



**IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN  
VETERANS OF AMERICA**

**Chief Executive Officer  
POSITION GUIDE**

**December 2022**



<b>Position:</b>	<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>
<b>Reports to:</b>	<b>Board of Directors</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>New York, NY or Washington, D.C.</b>

## **Mission**

To connect, unite, and empower post-9/11 veterans.

## **About Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America**

IAVA is a 501c3 nonprofit that seeks to improve the lives of over three million Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and their families. Founded in 2004 by Iraq War Veteran Paul Rieckhoff to provide resources and community, the organization has over 425,000 members and annually engages the membership to drive their advocacy and program activities. In 2021, IAVA, in collaboration with its membership, developed the core priorities of the organization. The “Big 6” policy priorities are: Suicide, Burn Pits and Toxic Exposures, Veterans Administration Modernization, Women Veterans, Alternative Therapies, and Education Benefits. IAVA is headquartered in New York City, and has an office in Washington, D.C.

Core to IAVA’s success has been its best-in-class **Advocacy** program. Since its founding in 2004, IAVA has remained the preeminent organization fighting, and winning, the most important battles in America on behalf of post-9/11 veterans and their families. IAVA’s advocacy program is focused on research to design solutions to the challenges of our times. IAVA uniquely addresses unmet veteran needs by carving pathways that enhance the lives of those who have answered the call to serve. IAVA trains leaders and collaborates with Veteran Services Organizations to inform lawmakers on both sides of the aisle about the issues facing the veteran community. IAVA’s approach is member and data driven and amplified through active communication, testimony, and engagement of elected officials at the national and statewide level. IAVA also has a 501c4 to accomplish its advocacy work.

In 2021, priority efforts and key victories included the campaign for the *Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act* and support for the passage of the 9-8-8 emergency phone number legislation for Americans with suicidal ideation. Support for Women Veterans continues to be a key area of focus for IAVA. The *#SHEWHOBORNETHETHEBATTLE* campaign, launched in 2017, led to

the 2021 signing of the of the *Deborah Sampson Act*, legislation written by IAVA to support women veterans' priorities. Of significant and longstanding effort, IAVA has been leading the pack on support for veterans who have long-term impacts from exposure to burn pits and toxic exposures during their service. IAVA's consistent storytelling, op-eds, advocacy with key legislators and other key activities resulted in the recent passage of the *Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act*, commonly referred to as the *PACT Act*. Over 80% of IAVA members were exposed to burn pits during their deployments and 90% of those exposed believe they already have or may have symptoms. IAVA and allies within the VSO community have spent years educating Congress, national leaders, and the public on the enormous scope of these injuries faced by the IAVA community. On August 10, 2022, the PACT Act was signed into law by President Biden after its passage by Congress. The law will provide new VA healthcare and disability benefits for America's veterans who have suffered toxic exposures, including from burn pits.

Other recent advocacy efforts have focused on modernizing government to support the current and future generations of veterans, defending and expanding veterans' education opportunities through the GI Bill, military family stability and transition, access to medical cannabis, support for minority and underserved veterans, and putting an end to veteran homelessness. During the 117th Congress, IAVA has supported over 102 legislative bills, has had over 300+ meetings with legislators, and has testified 10 times before congressional committees and sub-committees.

Founded in 2012, IAVA's **Quick Reaction Force (QRF)** leverages best-in-class research, data, and resources to empower veterans. This high-tech, high-touch comprehensive care management and referral service for veterans has helped tens of thousands of veterans navigate the resources available through public benefits and non-profit organizations across the country. The QRF is designed to scale up the capacity based on the needs of the veteran population, leveraging a comprehensive partner network to ensure that veterans receive the care they are seeking. IAVA believes that national resources are the best path forward for veterans and has partnered with nonprofits who have been vetted to do great work. Resources include Mental Health support, Housing, Financial, Employment, Legal and Education assistance, assistance with navigating the Veterans Administration (VA), Peer Support Groups, resources for family members, and support for resettled Afghans and those involved in the Afghan evacuation. In 2021, over 5,000 veterans were assisted through this unique program.

In addition to its core programs, IAVA leverages stories and technology unique to the post-9/11 veteran experience. Recent digital programs have included the "SAV March," a virtual national parade drawing attention to the needs of veterans, the "Vote Hub," introduced in 2021, a new resource to help veterans and civilians find voting registration information, polling locations, volunteer information and other resources to stay active and ensure their voice is heard at the ballot box; and the Veteran Coalition for Vaccination, a collaborative effort to push for vaccine distribution nationally. IAVA's awareness campaigns have generated significant exposure to veterans' issues, with over 85+ million reached via their media strategy and over 60+ national media appearances in 2021.

IAVA has an annual budget of approximately \$3.5M, a staff of 9, and is governed by a dedicated 18-member Board of Directors.

## **The Opportunity**

This is an important and exciting time for IAVA. For nearly two decades, IAVA has built a reputation for excellence in advocacy and programming to support some of the most important needs for post-9/11

veterans. Much has changed during that time, and IAVA recognizes that the veteran landscape is rapidly shifting, requiring new solutions to ensure success in the future, including the need for more effective policy solutions to address key veteran priorities and challenges and the engagement and inclusion of a broader and more diverse network of supporters, members and partners. IAVA is excited to move into a new era of activity as the organization seeks to meet these challenges head on.

In a key area of focus, IAVA continues to work to expand its advocacy efforts, leveraging the influence of its members, Board and staff to bring about important changes in national policy that will impact veterans' issues in the future. Building upon recent successes, such as the campaign for the PACT Act, IAVA is seeking to expand its advocacy efforts to reach new audiences and advance proactive policy solutions of key importance to its members. Put simply, IAVA seeks to advance its role as the leading voice on national policy issues.

IAVA recent successes in developing networking services for veterans has offered another significant opportunity for growth at the organization. The opportunity to scale these services to find the appropriate role for IAVA is of strategic importance for IAVA in the coming years. While the need is immense, the resources are limited, and determining how best to serve its members effectively will be a key strategic question for the next CEO and the Board of Directors.

The Board, staff and partners of IAVA feel an acute urgency to demonstrate commitment through their actions. Yet, they also understand that meaningful and lasting change begins with gaining clarity and alignment on intended outcomes and how to get there. IAVA strives for a blend of humility, patience, and determination as they work to augment their culture, build upon the organization's organizational history, and connect with new networks and communities.

The next CEO will lead these efforts, along with the many others, to push IAVA into a new era of impact. Key to delivering on these needs will be the alignment of the Board and staff on the path forward through a significant and robust strategic planning effort that is focused on growth. Through this process, the CEO will have the ability, in partnership with the Board, to shape the future of the organization in new ways. The CEO will help answer key questions, including the policy agenda in future years and the potential for new sources of funding. The Board is excited to work with the CEO to drive this collective effort and position the organization for greater success.

## **Position Summary**

Reporting to the Board of Directors (BOD), the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) leads in a manner which supports and guides the organization's mission and values. As the key strategic and operational leader, the CEO is responsible for overseeing the administration, programs, strategic plan, and financial management of the organization.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities include Board Management and Engagement; Strategic and Annual Planning; Financial Management and Fundraising; Staff Management; External Relations and Public Affairs.

The CEO works closely with staff and BOD to ensure the implementation of all aspects of membership, advocacy, programs, fundraising, communications, marketing, community-building, outreach, and the justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) change process. As the organization's strategic and operational leader, the CEO is responsible for ensuring sound strategic positioning and the execution of IAVA's mission.

## **Candidate Profile**

IAVA seeks an accomplished leader who demonstrates a keen understanding of and passion for the organization's mission. The ideal candidate has experience working to address complex systemic veterans issues and understands the importance of non-partisan collaboration in all facets of the organization. This person must be ready to join with the Board and staff to lead IAVA in pursuing new and expanded strategic goals in veteran advocacy and support.

The ideal candidate will be an experienced leader and strategist who has worked in the field of veterans issues. This leader will build momentum for relevant, critical, and provocative dialogue across sectors that build collaboration and meet the urgent need to develop an impactful approach to advocacy and power-building for veterans across the country. Candidates must exhibit a clear understanding, ability, and passion for the organizational development required to weave and operationalize a vision for change on behalf of veterans nationally. A strong commitment to collaboration across disciplines as well as evidence of leading successful partnerships with a variety of stakeholders is expected.

A background in advocacy, community organizing, coalition building, social movements, organizational development, or related field is required. Successful candidates must have experience or the ability to develop and/or influence public policies leading to long term, permanent social change. A demonstrable comprehension of the current veterans advocacy landscape is a plus. Experience in collaboration and consensus building across sectors, stakeholders, and with peer organizations and leaders is required. The leader must have the ability to integrate and translate data, research, community experiences, and leadership insights into clear collective messages and policy recommendations.

The individual must demonstrate a proven ability in strategic leadership, fundraising, management, collaborative ventures, and constituency building. Proven success in raising significant resources from individuals, foundations, and corporations on behalf of the mission and organization is required. A creative thinker with an entrepreneurial spirit and high aptitude in change management is highly desired. An understanding of business principles applied to a nonprofit organization, particularly a background in scaling sustainable growth, promoting continuous improvement of program quality, and revenue enhancement and diversification, is required.

The successful candidate will exhibit exceptional interpersonal skills to effectively interact with diverse communities, including Board, staff, members, donors, peer VSO groups, elected and appointed policy leaders, government officials, and other key stakeholders. An excellent public speaker, this individual must be comfortable providing public testimony, speaking in front of large groups, and be adept in media interviews and engagement. This individual must be confident, thoughtful and have the appropriate skills and presence to work in an effective, collegial, and collaborative manner across the expanse of members and partners involved in IAVA's work.

The ideal candidate will be a leader with demonstrated effectiveness in leading a justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) framework within an organization. Candidates must demonstrate a history of building and supporting a diverse team and have experience sharing power while collaborating with a diversity of internal and external constituencies to achieve results.

The preferred candidate is a trustworthy, strategic, and dependable leader who understands the mechanics and culture of a small nonprofit with significant aspirations for growth. This individual will be a

strong listener with an inclusive, team-oriented management style that inspires, empowers, motivates, and develops staff while at the same time setting measurable goals and holding each other accountable.

Diverse candidates, and candidates with non-traditional backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Achievement in veterans issues, organizing, philanthropy, advocacy, policy, law, and related fields is a plus, as is prior experience in the nonprofit, corporate, and/or government sectors.

## Diversity and Inclusion

IAVA is committed to creating and maintaining a workplace in which all employees have an opportunity to participate and contribute to the success of IAVA and are valued for their skills, experience, and unique perspective. IAVA is committed to equal employment opportunity and to compliance with federal and state anti-discrimination laws. IAVA prohibits discrimination and harassment against employees or applicants for employment based on age, race, color, religion, sex, marital status, physical, mental or sensory disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, national origin, political ideology or military status or any other status or characteristic protected by local, state, or federal law.

## Compensation and Benefits

The target salary for this position is \$225,000 - \$250,000 with some flexibility. Benefits include a health care package which include medical, dental and vision benefits, paid time off for vacation, family care, mental and physical health, religious holidays, civic duties and bereavement, as well as the opportunity to participate in a retirement plan.

## How to Apply

To apply, please submit a current resume and letter of introduction to Kittleman & Associates, LLC at <https://bit.ly/3BjTVHO> (click on the Apply button at the bottom of the page). For more information about IAVA, please visit <https://iava.org/>

## IAVA Core Values

- **Mission First:** We are here to serve and empower our post-9/11 veterans community. We believe these dynamic men and women represent America's future – our next greatest generation. They are our true north, and everything we do is designed to focus on them and the positive future they bring to the world.
- **Integrity Always:** We hold ourselves to the highest standards of efficiency, effectiveness, honesty, and transparency. We fight hard and take tough stands. That's not always easy, but it's who we are and what our mission requires.
- **Everyone is Welcome:** The veterans movement is for every veteran. Our diversity is our strength. We are a community that welcomes everyone, of every background, time period, and discharge status. The veterans movement is not for veterans alone. Our success is America's success. We believe everyone can do something to help.
- **Respect Must be Paid:** Many have come before us. From The Revolutionary War to the present day, every generation of veterans and allies before us have served, sacrificed, and paved the

way. Many had it much tougher than we have it now. They broke down barriers so we could succeed. We learn from and respect the history of our elders. We never forget those who came before us, those who were lost, and those who will follow us.

- **Lead in Service:** Our work is not about us as individuals. Success is a team game. We eat last, raise our hand first, and are always here to serve and lead. We will always put our community and our mission before ourselves. Everyone is a leader: a servant leader. We believe true leadership requires following and supporting others.
- **Attitude + Effort = Victory:** Many of the folks we serve are dealing with tremendous pain, loss, and trauma. They often reach out to us at a point when hope is lost. We always show them that they are not alone and we're committed. We engage in some work that can take years, even decades. The work is hard. Our positivity is key to our success, and it's contagious. We share our positive attitude with everyone we meet and partner with every day. And we give maximum effort always. Our mission, our supporters, and our future depend on it.
- **Make the Juice Worth the Squeeze:** We can't do everything. Staying focused and achieving greatness requires tremendous discipline. It also often means saying no to many things, so we can say yes to a few — and do them well. If we take something on, we make sure it's worth it. Once we do, we give it our all and crush it.
- **We Are the Changemakers:** Every day is a chance to make a difference. For every one of us. What we do changes lives and changes history. We are committed to rising to that challenge, to accepting the responsibility of leadership and to making a difference. Pressure is a privilege, and we respect and appreciate that privilege always. We're not passive. We get after it! We don't wait for the change we seek, we make it happen.
- **Keep It Fun:** The work we do is hard. Sometimes incredibly hard. It takes tremendous effort, energy and heart. So we make fun a priority. We don't take ourselves too seriously and we always think of others. Nobody wants to work with a jerk. So we keep it cool. Music, food and sports are connective tissue for our movement. We share our passions and successes, and we remember morale is everyone's responsibility. We always keep in mind a member or colleague could be having an incredibly tough day, that we can make better. We find ways to keep it fun and we and our movement are stronger for it.
- **Think of the Children:** The work we do changes families and the life trajectories for millions. We remember that what we do will make a solid difference now, and a transformative difference later. And true change doesn't happen overnight. When things are tough, we grind it out, and think of the difference our work will one day make for our grandkids and future generations.
- **Win the Day:** Every day is a day to make a difference. The challenges and opportunities we face can sometimes seem overwhelming. But they're not. Thanks to us. We attack the opportunity of each day vigor, because every day is winnable. And when stitched together over time, all those daily wins will transform lives and history.