



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Milton Veteran Named Wisconsin Woman Veteran of the Year

APPLETON – The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) is pleased to announce that US Marine Corps Veteran Kimberly Graff, Milton, has been named the 2018 Wisconsin Woman Veteran of the Year. WDVA Secretary Daniel J. Zimmerman presented the award to Graff at the Wisconsin Conference on Veterans Issue in Appleton on Monday, September 24, 2018.

“It is important to recognize individuals who go above and beyond when supporting Veterans in this state,” WDVA Secretary Daniel J. Zimmerman said. “The Wisconsin Woman Veteran of the Year award is one way we do that. Kim Graff’s tireless advocacy for the rights of military families impacts not only Wisconsin but is resonating nationwide. Again, Wisconsin leads the way in supporting Veterans and their families.”

Graff enlisted in the Marines two years after graduating from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls and two years to the day following the unexpected death of her first husband. She became a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defense Specialist in March 2013 and trained alongside the Secret Service in Washington D.C. She deployed to the South Pacific and Australia.

Graff remarried (her husband is also a Marine), moved back to Wisconsin, and had a daughter. She retired from the military earlier this year and now serves as a wife and mother to their child and her two stepchildren.

Graff was selected to receive the Wisconsin Woman Veteran of the Year award for her work to advocate for protections for military families as service members are away on duty, an issue that she took up following her husband’s struggle with the family court system and child placement. She created the “Protecting Military Families in Wisconsin” advocacy group and is working to pass the Deployed Parent Custody and Visitation Act in the Wisconsin State Legislature. It currently sits with the Legislative Study Committee on Child Placement and Support and has bipartisan backing. Graff has worked with various Veterans groups and has helped raise money for homeless women Veterans. She will earn her Master’s Degree next year in humanities and currently works as a Special Education Paraprofessional in the Milton School District.

Established in 2008, each year the Wisconsin Woman Veteran of the Year award has been given to an outstanding Wisconsin woman Veteran covering service eras from WWII to the current conflicts. Women have played a critical role in our military history and this award recognizes women Veterans who have compiled a record of superior service as a military service member, a Veteran, and outstanding member of the community.

*Editors note: [Linked here is a photo](#) of Kimberly Graff at the award presentation. From left – WDVA Secretary Zimmerman, Kim Graff, husband William, daughter Talia.*