



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: WomenVets@dva.wisconsin.gov

WDVA Announces 2020 Wisconsin Woman Veteran of the Year *Joanie Dickerson Honored for Military Service, Commitment to Community*

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) today announced that U.S. Navy veteran Joanie Dickerson was named its 2020 Woman Veteran of the Year.

Dickerson, a Bagley resident, dedicated twenty years (1980-2000) to the Navy, achieving the rank of Chief Petty Officer, which provided the opportunity to serve in a variety of leadership positions. Upon her retirement from the military, she continued her service by improving the lives of others in her community.

“From transporting veterans to medical appointments to participating in Veterans in the Classroom, a program that educates young people about the sacrifices of those who have served, Joanie Dickerson exemplifies what it means to be an outstanding community member and veteran,” said WDVA Secretary Mary Kolar. “She used the skills she developed in the military for the betterment of our state’s veterans, youth, and community members.”

Dickerson has held positions at American Legion Post 482 in Bagley as post commander, service officer, and finance officer. She has served as adjutant on the American Legion Grant County Council and, as a dual member of the American Legion family, she has also served as an officer and active member of American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Unit 482.

Dickerson served as a liaison to the county veterans service officer when the American Legion Auxiliary established the state-wide Homeless Women Veterans Grant Fund, which helps women veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and currently serves on its review committee. At the state level, she has served as chairman of several American Legion ALA committees and has advanced through the ALA state officer positions, currently serving as the department president.

In addition to these Legion roles, Dickerson is also an active advocate regarding issues impacting veterans, the military, and their families to ensure the issues impacting them remain in the forefront of the minds of our elected officials.

Dickerson was formally presented the award by Secretary Kolar during a Veterans Day celebration on Wednesday at St. Mary’s School in Bloomington, Wisc., where she teaches 5th through 8th grade. During the presentation, a congratulatory video from Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers was played. To see a video the presentation please visit the [Women Veterans of Wisconsin Facebook page](#).

Created in 2009, the WDVA's Woman Veteran of the Year Award recognizes women veterans in Wisconsin who have compiled records of exemplary service as military service members, veterans, and outstanding members of their communities.

Twenty-one women veterans from around the state were nominated by their peers for the 2019 award, and each were scored by a five-person panel based on a number of criteria such as contributions to the veterans' community and the resulting impact.

The WDVA also honored four women veterans with the "Women Veterans Impact Award." The following recipients were among the highest-scoring nominees through the selection process. Each received certificates commending them for their contributions to Wisconsin's veterans' community.

- Julia Atkinson, US Army veteran, Menomonee Falls
- Halli Lannan, US Army veteran, Wauwatosa
- Sandra Schumacher, US Army veteran, Madison

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