



## Ryan Else



Ryan Else, a combat veteran himself, is passionate about defending veterans in criminal cases, helping them to “hit reset” and get back on their feet while dealing with underlying physical, mental and adjustment problems of returning to civilian life.

One way of doing that is getting them into veterans treatment courts, where they have to keep up with demanding regimens that may lead to dismissal of their charges or avoidance of jail time, Else says.

“I want to see that [veterans] get honor and respect even when they’re not in their finest hour,” he says. He graduated from the University of St. Thomas School of Law in 2011 and went to work with the Brockton D.

Hunter P.A. law firm. He and Hunter co-edited an 800-page resource book, “The Attorney’s Guide to Defending Veterans in Criminal Court,” and speak nationally on the topic.

Else is executive director of the non-profit Veterans Defense Project, which recently received a two-year Minnesota state grant totaling \$500,000 to print more copies of the resource book and to increase the number of veterans treatment courts from seven currently.

Hunter, also a veteran, says, “Ryan has a warrior’s heart, a razor-sharp intellect and a caring soul. He is the ultimate legal ‘battle buddy’ and we would be lost without him.”

—Betsy Carlson