

# Devega CBD

## ‘We’re Both Addicted to the Cause’

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When Scott Vanlandingham and Chris Bentler founded Devega CBD in 2018, they wanted to provide people, especially veterans, with an alternative to replacing prescription opioids.

The Texas-based pair began by setting up an online website and establishing five locations at VFW Posts across the state to distribute their CBD products through vending machines, which they have since replaced with display cases in more than a dozen locations and growing.

“We’re both addicted to the cause,” said Vanlandingham, who spent more than 25 years in radiology, partnering with giants of industry like General Electric, Toshiba and Philips. “Our altruistic business model has been refined, and we always continue to source better products and prices while sharing the profit margin more and more.”

Since being founded in 2018, Devega CBD has donated a percentage of its national sales online to local VFW Posts across Texas, as well as the Department of Texas and its Foundation.

“We currently give 15 percent to Posts in Texas and 15 percent to all other VFW Departments,” said Bentler, who spent two decades in the nursing field. “We write checks every quarter and try to give back as much as we can, which includes another five percent toward the VFW’s National Veterans Service program.”

Part of Devega’s decision to trade vending machines for display cases at VFW Posts was a matter of logistics as they continue to expand, as well as a believe they could impact more lives by making their product more accessible this way.

“It’s where we can get it out faster, so we rollout these display cases and have Posts have their own dispensary types, where they can not only reap the benefits of CBD themselves, but bring in more foot traffic and donations to help the Posts,” Bentler added. “We also do not operate like a smoke shop. We do proper dosing and treat this as a medicinal product and not just to get high or for fun. Our packaging is very adamant on proper dosages.”

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The pair also secured a national licensing agreement with the VFW in April of this year to put the organization's renown logo on its products, a decision that was applauded by many VFW members in Texas who have already reaped the benefits.

Among them is VFW Department of Texas Jr. Vice Commander Dave Walden, an Army veteran who served for more than a decade between 2001-2012, deploying in support of both Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Walden, who uses Devega CBD and Delta-8 products to manage chronic pain, PTSD and insomnia, believes this alternative to the prescribed opioids snapped him from a perpetual "fog" he credits for not remembering at least six months of his life.

"When I got out of the service, facing a lot of injuries, I was taking upwards of 6,000 pills a year: narcotics and anti-depressants and valium and pills for the side-effects of the pills I was taking," said Walden, a life member of VFW Post 10427 in Leander, Texas. "And I was in a fog, couldn't remember like six months of my life."

Seeking a legal alternative to the medications he was being prescribed for his service-related health issues, Walden came across Devega CBD when it first became legal in Texas and says he has not taken any narcotics in more than five years.

"I ditched the pills because I wanted to get a hold of my life," Walden said. "I am now living a productive life, as the incoming Sr Vice of Texas and even being promoted to director of IT for the company I work for."

Walden has also helped Devega as a VFW spokesperson, sharing his story and what the products have done for him, personally.

As a prominent officer within the VFW Dept. of Texas, Walden is often called or approached to give his opinion and seal of approval on several topics, and he is among the loudest voices advocating for CBD as an alternative for prescribed opioids.

"I have helped other veterans who suffer from prescribed opioid addiction, helped get them on CBD and turn it around," Walden said. "CBD has changed my life, and to me it should be what veterans should be taking. But in saying all this, not all CBD is created equal. Devega gets third-party testing so we, as veterans, know what is going in our bodies. They are not required to do this, but they do. They are independently tested and provide us with the kind of trust we want when putting stuff in our bodies."

Walden is among the many at the VFW Department of Texas who see the fruitful benefits of this partnership with Devega, which is keen on growing nationally.

"The VFW is really big on any alternative to veterans opioid addiction, and the VFW can

also make a good amount of money,” Walden said. “But if we can just change the life of one veteran, we have gotten our return on our investment. With these donations from Devega, and the CBD products they offer, we can genuinely change the life of individual veterans.”

Vanlandingham and Bentler believe the new national licensing agreement with the VFW will help their company grow significantly fast at the national level, which in turn will help them donate more of the profits with the organization.

Currently they are in the process of establishing a larger online presence, as well as trying to get display cases across the more than 287 VFW Post location in Texas.

Devega is to attend and exhibit its products at a booth during the VFW National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky., in July.

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