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Simple, Significant Ways You Can Help Active and Former Military Members in Your Community

by Patrick Young

Military members—active and inactive—deal with a wide range of struggles each day. Between active combat and the physical and mental health consequences that come after a war, military members in our communities can often use the help of their neighbors. If you've been wondering how you can make a difference in the lives of service members and veterans, check out these practical ideas from [The Northwest Veterans Newsletter](#).

Help With Their Home Purchase

One practical way to help veterans in your community is to help them navigate the home buying process. Many veterans are eligible for a [VA loan](#), which allows them to buy a home without paying a down payment. What's more, a VA loan requires no mortgage insurance, which can save the homebuyer significantly on their payments.

Some organizations help to build or modify homes for veterans who have suffered injuries from combat. Donating to organizations like Homes for Our Troops or Building Homes for Heroes means that you can contribute to these worthy causes. And if you happen to be a contractor, you can volunteer and use your talents to help build homes.

Arrange Home Modifications

Suppose you want to take a more active role in helping to adapt existing homes for veterans. In that case, you could always offer to donate to organizations that supply [modifications](#) for people living with disabilities. You could even arrange for changes to be made in the homes of veterans in your community who need it.

Depending on any disabilities or limitations involved, modifications can include installing grab bars, replacing flooring, adding zero-step entries, putting down non-slip [mats](#), and many others. Some improvements can be [DIYed](#), depending on your knowledge and skills.

Benefits of Offering Employment

If you are a business owner, consider hiring veterans. The benefits of having veterans in your workforce are endless, and you likely will not find team members that are more dedicated, capable, adaptable, and team-focused. Many veterans are willing to learn new skills and trades, and are more than happy to take on additional responsibilities as they become more comfortable with the position within your company.

Even if you don't own a business, there are probably organizations and other causes in your area that help find jobs for veterans. Seek these organizations out and find out how you can contribute.

Assist Veteran Entrepreneurs

This is another way you can assist veterans if you are business-minded. Learn as much as you can about the entrepreneurial resources [available](#), and help veterans in your community connect with them.

You can also help veterans build their professional network and share any expertise or advice that will help them on their journey. For example, if you are well-versed in marketing, product development, customer service, or any other area of entrepreneurship, offer to be a mentor for those who aspire to own a business.

Encourage Their Education

Another excellent way to show you care about active and former military members is by assisting them in their educational goals! For instance, encouraging them to go [back to school](#) for a degree in accounting makes them much more marketable, and the flexibility of online

programs means they can study at their own pace, without having to take time off work. Even if the assistance you're giving them is just helping them to fill out forms and get started, it's a great way to show that you believe in their potential.

Organize Care Packages

One of the easiest ways to help active service members is to prepare care packages to send to those on deployment. You can include various items in your care packages—from non-perishable snacks to gift cards to handmade gifts. There are even organizations that [specialize](#) in sending gift boxes to send to troops.

Furthermore, if you know veterans in your community, you could always take care packages to their homes in person. And depending on how well you know the person (and their family), you could offer to cook them meals, help them with household duties, and many other tasks.

Considering all they have sacrificed for our country, helping the veterans and active military members in our communities is an honor. Consider the ideas above as you make a plan for getting involved, and keep looking for other ways to bless those who have risked their lives so that we can maintain our freedoms. Not only will it benefit the people you help, but it will also add fulfillment to your own life!

[The Northwest Veterans Newsletter](#) was established in 1996 to provide helpful information and resources for veterans and their families. If you have any questions or suggestions, please email roger@northwestvets.com or lilsispam@northwestvets.com.