



Veterans Work To Beat COVID - 19

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The Manhattan Beach, CA-based Prostate Cancer Awareness Project is calling on all veterans across the country to join the fight against COVID-19. The world is currently facing a serious crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, and it is everyone's responsibility to do what they can to contain the spread of the virus.

Robert Hess, who founded both the Prostate Cancer Awareness Project and the Disabled Veteran Empowerment Network (DVEN), is calling upon the nation's heroes, veterans, to lead the fight against COVID-19. He says, "COVID-19 is an invisible enemy but we can bring it under control if we all just wear a mask. Today, I'm challenging the American veteran community to lead the way by wearing a mask. It's our #VetsUp #MasksUp challenge. We slept in the rain, mud and dust and got shot at to protect our fellow Americans. We can certainly lead the way in wearing a mask. Hooah!"

Veterans earned this title by serving their country, and the COVID-19 pandemic presents another opportunity to do the same. Wearing a mask has, in numerous studies, been found to be effective in reducing the spread of the COVID-19 virus. It protects both the wearer and those around them by reducing the likelihood of the virus entering an uninfected wearer's body or being released into the air from an infected wearer's body. COVID-19 is spread through the droplets people spray when they cough, sneeze or talk. As face masks block most of these particles, this in turn decreases the rate of infection.

“It’s pretty clear that wearing a mask helps everyone,” says Robert Hess. “So, how do we convince everyone to wear one? As a proud veteran, I think the answer is simply to show people that wearing a mask is a patriotic duty. It’s a simple thing each of us can do to help our fellow Americans; those very same people for whom we put our lives on the line. COVID-19 is just a more insidious enemy, one we can’t see.”

Hess is himself a Vietnam veteran who is 90% disabled, with 80% of his disability being combat-related. Almost all of his disability is due to Agent Orange-related prostate cancer and combat-related PTSD. He understands the challenges faced by disabled veterans, being one himself, and knows what they face when trying to get their lives back on track once they return from war. He started the Prostate Cancer Awareness Project in 2006 to help veterans with prostate cancer measure their risk and find their cancers in the early stages while they are still treatable. In 2016 the Prostate Cancer Awareness Project expanded its mission to include support for all cancers in 2016, becoming The Cancer Journeys Foundation.

Around 2018, Robert Hess and The Cancer Journeys Foundation came to understand just how many veterans are dealing with cancer, and they also came to understand that a huge number of cancer survivors similarly have to grapple with PTSD. In early 2019, the DVEN program was formed, with the goal being to focus more on the disabled veteran population.

DVEN supports multiple veteran charities. They have screened a number of charities using GuideStar, the world’s largest database of non-profit charities, and compiled a list of trustworthy charities. Donations to these charities will directly benefit veterans and their families. Some of the charities supported by DVEN include Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Fisher House Foundation, Hire Heroes and so on.

“DVEN’s mission is to identify veteran organizations that are providing genuine support to the veteran community and provide monetary support to those programs,” DVEN says. “Sadly, many people have created sham organizations that collect funds but never provide any meaningful support. The Federal Trade Commission and state governments work hard to identify these organizations but it’s a challenge. We have posted a list of sham organizations in the right sidebar along with a list of organizations that genuinely support our veteran community.”

For more information on The Disabled Veteran Empowerment Network, visit the following link: <https://dven.org/read-set-masksup/>. The organization can be reached through their social media channels as well.

<https://vimeo.com/robertwarrenhess/review/476663077/4cf9cb7003>

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For more information about Prostate Cancer Awareness Project, contact the company here: Prostate Cancer Awareness Project Robert Hess 310.356.3872 Info@ThePCAP.org 1601 N. Sepulveda Blvd. Suite 576 Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

Prostate Cancer Awareness Project

The Prostate Cancer Awareness Project (PCAP) developed and operates an international prostate cancer early detection system available free on the Internet at <http://ProstateTracker.org>.

Website: <http://ThePCAP.org>

Email: Info@ThePCAP.org

Phone: 310.356.3872

