

**L. Tammy Duckworth**  
Director  
Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs

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L. Tammy Duckworth was appointed Director of the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs by Governor Blagojevich on November 21, 2006.

Director Duckworth is currently a Major with the Illinois Army National Guard. Previously, she served as a Logistics Officer, Company Commander and Battle Captain.

Director Duckworth speaks four languages, has a B.A. in political science from the University of Hawaii, an M.A. from George Washington University Elliot School of International Affairs, and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in political science at Northern Illinois University.

On November 12, 2004, Director Duckworth was co-piloting a Black Hawk helicopter north of Baghdad when a rocket-propelled grenade struck the cockpit of her aircraft and exploded. Focused on the safety of her crew, Director Duckworth was determined to land the helicopter not realizing she had been severely injured and that the other pilot was already at the controls. It wasn't until the helicopter landed that she passed out. Ten days later, when she woke up at Walter Reed Memorial Hospital in Washington, D.C., she learned that the explosion would cost her both legs and had shattered her right arm. It has been a long road to recovery, but Director Duckworth is optimistic and determined to continue to serve.

Dedicated, strong-willed and always the optimist, Director Duckworth kept busy during her recovery despite her injuries and rigorous rehabilitation schedule. She spoke to veterans' groups, attended the 2005 State of the Union address and testified twice before Congress urging that more be done to ensure soldiers continue to receive the same high level of medical care as they move from military to veteran status.

Coming Home While Director Duckworth was recuperating at Walter Reed, more than 30 volunteers rehabbed her Hoffman Estates home to be completely wheelchair-accessible. Members of her National Guard unit, fellow employees at Rotary International and friends from the community pitched in. When able to travel again, she returned home with her husband, Army National Guard Major Bryan Bowlsbey.

Currently, Director Duckworth is learning how to fly general aviation aircraft and hopes to return to flying helicopters in the future.

You can visit Director Duckworth's website at: <http://www.duckworthforcongress.com/>