



## **PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**Veterans Heritage Project Names First Executive Director**  
*Demand Leads to Non-Profit Organization's Growth*

**Phoenix, Ariz. (Monday, January 11, 2016)** - Veterans Heritage Project's (VHP) board of directors is pleased to name Michelle DiMuro, CFRE, as the non-profit organization's first executive director. Michelle has 17 years of non-profit management and fundraising experience, and has successfully operated her private consulting firm, Westfield Consulting, for the past seven years. Michelle has worked with large non-profits and grassroots agencies, including Desert Voices Oral Learning Center, Goodwill of Central Arizona, McDowell Sonoran Conservancy, Friends of Public Radio Arizona, Cancer Support Community Arizona, and Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona. Michelle brings to VHP an extensive background of philanthropic, entrepreneurial and resourceful expertise. "Practically every organizational role I've fulfilled in my career has enabled me to institute a new position, program or department," said Michelle. "I thoroughly enjoy the challenge and excitement of creating opportunities and developing a structure that enables ideas, people and mission-based programs to flourish."

"Michelle's professional proficiencies in building community relations, strategic planning, program implementation and fundraising initiatives, combined with her personal experiences as an 'Army brat', will be instrumental in helping VHP meet the growing demand for our civic engagement programming," said Laura Byers, VHP, board president. "We have a waiting list of veterans who want to participate in the program, and many teachers who are interested in bringing VHP to their schools. By expanding Michelle's role from a freelance-based consultant to a dedicated staff member, we now have the capacity to move into the next phase of the non-

profit life cycle — focusing on sustainability, quality and program growth. We couldn't be more pleased to have Michelle on board.”

Having consulted with VHP for more than 16 months, Michelle is very familiar with the organization and the impact their programs bring to the community. “It is an honor to share VHP's mission of ‘Connecting Students with Veterans’, and I feel so fortunate to work alongside such an outstanding group of passionate, dedicated individuals,” added Michelle. “VHP founder Barbara Hatch has developed award-winning, high-quality programs that have lasting impact for our veterans, our youth, our community and our country. VHP not only preserves history, but also serves as a platform for creating understanding and appreciation for our veterans' service, builds character and a sense of citizenship in our youth, and is developing a generation that will hold themselves accountable for setting goals and pursuing their future to the best of their abilities.”

Michelle has a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Arizona and holds the title of certified fund raising executive (CFRE) through the Association of Fundraising Professionals. Michelle has been a member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals Greater Arizona Chapter since 1999, having served as the chapter president in 2006, a mentor to young professionals through the chapter's nationally-recognized Professional Mentoring Program from 2008 to 2011, and as the professional mentoring program chair for the past three years. Prior to entering the non-profit arena in 1999, Michelle spent several years as a public relations and event planning specialist for manufacturing and software technology firms.

### **About Veterans Heritage Project (VHP)**

Founded in 2004, Veterans Heritage Project (VHP) became a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization in 2009, and provides Arizona-based students, ages 13 – 22 years, with first-hand civic education by connecting them with U.S. Armed Forces veterans. Through VHP's oral history publishing program, students capture and document veterans' stories and images, which are permanently preserved in the Library of Congress. VHP also provides student scholarships, encourages participation in statewide civic events, and operates a lecture series for community groups and schools. In addition to promoting life-long learning through education, VHP helps students gain an appreciation and understanding for veteran issues so that they may become informed and responsible future leaders. VHP currently operates more than 20 chapters in 15 communities statewide. VHP can be found online at [www.veteransheritage.org](http://www.veteransheritage.org), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/veteransheritageproject](https://www.facebook.com/veteransheritageproject) and on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/VHP\\_501c3](https://www.twitter.com/VHP_501c3).

### **Additional VHP Interview Opportunities**

- Barbara J. Hatch, founder, program director, 602-571-1248, [barbara@veteransheritage.org](mailto:barbara@veteransheritage.org)
- Laura L. Byers, board president, 602-421-9410, [laura@veteransheritage.org](mailto:laura@veteransheritage.org)