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## **Veterans Are the Solution—Not the Problem** **Nominate a Veteran In Your Community For the 2017 Veterans' Voices Award**

**April 26, 2017—ST. PAUL, Minn.**— The *Veterans' Voices Award* of the Minnesota Humanities Center celebrates men and women Veterans who are creating, leading, and building their communities beyond their military service.

"Like many of my peers, I work tirelessly to improve our community through a continued commitment to serve," said Paul Riedner, a 2016 *Veterans' Voices* awardee. "The *Veterans' Voices Award* amplifies our efforts and provides a much needed platform for the incredible gifts that those who serve have to offer us all."

The Humanities Center is now accepting nominations for its *2017 Veterans' Voices Award*, which honors exceptional Minnesota Veterans who have gone above and beyond the call of duty. This is an excellent opportunity to highlight Veterans who are active in your community. The *Veteran's Voices Award* recognizes Minnesota Veterans who served honorably in the military and are now significantly contributing to their communities, through their profession and/or through volunteerism. One hundred five (105) Veterans from 70 Minnesota communities have received the *Veterans' Voices Award* since its introduction in 2013.

"The *Veterans' Voices Award* is an inspiration to those who are newly transitioned into civilian life, and it fosters a network of civic minded Veterans," said Jason Garcia, who is the *Veterans' Voices* Program Officer at the Humanities Center and an Army Veteran. "I have observed, first-hand, the positive impact that the *Veterans' Voices Award* has on the individual Veteran, their home community, and the greater Minnesota Veterans' community."

The Humanities Center invites nominations of candidates who are actively engaged former or current military service members who are making significant, positive contributions and who fall into one of two categories: On the Rise (40 and under) or Legacy (over 40). **Award nominations will be accepted through May 19, 2017.**

"My selection as a *Veteran Voices Award* winner was an incredible personal honor, but more importantly, it expanded awareness of the two non-profits that I work with: Women Veterans Initiative and Healing of Memories," said Sheila Laughton, a 2016 *Veterans' Voices* awardee. "It is a huge step toward changing the stereotype of the morally injured Veteran."

The awards will be presented at the fifth annual *Veterans' Voices Award Ceremony* that will be held at the Anderson Student Center on the campus of St. Thomas University in St. Paul on September 11, 2017. WCCO-TV reporter and Veteran, Reg Chapman, will again emcee this event. Past award presenters include Governor Mark Dayton and Retired Major General Larry Shellito, Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs.

Since 9/11/2001 more than 50,000 men and women from Minnesota have been deployed and returned home from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. These Veterans are our neighbors—neighbors who defended the freedom of all Americans.

[Veterans' Voices](#) is a fast growing, state-wide program of the Humanities Center that is changing the narrative of Minnesota Veterans. This program draws on the power of the humanities to explore and share the full life experiences of Veterans. It empowers Minnesota Veterans to speak in their own voices utilizing plays, discussion groups, literature, and through the recognition provided by the *Veterans' Voices Award*.

**NOMINATIONS:** Nominations must be accompanied by a narrative describing why the Veteran is being nominated. **All nominations must be received by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, May 19, 2017.** For more information about the *Veterans' Voices Award* nomination process and past *Veterans' Voices* awardees visit [mnhum.org/vets](http://mnhum.org/vets).

Nominations may be submitted online ([mnhum.org/vets](http://mnhum.org/vets)) or by mail to:

**Minnesota Humanities Center**  
2017 *Veterans' Voices Award*  
987 Ivy Avenue East  
Saint Paul, MN 55106

**Ampers** radio is the media sponsor of the 2017 *Veterans' Voices Award Ceremony*.

**About the Minnesota Humanities Center:**

The Minnesota Humanities Center is a nonprofit that collaborates with organizations and individuals to inspire community conversations, forge deep connections, and illuminate authentic, diverse voices across Minnesota, especially those left out or marginalized. We work to build a thoughtful, literate, and engaged society through education, partnerships, and public programs. The Humanities Center is affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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Download our [Veterans' Voices Media Kit](#).



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