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Honor For Veterans Day November 10, 2017

Roger Williams University

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November 29, 2017

This Week at Roger (University email sent to campus community of events and stories happening on campus.)

Honor for Veterans Day

During Veterans Day observances, RWU Law Professor, veteran and military law expert David Coombs led a service that honored the people who serve our country



RWU Law Professor, veteran and military law expert David Coombs led a service that honored the people who serve our country during Veterans Day observances at RWU. Photo courtesy of Kayla Ebner.

November 15, 2017

BRISTOL, R.I. – During Veterans Day observances at Roger Williams University on November 10, RWU Law Professor, veteran and military law expert David Coombs delivered a presentation on service and honor.

A lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves, Coombs served for more than 12 years on active duty in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps. He was joined by the RWU ROTC, the Military and Veterans Law Association, and President Donald J. Farish. The following were his remarks to the campus community:

"Today we honor those who honored our country with its highest form of service. Those who once wore the uniform of our Air Force, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard – and my personal favorite, the U.S. Army.

The theme is 'Service and Honor,' and our veterans certainly display both on a daily basis. But perhaps the most enduring example of service and honor is something that happens once a veteran leaves military service and rejoins our civilian ranks: they become our police, firefighters, business leaders, and elected officials. A veteran brings the same commitment of service and honor once displayed in the military to their civilian endeavors. And through that commitment, they change lives.

While all of our veterans have made an impact in their civilian life, today I want to focus on the impact from a select group of our veterans; a group that our nation should always treasure and strive to cultivate. Something that should never be forgotten is that our veterans are both native born and immigrant.

If you want to see the power of opening our ranks to immigrant members look to someone like [Adam Babiker](#). Adam left his war-torn home in western Sudan in 2001, and went to Egypt where he was granted refugee status.

In 2006, he was resettled as a refugee into the United States. Three years later, he enlisted in the U.S. Army, participating in Operation New Dawn where he helped Iraqi reconstruction efforts. After the Army, Adam relocated to Houston, Texas, and volunteered with Interfaith Ministries to help new refugees through mentoring and other resettlement services.

You can also look to the example of [Emir Hadzic](#). Emir is a U.S. Marine veteran who recently retired after 20 years of service. He came to the United States in 1995 as a Bosnian Muslim refugee and enlisted in the Marines in 1996. He is currently in training at the St. Louis Police Academy.

Emir has been an outspoken advocate for refugees. He [spoke at the White House](#) in 2016 and has been recognized on the floor of the U.S. Senate as an example of the many extraordinary people, who come to the United States as a refugee, and go on to make our country better.

Or you can look closer to home, to [Sean Horgan](#), a Massachusetts resident. Sean was born in Ireland and came to the United States with his parents as a child. He enlisted in the Marines shortly after becoming a U.S. resident. Sean served everywhere from the Arctic Circle to a tour in Iraq, where he led a rifle platoon of 44 Marines.

He is now the New England Director of Team Rubicon, an organization that unites the skills and experiences of military veterans to rapidly deploy emergency response teams into crisis situations – such as the recent fires and hurricanes that have impacted our country. He has grown his all-volunteer team to over 1,000 members.

Sean has also helped lead the creation of the Greater Boston veterans Collaborative, which unites the efforts of veteran service organizations.

Adam Babiker, Emir Hadzic and Sean Horgan are just three examples of how we are stronger as a country when we are inclusive.

Our veterans are a diverse group. They represent every corner of our country. Their members are every shade of humanity, representative of every religious belief, gender and sexual orientation. It is through this great diversity that our military has time and time again demonstrated that there is no mission that it cannot accomplish.

Today, let's honor our veterans by seeking to follow their example by being inclusive of everyone that wants to join our ranks – whether native born or immigrant.

Let's strive to build bridges instead of walls.

Let's be respectful of each other, and realize that no matter what our differences, we are united in our love of this country and our appreciation for those who were willing to lay down their lives so that we might enjoy the freedoms that we do as Americans.

On this Veterans Day, and on every day, may God bless all who served and still do in the defense of our great country."