

## **JOSEPH CHENELLY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMVETS**

Joseph R. Chenelly was appointed national executive director of the nation's fourth-largest veterans service organization in May 2016. In this capacity, he administers the policies of AMVETS, supervises its national headquarters operations and provides direction, as needed, to state and local components. Joe previously served as AMVETS' national communications director.

Joe is the first veteran of combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq to lead one of the nation's "big six" veterans service organizations' staffs.

A native of Rochester, N.Y., Joe enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1998, serving with the 1st Marine Division, and was honorably discharged as a Staff Sergeant in April 2006. He is a combat veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, having served in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Kuwait, East Timor and the Horn of Africa.

Joe became a veterans' advocate, a journalist, and a political adviser after his time in uniform. He covered military and veterans matters on staff with *Leatherneck* magazine, the *Military Times* newspapers, *USA TODAY* and *Gannet News*, reporting on operations in the Middle East, Southwest Asia, Africa, as well as disaster relief in the United States. Joe was named one of the 100 "most influential journalists covering armed violence" by Action on Armed Violence in 2013. He was the first U.S. Marine combat correspondent to step into enemy territory after September 11, 2001, as a military reporter in Pakistan and Afghanistan. He also reported from the front-lines with American and allied forces in Kuwait and Iraq as that war began.

He has also served as president of Social Communications, LLC, and as a civilian public affairs officer for Marine Corps Base Quantico, VA. Joe is an alumni of Syracuse University and Central Texas College. He resides in Fairport, N.Y., with his wife Dawn, a service connected disabled Air Force veteran, and their five children.