

The Right Questions Lead Veteran to Victory

Ask and you shall receive

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“When it comes to helping veterans, you have to ask the right questions,” said VFW Service Officer Paul Pirlot. “Often they’re eligible for more than they know.”

Dave Chapman*, an elderly Korean War veteran, walked into the VFW service office upset with his medical coverage. The VA was charging him co-pays for prescriptions he should have received at no



cost.

As Pirlot looked Chapman over, he was struck by the large scars across his arms.

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“A Chinese soldier stood over me and shot me from left to right with an assault rifle,” said Chapman. “It’s a miracle the bullets missed my organs, but both my arms were hit multiple times.”

Following this incident 60 years ago, Chapman received a VA rating of 0 percent for his scars.

Pirlot noticed the muscle around Chapman’s wounds was atrophied. Astonished that Chapman hadn’t received a monetary award, Pirlot submitted a claim to the VA regional office citing a clear and unmistakable error on the initial evaluation.

To Pirlot’s surprise, the VA found no reason to reverse their decision and the original rating of 0 percent was upheld.

Unsatisfied with the decision, Pirlot contacted VFW Appeal Consultant George Sheets, who specializes in this type of claim.

“Sheets reviewed the veteran’s file and determined that he should have received a 60 percent rating, 30 percent for each arm, because the wounds were through and through ... meaning the muscle had both an entry and exit wound,” said Pirlot.

An official at the VA Central Office in Washington, D.C., reviewed Sheets’ conclusions and agreed that Chapman was not rated properly. The initial decision was overturned on the basis of a clear error, and Chapman was rated 60 percent going all the way back to 1953.

Six decades after the bullets tore through his flesh, Chapman finally received his due—a check for \$349,000.

“Who would’ve thought he’d come here for help with co-pays and leave with financial security,” said Pirlot. “Chapman was beyond happy, and I’m glad the VFW could help.”

The VFW’s National Veterans Service consists of more than 1,600 VFW-accredited representatives nationwide, and have helped more than 284,000 veterans recover \$6.9 billion in VA benefits in the last three years alone. To get help filing your VA claim or to find a service officer near you, [click here](#).

*Name changed for privacy.