



Joy Craig
Associate Director, National Legislative Service
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Joy Craig is a retired Marine Corps Chief Warrant Officer and a 2021 graduate of the University of California, Riverside, where she earned a bachelor's degree in political science. A native Californian, Joy spent her early years moving throughout the state before relocating to Tucson, Arizona, where she attended high school. The summer before her junior year, she entered the Arizona foster care system—an experience that shaped her perspective as she enlisted in the Marine Corps at 18 years of age.

Joy served 23 years in the military, specializing in Aviation Ordnance. After 17 years as an enlisted Marine, reaching the rank of Gunnery Sergeant, she was selected to become a warrant officer in a male-dominated field. Her final years were spent with F/A-18 squadrons in Beaufort, South Carolina, where she deployed twice to the Western Pacific before retiring in 2014.

Following her military career, Joy committed herself to advocacy and public service. She joined the board of Dragonboat Beaufort, a 501(c)(3) charity supporting local cancer patients, and coached its competitive racing team for five winning seasons. In 2017, she was selected as a writing fellow with The Warhorse, where she wrote about her military experiences. This led to her role as Community Outreach Officer for VetsLeaf, Inc., a veteran-owned cannabis manufacturer, where she worked on advocacy and policy efforts for federal legalization of medical cannabis.

Joy pursued higher education through the Department of Veterans Affairs' Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) program to transition from grassroots activism to professional advocacy. In 2022, she became a HillVets Fellow, working on national security and foreign policy for a U.S. senator before advancing to Military Legislative Assistant. Over the next two years, she played a key role in passing three National Defense Authorization Acts, driving critical policy changes for the Department of Defense and the nation.

In 2024, Joy joined the National Legislative Service of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) as Associate Director of Service Member Affairs, focusing on Armed Services legislation, foreign affairs, military quality of life, and military-to-civilian transition. She is also a proud member of the VFW Auxiliary and the granddaughter of a WWII Sailor who joined the Navy just three weeks after his 17th birthday in 1943.

A former Drill Instructor at Parris Island, Joy is an advocate, writer, and gardener. She has run marathons, climbed Mt. Fuji, and is the proud mother of two incredible daughters. She resides in the Washington, D.C., metro area.

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