



Board of County Commissioners

County of Hunterdon
71 Main Street, Building #1
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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hunterdon County Veterans Services Officer Elected By National Veterans Association As An Executive Board Member

Veterans Services Officer (VSO) Rich Booth has been assisting Veterans with obtaining benefits in Hunterdon County since August of 2018, most recently helping 155 Veterans qualify for \$714,082 in VA benefits over the past year and a half. This is in addition to Mr. Booth's work attending Veterans based conferences and staying up to date with current legislation, Commissioner Board Deputy Director Zachary T. Rich reported.

To retain accreditation, VSO Booth attended the annual National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO) Conference in June. While there, Booth was nominated for, and elected, to the Executive Board of NACVSO. In this leadership role, Booth will have enhanced responsibilities and serve on important committees within the organization.

Deputy Director Rich, the Board's Veteran's co-liaison, said, "Mr. Booth was chosen by his peers to be an Executive Board member candidate, and then was elected to that role by those same peers. I can't think of a better endorsement for a VSO than being chosen by a group of fellow VSOs from across the nation."

In order to gain a better understanding of legislation and leadership as a VSO, Booth also attended the NACVSO Conference in Washington, D.C. this past February. Several pieces of information, including bills that are being introduced in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, were discussed.

Some of the bills include the *Commitment to Veteran Support and Outreach Act*, the *Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2021*, the *Comprehensive and Overdue Support for Troops of War Act*, *Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxicities Act* and *Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act*.

"These acts ensure continuing care for veterans once they return to civilian life, often with multiple health issues, depending on where they served and for how long. My job is to assist Veterans and their dependents, with obtaining benefits that are provided for them at the county, state, and federal level," VSO Booth explained.

"VSO Booth is a strong advocate for the county's Veterans. Booth attends conferences to retain his accreditation and to learn local and national legislation to better serve those Veterans who need his guidance and support and in addition to the administrative work, Booth is always involved in the county's many Veteran events as well, which is not an easy task," Rich continued.



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VSO Booth assisted with several county events such as the Veteran's Recognition Medal Ceremony, the KIA Honor Flag Ceremony, the Veteran Headstone Cleaning events and as a host for a Veteran Breakfast where Veterans were invited to discuss their concerns directly with Booth.

Rich added, "Booth knows the men and women he serves, because he is a Veteran, having served honorably in the U.S. Navy from 1991 to 1994. I couldn't think of a better person to assist our county veterans than someone who has been in their shoes."

VSO Booth is able to work with Veterans in his office on Route 31 in Flemington at the county Senior Center, building 1, on the phone or virtually, if a Veteran is not able to come in.

"Having a VSO who is available, knowledgeable and respected by his peers is a win for Hunterdon County. I know I can speak for the Board when I say that we are thankful that VSO Booth is here and continues to advocate for the Veterans here in Hunterdon County," Rich concluded.

VSO Booth publishes a Veterans Newsletter twice each year. To be included in the mailing, please email rbooth@co.hunterdon.nj.us or call 908-788-1361.

If you would like to apply for the Veteran's Recognition Medal Ceremony, Veterans can email Ruthi Cass: rcass@co.hunterdon.nj.us or call 908-788-1104 for more information.