

# 'Westworld' Star and Veterans Advocate Jeffrey Wright to Join IAVA's 12th Annual Heroes Gala

**NEW YORK, NY (April 29, 2018)** – Today, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) is excited to announce that Westworld star and veterans advocate Jeffrey Wright will attend the 12th Annual IAVA Heroes Gala. The 2018 IAVA Heroes Gala will be held just three days before Veterans Day at the Classic Car Club at Hudson River Park's Pier 76 in New York City, a new venue that embodies the modern, innovative IAVA brand.

Jeffrey Wright is an Emmy and Tony Award winning actor and a lifelong activist. Wright has importantly used his public platform to advocate for veterans and IAVA's top priorities, including suicide prevention, and has directed and performed in a variety of creative endeavors aimed at raising awareness for the trauma of war and combat. He will attend IAVA's Heroes Gala as a special guest, as IAVA supporters Stephen Colbert, Meghan McCain, Willie Geist and Shannon Sharpe have in years past.

"Jeffrey Wright is proof that civilians can be some of the most powerful advocates and allies for our nation's veterans, and we are honored to have him join us at this year's Heroes Gala as a special guest," **said Paul Rieckhoff, IAVA Founder and CEO.** "Jeffrey's passion for veterans issues, and his support of IAVA initiatives and veterans, is paralleled only by his immense talent. It means a lot to our community to have him join us for this exciting and inspiring night."

Wright's announcement follows last month's news that IAVA's 2018 Civilian Leadership Honoree will be longtime IAVA board member, tech and philanthropic icon, Craig Newmark. Newmark is the founder of Craigslist and created Craig Newmark Philanthropy in 2016 to promote investment in organizations that effectively serve their communities and drive broad civic engagement at the grassroots level. He is a stalwart supporter of IAVA and its mission.

"Craig Newmark is one of the most prolific leaders in the philanthropic world, and we are honored to recognize his incredible dedication to the veterans community," **said Paul Rieckhoff, Founder and CEO of IAVA.** "Craig embodies the IAVA mission and all that is great about American ingenuity and service to country. He is a true patriot, an inspirational voice and a role model for people worldwide. We are honored to have an opportunity to salute Craig on behalf of the IAVA community and all Americans."

Over the past twelve years, the Heroes Gala has empowered IAVA to support post 9/11 veterans by raising millions of dollars for the best-in-class advocacy programs and transition support services provided nationwide to over one million veterans. This year, the Heroes Gala will also celebrate and support IAVA's groundbreaking Big 6 campaign, which is focused on elevating

veterans voices in the face of unprecedented politicization and achieving meaningful progress on 6 key issues:

- 1) Sustain the campaign to combat suicide among troops and veterans
- 2) Sustain the campaign to recognize and improve services for women veterans
- 3) Defend veteran and military education benefits
- 4) Defend and reform government support for today's veterans
- 5) Initiate support for injuries from burn pits and other toxic exposures
- 6) Initiate empowerment of veterans who want to utilize cannabis

Past honorees and distinguished guests have come from across the military, business, sports, entertainment and politics and include: **Medal of Honor recipient Flo Groberg, Former VA Secretary Robert McDonald, Rosanne Haggerty, Admiral Mike Mullen, Jon Stewart, Peter G. Peterson, Retired General David Petraeus, Miss USA Deshauna Barber, Joan Ganz Cooney, Henry Kissinger, Julian Bond, Roger Waters, David Gelbaum, Arnold Fisher, Senator Tammy Duckworth; Medal of Honor Recipient Sal Guinta, Willie Geist, Michael Bloomberg, Wes Moore, J.R. Martinez, NYPD Commissioner Raymond Kelly, Bill Hemmer, Rachel Maddow, Leslie Gelb, Coach Bill Cowher, Peter Berg, Nora Jones, Marc Roberge and OAR, Bob Woodruff, Skip Bayless, Shannon Sharpe, Harry Carson, Katie Nolan, Michelle Monaghan, Sebastian Junger** and many more.

Additional special guests and honorees will be announced in the coming months.

Sponsorship packages and tickets are available to the 12th Annual IAVA Heroes Gala [online](#).