

Hunterdon County Veterans Services Officer Attends Annual Training Conference To Re-certify As An Accredited VSO

Hunterdon County's Veteran Services Officer (VSO) Rich Booth recently completed a required certification program at the NACVSO (National Association of County Veteran Services Officers) Annual Training Conference in Washington, D.C., which included presentations from the Secretary of The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and a Medal of Honor recipient, Hunterdon County Commissioner Board Director Susan J. Soloway announced.

The purpose of the annual training conference is to teach county VSOs skills to serve clients more effectively, from the basics of advocacy to representing appeals at the Board of Veterans Appeals, and an opportunity for VSOs to connect with senior-level VA officials and fellow VSOs from around the country.

Director Soloway, the Board's Veterans liaison said, "The Board supports VSO Booth's attendance at the conference because it provides important training for county VSOs, so that they are able to provide Veterans assistance navigating life outside of their active military role."

At the D.C. conference, closing keynote speaker Army Staff Sergeant Clint Romesha, Congressional Medal of Honor recipient and published author, spoke about his experiences during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Sgt. Romesha discussed the Battle and how the Taliban had surrounded his unit, set fire to their outpost and what he and his team had to do to overcome the enemy.

Sgt. Romesha concluded his presentation by citing the value of Veterans Services Officers. How the VSOs help Veterans gain benefits they are entitled to receive. Romesha was wounded during the Battle of Kamdesh; he said getting the right benefits through his county VSO was critical for his recovery.

Several other guest speakers at the VSO Conference presented updated information about key topics which Veterans need when they separate from the military such as pensions, Ethics/Diversity, Veteran Affairs updates, and Case Law Review.

By attending the conference, Booth, a Navy Veteran, obtained necessary continuing education units (CEU's) to maintain his accreditation as the county's VSO.

VSO Booth said, "The material shared at the conference allows me to be a better advocate for Veterans. By staying certified through this accreditation, I have full access to the VA database and can be an appointed representative to the Veterans who need those services."

"VSO Booth has been a benefit to the county's Veterans, and we appreciate his hard work and dedication," Soloway concluded.

Veterans can reach VSO Booth by calling 908-788-1361 or emailing rbooth@co.hunterdon.nj.us

.

Information for Veterans can also be found on VSO Booth's webpage,
<https://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/aging/VeteransServices.html>