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SDDVA Secretary Whitlock's September Column – Community Support

Edith Wharton once said, “there are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.”

Thank you to our South Dakota communities for being both to veterans. Their lit candles light the pathways for our veterans and their mirror reflects aspiration for them to continue to succeed and supports them along their path.

Communities play an important role in every aspect of our lives. We have communities in our friends, our families, our employment, our neighborhoods, and in so many other places. Having a sense of community unites us. Being a part of a community can make us feel as though we are a part of something greater than ourselves.

A strong community is a place of opportunity. Big or small, a community can provide countless chances for growth and experience. With a community of people looking out for your best interests and working together for a common goal, there is no shortage of opportunities to succeed.

Communities have played a major role in all our veterans' lives. The individuals who form our communities are the ones who are there when our young men and women deploy, they are there to assist families when loved ones are serving, they are there when our heroes return from deployments, and they are there to help them adjust back into their civilian lives.

Community leaders hire our veterans. They know our veterans are devoted, disciplined, hardworking, loyal and have a wealth of knowledge, skills, and experience.

Let's continue to work together as a community to spread the light for all.

Greg Whitlock, Secretary
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs