



USDA Veterans Day 2024
A Legacy of Loyalty and Service

USDA Veteran Employee Organization
and Agricultural Marketing Service presents:

VETERANS DAY OBSERVANCE



A LEGACY OF LOYALTY AND SERVICE



Hybrid Event
Oct. 29 | 1 p.m. ET
USDA Whitten Patio | [Zoom](#)

OBSERVANCE PROGRAM



Program Welcome

James "Jay" Pinsky
Veterans Employee Organization (VEO) Secretary
Public Affairs Specialist – New Media Branch
Office of External Affairs, Rural Development



Pledge of Allegiance

Audience



Opening Remarks

Bruce Summers
Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)



Keynote Speaker Introduction

Ali Muhamad, Esq.
Deputy Director – Civil Rights Program
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)



Keynote Speaker

Marvin Frink
Army Veteran
Cattle Farm Owner
Briarwood Cattle Farm

OBSERVANCE PROGRAM



Fireside Chat Moderator

Douglas Keeler
Deputy Director - Office of Civil Rights Diversity & Inclusion
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)



Fireside Chat Panelist

John Locke
Soil Conservationist
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)



Fireside Chat Panelist

Peter E. Scarabelli, CFE
Outreach Coordinator, Specialty Crops Inspection Division,
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)



Fireside Chat Panelist

Lisa Wilcox
REE Section 508 Program Manager
Agricultural Research Service



Closing Remarks

Tab Bartley
Veterans Employee Organization (VEO) President
Public Affairs Specialist , Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)



The Armed Forces Medley

Please stand and sing along during your branch of services song! Next page has all the lyrics.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER SPEAKER BIO



Marvin Frink

After graduating high school, Marvin Frink joined the military to provide for his family and to help serve his country. Dedicating 15 years of service, including deployment to fight for his country, Marvin found himself dealing with anxiety. His father noticed he was suffering with PTSD and introduced him to farming.

Using farming and working with the cattle on a daily basis helps with the transition from military life to civilian life. After the passing of his father, Marvin continued the dream his father had for him of becoming a cattleman.

Briarwood Cattle Farm is a first-generation cattle farm owned and operated by veteran Marvin Frink and his wife Tanisha Frink. After serving honorably in the U.S. Army, his father [the late Reverend Kirby Frink] saw that Marvin was suffering from PTSD and knew that farming and raising cattle would help. Living out his father's wishes, Marvin is now grazing a good healthy herd of Black Angus cattle in Red Springs, North Carolina.

In September 2024, a lifelong dream became a reality with the ground breaking for Marvin and Tanisha on the farm butcher shop. Briarwood Custom Meats Butcher Shop, LLC is a USDA inspected whole animal carcass cutting facility that will focus on sustainability and utilizing every part of the animal. Briarwood Custom Meats Butcher Shop is set to open mid November 2024. Marvin also created the Day of Healing for veterans, which for the last several years, has opened the farm to host speakers to shine a light on the importance of mental health, and to connect veterans with opportunities in agribusiness using Agri-therapy.

Thankful for the opportunity to help feed America and become a better person with the outstanding support from family, close friends, and the community, success is in the near future for an American veteran who served his country proudly.

SPEAKER BIOS



James "Jay" Pinsky, Event MC

Retired U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer, and currently serves as a Public Affairs Specialist with USDA Rural Development.

He is a member of The American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars, and serves as the Commander of American Legion Post 247 in Remington, Va. Jay also serves on the Executive Board for The

Piedmont Peace Center in Warrenton, Va., and is a licensed and ordained chaplain. Jay holds a Masters of Science in Natural Resources and Sustainability from Virginia Tech, a Bachelor's of Science in Communication from Excelsior University, is a graduate of the Military Photojournalism Program at Syracuse University, and Harvard University's Strategy Execution for Public Leadership program. He is a graduate of the Defense Information School's Journalism and Public Affairs Officer programs.



Bruce Summers, Opening Remarks

Currently serves as the Administrator for the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). In this position he works on policy issues and oversight of a variety of programs including grading of commodities such as meat, produce, dairy and cotton, the USDA Market News Service, and the National Organic Program.

Mr. Summers is a long time employee of the Agricultural Marketing Service with more than 30 years of experience. Prior to being named to the Administrator position he served in the Fruit & Vegetable Program Area of the Agricultural Marketing Service. Mr. Summers has a degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Maryland.



Ali Muhamad, Esq. Keynote Speaker Introduction

During his 18 years with USDA, Ali has been engaged in creating civil rights, affirmative/equal employment, diversity and inclusion and employee engagement business strategies, training program plans, and management routines that deliver acceptable equal employment opportunity and diversity and inclusion program accountability.

In those years he has also held the following EEO positions; Discrimination Complaints Adjudicator, Team Lead; Compliance Program Manager, Team Lead; Branch Chief, Diversity and Inclusion and Special Emphasis Program Management Coordinator.

SPEAKER BIOS

During his tenure at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Ali has worked with Senior Managers and Civil Rights Directors to achieve U.S. Department of Agriculture's mission to be a model employer and a premier employer of choice in the Federal Government. Throughout his career, he has successfully managed employee relations, and customer relationships through his proven ability to interpret requirements, influence decision making, and deliver results. Ali holds a bachelor's in business administration and financial management from the George Washington University School of Business/Management and a Jurist Doctorate from the Dave Clark School of Law at the University of the District of Columbia, a top tier Public Interest Law School.. Ali is a licensed attorney and is barred with the State of Maryland, The fourth Federal Circuits of Maryland and Virginia as well as the Supreme Court of the United States.



Doug Keeler, Fireside Chat Moderator

Mr. Douglas (Doug) Keeler completed 24 years as a Marine Corps Officer where he served as Commanding Officer during Operations Desert Storm and Desert Saber and led a humanitarian operation in Bangladesh during Operation Sea Angel, created the Marine Corps Mortuary Affairs School and created the Marine Corps Logistics

Education Program, a graduate program at Penn State while serving as the career manager for senior logistics personnel. Upon his retirement from the Marine Corps, he returned to government service as the Marine Corps' Deputy for Life Cycle Management where he led the Marine Corps' signature process improvement project resulting in the creation of a governance structure over requirements, acquisition and sustainment and him being the first Chairman of the Total Life Cycle Management Corporate Board. He was also the Marine Corps' first Key Acquisition Leader representing Acquisition policy to the Under Secretary. He served as an Associate Deputy Administer (ADA) for Poultry Programs, Livestock Poultry and Seed and Science & Technology Program in the Agricultural Marketing Service. A leader in Veteran hiring, Doug was the first to use Operation Warfighter, Skillbridge and VA OJT programs in USDA where he was lauded for his 100% conversion rate from Veteran interns to FTEs. Additionally, Doug increased Veteran hires in AMS to over 25% in two fiscal years. He is currently the Deputy Director for the Office of Civil Rights Diversity and Inclusion in the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. A graduate of the OMB Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program, Doug has a master's degree in project management, is a Project Management Professional, a Lean Six-Sigma Green Belt and received his Logistics Professional Certificate from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

SPEAKER BIOS



John Locke, Fireside Chat Panelist

USDA-NRCS Soil Conservationist in Massachusetts. Serving Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket producers. Handles projects such as small vegetable operations, shellfish farming and cranberry production. Also, serves as the Veteran Emphasis Program Manager on the Massachusetts and Rhode Island Civil Rights Advisory committee

for NRCS. John is a 5-year Veteran of the United State Marine Corps, serving on Active Duty for 4 years. John's units include 3rd Recon Bn. 3rd MarDiv. / 1st Marine Headquarters Group, Combat Service Support Company / 1st Battalion, 25th Marines. John has been with the agency since August of 2022, before that he was an assistant golf course superintendent at numerous high-end courses in Massachusetts. John holds a Bachelor's in Turfgrass management from UMass Amherst.



Peter E. Scarabelli, Fireside Chat Panelist

Peter E. Scarabelli returned to the Specialty Crops Inspection Division as the Outreach Coordinator on July 28, 2024. Prior to this he had served 6-months with the VA on a President's Management Council inter agency rotation and 90-additional days at the VA's request. Previously he joined the Marketing Order and Agreement Division in

November 2018 as a Compliance and Enforcement Specialist. He was promoted to Branch Chief of the Compliance and Enforcement Branch on December 6, 2020. Peter's career also included five plus years with Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division. Peter worked in various capacities for the SCI Division, including three plus years working as an Agricultural Commodity Grader of both fresh and processed products in both North Brunswick, New Jersey and at the Hunt's Point terminal market in the Bronx, New York. He also served almost two years as an Agricultural Marketing Specialist in Washington, DC. Peter served in the United States Navy for over 6 years and was awarded the Navy Achievement Medal. He also owned a pizzeria in East Northport, New York for almost 15 years. Peter earned his degree in Business Management from Farmingdale State University.



Lisa Wilcox, Fireside Chat Panelist

Lisa's career path has been anything but traditional. Starting as an Army medic with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, she transitioned to a career in nursing, specializing in ICU and ER care. Driven by a passion for technology and accessibility, she became a frontend web developer and now leads the Section 508 program for one of USDA's largest research organizations. In this role, she champions digital accessibility and ensures compliance with federal standards.

SPEAKER BIOS



Tab Bartley, Closing Remarks

Tabitha Bartley served in the Marine Corps from 2010 to 2018. She served in various roles from staff writer for the Quantico Sentry, community relations chief for Marine Corps Base Quantico, Marketing and Public Affairs Director, Marine Corps Recruiting Station Columbia S.C. and as the uniform sexual assault victim advocate.

She worked as a project manager for unit campaigns at the Purdue for Life Foundation before returning to the National Capital Region. Her current role is as a public affairs specialist for AMS. Tab serves as the President for the Dept. of Agriculture's Veteran Employee Organization, on the Board of Directors for Minority Veterans of America, Women Veterans Policy Coordinator for the Interagency Veterans Advisory Council, as the Marketing and Public Affairs Officer for the Jack Maas Marine Corps League Detachment. Tab is married to Jacob Castro and they have four children.

USDA VETERAN EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP AND EVENT COMMITTEE



Tab Bartley, President VEO



Roger Loesch , Vice President VEO



James "Jay" Pinsky, Secretary VEO

USDA VETERAN EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP AND EVENT COMMITTEE CONT.



Josh Moose, Event Committee VEO

Management Analyst
Office of the Secretary
Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement



Lilly Mendoza, Event Committee VEO

Management Analyst
Program Monitoring, Evaluation, and Strategic Planning (MESP)
Global Programs | Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)



Richard Fierroz, Event Committee VEO

Executive Services Division, Office of Operations
USDA