

CPCS Recognizes Veterans Day 2025

“Not for themselves, but for their country”

Inscription at the base of the Private Soldier Monument, or “Old Simon” in the Arlington National Cemetery

Tomorrow, we pause to recognize an essential American holiday, dedicated to the people who have served our country in the armed forces across the United States and around the world.

Historically, November 11th was originally recognized as Armistice Day, in honor of the end of the First World War, under a proclamation signed by President Woodrow Wilson in 1919, and the date’s meaning was expanded to become Veterans Day in 1954 to recognize those who have served in all wars. There is a unique commitment to service derived from multiple sources, including, but not limited to family tradition, patriotism or to give thanks for the privilege of citizenship or permanent residence.

Within our CPCS family, we work with veterans, we represent veterans, and we litigate against veterans. In 2009, the American flag was flown in honor of CPCS at the Court Room of the Hall of Justice at Joint Base near Balad, Iraq, and we keep that flag as an honored memento. In 2016, Angel Rodriguez, Supervising Investigator with PDD, served as a Sergeant with the Army National Guard in deployment to Afghanistan from 2012-2013, securing a Service Member Patriot – Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Award for CPCS to honor our support of his service. Angel’s service experience helps him work with a diverse range of people, and his sense of duty drives him in pursuit of the facts and witnesses supporting our client’s causes. Other colleagues have come to CPCS after their service or have served while working for our agency, along with colleagues who continue to serve, with distinction. The stories of sacrifice and contribution among those who have served know no bounds, and includes people with backgrounds based on, but not limited to race, national origin, indigenous status, sex, gender, LGBTQ status, religion, and/or disability.

Among communities of color, countless individuals have served. In fact, a major underpinning to the civil rights movement was the fight by and on behalf of black

veterans who were treated as second-class citizens in their own country. These veterans, who numbered more than a million during World War II, experienced equal treatment in foreign lands, while being subjected to cruel treatment and discrimination from white comrades-in-arms and supervisors. Their struggles led to the creation of the G.I. Bill, while the experience of bias and hatred, along with these veterans' knowledge of organization and tactics made these veterans vital players in the civil rights struggle. Prominent among the leaders who served were Medgar Evers, who became the NAACP's first field secretary in Mississippi, Robert F. Williams, who stood armed against the Ku Klux Klan to stop desecration and attack, and Hosea Williams, who survived a Nazi bombing to become one of Dr. Martin Luther King's most trusted lieutenants in the non-violent movement for equality.

On their return from service, the struggle for far too many veterans has been grounded in hardship, starting with inadequate medical treatment for the traumas, addictions, and injuries they endure, and leading to the risk of behavior that can involve veterans with criminal justice and mental health systems. A major contributing factor to this dynamic is homelessness, where a 2023 US Department of Housing and Urban Development Report to Congress noted the number of homeless veterans, where, on an average night, 20,067 veterans were living in shelters across the United States, while 15,507 veterans were living without any shelter at all. In HUD's 2024 report on homelessness, there was an indication that veteran homelessness had decreased by 8% from 2023, representing 2,692 fewer homeless veterans. There are further indicators of potential improvement through grants and legislative initiatives, including a 2025 Veterans Administration grant of \$84 million dollar grant to organizations for legal and case management services for access and to keep people housed, with the Veterans Legal Services agency in our state being a recipient. For those veterans who live with these challenges, too many have become our clients, which should not be their fate after the contribution, sacrifice, and pain that are part of their service.

Between their commitment to our country, the history veterans have created and the sustaining impact they have had on our society, it is vitally important to recognize and pay due respect to those in our lives who have contributed through our armed forces. To help CPCS better recognize those who have served and are

part of our team, please send me a note with your dates of service, branch, and rank, so we can better honor your contributions in the future.

Peace,

John

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