



## **Pine Tree Legal Assistance, Inc.**

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### **Attorneys Prepare To Represent Veterans**

Brewer, ME- On Friday January 17<sup>th</sup>, Attorneys from around the state will be attending a morning-long training at the Infantry Memorial Room within the Maine Army National Guard armory in Brewer. The training will help prepare the attorneys to represent veterans in their claims before the US Department of Veterans Affairs.

The training is a qualified continuing legal education program (CLE) sponsored by the Maine Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP) in conjunction with the Veterans' Law Section of the Maine State Bar Association (MSBA) and the Maine Infantry Foundation.

Approximately seventeen attorneys will attend the training to be taught by Sgt. Neil Riley of the law firm Jackson & MacNichol. The training will facilitate the attorneys' becoming accredited with the US VA's Office of General Counsel, and their maintaining such accreditation.

Attorneys who apply their skills in distinguishing and presenting evidence to claims for veterans' benefits can reduce the time needed for review of those claims, and increase the accuracy of reviews.

The VLP is a joint project of Pine Tree Legal Assistance and the Maine Bar Foundation. It was established in 1983 to coordinate the volunteer efforts of Maine attorneys and community members in providing free legal assistance to Mainers with low incomes. One of the most effective pro bono projects in the country, the VLP generates more than \$1.5 million in donated services from Maine volunteer attorneys each year. This translates to the equivalent of \$2 in donated time for every \$1 spent on VLP operations.

The Veterans' Law Section of the MSBA is a new committee of attorney members of the MSBA who promote the goals and objectives of the Maine Bar in all fields of law controlling or affecting the military community.

The Maine Infantry Foundation remembers Maine's Infantry contributions and teaches future generations the importance of the role of Maine's Infantrymen. In addition to annually awarding scholarships to a family or families of deserving Maine Infantrymen, the Maine Infantry Foundation supported the construction of a special room inside the Maine Army National Guard's Armory in Brewer, Maine. The armory in Brewer is the home of Maine's only Infantry Company (B/3-172nd IN (MTN)). In conjunction with the Maine Military Museum, the Infantry Memorial Room houses special historical

artifacts relevant to the Infantry in Maine. The room also serves as a working memorial to those Maine Infantryman who have paid the ultimate price for freedom.

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