

DECEMBER 2008

UPDATE

Business Executives For National Security

A “Movement” for America’s Heroes

BENS Spearheads Project to Help Returning Veterans

For wounded soldiers returning home from the battlefield, reentering civilian life can be daunting—physically, emotionally, professionally and financially. And while government agencies and thousands of nonprofits seek to help returning veterans and their families during this transition, they have no single source for information about these resources and services. Moreover, there is a need for improved cooperation between government and nonprofits and a better understanding of the services being provided.

To address this need, BENS is launching the American Heroes Project to help reintegrate our returning warriors into civilian life. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen, our partner, has welcomed this long-term initiative to create a central, user-friendly database of information about nonprofit and government services available to veterans and their families. Approved by the BENS board last month, this effort will also identify gaps and redundancies in services and provide rating criteria to identify the best organizations for veterans and donors.

“The American Heroes Project is not a project but a movement through which BENS can make a contribution to our nation and its military for years to come,” said Chuck Jarvie, Chairman, Equity Appreciation Partners SW, and one of the driving forces behind the initiative.

Additionally, BENS is exploring the possibility of working with individual states and State Adjutant Generals to create a state-level program that would provide personalized mentoring to walk veterans through their job hunt and career establishment.

BENS Works: Business Sense for National Security

Streamlining Disaster Assistance — When disaster strikes, the private sector stands ready to step up with aid and assistance. But coordinating this help with government is often difficult. With the support of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, BENS has joined with the Department of Health and Human Services to implement a key recommendation of last year’s BENS Business Response Task Force: streamlining how agencies suspend regulations during crises and communicate with businesses and disaster response officials. A project team led by BENS board member Ramon Marks, Arnold & Porter, and comprised of businesses, non-profits and state officials, will provide recommendations for addressing specific issues, such as waivers of regulations and Public Health Emergency Declarations. The trail blazed by HHS could serve as inspiration for other agencies to follow suit. To learn more about this effort, please contact Danielle Lindholm at dlindholm@bens.org

Regional Partnership News

California: Fighting Fire with Partnerships — No sooner had they finished a drill simulating an earthquake, than the BENS Bay Area Business Force and the Homeland Security Advisory Council found themselves in a real-life disaster: last month's Los Angeles wildfires—just the latest example of BENS-championed business partnerships stepping up in a crisis. Staffing California's Emergency Operations Command Center to coordinate the private-sector response to the fires, HSAC, BABF and their partners sent over 100 incident reports to help companies coordinate evacuations and identify affected employees and customers. HSAC also made a difference in the relief effort by working with the Grocers Association to coordinate donations and get food and bottled water into the hands of fire victims.

Missouri: No Bridge Too Far — Because not all infrastructure is created equal, emergency officials must be able to direct recovery efforts to their communities' most critical systems and facilities. In Missouri—where recent floods, ice storms and tornadoes revealed a need to update the state's list of critical infrastructure—BENS is helping officials do just that. Working with state and federal agencies, trade associations and the academic community, BENS will bring in business leaders to help identify critical infrastructure owned by the private sector. In the coming months, the project will also create an annual simulation for government leaders to work through disaster scenarios and plan ahead for securing Missouri's most important energy, transportation and telecommunications networks.

Event Highlights and BENS Developments

Petraeus Thanks BENS for Supporting Troops — In one of BENS' largest events ever, more than 700 members and guests enjoyed an evening of honoring American heroes at the Eisenhower Award Dinner on the Intrepid aircraft carrier Nov. 19 in New York. Gen. David Petraeus—the former U.S. commander in Iraq and now commander of all U.S. forces in the Middle East and Afghanistan—recipient of the Eisenhower Award, said, "It has been enormously heartening that all of our citizens have stood united in support of those who have served in harm's way for our country, and I thank this group in particular for leading the way in doing just that." Also receiving honor at the dinner was Army Major David M. Rozelle, who after losing his right foot in Iraq, became the first soldier in recent military history to redeploy to the same battlefield as an amputee.

Hutchison Lauds BENS' Work — Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas praised BENS in late October for its work in making the nation safer and more secure over the past quarter century. The senator discussed key issues facing the nation to an audience of over 60 BENS members and guests at a luncheon in Dallas on Oct. 31, and gave her views on the recent financial bailout, the economic outlook, the Global War on Terror and energy.

Local Awareness, National Security— When it comes to assessing threats to the homeland, the more information the better—and businesses can play a critical role. This was one of the main messages from Caroline Barnes, New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness Intelligence Bureau Chief, to 16 BENS/NJBF members in Newark on Nov. 12. Briefing members on a range of security threats facing the private sector and the New York-New Jersey region—as well as on cyber terrorism and the Internet as a terrorist recruitment tool—Barnes stressed that by notifying authorities of suspicious activity in their communities, local businesses can help state and federal officials gain a clearer picture of possible threats to the homeland.

Upcoming Events

- **Dallas** – Lunch with Nate Self, Principal at the Praevius Group and author of *Two Wars*, Dec. 9. Contact Matthew Elias at 214-315-2576 or melias@bens.org
- **Kansas City** – Breakfast with SAC Chuck Green, United States Secret Service, Presidential Protection, Dec. 2, 7:30 a.m., River Club. Contact William Lawson at wlawson@bens.org
- **Kansas City** – Member Appreciation Event, BENS Chiefs Football, Dec. 14, noon, Arrowhead Stadium. Contact William Lawson at wlawson@bens.org
- **Los Angeles** – Business Continuity Seminar with Edward Gabriel, Director of Global Crisis Management and Business Continuity, The Walt Disney Company, Dec. 12, 7:30–9:30 a.m., Mapleton Investments, 10900 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1500. RSVP to Tracy Hughes at thughes@hsac.bens.org
- **New York** – The Growing Threat of Foreign Commercial Espionage, Dr. Joel Brenner, The National Counterintelligence Executive, Dec. 5, noon, Hotel Plaza Athenee, 37 East 64th Street. Contact Kirk Oberfeld at 646-379-2548 or koberfeld@bens.org
- **Southeast** – Lunch with former Army Chief of Staff and now President of the Association of the U.S. Army, Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan, Dec. 4, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m., Four Seasons Hotel. Contact Allison Cheatham at acheatham@bens.org
- **Washington DC** – The BENS Annual Holiday Open House, Dec. 10, 5:30-7:30 p.m., BENS DC Office, 1717 Pennsylvania Avenue, Ste 350. Contact Lisa Jackson at 202-296-2125, ext. 1111, or ljackson@bens.org