UPDATES FROM EDF

- The 2nd Annual Hidden Heroes Cities & Counties Summit was hosted on February 3rd. Hear updates from key partners and discover new resources available to your community. Watch the recording.
- Respite Relief Program hours for caregivers reset in 2022. If a caregiver used all 35 respite hours in 2021, they can now apply for additional hours.
- The Elizabeth Dole Act (H.R. 6823) was introduced in Congress on March 1. The bipartisan bill reinvests in caregiver support at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, establishes a user-friendly resource center, and expands VA Home-Based Community Services nationwide. Learn more.

COMMUNITIES IN ACTION

Last fall, Elizabeth Dole Foundation (EDF) launched I Am A Caregiver – an effort to amplify caregiver awareness and encourage self-identification of caregivers. Piloted in the state of Michigan, the initiative introduced I Am A Caregiver to key audiences including the general public and elected officials, educated media outlets on the importance of veteran caregivers in local communities, and showcased the work EDF and its partners are doing to support veterans and their caregivers across the state.

Grand Rapids Mayor Rosalynn Bliss, Wayne County Commissioner Monique Baker McCormick, Michigan Veterans Affairs Director Zaneta Adams, and Governor Gretchen Whitmer were among local voices encouraging caregivers to self-identify through I Am A Caregiver. Michigan Dole Caregiver Fellows Angelenia Taylor and Stephanie Hall used their platforms to work with partners including Michigan AARP and Michigan Wounded Warrior Project to educate caregivers on the importance of self-identification and available resources. Stay tuned as EDF provides new materials to expand I Am A Caregiver to your community in 2022!
PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: AARP

AARP and EDF have a long history of working together to support military and veteran caregivers. As caregivers support their veterans, self-care often becomes an afterthought. Emotional, financial, and physical stress can build up, leading to feelings of negativity, apathy, hopelessness, and complete exhaustion — a path to caregiver burnout. Review and share our new Caregiver Mental & Emotional Health Support Guide which provides five real-world tips for practicing self-care. Learn more about AARP’s work to support military caregivers at www.AARP.org/Veterans.

UPCOMING EVENTS

15 APR Military Kids Day
18 MAY EDF National Convening
19 OCT Heroes & History Makers Gala

HIDDEN HELPERS AMERICA'S CAREGIVING YOUTH

In conjunction with the White House’s Joining Forces Initiative, EDF launched “Hidden Helpers,” an effort to lift the voices of military caregiver kids, better understand the unique challenges they face, and enhance the support services available to them.

April is Month of the Military Child, and we encourage you to support the Hidden Helpers in your community by understanding the needs of and opportunities for caregiving youth. Use these tools to get started:

- RAND Hidden Helpers Executive Summary
- Hidden Helpers Guide for Policy Makers and Elected Leaders
- NACo County Explorer Data Tool

hiddenheroes.org
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