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For Immediate Release:

July 1, 2024

Empowering Our Heroes: A successful 19th Annual Stand Down Provides Vital Support to Veterans In-need

Over 500 Veterans & Families Receive Essential Services & Supplies at the largest Veteran-Focused Resource Fair in Central MA.

WORCESTER, MA - On June 21st, Veterans Inc., in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor, and other local agencies, hosted the 19th Annual Stand Down, the largest Veteran-focused Resource Fair in Central, MA. at Veterans Inc. HQ and Historic Armory. This event served over 500 Veterans and their family members. This event was open to Veterans and their families, no matter where along their journey they might be; and all services and items were provided free of charge.

The successful event showcased more than 150 providers and employers onsite to support Veterans and their families in attendance with the care and support they deserve: including the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV), the Veteran Affairs (VA), the Aids Project Worcester (APW) mobile testing van, PGA Hope, Amazon, Home Depot, WPD and many more. MCPHS Optometry performed complimentary vision and dental screenings, and acupuncture!

"Our 19th Annual Stand Down event is a testament to our unwavering commitment to those who have served our country," said Vincent Perrone, CEO and President. "This event is more than just a day of support; it's a powerful reminder that our Veterans are not forgotten. The gratitude, hope, and camaraderie we witnessed today reinforce our mission to stand by our Veterans, providing them with the resources and care they deserve". They were there for us when we needed them. We must be there now that they need us!

Following the color guard and national anthem during the opening ceremony, MassHire Worcester Veterans Representative, Bill Ryan, was honored with a Lifetime achievement award in recognition of his decades of outstanding support to Veterans and their families in our community. Bill has helped change lives by employing Veterans, reintegrating them into the community, and making them feel at home.

Veterans in attendance accessed free clothing, food, refreshments, haircuts by Super Cuts, and personal care items. The Dogfather, Mrs. Moriconi's Ice Cream, and Sub Zero Nitrogen Ice Cream were onsite, offering delicious treats. Additionally, all Veterans received surplus items such as boots, jackets, t-shirts, waist packs, backpacks, duffel bags, and much more. Clothing for women and children was also available with a dedicated area offering counseling and confidential support services onsite.

"As a community, it is our duty to ensure that those who have served our nation receive the support they need to thrive when they return home," said Senator Robyn Kennedy (D- First Worcester District). "Veterans Inc.'s 19th Annual Stand Down exemplifies this commitment by providing access to essential support and services like employment opportunities and medical care. I commend the over 50 employers and nearly 100 service providers who are coming together to offer connection and assistance. Their dedication is a testament to the strength of our community and the gratitude we hold for our veterans' sacrifices."

"The Veterans Division of the City of Worcester is committed to doing our very best to increase patriotism and Veteran services within the city by being present, involved and educating the communities we serve of the heroic stories, sacrifices and commitment from everyday Worcester citizens who adorn the uniform serving patriotically the United States of

America for our freedoms we often take for granted, freedom is not free.” – City of Worcester, Director of Veteran Services, Dr. Joe F. Robinson.

Mike Hsu from Cumulus’ Radio, 100 FM The Pike, was present with the Pike mobile and street team, MCing the event and provided opportunities for attendees to win concert tickets and prizes.

“Swift River is proud to sponsor Operation Stand Down in Massachusetts by Veteran’s Inc. We fully support their mission to connect veterans to essential resources, combat addiction, end homelessness, and ultimately restore hope to those who have served. Swift River is leading provider of substance abuse treatment in Massachusetts and is fervently committed to delivering high-quality care and excellent clinical outcomes for those struggling with mental health or substance use disorders.”

Thank you to our major sponsors of this year’s event: Swift River, Spectrum, The Department of Labor, National Grid, VA, Bank Hometown, AbbVie, Casella Waste Management, Always Best Senior Care Services, and Middlesex Savings Bank of Worcester, as well as over 300 community volunteers and the dedicated staff at Veterans Inc. Photography was provided by Andrew Pickering owner of Pix Pro Photography and Videography was provided by Ryan Hughes founder of Slide Rule Films, LLC. Photos from the event can be found on our website [here](#).

For more information on participating and registering for next year’s event, veterans may contact Veterans Inc. at 1-800-482-2565 or via e-mail at StandDown@veteransinc.org. or visit www.veteransinc.org/events/stand-down/.

About Veterans Inc.

Veterans Inc. is New England’s leading provider of support services to veterans and their families. A 501(c)(3) non-profit, the organization’s single-minded mission is to be there for our veterans in their time of need. Incorporated in 1990, Veterans Inc. has helped more than 100,000 veterans in need. Today, it operates offices and programs in all six New England states, Montana and North Dakota. The support services include housing programs, counseling, employment and training, family programs, benefits counseling and advocacy, behavioral health services, transportation, temporary financial assistance, health and wellness, food services, and women and childcare services.

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