

# [New Leaders Join IAVA's Board of Directors](#)

## *Veterans and veteran advocates work to take IAVA to next level*

**NEW YORK (June 26, 2015)** – Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) today introduced seven new members to serve on the organization's [Board of Directors](#). IAVA welcomes Joe Abruzzese, president of advertising sales at [Discovery Communications](#); Scott Feldmayer, partner at Barbaricum; Kenneth Fisher, senior partner of Fisher Brothers; Congressman Patrick J. Kennedy, former U.S. Representative; Norman Lear, producer, writer, activist and philanthropist; Jose Rene "J.R." Martinez, author, actor and veteran; and Jeff Marshall, director of west coast community operations at [Uber](#).

"We are honored to have these incredible leaders joining IAVA's board. Our work has never been more vital. These dynamic leaders will propel our work to support and empower our nation's next greatest generation of veterans," said IAVA CEO and Founder Paul Rieckhoff. "We've had a great start to 2015, and these renowned individuals will help take IAVA to another level. They represent diverse areas of expertise and backgrounds that will fuel IAVA's game-changing work to support almost three million post-9/11 veterans. Each of them has shown an extremely deep personal and professional commitment to the IAVA community."

The new members join the existing IAVA board, lead by Chairman Jim Hirschmann, president and CEO at the Western Asset Management Company, and including Craig Newmark, founder of Craigslist.org, and Rosanne Haggerty, founder of Common Ground Community. The full list can be found at [iava.org/board](http://iava.org/board).

### **Joe Abruzzese, President of Advertising Sales, Discovery Communications**

Joe Abruzzese oversees all advertising sales for Discovery's suite of U.S. networks, including Discovery Channel, TLC, Animal Planet and more. Under his leadership, the Discovery Communications advertising sales team has been consistently ranked as the number one cable sales organization in overall service, sales representative competence and upfront presentation. Before joining Discovery in 2002, Abruzzese held the top sales post at CBS for 11 years, responsible for all network sales efforts on behalf of CBS entertainment, sports, daytime, news, late night, the UPN networks and CBS Internet sales. Abruzzese was originally part of the NBC team where he worked in sports sales, planning and business affairs for ten years.

Abruzzese's civic and industry commitments include board positions on the National Kidney Foundation, Seton Hall Board of Regents, Louis Carr Foundation, Boys Hope Girls Hope, International Radio and Television Society Foundation, Inc., and NAPTE (National Association of Television Program Executives). A native of Newark, N.J., Abruzzese earned his bachelor's degree

in marketing and finance from Seton Hall University.

“Joe has a deep commitment to the veterans community, sharpened by his outstanding and patriotic work with the American Heroes Channel (formerly the Military Channel),” said Rieckhoff. “We are thrilled to have his leadership on our board.”

### **Scott Feldmayer, Partner, Barbaricum**

Scott Feldmayer is a senior government advisor with more than 15 years of public and private sector experience. A serial entrepreneur, Feldmayer helped create and grow five media-related startups and co-founded an early stage investment firm, Woodside O'Brien, interested in national security, technology, and veteran entrepreneurs. At Barbaricum, a technology centric government services firm, he oversees corporate strategy in addition to executive duties including finance, personnel, and performance.

Feldmayer served in the U.S. Army as an infantry officer. The Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran graduated from the University of Colorado with a degree in finance. He also completed executive education in innovation at Harvard, and currently resides in Washington, D.C.

“Scott represents all the potential of the IAVA generation of post-9/11 leaders. His personal experience as a post-9/11 vet and his business experience as an entrepreneur serve as an inspiration to our entire community. We're thrilled to have his deep connection and extensive experience added to the IAVA board,” said Rieckhoff.

### **Kenneth Fisher, Senior Partner, Fisher Brothers**

Kenneth Fisher is a senior partner at Fisher Brothers, based in New York City, and is part of the third generation of leadership, overseeing the leasing, management and marketing of more than five million square feet of class-A commercial space in midtown Manhattan and Washington, D.C.

As a philanthropist, Fisher is chairman and CEO of the Fisher House Foundation, which constructs “comfort homes” for the families of hospitalized military personnel and veterans. He serves as the co-chairman of the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum in New York City, and is on the board of the New York's Finest Foundation and the Jackie Robinson Foundation, as well as the General Command and Staff College in Ft. Leavenworth.

Fisher has twice been awarded the Department of Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the second with Bronze Palm, twice awarded the Army Service Award and is an Honorary Army Green Beret (2004) and an Honorary Marine (2011). In 2007, President George W. Bush appointed Fisher to the Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors, which conducted a comprehensive review of the care provided to soldiers who return from the battlefield.

“Few Americans have done more for our military and veterans than Ken Fisher. He and his family are the standard-bearers for veterans support in our country. He is world-renowned for this incredible patriotism and a passionate dedication to our veterans. We are honored and humbled to have Ken join the

IAVA board,” said Rieckhoff.

**Patrick J. Kennedy, Former United States Representative; Co-Founder, One Mind; Founder, Kennedy Forum**

Rep. Patrick Kennedy served 16 years in the U.S. House of Representatives and is predominantly known as the author and lead sponsor of the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008. This dramatic piece of legislation provides tens of millions of Americans access to mental health treatment. Kennedy is the co-founder of One Mind, a national coalition seeking new treatments and cures for neurologic and psychiatric diseases of the brain affecting one in every three Americans. One Mind for Research is dedicated to dramatic enhancements in funding and collaboration in research across all brain disorders in the next decade.

Kennedy is the founder of the Kennedy Forum on Community Mental Health, which served as a vehicle to celebrate the 50th anniversary of President Kennedy’s signing of the Community Mental Health Act, the landmark bill that laid the foundation of contemporary mental health policy. Kennedy authored and co-sponsored dozens of bills to increase the understanding and treatment of neurological and psychiatric disorders, including the National Neurotechnology Initiative Act, the COMBAT PTSD Act, and the Alzheimer’s Treatment and Caregiver Support Act.

Kennedy is a winner of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology Distinguished Service Award, the Society for Neuroscience Public Service Award, the Peter C. Alderman Foundation Humanitarian Award, the Autism Society of America Congressional Leadership Award, the Depression and BiPolar Support Paul Wellstone Mental Health Award, the Epilepsy Foundation Public Service Award and has been recognized widely for his mental health advocacy. Additionally, he is the founder of the Congressional Down Syndrome Caucus and the 21st Century Healthcare Caucus.

“Patrick Kennedy has always been a tremendous supporter of IAVA and the veterans community. In IAVA’s early days on Capitol Hill, Patrick was one of the first members of Congress to understand the urgent issues facing post-9/11 veterans. During his time on the House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction-Veterans Affairs, Patrick worked tirelessly for better mental health care for our vets and closely with IAVA on the Lane Evans Veterans Health and Benefits Improvement Act. Now, his innovative work with OneMind is setting the standard for care and support around issues like TBI and PTSD. He follows in the footsteps of his uncle President John F. Kennedy, a decorated World War II vet, and his father Senator Ted Kennedy, in keeping veterans support a top priority for the entire Kennedy family. We are thrilled to have Patrick now leading IAVA’s future as a board member,” said Rieckhoff.

**Norman Lear, Producer, Writer, Veteran, and Philanthropist**

Norman Lear has enjoyed a long career in television and film, and as a political and social activist and philanthropist. Lear began his television writing career in 1950 when he and his partner, Ed Simmons, were signed to

write for "The Ford Star Revue", starring Jack Haley. After only four shows, they were hired by Jerry Lewis to write for him and Dean Martin on "The Colgate Comedy Hour". In 1958, Lear teamed with director Bud Yorkin to form Tandem Productions. Together they produced several feature films, with Lear taking on roles as executive producer, writer and director. He was nominated for an Academy Award in 1967 for his script for "Divorce American Style". In 1970, CBS signed with Tandem to produce "All in the Family", which ran for nine seasons and earned four Emmy Awards as well as the Peabody Award in 1977. "All in the Family" was followed by a succession of other television hit shows including "Maude," "Sanford and Son," "Good Times," "The Jeffersons," "One Day at a Time," and "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman."

Lear left television in 1980 to form People For the American Way, a non-profit organization designed to monitor violations of constitutional freedoms. Lear has founded other nonprofit organizations, including the Business Enterprise Trust, which spotlighted exemplary social innovations in American business. In 1999, President Clinton bestowed the National Medal of Arts on Lear and he has the distinction of being among the first seven television pioneers inducted into the Television Academy Hall of Fame in 1984. Lear's memoir, "Even This I Get To Experience," was published in October 2014 by The Penguin Press.

After the Pearl Harbor attack, during World War II, Lear enlisted in the Army, serving in the Mediterranean Theater as a radio operator/gunner on Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress bombers with the 772nd Bombardment Squadron, 463 Bombardment Group (Heavy) of the Fifteenth Air Force, flying 52 combat missions for which he was awarded the Air Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters. Lear was discharged from the Army in 1945. He and his fellow WWII crew members are featured in the book "Crew Umbrigo" by Daniel P. Carroll and also 772nd Bomb Squadron: The Men, The Memories.

"Norman is a titan in American culture. And as a World War II veteran himself, he has been a life-long supporter of veterans issues and a passionate supporter of IAVA since our founding. For the last decade, Norman has played a pivotal role in expanding Hollywood's support for veterans. There is no finer example of the Greatest Generation and the potential of veterans than Norman. We are humbled to have him now helping lead IAVA's bright future as a board member," said Rieckhoff.

### **J.R. Martinez, Actor, Author, Speaker, Veteran**

Jose Rene "J. R." Martinez is an American actor, author, motivational speaker and former U.S. Army soldier. In March of 2003, Martinez was deployed to Iraq. In April he sustained severe burns to over 34 percent of his body when his humvee hit a roadside bomb. Since his recovery, Martinez has since become a highly sought-after motivational speaker. He has traveled around the country speaking about his experiences to corporations, veterans groups, schools and other organizations.

Many also know Martinez as Brot Monroe, on the Emmy Award winning daytime drama "All My Children." Martinez can currently be seen costarring on the syndicated action series, "SAF3." He is the author of the New York Times

bestseller "Full of Heart: My Story of Survival, Strength, and Spirit." Martinez serves as a spokesperson for Operation Finally Home, as well as for the Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors, Glasswing International, Free the Children, and the Viscardi Center.

"J.R. represents the best in all of us. From 'All My Children,' to winning 'Dancing With The Stars,' to receiving IAVA's 2009 Veterans Leadership Award, J.R. has always led from the front for IAVA veterans. As a spokesman for IAVA and Operation Finally Home for almost a decade, J.R. has inspired our veterans and supporters around the world. His energy, passion and experience are an outstanding addition to IAVA's board and will help propel our programs to amazing new heights. J.R. shows every veteran in America what is possible," said Rieckhoff.

### **Jeff Marshall, Director of West Coast Community Operations, Uber**

Jeff Marshall recently joined the ride-share giant Uber as director of west coast operations. Marshall previously served as a member of the Facebook Corporate Development team, focused on mergers and acquisitions the company does throughout the technology industry. He previously managed global business and customer operation teams focused on supporting over a billion people, developers and advertisers who use Facebook. Prior to Facebook, Marshall was an investment banker at Morgan Stanley in the technology banking group working with companies in the consumer internet, communications, semiconductor and software sectors.

"Jeff is a brilliant, rising star in Silicon Valley. As a post-9/11 Air Force veteran himself, Jeff knows our issues, how technology can empower veterans and the true value of a veteran to the business sector. He is at the forefront of technology innovation at Uber and his experience and connections to the tech community will serve as an integral part of IAVA's future. He has already galvanized tremendous support for veterans all across the Bay Area and as a member of Mayor Lee's Veterans Advisory Board. As a digital-born organization, the addition of Jeff Marshall to IAVA's board will bring incredible strategic vision and execution experience that will be essential as we scale our programs in the next decade," said Rieckhoff.

Note to media: Email [press@iava.org](mailto:press@iava.org) or call 212-982-9699 to speak with IAVA CEO and Founder Paul Rieckhoff or IAVA leadership.