



**HillVets**  
**2023 Annual Report**

# MENTORSHIP. EMPOWERMENT. COMMUNITY.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

3	MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER
4	IMPACT
5	MENTORSHIP <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• LEAD Program</li></ul>
8	EMPOWERMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fellowship Program</li></ul>
11	COMMUNITY
13	HILLVETS ON THE HILL
14	THANK YOU
16	DONOR SPOTLIGHT
17	ADVISORY BOARD
19	HILLVETS TEAM
20	BOARD OF DIRECTORS

hillvets

# MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

---

I am pleased to share the remarkable journey of HillVets over the past year and express my gratitude to our dedicated team for contributing to its success. As 2023 comes to a close, we look to the future with excitement as we enter our tenth year of serving Veterans. We are proud to be part of a community that uplifts, empowers, and serves Veterans. Today, the HillVets Foundation stands as a beacon in the veteran community, offering a supportive home near Capitol Hill to veterans, service members, survivors, and spouses.

Our commitment to fostering a purpose-driven environment has attracted distinguished figures like Former Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel and provided valuable guidance to young veterans. At the core of our mission is the belief that our community, with its unique lived experiences, should have a voice at the policy-making table on Capitol Hill, particularly given the significant allocation of the U.S. budget to the military and veterans. We strive to incorporate diverse perspectives into defense and foreign affairs discussions.

Achieving our mission necessitates a collective effort from our extended family, including program participants, generous supporters, and anyone aligned with our community. We recognize that we cannot accomplish our goals alone.

Throughout the year, we organized various events to unite our family and provide opportunities for military-connected individuals from diverse locations to pursue careers on Capitol Hill. Our support, guidance, and extensive network have not only fostered personal growth but have also cultivated highly capable alumni who play crucial roles in government.

Despite our limited resources, HillVets has gained national recognition and made a significant impact on veterans, alumni, and the broader community. By supporting HillVets, you become part of a pay-it-forward community that holds both local and national significance, actively shaping the future of our nation.

On behalf of HillVets, I express my gratitude for those in our family. We invite you to witness the local impact and national influence we have achieved. I look forward to your support and we hope for an opportunity to connect with you soon.

With highest regard,

**Justin Brown**  
**Founder and CEO**



# IMPACT

In 2023, HillVets maintained its commitment to excellence.

**Our initiatives have not only provided crucial support to Veterans but have also left a lasting mark on Capitol Hill discussions. Before delving into the detailed statistics, we wanted to take a moment to appreciate the professional strides HillVets has made in positively influencing the lives of our community of over 200 Veterans, service members, spouses, and Gold Star family members.**

## MENTORSHIP

### **In 2023, HillVets Foundation:**

- Mentored 16 Proteges in areas of leadership, ethics, advocacy, and self-improvement

## EMPOWERMENT

### **In 2023, HillVets Foundation:**

- Placed over 16 Veterans as Fellows on Capitol Hill with an additional 9 currently onboarding and interviewing for Hill Fellowship positions
- Helped 9 Fellows find permanent jobs following their fellowships

## COMMUNITY

### **In 2023, HillVets Foundation:**

- Hosted CAPCON8 conference in March
- Hosted monthly happy hours for alumni and current Fellows/Proteges
- Held a Summer retreat for Veterans in New River Gorge
- Celebrated 10 years of HillVets in a large event with our donors, Capitol Hill Members, HillVet Fellows, and Proteges

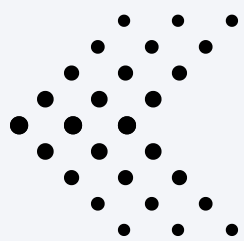




# MENTORSHIP.







# Looking Back on MENTORSHIP in 2023

## LEAD Program

**(Leadership, Ethics, Advocacy, and Dedication to Self-Improvement)**

HillVets LEAD stands as the premier intensive leadership program designed to develop the next generation of our nation's leaders.

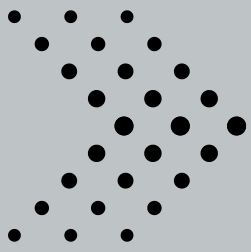
In May of 2023, the culmination of our sixteen-week program, LEAD, was held at the Oracle Cerner in Arlington, VA. This policy conference, known as CAPCON, included previous CAPCON hosts such as Gallup, The United States Senate, Cerner Corporation, and the DAV.

This 2023 year, LEAD program mentored 16 Proteges. The Proteges were primarily responsible for the planning and execution of 50% of the conference's content.

Participants in the conference included a vast array of Senators, Representatives, media personalities, social media influencers, policy experts, as well as others.

Proteges met weekly with HillVets faculty and professional speakers to receive guidance and mentorship in leadership pursuits.





# Moving Forward with MENTORSHIP in 2024

## LEAD Program

**(Leadership, Ethics, Advocacy, and Dedication to Self-Improvement)**

Our HillVets' LEAD program is dedicated to nurturing the future leaders of our nation. Currently, we welcome an average of 18 Protégés from diverse service branches and life backgrounds into our program.

Within LEAD, we orchestrate a dynamic curriculum featuring distinguished speakers, comprehensive educational resources, and a profound commitment from our Protégés to cultivate their leadership skills amongst a community of peers.



LEAD 2.0 represents a significant evolution, offering an even more immersive learning experience for our community. This innovative format comprises a series of six events, meticulously designed to foster expertise in an array of subjects, including literature, art, business, health, public speaking, and policy, among others.

In addition to these events, our program provides monthly gatherings that enable Protégés to learn from esteemed speakers and generous contributors within the HillVets community. What's more, HillVets LEAD Protégés have the privilege of attending each event at no cost, and are also welcome at future LEAD cohort events and dinners; which will continue to build positive relationships in our community.

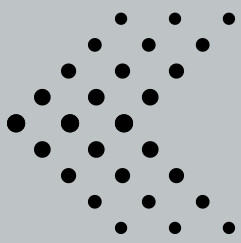
With applications opening every November, this program presents an incredible opportunity for Protégés to elevate their leadership abilities and cultivate a compelling professional self-brand.



# EMPOWERMENT.







# Looking Back on EMPOWERMENT in 2023

## HillVets Fellowship

The HillVets Fellowship program remains the premier legislative fellowship program for Veterans, spouses, and Gold Star family members.

Fellows are not simply placed in an office - they work with staff to choose the office that fits their political leanings, policy interests, and career goals best. Fellows are given substantive policy and legislative assignments. Many are hired immediately upon completing their fellowship in congressional offices, with federal agencies, or with our Veterans Service Organization (VSO) partners.

Fellows may apply up to six months before they would like to work on the Hill and are accepted and placed on a rolling basis, not on a semester or term schedule like some programs. Our goal is to place the men and women from our community into full-time, permanent positions in our nation's capital.

In 2023, HillVets has placed over 16 Veterans into Congressional offices on Capitol Hill. Our Fellowship Program is currently onboarding 9 additional Fellows and helping them secure placement. In 2023, we have helped 9 Fellows secure permanent positions of employment following their fellowshisp.



# HillVets Fellowship

## HillVets House



The HillVets House provides free room and board at a row home less than one block from Lincoln Park on Capitol Hill. The walk from HillVets House to the Senate and House office buildings is less than 20 minutes. HillVets House has shared workspace for fellows, donors, alumni, and staff and is utilized as a meeting space for LEAD protégés and for exclusive dinners and events.

Our fellows also have access to monthly networking opportunities, an extensive library at HillVets House, a great location, and a small food stipend. The staff is always excited to give tours of the House to prospective partners and introduce you to some of our amazing fellows.



**“The HillVets Fellowship was a transformative experience that marked a fundamental transition in my professional career. The team was tireless in their dedication to helping me realize my potential. The fellowship helped build my network and refine my professional development, and it became a springboard to enter a master’s program and resulted in a full-time role as a policy advisor.”**

*Essam Attia, Legislative Assistant to Senator Bernie Sanders.*

***There are no application, program, or housing fees for our Fellows, thanks to our generous annual partners.***

**HillVets Ambassadors are Senators and Representatives** from across the political spectrum who understand the importance of hiring Veterans. These offices receive incoming Fellows’ resumes first, and Fellows are encouraged to reach out to these offices for informational interviews. However, Fellows are encouraged to reach out to any member or committee office that they are interested in working for, and several have been and are currently placed in non-Ambassador offices.

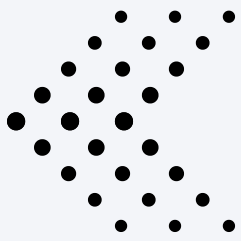




# COMMUNITY.







# Looking Back on building our **COMMUNITY** in 2023

## Events that BUILD our COMMUNITY

HillVets keeps active engagement with all 250+ alumni and provides constant opportunities to network, celebrate, support, and build our community.

In 2023, HillVets:

- Hosted 10 monthly Happy Hour events
  - These Happy Hour events are a wonderful way for our Fellows and Proteges to network, meet new people, and develop friendships outside of their daily work experience
- Veteran Retreat to New River Gorge
  - HillVets' first every annual camping fundraiser trip to New River Gorge. All proceeds support HillVets, and all are welcome. The weekend was spent building meaningful relationships through camping, river rafting, climbing, and more
- CAPCON8
  - This culminating conference held in March of 2023, showcased the work of our LEAD Cohort 8 as they held panel discussing policy and politics, getting a job on Capitol Hill, learning how to run for office, working in national security/foreign affairs, and more.
- HillVets 10th Anniversary Celebration
  - This event celebrated our ten year anniversary with our donors, supporters, and members of the HillVets Family. A wonderful celebration bringing our community together.





# ON THE HILL

We are proud to have 37 (and growing) HillVets Ambassadors. The HillVets Fellowship Ambassadors are Members of Congress who understand the value of hiring Veterans and the military-connected community. All 535 Member offices and all committees on Capitol Hill are encouraged to become Ambassador offices for fellows and employ our alumni in meaningful policy roles. Several Senate and House offices have hired our alumni as Military Legislative Assistants (MLA) or in other key staff roles.

## HOUSE AMBASSADORS

Representative Don Bacon (R-NE)  
 Representative Jack Bergman (R-MI)  
 Representative Salud Carbajal (D-CA)  
 Representative Chris Deluzio (D-PA)  
 Representative Ruben Gallego (D-AZ)  
 Representative Jimmy Gomez (D-CA)  
 Representative Tony Gonzales (R-TX)  
 Representative Diana Harshbarger (R-TN)  
 Representative Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA)  
 Representative Hank Johnson (D-GA)  
 Representative Trent Kelly (R-MS)  
 Representative Dan Kildee (D-MI)  
 Representative Derek Kilmer (D-WA)

Representative Andy Kim (D-NJ)  
 Representative Doug Lamborn (R-CO)  
 Representative Mike Levin (D-CA)  
 Representative Ted Lieu (D-CA)  
 Representative Brian Mast (R-FL)  
 Representative Barry Moore (R-AL)  
 Representative Seth Moulton (D-MA)  
 Representative Frank Mrvan (D-IN)  
 Representative Jimmy Panetta (D-CA)  
 Representative Scott Peters (D-CA)  
 Representative August Pfluger (R-TX)  
 Representative Marilyn Strickland (D-WA)  
 Representative Jeff Van Drew (R-NJ)

## SENATE AMBASSADORS

Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)  
 Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT)  
 Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ)  
 Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA)  
 Senator Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV)  
 Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL)  
 Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)  
 Senator Mike Rounds (R-SD)  
 Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT)  
 Senator Kyrsten Sinema (I-AZ)  
 Senator Reverend Raphael Warnock (D-GA)



# THANK YOU

## 2023 HillVets Foundation Mission Partners

### Liberty Legion

- Oracle Health

### Honor Guard

- Novo Nordisk
- DAV

### Bravery Battalion

- GOVIO
- American Optometric Association

### Valor Vanguard

- With Honor
- PMI
- Humana
- AMVETS
- Wounded Warrior Project

### Service Squad

- Horizon Therapeutics
- Chisholm Trail Communities Foundation
- Vietnam Veterans of America
- Student Veterans of America
- Bristol Meier Squibb

### Allies

- Spave
- GW Graduate School of Political Management
- Concerned Veterans for America
- The Nardelli Group
- USF/Veterans Campaign
- Northeastern University - Arlington Campus
- Tulane School of Professional Advancement
- Evan Williams - Community Foundation of Louisville

### Champion Circle

- The Nardelli Group, LLC
- The Nimitz Group
- George Mason
- Tulane University
- Policy Vets
- Combined Arms
- Tulane University School of Professional Advancement
- USF/Veterans Campaign
- Policy Vets
- American Legion
- Wawa Foundation



# THANK YOU

## 2023 HillVets Foundation Individual Donors

### Platinum Patron

- Brian Moran
- Charles Fowler

### Golden Guardian

- Nadhal Eadeh
- Justin Brown
- Rachel Levenberry
- Lancer Photography
- Will Sheehan

### Emerald Elite

- Michael Abrams
- David Gallegos
- Susan Langer

### Patriot Patrons

- Nicholas Mararac
- International Mental Health Consulting, Inc.
- The Washington Tattoo
- Rizwan Shah
- Robert Novy
- Patrick Sargent

### Patriot Patrons Cont.

- Julie Stoner
- Erica Schumack
- Lindsay Blount
- Victor Angry
- Nicholas Manzo
- Dominic Nordel
- Francisco Ortiz
- Laurence Paik
- Jason Beardsley
- Cory Titus
- Kyle Buckles
- Sarah Shriver Smothers
- Bob Carey
- Jason Pagel
- Elliot Tommingo
- Carole Turner
- Matt Brennan
- Bob Carey
- Victor Angry
- Joseph Wescott
- Laurence Paik









## **The Honorable Secretary Chuck Hagel, Chairman**

Secretary Hagel is the Former Secretary of Defense and United States Senator. He is an Army Veteran of the Vietnam War.



## **Gerry Byrne, Penske Media Corporation**

Gerry served as a Marine Officer in Vietnam in 1968/69 and was awarded the Navy Achievement Medal with Combat V. He is the current Vice Chairman for Penske Media.



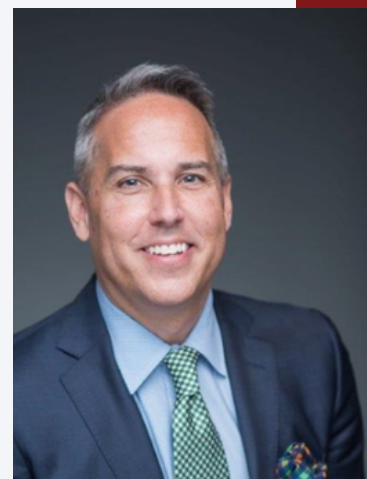
## **Matthew Sanderson, Caplin & Drysdale**

Matthew has been with HillVets since its inception. A fellow Utah graduate with our Founder, Matt graduated from Vanderbilt Law School and is a co-leader of the Political Law Group and a Member of the Exempt Organizations Group focusing on non-profit and political law.



## **Brian Branton, Novo Nordisk**

Brian is the current Senior Director, Federal Government Affairs, Head of Federal Government Affairs, at Novo Nordisk.





## **The Honorable Patrick Murphy**

The first Iraq War veteran elected to Congress, the former Acting Secretary of the Army, a health care innovator in the public and private sectors, and a champion for veterans.

## **Mick Nardelli, Nardelli Group**

Mick Nardelli, specializes in positioning businesses to ensure they can reap benefits through government action while insulating them from the adverse effects of government regulations.



## **In Memoriam: Garry Augustine, Former Executive Director, DAV**

Combat-wounded Army Veteran and former Executive Director of the Disabled American Veterans. Garry passed away in March of 2022 and will forever be remembered for his immense impact on the Veteran community.



**Justin Brown**  
**Founder & CEO**

Justin Brown is the Founder, and Executive Director, of HillVets. He has nearly a decade of Veterans' focused experience and advocacy, fighting on behalf of Veterans and their families to increase educational and employment opportunities, to expand access to benefits and healthcare, and to eliminate homelessness. He has worked for the VA, the VFW, the American Legion, and was a Staff Director for numerous Subcommittees for the House Veterans Affairs Committee.

Justin began his commitment to public service at the age of 17 when he enlisted in the United States Navy. There, he completed one deployment in support of Operation Southern Watch and two deployments in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Following Justin's service, he attended the University of Utah, graduating with dual bachelor's degrees in three years. He became active in the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) where he served as the youngest All-American District Commander and Department Chief of Staff in its history.

**Lucy Fackrell**  
**Director of Operations & Development & Fellowship Coordinator**

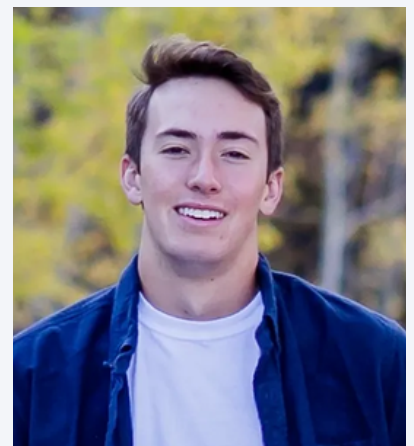
Lucy Fackrell from the heart of Salt Lake City, Utah is thrilled to be part of the HillVets team. As a native of SLC, Lucy Fackrell developed a deep appreciation for community values and a strong commitment to making a positive impact. Lucy is a University of Utah graduate with a major in Health, Society, and Policy and a minor in Sociology. During her time at the university, she developed a passion for public service, medical and healthcare affairs, policy processes, and nonprofit work. As a granddaughter of a former United States Air Force Veteran Test Pilot and having grown up in Utah serving the community and incorporating herself in leadership positions throughout her schooling, she is inspired by those who have come before her and who have paved the life she freely enjoys today.

**Lindsay Gelman**  
**Communications Director**

Lindsay Gelman is a recent Magna Cum Laude graduate from Elon University with degrees in Strategic Communications and Political Science. She has worked in the communications and public relations space for four years, with internships ranging from Lockheed Martin, Goodwill, Greek House and Prosek Partners. She is excited to work with such a mission driven company and is looking forward to getting to know those in veteran space.

**Nick Moss**  
**Intern & Administrative Assistant**

Originally from Park City, Utah, Nick currently resides in Salt Lake City and is an undergraduate student at the University of Utah majoring in Political Science, with an anticipated graduation date in the Spring of 2025. During his leisure time, he enjoys skiing fresh powder, hitting the local gym, and unwinding with his cats, Dude and Lucky. A member of the University of Utah Rugby team, Nick has honed his appreciation for teamwork and achieving shared objectives, skills he aspires to bring to the Hillvets team. With a lineage of military family members, he deeply understands the dedication, devotion, and sacrifices veterans make throughout their careers, and he is committed to upholding the mission and contributions of the Hillvets organization.





## **Justin Brown**

Chairman, see bio above



## **Abigail Gage**

Abigail P. Gage was a fellow in the first HillVets House class. Abigail is a U.S. Army Veteran and public policy professional with national security policy and project management experience in the military, on Capitol Hill, and within the Executive Branch. Abigail began her career as an active-duty U.S. Army Officer and continues to serve in the Army National Guard as a Military Intelligence Officer.



## **Joseph Betteley**

HillVets Alumnus, USMC Veteran. Joe is Assistant General Counsel for the Fincantieri Marine Group, which builds, repairs and sustains maritime vessels that proudly supply, service and defend our nation and the world. Joe was in our first class of HillVets House Fellows prior to going to law School at the University of Virginia. He is a veteran of the United States Marine Corp.



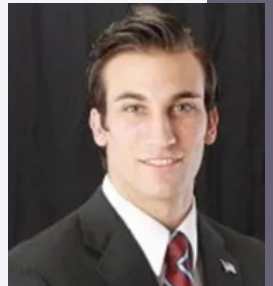
## **Saki Ververis**

Saki is an Air Force Veteran, and recently served as President Biden's VSO liaison. He is currently at the VA, and is a former staff member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee.



## **David Bell**

David has over a decade of legislative experience and worked for numerous New Jersey representatives. He takes lead on interviewing and onboarding HillVets House Fellows.



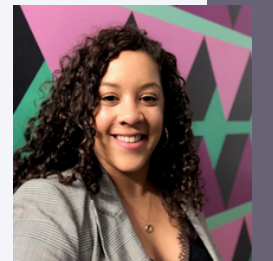
## **Erica Schumack**

Erica is a Vice President with J.P. Morgan Chase where she previously worked with veteran and military non-profit partners. She is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania.



## **Rachel Levenberry**

Rachel Levenberry joined the HillVets Foundation board in 2022. Rachel is the Chief of Staff at Rockwood Company, a Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) change management consulting company that supports the Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community.







**HillVets Foundation**  
**127 12th Street, SE**  
**Washington, D.C. 20003**

[www.hillvets.org](http://www.hillvets.org)  
[contact@hillvets.org](mailto:contact@hillvets.org)

 @hillvets    @hillvets    @hillvets