**Abbie Holland Schmit**

Abbie Holland Schmit is a dedicated service and empowerment advocate with extensive experience in supporting veterans and female warriors. Starting her career in the Wisconsin National Guard at 17 and deploying to Iraq by 21, Abbie faced and overcame transitional challenges upon her return. She found her voice through peer mentoring and volunteer work while studying Psychology and Political Science at Edgewood College. Her advocacy journey includes roles like a non-clinical case manager for the Army's Wounded Warrior Program, Manager of Alumni at Wounded Warrior Project (WWP), and National Director of Programs and Partnerships at Dryhootch of America.

In 2016, she co-founded Phenix Legacy to serve military and first responders and later joined Illinois Joining Forces as Senior Director of Women's Programming. Abbie’s leadership continued as COO of Veteran Coffee Roasters, focusing on empowering housing-insecure veterans.

Currently, Abbie is the Veteran's Program Director at Safer Foundation, addressing the challenges of justice-involved veterans. She is also a Military Sexual Trauma Research Project Ambassador through the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Abbie is pursuing a Master's in Social Work from Aurora University, specializing in trauma-informed practice and leadership, and has trained over 225 attendees in veteran culture. Her experience, recognized in notable media outlets and through her testimony before Congress, showcases her commitment to veteran welfare and policy influence.