



**Sherman Gillums Jr. (USMC, Ret.)**

Chief Advocacy Officer

AMVETS National Headquarters

AMVETS National Headquarters, Jan. 23, 2018 – Chief Advocacy Officer

Sherman has championed the interests of veterans and their families through leadership, advocacy, and services. He leads AMVETS National's efforts head on and ensure our country fulfills its promise to those who served and sacrificed. Advocating for major changes to how VA healthcare and benefits are administered, as well as problems, such as suicide, homelessness, and opioid abuse, that plague our nation's veterans.

Sherman Gillums Jr. began his military career in the U.S. Marine Corps when he enlisted at the age of 17 and quickly ascended into leadership, retiring as a chief warrant officer. During his military career, Gillums earned two Navy/Marine Corps Commendation Medals, Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medal, the Drill Instructor Ribbon, and Global War on Terror Service Medal. He was recognized as "Battalion Drill Instructor of the Year" and meritoriously promoted to the rank of staff sergeant in 1999, followed by appointment to the rank of warrant officer a year later.

Four months after the September 11, 2001, attacks, as he prepared to deploy to Afghanistan with the 1st Marine Division, he was involved in a vehicle collision at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton and became severely disabled at age 29. Gillums received an honorable discharge from military service and went on to pursue a new career in advocacy for veterans and their families.

He began his career in veteran advocacy as a national service officer in San Diego, where he developed Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits claims and clinical appeals for veterans and families in the area. Gillums continued his work in the VA benefits claims arena as an appellate representative at the Board of Veterans' Appeals in Washington, DC. He was promoted to associate executive director of Paralyzed Veterans of America's veterans benefits department in 2011 and subsequently served as the organization's executive director for two years.

Gillums holds a master's degree from the University of San Diego School of Business Administration and completed his executive education at Harvard Business School.