

[Stephen Colbert, Meghan McCain Join 11th Annual IAVA Heroes Gala In November](#)

NEW YORK, NY (August 17, 2017) – Today, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) is excited to announce the 2017 Veteran Leadership and the 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award Honorees, as well as two special guests, for the 11th Annual IAVA Heroes Gala on November 9, 2017 in New York.

IAVA is proud to announce Army Captain and Medal of Honor Recipient [Florent Groberg](#) will receive the 2017 IAVA Veteran Leadership Award. Groberg bravely served in the U.S. Army in Afghanistan where he was severely injured attempting to thwart a suicide bomber. In 2015, President Obama awarded Groberg the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions on the battlefield.

“Flo Groberg is one of the most important leaders of our generation,” **said Paul Rieckhoff, IAVA Founder and CEO.** “He embodies the IAVA mission and all that is great about America. Flo is a true patriot, an inspirational voice and a role model for people worldwide. We are honored to have an opportunity to salute Flo on behalf of the IAVA community and all Americans.”

IAVA is also proud to announce former United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Honorable Robert McDonald, will be awarded the 2017 IAVA Lifetime Achievement Award. The retired CEO, Chairman and President of Procter & Gamble, McDonald served as the eighth United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs. He is a former United States Army Captain and a graduate of West Point.

“Bob McDonald’s lifelong commitment to service, culminating in his tenure as the Secretary of VA, has been transformative and exemplary. He is a proven, dynamic public servant that veteran leaders could trust. As VA Secretary, he was a proactive change agent who understood a changing community of over 21 million veterans, and also had a mastery of technology, healthcare, the media and Congress. He is a true patriot and a great American, and we are proud to recognize his lifetime of service,” **said Rieckhoff.**

We are also proud to announce two special guests: [Stephen Colbert](#), host of CBS’ “The Late Show” and IAVA’s [2011 Civilian Leadership Award honoree](#); and [Meghan McCain](#), Fox News “Outnumbered” panelist and daughter of Senator John McCain.

“IAVA is thrilled to have Colbert and McCain joining us to celebrate and honor the Post-9/11 veteran community,” **said Paul Rieckhoff, Founder and CEO of IAVA.** “Few public figures have done more over the years to support our veterans than these powerful voices. Stephen always has our back, from his thoughtful interviews with Medal of Honor recipients to shaving his head for troops for a show in Iraq. And Meghan is the daughter and sister of combat

veterans, a longtime friend and supporter of IAVA, and a key advocate for veterans issues.”

Over the past eleven 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 [She Who Borne the Battle](#) campaign, which is focused on increasing public awareness and creating policy changes for women veterans, passing the Deborah Sampson Act and changing the exclusionary VA motto. It’ll be an incredible night of patriotism, inspiration and service and a highlight of the fall social calendar.

Past honorees and distinguished guests have come from across the military, business, sports, entertainment and politics and include: **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, Craig Newmark, 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.

The 2017 IAVA Heroes Gala is sponsored by: Fox Sports 1, Barbaricum, Reingold Inc, Vencore, Hero Clean, Heritage Strategies Inc, Western Asset Management, CNN, MSNBC, DC Group, Lizzie and Jonathan Tisch, Steve Tisch, PBC USA, JP Morgan, Greg D’Alba, John Buoymaster, HBO, and Emergent BioSolutions.

Sponsorship packages and tickets are available to the 11th Annual IAVA Heroes Gala [online](#) or contact IAVA at heroesgala@iava.org or 202-544-7692 ext 6208.