



Kristina J. Keenan
Deputy Director, National Legislative Service
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Kristina Keenan is the Deputy Director for the National Legislative Service of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. Her portfolio covers legislation related to economic opportunities and education benefits.

Kristina has been advocating for the VFW's legislative priorities since 2018 and most recently was involved in passing the Honoring our PACT Act, providing the largest expansion of veteran benefits in decades. Her legislative victories also include passage of the Global War on Terrorism Memorial Location Act and the Alexander Lofgren Veterans in Parks (VIP) Act, among others. In addition to focusing on economic opportunity legislation, she continues to advocate for cracking down on predatory companies seeking to make a profit off veterans' benefits. Her advocacy work in 2022 earned her place as one of the country's top lobbyists, recognized by both the National Institute of Lobbying and Ethics (NILE) and the Washington, D.C., publication, *The Hill*.



Kristina grew up in Northfield, Minnesota, and joined the Minnesota Army National Guard in 1999, as a counterintelligence agent. She deployed in 2003 with the 34th Infantry Division to Tuzla, Bosnia, as part of the Stabilization Force (SFOR), a NATO peacekeeping operation. Immediately following her deployment, Kristina volunteered for a second deployment to Bosnia, working in both Sarajevo and Mostar as a tactical human intelligence team leader with an allied military intelligence battalion. She finished her military service in 2005, with the rank of sergeant.

Following her discharge, Kristina completed a bachelor's degree in political science at the American University of Paris in France and later earned a master's in human rights and humanitarian action from the *Institut d'études politiques de Paris* (Paris Institute of Political Studies, commonly known as Sciences Po). Kristina completed a 10-month internship in 2008, at NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), in Mons, Belgium, where she was an intelligence analyst on counternarcotics issues in Afghanistan. Kristina then returned to Paris and worked at the American University of Paris in alumni affairs, communications, and fundraising from 2009 to 2018.

During her time in Paris, Kristina discovered an active American veteran community and joined VFW Post 605, the oldest Post in Europe. She served two years as the Post Commander, organizing and participating in numerous commemorations, memorials, and ceremonies at the American cemeteries and individual gravesites throughout France. Kristina was also elected VFW Department of Europe Chaplain, Student Veterans of America (SVA) Chairwoman, and was a member of the National Women Veterans Advisory Committee.

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