



# COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA CALIFORNIA

## RESOLUTION HONORING COUNTY VETERANS' SERVICES OFFICER RHONDA MURPHY

*WHEREAS, Rhonda Murphy, a veteran of the U.S. Navy, began her career with the County of Santa Barbara in 1997; and*

*WHEREAS, Rhonda is one of the two longest serving Veterans' Service Officers in the State of California; and*

*WHEREAS, Rhonda was elected as President of the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers this past January and is the first woman president of the Association in its 77-year history, which is quite a significant achievement and a point of pride for our County; and*

*WHEREAS, the Veterans' Services Program serves veterans in applying for, obtaining, and maintaining all available benefits and entitlements to which they may be eligible. Applying for veterans' benefits is a very complicated process and without professional assistance, many veterans lose benefits they have earned with their service — often thousands of dollars a year; and*

*WHEREAS, calculating benefits for veterans depends on a wide variety of factors — when and where one served, if service was in combat or during a congressionally approved war-time period, the cause and severity of a disability, and other individual factors. Additionally, Congress, federal courts and the Veterans Administration are constantly changing what benefits and services those who served in the military are eligible to receive. That is why County Veterans' Service Officers play such an important role in the lives of veterans; and*

*WHEREAS, studies show that veterans receive more benefits when they come to a professional for help. Veterans Service Officers do their jobs well. In fact, in California, they turned \$42 million in county and state funding into more than \$402 million in earned benefits for California veterans in the 2020-21 fiscal year; and*

*WHEREAS, there are more than 20,000 military veterans living in Santa Barbara County and Rhonda and her small team, including Joseph Fletcher and Kerrie Garrison, serve them with dignity, respect, and professionalism. In 2020-2021 they handled more than 3,000 in-person visits from County veterans and nearly 30,000 phone calls and email requests for service. Through more than 1,300 new claims, they were able to secure more than \$10 million in benefits for our veterans, which is an average of more than \$7,300 per veteran, almost double the state average.*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Board of Supervisors recognizes that Rhonda Murphy exemplifies the best of County employees and we congratulate her on her post as President of the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers.*

*PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of Santa Barbara County, State of California, this 28th day of June 2022 by a unanimous vote of all members present.*



ATTEST:

Clerk of the Board

*Das Pulliam*  
Supervisor - 1st District

*Amy Hart*  
Supervisor - 2nd District

*Jan Hauert*  
Supervisor - 3rd District

*Bob Moe*  
Supervisor - 4th District

*Ed Duggan*  
Supervisor - 5th District