

Greenfield veteran named Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year

Greenfield native Amber Frymark was named the Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year at the DAV and Auxiliary Wisconsin 91st State Convention. The award was presented to her at the State Convention Banquet on June 8th by State Commander Mike Hert.



In 2001, she enlisted in the U.S. Air Force at age 20, seeking a better future. Frymark, an OEF/OIF veteran, deployed twice to the Middle East, once in 2003 and again in 2010.

During her deployments, she acquired Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), a recognized Gulf War Illness and was diagnosed with mental health issues.

These “invisible wounds” did not exist at the time of her enlistment. Her symptoms consisted of: mood disturbances; social anxiety; depression; memory loss; borderline personality disorder; difficulty establishing and maintaining work and social relationships: and even suicidal ideation.

Upon returning from her second deployment, Frymark was presented a Challenge Coin by the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force and was selected to run Chapel Operations at the Air Force Base in Minot, North Dakota. In 2011, she was forced to end her military career in due to IBS and her “invisible wounds.”

Upon discharge, Frymark moved back to Wisconsin to be with her parents and lean on their moral support. After several unsuccessful attempts at seeking and maintaining employment and schooling, she finally found refuge in attending an online culinary schools.

In 2015, she used her acquired skills to begin a self-employed business Chowventions. It has been going strong ever since. Her quality of life is now much better, although she visits the VA on a regular basis to work on lingering mental health issues.

Frymark has overcome her handicaps with a positive philosophy. Her moto is, ***“Life is like a poker game. You play the hand you’re dealt. I’m here today because I played my hand with courage and perseverance, not luck.”***

Her achievements include:

- Winner of “Wisconsin’s Hottest Kitchen Challenge” in 2016

- Convinced local retail outlets to add her certified food product, a food-enhancing additive called Zwitchel, to retail shelves throughout the Milwaukee area in 2018
- Interviewed for her personal story by the Wisconsin Department of Women Veterans
- Obtained certification as “Wisconsin Veteran Business” owner
- Highlighted by the Wisconsin Women’s Business Initiative Corporation at their 2018 annual luncheon (1,600 in attendance)
- Interviewed by SCORE Biz Connection, a syndicated radio program, to highlight her veteran business
- Wisconsin winner of 2018 Progressive Insurance “Keys to Progress” award
- Advocate for the “22” message, having almost become a statistic herself
- Member of DAV Chapter 19 – participates in Forget-Me-Not fundraising drives, cooks at annual picnic and attends monthly meetings, etc.

CONGRATULATIONS AMBER ~ THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!