

## Military Order of the Purple Observes National Suicide Prevention Month

On Wednesday September 27, 2017, to commemorate the close of National Suicide Prevention Month, the Military Order of the Purple Heart became the first Veteran Service Organization to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery in remembrance of the twenty veterans per day who tragically take their own lives through suicide. In a somber ceremony, National Commander Neil Van Ess and National Suicide Awareness Officer John Flener were joined by National Adjutant Jack Leonard, Legislative Director Aleks Morosky, and other Purple Heart recipients in paying tribute to these fallen men and women who so honorably served in their Nation's Armed Forces.



Also joining the MOPH delegation was Brittany Yoder and her husband Ryan who, after reading about the event on Social Media, decided that she needed to make the drive from Delaware just to attend the ceremony because “it was so near and dear to my heart.” According to Brittany, “After 20+ years of service, my Dad made the decision to end his own life 4 years ago. The placing of the wreath for suicide awareness is a huge step in recognizing that too many veterans aren't getting all the mental health support that they need. I am here today for this monumental occasion for my Dad and best friend, and for every man or woman who suffered or are still suffering from PTSD, anxiety, depression, and/or suicidal thoughts. You are not alone.”



The Military Order of the Purple Heart pays special tribute on this occasion to the families and friends struggling to cope with the loss of their loved one. Through its Suicide Awareness Program, the MOPH strives to help bring awareness to the causes, recognition of the signs that lead to suicide, and inform its Members and the public of resources available to help treat the causes. It is hoped that these efforts will open the doors for discussion and encourage others to seek help with the knowledge that we truly care about their well-being.

**REMEMBER** -- The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Veterans and their loved ones can call **1-800-273-8255** and **Press 1, chat online**, or send a text message to **838255** to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. Support for **deaf and hard of hearing** individuals is available.

**STAND BY THEM**

Confidential help for  
Veterans and their families

• • • • Confidential chat at [VeteransCrisisLine.net](https://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net) or text to 838255 • • • •