

Veteran Makes the Most of ‘Rewarding’ NVS Experience

VFW Accredited Service Officer's knowledge inspired Army veteran to become a service officer

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Dominic Mele, 49, lives with his wife, Kristi, in Painesville, Ohio. He has two children, Jacqueline and Jerad, and is a member of VFW Post 2595.

Mele served in the Army for six and a half years, a time that included deployments to Iraq and Kuwait. He spent another six and a half years in the National Guard. After more than a decade in the military, Mele sustained injuries that continue to affect him.

“I am unable to do some jobs because of my disabilities. They also impacted my first marriage, which ended in divorce,” he said. “Today, I’m married to a nurse, and she is better able to understand my health issues and work with me.”

Mele connected with VFW Accredited Service Officer Eric Drake via email to find additional assistance.

“Eric understands the law and how the ratings system works,” Mele said. “He’s top notch. Working with him was very rewarding.”

With Drake’s help, Mele received a 100% disability rating and discovered a renewed sense of purpose.

“I had been working a dead-end job, but I wanted to make something of myself and do better for my family,” Mele said. “Eric’s knowledge inspired me to become a VFW Accredited Service Officer.”

Mele encourages other veterans who are struggling to manage service-related conditions or to receive benefits to seek help.

“Call your local Veterans Association regional office (VARO),” he said. “There are very

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knowledgeable VFW Accredited Service Officers ready and willing to assist you.”

Learn more about the [VFW's National Veterans Service \(NVS\) program](#).