The Veteran’s Creed
1. I am an American Veteran
2. I proudly served my country
3. I live the values I learned in the military
4. I continue to serve my community, my country and my fellow veterans
5. I maintain my physical and mental discipline
6. I continue to lead and improve
7. I make a difference
8. I honor and remember my fallen comrades

This issue of the listserv includes VA Will Change Its Motto; Army War College Event; Col Parks recipient; MOH Recipient; VA to Be First Major Insurer to Cover Alzheimer’s Drug Leqembi; Vets Activism Spans the Spectrum; Vets Unemployment

VA Will Change Its Motto
After some years of discussion and months of deliberation, the VA is changing its motto/mission statement. It is not a large change in words but a significant one. The current motto derived from Abraham Lincoln’s 2nd inaugural address is “To fulfill President Lincoln’s promise ‘to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan’ by serving and honoring the men and women who are America’s veterans.” This is the motto that is displayed prominently on the VA’s building at 810 Vermont Ave. NW in DC and across the country.

New mission statement: “To fulfill President Lincoln’s promise to care for those who have served in our nation’s military and for their families, caregivers, and survivors.”

As nicely expostulated in an Op Ed by RAND’s Kayla Williams in The Hill, the issue with the old motto was a lack of inclusiveness. Most especially the motto did not include women veterans who for many reasons may feel lack of recognition and an unwelcoming environment in the VA and elsewhere. Also, not included were LGBTQ+ and “widows and orphans” did not take into account the “diverse caregivers” for veterans. The motto changes are thus profound.

Army War College Event
On May 5th and 6th, The US Army War College will be conducting their annual conference on Civil-Military Relations. It will be entitled “the All-Volunteer Force at 50.” As part of this event and on behalf of former Army COS GEN George Casey and I will be presenting Supporting Veterans After 50 Years of the All-Volunteer Force and 20 Years of War: Ideas Moving Forward based on our book with the same title. In this presentation, I will review how AVF veterans differ from their predecessors, how they have accumulated many assets based on their military service and how the public image of these veterans may be distorted and requires balance. The
presentation will emphasize aspects related to the perception of veterans. These are themes that we have been working on for the past few years.

**Col Parks MOH Recipient**

Excerpts from the Medal of Honor dedication to Amry Col. Paris Davis. He received the medal at age 83, nearly 50 years after he was first nominated.

Col. Davis, 83 years old, enlisted in the Army in 1959, just over a decade after the military was desegregated. When he wanted to join the Special Forces, according to President Biden, some in the elite group asked if he was sure, since most people in the force didn’t look like him.

“Paris didn’t listen to them, and thank God he didn’t,” Mr. Biden said at a White House ceremony Friday.

The White House said Col. Davis was awarded the Medal of Honor, the country’s highest award for combat valor, for distinguishing himself over two days in June 1965 while in Vietnam. Col. Davis, then a captain, put his life at risk during a battle against North Vietnamese forces near Bong Son, rescuing two Americans while taking gunfire.

According to the White House “The night before, Col. Davis captured two enemy personnel to question them and learned that a larger enemy force was in the area, according to the Army. He led his soldiers into battle, where he was wounded and separated from his troops. Col. Davis then led four others forward during intense gunfire, managing to destroy gun emplacements and capture enemy soldiers.

As he tried to regroup his troops, he was hit and wounded again. Col. Davis tackled an enemy soldier with a rifle and defeated him with hand-to-hand combat, the Army said. Then he saw the two American soldiers who needed to be rescued. Col. Davis pulled both soldiers to safety even though he was shot in the leg and hit with fragments of a grenade. He dragged the second soldier to safety under a hail of gunfire. Col. Davis refused medical evacuation for himself and stayed on the battlefield to help remove his wounded troops, the White House said. He spent that time directing tactical air and artillery fire, according to the Army.”

The Army said Col. Davis’s actions “were decisive in changing the tide of the battle, ensuring that American Soldiers were not killed or taken prisoner, preventing the South Vietnamese company from being overrun, and ensuring the defeat of a numerically superior enemy force.”

“He’s an incredible man,” Mr. Biden said Friday, calling this the “most consequential day” of his presidency. When Col. Davis was told he would receive the Medal of Honor, Mr. Biden said, the retired officer’s response was: “America was behind me.” Col Davis also won the Silver Star and Purple Heart among other medals and is one of only 4 service members to win both the MOH and Soldier’s Medal given for an act of heroism that doesn’t involve combat (for saving a soldier in a truck stuck in the mud just before it
exploded). After retiring from the Army, Col Davis founded the Metro Herald, an Alexandria VA newspaper.

Yes, an incredible man!

**VA to Be First Major Insurer to Cover Alzheimer’s Drug Leqembi**
A first for the VA: As of March 13, they are the first to cover the new Alzheimer’s drug Leqebib for the early stages of the disease after accelerated approval by the FDA. Almost half of VA enrollees are 65 years of age or older and the estimate is that the VA has 167,954 veterans receiving care for Alzheimer’s. Medicare probably won’t approve the drug until FDA grants full and not just accelerated approval – FDA’s deadline for that is July 6.

Leqembi removes Amyloid plaques which, it is now thought, are not the cause but contribute to the mental decline in the disease. The drug slowed cognitive decline by 27%. Side effects include cerebral bleeding especially in those patients taking anticoagulant therapy.

**Vets Activism Spans the Spectrum.**
A Washington Post Perspective by Professor Jessica Adler of Florida International University, makes the point that political activity by military individuals (both active duty and veterans) spans the spectrum of political views. While the media often focuses on right-leaning veterans, Professor Adler notes that veterans and their organizations represent every political point of view.

Certain veterans may be attracted to paramilitary organizations but “people with military records - like any other diverse group - of complex and varied histories and activist identities.” Certain organizations have sought to claim veterans as a whole, though, in fact, no one group can do that.

After World War I there was a conscious effort to combat leftist tendencies among former service members and veterans’ organizations were created in this milieu. The newly formed American Legion was concerned with this, as were others of the then new veterans’ organizations. However, most veterans joined these organizations more for the kinship with neighbors and camaraderie and the fact that it advocated strongly for veterans issues. For example, the GI Bill came out of the American Legion to Congress. American Legion members as do those of other large veteran service organizations, represented a wide spectrum of beliefs.

In more recent years, veterans ‘organization representing minorities have grown and become very prominent. The Vietnam War stimulated a rise in leftist activism among veterans while others joined organizations on the right.

As far as the events of January 6th, 2021, according to this article about 10% of those involved were veterans who comprise about 6% of the country's population.
Many organizations seek the legitimacy that veterans provide, and veterans are targets for all sorts of movements. However, beliefs among veterans cover the entire spectrum.

**Vets Unemployment**
Veterans’ unemployment continues to be lower than in nonveterans. The average unemployment percentage for March 2022-Feb. 2023 are below. In Feb 2023, the overall rate for veterans was 2.5%, down from 2.8% the month before.

![Unemployment Rates Chart]

Joel Kupersmith, M.D.
Professor of Medicine

The Listserv is available as an archive on the Georgetown University Library website under the title “Veterans Interest Newsletters.

**Stats Section**

**Proportion of Injured Soldiers Who Survive Since World War I**

![Survival Rates Chart]

Note the much higher survival rate in the Post 9/11 wars. From Pew