

# [IAVA Nebraska Leadership Fellow Testifies Before Congress](#)

WASHINGTON, DC (October 22, 2015) – Former U.S. Army specialist, Afghanistan veteran and Omaha native [Ryan Kaufman](#) will testify today before Congress on an innovative Department of Veterans Affairs program that helps veterans make the transition to college life. During today's hearing, the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity will review the VA's [VetSuccess on Campus program](#), and will receive testimony from witnesses including Kaufman, who overcame significant personal challenges following his separation from the military in 2003.

"Because of VetSuccess, not only will the barriers to my success be broken down, but so will my children's. After I complete my bachelor program, I will move on to a master's degree in management with an emphasis in leadership," Kaufman will testify. "Few chronically homeless individuals in this country receive master's degrees. Fewer get doctoral degrees, but that is where I am headed. Without VetSuccess, this would not have been possible."

Due to the program, Kaufman is now making strong headway toward his bachelor's degree at Doane College in Grand Island, Neb. Professionally, he is now a peer-to-peer specialist providing critical support to Nebraska veterans and their families.

Kaufman will testify on behalf of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), with which he serves as a regional leadership fellow, traveling across Nebraska to connect veterans with needed resources and one another. He also coordinates community events, including IAVA member "VetTogethers" and peer support programs. His testimony can be found [here](#).

"I can't emphasize enough how empowering it is to be playing such an important role with IAVA. In Washington, D.C., everyone's always talking about things 'left' and 'right.' As a veteran serving veterans with IAVA, the only ones on the left and right are your battle buddies standing next to you," said Kaufman.

The House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee hearing will be held today, October 22nd at 2:00 p.m. ET at 334 Cannon House Office Building and streaming online at [veterans.house.gov](#).