



## **General Joseph Votel**

**US Army (Retired)**

**President & CFO, Business Executives for National Security**

Since January 2020, retired U.S. Army General Joseph L. Votel is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the nonprofit organization Business Executives for National Security (BENS).

General Votel's 39-year military career included commanding special operations and conventional forces at every level and leading the 79-member coalition which successfully liberated Iraq and Syria from the Islamic State. His last assignment before retiring was Commander of U.S. Central Command.

Prior to his time as Commander of U.S. Central Command, General Votel served as its Deputy Commander. As a direct combat commander, he served as Deputy Commander of the 82nd Airborne Division during Operation Enduring Freedom and led the 75th Ranger Regiment during initial operations in Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and 2003. While stationed at the Pentagon, he was the initial Director of the Army and Joint IED Defeat Task Force.

He is a Strategic Advisor for Sierra Nevada Corporation as well as a member of the Board of Trustees for Noblis Corporation. General Votel is a non-resident Distinguished Fellow at the Middle East Institute in Washington, DC and the Belfer Center at the John F. Kennedy School of Government in Cambridge, MA. He sits on the Executive Board of the Center for Ethics and the Rule of Law (CERL) at the University of Pennsylvania Law School and is an Advisor to the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, NY. He serves on the Board of Directors for both Service to School and Minnesota Wire and also serves as an Advisor to the Texas Transition Network. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

General Votel is a 1980 graduate of the United States Military Academy and he earned master's degrees from the U.S. Army Command and Staff College, and the Army War College.

General Votel was recognized with the Distinguished Military Leadership Award from the Atlantic Council, the U.S. - Arab Defense Leadership Award from the National Council on U.S. and Arab Relations, the Distinguished Service Award from the National Medal of Honor Society, the SGT James T. Regan Lifetime Achievement Award from the "Lead the Way" Foundation, and the Freedom Award from the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum.

General Votel and his wife Michele reside in Lake Elmo, Minnesota.

