VETERANS STRENGTHENING AMERICA

NATIONAL SECURITY DIVISION'S WEEKLY REPORT

Mario Marquez, Director
MMarquez@legion.org

January 16 – 20, 2023

STAFF ACTIVITY

- NS Staff attended an MSO/VSO meeting titled "Pharmacy Benefit and Network Update" hosted by Express Scripts. The discussion focused on implementing TRICARE's TPharm5 pharmacy network and returning 4,300 independent pharmacies in the network.

- NS Staff met with Army Joint Munitions Command to discuss the importance of the ammo, rifle, and static display program related to The American Legion Military Surplus Program. A bedrock of the Legion for many years and a trusted partner. Last year, TACOM donated more than 500,000+ ammo, 100,000+ clips, 50,000 rifles, and over 100 static displays to VSOs.

- NS Staff participated in an AUMF coalition meeting focused on reintroducing a bill to repeal the 2002 Iraq War Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) in the 118th Congress.

- NS Staff met The American Legion's Media and Communications division; the discussion focused on opportunities for collaboration.

- NS Staff met with the Project on Government Oversight's (POGO) Center for Defense Information to discuss the Legion's work on behalf of servicemembers and veterans vulnerable to deportation. POGO is interested in getting involved in veteran deportation issues and in learning how they might be able to support the Legion in this effort.

- NS Staff met to discuss The American Legion Spirit of Service (SOS) and Law Enforcement/ Firefighter of the Year Awards nomination process and criteria.

- NS Staff attended and supported Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Liz Hartman's monthly committee meeting. The focus was on do-outs from last month's meeting and new committee business aimed at preparing resolutions for consideration at the upcoming National Security Commission meeting during the 63rd Annual Washington Conference and the Spring National Executive Committee meeting in May.

- NS staff participated in a virtual event titled "A Readout of the U.S.-Japan Leaders' Meeting" hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). The event featured: Kurt Campbell, National Security Council Coordinator for the Indo-Pacific, and Koji Tomita, Ambassador of Japan to the US. President Biden and Prime Minister Kishida met in Washington, DC, on January 13 to discuss Japan's new national defense strategy, avenues for furthering U.S.-Japan alliance cooperation, and the importance of U.S.-Japan coordination to defend a rules-based international order. More information and video of the event are here.

- NS Staff attended virtually an award ceremony hosted by the San Diego Air & Space Museum where Korean War Aviator and Legionnaire E. Royce Williams received the Navy Cross from Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro. The National Executive Committee threw its support behind upgrading the award. It passed Resolution 70 in August 2017, which called for petitioning Congress and the Department of Defense. Years of American Legion member and staff advocacy were critical to achieving this upgrade to the Navy Cross for this Korean War hero. The ceremony took place on Friday, January 20, and a video of the event is available on the museum's YouTube channel here.

POW/MIA

January 19, 2023

- Airman accounted for from World War II (Reuter, G.)
- Airman accounted for from World War II (Deeds, J.)

January 18, 2023

- Soldier accounted for from World War II (Wilcon, M.)

January 17, 2023

- Airman accounted for from World War II (Meyer, M.)

DPAA has identified/repatriated 9 servicemembers so far this year.

PROGRAMS (The American Legion Military Surplus Equipment)

- Processed request: Ammo – 13,650; Rifle – 51; Clips – 30; Static Display - 2
- participants: Post – 11; Department – 10

TIP OF THE WEEK

JROTC American Legion Awards

Military Excellence Award. The Cadet must:

- Be in the top 25% of their class in JROTC and non-JROTC subjects.
- Have demonstrated outstanding qualities in military leadership, discipline, character, and citizenship.

Scholastic Excellence Award. The Cadet must:

- Be in the top 10% of their class in non-JROTC subjects.
- Be in the top 25% of their class in JROTC.
- Have demonstrated qualities of leadership.
- Have actively participated in related student activities such as student organizations, constructive activities, or sports.

PROCESS

- Selection. The DAI/SAI or head of the school or both will make the Selection.
- Source. Requests for awards may be made to the local posts of the American Legion. If no local post exists, information may be obtained from the National Security Division, The American Legion, K Street NW, Washington, DC 20006 or email The National Security Division at NationalSecurityDivision@legion.org
- Presentation. Arrangements will be made by the DAI/SAI for an American Legion representative to present the awards at an appropriate military ceremony.
- Reporting. Send a follow-on report to the National Security/Foreign Relations Director, The American Legion, that includes:
    (1) Name of recipient and type of award.
    (2) American Legion post number and date award was presented.
    (3) Name and title of American Legion representative presenting the award.