

[PBS "The Vietnam War" to Feature IAVA Board Member Wayne Smith](#)

New York, NY (September 16, 2017) – Before its premiere this Sunday at 8 PM on PBS, IAVA is proud to announce that Board Member and Vietnam veteran Wayne Smith will share his reflections on his experiences as an Army medic in “The Vietnam War” documentary series. A ten part series by filmmakers Ken Burns and Lynn Novick, “The Vietnam War” will tell the story of one of the most consequential, divisive, and controversial events in American history as it has never before been told on film. IAVA, the leading voice of the Post-9/11 generation of veterans, applauds the filmmakers and PBS for its commitment to documenting the war and encourages all Americans to watch and remember those serving today.

“This documentary could not be more important, nor more timely. Our nation has yet to heal from the turmoil of the Vietnam War. And, as more time passes, fewer generations of Americans understand what that war meant to our nation. This series is a recommitment that, as a nation, we will honor Vietnam veterans as they never were when they came home. And it’s a critical reminder that we not forget the men and women currently overseas, and the veterans of our most recent wars,” **said Paul Rieckhoff, Founder and CEO of IAVA.** “We are honored to have our Board Member and Vietnam veteran Wayne Smith participate in this prolific series. Wayne is a hero, a revered elder in our community and a beacon of knowledge, kindness and strength throughout his career of advocacy on behalf of veterans of all generations. Vietnam veterans like Wayne have a special bond with Post-9/11 veterans, facing some of the same issues seventy years later. We are grateful that Ken Burns, Lynn Novick and their team have taken such care in telling the story of this divisive, critical time in American history. All Americans should watch the series, reflecting on how far the country has come and how much still must be done to ensure that veterans, servicemembers and their families are not forgotten, no matter what era.”

“The Vietnam War” begins Sunday, September 17 on PBS at 8 PM EST. More information can be found at <http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/the-vietnam-war/home/>.

About Wayne Smith: Wayne Smith is an accomplished veterans advocate who has worked with war veterans for nearly four decades. A native of Providence, Rhode Island, he was an altar boy and choirboy. After serving nearly 18 months in Vietnam as a combat medic, Smith overcame his own wartime trauma before becoming a nationally recognized mental health therapist and advocate for war veterans. Smith has led educational programs about veterans and the causes and consequences of war, and helped raise more than \$2 million for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund. In 1998, Smith returned to Vietnam with 20 American veterans to promote peace and reconciliation. Together with 20 Vietnamese soldiers, these former enemies rode bicycles 1,200 miles, from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City, to help heal some of the wounds of that war. Smith

is one of the veterans featured in the Emmy Award winning documentary about the experience. He is on the Board of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA).

About IAVA Films:

Soon after our founding in 2004, IAVA leadership recognized that film and entertainment projects had a unique power to define our experience and activate millions. Films connected to our experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the broader military experience, for better or worse, would tell our story to the world forever.

As the voice of the Post-9/11 veterans community, with a massive and deeply-engaged membership nationwide, IAVA has the opportunity to support and validate the best—and serve as a watchdog for the worst. IAVA can also provide historical, technical, cultural, social, technological and programmatic support that can ensure a project maximizes its impact, generates thoughtful conversation, and does no harm—by supporting the veterans and supporters long after the film is over. Dynamic IAVA members across America can see them first—and drive the national dialogue, in our communities, online and in the media.

For more than a decade, Academy Award-nominated and critically-acclaimed IAVA-supported films have ranged from independent documentaries to box office blockbusters, and have included titles like The War Tapes, Restrepo, Warrior Champions, Fort Bliss, Crisis Line: Veterans Press 1, American Sniper and Max. These are the films that America is talking about—or should be talking about.

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