



Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 11, 2023

St. Paul, Minnesota – Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers (MACVSO) is pleased to announce the appointment of John Baker as its new Executive Director, effective October 1, 2023. John brings a wealth of experience and expertise to our organization, and we are excited to welcome him to our team.

John Baker has a proven track record of leadership and a deep commitment to the veteran community in Minnesota and around the nation. John is retired from 22 years in the United States Marine Corps where he served in various capacities and places around the country and the world. He recently retired as a tenured Professor of Criminal Justice at St. Cloud State University and is a licensed attorney. He previously represented veterans and servicemembers in the criminal justice system in Minnesota and around the country. He also chaired the initiative to start Veterans Courts in Minnesota and has been active in many other legislative issues for veterans. All his previous roles make him a strong fit for this position.

In his role as Executive Director, Baker will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organization such as ensuring County Veteran Service Officers have the tools and training to do their jobs. He will also be responsible for strategic planning, organizational growth, program development, and training and accreditation. His leadership will play a crucial role in achieving the organization's goals and objectives.

Baker expressed his enthusiasm about joining MACVSO, saying, "I am honored to be back doing something I have always been passionate about - helping our nation's military veterans."

Josh Beninga, President of MACVSO and the Lac qui Parle County Veteran Service Officer, commented on the appointment, stating, “We are thrilled to have Mr. Baker as our Executive Director after working on creating this position for the last five years. This is a first for our Association in its 78-year history and I’m excited for its future and the stability and sustainability his leadership will provide going forward.”

This is a new position for MACVSO based on a funding grant from the Minnesota Legislature.

Please join us in welcoming John Baker to the Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers. We are confident that his leadership, vision, skills, and passion will help us continue to make a meaningful impact in our veterans community in Minnesota and beyond.

Contact: John Baker, Executive Director, bakerjd02@gmail.com, (651) 214-0853 or Josh Beninga, President, josh.beninga@lqpc.com, (320) 598-3445

<https://www.macvso.org/>

About MACVSO: MACVSO is the Professional, Minnesota state-wide organization made up of over 140 specially trained and certified Veterans Advocates known as County Veterans Service Officers. We work collaboratively with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, and Nationally chartered Veterans Service Organizations. We promote the interests and welfare of U.S. Armed Forces Veterans, their family members, and survivors. We strive to enhance the quality of our clients lives through advocacy, counseling, claims assistance, and special programs.

Each member of the MACVSO is a Veteran too. We pledge to fulfill President Abraham Lincoln’s promise: “To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan” by serving and honoring the men and women who are America’s Veterans.



John Baker, MACVSO Executive Director