



Jennette Lombardo, Executive Director, receives Hall of Fame trophy at this year's annual Farmer Veteran Coalition Conference in Kansas City, MO.

FARMER VETERAN COALITION INDUCTED INTO HOWES HALL OF FAME

The Farmer Veteran Coalition, an NVBDC MVO Task Force member, is pleased to announce its induction into the prestigious Howes Hall of Fame, honoring its commitment to supporting those who serve in the military who are building America's agricultural future.

"The Farmer Veteran Coalition has been instrumental in empowering veterans through agriculture, providing them with the skills they need to succeed in farming," said Rob Howes, President of Howes Products. "Their dedication to helping veterans transition from the military to civilian life through farming is truly commendable. We are honored to recognize their efforts and welcome them into the Howes Hall of Fame."

Founded in 2009, the FVC is a national nonprofit organization that empowers military veterans to transition into careers in agriculture and help them to become successful farmers. Through education, resources, and mentorship, the FVC fosters economic opportunities, promotes sustainable agriculture, and strengthens rural communities while supporting veterans in building meaningful post-service livelihoods in

farming. It also offers a Fellowship Fund; a small grant program that assists in providing needed items for veterans' farm operations.

Additionally, the FVC operates the Homegrown by Heroes labeling program, which certifies veteran-grown agricultural products and identifies producers on MarketMaker, an online platform selling direct to consumers. Currently, the FVC boasts a membership of more than 50,000.

Jennette Lombardo, CEO of the Farmer Veteran Coalition, expressed her gratitude for the recognition. "Being inducted into the Howes Hall of Fame is a tremendous honor for our organization. It underscores the importance of our mission and the impact we are making on the lives of veteran farmers and their families across the country. We are committed to continuing our work, expanding our programs, and supporting even more veterans in their agriculture endeavors."

Learn more about the Farmer Veteran Coalition here: farmvetco.org.

ROBERT MIDDLETON WHITE HOUSE AWARD



Robert Middleton II with his wife, Mentory, as he receives honorary doctoral degree.

MARINE'S COMMITMENT TO SERVICE HONORED WITH PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS

NVBDC Task Force member, Marine Robert B. Middleton II, Sergeant, ret, has received two prestigious honors this fall acknowledging his years of dedication to serving the veteran community and the community-at-large: an honorary doctorate in business administration and The Presidential Lifetime Achievement Gold Medal Award, the latter was awarded on November 23, 2024.

"I hope that my awards, for which I am most grateful, will open new doors to help veterans and disadvantaged people," said Middleton.

Currently, the 77-years-young Middleton also serves as the National Commandant for the Montford Point Marines of America, which preserves the history of the nation's first African American Marines who served in WWII.

He also is a member of the Commandant of the Marine Corps Advisory Council. Additionally, Middleton continues his multi-decades volunteer work assisting veterans as they re-integrate into society after military service, as well as his work with disadvantaged youth and adults.

A man of many interests, Middleton retired from a successful entrepreneurial career, where he owned several businesses. With his Honorary Doctorate in Business Administration and the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Gold Medal Award, Middleton plans to continue to open doors for domestic and international business, advocate for veteran causes, and engage in humanitarian endeavors.

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