

BEYOND THE WELCOME HOME



NEWS RELEASE

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YOUNG VETERANS GATHER IN LOS ANGELES TO DISCUSS PERSONAL CHALLENGES AND PROPOSE SOLUTIONS FOR COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE U.S.

Mobilize.org, ServiceNation and Partners Will Award Thousands of Dollars to Winning Proposals that Veterans Will Implement in their Communities and Discuss on MTV

LOS ANGELES, CA – Up to one hundred young veterans from across the country have been selected to attend “Beyond the Welcome Home,” a two-day summit where participants will debate, discuss and collaborate on veteran-led, veteran benefited projects in America’s communities and win thousands of dollars to turn their ideas into reality. Winning projects will receive awards and support from veterans and leaders in the service community and will also have the chance to appear on mtvU, MTV’s 24-hour college network.

With nearly 2 million Americans having served in Iraq and Afghanistan over the last eight years – the largest all-volunteer force ever – young veterans returning from battlefield are finding they significantly lack adequate support to transition back in to their communities. Seeking to help tackle these challenges, Mobilize.org, ServiceNation: Mission Serve, MTV, the Goldhirsh Foundation, and the McCormick Foundation have partnered to support the Millennial veteran population by hosting “Beyond the Welcome Home.”

“Helping our nation’s young veterans capitalize on their commitment to service and turn their great ideas into action is one of the best ways we can support their transitions back home,” said **Maya Enista**, CEO of Mobilize.org. “Not only will our young veterans benefit from the “Beyond the Welcome Home” summit, but their communities will be the direct recipients of their great works and inspiration.”

The Mobilize.org theory of social change, titled “Democracy 2.0,” prescribes that it is not enough for Millennials to identify their most pressing issues, but that they must take the lead and work together to propose and implement these solutions. Winning projects, voted on by summit participants, will receive a Mobilize.org Democracy 2.0 Award.

“The Beyond the Welcome Home Summit is an incredible opportunity for Millennial veterans to connect with their peers and bring their passion for service into America’s communities,” said **Col (ret.) Rob Gordon**, chair of ServiceNation’s Mission Serve initiative. “ServiceNation is proud to join its partners in giving young veterans the tools they need to carry out their unique ideas for how to best continue serving their country off the battlefield.”

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All “Beyond the Welcome Home” participants are invited to propose ideas they believe will positively impact their communities, country or military installations. During the summit, participants will vote on the top ideas that will receive an award, **a share of up to \$25,000 in funding**, and one year of expert advice to implement their projects back home.

“This generation of young, talented veterans has the power and unique ability to play an outsized role in advancing the community service movement in this country,” said **Jason Rzepka**, Vice President of MTV Public Affairs. “MTV and mtvU are thrilled to partner with the ‘Beyond the Welcome Home’ summit to give veterans a platform to meet with peers and bring their creative ideas to life.”

“Beyond the Welcome Home” will take place **April 1 – 3, at the 125-acre Home Depot Center**, the nation's most complete training facility for Olympic, amateur and professional athletes. The summit will also be streamed live online at www.Mobilize.org.

“Beyond the Welcome Home” is made possible through generous support from the Home Depot Foundation, BFGoodrich, Bank of America, the Home Depot Center, and the LA Galaxy and its official online sponsor, The Case Foundation. Bank of America also is a proud program partner of ServiceNation: Mission Serve.

About Mobilize.org

Mobilize.org is an all-partisan organization, built and led by Millennials. Founded eight years ago by 10 students on the campus of UC Berkeley, Mobilize.org has grown into a national Millennial movement, engaging the Millennial generation in building the next level of the democracy we will inherit - Democracy 2.0. Utilizing technology and social networking to connect Millennials to each other online, its national Democracy 2.0 Award Summits gather Millennials from around the country to discuss issues impacting our generation and to develop sustainable solutions to address them. The Mobilize.org mission is to improve the way democracy works by investing in Millennial-driven solutions. For more information, visit www.Mobilize.org.

About ServiceNation

ServiceNation is a national campaign to increase service opportunities and elevate service as a core ideal and problem-solving strategy in American society. Reaching an estimated 100 million citizens through its 250 member groups, ServiceNation played a leading role in the drafting and April 2009 enactment of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, which authorizes the greatest expansion of national service in America since FDR created the Civilian Conservation Corps. Now that the Act has passed, the ServiceNation coalition is working to inspire a powerful culture of volunteerism in our country. We envision an America in which a commonly asked question is, “Where do you serve?” For more information, visit www.servicenation.org.

About MTV

MTV is the dynamic, vibrant experiment at the intersection of music, creativity and youth culture. For over 28 years, MTV has evolved, challenged the norm, and detonated boundaries -- giving each new generation a creative outlet and voice that entertains, informs and unites on every platform and screen. On-air, MTV is the number one rated full-day ad-supported cable network for P12-24. Online, MTV.com averaged 8.5 million monthly unique visitors during the first quarter of 2009 -- up +6% from Q4/2008 and up +6% year-over-year. Total video streams for the first quarter of 2009 increased 21% over the same time period last year. And MTV's successful sibling networks MTV2, mtvU and MTV Tr3s each deliver unprecedented customized content, super-serving music fans, college students and young American Latinos like no one else. MTV is part of MTV Networks, a unit of Viacom (NYSE: VIA, VIA.B), one of the world's leading creators of programming and content across all media platforms. Wanna know more? Come on in... www.mtvpress.com.

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