



Welcome to St. Louis, MO



**78th Annual VA Voluntary Service
National Advisory Committee
Meeting & Conference
May 14-16, 2024**

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**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF ST. LOUIS
MISSOURI**

TISHAURA O. JONES
MAYOR

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May 13, 2024

National Advisory Committee Meeting and Conference
St. Louis, Missouri

Greetings:

As Mayor of the City of St. Louis, it is my special pleasure to welcome the National Advisory Committee (NAC) meeting and conference to St. Louis. We are confident you will find it a perfect setting for your conference.

Backed by a tradition of proven hospitality and excellent facilities, we consider it a privilege to provide an inspiring and stimulating atmosphere for your meeting. I wish you a wonderful convention experience in which you connect, learn, stretch, and share your contributions with this amazing community of volunteer stakeholders, supporters and donors for our nation's best, our Veterans.

I am delighted that you have chosen St. Louis to host your conference this year. While you are here, I invite you to enjoy all that our city has to offer and I encourage you to visit our museums, monuments, restaurants and diverse neighborhoods. Just a short walk from your conference hotel, Hyatt Regency at the Arch, is the historic Gateway to the West Arch and National Park. While here, you may wish to include a visit to Soldiers Memorial Military Museum, Forest Park with its many museums and of course, the iconic Busch Stadium, home of the St. Louis Cardinals.

On behalf of the residents of St. Louis, I wish you a successful and enjoyable conference and a memorable time in our city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tishaura O. Jones".

Tishaura O. Jones
Mayor, City of St. Louis



Welcome

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration

Welcome to VISN 15, National Advisory Committee Partners!

We are thrilled you're here for the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee (NAC) meeting and conference. For the first time in the 78-year history of the NAC, the conference is being held in the Gateway to the West, St. Louis, Missouri.

This conference brings together more than 50 Veteran Service Organizations, strategic engagement members, and other community partners, along with senior leaders across VHA program offices and VA administrations. Your role in advising the Secretary of Veterans Affairs through the Under Secretary of Health on matters pertaining to the participation of volunteers in VA medical facilities is critical, as are your efforts to recruit and orient new volunteers.

Over the next three days, we encourage you to seize every opportunity to network with your counterparts, learn, share best practices, and participate in the educational workshops focused on innovation, quality, leadership, and program development.

The St. Louis Hyatt at the Arch is providing a beautiful backdrop for us and has truly gone above and beyond to ensure this will be a world-class event. As time permits, we hope you will get out and see what our fantastic city has to offer, including the St. Louis Art Museum, St. Louis Zoo, and, of course, the iconic St. Louis Gateway Arch, which is walkable for many from the main entrance of the event hotel.

On Wednesday, the St. Louis VA Voluntary Service Committee is hosting a Taste of St. Louis Happy Hour reception at the Soldiers Memorial. Guests can view Museum exhibits, including the unique "Vietnam at War and Home" Exhibit. Buses will travel between the hotel and the museum. As a special commemorative gift for your visit to our city, photos will be taken of guests at the Gateway Arch National Park entrance on Tuesday and Wednesday. Details are in your daily schedule.

Again, welcome to St. Louis, and have a great conference!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia L. Hall".

5/2/2024

Patricia L. Hall, PhD FACHE

Date

Network Director VA Heartland Network VISN 15

Goals and Objectives

The following are goals and objectives for the 78th Annual VAVS NAC Meeting and Conference:

1. Provide the VAVS NAC an opportunity to conduct its business in a manner that assures achievement of all responsibilities mandated by its charter.
2. Provide NAC orientation to local and national VAVS Representatives and Deputy Representatives and VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement (CDCE) staff.
3. Present to all member organization representatives an overview of current and pending VAVS/CDCE policies and procedures.
4. Foster full and open communication among the member organizations, their representatives, and CDCE staff in VA Central Office and in the field.
5. Provide the NAC member organizations with educational and training programs designed to share information geared towards improving volunteer programs with special emphasis on methods to recruit, retain, motivate, and recognize volunteers.
6. Furnish the NAC member organizations the opportunity to hear from VA leadership concerning key issues within the Department of Veterans Affairs.
7. Arrange for the NAC review of, and action on, recommendations.
8. Honor the recipient of the James H. Parke Memorial Youth Scholarship Award.
9. Recognize the NAC Volunteer of the Year recipients.
10. Recognize the recipients of the CDCE American Spirit and Leadership Awards.

Conference Planning Committee

2024 NAC Meeting and Conference Host: VA St. Louis Health Care System St. Louis, Missouri

2024 Conference Planners:

Marcena C. Gunter, Host
Chief, Center for Development &
Civic Engagement
VA St. Louis Health Care System

Joseph Dooley
President, VAVS Partners, Inc
United Veterans Services

Vicki Sarracino
Vice President, VAVS Partners, Inc.
Soldiers' Angels

Larry Kelly
Treasurer, VAVS Partners, Inc.
Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc.

VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement Staff:

Sabrina C. Clark, Ph.D., Director
Kevin Stanford, DHA, MBA, Acting Deputy Director
CarolAnn Miragliuolo, Senior Advisor
William Ball, Field Advisor
Mitra Gobin-Wade, Administrative Officer
Tyrone Green, Program Analyst
Ginny Hoover, Program Analyst
Sanitria McKenzie, Program Specialist
Wesley Walls, Communication Specialist
Nathan Witt, Program Analyst

Registration & Support Staff:

Elizabeth Cazares
Assistant Chief, Center for Development
& Civic Engagement
South Texas Veterans Health Care System

Vicki Eatmon
Assistant Chief, Center for Development
& Civic Engagement
Western North Carolina VA Health Care System

Tabitha Ingram
Chief, Voluntary Service
Center for Development & Civic Engagement
Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center

Michael White
Chief, Center for Development & Civic
Engagement
Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center

Conference Photographers:

Mary-Dale Amison
Public Affairs Specialist
VA St. Louis Health Care System

Hallaye Sow
Audiovisual Technician
VA St. Louis Health Care System



Opening Ceremony

Tuesday, May 14th - 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Regency Ballroom ABCD

Presentation of Colors: *The United States Transportation Command Joint Service Color Guard Team*

Presentation of Awards

Sabrina C. Clark, Ph.D., Director, VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement
Joseph Dooley, United Veterans Services

Center for Development & Civic Engagement American Spirit Awards

Center for Development & Civic Engagement Leadership Awards

VAVS National Advisory Committee Volunteer of the Year Awards

Keynote: **Trends in Volunteering and Civic Engagement**



Katie Stearns
*Global Program and Impact
Officer
Points of Light*

Katie Stearns is the chief program and impact officer at Points of Light, leading the programs that bring the organization's mission to life and measuring our impact around the world. Her focus is building the effectiveness and capacity of NGOs and their leaders, advancing corporate social impact and driving sector-leading research and convenings. She oversees the Global Network, the Points of Light Conference, The Civic 50, the Corporate Service Council, corporate activation and consulting and the Daily Point of Light Award.

Helping companies and nonprofits do good well and connecting individuals to meaningful civic engagement has been the driving force of Katie's work over the last 23 years. Most recently, she served at Points of Light's chief global corporate solutions officer, leading the teams responsible for large-scale employee volunteer programs, the Corporate Service Council, Civic 50, and corporate research, insights, and advisory support.

Working at the intersection of the nonprofit and corporate sectors has given Katie the opportunity to partner with hundreds of Fortune 500 companies and nonprofits to translate social impact and employee engagement goals into meaningful, inclusive community change.

Katie started her career at Points of Light Global Network affiliate Chicago Cares, where she led fundraising, marketing and large-scale volunteer events and grew the size and scope of the corporate volunteer program by more than 500%. She subsequently served in multiple leadership roles at Points of Light before building corporate and community partnerships that enabled iMentor's expansion to Chicago. Before returning to Points of Light in 2022, she served as chief partnerships officer at Common Impact, a nationally recognized nonprofit that designs and scales skills-based volunteer programs for companies.

The Points of Light mission is to inspire, equip, and mobilize people to take action that changes the world. We envision a world in which everyone discovers the power to make a difference, creating healthy communities in vibrant, participatory societies.

We envision a society where it is easy for every person to drive change in their community, and in the world. We will be a cultural catalyst, working in partnership with organizations and individuals to build a society where it is impossible to sit on the sidelines. We'll define a new kind of volunteerism for the 21st century, one that calls on people to give their time, talents, voice, and resources in service to build a brighter future for all.

Taste of SAINT LOUIS



Sponsored by

**VA ST. LOUIS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
VAVS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Thank you for your generous donation!



Welcome to St. Louis, NAC Partners!

Photo Under the Arch

With our talented
Volunteer Photographer
Nathan Ralston



Tuesday and

Wednesday

May 14 and May 15

12PM to 4PM

**You may pick up your
photo the next day at
registration.**

If you need a digital copy,
Please contact
vhasstlvolunteer@va.gov



Daily Schedule

Monday, May 13, 2024 (Pre-Meeting Activities)

Noon - 5:00	Registration	Registration Hall
1:00 - 2:30	TCF Trainees Meeting	Regency F
3:00 - 6:00	CDCE Staff Meeting	Regency Ballroom ABCD

Tuesday, May 14, 2024

7:30 - 8:00	Gentle Yoga Session	Gateway West - Floor 18
8:00 - 5:00	Registration	Registration Hall
8:30 - 1:00	Health and Information Fair	Regency E - Floor 2
8:30 - 12:00	Executive Committee Meeting	Gateway East - Floor 18
9:00 - 11:30	CDCE Staff Regional Groups	Regency F - Floor 2
11:00 - 12:00	Volunteer & NAC Member Attendee Briefing	Regency Ballroom ABCD
12:00 - 4:00	Photos at the Gateway Arch	Gateway Arch National Park
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch on your own	
1:00 - 3:00	Facilitated Networking & Education Review	Regency Ballroom ABCD
3:00 - 4:00	Break/Dinner on your own	
4:00 - 7:00	Opening Ceremony - Awards & Keynote	Regency Ballroom ABCD
7:15 - 9:00	Opening Reception	Regency EF - Floor 2

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

7:30 - 8:00	Gentle Yoga Session	Gateway West - Floor 18
8:00 - 5:00	Registration	Registration Hall
8:30 - 12:00	Business Meeting	Regency Ballroom ABCD
12:00 - 4:00	Photos at the Gateway Arch	Gateway Arch National Park
12:00 - 1:15	Lunch on your own	
	Educational Workshops - Session 1	
1:15 - 2:30	A. Designing Programs for Broader Community Impact B. Building Equity Into Innovation C. Navigating the Legal Landscape D. Investing in What Matters	Regency E -Floor 2 Regency F - Floor 2 Gateway East - Floor 18 Gateway West - Floor 18

Daily Schedule

2:30 - 2:45	Break	Registration Hall
Poster Session - Awardees		
2:30 - 3:30	Meet with 2024 recipients to congratulate them and learn about their outstanding service and award-winning programs.	Registration Hall
Educational Workshops - Session 2		
3:45 - 5:00	A. Designing Programs for Broader Community Impact B. Building Equity Into Innovation C. Navigating the Legal Landscape D. Investing in What Matters	Regency E - Floor 2 Regency F - Floor 2 Gateway East - Floor 18 Gateway West - Floor 18
5:00	Dinner on Your Own	
Thursday, May 16, 2024		
7:00 - 8:00	National Story Day - Excerpts from, "In Their Words: Stories of America's Veterans"	Regency Ballroom ABCD
8:00 - 2:00	Information Desk	Registration Hall
Educational Workshops - Session 3		
8:30 - 9:45	A. Designing Programs for Broader Community Impact B. Building Equity Into Innovation C. Navigating the Legal Landscape D. Investing in What Matters	Regency E - Floor 2 Regency F - Floor 2 Gateway East - Floor 18 Gateway West - Floor 18
9:45 - 10:00	Break	Registration Hall
Educational Workshops - Session 4		
10:00 - 11:15	A. Designing Programs for Broader Community Impact B. Building Equity Into Innovation C. Navigating the Legal Landscape D. Investing in What Matters	Regency E - Floor 2 Regency F - Floor 2 Gateway East - Floor 18 Gateway West - Floor 18
11:30 - 1:00	James H. Parke Memorial Scholarship Luncheon <i>Honoring Zach Gardner</i>	Regency Ballroom ABCD
1:00 - 2:00	Poster Session - VISN Liaisons	Registration Hall
2:00 - 4:30	Business Meeting	Regency Ballroom ABCD

VAVS National Advisory Committee

Chair and Designated Federal Officer:
Sabrina C. Clark, Ph.D., Director, VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement

2024 VAVS NAC Executive Committee

Chairperson: Joseph Dooley, United Veterans Services
Vice-Chairperson: Vicki Sarracino, Soldiers' Angels

American Gold Star Mothers

American Legion

American Legion Auxiliary

AMVETS Auxiliary

Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks

Disabled American Veterans

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary

Forty and Eight

Improved and Benevolent Protective
Order of Elks of the World, Inc.

Knights of Columbus

Marine Corps League Auxiliary

Military Women Across the Nation

National Society Daughters of the American
Revolution

Paralyzed Veterans of America

Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc.

Soldiers' Angels

Sons of the American Legion

United Veterans Services

Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.

Subcommittees

Recommendations

Amy Palmer, Chair
Ron Rolfes, Jr.
Ron Minter

Recruitment

John Kleindienst, Chair
Larry Kelly
Patti Davis

NAC Volunteer of the Year

Joseph Dooley, Chair
John Kleindienst
Mary Morgan

Membership

Mary Morgan, Chair
Vicki Sarracino
Kathy Balkman

Partnership

Ron Rolfes, Jr., Co-Chair
Karen O'Neal, Co-Chair
Mary Morgan
John Kleindienst
Cesar Emanó
Karla Mcghan Barthel

VAVS NAC Business Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

Call to Order	Joseph Dooley, <i>NAC Executive Committee Chair, United Veterans Services</i>
Presentation of Colors	SGT Charles A. Fricke VFW, Post 805, O'Fallon Illinois
Pledge of Allegiance	Tom Richardson, <i>VAVS Representative, VFW Department of Illinois</i>
Invocation	Richard Moore, <i>Chief Chaplain Service, VA St. Louis Health Care System</i>
Welcome	Candace Ifabiyi MHA,MSBA,FACHE, <i>Director VA St. Louis Health Care System</i>
Roll Call	Vicki Sarracino, <i>NAC Executive Committee Vice-Chair, Soldiers' Angels</i>
Opening Remarks and Meeting Objectives	Joseph Dooley, <i>NAC Executive Committee Chair, United Veterans Services</i>
Sub-Committee Reports	
Recommendations	Amy Palmer, <i>Soldiers' Angels</i>
NAC Volunteer of the Year	Joseph Dooley, <i>United Veterans Services</i>
Recruitment	John Kleindienst, <i>Disabled American Veterans</i>
Membership	Mary Morgan, <i>Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks</i>
Partnership	Ron Rolfes, <i>Co-Chair, Forty and Eight</i> Karen O'Neal, <i>Co-Chair, Erie VA Medical Center</i>
Standard Operating Procedures	Patricia Kranzow, <i>American Legion Auxiliary</i>
Federal Advisory Committee Act 101	Jeffrey Moragne, <i>Director Advisory Committee Management Office Office of the Secretary</i>
SECVA Video Address to Advisory Committee Members	Denis R. McDonough <i>Secretary of Veterans Affairs</i>

VAVS NAC Business Meeting Agenda

Office of Patient Advocacy
Ann E. Doran, *Executive Director*
Office of Patient Advocacy

Whole Health
Kavitha Reddy, *Associate Director*
Employee Whole Health, Patient Care Services

Empowering the Next
Generation of Healthcare
Professionals through
Volunteerism
Olala Harris, *Undergraduate/Volunteer*
Columbia VA Health Care System
Tammy M. Finney, *DNP, MSN, RN, CHCR*
Chief, Community Relations & Engagement / Public Affairs Officer
Columbia VA Health Care System

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Call to Order
Joseph Dooley, *United Veterans Services*

2024 CDCE Update
Sabrina C. Clark, *Ph.D., Director*
VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement

Leadership Panel Discussion
Patricia Hall, *Network Director, VA Heartland Network*
Candace Ifabiyi, *Director, VA St. Louis Healthcare System*
Demitric Franklin, *Associate Director, Central California VA Health Care System*
Jeffrey Bernhard, *Assistant Director, VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System*

Facilitator: Benita Miller, Deputy Network Director, VA Southeast Network

Veterans Canteen Service
Renee Claypool, *Chief Operating Officer*
Veterans Canteen Service

National Cemetery
Administration
Andrea J. Massey, *Director, Training and Safety*
National Cemetery Administration

Veterans' Family, Caregiver,
and Survivor Advisory
Committee
Dr. Betty Moseley Brown, *Designated Federal Officer*
Caregiver Support Program, Veterans Health Administration

Call to Action
Michelle Dorsey, *MD, MPH, FACR, FACHE*
Deputy Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Operations - Redesign
Veterans Health Administration

Closing/Adjournment
Joseph Dooley, *United Veterans Services*

NAC Member Organizations

Service Member Organizations

(as of May 1, 2024)

Organization Name	Position	Name
American Gold Star Mothers	R	Pam Stemple
	D	Mona T. Gunn
	D	Delores Thompson
American Legion	R	Tiffany Ellett
	D	Marie Black
	D	Melvin J. Brown
	D	Nicole Bathan
American Legion Auxiliary	R	Donna Ray
	D	Pat Kranzow
American Red Cross	R	Betty Temple
	D	Cynthia Wilson
	D	Julie Myers
AMVETS	R	John P. Brown, III
	D	Sarah Langley
	D	Dana Dillon
	D	Alyce Knaflich
AMVETS Auxiliary	R	Marie Rorrio
	D	Donna Tolland
	D	Amy Stopyra
Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks	R	Mary Morgan
	D	Martin Harbolt
	D	Hannah Graber
	D	Stewart Israel
Blinded Veterans Association	R	Vernon Humphrey, Ph.D
	D	Tracy Ferro
	D	Donald Overton, Jr.
Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.	R	Anne Parker
	D	Carol Sanchez
	D	Doreen Berggren
Disabled American Veterans	R	John H. Kleindienst
	D	Oscar Olguin
	D	Ron Minter
Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary	R	Patricia Davis
	D	Ann Glende
Forty and Eight	R	Ron Rolfes, Jr.
	D	D. Davis

NAC Member Organizations

Organization Name	Position	Name
Jewish War Veterans of the USA	R	Howard Goldstein
	D	Kenneth Ashworth
	D	Monroe Ginsburg, DMD
Knights of Columbus	R	Christopher E. Moore
	D	Sompaul Vorapanich
Korean War Veterans Association	R	Adrienne Evans-Quickley
	D	Acquanetta Pullins-Sneed
Marine Corps League	R	Howard Schaeffer
	D	Jack Prosoh
	D	Rex Hopper
Marine Corps League Auxiliary	R	Evelyn B. Joppa
	D	Donna Rae Smith
Masonic Service Association of North America	R	Craig Davis
	D	Darrell G. Fremont
	D	James Kendall
	D	Tom Nash
Military Order of the Cootie	R	Alan Perkins
	D	Walter Smith
Military Order of the Cootie Auxiliary	R	Lori Nettles
	D	Sandra McKinley
Military Order of the Purple Heart Auxiliary	R	Linda Varejcka
	D	Barbara Hale-Ray
Military Order of the Purple Heart of the U.S.A., Inc	R	Greg Lutes
	D	Sydney Staton
Military Women Across the Nation	R	LeSans (LL) Alexander
	D	GinaMarie Doherty
National Society Daughters of the American Revolution	R	Kathy Balkman
	D	Donna Sayre
National Society Sons of the American Revolution	R	Scott Giltner
	D	Richard E. Friberg
Paralyzed Veterans of America	R	Christi Hillman
	D	Kelly Sanders
Polish Legion of American Veterans, U.S.A.	R	Ferdinand R. Thomas, Jr.
	D	Jose Garcia
	D	David Piecuch

NAC Member Organizations

Organization Name	Position	Name
Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc.	R	Lawrence Kelly
	D	Amy Milne
	D	John Langford
	D	Chris Woodward
Salvation Army	R	David Davis
	D	Jacki Blanchard
	D	Debbie Lum
	D	Jo Langham
Soldiers' Angels	R	Vicki Sarracino
	D	Amy Palmer
	D	John Harris
	D	Brent Cooper
Sons of the American Legion	R	Bruno Williamson
	D	Seth Rippe
	D	William Sutterlin
	D	Jeffrey Gibson
United Daughters of the Confederacy	R	Edgar Seegers
	R	Charlotte Clinger
	D	Janet W. Grams
	D	Sherry Davis
United Veterans Services	D	Jewel Wellborn
	R	Joseph Dooley
	D	Erma Harris
Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary	R	Karlene Beams
	D	Della Steege
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.	R	Katherine Cassell
	D	Julianna Holt
Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.	R	Kenneth Rose

Associate Service Member Organizations

AmeriCorps	R	John Lira
	D	Joanne Newsome
Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, (1861-1865)	R	MaryAnn Herbsleb
Fleet Reserve Association	R	Phillip Reid
	D	Theo Lawson
Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.	R	Katherine Donovan
	D	Audrey Easterling
	D	Augustine Chapman
	D	Carolyn Edwards

NAC Member Organizations

Organization Name	Position	Name
I.B.P.O.E. of the World, Inc.	R	Shalanda Weems
	D	Deborah Flemming
	D	Robert Brown
Ladies Auxiliary, Polish Legion of American Veterans, U.S.A.	R	Denise Holda
	D	Candy Ostrom
National Society of US Daughters 1812	R	Victoria Panzer
	D	Rita McSorley
	D	Mary Ann Loss
	D	Sheila Beatty
Women's Army Corps Veterans' Association	R	Angela Huth

Donor Member Organizations

Bowlers to Veterans Link (BVL), Inc.	R	Mary Harrar
Help Heal Veterans	R	Joseph McClain
	D	Rosanne Schmidt
Veterans Voices Writing Project, Inc.	R	Sheryl Liddle
	D	Ted Iliff
	D	Priscilla Chansky

Strategic Engagement Members

Home of the Brave	R	Katie Bowen
Student Veterans of America	R	Abby Kinch
	D	Lauren Augustine
Warrior Rising	R	Jason Van Camp
	D	Ken Vennera
YMCA of the USA	R	Neal Denton

Honorary Members

Ladies Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association	R	Dorothy Smiley
	D	Christina Murray
National Ladies Auxiliary, Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A., Inc.	R	Petra Kaatz
	D	Freda H. Rosenskein
Sons of AMVETS	R	Joe Kirkpatrick
	D	Daniel Briggs
	D	William Gerry
The Silver Star Families of America	R	Diana Creed-Newton
	D	Kathleen Landess
Women Marines Association	R	Kay Croll
	D	Mitzi Manning

Health & Information Exhibit Fair



Tuesday, May 14th, 8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Regency E

Learn about some of the innovative programs and services that support Veterans. This is a great opportunity for networking with your fellow NAC attendees, Veterans, colleagues, and exhibitors.

Official welcome by Dr. Tammy Finney at 8:30 a.m.

The following exhibitors are scheduled to participate:

- **Duo Dogs, Inc.**
- **Fisher House Foundation**
- **Gateway Tykes on Trykes/Ambucs**
- **Honor Flight of Greater St. Louis**
- **The Kaufman Fund**
- **Million Veterans Program**
- **Military Basketball Association**
- **Mission Continues**
- **National Cemetery Administration**
- **National VA History Center**
- **Office of Patient Centered Care & Cultural Transformation**
- **Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc.**
- **Rural WAVE**
- **Songs for Sound**
- **Veterans Canteen Service**

CDCE Educational Competencies

	Accountability - Holds self and others accountable for measurable high-quality, and timely results. Determines objectives, sets priorities, and delegates work. Accepts responsibility for mistakes. Complies with established control systems and rules.
	Creativity and Innovation - Develops new insights into situations; questions conventional approaches; encourages new ideas and innovations; designs and implements new or cutting edge programs/processes.
	Customer Service - Anticipates and meets the needs of both internal and external customers. Delivers high-quality products and services; is committed to continuous improvement.
	Financial Management - Understands the organization's financial processes. Prepares, justifies and administers the program budget and General Post Funds (GPF). Understands required procurement and contracting for VAVS programs. Monitors expenditures and uses cost-benefit thinking for appropriated and donated and in-kind funds and services.
	Honesty and Integrity - Behaves in an honest, fair, and ethical manner. Shows consistency in words and actions. Models high standards of ethics.
	Human Resources Management - Builds and manages a volunteer workforce based on organizational goals, budget considerations, volunteer supervisors, and the needs of Veterans and their families. Ensures that volunteers are appropriately recruited, selected, evaluated, and rewarded; takes action to address any concerns that may arise. Manages a multi-sector blended volunteer workforce and a variety of work settings and situations.
	Interpersonal Skills - Treats others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect. Considers and responds appropriately to the needs and feelings of different people in different situations.
	Partnering - Develops networks and builds alliances; collaborates across boundaries to build strategic relationships and achieve common goals.
	Political Savvy - Identifies the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization. Perceives organizational and political reality and acts accordingly.
	Strategic Thinking - Formulates objectives and priorities, and implements plans consistent with the long-term interests and needs of the organization. Capitalizes on opportunities and manages risks.

VA Strategic Plan - 2022 to 2028

Our Mission: To fulfill President Lincoln's promise to care for those who have served in our nation's military and for their families, caregivers, and survivors.

Values: Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, Excellence: VA Core Values (I-CARE) define who we are and our culture. They serve as a guide in providing care and services to Veterans, their families, and beneficiaries.

The Strategic Plan incorporates the VA Secretary's four fundamental principles to lead and manage VA in alignment with VA's ICARE Core Values, Characteristics, and Customer Experience Principles:

Advocacy -- Access -- Outcomes -- Excellence

GOAL 1: VA consistently communicates with its customers and partners to assess and maximize performance, evaluate needs and build long-term relationships and trust.

1.1: (Consistent and Easy to Understand Information) VA and partners use multiple channels and methods to ensure information about benefits, care and services is clear and easy to understand and access.

1.2: (Lifelong Relationships and Trust) VA listens to Veterans, their families, caregivers, survivors, Service members, employees and other stakeholders to project future trends, anticipate needs and deliver effective and agile solutions that improve their outcomes, access and experiences.

GOAL 2: VA delivers timely, accessible, high-quality benefits, care and services to meet the unique needs of Veterans and all eligible beneficiaries.

2.1: (Underserved, Marginalized and At-Risk Veterans) VA emphasizes the delivery of benefits, care and services to underserved, marginalized and at-risk Veterans to prevent suicide and homelessness, improve their economic security, health, resiliency and quality of life and achieve equity.

2.2: (Tailored Delivery of Benefits, Care and Services Ensure Equity and Access) VA and partners will tailor the delivery of benefits and customize whole health care and services for the recipient at each phase of their life journey.

2.3: (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility (I-DEA)) VA will enhance understanding of Veteran needs and eliminate disparities and barriers to health, improve service delivery and opportunities to enhance Veterans' outcomes, experiences and quality of life.

2.4: (Innovative Care) VA will improve understanding of Veteran specific illnesses and injuries to develop and adopt innovative new treatments that prevent future illness and enhance Veteran outcomes.

2.5: (Value and Sustainability) VA, with community partners, will deliver integrated care and services, balancing resources to ensure sustainability while continuing to deliver value and improve health and well-being outcomes of Veterans.

GOAL 3. VA builds and maintains trust with Stakeholders through proven stewardship, transparency and accountability.

3.1: (VA is Transparent and Trusted) VA will be the trusted agent for service and advocacy for our Nation's heroes, caregivers, families, survivors and Service members to improve their quality of life and ensure end of life dignity.

3.2: (Internal and External Accountability) VA will continue to promote and improve organizational and individual accountability and ensure a just culture.

GOAL 4. VA ensures governance, systems, data and management best practices improve experiences, satisfaction, accountability and security.

4.1: (Our Employees Are Our Greatest Asset) VA will transform its human capital management capabilities to empower a collaborative culture that promotes information sharing, diversity, equity and inclusion and a competent, high-performing workforce to best serve Veterans and their families.

4.2: (Data is a Strategic Asset) VA will securely manage data as a strategic asset to improve VA's understanding of customers and partners, drive evidence-based decision-making and deliver more effective and efficient solutions.

4.3: (Easy Access and Secure Systems) VA will deliver integrated, interoperable, secure and state-of-the-art systems to ensure convenient and secure access and improve the delivery of benefits, care and services.

4.4: (Evidence Based Decisions) VA will improve governance, management practices and make evidence-based decisions to ensure quality outcomes and experiences and efficient use of resources.

Shape Your Conference

Volunteer & NAC Member Attendee Briefing

(1 Session: Tuesday, May 14, 11:00 - 12:00)

VAVS Organization Members - This session gives clarification on the roles and responsibilities of VAVS Representatives and Deputy Representatives as they navigate and interact with local VA sites. Participants will learn how their organization contributes to the healthcare of our Veterans and the unique relationship they will have with local VA sites. Participants will take with them creative ideas to support their local Veterans, better understanding of their responsibility, and ways to challenge their group to greater involvement with VA.



Faculty: Jennifer Lilly, Chief, Center for Development & Civic Engagement
Coatesville VA Medical Center

CDCE Staff Regional Groups

(1 Session: Tuesday, May 14, 9:00 - 11:30)

VA CDCE Staff - Join us for a workshop where we break into regional groups to discuss the opportunities and challenges unique to your VISN. We'll delve into strategic planning and the roles of volunteers and community partnerships. Share best practices and forge connections that empower you to better serve Veterans in your area!



Facilitated Networking & Education Review

(1 Session: Tuesday, May 14, 1:00 - 3:00)

All Attendees - Join us for a session focused on collaboration! VAVS Organization and CDCE Staff cohorts will come together to delve into pressing volunteer and partner topics, discuss VA's strategic plans, and explore how we can jointly further enhance the experiences of Veterans, caregivers, their families and survivors.



Empowering Your Experience

Designing Programs for Broader Community Impact

This workshop equips you with the tools to expand program outreach and make a meaningful difference in the lives of Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. Gain valuable insights from national leaders of two VAVS NAC organizations as they share their expertise on shaping impactful programs. Then, delve into real-world success stories presented by VA facility CDCE Chiefs who will showcase how their initiatives have demonstrably improved lives within the communities they serve.

Leave the workshop with strategies to: broaden your organization's or service's reach; discover methods to attract and retain a diverse pool of volunteers and donors; forge impactful partnerships; and collaborate effectively to amplify your impact. This workshop empowers leaders within organizations and VA to implement strong practices, create impactful programs, and leave a lasting positive legacy within your community.



John Kleindienst, *VAVS National Representative, Disabled American Veterans*



Mary Morgan, *VAVS National Representative, Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks*



Nicholas LaMarca, *Chief, CDCE, VA Western New York Healthcare System*



Traci Washington, *Chief, CDCE, VA Central Ohio Health Care System*

Building Equity Into Innovation

Innovation has been a longstanding cornerstone of VHA. From the first implantable cardiac pacemaker in 1960 to now implementing virtual reality into rehabilitative treatment, VHA has proudly been at the forefront of innovative healthcare for decades. Its ability to change lives for the better enables continued partnership and investment towards equitable care delivery. Change moves at the speed of trust, and people are the most essential ingredient for the change we hope to make together.



Blaine Fitzgerald, *Diffusion Specialist Programming Lead
Office of Healthcare Innovation and Learning
VHA Innovation Ecosystem - Diffusion of Excellence*

Blaine Fitzgerald is a Diffusion Specialist and Program Manager in Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Office of Healthcare Innovation and Learning's Diffusion of Excellence. She graduated from The College of New Jersey with a Bachelor of Science degree in Exercise Science, minoring in Psychology and Public Health, and The George Washington University with a Master's in Public Health. Ms. Fitzgerald has previously worked as a personal trainer and metabolic researcher prior to focusing on leadership training and development in the pharmaceutical industry. As part of her current role, she oversees all Diffusion of Excellence training events, communication strategies, and the annual VHA Shark Tank Competition highlighting VHA frontline innovation.

Empowering Your Experience

Navigating the Legal Landscape: The Journey to Responsible Stewardship

This interactive workshop will utilize real-world case studies to equip participants with a better understanding of the legal framework surrounding VA's use of donations and community partnerships. In collaboration with the Office of General Counsel (OGC), CDCE has made a concentrated effort to ensure that its activities and programs are aligned with the Department's commitment to just and faithful execution of laws, regulations and policies that govern its authority to onboard volunteers, enter into partnership agreements, as well as solicit and accept donations. This session aims to help staff, volunteers, and NAC representatives to leverage community resources more effectively in support of VA's mission and to explore the critical importance of responsible stewardship.



Mike Davis, Esq.
Information Law Group/Gifts Subject Matter Expert
Office of General Counsel

Julianne Bramesco
General Attorney
Office of General Counsel

Investing in What Matters: How Your Support Fuels VHA's Journey to an HRO

Since 2019, VHA has formally embarked on a Journey to become a High Reliability Organization (HRO), further enhancing our commitment to provide the safest and highest quality health care services to our nation's Veterans. This workshop will provide an overview of the VHA's HRO Journey, key High Reliability principles and concepts, and how volunteers can support this critical endeavor.



Dr. James Leyva

Dr. James Leyva is a veteran of the U.S. Navy, having served as an Aerographer's Mate (Weather forecaster) from 2001 – 2006. After leaving military service, Dr. Leyva began his VA career as a Clinical Audiologist with the Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center in Indianapolis, Indiana in 2015. After completing several improvement projects for the clinic, and within the Physical Medicine and Rehab Service, Dr. Leyva was selected as the Chief of Audiology in 2018 and is a 2019 graduate of VISN 10 Leadership Development Institute (LDI). Relocating to Colorado, Dr. Leyva served as a systems redesign coordinator for the Rocky Mountain Regional Medical Center in Aurora, Colorado for before accepting a role within the VISN 19 Rocky Mountain Network Office, where he served as a Health System Specialist and Executive Assistant to the VISN 19 Chief Nursing Officer. In his current role, Dr. Leyva serves as a Health Systems Specialist, as a member of the High Reliability Organization (HRO) Support team within VHACO.



Jeff Smith

Jeff A. Smith serves as a Health Systems Specialist, High Reliability Infrastructure, VHA High Reliability Enterprise Support, under VHA's Office of Quality Management. As a member of the HiRES Infrastructure Branch, he supports and facilitates the VHA's continued progress in its High Reliability Organization (HRO) journey. Mr. Smith entered VA service in June 2013 and has served as the Administrative Officer in the Surgical and Specialty Care Service Line. In November 2016, he was selected as the Administrative Officer to the Associate Director, and most recently, starting in July 2020, he served as the Lean Management Systems Coordinator/HRO Lead. These positions were located at the St. Cloud VA Health Care System in St. Cloud, Minnesota.

Gentle Yoga

Yoga is one of the evidence-based complementary and integrative health (CIH) approaches within the VHA Whole Health System of care. These sessions will provide an introduction to yoga and allow you to experience one of the components of care for our Veteran population. Used to treat conditions such as chronic low back pain, depressive disorders, anxiety, and insomnia; these classes will get you started on a practice of your own.



Facilitator: VA St. Louis Health Care System Office of Whole Health

National Story Day - Excerpts from, "In Their Words: Stories of America's Veterans"

National Tell A Story Day is celebrated annually on April 27th. This day is dedicated to the art of storytelling and encourages people to share their stories and connect with others through the power of narrative.

Since 2013, writers for the "My Life, My Story" (MLMS) program have interviewed thousands of Veterans at VA Hospitals across the country. From those interviews, MLMS volunteers craft brief life histories that, with the Veteran's permission, become part of their medical record. By reading those stories, VA health care providers can get to know their patients a little better. In addition, Veterans receive copies of their story to share with family and friends.



During this year's National Story Day, the MLMS team collaborated with the CDCE office to host a four hour event for VA employees to showcase some of the stories Veterans have shared.

Do you know a Veteran who would like to share their story, contact the MLMS team at mystory@va.gov.



Wesley Walls, *Communications Specialist, VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement*

Mr. Walls began his VA journey as a VA Work Study in 1997 and has progressively held higher positions within the VA since. For 27 years, he served in positions in Health Administration Service, Pharmacy Service and the Office of the Director at the Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center in Clarksburg, WV. During the last 15 years at the Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center, he was the Public Affairs Officer and in the last five years additionally served as the Chief, Public Affairs and Community Relations serving as the facility Voluntary Service Officer too. He was responsible for all media, special event coordination, and oversight of the volunteer program.

Mr. Walls currently serves as the Communications Specialist for the VA Center for Development and Civic Engagement (CDCE) in VA Central Office. In his current role, he oversees various communication avenues for the national CDCE program office.

Mr. Walls received his Master of Arts degree in Corporate and Organizational Communication from West Virginia University and received his Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Fairmont State University. He is a VA nationally certified mentor and a VA Health Care Leadership Development Program graduate.

VISN Poster Session

This poster session showcases a variety of programs and initiatives designed to highlight the role of VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement (CDCE) offices and their partners in supporting VA's strategic goals, enhancing the experiences of Veterans, families, caregivers, and survivors.

Explore the posters to discover:

- Creative approaches to tackling challenges.
- Inspiring ideas to implement in your own setting.
- Opportunities to connect with colleagues and share best practices.

Questions to Spark Your Exploration:

- What unique aspects of this initiative sparked your interest?
- How could you adapt this initiative for your specific facility, organization, or group?
- What questions do you have for the presenters?

By engaging through this poster session, we can foster a vibrant exchange of ideas and inspire new approaches to advance our field.

VISN 2	Food Pantries & Food Insecurity
VISN 4	Compassionate Contact Corps & Employee Engagement
VISN 5	Will You Be My Driver? Community Engagement & Volunteer Recruitment in Action
VISN 7	Youth Volunteering: Leading the Future with Biomedical Research
VISN 8	Veteran Resource Fair - PACT Act Event
VISN 9	Formal Student Shadowing Programs with MOUs
VISN 12	Collaboration with The Rural WAVE (Wellness and Veteran Engagement) Initiative
VISN 15	Food Force: Branching Out to Fill the Gap
VISN 19	Centenarian Recognition Program
VISN 20	Vet Ride Scheduling Program
VISN 21	Transparent Stewardship: Electronic Tracking of Donated Funds Utilization
VISN 22	Whole Health Gardening Project: How Do We Partner?
VISN 23	Community Living Center Veteran Companion Program

Poster Judging

Use the QR codes at the session to vote for your favorite poster in each of the following categories.

- Most Innovative Idea
- Most Relevant to My Community
- Most Likely Something I Can Implement Within the Next 90 Days
- Most Creative
- Most Scalable



2024 James H. Parke Memorial Scholarships

\$20,000	Zach Gardner	Veterans Healthcare System of the Ozarks Fayetteville, Arkansas
\$5,000	Anushka Kagade	W.G. (Bill) Hefner VA Health Care System Salisbury, North Carolina
\$2,000	Diya Shah	W.G. (Bill) Hefner VA Health Care System Salisbury, North Carolina
\$2,000	Jayedn Griffin	W.G. (Bill) Hefner VA Health Care System Salisbury, North Carolina
\$2,000	Katrina Campbell	VA St. Louis Health Care System St. Louis, Missouri

James H. Parke Summer Scholarships

\$500	Denver Nelson	Fargo VA Health Care System Fargo, North Dakota
\$500	Jai Patel	VA St. Louis Health Care System St. Louis, Missouri
\$500	Jasmine David	W.G. (Bill) Hefner VA Health Care System Salisbury, North Carolina
\$500	John Crites	VA St. Louis Health Care System St. Louis, Missouri
\$500	Nathan Barber	VA Loma Linda Healthcare System Loma Linda, California
\$500	Shivani Patel	William Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center Columbia, South Carolina
\$500	Vinayak Kumar Duggal	W.G. (Bill) Hefner VA Health Care System Salisbury, North Carolina
\$500	Vincent Sharp	Veterans Healthcare System of the Ozarks Fayetteville, Arkansas

James H. Parke Memorial Scholarship

\$20,000 Scholarship Recipient



Zach Gardner

Veterans Healthcare System of the Ozarks
Fayetteville, Arkansas

Zach Gardner has been honored with the 2024 James Parke Youth Volunteer Scholarship, receiving \$20,000 for his outstanding dedication to Veterans. Inspired from a young age by his family's commitment to service at the Fayetteville National Cemetery and the Arkansas State Veterans Home, Zach has embodied the spirit of volunteerism throughout his life.

As a recent graduate of Fayetteville High School, Zach has excelled academically and as a leader in various capacities, including on the lacrosse field, in 4-H, Boy Scouts, and particularly within the Veterans Health Care System of the Ozarks. His service there includes over 1,100 hours dedicated to improving Veterans' lives, underscoring his deep commitment to the community.

Zach's involvement on the U.S. Veterans Affairs Student Leadership Council and as an Eagle Scout has amplified his impact, helping to instill the values of scouting across his community and state. His philosophy of leadership emphasizes 'service before self,' focusing on the importance of advancing others and embodying compassion and respect in every interaction.

His guiding principle is that "every headstone tells a story," a perspective that drives him to enhance these stories through active listening and engagement. This approach has not only enriched his understanding of service but has also shaped his vision as a leader committed to uniting and elevating his community.

Zach's achievements and future potential continue to inspire the Veterans Health Care System of the Ozarks and beyond. This scholarship is a testament to his past contributions and his unwavering commitment to serve.

National Advisory Committee Male Volunteer of the Year



Christopher Leonardini
Soldiers' Angels
VA Northern California Health Care System
Sacramento, California

Chris Leonardini, an outstanding advocate at the Sacramento VA Medical Center and a key figure in Soldiers' Angels, has been rightly honored as the NAC Male of the Year. Chris's exceptional efforts extend well beyond the confines of the hospital, deeply touching the lives of numerous Veterans.

His significant initiative to reinstate volunteer visits following a lengthy hiatus has had a transformative impact.

This move has reintroduced hundreds of Veterans in the Transitional Care Unit and the Medical-Surgical units to the compassionate presence of volunteers, fostering essential social interactions that were greatly missed.

Mr. Leonardini's proactive approach is further demonstrated by his pioneering work in gaining volunteer access to the Behavioral Health unit, a first for the Sacramento VA Medical Center. His ability to build trust and coordinate with facility staff has been crucial in this achievement.

Understanding the critical role of community and continuity, Mr. Leonardini has expanded the Soldiers' Angels volunteer base, focusing on engaging younger volunteers to ensure the program's sustainability. He also orchestrates special events, such as Mother's Day celebrations and National Salute events, that deliver simple yet profound gestures of appreciation to Veterans.

One of his notable achievements is championing the "Home of the Brave" event, significantly enriching Veterans' lives and fostering a deeper community connection.

Mr. Chris Leonardini's relentless dedication and innovative leadership in enhancing Veteran care and support through Soldiers' Angels rightfully earn him the accolade of NAC Male Volunteer of the Year, celebrating his ongoing commitment to Veterans' well-being and community engagement.

National Advisory Committee Female Volunteer of the Year



Diane Erickson
American Legion Auxiliary
VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System
Aurora, Colorado

Ms. Diane Erickson has been an outstanding and active volunteer of the Rocky Mountain Regional Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Aurora, Colorado since 2017. Her leadership and dedication as a volunteer has proven to have a significant impact on Veteran care throughout the Eastern Colorado Healthcare System (ECHCS). In addition, Ms. Erickson has been an active member and representative of the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Department of Colorado.

Ms. Erickson also assists as a Compassionate Contact Corps volunteer. She appreciates the conversations with the Veterans and can provide empathy and support. Ms. Erickson displayed a spirit for volunteering at a young age as she started helping others as a child at church bazar fundraisers each year. In addition, she always volunteered with school activities that her children were involved in.

Diane serves as both a mentor and advocate for ALA Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation volunteers across Colorado. She has fought long and hard for funding to meet the unique needs of the Veteran as they receive specialty treatment at their facility of care. She is quite accomplished in her endeavors to raise awareness and funding for the Veterans Christmas Shop, Creative Arts, and the Baby Shower at the ECHCS. In addition, Ms. Erickson volunteered with mailings for the mental health clinics and at the Jewel Clinic helping to get information and tools out to Veterans.

Ms. Erickson's late husband, Brandt, started a summer barbeque over 15 years ago at the Veteran's Community Living Center at Fitzsimmons. She has continued this valued tradition by helping plan the yearly event and attending to enjoy the happiness it brings Veterans.

Ms. Erickson was instrumental in recruiting volunteers for the National Advisory Committee in April 2023 which was held in Denver, Colorado. Ms. Erickson has been on the National Creative Arts Festival Committee for the past 3 years and is currently planning for the Creative Arts Festival being held in Denver in May of 2024.

Diane's unwavering commitment is evident in the countless hours she volunteers across various VA programs. Her passion for serving Veterans, evident in her longstanding membership with the American Legion Auxiliary and her focused efforts at the VA ECHCS since 2015, perfectly embodies the spirit of this award.



2024 VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement American Spirit and Leadership Awards

Youth Leadership & Civic Engagement Award	Amy Tomko VA Butler Healthcare System Butler, Pennsylvania
Community Partnership Award	Todd Greenman VA Battle Creek Medical Center Battle Creek, Michigan
Innovation Award	Anit Tyagi VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System Aurora, Colorado
Volunteer Supervisor Award	Brenda Barrios VA Palo Alto Health Care System Palo Alto, California
Strategic Partnership Excellence Award	SAVAHCS Fisher House Southern Arizona VA Health Care System Tucson, Arizona
Executive Leadership Award	Demitric Franklin VA Central California Health Care System Fresno, California

VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement Youth Leadership & Civic Engagement Award



Amy Tomko

VA Butler Healthcare System
Butler, Pennsylvania

The Butler VA Health Care System's innovative summer program, "Camp to Caregivers," has been recognized with the Youth Leadership & Civic Engagement Award. Spearheaded by CDCE Chief, Amy Tomko, and Fire & Emergency Service Department Chief, David Guiste, this initiative goes beyond traditional camp activities to ignite a passion for healthcare in young minds.

Under Amy and David's collaborative leadership, the program integrates students into the Fire & Emergency Services Department, offering hands-on experiences that transcend conventional learning. Students engage in modified fitness tests, shadow Firefighter/EMTs during medical and fire calls, assist with dispatch duties, and receive training in fire safety, emergency response, and basic life support skills like CPR and hemorrhage control.

More than just educational, "Camp to Caregivers" opens students' eyes to the diverse career opportunities within the VA, highlighting the critical roles that fire protection and emergency services play in ensuring Veteran safety. The students are not mere observers; they actively participate in emergency drills, equipment checks, and station maintenance, fostering a sense of leadership and ownership.

The program's impact is profound, with students documenting their experiences and insights in detailed journals. Veterans themselves have embraced the program, often sharing stories with the students and fostering connections that enhance rapport during emergencies. The positive influence of these interactions is echoed by Fire & Emergency Services employees who have noted the uplifting impact on the community.

This award celebrates a successful collaboration that benefits both students and Veterans, fostering a vibrant community and nurturing future leaders in healthcare, showing how Butler VA is small but mighty in all they do!

VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement Community Partnership Award



Todd Greenman
Battle Creek VA Medical Center
Battle Creek, Michigan

For over three decades, Todd Greenman, a Voluntary Service Officer at the Battle Creek VA Medical Center, has been the heart and soul of the "Remember-A-Vet" program. This heartwarming initiative, started in partnership with the Battle Creek Enquirer in 1953, has become a tradition, raising over \$26,000 annually.

Greenman's dedication goes beyond fundraising. He meticulously oversees the program, ensuring Veterans in the hospital receive Canteen coupon books, toiletries, snacks, and even daily newspapers throughout the year. These seemingly small gestures provide a vital connection to the outside world and a much-needed boost to morale, especially during holidays when Veterans might feel isolated.

Greenman doesn't just manage the program; he champions it. He has fostered a strong relationship with the Battle Creek Enquirer, securing media coverage that highlights the program's impact and the medical center's commitment to Veterans.

This nomination celebrates Todd Greenman's unwavering dedication to ensuring Veterans are remembered and supported, not just financially, but also emotionally and as part of a larger community.

VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement Innovation Award



Anit Tyagi

VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System
Aurora, Colorado

The VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System has revolutionized Veteran care with the "Remembering Our Veterans" program, earning it the esteemed Innovation Award. This staff-led initiative captures the poignant histories of Veterans, not with traditional medical tools, but through the powerful mediums of video and heartfelt dialogue.

The program features Veterans like Martha Baker, a 96-year-old Army nurse who shattered barriers post-segregation, and Ronald Heath, a Korean War Veteran turned Broadway singer. These stories are meticulously preserved through interviews conducted by trained volunteers, each session creating a timeless artifact of personal and historical significance.

Beyond chronicling heroic pasts, the program serves a therapeutic purpose, especially for Veterans in extended care and those battling memory loss. Recalling old memories often reignites joy and offers solace, even providing hospice patients a chance to impart final reflections and craft a lasting legacy.

The initiative extends its impact to families, who receive a "digital tapestry" of memories, enabling intergenerational connections and deeper understanding of their heroic relatives. The wider public also benefits, gaining insights into the sacrifices made by Veterans through the program's YouTube channel, which showcases these compelling narratives.

A key to the program's success is its collaborative foundation, uniting staff and volunteers of all ages with user-friendly equipment and standardized protocols. This approach ensures the initiative's replicability across other VA facilities, fostering a national network of Veteran storytellers.

"Remembering Our Veterans" is more than just a program—it is a commitment to honor the service and sacrifices of Veterans, strengthen family bonds, and preserve these invaluable stories for future generations. Its innovative approach not only enhances Veteran care but also enriches our understanding of American history.

VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement Volunteer Supervisor Award



Brenda Barrios
VA Palo Alto Health Care System
Palo Alto, California

Ms. Barrios, the Lead Recreation Therapist at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System, has been awarded the CDCE Volunteer Supervisor Award for her exceptional leadership of the United Students for Veterans Health program. Managing over 60 volunteers, she provides vital social support to Veterans with Alzheimer's in a specialized gero-psychology community living center.

Since 1994, Ms. Barrios has transformed this initiative into a significant national effort. Her leadership style, which encourages volunteers to customize their interactions based on the unique needs of each Veteran, has greatly enhanced care quality and promoted personal growth among the volunteers.

Amid the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ms. Barrios swiftly implemented virtual visits and a pen pal system to maintain essential connections between volunteers and Veterans, ensuring continuity of support during isolating times. Her steadfast commitment to the principles of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (I*DEA) has enriched the program, significantly reducing Veterans' feelings of isolation and enriching their social interactions.

Under her guidance, the program has expanded its impact, notably decreasing depression among Veterans. Both volunteers and Veterans' families report marked improvements in mental health and social engagement. Her approach has not only fostered a supportive environment but has also cultivated a diverse and inclusive community.

Ms. Barrios's innovative leadership and dedication to developing the next generation of healthcare leaders make her a truly deserving recipient of this award. Her work exemplifies the transformative power of strategic volunteer management in enhancing Veteran care.

VA Voluntary Service American Spirit Award Strategic Partnership Excellence Award



SAVAHCS Fisher House Southern Arizona VA Health Care System Tucson, Arizona

Kelly Laurich, formerly the Fisher House Manager at the Southern Arizona VA, has been recognized with the Strategic Partnership Excellence Award for her visionary integration of community spirit into support for Veterans. Laurich capitalized on the University of Arizona's (UA) strong military ties by forging a

partnership with UA's chapter of Operation Hat Trick, known for its military-themed apparel sales at football games.

Under Laurich's leadership, this collaboration ensured that proceeds from apparel sales directly benefited the families staying at the Fisher House, rather than being absorbed into a general fund. This strategic move not only leveraged resources effectively but also created a mutually beneficial relationship between UA and the Veteran community.

The partnership expanded beyond financial contributions, evolving into a robust community support system. UA athletes, staff, and students engaged deeply with the cause, volunteering at Fisher House to cook meals, create comfort items, and dine with Veteran families, thus fostering a nurturing and communal atmosphere.

Since its inception in 2018, Operation Hat Trick has contributed over \$106,500, enhancing the Fisher House's ability to provide a comforting environment and essential supplies. The initiative has also gained national attention, earning UA accolades for their community service, and inspiring similar models at other universities.

Kelly Laurich's ongoing commitment to this partnership exemplifies the transformative impact of strategic alliances in supporting Veterans. Her efforts have not only strengthened community ties but have also set a benchmark for leveraging collegiate spirit for a noble cause.

VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement Executive Leadership Award



Demitric Franklin

VA Central California Health Care System
Dayton, Ohio

For the Center for Development and Civic Engagement (CDCE), Mr. Franklin wasn't just the boss, he was their champion. Regular meetings weren't a formality; they were a wellspring of support. Challenges became opportunities for collaboration, and solutions were found together. Mr. Franklin didn't just lead, he advocated. He secured funding for more staff, tirelessly explaining CDCE's vital role to everyone from hospital leadership to community partners.

He believed in his team and their mission. Staff development flourished under his watch. Training opportunities were encouraged, and career growth within CDCE was actively supported, fostering a sense of purpose and growth.

Collaboration was Mr. Franklin's other key strength. He included CDCE in leadership meetings, ensuring their voice mattered. He actively built bridges with other departments and community organizations, creating a strong support network for Veterans. This trust extended to resources. He approved requests and delegated tasks, confident in the team's ability to deliver.

The results spoke volumes. CDCE's staffing grew, allowing them to expand services and better support Veterans. Their dedicated office space, championed by Mr. Franklin, became a symbol of professionalism and efficiency. Staff morale soared, fueled by a sense of purpose and opportunity under his supportive leadership.

CDCE became a trusted partner, and during the pandemic, our ability to fulfill critical needs truly shone. Perhaps the most significant impact was the work environment Mr. Franklin fostered – one that valued equity and inclusivity, where everyone felt welcome, safe, and respected. Mr. Franklin's leadership wasn't just about numbers; it was about people. He empowered his team, championed their cause, and ultimately, made a world of difference for the Veterans they served.

VA Senior Leaders



Denis R. McDonough
Secretary of Veterans Affairs

The Honorable Denis Richard McDonough was nominated by President Biden to lead the Department of Veterans Affairs. Mr. McDonough's nomination was confirmed by the United States Senate on February 8th, 2021, and he was sworn in the following day as the 11th Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

On January 27, 2021, during his confirmation hearing, Secretary McDonough testified to Congress, "I will work tirelessly to build and restore VA's trust as the premier agency for ensuring the well-being of America's Veterans. After all, there is no more sacred obligation nor noble undertaking than to uphold our promises to our Veterans, whether they came home decades ago or days ago."

Secretary McDonough served in the Obama Administration as the 26th White House Chief of Staff from February 2013 to January 2017. In that role, Mr. McDonough managed the White House staff and worked across the cabinet to advance the Obama-Biden agenda, confronted management issues facing the federal government, and devised and enforced goals, plans, and performance standards to preserve the Obama-Biden Administration's reputation for effective, ethical operations.



Tanya Bradsher
VA Deputy Secretary

The Honorable Tanya Bradsher was nominated by President Biden to serve as the 10th Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Ms. Bradsher's nomination was confirmed by the United States Senate on September 14, 2023, and she was sworn in on September 20, 2023. In this role, Deputy Secretary Bradsher helps lead the Department of Veterans Affairs as it continues to deliver more care and more benefits to more Veterans than ever before in the nation's history.

Upon her confirmation, Ms. Bradsher said, "As deputy secretary, I promise to do everything in my power to ensure that every Veteran gets the world-class care and benefits they deserve. This is the honor of a lifetime, and I am forever grateful to President Biden and Secretary McDonough for this opportunity to serve our nation's heroes."

Ms. Bradsher is a combat Veteran who served for 20 years in the United States Army. She enlisted in 1993 and was commissioned in 1994 from the Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia. Her major assignments included Spokesperson on the White House National Security Council for the Department of Defense, Asia, Africa, Western Hemisphere, counter-terrorism, and detainee policies; Defense Press Officer in the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs at the Pentagon; Brigade Public Affairs Officer during Operation Iraqi Freedom, Deputy Public Affairs officer, 8th U.S. Army; Commander, Delta Company 516th Battalion, and Executive Officer, 1st Replacement Company, 8th Personnel Support Command.



Kimberly M. Jackson
VA Chief of Staff

Ms. Jackson was selected by Secretary Denis McDonough to serve as the Chief of Staff for Veterans Affairs and sworn in on October 10, 2023. As Chief of Staff, Ms. Jackson is the senior advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary in the federal government's second-largest Cabinet department, with a budget of more than \$246 billion and over 450,000 employees serving in VA medical centers, clinics, benefits offices, and national cemeteries.

Ms. Jackson brings to the Department of Veterans Affairs two decades of experience in national security, military health, and Veterans issues spanning positions in the executive branch, legislative branch, and research and nonprofit institutions. From January 2021 to October 2023, she served as the principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense for the strategic readiness of the Armed Forces as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Readiness in the Department of Defense.

Ms. Jackson also served as a Naval Reserve officer from 2012 to 2020, holding assignments in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, Naval Special Warfare, and the Chief of Naval Operations' Strategic Studies Group.

VA Senior Leaders



Dr. Shereef Elnahal
Under Secretary for Health

Dr. Shereef Elnahal was appointed by President Joseph R. Biden to serve as Under Secretary for Health at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and confirmed by the Senate on July 21, 2022. In this role, he leads the largest integrated health system in the nation alongside a team of nearly 400,000 professionals delivering world-class care to 9 million enrolled Veterans.

In the first year of his tenure, Dr. Elnahal has overseen the Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) implementation of the Sergeant First Class (SFC) Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act, the largest expansion of Veteran benefits in a generation. To prepare the enterprise to provide more care and more benefits to more Veterans, caregivers, and survivors than ever before, he has spearheaded initiatives to improve access, expand infrastructure, and train employees to serve Veterans impacted by toxic exposures. Under his direction, VHA also embarked on an aggressive hiring effort, growing its workforce at historic rates despite recruitment and retention challenges in the broader health care market.

Dr. Elnahal holds an M.D. from Harvard Medical School and an M.B.A. with Distinction from Harvard Business School.



RimaAnn O. Nelson
Assistant Under Secretary for
Health for Operations

Ms. RimaAnn O. Nelson assumed the position of Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Operations, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs effective January 2, 2022.

Ms. Nelson served as the Network Director for Veteran Integrated Service Network (VISN) 10, VA Healthcare System beginning October 27, 2019. Prior to Ms. Nelson's role as Network Director, she served as the Executive Director of the Phoenix VA Health Care System, a tertiary care hospital providing a full range of Primary Care, Specialty Care, Mental Health and Allied Health Services to over 100,000 Arizona Veterans.

Ms. Nelson served as the Director of the VA Regional Office and Outpatient Clinic at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in Manila (USDVA), Philippines from July 2013 through October 2016. As the Director of USDVA Manila, Ms. Nelson led the only VA health care facility located in a foreign country and located on U.S. Embassy property. She oversaw all aspects of both VBA and VHA operations for all Veterans, dependents, and their survivors in the Philippines. Prior to her appointment in Manila, Ms. Nelson served as the Medical Center Director of the St. Louis VA Health Care System. Ms. Nelson began her career with the Department of Veterans Affairs at the Salt Lake City VA Health Care System in 1994.



Michelle Dorsey
MD, MPH, FACR, FACHE
Deputy Assistant Under
Secretary for Health for
Operations for Redesign

Dr. Dorsey joins us from her prior role as the Chief Medical Officer for Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 22 where she oversaw medical operations in the Desert Pacific Healthcare Network. She also recently served as an Executive Sponsor of the national Universal Access Deployment (UAD). Reporting to the Deputy Under Secretary of Health, she co-led the UAD effort responsible for enhancing VHAs ability to align needed resources and support to provide all Veterans with quality, timely access to care, regardless of location or modality of care.

Dr. Dorsey began her VA career in 2010 at the Phoenix VA Healthcare System. Earlier in her career, she served as the Chief of Radiology for the Phoenix VA and fulfilled various details including as the Acting Associate Director of the VA National Teleradiology Program, and Acting Deputy and Associate Director of the Phoenix VA. Prior to COVID-19, Dr. Dorsey served as Senior Clinical Advisor for the VHA Chief of Staff's office, as a liaison to the Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation. She served as interim Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff at the Phoenix VA and was instrumental in the COVID-19 response for which she was recognized with a COVID-19 Hero Award for Innovation.

Dr. Dorsey has a passion for providing care to underserved communities, both in the United States and abroad, with a focus on women's health and breast imaging. Author of multiple publications and speaker at national and international events, Dr. Dorsey has been an active volunteer contributor to the American College of Radiology, American College of Healthcare Executives and American Board of Radiology.

Speaker Biographies



Jeffrey Moragne
*Director, Advisory Committee
Management Office
Office of Secretary*

Mr. Jeffrey Moragne is the Director, Advisory Committee Management Officer, Department of Veterans Affairs. Prior to coming to this position, Mr. Moragne held various positions in the Department such as the Deputy Director Leading EDGE Program Management Office, Operations Director Corporate Senior Executive Management Office, Assistant Director in the Benefits Assistance Service, and Special Assistant for Strategic Planning to the Under Secretary for Benefits. Better known as "Boomer," he is an Air Force Academy graduate who served 27 years as a fighter pilot, joint service officer, and an accredited US diplomat retiring in 2008 as a Colonel. Boomer has a Master's degree in Aviation Science from Embry Riddle and is fluent in multiple languages. He has served in Europe, Asia and the Americas.



Ann E. Doran,
MHSM, MPA, CPHQ, CPHRM
*Executive Director, Office of
Patient Advocacy
Veterans Health Administration*

Ann E. Doran, MHSM, MPA, CPHQ, CPHRM is the Executive Director, Office of Patient Advocacy, Veterans Health Administration. She is responsible for overseeing and driving critical strategies toward VHA's cultural transformation, improving the Veterans' experience and delivering an exceptional advocacy program.

Prior to this appointment, Ms. Doran was the Vice President of Quality Management for Auburn Community Hospital in Auburn, N.Y. In this position, Ms. Doran provided direct oversight for all quality, patient safety, risk management, patient advocacy, infection control, social work and case management programs. Ms. Doran held positions as System Director of Risk Management & Patient Safety for Bassett Healthcare, and was Director of Quality & Risk Management for Holly Hill Psychiatric Hospital in Raleigh NC, giving her over 23 years of experience in healthcare quality, risk management and patient advocacy.

Ms. Doran is a retired Chief Petty Officer, Hospital Corpsman, USN (AW, FMF). She was stationed in San Diego, CA. Camp Pendleton, CA, Bethesda, MD, USNS (T-AH 20) COMFORT, Diego Garcia, Camp LeJeune, NC, and Cherry Point, NC. She is a Persian Gulf War Veteran.

She is a certified professional in Healthcare Quality and Healthcare Risk Management as well as certified in Healthcare Administration by Cornell University. She is a member of the National Association of Healthcare Quality, American Society of Healthcare Risk Management, and American College of Healthcare Executives.



Dr. Kavitha Reddy
M.D. FACEP ABOIM
*Associate Director Employee
Whole Health
Veterans Health Administration*

Kavitha Reddy is currently the Associate Director of Employee Whole Health in the Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) Office of Patient-Centered Care and Cultural Transformation (OPCC & CT). She is a practicing Emergency Medicine Physician with fellowship training in Integrative Medicine, at VA St. Louis Healthcare System in Missouri. She is an Assistant Professor in Emergency Medicine at the Washington University School of Medicine. She previously served for three years as the Whole Health System Clinical Director for the VA St. Louis Healthcare System and ten years as a National Whole Health Champion for VHA OPCC & CT. She is an active member of the VHA Reducing Employee Burnout and Optimizing Organizational Thriving (REBOOT) Implementation team and currently serves as Executive Sponsor for the Chief Well-Being Officer Initiative. She is a Member-At-Large on the Board of Directors for the Academic Consortium of Integrative Medicine and Health.

Speaker Biographies



Olala Harris
*Undergraduate / HCTA
Volunteer, Columbia VA Health
Care System*

Olala Harris is a dynamic first-generation 2024 graduate Honor Scholar biology major at the illustrious Benedict College on an unwavering path toward a career in Pulmonology. Olala has immersed herself in research opportunities such as the NIH National Institute on Aging R25 Summer Research Education Program, where she gained a leadership award, and Benedict College Summer Undergraduate Research Institute, where she won the 2nd place poster presentation award. Olala is one of the Student Ambassadors for the NIH National Institute on Aging R25 Summer Research Education Program at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Greenville.

Olala was the 2023-2024 President of Benedict College Beta Kappa Chi National Scientific Honors Society; the 2022-2023 President, and the 2021-2022 Treasurer of the Benedict College Minority Association of Pre-medical Students chapter; member of the National Society of Leadership and Success; scholar of the Pre-med Partners Pathway (P3 program) of the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Greenville; and active member of the Benedict College Honors Program in which she graduated with the highest PAW BRONZE MEDALLION. Olala was among the first cohort of the East Africa study abroad experience, she holds the distinction of participating in the Columbia VA Health Care System Health Care Talent Academy, is the recipient of the Certificate of Completion in Biochemistry in the HMX Fundamentals Program at Harvard Medical School, and the South Carolina Public Health Preparedness Student Corps.



Sabrina C. Clark
*Ph.D., Director, VA Center
for Development & Civic
Engagement*

Dr. Sabrina Clark is the Director for the VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement (CDCE), formerly known as VA Voluntary Service (VAVS), and one of the largest integrated volunteer programs in the Federal government. In this role, she navigated her organization through the COVID-19 pandemic, pivoting to virtual assignments, such as the award-winning Compassionate Contact Corps; facilitating trained community volunteers to assist in combatting isolation and loneliness within the Veteran population. In 2021, she led a successful change management initiative across a 75-year-old nationwide organization consisting of more than 500 employees, in addition to thousands of volunteers and community partners. This organizational transformation led to the renaming of VAVS to CDCE and the professional elevation of this community of practice that laid the foundation for VA's expansive and comprehensive capacity-building programs, which since 1946 have resulted in more than 91 million hours of service on behalf of our nation's Veterans.

In 2022, Dr. Clark spearheaded the Veteran's Health Administration's (VHA) response to Executive Order 14019: Promoting Access to Voting, working across the Department to expand outreach potential to strategic partners and ensuring access to this fundamental exercise of freedom for all Veterans. Most recently, she has been charged with leading a Task Force for ensuring a more personalized approach for Veterans as part of VA's PACT Act implementation and stood up the VHA Health Care Talent Academy (HCTA) in conjunction with the Johnny Isakson, David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020. The HCTA is a program designed to deepen the pipeline of talent across undergraduate college students from minority-serving institutions. Additionally, as Executive Strategic Advisor to the VHA Office of Health Care Innovation and Learning, she is leading the effort to ensure a legacy of health equity across the administration through the utilization of equity-focused implementation mapping throughout the process of building these and all future programs to enhance care and services for Veterans, families, caregivers, and survivors.

A native of Zanesville, Ohio, Dr. Clark now resides in Baltimore, MD with her husband of 31 years and son, where she remains active outside of VA as a professional musician and involved in her community as part of her local chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. In addition to her professional affiliations, Dr. Clark was named an honorary member of Psi Zeta Phi Military Sorority, Inc. in 2022 for her commitment and service to women Veterans.

Speaker Biographies



Patricia L. Hall
Ph.D., FACHE
*Network Director, VA Heartland
Network (VISN 15)*

Patricia L. Hall, PhD, FACHE was appointed Network Director for VISN 15, the VA Heartland Network, effective August 28, 2022. As the Network Director, she leads 69 sites of care in Kansas, Missouri, and Illinois, including seven VA Medical Centers, 59 associated Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs), and 2 Health Care Centers. The network has an operations budget over 4.4 billion dollars with 14,800 employees and serves approximately 400,000 Veterans annually.

Prior to this assignment, Dr. Hall has served as the Director/CEO for Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans' Hospital in Columbia, Missouri and for John J. Pershing VA Medical Center in Poplar Bluff, Missouri; as Associate Director of Patient Care Services in Kansas City, Missouri and Tomah, Wisconsin; and as acting Director/CEO of the St. Louis VA Health Care System.

Additionally, Dr. Hall is a Veteran of the U.S. Army serving from 1990 to 2016. During her military career, she served as hospital commander of the 452nd Combat Support Hospital in both Salerno, Afghanistan and Camp Arifjan Kuwait. Dr. Hall is a Veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Restore Hope.

Dr. Hall holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Health Administration, a Master of Science in Nursing, a Master of Science in Strategic Studies, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. She is a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE).



Candace Ifabiyi
*Director, VA St Louis Health
Care System*

Ms. Candace Ifabiyi was appointed as CEO/Director of the St. Louis Health Care System, in St. Louis, Missouri on January 29, 2023. In this role, Ms. Ifabiyi oversees a level 1A complexity system with two hospitals, the John Cochran hospital in St. Louis and Jefferson Barracks hospital in South St. Louis County.

Ms. Ifabiyi was previously the first woman CEO/Director of the Robert J. Dole VA Medical Center, in Wichita, Kansas. Prior to Wichita, Ms. Ifabiyi was the Associate Director/COO of the Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital in Hines, IL.

Ms. Ifabiyi is a Veteran of the U.S. Army Reserves that started her VA career in 2006 as a GS-5 supply specialist at the Memphis VA Medical Center. During her VA career, Ms. Ifabiyi has held various positions to include serving as Acting Hospital Director at the Northeast Ohio Healthcare System in Cleveland Ohio. In this capacity, she managed a VHA healthcare system that was among the top 5 most complex in the country. Ms. Ifabiyi also served as the Acting Hospital Director of the Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital and the Illiana Health Care System.

Ms. Ifabiyi has held positions at VA Central Office in Washington, DC, to include VHA's Office of Policy and Planning and VHA's Office of Patient Care Services. She also served in the Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Workforce Services. Ms. Ifabiyi obtained a Master of Science in Business Administration (MSBA) and Master of Health Administration (MHA) from The University of Memphis. She is a recipient of the 2021 Wichita Business Journal's 40 under 40 and was named 2022 Executive of the Year in Wichita, KS. In 2022, under her leadership, Wichita's Dole VA Medical Center received the prestigious Pathway to Excellence designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). Dole VA is one of three hospitals in the entire state of Kansas to receive the recognition.

Speaker Biographies



Demitric Franklin
*Associate Director, VA Central
California Health Care System*

Demitric Franklin is a seasoned healthcare executive with over 10 years of experience leading and improving complex healthcare organizations. Recognized for his visionary leadership and commitment to quality care, he has received many accolades including awarding completion of the Excellence in Governmental Fellows Program in 2021. Throughout his career, Demitric has consistently demonstrated a talent for building strong, results-oriented teams. As Associate Director/ Chief Operating Officer since 2016, he has overseen the daily operations of a large health system, managed over 15 service lines, and collaborated with executive leaders to enhance patient care and financial solvency.

Demitric is a member of the American College of Health Care Executives, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Incorporated, and a past board member of his homeowner's association. Additionally, he enjoys spending time with his family, remodeling his home, cooking, and getting out in nature to include the mountains and beach.



Jeffrey Bernhard
*Assistant Director
VA Ann Arbor Healthcare
System*

Jeffrey Bernhard is the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System Assistant Director. Prior to this role, he served as the VISN 10 Senior Health System Specialist.

After beginning his career in the VA as a Presidential Management Fellow at the Central Alabama VA Healthcare System, Mr. Bernhard held positions at the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System, which included Executive Assistant to the Associate Director and Administrative Officer for the Mental Health Service. Other VA positions include CBOC Manager in Columbus, Georgia and VERA Coordinator in Tuskegee, Alabama.

Mr. Bernhard is a U.S. Army Veteran having served in the Judge Advocate General Corps from 2001 - 2005 as a Legal Noncommissioned Officer. He is a proud Evangel University Alumnae, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Theology, later attending Missouri State University to earn both a Master of Arts degree in International Affairs and a Master of Arts degree in Public Administration.



Benita K. Miller
*FACHE, LISW-CP
Deputy Network Director
VA Southeast Network (VISN 7)*

Ms. Benita Miller was appointed Deputy Network Director for the VA Southeast Network (VISN 7) in September 2019. Ms. Miller previously served as Chief Operating Officer/ Associate Director and Interim Medical Center Director at the Hampton VA Medical Center, and served as the Chief Benefits Officer for the Veterans Health Administration.

Ms. Miller began her career with Department of Veterans Affairs in 1998. During her tenure with VA, she has held positions in various capacities to include Clinical Social Worker, Administrative Officer for Primary Care and Sub-Specialty Medicine, Advanced Clinical Access Coordinator, Executive Assistant to the Director, and VISN Health System Specialist. Ms. Miller also served as the Administrator of the Waco, Texas VA Medical Center where she managed regulatory compliance, fiscal operations, and significant capital structure improvements.

Ms. Miller received a Bachelor of Social Work from South Carolina State University, Masters of Social Work from the University of South Carolina, and Masters of Health Administration from Baylor University. Ms. Miller is Board Certified as a Fellow in the American College of Health Care Executives (ACHE). She is a Licensed Independent Social Worker – Clinical Practice. Ms. Miller is a graduate of the VA Health Care Leadership Institute and the VA Executive Career Field Candidate Development Program. Ms. Miller serves as a member of the VHA Healthcare Leadership Development Advisory board. She is a recipient of the 2015 ACHE Regent's Senior Healthcare Leader Award. Ms. Miller is a 2019 graduate of the U. S. Office of Personnel Management's Senior Executive Assessment Program.

Speaker Biographies



Renee Claypool
*Chief Operating Officer
Veterans Canteen Service*

In February 2022, Renee Claypool was appointed to the position of Chief Operating Officer (COO), Veterans Canteen Service (VCS), Veterans Health Administration (VHA), and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). As the COO, Ms. Claypool is responsible for leading and executing day-to-day customer service operations across the VCS enterprise to include 200 Patriot Stores, Cafe and Brew locations in VA Medical Centers and Community Outpatient Clinics. Ms. Claypool leads over 3,000 associates charged with providing the highest level of quality, value and service to our nations Veterans, their families, caregivers, volunteers and visitors to VA hospitals.

Prior to her assignment as COO, Ms. Claypool served as the Associate Director of Operations (ADO), Director of Food Operations. Ms. Claypool joined the Veterans Canteen Service in 1998 as a Food Supervisor. In 2000, she was promoted to Assistant Canteen Chief, and in 2004 promoted to Canteen Chief, Columbia, MO.

Ms. Claypool earned her Professional Certification in “Leadership for a Democratic Society” from the Federal Executive Institute in 2017.



Andrea J. Massey
*Director, Training and Safety
National Cemetery
Administration*

Andrea Massey was named Director of Training and Safety for the National Cemetery Administration (NCA), effective November 11, 2018. She is responsible for leader and employee development and the National Training Center in St. Louis in addition to serving on VA level boards/committees.

Ms. Massey also has the responsibility for NCA National Safety and Occupational Health Program. She acquired responsibility for NCA's Emergency Management Program in 2019.

Prior to this position, Ms. Massey served as the Deputy Director, Support Division in Veterans Health Administration (VHA), Employee Education System (EES), in which she oversaw the coordination and facilitation of an interdisciplinary team supporting the implementation, evaluation and communication of training and education programs.

Ms. Massey began her career as an Instructional Systems Specialist Student Trainee with the EES in the Veterans Health Administration in 2007. She has worked as an Instructional Systems/Educational Program Specialist conducting needs analyses to identify knowledge, performance or technology-based gaps and conducting and leading program evaluation to ensure objectives align with outcomes and evaluation strategies are implemented successfully.

Ms. Massey holds a Bachelor in Health Education and a Master's degree in Instructional Design and Performance Improvement, both from Southern Illinois University.

Ms. Massey is an active volunteer in her community, she was nominated for the Excellence in Government Award for Professionalism in 2012, and received the Amber Blaze Award for Exceptional Customer Service in 2017.

Speaker Biographies



**Dr. Betty Moseley
Brown**

*Designated Federal Officer
Caregiver Support Program,
Veterans Health Administration*

In September 2023, Dr. Betty Moseley Brown joined the Veterans Health Administration (within the Caregiver Support Program). Dr. Moseley Brown is currently the Designated Federal Officer for the Veterans' Family, Caregiver and Survivor Federal Advisory Committee. Prior to this role, she was the Associate Director, Center for Women Veterans from November 2004 to April 2018.

Dr. Moseley Brown's passion for Veterans began during her United States Marine Corps service from 1978 – 1992. Her VA career began in the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) in San Diego. She served in various positions, to include a Veterans Benefits Counselor, management analyst in Compensation and Pension Service, and later working for the Associate Deputy Under Secretary for Policy and Program Management in Washington, DC.

In September 2016, Dr. Moseley Brown was awarded the Dickey Chapelle Award; honoring the memory of the late Dickey Chapelle, an American foreign correspondent who first covered Marines in combat at the Battle of Iwo Jima and was killed while on patrol with a Marine Corps infantry unit engaged in combat operations against enemy forces during the Vietnam War. The award was established by the Marine Corps League to extend recognition to a woman who has contributed substantially to the morale, welfare and well-being of the officers and men and women of the United States Marine Corps. In 2021, Dr. Moseley Brown authored "Leadership Lessons: Personal Reflections from a Woman Marine."



Jeanne LoVette, DHA
*MidCon Designated Learning
Officer, Midwest Consortium*

Jeanne D. LoVette, DHA, currently serves as Designated Learning Officer. In this role, she leads the development and implementation of executive leadership programs. She has wide-ranging leadership experience, serving as interim executive leadership, and creating and standing up customer service and employee engagement programs during her more than 15 years with the federal government. She proudly served her country in the US Army and, as a servant leader, passionately 'pays it forward' by serving as a certified leadership Coach and mentor. Dr. LoVette completed a doctorate in Healthcare Administration from Capella University, has earned certifications in change management and is Green Belt certified. She is a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE), has volunteered with The Reading People Literacy organization, and is a Michigan State University alum who loves all things Spartan Nation!



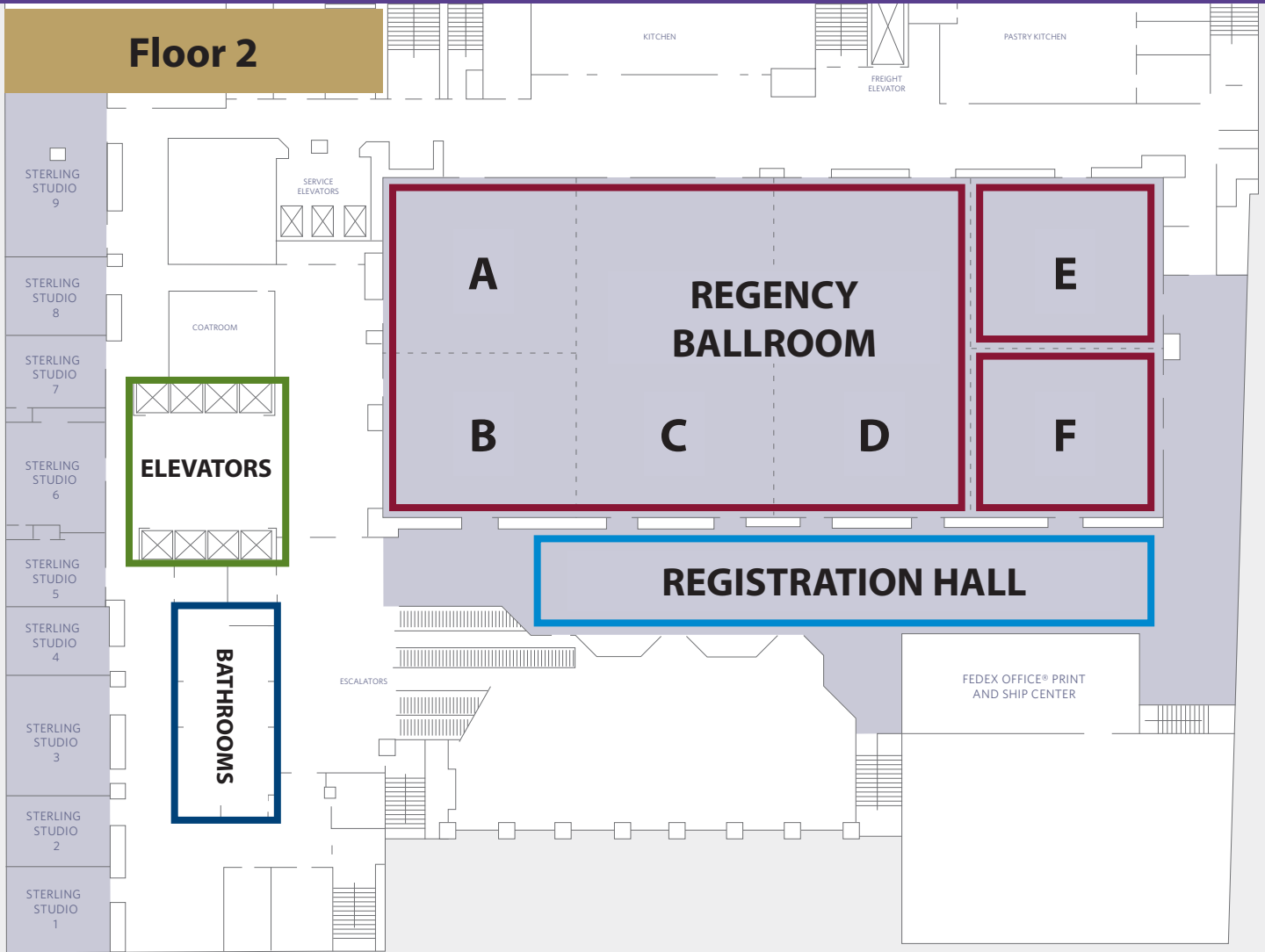
Tammy M. Finney
DNP, MSN, RN, CHCR
*Chief, Community Relations
& Engagement / Public Affairs
Officer, Columbia VA Health
Care System*

Tammy M. Finney, DNP, MSN, RN, CHCR, currently serves as Chief of Community Relations and Engagement and Public Affairs Officer at the Columbia VA Health Care System. Finney was appointed to the Center for Development & Civic Engagement (CDCE) Board of Directors for VISN 7. Dr. Finney is the Vice Chancellor of the Health Care Talent Academy, a member of the workgroup for White House Executive Orders and serves on multiple committees at the Dorn VA Medical Center. She is a registered nurse of 34 years, with expertise in multiple areas.

Dr. Finney earned her Associate of Science Nursing degree, Bachelor of Science Nursing, Master of Science Nursing, and Doctor of Nursing Practice specializing in Leadership and Management. She is an American Cancer Society Reach to Recovery Volunteer, Certified Wellness Coach, Mediator, and CDCE Academy faculty member.

Dr. Finney is a mentor for the nationally recognized Columbia VA Summer Student Program. She supports and guides them to become community change agents, provides learning opportunities, and helps them discover their prospective careers. In recognition of Dr. Finney's commitment to youth and helping to shape their lives, in 2020, the Psi Zeta Phi Military Sorority, Inc. created the Tammy M. Finney Youth Scholarship.

Honors include the 2020 Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Excellence Award, 2021 Psi Zeta Phi, Military Sorority, Inc. Lifetime Achievement Award. She is a member of the South Carolina Philharmonic Advisory Council, Women's and Gender Studies Partnership Council - University of South Carolina, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Chi Eta Phi, Sorority Inc., Sigma Theta Tau International, and honorary member of Psi Zeta Phi, Sorority, Inc.



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VA St. Louis Health Care System*

