Young Veterans Want in on VFW Action

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The VFW's advocacy and service efforts are making an impact on America's newest generation of war veterans and they want in on the action. Just this past weekend, thirty young veterans were sworn in as the newest members of Post 2940 in Buffalo, N.Y.

In recent years, the VFW has led many battles for justice on behalf of America's newest generation of veterans. Most recently, the VFW has taken aim at ensuring resource and prevention programs for military suicide, improved health programs specifically for women veterans and increased funding for research and treatment for those suffering with Traumatic Brain Injury and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. And, just last week, VFW proved to be the driving force behind military Tuition Assistance reinstatement – a program that had been cut due to sequestration.

This group of ambitious New York veterans wants to bring the first-hand experiences of having served in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to an organization known for its ability to achieve results in obtaining justice for all veterans of all wars. Many of these newly installed members are already poised to take on leadership positions within the VFW.

Advocating for their fellow service members will be nothing new to the group. Each of them is a member of Student Veterans of America (SVA), an organization dedicated to the higher education of military veterans.

Though younger veterans may not be as familiar with the VFW as veterans of WWII, Korea and Vietnam, that is steadily changing as the organization continues to increase its outreach efforts and enact many legislative changes that have a direct impact on those who've served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Today, approximately 15 percent of all veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan who are eligible for VFW membership have in fact joined. Veterans of these theatres make up about 10 percent of overall membership. Percentage-wise, this is a larger market share than any previous war.

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