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Contact: Mark Szymanski, Evocati PR
Email: mark.szymanski@evocatillc.com
Website: TAPS.org



TAPS to Honor Sara Procacci Wilson with the Senator Ted Stevens Leadership Award



ARLINGTON, Va. — Feb. 25, 2026 — The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), the national nonprofit organization providing compassionate care to all those grieving the death of a military or veteran loved one, is proud to announce that Sara Procacci Wilson will receive the TAPS Senator Ted Stevens Leadership Award at the 2026 TAPS Honor Guard Gala.

The Senator Ted Stevens Leadership Award is presented annually to an individual who has demonstrated outstanding leadership on behalf of military and veteran survivors. The award honors those who embody the spirit of TAPS through service, advocacy, and a deep commitment to ensuring that no survivor walks alone.

Sara Procacci Wilson is the widow of Capt. David Selkirk “Beaker” Wilson, U.S. Navy (Ret.), who died suddenly in 2014, leaving Sara to raise their children, then 6-year-old Christina and 2-year-old Kai.

Three months after her husband’s death, Sara attended the TAPS National Military Survivor Seminar, where her children participated in their first Good Grief Camp. Through peer mentorship, the Wilson family was welcomed into the TAPS community. Since then, they have returned each Memorial Day weekend for the national TAPS gathering, and her children continue to take part in TAPS Good Grief Camp, remaining deeply connected to their TAPS family.

“Sara is the embodiment of the peer model that is the foundation of TAPS,” said Bonnie Carroll, TAPS President, Founder, and surviving spouse of Brig. Gen. Tom Carroll. “She creates spaces where grief can be spoken aloud, where surviving families feel seen and understood, and where no one has to carry loss alone. Time and again, she helps survivors find one another in the darkest hours, and her leadership has strengthened our community and extended the reach of TAPS in powerful, lasting ways.”

Over the past decade, Sara has become a pillar of the TAPS community, helping shape a culture of care defined by leadership, advocacy, and unwavering service. Recognizing how much survivors need connection beyond formal programming, she built peer-to-peer networks that keep families linked through text and social media, creating steady lifelines of support that complement the TAPS 24/7 National Military Survivor Helpline.

Most recently, Sara stepped forward with a calm, compassionate presence to provide critical on-site support to families impacted by the tragic shooting of two National Guardsmen in Washington, D.C.

Drawing on her professional background in public policy and law, Sara has been a powerful advocate on Capitol Hill, regularly partnering with TAPS’ legislative team to share survivor perspectives during TAPS Advocacy Week and other key policy initiatives, including the passage of the PACT Act. She is part of TAPS’ core group of survivor advocates who help ensure that the voices of grieving families are heard in the laws that impact their lives.

Sara has represented TAPS in national media and public awareness campaigns, including appearing in a TAPS television commercial with her children and contributing to TAPS publications. She has spoken at major TAPS fundraising events, accepted donations on behalf of TAPS from community partners such as the Washington International Horse Show and the Armed Forces Cycling Classic, and helped deepen TAPS’s partnership with the Theatre Lab in Washington, D.C.

Internationally, Sara has represented TAPS through its partnership in the United Kingdom, and, in 2023, she hosted a bereaved military family from the U.K. for a two-week visit that included their attendance at the TAPS Northeast Regional Military Survivor Seminar and Good Grief

Camp in Buffalo, New York. She has also participated in TAPS retreats in Alaska and Arizona, engaged in TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing® programming, and supported TAPS Women's Empowerment initiatives.

"Sara's leadership extends far beyond any single program or initiative," Carroll said. "Whether she is supporting local families, collaborating with our international partners, or standing before elected officials to advocate for her fellow survivors, she consistently reflects the heart of TAPS. She has turned personal loss into profound purpose, and her impact will be felt for generations."

The TAPS Senator Ted Stevens Leadership Award will be presented to Sara Wilson at the [TAPS Honor Guard Gala](#) on March 17, 2026, at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., where USAA is the Presenting Sponsor.

About the TAPS Senator Ted Stevens Leadership Award:

The award, presented annually at the TAPS Honor Guard Gala, is named in honor of the late U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens of Alaska, an early champion of TAPS who recognized the need for sustained care for military families after loss. He served as TAPS' first Honorary Chairman and helped elevate awareness of TAPS within the Department of War, laying the foundation for the organization's national reach.

"I am beyond honored to receive this award," said Sara Procacci Wilson. "TAPS has done so much for my family and me; I wanted to give back and return the favor. It has been incredibly rewarding to support fellow military surviving families."

For more information about TAPS or the Sen. Ted Stevens Leadership Award, visit taps.org.

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About TAPS: TAPS is the leading national organization providing compassionate care and survivor support services for the families of America's fallen military heroes. Since 1994, TAPS has offered support to all those grieving the death of a military loved one through peer-based emotional support, connections with grief and trauma resources, grief seminars and retreats for adults, Good Grief Camps for children and teens, casework assistance, connections to community-based care, online and in-person support groups, and the 24/7 National Military Survivor Helpline, all at no cost to surviving families. For more information and to get involved, visit [TAPS.org](https://taps.org).