

Legislative Year End Report 2019-2020
Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh

I was honored to become the DAV Auxiliary's National 2nd Jr. Vice Commander at the 2019 National Convention in Orlando, Florida. In conjunction with this position, I also served as the Chair of Legislation.

I have a feeling that the people who attended Fall Conference might have thought I was nuts as my program began! I started by showing two different pictures of trees: one was very abstract and the other was a photograph. Not surprisingly, more people were able to identify the trees in the photograph. What could this have to do with legislative activities? Like a photographer, successful advocates can clearly explain the needs of disabled veterans and their families to government officials.

Units and individual members were urged to support all veterans' legislative issues on local, state, and federal levels by lobbying lawmakers. Auxiliary members are DAV's strongest allies. Through participation in DAV's Commanders' Action Network, Auxiliary members amplify the voices of veterans on key legislative issues. Since politicians count numbers, we must work together to ensure that promises are kept to the men and women who served.

My husband, Mike and I attended DAV's Mid-Winter Conference in Washington, DC. We were fortunate enough to watch as Commander Franz laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Joel Adema, California's DAV Auxiliary's Sr. Vice Commander and I joined our State's Benefits Protection Team in meetings with Congressional Aides. We discussed DAV's critical policy goals for the year.

Springtime brought with it the arrival of legislative Reports from Units all over the country. These documents give important evidence that Auxiliary members are involved in legislative activities throughout this great land. It is important to acknowledge all those members who took time to advocate for legislation regarding Breaking Barriers for Women, Burn Pit Exposure, Bladder Cancer, Presumptive Disease of Hypertension, VA Tele-Hearing modernization, VA Website Accessibility act of 2019, Keep Our Promise, The Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act of 2019, The Whole Veteran Act, Dental Care of Low Income Veterans Act, COFA Veterans Review Act, The Veterans Access to Child Care Act, Veterans Access to Acupuncture Services, Support for Suicide Prevention Coordinators Act, Military Surviving Equity ACT, and many more.

I was slated to be the national representative at the Louisiana, Nevada, and the Texas State Conventions. Sadly, these Conventions were canceled due to the aggressive nature of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus). I am looking forward to future opportunities to visit these states.

I am so grateful for the possibilities offered by my position has allowed. I am truly blessed to be part of the DAV Auxiliary, an organization that continues to lobby our government officials to keep their promise to disabled veterans and their families.