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## **Veterans Business Battle to welcome Medal of Honor recipient Kyle Carpenter in Houston**

HOUSTON - Decorated veteran and philanthropist Cpl. Kyle Carpenter will deliver a keynote speech at an awards banquet Feb. 27 celebrating veteran entrepreneurs.

The banquet, hosted by the Houston chapter of the global non-profit *Entrepreneurs' Organization*, is the culmination of the *EO-Houston Veterans Business Battle* ([www.vetbizbattle.com](http://www.vetbizbattle.com)), a business plan competition for veterans seeking investment capital. During last year's inaugural event, more than \$900,000 of investment offers were extended to finalists. Applications will be accepted through Jan. 8.

In 2014, Carpenter became the youngest living Marine to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. During a firefight in Afghanistan in 2010, Carpenter shielded another Marine from a grenade, nearly killing himself. After nearly three years of recovery at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and more than 40 surgeries, Carpenter enrolled in college at the University of South Carolina and has worked to raise money for the Semper Fi Fund and the Fisher House Foundation, which provides free and low-cost housing for veterans undergoing medical treatment.

The winners of the competition, which will be held earlier that day at Rice University, will be announced at the dinner. Entrepreneurs' Organization-Houston and Rice University's Veterans in Business Association will also name the Veteran Entrepreneur of the Year.

"Cpl. Carpenter has shown amazing leadership, risen above significant trials and serves as an inspiration for us all," Veterans Business Battle Executive Director Phil Butcher said. "It is our hope that his story will inspire other veterans as they seek to become entrepreneurs."

The competition, which partners with the U.S. Small Business Association, Amegy Bank, the City of Houston and Rice University, is open to start-ups and existing businesses ready to grow.

To compete, individuals or teams must apply on the competition's website, [www.vetbizbattle.com](http://www.vetbizbattle.com), by January 8.

Portions of the proceeds from the dinner will go toward the Rice University Veterans in Business Association Military Scholars Program, which provides scholarships for veterans pursuing a Rice MBA degree.

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Veterans Business Battle was established in 2015 by The Houston chapter of Entrepreneurs' Organization and Rice University's Veterans in Business Association. The competition aims to foster entrepreneurship among veterans, grow veteran-owned businesses and give back to veterans seeking to make a difference in the business world. For more information, visit [www.vetbizbattle.com](http://www.vetbizbattle.com)