

National Veterans Legal Services Program

Newsletter: "Justice for Warriors"

<http://www.nvlsp.org/>

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National Veterans Legal Services Program Newsletter ***Justice for Warriors***

Dear Frank,

Exciting things have been happening at the [National Veterans Legal Services Program \(NVLSP\)](http://www.nvlsp.org/). In this newsletter, you will meet veterans and service members who have been awarded benefits with the help of NVLSP and our pro-bono partners. You will also get to know some of the dedicated attorneys who are truly the backbone of our organization. Recent events have highlighted the skill, bravery and determination of our men and women in the armed services. We all owe our gratitude and appreciation to military service members who make huge sacrifices for our freedom. And that is why NVLSP strives to continue to serve those who have served us.

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to friends and colleagues.

NVLSP Appoints New Board Members

Veterans just got a few more champions - with the addition of eight new members to NVLSP's Board of Directors. The new board members will be

actively involved in policy oversight for the organization. "NVLSP is working hard to extend its reach. One way to accomplish this is to draw on a Board comprised of individuals from across the country with a diversity of experience and opinions," said Ron Abrams, Joint Executive Director at NVLSP.

NVLSP welcomes the following new board members:

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A 36 Year Wait for One Vietnam Veteran

Recently, NVLSP assisted a Vietnam Army veteran named M.K. Since his honorable discharge in 1974, he has had a very difficult time coping with life's ups and downs. This veteran has endured decades of mental illness and has received a variety of diagnoses including [bi-polar disorder](#), [depression](#) and [psychosis](#). His psychiatric problems and difficulties resulted in numerous hospitalizations. His symptoms have prevented him from maintaining employment and from maintaining relationships with family members.

M.K. initially filed a claim for service-connected disability benefits at the [VA Regional Office in Newark, New Jersey](#) in 1999. The VA denied his claim in 2000. He appealed this decision to the Board of Veterans' Appeals, which ultimately denied the claim in 2007.

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A Soldier's Battle with PTSD

Specialist J.T. served in the United States Marine Corps in 1998 and in the United States Army from 2005-2007, including service in Operation Iraqi Freedom. In December 2006, while serving in Iraq, he was injured when an improvised explosive device (IED) exploded near his vehicle. The attack killed several of his fellow service members and rendered him unconscious. He awoke with his clothes and face covered in blood. He sustained a concussion and superficial wounds. Once back in the U.S., he began experiencing migraine headaches, memory loss, frequent nightmares and severe mood swings. He knew something was very wrong, nonetheless his behavior and symptoms wreaked havoc on his marriage and a divorce ensued. After a battery of physical and mental health exams, J.T. was diagnosed with [Post-traumatic Stress Disorder \(PTSD\)](#).

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A Widow's Story of Survival

Lance Corporal R.C. was a Vietnam veteran who served honorably in the United States Marine Corps for three years. After completing his military service, he returned to civilian life but things never returned to normal. He retreated into a dark abyss of mental anguish and social isolation. He rarely left his home, even to go to the store, and was always on alert and worried about the safety of his family and home. Eventually he was diagnosed with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and was granted

a veterans disability rating of 70%. The veteran's health steadily declined. Over the years, his PTSD symptoms worsened and he was plagued by [heart disease](#), [hypertension](#), [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease](#) and several other medical conditions. In July 2003, he suffered a massive heart attack and died. His widow, S.C., filed a claim of entitlement to compensation in 2004, on the basis that her late husband's death was related to PTSD, which significantly contributed to his heart disease. The Board of Veterans' Appeals denied her claim in April 2009. In the interim, S.C. lost nearly everything, including her house, and went from living in a two-story home to living in a trailer.

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Meet-the-Attorney Mr. Louis George, NVLSP Sr. Attorney

Mr. Louis ("Lou") George is a senior attorney at [NVLSP](#). As a member of NVLSP's litigation staff, he represents veterans and dependents before the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Board of Veterans' Appeals, the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, and other federal courts. Mr. George also mentors attorneys participating in NVLSP's Volunteer Lawyer and [Lawyers Serving Warriors Programs](#). He is a co-author of [The Veterans Benefits Manual](#) (Lexis Law Publishing).

Mr. Louis George,
NVLSP Sr. Attorney

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Sincerely,

National Veterans Legal Services Program

The National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP) is an independent nonprofit organization that has worked since 1980 to ensure that the U.S. government keeps its pact with our nation's 25 million veterans and active duty personnel by providing them the federal benefits they have earned through their service to our country.

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