>Natalie Stubbs</td>
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<td>Brian Coleman</td>
<td>Gracie Hyland</td>
<td>Kate Middleton</td>
<td>Theresa Tischer</td>
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<td>Brianna Edwards</td>
<td>Max Kelln</td>
<td>JT Minor</td>
<td>Dona Trnovska</td>
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<td>Megan Farooqui</td>
<td>Craig Komanecki</td>
<td>Peter Nielsen</td>
<td>Gilliland</td>
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<td>Eric Friedman</td>
<td>Blake Lehr</td>
<td>Lisa Perunovich</td>
<td>Tyler Vivian</td>
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<td>Lexi Fuson</td>
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<td>David Porteous</td>
<td>Laura Wall</td>
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<td>Kevin Green</td>
<td>RoxAnn Mack</td>
<td>Sean Powell</td>
<td>Charles Westerhaus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Molly Gulbranson</td>
<td>Bob Mancuso</td>
<td>Robin Rank</td>
<td>Nathaniel Zylstra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Haag</td>
<td>Sara Manske</td>
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</table>

### Finnegan: 1 matter

Finnegan volunteers drafted a Supreme Court amicus brief in Skaar v. McDonough.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Tom Sullivan, Beth Ferrill**

- Paul Browning
- Charles Collins-Chase
- Alexander Harding
- Ryan McDonnell
- Tom Sullivan

### Foley Hoag: 3 matters

A new LSW partner in 2023, Foley Hoag accepted 3 medical retirement administrative appeals.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Rebecca Cazabon, Nathaniel McPherson**

- Spenser Angel
- Sarah Burg
- Cecilia Copperman
- Priya Dalal
- Jeffrey Lewis
- Katherine Luo
- Nate McPherson
- Courtney Tobin
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**Freddie Mac: 1 matter**

A new LSW partner in 2023, Freddie Mac accepted 1 discharge upgrade file review matter.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Jennifer Carroll**

Jennifer Carroll  
Andrea Dinkins

Ron Ferlazzo  
Thomas Flack  
Mary Howard

**Gibson Dunn: 3 matters**

Gibson Dunn accepted 2 discharge upgrade matters and 1 medical retirement administrative appeal.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Katie Marquart, Mark Cherry, Ariana Sañudo, Patty Herold**

Ben Betner  
Kyle Clendenon  
Alex Fischer

Jane Love  
Vivian Lu  
Lloyd Marshall

Andrew Robb  
Harrison Tucker

**Hogan Lovells: 85 matters**

Hogan Lovells accepted 7 medical retirement administrative appeals, 2 medical retirement litigation matters, 9 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases, 1 appeal at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals, 2 TSGLI cases, 1 discharge upgrade case, and 57 discharge upgrade file review matters. Hogan also assisted with researching the applicability of the substantial evidence standard in TSGLI claims and appeals.

Hogan volunteers interviewed 5 veterans and service members at a virtual clinic, providing brief service and advice regarding the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) process.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: T. Weymouth Clark, Joe Cavanaugh, Melissa Giangrande**
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Hogan Lovells (cont.)

Lena Al-Marzoog
Eric Andalman
Paget Barranco
Michael Basse
Lexi Bender
Brittney Bennett
Justin Bevilacqua
Matt Bowles
Amanda Brown
Adam Brown
Lindsay Brown
Ted Brown
Lacy Brown
Max Cardin
Nathan Cooper
Celine Crowson
Connor Day
Myles DePass
Imani Dixon
Emma Dowell
Kevin Downey
Bradley Edmister
Taylor Evans

Chris Fitzpatrick
Darnesha Carter
Foli
David Foster
Laura Friedli
Stephanie Gold
Maile Gradison
Joe Grdinovac
Kevin Greenslade
Rose Grover
Mary Grywatch
Stacy Hadeka
Barbara Hayes
Mark Heimlich
Taylor Hillman
Kacey Hirtle
Vassi Iliadis
Michael Jacobson
Greg Kass
Warren Kessler
Emily Kimball
Katie Kramer

Stefan Krantz
Garrett Kraus
Dave Locascio
Jason Lohr
Chuck Loughlin
Theresa Luk
Seab Macdonald
Kellie Majcher
Pat Malone
Tom McGovern
Katy Milner
Lyndsay Montour
Rachel Moon
Joseph Murphy
DH Nam
Lauren Olmsted
Christine Pinnkathok
Connie Potter
Ned Purdon
Breanna Reeves
Chrissy Reynolds
Anne Salladin

George Salter
David Sharfstein
Tej Singh
Craig Smith
Annie Spencer
Kyle Spies
Russell Tan
Erida Tosini-Corea
James VanLandingham
Curtis Victor
Gibby Wagner
Bryan Walsh
Deborah Wei
Monae White
David Willner
Thomas Wiltshire
Ron Wisor
Tom Woolsey
Soyoun Yasuda
Kelly Zhang
Sally Zhang

Holland & Hart: 5 matters

Holland & Hart accepted 5 matters at the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Teague Donahey

Teague Donahey

Zack McCraney
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Holland & Knight: 1 matter
Holland & Knight accepted 1 Military Sexual Trauma discharge upgrade case.

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Gordon Griffin
Amy Fuentes
Chris Nagel

Hunton Andrews Kurth: 48 matters
Hunton Andrews Kurth is a leading LSW partner for Combat-Related Special Compensation, TSGLI, and medical retirement cases. Hunton Andrews Kurth accepted 15 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases, 7 TSGLI cases, 1 medical retirement administrative appeal, 2 CRSC litigation cases, and 1 discharge upgrade litigation case. Hunton also accepted 3 discharge upgrade cases (1 involving Military Sexual Trauma) and interviewed 15 veterans at a virtual discharge upgrade clinic. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Kevin Gaunt, Maeve Malik, Toni Poole
Gil O. Acevedo    Monika M. Dziewa    Asha E. McCorvey
Benjamin C. Ackerly  Michael F.    Eric Mogel
Daniela Alvarado  Fitzpatrick    Alexandra Noetzel
Britt E. Anderson  Andrea Gardner    Brian V. Otero
Emily Benedict    Kevin E. Gaunt    Anna Page
Timothy E. Biller  David N. Goldman    Reuben Pearlman
Jaime E. Bloxom    Brendan P. Harney    Ryan Pedraza
Audrey A. Briscoe  Mark S. Hedberg    Natalie Peloquin
Jason Brown    Jae Lynn Huckaba    Kate Perkins
Karma Brown    Jamie Zysk Isani    Kelli Regan Rice
Joe Buoni    Trlica Kennedy    Gregory J. Schmitt
Aaron J. Carroll    Sam Kim    Tom K. Schulte
James F. Channing    Becca E. Lee    Quince Thompson
Shannon E. Daily    Charlotte Leszinske    Evan L. Weisberg
Samuel A. Danon    Patrick C. Macher    Alexa N. Williams
Danielle Dobrusin    Eric Markus    Angie Yearick
Diana C. Dominguez
Thank You for Your Legal Representation

**Jones Day: 2 matters**
Jones Day accepted 2 matters at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Amy Zywicki**

John Cheretis  
Jason Keehfus

Jeffrey Meehan  
Evan Singer

**JP Morgan Chase: 13 matters**
JP Morgan Chase partnered with Sidley to interview 13 veterans and service members at a virtual clinic, providing brief service and advice regarding the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) process.

Timothy Brandis  
Seth Cottrell  
Amy Jester  
Rhonda Moore  
Robin Noble  
MaryAnn O’Connor  
Joe Robinson Jr.  
Joseph Wagner  
Jean Weipert  
Dana Westfall  
Mina Whangbo

**K&L Gates: 8 matters**
K&L Gates accepted 8 appeals at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Brian Koosed**

Sara Hall  
Tara Hopkins  
Catherine Johnson  
Sophia Khan  
Brian Koosed  
Austin Rossi  
Kristin Wells
Thank You for Your Legal Representation

**King & Spalding: 8 matters**

King & Spalding accepted 4 discharge upgrade cases (1 involving Military Sexual Trauma), 2 cases before the Board of Veterans’ Appeals, and 2 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Radha Manthe, Josh Toll, Larry Slovensky**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matthew Bellem</th>
<th>Kyle Maury</th>
<th>Matt Rowan</th>
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<td>Grace Carpenter</td>
<td>Jeannine Novak</td>
<td>Larry Slovensky</td>
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<td>Taeyeong Kim</td>
<td>Alex Panos</td>
<td>Mark Villapando</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geoff King</td>
<td>Barbara Ritzert</td>
<td>Michael Wheaton</td>
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**Kirkland & Ellis: 26 matters**

Kirkland accepted 10 discharge upgrade cases (with 4 involving Military Sexual Trauma), 1 discharge upgrade litigation case, 2 Military Sexual Trauma VA claims cases, and 1 medical retirement administrative appeal.

Kirkland also partnered with Accenture to interview 10 veterans at a virtual discharge upgrade clinic. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Jacqueline Haberfeld, Kate Barry, Emily Sullivan, Amy Heaton, Sarah Lemar, Ashley Huebner, Ruth Dominguez, Alison King, Julissa Saragoza-Arroyo**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patrick Arnett</th>
<th>Kori Dean</th>
<th>Melissa S. Gainor</th>
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<td>Matthew Brandys</td>
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<td>Alexandra Caritis</td>
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<td>Kenny Chiagha</td>
<td>Grace Duke</td>
<td>Mary-Kathryn Hawes</td>
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<td>Patrick Corrigan</td>
<td>Lucie H. Duvall</td>
<td>Matt Hershkowitz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chad B. Crowell</td>
<td>Peter Evangelatos</td>
<td>Nathan Howe</td>
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<td>Rich Cunningham</td>
<td>Andrew Farrington</td>
<td>Sanaa Jain</td>
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<td>Joshua S. Davenport</td>
<td>Mark Filip</td>
<td>Ian Jelsma</td>
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</table>
Thank You for Your Legal Representation

Kirkland & Ellis (cont.)

Madison Kavanaugh  Matt McIntee  Michael Rigdon  Marisa Stern
Kim Kelly  Ryan Melde  Drue A. Santora  Tera Stone
Brandon King  Brandi Miller  Riley Satterwhite  Ken Sturek
Robert Kimmitt  Janet Mukherjee  Matthew Schaible  Madeline Thompson
Jonathan Lahn  Patrick O'Toole  Madeline  Tia T. Trout-Perez
Summer Lange  Stephanie Owen  Schoeffman  Joe Walter
Mitchell Lawson  Kevin Pavloski  David Seligman  Michelle A.
Olivia Liska  Michael A. Pearson  Ben Sharp  Weinbaum
Ieuan Adrian List  Monica Pechous  Emily Crawford  Heather Danielle
James John Lomeo  Anyela Perez  Sheffield  Welch
William Mabry  William Phalen  Ashley Sinclair  Matthew Wheatley
Ryan T. Martirano  Karra A. Puccia  Isobel Smith  Claire Wolf
Brad Masters  LaFaye Roberts  Karen Sodke  Lexi Wung
Alyssa M. McClure  Nils Remole  Laura Stake  Jordan Anne Young

Latham & Watkins: 20 matters

A leading LSW partner across case types, Latham accepted 4 discharge upgrade cases, 2 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases, 1 medical retirement administrative appeal, 2 medical retirement litigation cases, 4 TSGLI cases, and 1 Military Sexual Trauma VA claim. Latham further accepted 4 appeals at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals and 1 appeal at the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. Latham also provided full representation for a service member going through the Integrated Disability Evaluation System process.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Spencer Chatellier, Justin Kirschner, Allen Gardner

Andrew Angel  Katie Connelly  Magda Farhat
Jordan Armstrong  Chris Cronin  Chris Garcia
Joseph Axelrad  Haley Denler  Bob Gilbert
Carol Bale  Lindsey Doyle  Meaghan Haley
Jack Barber  Greg Drozdzal  Kevin Hamilton
Caitlyn Brock  Alex Dubose  Jake Hummer
Ian Bushner  Denver Dunn  Kehaulani Jai
Spencer Chatellier  Archita Dwarakanath  Helen Klein
Thank You for Your Legal Representation

Latham & Watkins (cont.)

- Craig Kornreich
- David Kuiper
- TJ Li
- John Miller
- Natalia Ortiz
- Elizabeth Osborne
- Byron Patton
- Adam Perlman
- Matthew Powell
- Adam Ravin
- Lis Ryan
- Charles Sanders
- Morgen Seim
- Tal Simon
- Keith Simon
- Kevin Smith
- Darryl Steensma
- Andrew Taggart
- Cort Thompson
- Abby Timmons
- Steven Van Iwaarden
- Holly Victorson
- Katie Worthington
- Lexi Zentel

Linklaters: 14 matters

Linklaters accepted 14 discharge upgrade file review matters.

- Max Blinder-Acenal
- Erika Cabo
- Anna Gooding
- Ray Hou
- Celeste Jackson
- Jihe Kim
- David Mba
- Lizzeth Merchán
- Lauren Schnoebelen
- Chloe Shostack
- Elizabeth Walker
- Peter Williams

Mayer Brown: 51 matters

Mayer Brown accepted 51 discharge upgrade file review matters.

- Danika Jo Anderson
- Benje Benedetto
- Amber Bennett
- Jacob Blakelee
- Marissa Cascio
- Megan Cicotte
- Gordon Cobb
- Kimberly Cornella
- Elliott Crosland
- Brandon Dennis
- Tim Dondanville
- Alex Edge
- Frank Falbo
- Heather Feingold
- June Fleck
- Julie Gillespie
- Shushan Ginosyan
- Patrick Gucwa
Thank You for Your Legal Representation

### Mayer Brown (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Laura Hayden</th>
<th>Jeff Lai</th>
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<td>Andy Hogan</td>
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<td>Calla Zhou</td>
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### McCarter & English: 5 matters

McCarter & English accepted 5 discharge upgrade matters.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact:** Michelle Pallak

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Katherine Althoff</th>
<th>Kathleen Ehrhard</th>
<th>Rebecca Klinger</th>
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<tr>
<td>George Blazeski</td>
<td>James Freebery</td>
<td>Megan Nigro</td>
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<td>Sandra Carr</td>
<td>John Isacson</td>
<td>Sarah Smith</td>
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<td>Angela Della Rocco</td>
<td>Jordan Kidd</td>
<td>Matt VanEman</td>
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### McDermott Will & Emery: 3 matters

McDermott Will & Emery accepted 2 Combat-Related Special Compensation matters and 1 military retirement litigation matter.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts:** Elizabeth Lewis, Rosie Washington-Chambers, Marshall Jackson Jr.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emily Curran</th>
<th>Marshall Jackson Jr.</th>
<th>Rachel Lee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caroline Iovino</td>
<td>David Keifer</td>
<td>Alex Spisak</td>
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</table>
McGuireWoods: 57 matters

McGuireWoods, with their partners Wells Fargo and TD Bank, conducted two separate two-day virtual clinics for 47 injured Special Operations service members in 2023.

McGuireWoods also partnered with NVLSP and Capital One for a Know Your Rights presentation and an in-person discharge upgrade intake clinic in Richmond, VA.

McGuireWoods accepted 4 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases, 2 discharge upgrade cases, and 1 appeal before the Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Michael Podberesky, Angie Zimmern, Drew Austria

Drew Austria  Joe Florczak  Sarah Martin  Frederick Schutt
Garra Brown  David Franchina  Wolf McGavran  Andrew Seward
Bartley  Bryan Fratkin  David Melson  Joseph Sheering
Bob Bittman  Ryan Frei  Steven Mikulic  Kyle Smith
Jane Brady  David Greenspan  Gabriel Milunas  Jennifer Stearman
Casey Buchanan  Thomas Hancock  Branden Moore  Bruce Steen
Karli Celestin  IV  Todd Mullins  Noel Symons
Matthew Chmiel  Daniel Howell  Kristen Mynes  John Thomas
Jason Cook  Wen Hutchinson  Jacob Nielsen  Jason Vespoli
Jessie Dawe  Booker Taishon  Jessica O'Brien  Sarah Waszmer
Arrion Dennis  Johnson III  Francis Oroszlan  Najwan Wayef
Kyle Dudney  Sean Keene  Andrew Papa  Ramsey White
Margaret Dylak  Anne Kelly  Jontille Ray  TJ Whittle
Jeff Ehrlich  Mark Kinghorn  Stan Roberts  David Wolpa
Kasey Erb  Doug Lamb  Seth Schaeffer
Katlyn Farrell  James Lego

Microsoft: 24 matters

Microsoft accepted 15 discharge upgrade file review matters. Microsoft also partnered with Crowell & Moring to interview 9 veterans at a virtual discharge upgrade clinic. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Adrian Palma, Mohana Bhirangi, John Duncan III, Bill Hayden, Beth Henderson, Paolo Sy
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Microsoft (cont.)

EJ Bastien       Mackenzie Houck       Rucksar Rahman
Bob Beymar       Amanda Molina       Mary Jo Schrade
AJ Calvelo       Ranti Okunoren       Deanna Tran
John Duncan III  Adrian Palma        Jenna Wolfe
Allison Girvin   Bridgitte Plata     Andrea Yepez
Geoff Hoggard

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius: 34 matters

Morgan Lewis accepted 8 appeals at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals, 1 medical retirement litigation appeal, 8 discharge upgrade matters (including 2 involving Military Sexual Trauma), and 1 Combat-Related Special Compensation case.

Morgan Lewis volunteers also drafted two Supreme Court amicus briefs in Rudisill v. McDonough.

Morgan Lewis further partnered with Comcast and NVLSP for a Know Your Rights presentation and an in-person discharge upgrade intake clinic in Philadelphia, PA. Volunteers met with 14 veterans seeking discharge upgrade pro bono assistance.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Rachel Strong, Namita Mani, Alison Sclater, Jay Lee, and Andrea Fitanides

Mike Abernathy       Andy Dietrick       Zak Johns       Joe Nuccio
Andrew Antczak      David Dziengowski    Ethan Johnson    Caitlin Onomastico
Dana Baiocco        Anna Els            Michael Kenneally Vinny Papa
Jeremy Blumenfeld    Kara Emrich         Shelby Krafka   Matt Papkin
Sarah Bouchard       Klair Fitzpatrick   Tom Linthorst   Miranda Rowley
Alyssa Calvallo      Victor Ghidu        Rebecca McDougall Dan Salemi
Patrick James        Neal Gordon         Margaret McDowell Sydney Swanson
Campbell             Caroline Hardie      Sean McMahan     Adam Teitcher
Clay Carlton         Donald Haverman      Toni Moran       Adam Wagmeister
Giovanna Cinelli     Samson Huang        Greg Mottla     Jonathan Wilt
John Clancy          Patrick Huyett       James Nelson     
Marino D’Alessandro
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National Football League: 10 matters

The NFL, through its in-house legal department, partnered with Paul, Weiss to conduct 10 virtual discharge upgrade clinic interviews. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases.

NBCUniversal: 10 matters

NBCUniversal accepted 10 discharge upgrade file review matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Dan Cooper, Cherrey Wales

Erik Bierbauer  
Taylor Carter  
Anita Dange  
Gernez Owens  

Jason Rosenbaum  
Helena Smit  
Michael Sofia  
Britt Swain  
Justin Waters  
Molly Wayne

Nixon Peabody: 9 matters

Nixon Peabody accepted 7 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases and 2 appeals at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Sharmaine Heng, David Song, Matthew Richards, Emery Lewis, Patrice Harris, Brian Whittaker, Brianna Thompson

Tom Brett  
Alex Day  
Neil Diskin  
Greg Doran  
Keith Edeus  
Kelly Glynn  
April Hua  
Peter Krusiewicz  
Tom Mealiffe  
Marissa Muscarella  
Amanda Przybycien  
Bill Reynolds  
Virginia Wong  
Bob Yoshitomi
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### O’Melveny: 30 matters

O’Melveny accepted 1 Combat-Related Special Compensation case, 1 discharge upgrade case, and 28 discharge upgrade file review matters.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Jerri Shick, David Lash, Taylor Simeone**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Joanne Bae</th>
<th>Yoon-Jee Kim</th>
<th>Hassen Sayeed</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kyla Butler</td>
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<td>Emma Byrd</td>
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### OpenText: 3 matters

OpenText accepted 3 discharge upgrade file review matters.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Brian Pinnell**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brian Pinnell</th>
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### Optum: 12 matters

Optum partnered with Faegre Drinker to interview 9 veterans at a virtual discharge upgrade clinic. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases. Optum partnered with Faegre Drinker for full representation on 3 discharge upgrade cases.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Stephen Morgan, Kelly Simenson, Rachael Bowens**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shari Aberle</th>
<th>Janet Hatch</th>
<th>Emily Boardman</th>
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<tr>
<td>John Bencivenga</td>
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<td>Aimee Blatz</td>
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<td>Robert Stevenson</td>
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<td>Sarah Russell Goddard</td>
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<td>Lynne Willett</td>
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<tr>
<td>Francine Gunter</td>
<td>Nathaniel Orpen</td>
<td>Joshua Wueller</td>
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Thank You for Your Legal Representation

Orrick: 6 matters
Orrick accepted 6 appeals at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Rene Kathawala
Andrew Bethune  Christopher Higgins  Robert B. Moyle
Eileen M. Cole  Rene A. Kathawala  Anne Savin
Graham Gardner  Kevin Kuhn  Eric A. Shumsky
Preetha Gist  Shane McCammon  Caroline Stapleton

Paul Hastings: 9 matters
Paul Hastings accepted 7 Combat-Related Special Compensation matters, 1 appeal at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals, and 1 medical retirement litigation matter.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Caitlin Annotoyn, Brenda Freed, Josh Yin
Donna Bobbish  David Feigenbaum  Howard Herr  Bill McCue
Chris Brewer  Ariel Giumarelli  Matt Herrington  Raven Rowe
Josh Christensen  Nisa Gossenlink-Ulep  Thomas Jordan  Jesse Schley
Mark Consilvio  Anthony Gunnell  Eric Keller  Brian Stief
Bill DeGrandis  Ryan Harris  Mike Marusak

Paul, Weiss: 24 matters
Paul, Weiss accepted 3 discharge upgrade matters (2 involving Military Sexual Trauma) and 11 discharge upgrade file review matters.

Paul, Weiss also hosted a virtual discharge upgrade clinic with the NFL, serving 10 veterans. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Emily Donohoe, Jeremy Benjamin, Tanaz Moghadam, Kennady Wade
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Paul, Weiss (cont.)

Kayla Anderson
Ryan Arredondo
Matt Battaglia
Joe Bial
Lilibeth Clelo
Jacob Cohen
Dovber Gopin
Destiny Harmon
Grace Hotz
Dhrumit Joshi
Hannah Kark
Jeremy Kelly
Richard Kennedy
Austin Kuhn
John Magruder
Saqib Mahmood
Sean Malone
Nathan Mitchell
Chloe Nanfara
Charles Pesant
Alexandra Ritschard
Spencer Rosen
Joseph Sommerfeld
Mei Song
Adrienne Tang

Perkins Coie: 149 matters

Perkins Coie accepted 10 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases, 1 discharge upgrade case, and 1 discharge upgrade litigation matter. Perkins Coie also assisted the named plaintiff in the Torres class action lawsuit through the Integrated Disability Evaluation System process. Perkins Coie is a leading partner for discharge upgrade file reviews, accepting 136 file review matters in 2023.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Julie LaEace, Sara Malan, Alex Canizares

David Aaron
Tom Ahmadifar
Reina Almon-Griffin
Pam Anderson
Juan Fonseca Angel
Veronica Ascarrunz
George Auslander
Sean Belding
Tessa Bell
Pranav Bethala
Jedidiah Blake
Michael Bleicher
Suzanne Boehm
Meeka Bondy
Alix Bromer
Graeme Bushart
Michael Caine
Gary Campbell
Alexander Canizares
Samantha Carl
David Chiappetta
Steve Cohen
Barak Cohen
Ashley Connelly
Ben Dale
Evan Davis
Michael Dawes
John Delaney
Ben Desch
John Dillow
Andrew Dufresne
Brenna Duncan
Gary Eisenberg
Ben Estes
Linc Finkenberg
Troy Foster
Julia Fox
Don Friedman
Annie Fuoto
Gabbi Gallego
Colleen Ganin
Yuanfeng Gao
Kerensa Gimre
Michael Glenn
Rebecca Gordon
Garmai Gorlorwulu
Laura Gritz
Grace Guan
Pete Gutsche
Jordan Hameen
Michelle Han
Jordan Harris
Chad Henry
Bryce Herman
Thea Herrera
Adam Hester
Jennifer Hewitt
Hayden Householder
Sarah Hugues
Thank You for Your Legal Representation

Perkins Coie (cont.)

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Thank You for Your Legal Representation

Reed Smith: 3 matters
Reed Smith accepted 2 Combat-Related Special Compensation matters 1 medical retirement administrative appeal.

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Chris Walters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sean Birt</th>
<th>Kennede Miller</th>
<th>Anna Targowska</th>
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<tr>
<td>Taylor Marcusson</td>
<td>Ed Rogan</td>
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RTX: 24 matters
RTX accepted 2 discharge upgrade cases with partner DLA and 22 discharge upgrade file review matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Justin Hendrix, Wendie Wigginton

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<tr>
<th>Margeaux Bergan</th>
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<td>Emily Letich</td>
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Shearman & Sterling: 61 matters
Shearman & Sterling is a leading partner for discharge upgrade file reviews, accepting 61 in 2023, partnering with Visa on 4 of the file review matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Saralyn Cohen, Kit Chau, Jeseña Brown

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<tr>
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Thank You for Your Legal Representation

Sheppard Mullin: 3 matters

Sheppard Mullin volunteers accepted 2 discharge upgrade matters (with 1 involving Military Sexual Trauma) and 1 appeal at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Abby Carrigan, Daniel Brown, Townsend Bourne**

- Collette Hughes
- Emma Husseman
- Bill Kane
- Bob Magielnicki
- Lisa Mays
- Sylvia Waghorne

Sidley Austin: 52 matters

Sidley is a leading LSW partner for all case types. Sidley accepted 9 discharge upgrade cases (with 2 involving Military Sexual Trauma), 13 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases, 1 TSGLI case, 1 medical retirement administrative appeal, and 2 appeals at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals. Sidley also accepted 8 discharge upgrade file review matters, partnering with Amazon on 7 of the file review matters.

Sidley further partnered with JP Morgan Chase to interview 13 veterans and service members at a virtual clinic, providing brief service and advice regarding the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) process.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Emily Wexler**

- Jake Ahlgren
- Juan Arendse
- Barret Armbruster
- Rebecca Brooks
- Alex Butler
- Jack Cadden
- Beth Chiarelli
- Jin Cho
- Maureen Crough
- Sean Damm
- Andrew Friedman
- Robert Garsson
- Nidhi George
- Grace Gerbas
- Amanda Gonzalez
- Conor Gordon
- Nick Greenberg
- Mark Guerrera
- Lauren Gumerove
- Alyssa Hartley
- Charlie Hu
- Brenna Jenny
- Derek Kang
- Erin Kauffman
- Kelsey Kehoe
- Lauren Kitces
- Alexandra Kozyra
- Averyn Lee
- Nathaniel Love
- Justin Macke
- Alex Meyer
- Megan Moffett
- Katherine Olson
- Pamela Ozga
- Chris Papajohn
- Kevin Park
- Alexa Peterson
- Ian Ross
- Ram Sachs
- Garrett Sciortino
- Charles Sommers
- Austin Stanton
- Tyler Swafford
- Kyle Tanzer
- William Thompson III
- Naphtali Ukiri
- Dan Ulman
Thank You for Your Legal Representation

Sidley Austin (cont.)

Manuel Valle
Arie Van Wijngaarden
Frank Vanker
Olivia Walseth
Jennifer Warta
Emily Wexler
Peter Whitfield
Irine Yang
Peiyu Yu

Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom: 9 matters

 Volunteer attorneys from Skadden accepted 1 discharge upgrade case and 8 discharge upgrade file review matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Anna Frances Coleman, Eddie Houlihan, Don Salzman, Jim Perry, Scott Rabinowitz

Vinnie Chiappini
Nikko Martins
Jim Perry
Catrina Shea

Steptoe: 15 matters

Steptoe accepted 7 cases at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals, 2 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases, and 1 medical retirement litigation matter. Steptoe also accepted 5 discharge upgrade file review matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Paul Lee, Harmony Jones

Courtney Andrews
Joan Baughan
Joe Bower
Henry Caldwell
Shawn Davisson
Kelly Eberspecher
Ryan Evans
Tyler Evans
George Grandison
Elaine Hartman
Dane Jacques
John Kavanagh
Samantha McCarthy
Jordan Mobley
Dylan O’Leary
Michael O’Rourke
Jenny Singth
Tim Yoo
Lillian Wallace
Kate Wersinger
Onika Williams
Thank You for Your Legal Representation

### Taft: 9 matters

Taft accepted 3 Combat-Related Special compensation matters and 6 discharge upgrade file review matters.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Monica Fennell**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ina Avalon</th>
<th>Jonathan Levy</th>
<th>Trent Sandifur</th>
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<td>Aisha Hall</td>
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<td>Richard Kruger</td>
<td>Amanda Pipik-Leip</td>
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### TD Bank: 21 matters

TD Bank volunteers, with their partners from McGuireWoods, assisted LSW with conducting a 2-day virtual clinic for 21 injured Special Operations service members.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Stacey Spevak, La-Donna Lawrence, Anjum Unwala, Kenneth Boysen**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jim Adams</th>
<th>Michael Fausey</th>
<th>Sheila Messick</th>
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### T-Mobile: 3 matters

T-Mobile partnered with DLA Piper to conduct 3 discharge upgrade virtual clinic interviews. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Michelle Lama**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valerie Fairwell</th>
<th>Chris Jordan</th>
<th>Amanda Rosen</th>
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Thank You for Your Legal Representation

### Troutman Pepper: 18 matters

Troutman Pepper accepted 5 Combat-Related Special compensation cases, 7 discharge upgrade cases (1 involving Military Sexual Trauma), and 4 TSGLI cases. Troutman Pepper also accepted two projects regarding TSGLI. Volunteers drafted public comments on the TSGLI application and appeal forms and another team submitted FOIA requests to assist LSW in obtaining claims, appeals, and policy data regarding TSGLI.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts:** Maddie Moore, Sara Richman, Tim Bado, Nick Ramos, Daniela Lermer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Troutman PepperStaff</th>
<th>Troutman PepperStaff</th>
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<td>Zie Alere</td>
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<td>Zach Kobokovich</td>
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<td>Alicia Worthy</td>
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### U.S. Bank: 4 matters

U.S. Bank accepted 4 discharge upgrade file review matters.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts:** Tara Adams, Jennifer Allen

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<th>U.S. BankStaff</th>
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<td>Eric Anderson</td>
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<td>Andria Beeler-Norrholm</td>
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### Verizon: 12 matters

Verizon accepted 12 discharge upgrade file review matters.

**LSW Pro Bono Contacts:** Alycia Guichard, Ashley Morgan, Avery Pollard

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<th>VerizonStaff</th>
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<td>Jim Matteo</td>
<td>Genna Roarty</td>
<td>Yvonne Williams-Wass</td>
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**Visa: 4 matters**

Visa accepted 4 discharge upgrade file review matters with partner Shearman & Sterling.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Robert Lewis**

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**VMware: 9 matters**

VMware accepted 9 discharge upgrade file review matters.

**LSW Pro Bono Contact: Stephanie Nelson**

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<td>Angela Le</td>
<td>Beth Miersch</td>
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Thank You for Your Legal Representation

White & Case: 8 matters
A leading partner at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals, White & Case accepted 8 cases at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Matt Frutig, Dan Shults, Alex Eguiluz

Rashad Abdallah         Matthew Drossos         Jason McCoy
Alec Albright           Kyle Ferrier            Stephen Moeller-Sally
Matt Brown              Shushi Hovannisian      Otto Nunez-Montelongo
Heather Burke           Shridhar Jayanthi       Jeremy Ostrander
Peter Carney            Dominic Litz            Henrik Patel
Alex Dilley             Lauren Lundy            Aaron Potter

Williams & Connolly: 6 matters
Williams & Connolly accepted 3 discharge upgrade matters, 1 medical retirement litigation matter, and 1 appeal at the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. Williams & Connolly volunteers also wrote Supreme Court certiorari amicus petitions for Bufkin v. McDonough & Thornton v. McDonough.

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Liam Montgomery

Stephen Andrews         Gabe Delaney            Meagan Newkirk
Perry Austin            Shayon Ghosh            Luke Sandor
Andrew Borrasco         Christopher Manning     Donovan Stone
Greg Bowman             Liam Montgomery          Alexandra Trobe
Atticus DeProspo        Madison Needham

Willkie Farr: 5 matters
Willkie Farr accepted 4 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases and 1 TSGLI case.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Stacey Kushlefsky, Jordan Diamond
Thank You for Your Legal Representation

Willkie Farr (cont.)

Krystyna Blakeslee  Wes Eguchi  Charlene Ni
Nicholas Chanin  Rikki Lavine  Michael Rieger
Courtenay Cullen  Issy Lipshutz  Cassandra Vangellow

WilmerHale: 40 matters

WilmerHale is a leading LSW partner for all case types. WilmerHale accepted 12 discharge upgrade cases (2 involving Military Sexual Trauma), 10 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases, 1 TSGLI case, 5 appeals at the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, and 1 case at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

WilmerHale partnered with Bank of America to interview 10 veterans at a virtual discharge upgrade clinic. Veterans from across the country met with pro bono attorneys through virtual meeting platforms to discuss their discharge upgrade cases.

WilmerHale also assisted LSW with researching privacy protections for documents filed at the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Erin Marie Meyer, Dorian Meyer Needham, Leigh Hillebrand

Mihdi Afnan  Joseph Brenner  Amy Doberman  Brent Gurney
Stephanie Avakian  John Butts  Shanelle Doher  Bobby Hampton
Christopher Babbitt  Mark Cahn  Lori Echavarria  Mark Hanin
Holly Bard  Benjamin Chapin  Erin Farrel  Elese Hanson
Nitisha Baronia  Jason Chipman  Micah Fielden  Ashley Hartman
Ashley Bashur  Daniel Clark  Sarah Garrett  Michael Heyison
Julia Bell  Paul Connell  Douglas Gates  Annie Himes
Matthew Benedetto  Tim Cook  Andrew Goldman  Sarah Hogan
Matthew Beville  Will Dario  Emily Gomez  Matthew Holmwood
Michael Bongiorno  Andrew Davies  Jennifer Graber  Hayley Hopkins
Jeannette Boot  Thomas Davis  Joel Green  Steven Horn
David Bowker  Rachel Dober  Robert Greffenius  Christie Huchro
Thank You for Your Legal Representation

WilmerHale (cont.)

Denis Hurley  Jessica Maneval  Disha Patel  Kyle Swan
Jarrod Ingles  Daniel Martin  Ryan Potts  Blake Sweat
Andrew Jumper  Martin McCormack  Ed Powell  Jennifer Thompson
Leon Kenworthy  Caitlin McGough  Thais Ridgeway  Lydia Turnage
Kyle Kessler  William McLucas  Grant Rowan  David Waites
Omar Khan  Anna Mizzi  Cristina Salcedo  Dennis Wang
Natalie Kirchoff  David Mlaver  Knute Salhus  William Warden
Barbara Kirschten  Ben Morris  Alan Schoenfeld  Brittany Warren
Kelley Kling  Danielle Morris  Elliot Shackelford  Sydney Warren
Jonathan Knight  Jaclyn Moyer  Howard Shapiro  Jon Weingart
Perry Lang  Sarah Murphy  Akshat Shekar  Monika Weisman
Yoon-Young Lee  Josh Nathanson  Michelle Silva  Reid Whitaker
Hyun-Soo Lee  Alex Nemtzow  Alexandra Stanley  Amy Wigmore
Mike Leotta  Bruce Newman  Joshua Stern  Sam Winter-Barker
Lauren Lifland  Stephanie Nicolas  Robert Stiller  Nora Xu
Ben Lobley  Patrick Nyman  Emily Summit  Alex Young
Meredith Loretta  Edward O’Callaghan  Erik Swabb  Todd Zubler
Andrew Lux  Tom Oates

Winston & Strawn: 5 matters

Winston & Strawn accepted 4 cases at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals and 1 discharge upgrade matter.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Greg McConnell, Tara Moss, Maria Kutnick

Scott Border  Amy Kearbey  Krishnan Padmanabhan
Claire Fundakowski  Rich McCarty  Scott Thomas
David Houck
NVLSP Staff

Executive Team

Paul Wright, Executive Director
Rochelle Bobroff, Director of Lawyers Serving Warriors®, Pro Bono Program of NVLSP
Patty Briotta, Director of Communications
Renee Burbank, Director of Litigation
Rafael Resto-Olivo, Director of Human Resources & Operations
Ana Reyes, Director of Development
Richard Spataro, Director of Training and Publications
Stacy Tromble, Director of CAVC Litigation
Jeffrey J. Zanghi, Director of Finance

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Brandy Disbennett-Albrecht, Appellate Attorney
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Matthew Handley, Equal Justice Works Fellow
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Cinthia Johnson, Staff Attorney
Ryan Kelley, Staff Attorney
Ann Kenna, Staff Attorney
Brianna LeFrere, Legal Assistant
Esther Leibfarth, Senior Managing Attorney
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Elizabeth Tarloski, Staff Attorney
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Dale Ton, Appellate Attorney
Alie Venuti, Senior Staff Attorney
Lora Vineberg, Staff Attorney
Tekey Wallace, Staff Attorney
Hannah R. Zacharias, Appellate Attorney
We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to ensure that the government delivers to our nation's 18 million veterans and active duty personnel the benefits to which they are entitled because of disabilities resulting from their military service to our country.