

2023 Report

National Veterans Legal Services Program

Pro Bono Program

Lawyers Serving Warriors®



NVLSP
NATIONAL VETERANS LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAM

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NVLSP Staff



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Our pro bono partners’ exceptional dedication is evident in the hours they have donated in serving our veterans.

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



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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.

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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

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

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 cataloging 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.



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.



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.

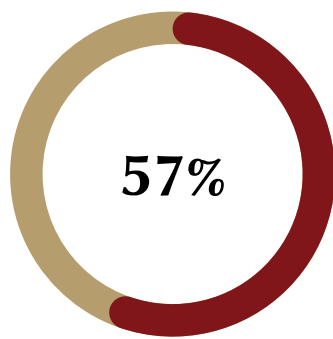
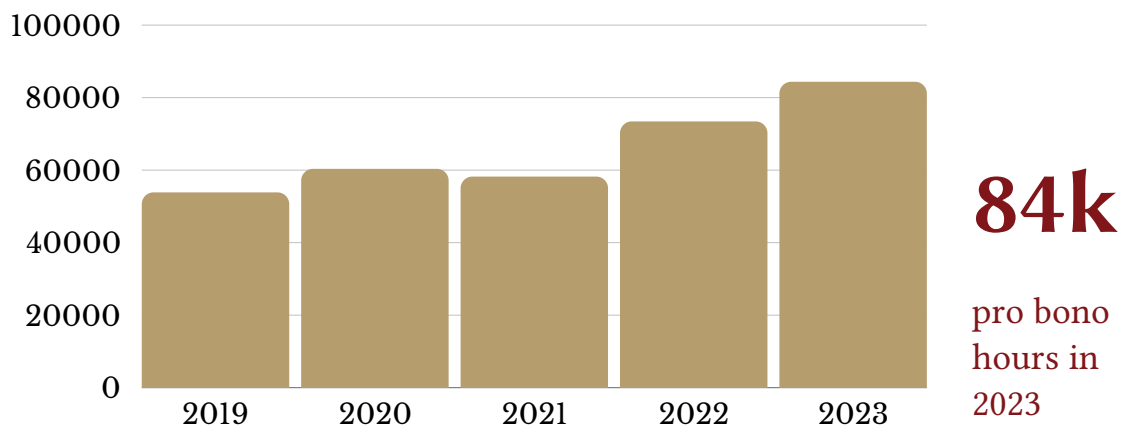


Appeals

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.

Pro Bono Hours

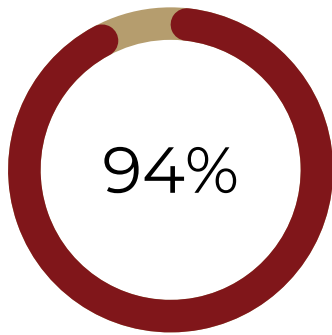
Below is an overview, by year, of the number of hours pro bono volunteers at LSW law firm and corporate partners worked on LSW-referred pro bono matters.



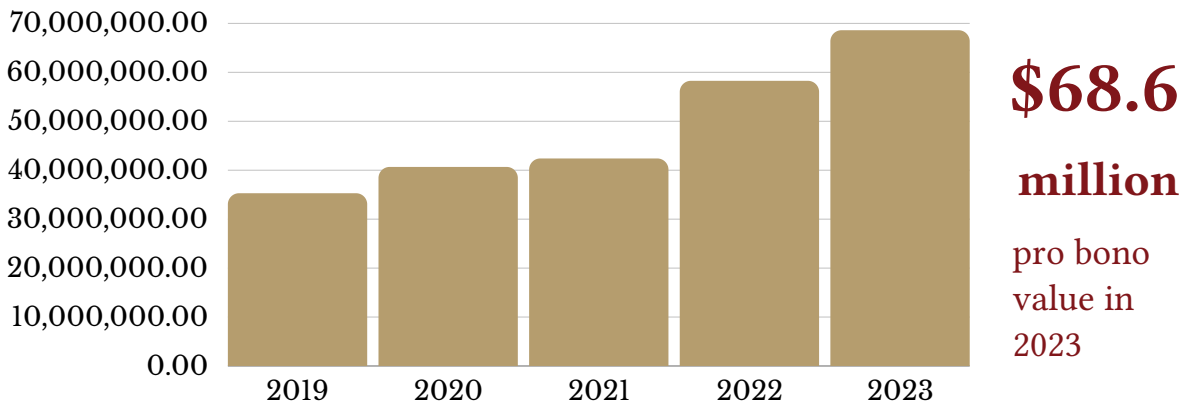
increase in pro bono hours since 2019

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.



increase in pro bono value since 2019



LSW Clinics

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

25

Clinics

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

282

Veterans

282 veterans were provided with brief service, advice, and individual consultations.



NVLSP Senior Managing Attorney Esther Leibfarth (center) and NVLSP Staff Attorney Amy Fulmer (right) talk with Recovery Care Coordinator for the USSOCOM Warrior Care Program (left).

LSW Trainings

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.

49

Live Trainings

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

2,730

Attendees

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.

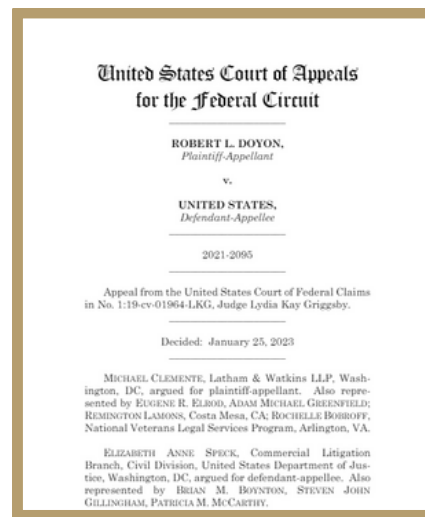
Victory Lap

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.

Victory Lap

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

Victory Lap

Military Medical Retirement



NVLSP Staff Attorney Abigail Reynolds and NVLSP Senior Pro Bono Coordinating Attorney Erin Mee at a George Mason Center for Community Mental Health Food for Thought fundraiser.

experiences, rated at 50% disabling. He appealed on his own to the Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records (AFBCMR). The Board denied medical retirement, finding that his mental health condition was not incurred in the line of duty because it was not caused by military stressors. Elizabeth Olien, Graham Gardner, and Caitlin Kasmar of Orrick appealed the Board's decision to the Court of Federal Claims, and the case was remanded from the Court back to the Board. The Board determined that the veteran's mental health condition occurred in the line of duty, but only conferred a rating of 10%, which does not suffice for a medical retirement. The team filed an amended complaint asserting that the 10% rating was arbitrary, capricious, and contrary to law. The Court agreed and the matter was remanded again. The Board awarded the veteran a permanent medical retirement with a 50% rating. The volunteers subsequently assisted the veteran with an application for Combat-Related Special Compensation.

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.

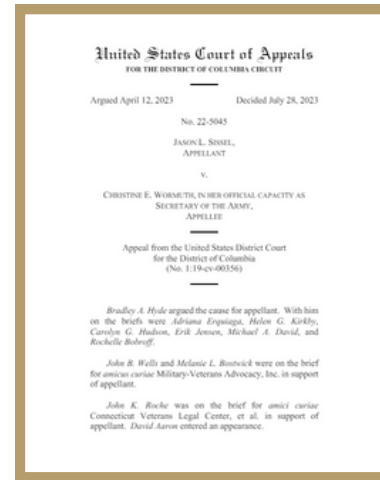
An Army Infantryman deployed to Iraq in March 2004 with the First Cavalry Division. He participated in a historic ambush in Sadr City, sustaining a bullet wound to the left shoulder and another to his upper arm. He was awarded a Purple Heart, the Army Commendation Medal with Valor Device, and the Combat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

Victory Lap

Military Medical Retirement

honorably served 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



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.

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.

Victory Lap

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.

Victory Lap

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.

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.

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 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 Infantryman was discharged on that basis a few weeks later. 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)

CRSC Litigation



NVLSP Staff Attorney Amy Fulmer, Equine Immersion Project Lead Wrangler John Rhimer, K-9 Finn, NVLSP Senior Managing Attorney Esther Leibfarth, First Sergeant (R) Jason Belford, K-9 Havoc, and Equine Immersion Project CEO and Founder Tara Mahoney at USSOCOM hosted 2024 Warrior Care Conference in Orlando, Florida.

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.

Victory Lap

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.

Victory Lap

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.



NVLSP Lawyers Serving Warriors® and DLA Piper at a clinic at the Fort Belvoir Soldier Recovery Unit.

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

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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.

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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%.

An Army Infantryman was promoted as a Special Forces Sergeant, and ultimately retired after over 20 years of service as a Master Sergeant.

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.

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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

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disability with an explicit determination by the Physical Evaluation Board that his PTSD was combat-related. He applied for CRSC for PTSD on his own initially and twice on reconsideration but was denied. **Christopher Cognato of Ballard Spahr** compiled a third reconsideration request with substantial new evidence combined with an initial application for additional conditions. The brief emphasized the extensive personnel and medical records documenting the veteran's direct experience of combat. The veteran was awarded CRSC for his PTSD, tinnitus, asthma and rhinitis, for a combined combat-related disability rating of 100%.

An Army Air Defense Battle Management

System Operator deployed to Afghanistan in 2014. While deployed, an enemy rocket exploded within five to ten feet of him, and the impact of the rocket blast resulted in his losing consciousness. Upon regaining consciousness, he experienced dizziness and confusion, and he began to experience frequent headaches immediately after the incident. He was awarded a Combat Action Badge and medically retired. **Stacey Ruiz, Connor Burns and Ryan Kahn of Willkie Farr & Gallagher** represented the veteran in submitting an initial application for CRSC. He was awarded CRSC for PTSD, migraines and other conditions for a combined combat-related disability rating of 90%.

Discharge Upgrades



Litigation

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

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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

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Federal News Network interviewed NVLSP Staff Attorney Abigail Reynolds on the new discharge upgrade manual and navigating VA's complex network of programs.

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.

While deployed to Iraq, a Marine Corps Mechanic experienced an IED attack to his convoy that severely injured a fellow service member. The next month, a mortar hit his deployment base as he was walking to the mess hall, which just missed hitting him by twenty feet, killing one friend and injuring several others. When he returned home, he discovered that his wife was having an affair and had taken out almost \$40,000 in loans in his name.

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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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 Hettich 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 Stoeber 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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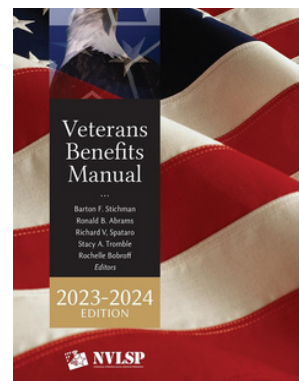
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conduct of the veteran in the 20 years following his discharge, including working as a EMT, health care professional, and case manager for Human Services. The Board for Correction of Naval Records upgraded his discharge to General (Under Honorable 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 combatting 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.



The Veterans Benefits Manual is the most comprehensive treatise on veterans law providing critical insight and analysis written by practicing lawyers at NVLSP.

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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.



NVLSP Staff Attorney Amy Fulmer at a Veteran Stand Down event in Alachua County, Florida.

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."

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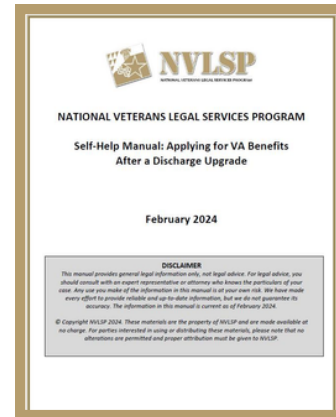
Discharge Upgrade Administrative Applications and Appeals

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



NVLSP issued a free "Self-Help Manual: Applying for VA Benefits After a Discharge Upgrade". The step-by-step guide informs veterans about the benefits they may be eligible to receive once they obtain a discharge upgrade and other resources available.

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.

Victory Lap

Discharge Upgrade Administrative Applications and Appeals

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.

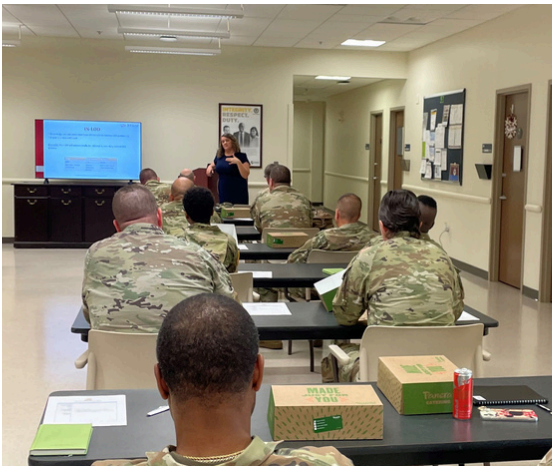
Keely McCarty and Emily Theriault of Sheppard Mullin represented the veteran at a Naval Discharge Review Board hearing. The volunteers detailed his excellent service and argued that his mental health condition mitigated his alcoholism. The Board agreed that the veteran's mental health condition excused 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.

Victory Lap

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection ("TSGLI")

TSGLI Administrative Applications and Appeals



NVLSP Senior Managing Attorney Esther Leibfarth gives a presentation to service members in a clinic at the Fort Belvoir Soldier Recovery Unit.

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.

Victory Lap

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 staff and family including NVLSP Director of CAVC Litigation Stacy Tromble, BVA Project Coordinating Attorney Brandy Disbennett-Albrecht, Appellate Attorney Alec Ghezzi, Director of Human Resources & Operations Rafael Resto-Olivo, and Appellate Attorney Emily Woodward Deutsch at Michigan Veterans Honor Flight into Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport through an event with the CAVC Bar Association.

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

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.

Victory Lap

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.



NVLSP Special Counsel Christine Cote Hill, Of Counsel Thomas J. Herthel, and Director of CAVC Litigation Stacy Tromble at the NASDVA Midwinter Training Conference.

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.

Victory Lap

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.

Accenture	Hewlett Packard Enterprise	Orrick
AIG	HP Inc.	Paul Hastings
Akerman	Hogan Lovells	Paul, Weiss
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld	Holland & Hart	Perkins Coie
Arnold & Porter	Hunton Andrews Kurth	Pfizer
Ballard Spahr	Intel Corporation	Reed Smith
Bank of America	Jones Day	RTX
Bradley Arant	Katten Muchin Rosenman	Shearman & Sterling
Chapman and Cutler	King & Spalding	Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton
Chevron Corporation	Kirkland & Ellis	Sidley Austin Foundation
Cisco	K&L Gates	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom
Clifford Chance	Latham & Watkins	The Steptoe Foundation
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Dechert	Mayer Brown	VMware Inc.
DLA Piper Foundation	McCarter & English	Wells Fargo
Eversheds Sutherland US	McDermott Will & Emery	White & Case
Exelon	McGuireWoods	WilmerHale
Faegre Drinker	Merck & Co.	Williams & Connolly
Finnegan	Microsoft Corporation	Winston & Strawn
Foley Hoag	Morgan Lewis & Bockius	
Gibson Dunn	Nixon Peabody	
Greater Washington Community Foundation	Oracle	

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.)

Sean Callagy	Suneeta Hazra	Darrel Pae
Colleen Couture	Justin Imperato	Carlos Pelaez
Deborah Curtis	Tiffany Jang	Kyle Perdue
Benjamin Danieli	Bell Johnson	Adam Reinhart
Mahnu Davar	Kevin Jordan	Katie Roux
Joshua Davis	Martin Kald	John Shearer
Anne Davis	Oluoma Kas-Osoka	Lisa Shi
Scott DeAbate	Garrett Kraus	Carey Smith
Mark Epley	Shay Longtain	EP Stonehill
James Feeney	Frank Mangini	David Thorne
Keith Feigenbaum	Sharon Mayo	Bethany Tolentino
Debbie Feinstein	David Menchel	Michael Treves
Eric Fell	Caitlin Mika	Sebastian Canon Urrutia
John Fiorenzo	Jeffrey Miller	Mike Walden
Claire Frost	Alex Natanzon	Stephanie Weirick
Joe Galvin	Alyson Nickols	Ryan White
Alex Gendzier	Stephanie Nygard	Steven Wickman
Dina Hayes	Gabe Ossi	Nellie Wigfall

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

Vincent Doa

Mary Jones

Lucy Aude

Victoria Donohue

Allison Layson

Judith Beall

Patricia Dunn

Aaron Longo

Donald Butler

Yolanda Gamboa

Andy Margolin

Kathryn Caimi

Matt Gellar

Ryan Rogers

Luanne Chu

Pamela Grotsky

Gary Rosenblum

Gregory Couillou

Marissa Halligan

Jessica Thorn

Elizabeth Crean

David Heaton

Amanda Vaughn

Alyson Danner

David Holliday

Thomas Yang

Guy DeMaertelaere

Karen Holness

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

Brendan Glynn

Roe Talmor

Connie Delk

Jennifer Michael

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	Christy Hancock	Kyle Owens
Jay Bender	Kimberly Ingram	Ted Pearce
Jera Bradshaw	Benjamin Johnson	Grant Premo
Maria Carisetti	Dana Lumsden	Elizabeth Sauer
Mike Denniston	Tom Mostellar	Nate Viebrock
Ginny Light Gibson	Christopher Odgers	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	Natasha Ertzbischoff	Nicholas Joynson
Stephen Cook		

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	Jennifer Joy	Grahin Rollins
Charleatta Funney	Timothy Kennedy	Lisa Rossi
Jacqueline Hayes	Katlyn Miller	Brent Timberlake
Maisha Hughes	Leigh O'Neill	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

Kathy Wassberg

Steve Whitmore

Amanda Zivich

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

Graham Allan

Victoria Fernandez

Caren Neydavoud

Xiao Chang

Bob Hall

Tom Philbrick

Tawanda Etheridge

Nigel Hsu

Tanjeev Thandi

Citi: 1 matter

A new partner in 2023, Citi partnered with Perkins Coie on 1 discharge upgrade file review matter.

Anna Andreescu

Sofia Rahman

Marian Florio Persico

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

Timothy Cornell

David Harris

Jordan Passmore

Megan Hackett

Dennis Morrisroe

Sung Shin

Thank You for Your Legal Representation

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
Jeremy Hsu

Samantha Leib
Saranne Louth

Mitchell Metcalf
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 Lee
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

Thank You for Your Legal Representation

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

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

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

Don Knight	Dorothy Pingley	Shannon Sullivan
Mark Mazzei		

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

Marian Barilone
Rita Concepcion
Erica Cox

Robin Domonte
Laura Lehman
Toshia Smith

Chris Sparks
Dave Valent

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

Melissa Burgess
Anthony T. Caso
Jonathan B. Engel
Matthew C. Gurr

K.C. Halm
Richard Kim
Andy Lorentz
John C. Nelson Jr.

Jordan E. Thompson
Vidhya Prabhakaran
Barry A. Stulberg

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.)

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

Deltek: 10 matters

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

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Stephani Antona, Colette Shotton

Stephani Antona	Carla Holpp	Richard Reed
Lisa Bencic	Christine John	Tracy Schampers
Charlie Crawford-Silva	Jon Knight	Colette Shotton
Lori Der-Hacopian		

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

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

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

Danielle Rushing Behrends	Carrie A. Hazel	Jonathan A. Meulemans
Hannah E. Buzolits	Reed R. Heimbecher	Lisa M. Myers
Peyton E. Click	Lyndsey D. Jackson	Victoria Remus
Sarah Cornwell	John A. Janiszewski	John F. Rhoades
McKenna B. Crisp	Stacey L. McGraw	Maggi Robert
Andrew T. Green	Sherry Medley	Christopher T. Sakauye
Marilyn M. Guichard	Victor T. Metroff	

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Eversheds Sutherland: 6 matters

Eversheds Sutherland accepted 6 discharge upgrade matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Aileen Crowson, Rich Noland

Chris Bloomfield	Kristen Martin	Paige Spraker
Stan Freeman	Rich Noland	Alex Stith
Aleeza Kanner	Brigid O'Donoghue	Shenghao Wang

Exelon: 8 matters

Exelon accepted 8 discharge upgrade file review matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Lisa Luftig, Kelsey Bynum

Kunle Adeyemo	Kelsey Bynum	Chervonti Jones
Eric Allie	Monay Chase	Lisa Luftig
Tat-Lin Angus	Kim Curry	Quentin McMahan
Carmen Armes	Cliff Glover	Doug Micheel
Joanna Baltes	Gary Guy	Lauren Murray
Taylor Beckham	Andrea Harper	Trever Neuroth
Aneta Benja	Brian Hoffman	Connie Pierce
Amy Blauman	James Holley	Shevon Rockett
Dorothy Bonds	Dennis Jamouneau	Denise Wojcik
Shawn Brant		

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.)

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

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	Alexander Harding	Tom Sullivan
Charles Collins-Chase	Ryan McDonnell	

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	Priya Dalal	Nate McPherson
Sarah Burg	Jeffrey Lewis	Courtney Tobin
Cecilia Copperman	Katherine Luo	

Thank You for Your Legal Representation

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	Chris Fitzpatrick	Stefan Krantz	George Salter
Eric Andalman	Darnesha Carter	Garrett Kraus	David Sharfstein
Paget Barranco	Foli	Dave Locascio	Tej Singh
Michael Basse	David Foster	Jason Lohr	Craig Smith
Lexi Bender	Laura Friedli	Chuck Loughlin	Annie Spencer
Brittney Bennett	Stephanie Gold	Theresa Luk	Kyle Spies
Justin Bevilacqua	Maile Gradison	Seab Macdonald	Russell Tan
Matt Bowles	Joe Grdinovac	Kellie Majcher	Erida Tosini-Corea
Amanda Brown	Kevin Greenslade	Pat Malone	James VanLandingham
Adam Brown	Rose Grover	Tom McGovern	Curtis Victor
Lindsay Brown	Mary Grywatch	Katy Milner	Gibby Wagner
Ted Brown	Stacy Hadeka	Lyndsay Montour	Bryan Walsh
Lacy Brown	Barbara Hayes	Rachel Moon	Deborah Wei
Max Cardin	Mark Heimlich	Joseph Murphy	Monae White
Nathan Cooper	Taylor Hillman	DH Nam	David Willner
Celine Crowson	Kacey Hirtle	Lauren Olmsted	Thomas Wiltshire
Connor Day	Vassi Iliadis	Christine Pinnkathok	Ron Wisor
Myles DePass	Michael Jacobson	Connie Potter	Tom Woolsey
Imani Dixon	Greg Kass	Ned Purdon	Soyoun Yasuda
Emma Dowell	Warren Kessler	Breanna Reeves	Kelly Zhang
Kevin Downey	Emily Kimball	Chrissy Reynolds	Sally Zhang
Bradley Edmister	Katie Kramer	Anne Salladin	
Taylor Evans			

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

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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

Matthew Bellem	Kyle Maury	Matt Rowan
Grace Carpenter	Jeannine Novak	Larry Slovensky
Taeyeong Kim	Alex Panos	Mark Villapando
Geoff King	Barbara Ritzert	Michael Wheaton

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

Patrick Arnett	Kori Dean	Melissa S. Gainor
Matthew Brandys	Brian Delaney	Craig Garvey
Brooksany Barrowes	Adam Desantis	Anna Geml
Aidan Burke	Rob Dixon	Daniel J. Gerkin
Brigham Cannon	Matt Dobleman	Amber Harezlak
Alexandra Caritis	Daniel T. Donovan	Becky Henz
Kenny Chiaghana	Grace Duke	Mary-Kathryn Hawes
Patrick Corrigan	Lucie H. Duvall	Matt Hershkowitz
Chad B. Crowell	Peter Evangelatos	Nathan Howe
Rich Cunningham	Andrew Farrington	Sanaa Jain
Joshua S. Davenport	Mark Filip	Ian Jelsma

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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 Drozdal	Kevin Hamilton
Caitlyn Brock	Alex Dubose	Jake Hummer
Ian Bushner	Denver Dunn	Kehaulani Jai
Spencer Chatellier	Archita Dwarakanath	Helen Klein

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Latham & Watkins (cont.)

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

Linklaters: 14 matters

Linklaters accepted 14 discharge upgrade file review matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Karen Carbonell, Riya Gupta

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

Mayer Brown: 51 matters

Mayer Brown accepted 51 discharge upgrade file review matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Jennifer Cheung

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

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Mayer Brown (cont.)

Laura Hayden	Jeff Lai	Delfina Nicholson	Miller Smith
Andy Hogan	Constantina Leodis	Elizabeth Osborne	Brooke Stewart
Natalie Holman	Gail Levine	Liz Osborne	Lorenz Taets
Nic Jackson	Ellie Marino	Ryan Regan	Hannah Vanderlaan
Michael Jaeger	Aubrey McEachern	Laura Saini	Christophe Wassaf
Tyrone Johnson	Patrick Mock	Brian Saleeby	Laura Watson
Carmel Joseph	Jack Murray	Jon Schlotterback	Kelsey Wheaton
James Kendal	Vera Nackovic	Girindra Selleck	Natalie Witter
Melissa Kilcoyne	Tim Nagy	Sydney Siwinski	Calla Zhou
Peter Kim	Tyler Nellis		

McCarter & English: 5 matters

McCarter & English accepted 5 discharge upgrade matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Michelle Pallak

Katherine Althoff	Kathleen Ehrhard	Rebecca Klinger
George Blazeski	James Freebery	Megan Nigro
Sandra Carr	John Isacson	Sarah Smith
Angela Della Rocco	Jordan Kidd	Matt VanEman

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.

Emily Curran	Marshall Jackson Jr.	Rachel Lee
Caroline Iovino	David Keifer	Alex Spisak

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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 Yopez
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 Wagneister
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

Joanne Bae	Yoon-Jee Kim	Hassen Sayeed
Kyla Butler	Susanna Korkeakivi	Tai Vivatvaraphol
Emma Byrd	Bryce May	Julie Allison
Etienne Dumas	Andrew Montalbano	Weltman
Landa Gandler	Katina Nordloh	Hayley Wolf
Andi Hasaj	Chris Owens	Elena Zaraboza
Carl Heiberg	Marc Pensabene	Renia Zervos
Caitlin Hogan	Daryn Rush	

OpenText: 3 matters

OpenText accepted 3 discharge upgrade file review matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Brian Pinnell

Brian Pinnell

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

Shari Aberle	Janet Hatch	Emily Boardman
John Bencivenga	Kathryn Hutton	Revell
Mike Berger	Karen Kaplan	Storm Spencer
Aimee Blatz	Helen Keeley	Robert Stevenson
Gillian Blitzer	Taneshia McFadden	Janis Verruso
Sarah Russell Goddard	Aoife Murphy	Lynne Willett
Francine Gunter	Nathaniel Orpen	Joshua Wueller

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

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

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Perkins Coie (cont.)

Jennifer Huseby	Shirin Malkani	Karen McGaffey	Alexis Shankman
Maisie Ide	Kristin Marie Marcil	Megan McLean	Ashlee Sherman
Coimbra Jackson	Bill McCabe	Keith Miller	Cara Simpkins
Daniel Jackstadt	Christy McCullough	Greg Miller	Karan Singh
Simon Joaquin	Maddie McFee	Greg Mina	Dawn Smith
Brandon Johnson	Karen McGaffey	Jassiem Moore	Kelly Soldati
Nick Kajca	Megan McLean	Megan Morrissey	Jordan Surratt
Christopher Kelley	Keith Miller	Hanna Mullin	Mathieu Swiderski
Nate Kelley	Greg Miller	Trang Nguyen	Brandon Thompson
Michelle Kemp	Greg Mina	Michael Nguyen	Jonathan Tietz
Wonji Kerper	Jassiem Moore	Gina Nyberg	Tommy Tobin
Ethan Kerstein	Megan Morrissey	Katie O'Sullivan	Joshuah Turner
Janis Kestenbaum	Hanna Mullin	Jeff Ong	Max Tyler
James Kilcup	Trang Nguyen	Cory Owan	Rae Utterback
Robert Kim	Michael Nguyen	Mark Parise	Fabricio Vayra
Samuel Klein	Gina Nyberg	Mira Park	Gia Velasquez
Sean Knowles	Katie O'Sullivan	Alexander Pascualy	James Vivenzio
LeAnn Johnson	Jeff Ong	Adrienne Paterson	Greg Vogel
Koch	Cory Owan	Marian Florio	Tom Vogt
Arthur Kolios	Mark Parise	Persico	Adriana Vélez-León
Sarah Konz	Mira Park	Christopher Phares	Ji Wang
Naa Kai Koppoe	Mat Lutz	Alexandra Pierce	Oviatt Worthington
Hannah Lanham	Rocky Maas	Olivia Radics	Wargula
Kristi Lee	Eric Maas	Avinash Ram	Christ Wassman
Kristin Lockhart	Olivia Maffei	Emily Rich	Sean West
Kira Loehr	Philip Maier	Daniel Ridlon	Kathleen Wills
Briana Loughlin	Shirin Malkani	Torryn Rodgers	Zoe Wood
Mat Lutz	Kristin Marie Marcil	Nic Schmidt	Wei Yuan
Rocky Maas	Bill McCabe	John Schoppert	Madison Zhang
Eric Maas	Christy McCullough	Hannah Schuppner	James Zuanich
Olivia Maffei	Maddie McFee		
Philip Maier			

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Reed Smith: 3 matters

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

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Chris Walters

Sean Birt

Taylor Marcusson

Kennede Miller

Ed Rogan

Anna Targowska

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

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, Jeseñia Brown

Margeaux Bergan

Thomas Blecher

Mallory Brennan

Carter Clements

Samantha Favela

William Holste

Emily Kelly

Rachel Kim

Taylor Landry

David Lee

Emily Letich

Efren Lemus

Tia Lewis

Jake Lortz

Randall Martin

Thomas Mastoras

Matt McGee

Helen McKinney

Mitchell Menlove

Petar Nalbantov

Erin Nauman

Memmi Rasmussen

Haley Schwab

Adam Schwartz

Sean Skiffington

Dillon Tan

Katherine Teng

Daniel Tristán

Danni Vorbrodt

Eva Wang

Kazumaza Watanabe

Alexis Whitaker

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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 Chiarello

Jin Cho

Maureen Crough

Sean Damm

Andrew Friedman

Robert Garsson

Nidhi George

Grace Gerbas

Amanda Gonzalez

Conor Gordon

Nick Greenberg

Mark Guerrero

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

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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

Step toe: 15 matters

Step toe accepted 7 cases at the Board of Veterans' Appeals, 2 Combat-Related Special Compensation cases, and 1 medical retirement litigation matter. Step toe 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 Singh

Tim Yoo

Lillian Wallace

Kate Wersinger

Onika Williams

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Taft: 9 matters

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

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Monica Fennell

Ina Avalon

Aisha Hall

Jack Koepke

Richard Kruger

Jonathan Levy

Allison Smith Newsome

Devina Patel

Amanda Pipik-Leip

Trent Sandifur

William Sweet

Paige Szymanski

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

Jim Adams

Adam Bean

Kevin Burke

Patrick Bussard

Joanne Chormanski

Frank DiCarlo

Michael Fausey

Suzanne Franco

Keith Golden

David Gollin

Amanda Gonzalez

Anthony Kim

Sheila Messick

Chris Michailoff

Jeffery Muehlgay

Paloma Naderi

Danny Phillips

Stacey Spivak

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

Valerie Fairwell

Chris Jordan

Amanda Rosen

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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 Lerner

Zie Alere	Dave Gettings	Anthony Melon	Jessica Ring
Alejandra Aponte	Melanie Griffith	Riley Nicholson	McKayla Riter
Tim Bado	Maia Harris	Dascher Pasco	Bryan Rizza
Tiffany Bracewell	Bryan Haynes	Kim Phan	Jeremy Sairsingh
Alyssa Cavanaugh	Alex Hill	Dustin Plumadore	Nick Schuchert
Dane Brody	Zach Kobokovich	Nick Ramos	Trey Smith
Chanove	Megan Mackie	Brittany Reeves	Chris Verdugo
Carson Cox	Mindy McGrath	Sara Richman	Alicia Worthy
Kyle Deak			

U.S. Bank: 4 matters

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

LSW Pro Bono Contacts: Tara Adams, Jennifer Allen

Eric Anderson	Alison Atkins	Andria Beeler-Norrholm
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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

Willie Callison	Stacey Carson	Oded Friedmann
Megan Campbell	Dawn Damschen	Curtis Groves

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Verizon (cont.)

Emily Hendrix	James McDow	Rachel Scott
Michelle Hills	Avram Polinsky	Daniel Seaman
Ann Gover Johnson	Avery Pollard	Andrea Short
Jim Matteo	Genna Roarty	Yvonne Williams-Wass

Visa: 4 matters

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

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Robert Lewis

Alexis Gomond	Chris McGuire	Jacqueline Rudloff
Colette Gulick	Alex Miller	Ivy Tao
Robert Lewis	Stephanie Peter	Kara Weiss
Grace Lykins		

VMware: 9 matters

VMware accepted 9 discharge upgrade file review matters.

LSW Pro Bono Contact: Stephanie Nelson

Aundrea Holt	Doug Loi	Karen Moir
Jane Jue	Elaine Manzanilla	Stephanie Nelson
Angela Le	Beth Miersch	

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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

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Willkie Farr (cont.)

Krystyna Blakeslee
Nicholas Chanin
Courtenay Cullen
Stefan Ducich

Wes Eguchi
Rikki Lavine
Issy Lipshutz

Charlene Ni
Michael Rieger
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	Else 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

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WilmerHale (cont.)

Denis Hurley	Jessica Maneval	Disha Patel	Kyle Swan
Jarrold 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 Loble	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

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 Renee Burbank, Director of Litigation
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 Stacy Tromble, Director of CAVC Litigation
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 Ryan Kelley, Staff Attorney
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 Lane McCall, IT Manager
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 Abigail Schopick, Senior Appellate Attorney
 Carlie Steiner, Appellate 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



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NATIONAL VETERANS LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAM

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.



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