



Chartered by the Congress of the United States

Distinguishing Facts About Paralyzed Veterans of America

Paralyzed Veterans of America's (Paralyzed Veterans) holistic, one-on-one, partner-for-life model distinguishes it from other veteran service organizations (VSO). For 70 years, Paralyzed Veterans has worked for sustainable change to ensure every veteran can access the care, benefits and job opportunities to which they are entitled – through advocacy, direct assistance provided on an individualized basis, adaptive sports opportunities across the country, collaborating with the Department of Veterans Affairs, and other substantive, tangible services. A few key pieces that differentiate Paralyzed Veterans of America:

- We provide support to any veteran, regardless of their disability, and their families with a special expertise in serving those with catastrophic disabilities like spinal cord or traumatic brain injury
- Paralyzed Veterans was chartered by Congress to raise awareness of the challenges disabled veterans face
- Paralyzed Veterans is a direct service provider in that it works on the ground, out of VA hospitals and at community events, to support veterans with a myriad of programs – rather than some other VSOs that grant funds out to direct service organizations like us but don't offer their own long-term, substantive programs
- Paralyzed Veterans is the only VSO that routinely audits VA hospitals
- Paralyzed Veterans is the only VSO with licensed clinicians on staff
- Paralyzed Veterans is the only VSO with licensed, skilled architects on staff
- Paralyzed Veterans is the only VSO to host an annual continuing education medical conference
- Paralyzed Veterans works on the most complex benefits claims, often accepting referrals from other VSOs, to ensure that the maximum benefit is achieved for veteran in question
- Paralyzed Veterans secured more benefits for veterans than the next four VSOs combined last year
- Paralyzed Veterans holds roughly 36,000 Powers of Attorney for veterans who need benefits assistance and submitted more than 30,000 claims last fiscal year
- Paralyzed Veterans Appellate Services program prosecutes all appeals to the VA Board of Veterans Appeals – an average of 500 annually
- Paralyzed Veterans co-presents (with the VA) the largest annual multi-event wheelchair sporting competition in the world, the National Veterans Wheelchair Games with nearly 600 veteran athletes competing in 20 sports and recreation activities
- Paralyzed Veterans is a member organization with 34 Chapters that work locally to advocate for veterans on a grassroots level; combined with our service centers, this gives us a nationwide footprint of more than 100 offices



Paralyzed Veterans of America

801 18th Street NW
Washington DC 20006
(O) 202.872.1300
(TDD) 202.416.7622
(F) 202.785.4452
pva.org

Chartered by the Congress of the United States

- Paralyzed Veterans never charges veterans or family members for services rendered

Core Mission-Serving Programs and Services:

- *Medical Services:* Our teams of architects, advocates, and licensed medical professionals conduct routine site visits to 31 VA Spinal Cord Injury units and Long-term Care Centers to ensure quality care standards are met. Medical Services also operates a SCI/D hotline and develops consumer and clinical practice guidelines widely considered to set the standard of care.
- *Veterans Benefits:* Through a national network of 75 highly trained service officers, Paralyzed Veterans assists veterans to navigate the VA benefits system in a holistic, one-on-one approach to help them secure the support to which they're entitled through their service and sacrifice. For each of the last two years, Paralyzed Veterans secured more than \$1 billion in benefits for veterans and their families, with every penny going directly to the applicable individuals.
- *Vocational Rehabilitation:* Through Paving Access for Veterans Employment (PAVE), our Masters-level vocational counselors and employment analysts aid veterans, regardless of their disability, in returning to work by assisting them with career counseling, résumé writing, interview preparation and connecting them with job opportunities, education and training. PAVE was successful in placing at least one client per day in 2015.
- *Architecture:* By employing licensed architects as accessibility pro-bono consultants to both private and public structures, Paralyzed Veterans works to promote a truly accessible way of life for all Americans. Projects run the gamut from VA hospitals to the Minnesota Vikings stadium.
- *Research and Education:* Through two foundations, Paralyzed Veterans has funded more than \$62 million in cutting-edge research to advance critical treatments, sustain the search for a cure and support best practices in medical research and education.



Paralyzed Veterans of America

801 18th Street NW
Washington DC 20006
(O) 202.872.1300
(TDD) 202.416.7622
(F) 202.785.4452
pva.org

Chartered by the Congress of the United States

- **Sports and Recreation:** By co-presenting the National Veterans Wheelchair Games annually, as well as a variety of other adaptive activities like hand cycling, fishing and billiards tournaments, Paralyzed Veterans fosters camaraderie and encourages veterans to lead active lifestyles. Research shows participation in adaptive sporting opportunities leads to improved cardiovascular health (a major concern of wheelchair-users), lower risk of heart disease and diabetes and improved mental and emotional stability.
- **Advocacy:** By co-writing the Independent Budget every year, Paralyzed Veterans helps shape priorities for Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs, ensuring that veterans' issues remain a national focus. In fact, Paralyzed Veterans just celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, honoring former Senator Bob Dole with the inaugural Gordon H. Mansfield Award for his leadership in shepherding the landmark bill through Congress.

More About Paralyzed Veterans

Paralyzed Veterans was established in 1946 by WWII veterans who suffered spinal cord injuries and found it very difficult to access care, benefits, and support. Today, Paralyzed Veterans has more than 18,000 members who are veterans of every generation and also serves the veteran community, its families and caregivers; and advocates for the disability community.

Paralyzed Veterans of America is the only congressionally chartered veterans service organization dedicated solely for the benefit and representation of veterans with spinal cord injury or disease. For nearly 70 years, we have ensured that veterans have received the benefits earned through their service to our nation; monitored their care in VA spinal cord injury units; and funded research and education in the search for a cure and improved care for individuals with paralysis.

As a partner for life, Paralyzed Veterans also develops training and career services, works to ensure accessibility in public buildings and spaces, provides health and rehabilitation opportunities through sports and recreation and advocates for veterans and all people with disabilities. With more than 70 offices and 34 chapters, Paralyzed Veterans serves veterans, their families and their caregivers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

For more information, visit pva.org.