



ACP Alumna Kasey Kelly



ACP Mentor Michael Claudio

***ACP Ventures is committed to empowering Veteran and Active-Duty Military Spouse entrepreneurs with 1-on-1 year long mentorship, on-demand resources, and an online Village of supporters. Our mission is to cultivate a legacy of informed Veterans and Active-Duty Military Spouses who venture their entrepreneurial journey with intention, creating enduring impact for themselves and their communities.***

When Kasey Kelly married a U.S. Army soldier, she never imagined that the path ahead would ultimately lead her to a farm in rural Virginia with a flock of chickens for co-workers.

Kelly's husband medically retired in 2021, and the family moved to Virginia to help him heal from the traumatic brain injuries and post-traumatic stress he experienced in service. Although they got by on his military pension and Kelly's salary as her husband's caregiver, Kelly wanted a longer-term plan for financial stability. She began to consider how she could use her family's experiences on the farm to spread awareness about trauma, neurodivergence, and healing, and to connect with other military families.

In the playful chickens who starred in her first videos, Kelly had adorable allies, but she needed some human inspiration. She reached out to ACP to connect with a Mentor who could help her overcome her doubts about entrepreneurship and better understand the world of social media and content creation.

**"When I called and told ACP what I wanted to do, they never batted an eye,"** says Kelly. Instead, ACP found Kelly a champion in her Mentor, Michael Claudio. As a Senior Video Producer at ABC News, Claudio brought an experienced eye to Kelly's content. He followed her progress with great enthusiasm and provided real-time feedback on how she could refine her technique and expand her viewership.

**"Fear is my biggest hurdle,"** Kelly says, and Claudio's patience and empathy helped her face it head-on. **"Once I was able to get over those fears... accomplishing goals was easy."**

**"I was so proud of [Kasey] when I saw her start to gain a following and viewership on social media,**

**which was her goal from the start,"** says Claudio, who came to ACP with nearly 10 years of production experience. He helped Kelly identify opportunities to pitch her content, celebrate her first podcast appearance, and bite back against imposter syndrome. Some of Kelly's videos even went viral, racking up over a million views, marking a major milestone in her journey.

**"I knew the value of mentorship because of my own experiences when I was younger in AmeriCorps and in college,"** Kelly says, explaining why she wanted a Mentor. **"Those points in my life were so pivotal in professional development for me that I knew on this new journey, having a mentor would be critical."**

Kelly now feels confident about her ability to turn out engaging content and connect with other military families. She encourages other Military Spouses, especially those whose lives have taken an unexpected turn, to take a big step in the direction of their dreams by signing up for ACP's Mentorship Program.

**"Veterans [and their families] are some of the strongest people on the planet,"** Claudio says. **"Just getting to hear their stories, be there for them, learn about what they hope to achieve and... offer what guidance I can is a great honor."**

To sign up as an ACP Mentor, please apply [here](#) and give an hour a month to a Veteran or Military Spouse!

*This Small Business Spotlight was written by Hailey Brindamour, a Senior Operations Associate here at ACP. A Military Spouse herself, Hailey joined us in the summer of 2022 and has supported countless mentorships like Kasey and Michael's. In her role, she plays a vital part in ensuring incredible experiences like this are possible for our community.*

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