

# Hidden Heroes Cities & Counties Connection



JUNE 2022

PRESENTED BY:



## UPDATES FROM EDF

- June is PTSD Awareness Month. It is important to recognize the hidden heroes and hidden helpers who care for those with PTSD and recognize the emotional toll caring for a loved one with PTSD can have. Read [EDF & AARP's Caregiver Mental & Emotional Health Guide](#) for tips on how to better support caregivers' mental and emotional health.
- EDF announced the election of two new members to its Board of Directors, Ali Zelenko, senior vice president of strategic initiatives for NBC News and head of strategic partnerships for NBC News Studios, and Kimberly Mingo, vice president of government business and strategy for Philips. [Read more.](#)

## WELCOME

Newport, RI

## CHICAGO HOSTS FIRST HIDDEN HEROES IMPACT FORUM



The Elizabeth Dole Foundation, in conjunction with the city of Chicago, hosted a first-ever Hidden Heroes Impact Forum on May 29. Led by Illinois Dole Caregiver Fellow Theresa Coomer, the forum aimed to connect caregivers, discuss the military and veteran caregiver experience, and highlight local resources available to caregivers and their families. The forum featured a Caregiver Experience Panel where caregivers discussed their experiences and a Mental Health Professional Panel where therapists and VA Caregiver Program Coordinators discussed the necessary support military and veteran caregivers need as they navigate their role.

This successful program was part of a multi-day veterans-focused effort by the City of Chicago, which included a 17-mile Ruck March to raise awareness for veteran suicide and Memorial Day observances.

# HIDDEN HEROES DAY IN NEWPORT

Rhode Island Dole Caregiver Fellow Consuelo Jessop met with Newport Mayor Jeanne-Marie Napolitano after the mayor declared "Hidden Heroes Day" in Newport, RI. For the past two years, Consuelo has hosted a caregiver wellness project in North Providence, RI, connecting caregivers and introducing them to wellness practices and resourceful ways to identify and treat caregiver-burnout. This wellness project will expand to caregivers in Newport in 2023.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**18  
AUG**

Caregiver  
Advocacy C3  
Webinar

**19  
OCT**

Heroes & History  
Makers Gala

**NOV**

Month of the  
Military  
Caregiver

## AARP VETERANS HEALTH BENEFITS NAVIGATOR

In early June, AARP announced the expansion of their free Veterans & Military Health Benefits Navigator, first launched in October 2021. The Navigator offers veterans and caregivers access to the most up-to-date health care options. Through the Navigator, veterans and caregivers can ask questions and be provided with necessary and valuable information. This new version includes sections on VA Specialty Care Programs and Services, including Women Veterans Health Care Programs, Specialty Emotional, and Mental Health, Specialty Dental, Oral, Hearing and Vision, and Family Caregiver Assistance Programs. Click [here](#) to check out the Navigator for yourself, and read a caregiver's story using the Navigator [here](#). We encourage you to share this resource with your veteran and caregiver network.



[hiddenheroes.org](https://hiddenheroes.org)

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