

WJA Announces 2020 Female Veteran Grant Winner

The grant, sponsored by Jewelers Mutual Insurance Group, is awarded to Latoya Boyd



The Women's Jewelry Association (WJA) has awarded Latoya Boyd, a first-generation jewelry designer, jeweler, and Gemological Institute of America graduate gemologist, the 2020 Female Veteran Grant, sponsored by Jewelers Mutual Insurance Group.

The Female Veteran Grant, a \$5,000 award, is bestowed on a deserving U.S. military veteran to use towards her professional growth within the jewelry and/or watch industries. The grant was established to lend support to women veterans who continue to serve their communities through their work in jewelry.

Originally from Los Angeles, Boyd served in the U.S. Army as a mechanic, and was deployed to Afghanistan for a year. After her honorable discharge in 2014, she enrolled in the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in Los Angeles, where she studied jewelry and metalsmithing arts.

Boyd then enrolled at GIA, where she received a CAD (computer-aided design) certificate and also earned her graduate gemology (G.G.) diploma. The jeweler also gained a certificate in diamond jewelry repair from John Fish Jewelry School in Las Vegas.

Now the owner and designer of Latoya Boyd Jewelry, Boyd produces custom designs and ready-made pieces. With her new grant, she plans to hire effective marketing support, such as a copywriter and photographer, as well as to pay for web hosting fees and bookkeeping software.

“Congratulations to Latoya Boyd on winning the 2020 Female Veteran Grant,” says Sheri Ihde, director of industry relations at Jewelers Mutual Insurance Group. “Jewelers Mutual is honored to be a continuing sponsor of the grant for the sixth consecutive year. This grant is not only a way of giving back to the industry, but it is bestowed on a deserving female veteran, who has the passion and desire to invest her talents in our industry. It’s very meaningful, and we’d like to thank Latoya for her service and wish her luck in her ongoing jewelry career.”

The WJA Foundation, a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation, administers the Female Veteran Grant. Since its inception, the foundation has awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars to provide education, business support, and mentorship to its members. The chair of the Female Veteran Grant committee is Isabel Cajulis, and current foundation president is Brandee Dallow.

The Women’s Jewelry Association raises funds for grants and scholarships throughout the year, principally via its Awards for Excellence Gala, which this year will take place virtually on July 27, with an online celebration and keynote presentation. For more information, contact WJA Executive Director Jennifer Markas at jennifer@womensjewelryassociation.com.

Donations to the WJA Foundation can also be made here:

<https://www.womensjewelryassociation.com/foundation>. Industry members who want to support WJA grants and scholarships can also designate the WJA Foundation as their charity supporter via the AmazonSmile program. Details available at the link above.

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About the Women's Jewelry Association

WJA's mission is to help women in the jewelry and watch industries advance and develop professionally through networking, education, and leadership development. For more information, visit www.womensjewelryassociation.com.

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