



# NASDVA

National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs



## 2023 Annual Training Conference **Buffalo, New York** **August 13-16**

*Presented by*







# 2023 Midwinter Training Conference







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- 2. To pu  
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Save the Dates for 2024

2023 Annual Training Conference

# NASDVA 2024 Conferences

## Midwinter Conference February 19-22, 2024

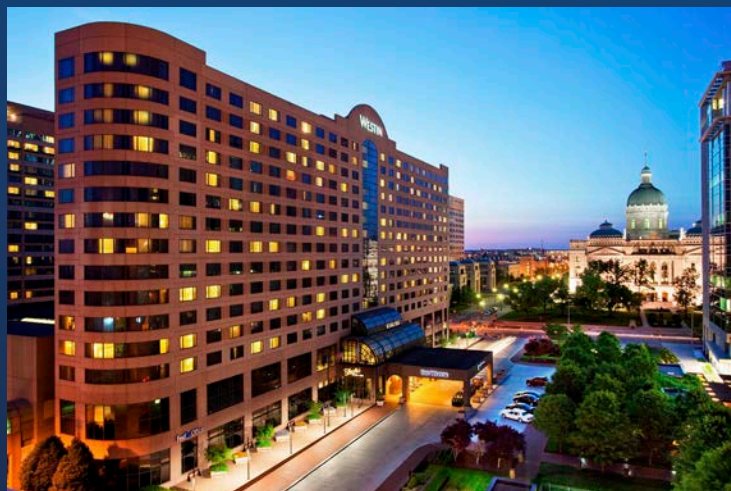
DoubleTree - Crystal City  
Arlington, VA



## Annual Training Conference August 18-21, 2024

The Westin Indianapolis  
Indianapolis, IN

Hosted by the  
Indiana Department  
of Veterans Affairs



Indiana War Memorial



Indiana War Memorial





## ***2023 Annual Training Conference Binder Outline***

### **I. Welcome**

- Save the Dates
- Remembering the Vietnam Conflict 50 Years Later
- Welcome Letters
- Thank You to Our Sponsors
- Mission, Vision, and Conference Priorities

### **II. Agenda**

### **III. Membership and Committees**

- Membership Directory
- Directors by District Map
- Executive Committee
- NASDVA Committees
- Award Recipients
- Conventions and Past Presidents

### **IV. Constitution and Bylaws**

### **V. Speaker Biographies**

### **VI. Sponsor and Vendor Information**





## **THANK YOU TO NASDVA'S VIETNAM VETERANS**

**IN HONOR OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
END OF THE VIETNAM WAR, NASDVA WOULD  
LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT AND THANK OUR CURRENT  
MEMBERS AND PAST PRESIDENTS WHO SERVED  
IN VIETNAM. BELOW ARE PHOTOS THEY  
SHARED WITH US FROM THEIR TIME IN THE  
SERVICE. PLEASE JOIN US IN THANKING THEM.**



**JOEY STRICKLAND**



**JOHN GARCIA**



**CHARLIE SMITH**



**RAY BOLAND**





LES BEAVERS WITH INTERPRETER AND LOCAL VIETNAMESE TROOPS TAKING A BREAK AFTER MOVING THROUGH THE PADDIES



JIM WILLIS

Medal of Honor recipient  
Thomas G. Kelley

Medal of Honor recipient  
Nick Bacon

Prisoner of War Thomas N. Moe

Prisoner of War Paul Galanti

Past President Leslie Beavers

Past President Joey Strickland

Past President Raymond Boland

Past President Stoney Wages

Past President John Garcia

Past President Charlie Smith

Past President Terry Schow

Past President John M. King

Past President Linda Schwartz

Past President Jim Willis

Past President Earl Peck

Past President Joseph R. Clelan

Past President Dennis Foell

Past President Dale Renaud

Past President Jon Mangis

Past President Douglas Brown

Past President Sam Black

Past President Jessie G. Ugalde

Past President Frank Wilkes

Past President William J. Gregg

Past Member Howard Metcalf

Past Member Patrick Palmersheim

Past Member James M. Brown

Past Member George Owings



STONEY WAGES NEXT TO HIS AH-1 COBRA, OCT 1965



TERRY SCHOW WITH RECONNAISSANCE TEAM LEADERS, 1970





### *Remembering Our Duty on the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War*

NASDVA recognizes the 50th Year Commemoration of the Vietnam War, the return of hundreds of POWs, and the departure of U.S. combat troops from Vietnam on March 29, 1973. We express a sincere gratitude to the 9 million Service Members who served during the Vietnam War era, with 3.4 million serving in Southeast Asia and 2.7 million in country, and most sincerely, to the over 58,200 lost lives.

Americans watched as communist forces seized control of Saigon on April 30, 1975. The last U.S. servicemen in Vietnam climbed from the roof of the U.S. Embassy into a waiting helicopter, just hours before four divisions of Communist North Vietnamese troops marched into the city. Sailors pushed helicopters from aircraft carriers into the sea to make room for the last 2,000 Americans still arriving out of Saigon. The North Vietnamese suddenly looked like a modern armored force as tanks rolled in to take control of the country. Even for those Americans not old enough to remember the images of that war, Vietnam has had a lasting impact. In 1968 -1969, the anti-war movement and protests grew stronger as the war effort wore on, particularly on college campuses, dividing Americans while some Americans thought it a betrayal of our country and considered it unpatriotic. The Vietnam War changed America and its legacy is complicated.



Former Defense Secretary Melvin Laird reflected, “These young men and women have never truly been recognized for their sacrifices, patriotism and valor in a very unpopular war.” America was so caught up in conflicts surrounding the war it was widely overlooked that our soldiers performed admirably and honorably in Vietnam. They never lost a battle. North Vietnamese losses were as high as 40-to-one. Back home, America’s will to fight wavered, but our troops never quit, even as casualties mounted.

The veterans of that era helped shape the current Veterans Administration and have been a driving factor in expanding and improving the benefits our veterans earn today. Because of that conflict, American military forces altered strategies and doctrines. Future presidents looked to Vietnam as a lesson not to be repeated. America gained insights on the role of politics and war, the limits of a powerful nation, and the need to support the young men and women who serve.

As we conclude the 50th anniversary commemoration, the lessons learned are our responsibility to never waiver in our support for our troops, despite whatever feeling we might have toward an American military engagement; to respect those who step up to protect our nation and its freedoms, spending months and years away from family and the comforts of home; to care for those who come home injured physically or mentally; and to honor those who make the ultimate sacrifice.

When many returning Vietnam veterans came home, they found themselves rejected by many who let the divisive politics and contempt for the war affect how they treated those who served. NASDVA is committed to helping ensure that never happens again in this great country. We must honor, respect, and care for all who serve - past, present and future. It is our duty. It is our mission.

John Scocos  
NASDVA Executive Director

Les Beavers  
NASDVA Legislative Director





## *The National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs*

James S. Hartsell (FL)  
President

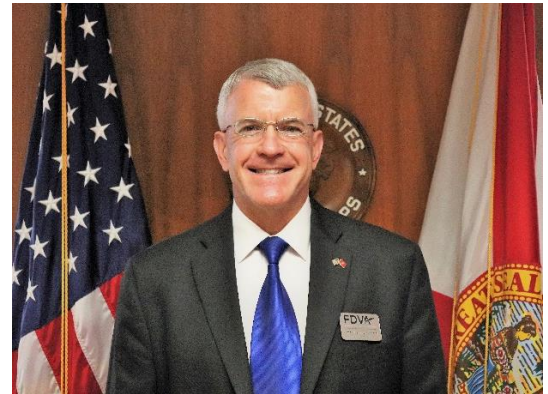
Dennis Wimer (IN)  
Senior Vice President

Tim Sheppard (WY)  
Junior Vice President

John Scocos (WI)  
Executive Director

Welcome to the 2023 NASDVA Annual Training Conference in Buffalo, New York. We appreciate you attending this premier national Veterans' conference in the City of Good Neighbors.

I welcome our many members and associate members, especially those of you new to your roles and our national association. This is a unique opportunity to network, ask questions, and share best practices with other State and Territory leaders. Your active participation in one of our many committees is also highly encouraged. We are your peers and mentors, and can only grow stronger as leaders and Veterans' advocates with your engagement.



Our association was founded more than 75 years ago to bring together the State Directors, Commissioners and Secretaries from all 50 States, U.S. Territories and the District of Columbia to encourage communication, facilitate discussion, and promote best practices to successfully advocate for our Nation's 19 million Veterans, their families and survivors. It's important work and we're committed with purpose and passion to address these important issues.

New York State Department of Veterans' Services Commissioner Viviana DeCohen and NASDVA Executive Director John Scocos have put together an outstanding four-day conference for us, focusing on networking and the sharing of best practices. We'll also receive important updates from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and other key Veterans' advocates, as well as honor several of our association's members. As part of our gathering, you'll also see many new and returning sponsors who help make our association vibrant. I encourage us all to make a sincere effort to engage with our speakers and sponsors.

At the end of each day's session, you'll be asked to fill out a critique form, which we'll use to improve the following day's agenda plus future conferences. I would sincerely appreciate your feedback each day as we progress through the agenda.

I'm honored to serve as your president and join with you in our pursuit of excellence as we connect Veterans with earned services, benefits and support. Welcome to Buffalo and enjoy the conference.

Semper Fidelis!

James S. Hartsell  
NASDVA President





STATE OF NEW YORK  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER  
ALBANY 12224

KATHY HOCHUL  
GOVERNOR

July 14, 2023

NYS Department of Veterans' Services  
2 Empire State Plaza, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Albany, NY 12223

Dear Friends:


It is my pleasure to send greetings to everyone gathered for the 2023 National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA) Conference.

Since its founding in 1946, NASDVA has provided invaluable support to veterans, service members, and military families looking to receive both earned benefits and vital programs for their well being and success. By collaborating with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs as well as forging connections between state agencies, NASDVA strengthens advocacy for the military community while ensuring that members across the country gain access to and assistance with services such as VA healthcare and disability claims.

It is an honor to be hosting this year's event in the City of Buffalo, where delegates come together to share innovative ideas on how to best serve veterans and active military personnel in honor of their bravery and selfless dedication to our country. On behalf of all New Yorkers, I wish you an unforgettable 2023 NASDVA gathering.

Best wishes for an informative and enjoyable conference.

Sincerely,

  
Kathy Hochul  
Governor



Department of  
Veterans' Services

Kathy Hochul  
Governor

Viviana DeCohen  
Commissioner

Dear Members of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA),

It is with great enthusiasm and pride that I extend a warm welcome to all of you on behalf of the New York State Department of Veterans' Services (DVS). As Commissioner and a U.S. Marine Corps Veteran, we are honored to host the 2023 Annual Training Conference in the vibrant city of Buffalo, New York.

Buffalo, known as the City of Good Neighbors, is eager to embrace you with its rich history, cultural diversity, and warm hospitality. I encourage you to indulge in the culinary delights, explore the iconic landmarks, and immerse yourselves in the vibrant spirit of our great state. From the breathtaking Niagara Falls to the iconic architecture, New York State offers an array of experiences that will leave a lasting impression.

This conference presents a remarkable opportunity for collaboration, learning, and sharing of best practices. Throughout the week, we will engage in meaningful discussions, workshops, and networking events to enhance our collective efforts.


It is our shared commitment to make a positive difference in the lives of our veterans, regardless of their era of service or circumstances. At NYS DVS, we are committed to ensuring that our veterans and their families receive the benefits and support they rightfully deserve.

I extend my deepest gratitude to every one of you for your unwavering dedication to serving our veterans. Your leadership and tireless efforts contribute to the well-being of those who have sacrificed so much for our nation. Let us seize this opportunity to build upon our collective strengths, foster collaboration, and amplify the impact we have on the lives of our veterans.

I would like to extend a special thank you to NASDVA President, Retired Marine Corps Major General James S. "Hammer" Hartsell for hosting this training conference in Buffalo, NY. A special thank you as well to Executive Director John Scocos, and the entire NASDVA Executive Committee for their dedicated efforts in organizing this conference. Your commitment to advancing the cause of veterans and your invaluable leadership have been instrumental in bringing us together for this important event.

On behalf of the entire NYS DVS team, I extend a warm welcome to Buffalo and to the 2023 NASDVA Annual Training Conference. May this week be filled with inspiration, growth, and fruitful partnerships that will shape the future of veteran services; ***From Sea to Shining Sea.***

Thank you once again for joining us in Buffalo, and I look forward to a week of meaningful collaboration and forging stronger partnerships.



Viviana M. DeCohen  
Commissioner





# *Thank you to our sponsors!*

NASDVA's annual training conference allows our members to gather and learn best practices, share ideas, get briefed by senior VA leadership, and better serve the veterans in the states and territories they serve.

Without our generous sponsors and vendors, these training conferences would not be possible.

## *Premier Sponsor*

WellHive

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## *Conference Sponsors*

AARP  
HMR Veterans Services  
MOBE  
Optum Serve

Optum Ventures  
Tyler Technologies  
Weber Health Logistics

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## *Plenary Sponsors*

Avalon Action Alliance  
Capital Caring Health  
Combined Arms  
Heroes with Hearing Loss

Milton Hershey School  
SFCS  
TriWest Healthcare Alliance  
Zeel

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## *Break & Transportation Sponsors*

Cohen Veterans Network  
MedSign International  
National Veterans Legal Services Program

Orcutt Winslow  
The Veterans Consortium

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## *Vendors*

D'Aniello Institute for Veterans and  
Military Families  
Mentor Agility  
Military-Veterans Advocacy  
National Cemetery Administration  
Post Traumatic Training Institute  
Public Consulting Group  
Qualtrics  
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors

Telemynd  
TransUnion  
Valor 4 Vet  
Vertava Health  
Veterans Experience Office  
Veterans One-Stop Center of WNY  
VetPro  
VHA's Office of Healthcare Innovation  
and Learning





## **Mission**

The mission of NASDVA is to foster the effective representation of persons claiming entitlements on account of the honorable military service of any person as defined in 38 U.S.C. 101; to provide a medium for the exchange of ideas and information; to facilitate reciprocal state services; to secure uniformity, equality, efficiency, and effectiveness in providing services to veterans and their family members in all States and Territories; and to maintain an interest in all veteran legislation.

## **Vision**

To ensure the nation's Veterans, their Families, and Survivors receive the benefits and services they have earned in order to improve their quality of life and overall well-being.

## **Conference Priorities**

- Committee and Business Meetings
- Best Practices
- Updates from Senior VA Officials
- Sponsor and Vendor Engagement
- Networking
- MOA signing with NASVH



# NASDVA Photos from 2023



NASDVA President James S. Hartsell presented a wreath on behalf of the association at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery on Memorial Day 2023.



NASDVA President James S. Hartsell met up with many of our partners at a White House breakfast this May. Clockwise from left is President Hartsell with past NACVSO President Nichole Coleman, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Matthew Quinn and Under Secretary for Health Dr. Shareef Elnahal, Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro, TAPS President and Founder Bonnie Carrol and Military Women's Memorial President Phyllis Wilson, and Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. Charles Q. Brown, Jr.



NASDVA Executive Director John Scocos presented past member Vito Imbasciani (CA) with an award in recognition of his years of service to NASDVA after Vito became chair of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine.



NASDVA Executive Director John Scocos visited Indianapolis for a site visit with the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs to prepare for the 2024 Annual Training Conference.





## 2023 Annual Training Conference

August 13 – 16, 2023

Embassy Suites, 200 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, New York, 22202 – 884-206-3556

**Focus of Conference: Committee Meetings, Best Practices, Sponsor Engagement, MOA signing (NASVH), USDVA Updates.**

### **SUNDAY, August 13th** (Business Casual or State Apparel)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.</b><br><i>Embassy Suites Lobby</i>  | Registration and Information<br>NYS Department of Veterans' Services and NASDVA Staff   |
| <b>11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</b><br><i>Executive Boardroom</i> | Executive Committee Meeting<br><b>James S. Hartsell (FL)</b> , NASDVA President   |
| <b>12:00 – 1:00 p.m.</b>                                     | Lunch (on your own)   |
| <b>1:00 – 2:00 p.m.</b><br><i>Executive Boardroom</i>        | New Directors Orientation<br>Conference Agenda, NASDVA By-Laws, and Website<br><b>Dennis Wimer (IN)</b> , NASDVA Senior Vice President<br><b>Tim Sheppard (WY)</b> , NASDVA Junior Vice President<br><b>Terry Prince (IL)</b> , NASDVA Secretary<br><b>John A. Scocos</b> , NASDVA Executive Director<br><br>USDVA Overview and Partnership with NASDVA<br><b>Henry Huntley</b> , USDVA<br><b>John Boerstler</b> , Veterans Experience Office                             |
| <b>2:00 – 2:45 p.m.</b><br><i>Designated Rooms</i>           | <b>District Vice President Meeting</b> - Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Southwest, and Far West<br>(Room assignment will be posted)   |
| <b>3:00 – 5:00 p.m.</b><br><i>Designated Rooms</i>           | Committee Breakout Sessions (rooms will be posted): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislative</li> <li>• Public and Intergovernmental Affairs</li> <li>• Veterans Benefits/Education (SAA)</li> <li>• Memorial Affairs</li> <li>• Veterans' Health Care and Mental Health</li> <li>• State Veterans Homes</li> <li>• Outreach and Homelessness</li> <li>• Veterans Transition and Employment</li> <li>• Women Veterans</li> <li>• Minority Veterans</li> </ul> |
| <b>3:00 – 3:30 p.m.</b><br><i>Encore Foyer</i>               | Break – State Directors network with Sponsors and Vendors<br>(Break designated by Committee Chair)<br><b>Sponsor: WellHive</b>  |
| <b>5:00 – 7:30 p.m.</b><br><i>Avant Ballroom and Patio</i>   | Vendor Social<br><b>Sponsor: NASDVA</b><br>Introduction, <b>John A. Scocos</b> , NASDVA Executive Director<br><b>James S. Hartsell (FL)</b> , NASDVA President<br>New York Welcome, <b>Viviana M. DeCohen (NY)</b> , Host State Director  |





## MONDAY, AUGUST 14<sup>th</sup> (Business Attire)

**7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.** Registration and Information  
*Embassy Suites Lobby* NYS Department of Veterans' Services and NASDVA Staff

**6:30 – 7:45 a.m.** Breakfast  
*Embassy Restaurant* Embassy Suites

**8:00 – 8:30 a.m.** NASDVA Opening Ceremony  
*Avant Ballroom* **John A. Scocos**, NASDVA Executive Director

NASDVA Welcome  
**James S. Hartsell (FL)**, NASDVA President

Color Guard  
**Niagara Falls Air Base Honor Guard**

National Anthem  
**Benjamin Pomerance (NY)**

Pledge of Allegiance  
**Les Beavers (KY)**, NASDVA Legislative Director

Invocation  
**Joey Strickland (LA)**, Past President

Vietnam Veterans Tribute  
**Les Beavers (KY)**, Legislative Director

New York Welcome  
**Viviana M. DeCohen (NY)**, Host State Director  
**Kathy Hochul**, Governor of New York

Roll Call  
**Terry Prince (IL)**, NASDVA Secretary

**8:40 – 8:50 a.m.** **Morning Plenary Session Sponsor: Milton Hershey School**  
*Avant Ballroom* **Cindy Spinner**, Regional Admissions Recruiter

**8:50 – 10:30 a.m.** Business Meeting (**NASDVA Members Only – Separate Agenda**)  
*Avant Ballroom* Treasurer Report and Legislative Update.  
**James S. Hartsell (FL)**, NASDVA President

NASDVA Executive Director Updates for 2024:  
Update on Midwinter Conference to be held at DoubleTree – Crystal City, Arlington, VA, Feb 19-22  
**John A. Scocos**, NASDVA Executive Director

Update on Annual Training Conference to be held at Westin, Indianapolis, IN, Aug 18-21  
**Dennis Wimer (IN)**  
**John A. Scocos**, NASDVA Executive Director

**10:30 – 11:00 a.m.** Break – State Directors network with Sponsors and Vendors  
*Salon* Sponsor: **Orcutt | Winslow**





<b>11:00 – 11:30 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	NASDVA Committee Reports <b>James S. Hartsell (FL)</b> , NASDVA President
<b>11:30 – 11:55 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	United States Public Health Services <b>RADM Susan Orsega</b> , Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary for Health and the U.S. Surgeon General
<b>11:55 – 1:00 p.m.</b> <i>Encore Ballroom</i>	Lunch <b>Sponsor: Tyler Technologies</b> <b>Speaker: Dale Bird</b> , Director, Turnkey Products Customer Success
<b>1:00 – 1:05 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	<b>Afternoon Plenary Sponsor: Capital Caring Health</b> <b>Stephen Cone</b> , Executive Director
<b>1:05 – 1:15 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	Zeel <b>Amy Wegel</b> , Government Accounts Relationship Manager
<b>1:15 – 1:45 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	D’Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families, Syracuse University <b>Dr. Michael Haynie</b> , Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives and Innovation
<b>1:45 – 2: 15 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	Veterans’ Health Administration Update <b>Dr. Shereef Elnahal</b> , Under Secretary for Health, USDVA
<b>2:15 – 2:25 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	Honor and Remember <b>George Lutz</b> , Founder and Executive Director
<b>2:25 – 2:50 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) <b>Bonnie Carroll</b> , President & Founder
<b>2:50 – 3:00 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	Combined Arms <b>Bryan Escobedo</b> , Executive Director, Technology & Innovation
<b>3:00 – 3:25 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	<i>Best Practice:</i> Specialty Programs of the Military Family Relief Fund (MFRF) <b>Dennis Wimer</b> , Director, Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs
<b>3:25– 3:45 p.m.</b> <i>Salon</i>	Break – State Directors network with Sponsors and Vendors <b>Sponsor: Orcutt   Winslow</b>
<b>3:45 – 4:15 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	National Cemetery Administration Update <b>Matthew Quinn</b> , Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, USDVA
<b>4:15 – 4:45 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	<i>Best Practice:</i> Opening Veterans to Every Resource (OVER)-Diversion Funds <b>Larry Herke</b> , Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Veteran Affairs
<b>4:45 – 5:00 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	Veteran Experience Office, VX Program Update <b>Jim Wartski</b> , Executive Director, Veterans Family & Community Engagement
<b>5:00 – 5:05 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	Conference Recap and Announcements <b>James S. Hartsell (FL)</b> , NASDVA President
<b>5:10 – 6:00 pm</b> <i>Embassy Suites Lobby</i>	Transportation to Reception Site <b>Naval &amp; Military Park</b> <b>1 Naval Park Grove, Buffalo, New York</b>





**6:15 – 9:00 p.m.**  
*Naval & Military Park*

President's Reception  
**James S. Hartsell (FL)**, NASDVA President  
**Viviana M. DeCohen (NY)**, Host State Director  
**NASDVA Official Photo taken at the Naval Park**  
**Sponsors:** HMR Veterans Services, **Bill Biggs**, President  
Weber Health Logistics  
WellHive

**9:15 - 10:00 p.m.** Return Transportation to Embassy Suites

## **TUESDAY, AUGUST 15th (Business Attire)**

**6:30 – 7:45 a.m.**  
*Embassy Restaurant*

Breakfast  
Embassy Suites

**7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**  
*Embassy Suites Lobby*

Registration and Information  
NYS Department of Veterans' Services and NASDVA Staff

**8:00 – 8:10 a.m.**  
*Avant Ballroom*

**Morning Plenary Session Sponsor: Heroes with Hearing Loss**  
**Marta Wray**, National CapTel Field Marketing Programs Manager

**8:10 – 8:15 a.m.**  
*Avant Ballroom*

Conference Update and Announcements  
**James S. Hartsell (FL)**, NASDVA President

**8:15 – 8:40 a.m.**  
*Avant Ballroom*

Native American Veterans Program Update  
**Peter Vicaire**, Tribal Government Relations

**8:40 – 8:50 a.m.**  
*Avant Ballroom*

**TriWest Healthcare Alliance**  
**Glenn Gray**, Director, Customer Care & Community Relations

**8:50 – 9:20 a.m.**  
*Avant Ballroom*

Veterans Benefit Administration Update  
**Joshua Jacobs**, Under Secretary for Benefits, USDVA

**9:20 – 9:30 a.m.**  
*Avant Ballroom*

Telemynd: A Better Mental Health Solution  
**Reuben Dickenson**, VP of Strategic Partnerships, Telemynd

**9:30 – 10:00 a.m.**  
*Salon*

Break – State Directors network with Sponsors and Vendors  
**Sponsor: Cohen Veterans Network**

**10:00 – 10:30 a.m.**  
*Avant Ballroom*

AARP - Supportive Programs for Veterans  
**Peter Jeffries**, Director

**10:30 – 11:00 a.m.**  
*Avant Ballroom*

Center for Women Veterans Update (USDVA)  
**Lourdes Tiglao**, Director

**11:00 – 11:30 a.m.**  
*Avant Ballroom*

Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs  
**Zaneta Adams**, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Intergovernmental Affairs

**11:30 – 12:00 p.m.**  
*Avant Ballroom*

American Legion  
**Daniel J. Seehafer**, Leading Candidate for National Commander of the American Legion  
*Group Photo to be taken*





<b>12:00 – 1:00 p.m.</b> <i>Encore Ballroom</i>	Lunch <b>Sponsor: Optum Serve</b> <b>Speaker: Mark Swofford</b> , CEO, Health Services   Optum Serve <b>Awardee: Special Award Announced at the Luncheon</b> <b>Speakers: NASDVA President and Awardee</b>
<b>1:00 – 1:10 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	<b>Afternoon Plenary Session Sponsor: SFCS, Inc.</b> <b>Kerry Buck</b> , Senior Principal Architect
<b>1:10 – 1:20 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	HereNOW Help
<b>1:20 – 1:50 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	<i>Best Practice:</i> Virtual Claims Clinics <b>John Hilgert</b> , Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs
<b>1:50 – 2:50 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	State Veterans Home Update Best Practices, signing of MOA <b>Fred Sganga</b> , Legislative Director, NASVH <b>Tracy M. Schaner</b> , President, NASVH
<b>2:50 – 3:40 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	DOD/VA Collaboration Office DD-214 Moderation Update Joint Presentation <b>Michael Odle</b> , Director, Department of Defense/ Veterans Affairs <b>Peter Abraham</b> , Director of Defense/ Veterans DMDC <b>Eric Robinson &amp; Mr. Robert R. Kebre</b> , VBAVCO
<b>3:40 – 4:10 p.m.</b> <i>Salon</i>	Break – State Directors network with Sponsors and Vendors <b>Sponsor: Cohen Veterans Network</b>
<b>4:10 – 4:30 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	<i>Best Practice:</i> KDVA Annual State Commanders Conference <b>Whitney Allen</b> , Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs
<b>4:30 – 4:50 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	<i>Best Practice:</i> Veteran Business Resource Center (VBRC) <b>Gary Harter</b> , Utah Department of Veterans and Military Affairs
<b>4:50 – 5:10 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	<i>Best Practice:</i> Virtual Hearing Partnerships with CVSOs <b>Tommy H. Baker</b> , Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Veterans Services
<b>5:10 – 5:30 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	U.S. Small Business Administration Update <b>John Garcia</b> , District Director, New Mexico
<b>5:30 – 5:40 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	Conference Recap & Announcements <b>James S. Hartsell (FL)</b> , NASDVA President
<b>6:00 – 8:00 p.m.</b>	Dinner on your own



## WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16th (Business Casual or State Apparel)

<b>6:30 – 7:45 a.m.</b> <i>Embassy Restaurant</i>	Breakfast Embassy Suites
<b>7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.</b> <i>Embassy Suites Lobby</i>	Registration and Information NYS Department of Veterans' Services and NASDVA Staff
<b>8:00 – 8:10 a.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	WellHive <b>Nadhah Eadeh</b> , Senior Vice President of Federal Relations
<b>8:10 – 8:15 a.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	Conference Update and Announcements <b>James S. Hartsell (FL)</b> , NASDVA President
<b>8:15 – 8:40 a.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	<i>Best Practice:</i> Military Spouse Liaison Program <b>David Puente Jr.</b> , Washington Department of Veterans Affairs
<b>8:40 – 9:25 a.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	National Center for PTSD <b>Lisa Ann J. Cuccurullo</b> , Director, USDVA
<b>9:25 – 9:45 a.m.</b> <i>Salon</i>	Break – State Directors network with Sponsors and Vendors <b>Sponsor: MedSign International</b>
<b>9:45– 10:15 a.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	National Coalition for Homeless Veterans <b>Kathryn Monet</b> , Chief Executive Officer
<b>10:15 – 10:30 a.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	LetsGetChecked: A Global leader in At-Home Healthcare Solutions <b>Deborah L. Dean</b> , Chief Tech Commercialization Officer
<b>10:30 – 10:40 a.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	Veteran & Military Spouse Talent Engagement Program (VMSTEP) <b>Dr. Andree-Monique Sutton</b> , Director of Operations
<b>10:40 – 10:55 a.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	<i>Best Practice:</i> Services to Tribal Governments Serving Native American Veterans <b>Verdie Bowen</b> , Director, Alaska Office of Veteran Affairs
<b>10:55 – 11:20 a.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	Buffalo Regional Office (USDVA) <b>Donna P. Mallia</b> , Director
<b>11:20 – 11:50 a.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO) update <b>Christopher Hinton</b> , NASCVSO President <b>Nichole Coleman</b> , NACVSO Past President
<b>11:50 – 1:10 p.m.</b> <i>Encore Ballroom</i>	Lunch <b>Sponsor:</b> MOBE: Bridging the Gaps in Healthcare and Improving the Lives of Veterans <b>Becky Curtis</b> , Director of Coaching, Override Health <b>Kurt Cegielski</b> , Chief Commercial Officer, MOBE <b>Introduction of Guest Speaker: Director DeCohen</b> <b>Special Guest Speaker: Judge Robert Russell</b> - Founder of Veterans Treatment Court
<b>1:10 – 1:20 p.m.</b> <i>Avant Ballroom</i>	<b>Afternoon Plenary Session Sponsor: Avalon Action Alliance</b> <b>Jackie Breitenstein, CCMC, CTRS</b> , Program Manager, Shepherd Center





**1:20 – 1:40 p.m.**

*Avant Ballroom*

Veterans Experience Office Update

**John Boerstler**, Chief Veterans Experience Officer (USDVA)

**1:40 – 1:50 p.m.**

*Avant Ballroom*

**MedSign International**

**Tom Conroy**, CEO

**1:50 – 2:00 p.m.**

*Avant Ballroom*

Conference Closing Remarks

**James S. Hartsell (FL)**, NASDVA President

**2:30 – 3:40 p.m.**

*Main Lobby*

Transportation to Niagara Falls Site Visit

**Sponsor: National Veterans Legal Services Program**

**3:40 – 6:00 p.m.**

Niagara Falls Site Visit

**6:35 – 7:45 p.m.**

Transportation to Embassy Suites - End of Mission

Dinner on your own- Buffalo, New York

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 17<sup>th</sup>**

**NASDVA ENROUTE HOME**







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### WEST VIRGINIA

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### WYOMING

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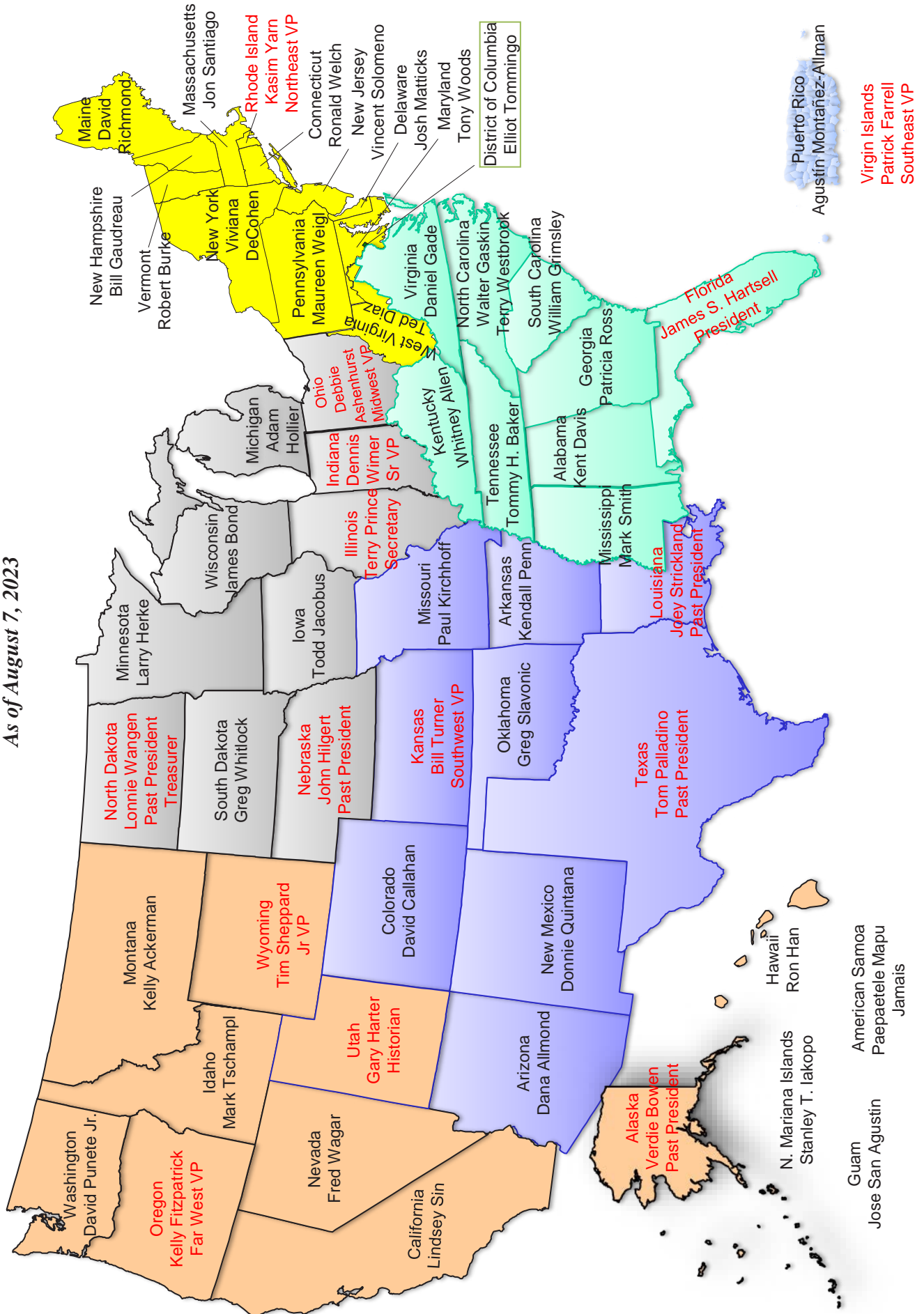
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## 2023 Directors by District

As of August 7, 2023





## 2022-2023 NASDVA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

<b>President</b>	<b>James S. Hartsell</b> Florida	(850) 487-1533 ext. 7707 Cell (727) 309-3076	<a href="mailto:james.hartsell@fdva.fl.gov">james.hartsell@fdva.fl.gov</a>
<b>Sr. Vice President</b>	<b>Dennis Wimer</b> Indiana	(317) 232-3923 Cell (317) 509-9859	<a href="mailto:DWimer1@dva.in.gov">DWimer1@dva.in.gov</a>
<b>Jr. Vice President</b>	<b>Tim Sheppard</b> Wyoming	(307) 777-8151 Cell (307) 631-5158	<a href="mailto:Timothy.Sheppard@wyo.gov">Timothy.Sheppard@wyo.gov</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Terry Prince</b> Illinois	(217) 785-4114 Cell (312) 898-0554	<a href="mailto:Terry.Prince@illinois.gov">Terry.Prince@illinois.gov</a>
<b>Treasurer</b> Past President 14-15	<b>Lonnie Wangen</b> North Dakota	(701) 239-7165 Cell (701) 212-0940	<a href="mailto:LWangen@nd.gov">LWangen@nd.gov</a>
<b>Historian</b>	<b>Gary Harter</b> Utah	(801) 326-2372 Cell (801) 440-6946	<a href="mailto:GHarter@utah.gov">GHarter@utah.gov</a>
<b>Executive Director*</b> Past President 07-08	<b>John Scocos</b> Wisconsin	Cell (608) 358-6195	<a href="mailto:JAScocos@gmail.com">JAScocos@gmail.com</a>
<b>Legislative Director*</b> Past President 04-05	<b>Les Beavers</b> Kentucky	Cell (502) 396-5675	<a href="mailto:LesBeaversusma60@gmail.com">LesBeaversusma60@gmail.com</a>

## District Vice Presidents

<b>Northeast</b>	<b>Kasim Yarn</b> Rhode Island	(401) 921-0411 Cell (401) 954-0078	<a href="mailto:Kasim.Yarn@vets.ri.gov">Kasim.Yarn@vets.ri.gov</a>
<b>Southeast</b>	<b>Patrick Farrell</b> Virgin Islands	(340) 774-8387 Cell (340) 998-9025	<a href="mailto:Patrick.Farrell@va.vi.gov">Patrick.Farrell@va.vi.gov</a>
<b>Midwest</b>	<b>Debbie Ashenhurst</b> Ohio	(614) 728-1084 Cell (614) 623-2806	<a href="mailto:Deborah.Ashenhurst@dvs.ohio.gov">Deborah.Ashenhurst@dvs.ohio.gov</a>
<b>Southwest</b>	<b>William (Bill) Turner</b> Kansas	(785) 296-3976 Cell (785) 207-4605	<a href="mailto:Bill.Turner@ks.gov">Bill.Turner@ks.gov</a>
<b>Far West</b>	<b>Kelly Fitzpatrick</b> Oregon	(503) 373-2388 Cell (503) 580-4667	<a href="mailto:Kelly.Fitzpatrick@odva.oregon.gov">Kelly.Fitzpatrick@odva.oregon.gov</a>

## Past Presidents

<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>Thomas Palladino</b> Texas	(512) 463-0504 Cell (512) 438-9425	<a href="mailto:Thomas.Palladino@tvc.texas.gov">Thomas.Palladino@tvc.texas.gov</a>
<b>2019-2021</b>	<b>John Hilgert</b> Nebraska	(402) 471-2458 Cell (402) 326-9125	<a href="mailto:John.Hilgert@nebraska.gov">John.Hilgert@nebraska.gov</a>
<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>Verdie Bowen</b> Alaska	(907) 334-0874 Cell (907) 354-7152	<a href="mailto:Verdie.Bowen@alaska.gov">Verdie.Bowen@alaska.gov</a>
<b>2003-2004</b>	<b>Joey Strickland</b> Louisiana	(225) 219-5003 Cell (225) 588-1634	<a href="mailto:Joey.Strickland@la.gov">Joey.Strickland@la.gov</a>

\*Non-voting member





## *The National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs*

James S. Hartsell (FL)  
President

Dennis Wimer (IN)  
Senior Vice President

Tim Sheppard (WY)  
Junior Vice President

John Scocos (WI)  
Executive Director

July 24, 2023

Subject: 2023 NASDVA Standing Committees

Article II of the NASDVA By-Laws allows the President and Executive Committee to create committees. The current committee list follows:

1. Constitution and Bylaws
2. Nominating
3. Finance and Audit
4. Legislative
5. Strategic Planning
6. Conference Planning
7. Public and Intergovernmental Affairs
8. Veterans Benefits/Education/SAA
9. Memorial Affairs
10. Veterans' Healthcare and Mental Health
11. State Veterans Homes
12. Outreach and Homelessness
13. Veterans Transition and Employment
14. Women Veterans
15. Minority Veterans

### **1. Constitution and Bylaws**

Executive Committee Members (Article VIII, Officers Section 1)

### **2. Nominating: (Article VIII, Section 1)**

Chair: James S. Hartsell (FL), President  
Past Presidents who are members  
Terry Prince (IL), Secretary  
5 District VPs (if they are not nominated for Junior VP)

### **3. Finance and Audit: (Article X Finance, Section 4)**

Chair: Lonnie Wangen (ND), Treasurer  
John Scocos (WI), Executive Director  
Terry Prince (IL), Secretary  
Gary Harter (UT), Historian

### **4. Legislative: (Article IV, Section 2)**

Chair: Jr VP  
Verdie Bowen (AK)  
Les Beavers (KY), Legislative Director  
John Hilgert (NE), (Past Pres)  
5 District VPs (or their representative)

### **5. Strategic Planning**

Chair: James S. Hartsell (FL), President  
Terry Prince (IL), Secretary  
5 District VPs (or their representative)  
John Scocos (WI), Executive Director

### **6. Conference Planning**

Chair: James S. Hartsell (FL), President  
Viviana DeCohen (NY), Host State  
John Scocos (WI), Executive Director  
Dennis Wimer (IN), Sr VP  
Terry Prince (IL), Secretary  
Lonnie Wangen (ND), Treasurer  
Kasim Yarn (RI), NE VP



### **7. Public and Intergovernmental Affairs**

Chair: Ted Diaz (WV)  
Tom Palladino (TX)  
Verdie Bowen (AK)  
John Spangler (CA)  
Lonnie Wangen (ND)  
Kasim Yarn (RI)  
John Hilgert (NE)  
Kent Davis (AL)

### **8. Veterans Benefits/Education/SAA**

Chair: Daniel Gade (VA)  
Ronald P. Welch (CT)  
Keith Boylan (CA)  
Mark Tschampl (ID)  
Terry Westbrook (NC)  
Benjamin Pomerance (NY)  
Kelly Fitzpatrick (OR)  
Jennifer Donovan (OR)  
Charlie Catoe (TX)  
Cory Pearson (UT)  
Steven Combs (VA)  
Herm Breuer, NACVSO

### **9. Memorial Affairs**

Chair: Joey Strickland (LA)  
Bill Turner (KS)  
Anthony Woods (MD)  
David Richmond (ME)  
Kelly Ackerman (MT)  
Joel Kintsel (OK)  
Robert (Bob) Burke (VT)  
Kent Davis (AL)

### **10. Veterans' Health Care and Mental Health**

Chair: Larry Herke (MN)  
Vice Chair: Lindsey Sin (CA)  
Kendall Penn (AR)  
Paepaetele Mapu Jamais (AS)  
Jose San Agustin (GU)  
Terry Prince (IL)  
Fred Wagar (NV)  
Viviana DeCohen (NY)  
Maureen Weigl (PA)  
Chip Osborne (TX)  
Jon Santiago (MA)  
Nicole Coleman, NACVSO

### **11. State Veterans Homes**

Chair: Steve Murray (FL)  
James Bond (WI)

John Scott (AZ)  
Cheryl L. Poppe (MA)  
Paul Kirchhoff (MO)  
Mark Smith (MS)  
Sarah Lane (OK)  
Greg Whitlock (SD)  
Tommy Baker (TN)  
Fred Sganga, NASVH  
David Puente Jr. (WA)

### **12. Outreach and Homelessness**

Chair: Joshua Matticks (DE)  
Elliot Tommingo (DC)  
Todd Jacobus (IA)  
Brad Lindsey (MN)  
Jason Loughran (NYC)  
Joel Mutschler (PA)  
Randy Coleman (WV)  
Jon Santiago (MA)

### **13. Veterans Transition and Employment**

Chair: Gary Harter (UT)  
Dennis Wimer (IN)  
Michael Thompson (IN)  
William (Bill) Gaudreau (NH)  
Debbie Ashenhurst (OH)  
James Hendon (NYC)  
Walter Gaskin (NC)  
Todd McCaffrey (SC)  
Greg Whitlock (SD)  
Shawn Deabay (TX)  
Patrick Farrell (VI)

### **14. Women Veterans**

Chair: Gina Chandler (AR)  
Dana Allmond (AZ)  
Virginia Wimmer (CA)  
David Callahan (CO)  
Patricia Ross (GA)  
Donnie Quintana (NM)  
Martha Garcia (OR)  
Lisa Narciso (WA)

### **15. Minority Veterans**

Chair: Whitney Allen (KY)  
Xochitl Rodriguez-Murillo (CA)  
Ron Han (HI)  
Vincent Solomeno (NJ)  
Joel Evans (NY)  
Agustin Montanez-Allman (PR)  
Tim Sheppard (WY)





**The following is a list of 26 VA advisory committees. The VA Secretary has appointed several NASDVA members to these committees.**

1. VA National Academic Affiliations Council
2. Advisory Committee on Cemeteries and Memorials \*  
**Joey Strickland, Committee Chair, Secretary, Louisiana Dept of Veteran Affairs, NASDVA Past President**
3. Cooperative Studies Scientific Evaluation Committee
4. Advisory Committee on Disability Compensation
5. Veterans' Advisory Committee on Education
6. Advisory Committee on Former Prisoners of War
7. Genomic Medicine Program Advisory Committee
8. Geriatrics and Gerontology Advisory Committee
9. Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses
10. Health Services Research and Development Service Merit Review Board
11. Advisory Committee on Homeless Veterans
12. Joint Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development and Clinical Science Research and Development Services Scientific Merit Review Board
13. Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans
14. National Research Advisory Council
15. Advisory Committee on Prosthetics and Special Disabilities Programs
16. Advisory Committee on the Readjustment of Veterans  
**Verdie Bowen, Committee Chair, Director, Alaska Office of Veteran Affairs, NASDVA Past President**

17. Veterans' Advisory Committee on Rehabilitation
18. Rehabilitation Research and Development Service Scientific Merit Review Board
19. Veterans' Rural Health Advisory Committee  
**Lonnie Wangen, Commissioner, North Dakota Dept of Veteran Affairs, NASDVA Past President**
20. Special Medical Advisory Group
21. Advisory Committee on Structural Safety of Department of Veterans Affairs Facilities
22. Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service National Advisory Committee
23. Advisory Committee on Women Veterans
24. Veterans' Family, Caregiver, and Survivor Advisory Committee
25. Veterans and Community Oversight and Engagement Board  
**Keith Boylan, Deputy Secretary, California Dept of Veterans Affairs**
26. Advisory Committee on Tribal and Indian Affairs



## IRON MIKE RECIPIENTS

The “Iron Mike” is awarded by the NASDVA Executive Committee to those who have contributed to the mission and success of NASDVA

YEAR	RECIPIENT	AGENCY/ORGANIZATION
2001	Honorable R. James Nicholson	VA Secretary
2002	Commissioner Pete Wheeler	Georgia DVS
2003	George P. Basher, Director	New York DVA
2004	Kenneth Fisher	President/CEO of Fisher House
2005	Bob Filner	Congressman
2006	John Scocos, Secretary	Wisconsin DVA
2007	John Garcia, Secretary	New Mexico DVS
2008	Les Beavers, Commissioner	Kentucky DVA
2008	Antonio Davila, Ex Dir	Delaware DVA
2008	John King, Deputy Secretary	California DVA
2008	Joey Strickland, Deputy Secretary	Louisiana DVA
2009	Arnold Schwarzenegger	Governor, California
2009	Bill Biggs	HMR Veterans Services
2010	Terry Schow, Executive Director	Utah DVA
2010	Bob Riley	Governor, Alabama
2011	Tammy Duckworth, Assistant Secretary	USDVA-Public and Intergovernmental Affairs
2011	Eric Shinseki	VA Secretary
2011	Tom Kelley, Secretary	Massachusetts DVA
2011	Charlie Smith, Director	North Carolina DVA
2011	Frank Salvas	Director, VA State Cemetery Grants Services
2011	Linda Schwartz, Commissioner	Connecticut DVA
2012	Mike Michaud	Congressman, U.S. Rep, Maine 2 <sup>nd</sup> District
2012	David Fletcher, Director	Arkansas DVA
2013	Jim Willis, Director	Oregon DVA
2013	Allison Hickey	Under Secretary, VBA
2014	Steve Muro	Under Secretary, VA Memorial Affairs
2014	Clyde W. Marsh, Commissioner	Alabama DVA
2015	Lonnie L. Wangen, Commissioner	North Dakota DVA
2015	Jason Cain	Director, VA Intergovernmental Affairs
2016	David Brasuell, Administrator	Idaho DVA
2017	Randy Reeves, Commissioner	Mississippi DVA
2018	Verdie Bowen, Director	Alaska DVA
2019	Alfie Alvarado-Ramos	Washington DVA
2021	John Hilgert	Nebraska DVA
2022	Thomas Palladino	Texas Veterans Commission





## VETERANS “Advocate of the Year” RECIPIENTS

Each year the NASDVA president selects the NASDVA Veterans Advocate of the year, which is awarded or announced at the NASDVA Mid-Winter Conference.

Year	Recipient	Agency/Organization
1997	Mr. George Skypeck	Artist
1998	BG Wilma Vaught	WIMSA
1999	Mrs. Diane Evans Carlson	Vietnam Veterans Women's Memorial
2000	Honorable Hershel Gober	VA Deputy Secretary
2001	Honorable Sonny Montgomery	Congressman
2002	Honorable Tommy G. Thompson	DHSS Secretary
2003	Honorable Lane Evans	Congressman
2004	Mr. Raymond G. Boland	DASDVA, CARES
2005	Honorable Anthony Principi	VA Secretary
2006	Michael H. McLendon	VA Policy (WHCoA)
2009	Jim Webb	Senator, Virginia Author and sponsor for Post 9/11 GI Bill
2010	Daniel Akaka	Senator, Chairman of Senate Veteran' Committee
2011	Patty Murray	Senator, Chairwoman of Senate VA Committee
2012	Eric Shinseki	Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs
2013	Jan Brewer	Governor, Arizona
2013	Dave Heineman	Governor, Nebraska
2014	Michelle Obama	First Lady. Joining Forces
2014	Dr. Jill Biden	Second Lady. Joining Forces
2015	Bernie Sanders	Senator, Vermont, Chairman of Senate Veteran' Committee
2016	MG Joshua (Joe) Robles Jr.	President and CEO, USAA
2017	Robert McDonald	VA Secretary
2017	Sloan Gibson	VA Deputy Secretary
2018	Scott Blackburn	VA Acting Secretary
2019	Johnny Isakson	Senator, Georgia Chairman Senate Veterans Affairs Committee
2020	BG Les Beavers	Past Executive Director, NASDVA
2022	Henry Huntley	USDVA Intergovernmental Affairs
2023	Robert E. Wallace	Executive Director, VFW Washington Office







## NASDVA “HONORARY Members”

Honorary members are nominated and voted on during the NASDVA business meetings

Name	Position
Susan McCrea	USDVA Intergovernmental Office
Hershel Gober	USDVA Deputy Secretary and Acting Secretary
Clayton Clark	NASDVA Secretary, Former Director Vermont DVS
Louie Spinelli	MOPH Foundation Sponsorship of NASDVA
Tom Kelley	Secretary Massachusetts DVA, CMOH Recipient
Bill Biggs	CEO and President HMR Veterans Services, Inc.
Tammi Duckworth	Former Director of Illinois DVA, US Representative
Allison Hickey	Under Secretary VBA
Paul Galanti	Former Commissioner Virginia DVS, Vietnam POW
Tom Moe	Former Director Ohio DVS, Vietnam POW
Liza Narciso	Former NASDVA Assistant Treasurer
Martha Garcia	Former NASDVA Assistant Treasurer

\*All NASDVA Past Presidents per ARTICLE II DEFINITIONS Section 3, are “Honorary Members” when no longer a member (Section 1).

## PILLARS OF EXCELLENCE

Through a Memorandum of Understanding, dated 13 February 2012, an “Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence” Award was established to recognize best practices from NASDVA members that have developed effective programs to address the four top-line issues: elimination of the claims backlog, ending veteran’ homelessness, improving access to VA benefits and services, and innovative state programs.

### 2014

- Illinois (Innovative) – Illinois Joining Forces
- Texas (Claims & Appeals Backlog) – Strike Force Teams
- Washington (Access) – Benefits Enhancement
- Washington (Homelessness)-Eliminating homelessness model
- Alabama (Innovative) – Veterans Treatment Court



### 2015

- Alaska (Access) – Alaska Native Sharing Agreement
- Florida (Access) – FDVA Outreach & Branding Campaign
- Idaho (Innovative) - Music and Memory Program
- Ohio (Claims & Appeals Backlog) – DOD Data Sharing
- Texas (Innovative) – Military Veteran Peer Network
- Washington (Innovative) – Washington State Transition Model
- South Dakota (Innovative) – Operation Reaching All Veterans





## 2016

- California (Access) – Women Veterans Outreach Program
- California (Homelessness) – Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention Program (VHHP)
- Michigan (Access) – Michigan Veterans Resource Service Center (VRSC)
- Michigan (Innovative) – Veterans Community Action Teams (VCAT)
- Nevada (Innovative) – Nevada Veterans Advocate Program (NVAP)
- North Dakota (Access) – Agent Orange Outreach Program
- Washington (Innovative) – Incarcerated Veterans Program



## 2017

- Alaska (Innovative) – Veteran Information System (VIS)
- Virginia (Innovative) – Housing Homeless
- Washington (Innovative) – Public-Private Partnerships grows Healthcare and other services for Veterans
- Alabama (Innovative) – Alabama Veterans Network
- North Dakota (Innovative) – Rural Veterans Court



## 2018

- California (Innovative) – Disabled Veterans Business Enterprise Program
- Idaho (Innovative) – Idaho Veterans Memorials and Monuments
- Maine (Suicide Awareness) – 1<sup>st</sup> annual Military Veterans Symposium: Suicide Prevention
- Massachusetts (Homelessness) – Statewide Advocacy for Veterans Empowerment SAVE
- Minnesota (Claims & Appeals Backlog) – Discharge Access Database System DADS
- Texas (Access) – Veterans Health Care Advocacy Program
- Washington (Innovative) – Vets Corps. Veterans Helping Veterans Navigate Higher Ed.



## 2019

- District of Columbia (Customer Experience) – Veteran Special Outreach & Advocacy Roundtable Series
- Michigan (Customer Experience) – Incarcerated Veteran Program
- Nevada (Claims & Appeals Backlog) – Ask a VSO
- Maine (Homelessness) – Homeless Veteran Coordinator Program
- Nevada (Innovative) – Nevada Veterans Legislative Program
- California (Innovative) – California Transition Assistance Program
- Delaware (Innovative) – Delaware Joining Forces





### 2020

- Alaska (Suicide Awareness and Prevention) – Alaska Coalition for Veterans and Military Families
- Maine (Innovative) – Justice Action Committee
- Michigan (Innovative) – The Veteran Friendly Schools Program
- Minnesota (Innovative) – Veterans Application Tracking System
- New Mexico (Innovative) – The Forgotten Heroes Funeral Program
- New York (Innovative) – The Fresh Connect Checks Program
- Wisconsin (Innovative) – Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program



### 2021

- Arizona (Suicide Awareness and Prevention) – Be Connected Program: A State-wide Model for Upstream Veterans Suicide Prevention
- Idaho (Innovative) – Ceremonial Urn Cover Program
- Kentucky (Homelessness) – The Homeless Veteran Trust Fund
- Minnesota (Delivery of Services to Tribal Governments Serving Native Americans) – Tribal Veteran Service Officer Program (TVSO)
- Nevada (Suicide Awareness and Prevention) – Operation Mission Ready
- Oregon (Customer Experience) – I am Not Invisible Exhibit Women Veterans Program
- Virginia (Claims & Appeals Backlog) – VSVA Benefits Appeals Program



### 2022

- California (Innovative) – Justice Involved Veteran Initiative
- Kentucky (Innovative) – Veterans Songwriting Project
- Maine (Innovative) – Veterans' Dental Network (MVDN)
- Maryland (Innovative) – Serving Those who Served: A Library Partnership
- Nevada (Innovative) – Patriot Employer Program
- NYC, New York (Innovative) – Mission: Vet Check
- Pennsylvania (Customer Experience) – VET Connect
- Virginia – (Suicide Awareness and Prevention) - Identify Service Members, Veterans and Families, Screen for Suicide Risk and Refer for Services (VISR) Pilot



### 2023

- Indiana (Innovative) – Specialty Programs of the Military Family Relief Fund
- Utah (Innovative) – Veteran Business Resource Center
- Kentucky (Innovative) – Kentucky Veterans Program Trust Fund
- Alaska (Delivery of services to Tribal Governments Serving Native Americans) – Tribal Veterans Representative Program
- Minnesota (Homelessness) – Every Veteran Deserves a Home
- Washington (Innovative) – Military Spouse Liaison
- Nebraska (Claims & Appeals Backlog) – Virtual Claims Clinics







	YEAR	HOST STATE	PRESIDENT ELECTED		YEAR	HOST STATE	PRESIDENT ELECTED
1st	47-48	Illinois	Homer G. Bradney, IL	39th	86-87	Arizona	William J. Gregg, MN
2nd	48-49	Louisiana	C.Clarence Horton, AL	40th	87-88	New Jersey	Frank Wilkes, AL
3rd	49-50	Minnesota	T.H. McGovran, WV	41st	88-89	Mississippi	Jesse G. Ugalde, CA
4th	50-51	Colorado	William R. Rice, CO	42nd	89-90	Oregon	Sam Black, VA
5th	51-52	Maine	Clinton Green, IN	43rd	90-91	Florida	Douglas Brown, TX
6th	52-53	North Carolina	Melvin T. Dixon, FL	44th	91-92	Nevada	Jon Mangis, OR
7th	53-54	Oklahoma	William K. Barrett, GA	45th	92-93	Arkansas	Dale Renaud, IA
8th	54-55	Michigan	Floyd E. Henderson, ND	46th	93-94	North Dakota	Joseph R. Clelan, PA
9th	55-56	Kansas	Alexander J. Smith, VT	47th	94-95	New Mexico	Earl Peck, FL
10th	56-57	West Virginia	Gordon A. Huseby, WI	48th	95-96	Virginia	Michael C. D'Arco, NM
11th	57-58	Oregon	Charles L. Morris, TX	49th	96-97	Arizona	Norman O. Gallion, AZ
12th	58-59	Illinois	J. Marvin Russell, CA	50th	97-98	Mississippi	Antonio Davila, DE
13th	59-60	Alabama	James L. Crider, TN	51st	98-99	Wisconsin	Dennis Foell, SD
14th	60-61	Wisconsin	Lawrence J. LaLone, MI	52nd	99-00	Hawaii	Gen "Stoney" Wages, KS
15th	61-62	Tennessee	H.C. Saalfeld, OR	53rd	00-01	Puerto Rico	Walt Ozawa, HI
16th	62-63	California	Charles N. Collatos, MA	54th	01-02	Canceled - 9/11	Raymond G. Boland, WI
17th	63-64	New Jersey	James J. Murphy, AZ	55th	02-03	South Carolina	Raymond G. Boland, WI
18th	64-65	Florida	Pete Wheeler, GA	56th	03-04	Louisiana	Joey Strickland, LA
19th	65-66	Washington	Richard C. Manning, MD	57th	04-05	New York	Les Beavers, KY
20th	66-67	Louisiana	Wayne E. Garrett, KS	58th	05-05	Washington	John King, WA
21st	67-68	Massachusetts	Melvin L. Jacobsen, NV		05-06	Mid-year apt.	George Basher, NY
22nd	68-69	New Mexico	Lloyd F. Zander, ND	59th	06-07	Utah	John Garcia, NM
23rd	69-70	Virgin Islands	Walter C. Head, Jr., AL	60th	07-08	Maryland	John Scocos, WI
24th	70-71	Oregon	Robert R. Washburn, ME	61st	08-09	California	Charlie Smith, NC
25th	71-72	Kentucky	O.C. Ball, OK	62nd	09-10	North Carolina	Terry Schow, UT
26th	72-73	Maryland	Larry Laughridge, ID	63rd	10-11	Alabama	Linda Schwartz, CT
27th	73-74	Arkansas	Harry F. Carper, VA	64th	11-12	Oregon	David Fletcher, AR
28th	74-75	Arizona	Frank A. Schmidt, Jr., MI	65th	12-13	Puerto Rico	Jim Willis, OR
29th	75-76	Louisiana	A. Leo Anderson, DC	66th	13-14	Tennessee	W. Clyde Marsh, AL
30th	76-77	Illinois	Fiberto Ruiz, Jr., NM	67th	14-15	California	Lonnie Wangen, ND
31st	77-78	Nevada	Eryle A. Rohlesen, VI	68th	15-16	Florida	David Brasuell, ID
32nd	78-79	Pennsylvania	Ray J. Kauffman, IA	69th	16-17	Texas	Randy Reeves, MS
33rd	79-80	Texas	John H. Easton, MD	70th	17-18	Virgin Islands	Verdie Bowen, AK
34th	80-81	South Carolina	Frank Godwin III, MS	71st	18-19	Massachusetts	Alfie Alvarado, WA
35th	81-82	Louisiana	John Siemer, OH	72nd	19-20	Nebraska	John Hilgert, NE
36th	82-83	Virgin Islands	Joseph C. Anderson, NY	73rd	21-22	Nevada	Thomas Palladino, TX
37th	83-84	New York	Aubrey Bullard, TX	74th	22-23	Hawaii	Wanda Wright, AZ
38th	85-86	Alabama	Rich C. Countryman, AZ	75th	23-24	Midwinter - DC	James Hartsell, FL

\*Swearing in of EXCOM was moved to the Midwinter Conference in 2023





**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE DIRECTORS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, INC.  
BYLAWS**

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**ARTICLE I**  
**NAME**

Section 1. The name of the organization shall be the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs, Inc.

Section 2. The headquarters of the National Association shall follow the residence of the President of such National Association. The address of the National Association shall be the same as the address of the National President or as otherwise prescribed by the Association membership.

Section 3. All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs, Inc. 'Roberts Rules of Order, as Revised', shall govern all procedures not covered.

**ARTICLE II**  
**DEFINITIONS**

Section 1. The term 'Member' as used hereinafter is defined as follows: The Director of a State Department of Veterans Affairs of a State, Commonwealth, Territory, or the District Columbia. The State Service Officer or one holding a comparable position, or his/her designates, or, in the absence of any of the above-named persons, such persons as may be designated by the Governor of such State, Commonwealth or Territory or the Mayor of the District of Columbia and who shall have paid such dues as are hereinafter to be assessed. The person must be a full-time paid employee of the state or district he/she represents.

Section 2. The term 'Associate Member' as hereinafter used is defined as follows: An official or employee of a State Department of Veterans Affairs, or like group who shall have been approved and recommended by the member from his/her state and who shall have paid such dues as are hereinafter to be assessed, or an officer or member of a Veterans or Service organization recognized by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) or its successor.

Section 3. The term 'Honorary Member' as used hereinafter is defined as follows: Such former members previously qualified under Article II, Section 1, and such other persons who upon approval by a majority vote of President and Executive Committee, and Past Presidents are granted an Honorary Life Membership Card by the Secretary of the Association.

Section 4. All staff employees, commissioners and/or Board members directly associated with the respective offices of the members of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs shall be recognized as being non-voting members of NASDVA, in fact with no provision for a dues assessment.

Section 5. The President and Executive Committee shall resolve any questions concerning the eligibility of an applicant for membership in the Association.





## ARTICLE III PURPOSES

Section 1. The purposes of the National Association are to foster the effective representation of persons claiming entitlements on account of the honorable military service of any person as defined in 38 U.S.C. 101; to provide a medium for the exchange of ideas and information; to facilitate reciprocal State Services; to secure uniformity, equality, efficiency and effectiveness in providing services to veterans and their family members in all the States and Territories; and to maintain an interest in all veterans' legislation.

Section 2. The National Association recognizes the great worth and merit of all existing congressionally chartered veterans' organizations and asserts a willingness and determination to cooperate with such organizations. It further declares a deep and abiding interest in the welfare of all veterans and their families regardless of organizational affiliation or the lack of it.

## ARTICLE IV SUB-DIVISIONS OF ORGANIZATION

Section 1. The National Association shall be divided into five (5) districts comprised as follows:

**Northeast District:** Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

**Midwest District:** Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

**Southeast District:** Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

**Southwest District:** Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

**Far West District:** Alaska, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, American Samoa, Guam, and Northern Mariana Islands.

Each such district shall, from its own membership and while in caucus prior to or at the National Association Mid-Winter Training Conference, elect a District Vice President and such District Vice Presidents shall become members of the National Executive Committee. In each such district, a majority of district members or the official designee in good standing attending the National Association Annual Training Conference shall constitute a quorum.

Section 2. The District Vice President of each district, or their designated representative from the district, may be a member of the National Legislative Committee. The National Legislative Committee shall meet at the call of the designated Chair of the committee.

Section 3. The representative from each state within the district shall comprise the district committee. The District Vice President may call meetings of the district committee. The District Vice President should notify the National President prior to convening any such meetings. A report of such committee meetings shall be forwarded to the National Secretary for dissemination to the members at large.



**ARTICLE V**  
**ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Each state, after having paid such dues as are hereinafter assessed, shall be entitled to one member with a vote at each National Association Annual Training Conference and/or Mid-Winter Training Conference. Each Director or his/her designee with appropriate credentials is strongly encouraged and advised by National Association to actively participate in all district meetings, the Mid-Winter Training Conference, the Annual Training Conference, and meetings of any affiliated group that will benefit our constituents and NASDVA.

Section 2. There shall be a class of membership described as Associate Members which will be composed of officials and officers, or members of veterans or service organizations recognized by the United States Department of Veterans Administration (USDVA) or its successor, or employees of State Departments of Veterans Affairs or like groups. This class of member may, only upon recommendation or approval of the State Director or his/her equivalent, be an Associate Member of the National Association.

Section 3. Associate Members shall not be permitted to vote in National Association Annual or Mid-Winter Training Conferences or district caucuses but may be permitted to participated in the deliberations and discussions at the discretion of the presiding officer.

Section 4. There shall be an additional class of membership described as Honorary Members; such shall be composed of such individuals as described in Article II, Section 3.

Section 5. Honorary Members shall not be permitted to vote in National Association Annual or Mid-Winter Training Conferences or district caucuses but may be permitted to participated in the deliberations and discussions at the discretion of the presiding officer or committee chairman; all said deliberations and discussions are to be considered advisory only, both as to floor debate and committee session.

Section 6. All staff employees, commissioners and/or board members as described in Article II, Section 4 shall not be permitted to vote in National Association Conferences or district caucuses but may be permitted to participated in the deliberations and discussion at the discretion of the presiding officer.

**ARTICLE VI**  
**AUTHORITY**

Section 1. Absolute authority of the National Association shall be vested in the majority vote of the members at the National Association Annual or Mid-Winter Training Conferences.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall have authority in the interim between National Association Annual Training Conferences, with the advice and counsel of the states that may be affected by action(s) taken by the Executive Committee interests, to take such action as will be in the best interests of the National Association and for the good of veterans generally and shall implement the mandates of the previous National Association Annual or Mid-Winter Training Conference.

**ARTICLE VII**  
**QUORUMS AND PROXIES**

Section 1. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the paid-up members.



Section 2. Any member may, by written authority, empower another official or employee of his/her department or office to act as proxy in his/her stead at any meeting of the National Association.

Section 3. Any member may, by written authority, empower the official representative of another state to act as proxy in his/her stead at any meeting of the National Association.

Section 4. In the event a District Vice President is unavailable to attend an Annual or Mid-winter Training Conference, the District members will caucus to designate a representative for Executive Committee meetings.

### **ARTICLE VIII** **OFFICERS**

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the President, the Senior Vice President, the Junior Vice President, the five (5) District Vice Presidents, the Treasurer, the Secretary, the Historian, and all Past Presidents who are members of the Association.

Section 2. At the National Association Mid-Winter Training Conference, members shall elect the President, Senior Vice President, and Junior Vice President. These officers will be nominated by a committee consisting of the current President and Past Presidents who are members (Article II, Section 1) and the five District Vice Presidents. Prior to election, there will be a call for additional nominations from the membership. Officers will be elected by a majority vote to serve a one-year term or until the next Mid-Winter Training Conference. If no one candidate receives a majority vote on the first ballot, the association members will conduct a runoff election choosing between the two candidates who received the most votes from the first ballot. These officers cannot be elected to the same office twice, except one who is appointed as a result of a vacancy under the provisions of Article IX, Section 1, who then shall be eligible to seek election for a consecutive term. Only members as defined in Article II, Section 1 are eligible to hold elective office. Persons who become ineligible for membership cease to be eligible to hold elective office.

Section 3. The President with the approval of the Executive Committee shall appoint members, as defined in Article II, Section 1, to serve as Treasurer, Secretary, and Historian of the Association. They will serve until such time as the President with the approval of the Executive Committee appoints a new officer, the officer's appointment is terminated, or the officer resigns. Persons serving in these positions who become ineligible for membership shall be removed from the position.

Section 4. The Executive Committee shall, in addition to other duties assigned by the constitution, be responsible for information technology, fundraising, VSO relations, public affairs and policy development and implementation.

Section 5. A National Association President who may leave office prior to 30 days of tenure because of lack of membership qualification as defined in Article II, Section 1, shall be deemed not to have held office and shall not be recognized to have been a Past President of the National Association.

Section 6. All members of NASDVA who are veterans of the United States Armed Forces and are elected or appointed as officers of the Association shall certify in writing that all periods of their individual service in the United States Armed Forces is characterized as honorable service and that such certification shall be submitted to the NASDVA Secretary within thirty days of their election or appointment. If such certification is not submitted, the office shall be declared vacated and the Executive Committee shall immediately fill, by appointment with a qualified member, the vacated office for the remainder of the term of office.





### **ARTICLE IX** **VACANCIES**

Section 1. In the event the office of President shall become vacant for any reason, the Senior Vice President shall immediately assume the President's office; in the event the office of Senior Vice President shall become vacant the Junior Vice President shall assume the Senior Vice President's office. They shall serve in these positions until the remainder of the current term. Further, the Executive Committee shall be empowered to fill by appointment the vacated office of the Junior Vice President and solicit nominations from all members, as defined in Article II Section 1, to serve until the next scheduled conference of the Association. At the next conference, election for the Junior Vice President shall take place in accordance with Article VIII Section 1. If the appointed Junior Vice President assumes the vacant position of Senior Vice President prior to being elected by the members, then he/she serves until the next scheduled conference when an election will take place for Senior Vice President. Vacancies occurring among the District Vice Presidents shall be filled through election by and from the membership of the district affected. The President shall call an election as expeditiously as possible to fill the vacancy.

### **ARTICLE X** **DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

Section 1. The President shall be the executive head of the National Association. He/she shall be chairperson of the National Association Annual Training Conference and of the Executive Committee, and as such he/she will establish the agendas for the Annual Training Conference and Midwinter Training Conference. The President shall be authorized to appoint the membership of the standing committees and shall perform such other duties as are usually incident to the office of President. The President will appoint a member of the Veterans HealthCare and State Veterans Homes Committee as a liaison to the Association of State Veterans Homes. Any other position (appointed or elected) created by the President, or the body is to be approved by the Executive Committee at each Annual Training Conference. Districts will caucus when necessary.

Section 2. The Senior Vice President shall act as the representative of the President and shall serve in his/her stead upon request. He/she shall perform such duties as delegated by the President, which shall include chairing the Strategic Planning committee and coordinating with the Executive Committee and Committee Chairs to execute the NASDVA Strategic Plan.

Section 3. The Junior Vice President shall act as the representative of the President and shall serve in his/her stead upon request. He/she shall perform such duties as delegated by the President, which shall include chairing the Legislative Committee and assisting with the preparation of the annual testimony to the U.S. Congress.

Section 4. The Secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of all meetings of the National Association and of the Executive Committee and shall perform such other duties as are customarily required by his/her office. The Secretary shall compile and maintain association correspondence including Resolutions and Amendments to the Bylaws and an updated Directory of State Directors and a contact list of members, associate, and honorary members.

Section 5. The National Association Historian shall record, compile, and maintain a history of the National Association and manage historical documents in the NASDVA Dropbox. The historian will maintain an updated database of State best practices and veterans' benefits and services.

Section 6. The Treasurer is the National Association's top financial officer. Partnering with the President and Executive Director, he/she develops and administers the annual budget and provides financial reports to the



Executive Committee and the membership at the Annual and Mid-Winter Training Conferences. The Treasurer shall coordinate with the National Association's President, Executive Director, and contracted financial institution, for the disbursement of funds.

The Treasurer will ensure the National Association files taxes appropriately with the Internal Revenue Service and all states and territories so that it may retain its status as a non-profit organization. The Treasurer will annually register the National Association as a corporation.

Section 7. The District Vice Presidents (DVPs) shall be the executive head of their respective districts. DVPs should call for a district meeting at the Mid-Winter Training Conference, Annual Training Conference and one other time within their districts annually. Encourage networking among district representatives. Each of the five (5) District Vice Presidents will, in turn, also meet during the Mid-Winter Training Conference and the Annual Training Conference. Each shall be chair of the district meeting and prepare minutes of such meeting. A copy of the minutes shall be distributed to each member of the District and the Secretary of the National Association. Each shall be authorized to appoint the membership of such standing committees as the district may determine necessary. Each shall perform such other duties as are usually incident to the office of District Vice President. When the Annual Training Conference is held within their district, the DVP will be responsible for hosting any special accommodations at the conference and will be assisted by the other members of the district.

### **ARTICLE XI** **STANDING COMMITTEES**

The President of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs shall have the authority to form committees with concurrence of the majority of the Executive Committee. Additionally, the President shall designate membership and a Chair for all committees within sixty (60) days following each Annual Training Conference or after the establishment of a committee. If such chair's attendance is precluded at either the National Annual or Mid-Winter Training Conferences or unable to serve during the interim between conferences, another member of the committee shall be designated by the President as chair to perform the duties of that office as required. The President may appoint members or associate members to serve on the committees. For each committee there must be clear definitions established by the President as to duties and responsibilities. The list of standing committees will be annotated in the NASDVA Operations Manual.

### **ARTICLE XII** **RESOLUTIONS/MOU/MOA**

Section 1. Resolutions, Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), and Memorandums of Agreements (MOA) may be adopted by a vote of a majority of the members present at the National Association Annual Training Conference or Mid-Winter Training Conference.

Section 2. The Executive Committee, in the best interest of the Association shall have the authority in the interim between the National Association Annual Training Conference and Mid-Winter Training Conference to prepare resolutions, Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), and Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) that have not previously been considered by the membership and submit such resolutions/MOUs/MOAs to the association membership at the next NASDVA Training Conference.



**ARTICLE XIII**  
**ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE LOCATION SELECTION**

Section 1. The location of Annual Training Conferences will be determined by a majority vote at the Mid-Winter Training Conference business meeting of the preceding year (example: The 2009 Annual Training Conference will be determined at the 2008 Mid-Winter Training Conference). In the event that a state withdraws their offer to host a conference after it has been selected, the Executive Committee will select an alternate location.

Section 2. States that wish to host the Annual Training Conference will provide the President a letter of intent prior to the start of the Mid-Winter Training Conference business meeting. All states that wish to host the Annual Training Conference will be provided an opportunity to present information about their intentions prior to a vote.

Section 3. The location of the Mid-Winter Training Conference will be approved by the Executive Committee.

**ARTICLE XIV**  
**REPORTS AND RECORDS**

Section 1. It will be the responsibility of the National Association Secretary to furnish each member, within sixty (60) days of adjournment, a digest of the minutes of the business meetings held at the Annual and Mid-Winter Training Conferences to include all motions, resolutions and actions.

Section 2. The National Association Secretary will be responsible for the minutes of all Executive Committee meetings with distribution to the membership within 30 days.

Section 3. The Treasurer provides financial reports to the membership at the Annual and Mid-Winter Training Conferences.

Section 4. The National Association Secretary and Treasurer will keep all records current during his/her tenures. All records not of current value shall be retired and forwarded to the headquarters of the National Association for permanent storage.

Section 5. The National Association President is authorized to appoint a General Counsel annually.

**ARTICLE XV**  
**FINANCE**

Section 1. The membership dues of the National Association shall be established by a majority vote of the members during the Annual Training Conference or Mid-Winter Training Conference, with changes in the dues levels taking effect the following fiscal year. In the event no majority is reached, the dues level will remain the same. Honorary Members do not pay yearly membership dues but will pay Mid-Winter and Annual Conference registration member fees.

Section 2. Associate Members may, upon payment of their annual dues, participate as affiliate members. The dues for an Associate Member shall be established by a majority vote of the members during the Annual Training Conference or Mid-Winter Training Conference, with changes in the dues taking effect the following fiscal year.





Section 3. The Executive Committee shall establish the conference fees for the Annual and Mid-Winter Training Conferences.

Section 4. The fiscal year of the National Association shall run from October 1st each year to September 30th inclusive, of the next year. Dues should be paid to the National Association by the Annual Training Conference.

Section 5. An annual budget shall be prepared by the Finance and Audit Committee and submitted to the membership for approval at each Annual Training Conference.

Section 6. The Executive Committee may contract with an outside organization to manage NASDVA's funds and provide accounting services including membership dues, conference fees, sponsor donations, and all expenditures. This organization will provide quarterly financial reports and an annual audit of the funds to the NASDVA President, Executive Director and Treasurer.

### **ARTICLE XVI** **BONDING OF OFFICERS**

Section 1. The Treasurer of the National Association shall be bonded in the amount of \$10,000.00 for the faithful performance of his/her duties; such bond to be provided by a reputable commercial surety company, the expense of which shall be borne by the National Association. This bond shall be a type referred to as a 'position bond' and shall be secured for a period of three to five years to take advantage of reduction in premium over a one-year bond. It will be the responsibility of each newly elected President to notify the surety company which issued the current bond of the name and address of any newly appointed Treasurer.

### **ARTICLE XVII** **DISBURSEMENTS**

Section 1. An appropriation of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) from the National Association treasury may be made to the 'director-host' of each National Association Annual Training Conference of the National Association for the purpose of assisting to defray the necessary expenses of such convention. The Treasurer shall make this allowance available to the 'direct-host' prior to the actual dates of such National Association Annual Training Convention upon the receipt of the instruction and voucher from the President of the National Association. Each 'director-host' shall, no later than thirty (30) days after the adjournment of the National Association Annual Training Conference, forward to the Treasurer of the National Association any unexpended or unencumbered funds and a detailed written accounting of the expenditure of the National Association funds to the Executive Committee. When approved by the Executive Committee, this accounting of the expenditure of the National Association funds shall be submitted to the Executive Committee. When approved by the Executive Committee, this accounting shall be made part of the permanent records of the National Association in the custody of the Treasurer.

Section 2. The President of the NASDVA or his/her designated representative shall be provided an appropriation not to exceed a sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) to defray expenses for travel, hotel accommodations and other related expenses to events or meetings at which he/she represents the Association. This may include expenses incurred to attend the National Association Annual Training Conference and Mid-Winter Training Conference. This does not include expenses incurred for the luncheon at the Mid-Winter Training Conference, which will be paid by the Treasurer. The President or his/her



designated representative shall make an itemized accounting of any balance returned to the Treasurer. Member Directors who are designated representatives of the President shall submit a report on their assignment to the President for distribution to the membership.

Section 3. There is hereby established a discretionary fund of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) in each fiscal year which may be disbursed by direction of the President to meet unforeseen contingencies which may arise, and which are not provided for elsewhere in the Bylaws or other lawful action of the National Association. The fund may also be used to help defray travel costs to represent or conduct the business of NASDVA, to attend Executive Committee meetings providing the President officially calls the meeting. An itemized accounting shall be made to the Treasurer, which shall be noted in the annual financial report and reported to the membership.

Section 4. Employees: The President of the National Association shall be authorized to retain employees or contractors to meet the needs of the Association. The President shall oversee the hiring and termination of employees or contractors, with all hiring and termination decisions voted on by the Executive Committee. The President shall determine the appropriate level of compensation for employees or contractors, with all compensation decisions voted on by the Executive Committee. The President or their delegate will supervise all employees or contractors operating on behalf of the Association.

Section 5. The President and Executive Committee will retain an Executive Director for the National Association who reports to the President and Executive Committee and serves to support and conduct administration for the Executive Committee. He/she routinely informs the executive committee of the association's operational status, as well as advising members on strategies to accomplish the mission and goals. The Executive Director duties include facilitating executive committee meetings, overseeing daily operations of the association, managing the association's finances, including budgeting and account spending in coordination with the Treasurer and the contracted financial institution, develops fundraising for the organization, acts as the point of contact of the Annual and Mid-Winter Training Conferences, and represents the nonprofit with federal agencies, veteran organizations, and the public.

Section 5. At each National Association Annual Training Conference, the incumbent Treasurer, with the advice and counsel of the Finance/Audit Committee, will prepare an operating budget for the next fiscal year and present to the National Association Annual Training Conference for appropriate action.

Section 6. District Vice Presidents shall be provided a sum not to exceed a total of Seven Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$750.00) during any one term of office to assist in defraying incidental expenses incurred in conducting a district meeting or meetings or may be used to help defray travel costs to attend an Executive Meeting held at a time other than the Washington, D.C. Mid-Winter Training Conference or Annual Training Conference, provided the meeting is an officially called meeting by the President to conduct the business of NASDVA. An itemized accounting shall be made to the Treasurer, which shall be noted in the annual financial report and reported to the membership.

## **ARTICLE XVIII** **AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. These By-Laws may be amended at any National Association Annual Training Conference or Mid-Winter Training Conference by a majority vote of two-thirds of the members present provided the proposed amendment has been distributed in writing to all members of the National Association at least thirty (30) days prior to action thereon by the National Association. The proposed amendment may be delivered to members through standard mail, fax, or Email. Approved amendments will take effect immediately unless an effective date was established in their passage.



## **ARTICLE XIX** **RATIFICATION**

Section 1. All acts heretofore performed in connection with the organization and establishment of the National Association are hereby confirmed and ratified.

## **ARTICLE XX** **DISSOLUTION**

Section 1. Upon the dissolution of the association and after payment of all outstanding debts of the association, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

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Last amended on February 20, 2023, during the Business Meeting at the NASDVA Mid-Winter Training Conference.





### ***Cindy Spinner***

#### ***Regional Admissions Recruiter, Milton Hershey School***

Cindy Spinner has a background in communications and has worked closely with disadvantaged families for 16 years and has been with Milton Hershey School since 2003. Milton Hershey School is one of the world's best private schools, where qualifying students in pre-K through 12th grade live on campus and receive an exceptional educational experience—with all costs covered. Cindy will be sharing information about Milton Hershey School and the opportunities available to Military families.





**Rear Admiral Susan Orsega**

**Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary for Health and the U.S. Surgeon General**

Rear Admiral (RADM) Susan Orsega is the Senior Advisor to Assistant Secretary for Health (ASH) and Surgeon General (SG). She is the principal advisor to the ASH and SG on a full range of Office of the Assistant Secretary (OASH)/Office of Surgeon General (OSG) and U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps programs, policies and activities with a heavy focus on USPHS Commissioned Corps modernization and increased response to public health crises. She serves as the lead for the USPHS Commissioned Corps Legislative program and is responsible for establishing the first ever legislative liaison program. She advances interagency, equivalent military and public health partnerships to achieve the USPHS Commissioned Corps' mission.

RADM Orsega has held numerous leadership positions at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Prior to this assignment, she served as the Director of Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) (March 2019 to October 2021), where she was responsible for directing all functions regarding personnel, administration, operations, readiness, deployment, and policy for the 6,000 officers of the USPHS Commissioned Corps, Active and Ready Reserve components. In that role, she managed the activation of the largest deployment of the USPHS Commissioned Corps in support of international and national COVID-19 efforts. She was instrumental in the historic development of the Ready Reserve Corps. RADM Orsega served as Acting Surgeon General from January 26, 2021 to March 25, 2021 pending the Senate confirmation of Dr. Vivek H. Murthy as the 21st Surgeon General (SG). She served as the USPHS Commissioned Corps Chief Nurse Officer from May 2016 to October 2019, advising the SG on the recruitment, deployment, and career development for nursing and providing leadership to 4,500 USPHS Commissioned Corps nurses and HHS nurse civilians.

RADM Orsega's career spans over 33 years in the USPHS Commissioned Corps. Commissioned in 1989, she was assigned to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) when the HIV/AIDS epidemic was unfolding. She continued to advance her nursing and scientific knowledge in her NIH assignments with an emphasis on practice, leadership and operations. From 2001 to 2019, she was assigned to National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)/NIH. From 2007 to 2019, she was responsible for the operational management of two NIAID projects with South African and Malian Governments; involving international health care professionals that provided research to over research participants in both countries who would otherwise not receive treatment.



### ***Dale Bird***

### ***Director, Turnkey Products Customer Success, Tyler Technologies***

Dale Bird is an Army Veteran and expert in human resources and EEO laws and regulations in both the corporate and federal markets. Since joining Tyler Technologies in 2005, he has been instrumental in developing workforce management products, user forums, and the annual 462 & Federal Workforce Symposium. He now manages client success for Tyler's workforce case management portfolio, including the Veterans' Benefits application. Previously he led training, consulting, and customer service teams at a variety of companies in the engineering, finance, and software fields.







### **Steve Cone, Chief of Communications, Marketing, and Philanthropy, Capital Caring Health**

Steve Cone is Chief of Communications, Marketing, and Philanthropy at Capital Caring Health. In this role, he provides leadership to increase public and brand awareness of Capital Caring Health, and he also oversees the organization's philanthropic activities and develops strategies to enhance the organization's impact and reach.

Prior to his role with Capital Caring Health, Steve co-managed a data consulting and marketing services firm headquartered in New York. From 2015 to 2017, Steve was Chief Revenue Officer of the American Bar Association and from 2010 through June 2015, Steve was AARP's Executive Vice President responsible for all membership activities and partnerships with corporations across America.

With more than 45 years of senior-level marketing and fundraising experience, he has created or led efforts to develop many national loyalty programs including United's MileagePlus®, Hyatt's Gold Passport, and Saks Fifth Avenue's, SaksFirst rewards program.

Steve has provided marketing services to major organizations including Apple, American Express, FedEx, Memorial Sloan-Kettering, and the San Diego Zoo. Steve has also led marketing campaigns for environmental groups like The Nature Conservancy and the World Wildlife Fund. He has also provided marketing support to presidential campaigns for both major parties.

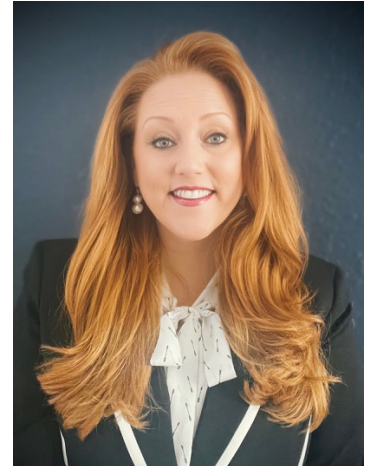


## **Amy Wegel**

### ***Government Accounts Relationship Manager, Zeel***

Amy Wegel is a passionate relationship builder, change leader, and culture & people motivator, recognized for her outstanding contributions to the fields of massage therapy and Veterans health. As a respected professional with over a decade leading teams in the health & wellness field, Amy's dedication to her work and the Veteran community shines through in every endeavor she undertakes.

Amy currently serves as the Government Accounts Relationship Manager for Zeel, a tech enabled healthcare company delivering in-home massage and tele-behavioral therapy to treat and manage physical and mental pain. Zeel is the US's only licensed medical practice for in-home massage treatments on a national scale, working in concert with TriWest & Optum to serve the entire VA Community Care Network.



Amy has played a pivotal role in introducing and leading Zeel's in-home therapy programs to VA Medical Center's across the country, offering non-opioid pain management solutions by providing ~40,000 treatments to Veterans in the past 20 months. More than 90% of the Veterans treated by Zeel report massage therapy has reduced or eliminated their pain, and over 51% of these veterans report a reduced reliance on, or total elimination of pain medication use. Amy is passionate about Zeel's mission & it is personal for her as the proud wife of an OIF/OEF Army veteran.

Prior to Zeel, Amy held significant leadership roles in various organizations, including The Walt Disney Company, Ulta Beauty, Elements Therapeutic Massage, and Innovative Spa Management. She is known for reorganizing struggling operations by instilling accountability & process control, along with building high performing teams. She has additionally served on the Advisory Board for Heritage College & Institute.

Apart from her professional endeavors, Amy volunteers as a mentor for transitioning veterans and their spouses with ACP, as well as volunteering her time at Give Kids The World Village, an all-inclusive village where over 150,000 terminally ill children have had their "Make-a-Wish" dream vacation come true.



### ***J. Michael Haynie, Ph.D.***

#### ***Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives and Innovation, Syracuse University***

Dr. Mike Haynie is Syracuse University's Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives and Innovation, and also the Barnes Professor of Entrepreneurship. In 2018, Syracuse University named Haynie a University Professor, the most senior rank awarded to faculty at the University.

As Vice Chancellor, Dr. Haynie leads a broad portfolio of responsibility centers and innovation initiatives, including the University's robust portfolio of entrepreneurship and innovation programs, and cross-campus efforts to develop and enhance academic offerings for online and nontraditional students. Haynie also oversees the University's government and community engagement strategy, as well as defense- and veteran-connected programs and initiatives across the Institution.



In 2011, Haynie founded the D'Aniello Institute for Veterans & Military Families (IVMF) at Syracuse University, the nation's first interdisciplinary institute created to inform and advance the policy, economic, and wellness concerns of the America's veterans and families. Today IVMF programs serve over 25,000 veterans annually, and the Institute is widely acknowledged as the nation's leading academic voice related to issues impacting veterans and military-connected families. In 2013, Dr. Haynie's efforts on behalf of veterans were the subject of a feature story by the CBS news magazine 60 Minutes, titled "Succeeding as Civilians."

Haynie is regarded as one of the world's leading scholars related to entrepreneurial decision-making and strategy, and his research has been published in many of the world's leading entrepreneurship and business journals. Dr. Haynie currently serves on the editorial review boards of the Journal of Business Venturing, the Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal, the Journal of Management Studies, and is an associate editor for the Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health. Over the past decade, his academic work has consistently garnered significant federal, state, foundation, and philanthropic funding.

Haynie completed his PhD in Entrepreneurship and Business Strategy at the University of Colorado at Boulder, his MBA at the University of Oregon, and his undergraduate degree in Political Science from the University of Delaware. Before beginning his academic career at Syracuse University, Haynie served for 14 years as an officer in the United States Air Force.





## ***Department of Veterans Affairs***

### ***Senior Executive Biography***

***Shereef Elnahal, M.D., M.B.A.***

***Under Secretary for Health***

Dr. Shereef Elnahal is Under Secretary for Health at the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). He was nominated by President Joseph R. Biden and confirmed by the United States Senate on July 21, 2022. As the Under Secretary for Health, Dr. Elnahal directs a health care system with an annual budget of approximately \$102.2 billion, overseeing the delivery of care to more than 9 million enrolled Veterans. The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is the largest integrated health care system in the United States, providing care at over 1,300 health care facilities, including 171 VA Medical Centers and 1,120 outpatient sites of care of varying complexity (VHA outpatient clinics). VHA is the nation's largest provider of graduate medical education and a major contributor to medical and scientific research. More than 73,000 active volunteers, 127,000 health professions trainees, and more than 362,000 health care professionals and support staff are an integral part of the VHA community.



Dr. Elnahal is physician leader who previously served as President and Chief Executive Officer of University Hospital in Newark, NJ from 2019 through 2022. Dr. Elnahal led University Hospital through the COVID-19 public health emergency. The hospital has served as a model for urban hospital and regional response efforts. In addition to his leadership during the pandemic, Dr. Elnahal oversaw substantial improvements in care quality and patient safety at University Hospital, leading to improvements against national benchmarks.

Prior to his time at University Hospital, Elnahal served as New Jersey's 21st Health Commissioner, appointed to the Cabinet post by Governor Phil Murphy and confirmed unanimously by the New Jersey Senate. During his nearly two years as Commissioner, he expanded the New Jersey Health Information Network, an interoperability platform that allows for electronic exchange of patient health information among healthcare providers. He worked closely with New Jersey First Lady Tammy Murphy on her Nurture NJ campaign to help improve infant and maternal health outcomes and reduce health disparities—a mission he continued at University Hospital, with its top tier maternal health services. He also made strides in curbing the opioid epidemic, granting funding to institutions to facilitate data sharing and public health reporting, and marked NJ as the first state in the nation to allow EMS responders to use buprenorphine in the field to prevent withdrawal after naloxone.

Dr. Elnahal previously served as VA's Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Quality, Safety, and Value from 2016 through 2018, overseeing national policies around quality of care for the VHA, and as a White House Fellow in the VA from 2015-16. During that time, he co-founded the VHA Innovation Ecosystem, a program that continues to foster the spread of innovation and best practices that improve Veteran care across the nation.

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



### **George Lutz**

#### ***Founder and Executive Director, Honor and Remember, Inc.***

George Lutz is the founder and executive director of Honor and Remember Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to perpetually recognizing our fallen Military heroes and their families. Through the creation of the Honor and Remember Flag the organization's mission is to establish a public national symbol that recognizes with gratitude and respect the men and women who died in military service to America. Further goals include broad national awareness and education of the flag's meaning and importance and to present personalized Honor and Remember Flags to the immediate families of all our nation's fallen. George is the father of Corporal Tony Lutz, who was killed in Falujah, Iraq in 2005 and who is the inspiration for the Honor and Remember Flag.





## **Bonnie Carroll**

### ***TAPS President and Founder, Surviving spouse of Army Brig. Gen. Tom Carroll***

Bonnie Carroll is a 2015 recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. She is a military veteran, the surviving spouse of the Brigadier General Tom Carroll, a former staffer in the Reagan and Bush White Houses, and the President and Founder of the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), the leading national Military Service Organization providing compassionate care, casework assistance, and 24/7/365 emotional support for all those impacted by the death of a military loved one. Ms. Carroll founded TAPS following the death of her husband in an Army C-12 plane crash on Nov. 12, 1992.



Ms. Carroll served in Baghdad, Iraq, as the Deputy Senior Advisor for Programs in the Ministry of Communications. In that capacity, she managed the execution of a quarter-billion dollars in U.S. supplemental funds for the reconstruction of the telecommunications capability in Iraq, the modernization of the postal service, and creation of the Iraq Communications and Media Commission. She continues to work with Iraqi surviving families facing traumatic loss.

Before going to Iraq, Ms. Carroll was appointed to be the White House Liaison for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in Washington, D.C. Prior to this appointment, she served as director of the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) and ensured the development of programs to aid families coping with a traumatic loss in the military.

Carroll retired as a Major in the Air Force Reserve following 30 years of service, where her career included service as Chief, Casualty Operations, HQ USAF. Her last assignment was on the HQ USAF National Security and Emergency Preparedness staff in the Pentagon. Prior to joining the USAFR, Major Carroll served 16 years in the Air National Guard as a Transportation Officer, Logistics Officer, and Executive Officer.

Ms. Carroll holds a degree in Public Administration and Political Science from American University and a degree in Equine Science from Springfield College. She has completed Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government's Executive Leadership Program on International Conflict Resolution, and is a graduate of several military service schools, including the USAF Logistics Officer Course, Squadron Officers School, Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, Academy of Military Science (Distinguished Graduate), and USAF Basic Training (Honor Graduate).

Ms. Carroll has served on the Board of Directors of the Association of Death Education and Counseling, the Department of Defense Military Family Readiness Council, the VA Advisory Committee on Disability Compensation, and is past co-chair of the Department of Defense Task Force on the Prevention of Suicide by Members of the Armed Forces. She currently serves on the Defense Health Board and the Board of the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America.





### ***Bryan Escobedo***

#### ***Executive Director, Technology & Innovation, Combined Arms***

Bryan is the Product Owner of Combined Arms' technology. He currently leads the organization's Technology & Innovation Department as well as all national expansion efforts, serving as the chief consultant to states seeking to establish a data-driven collaborative model for social impact. Most recently, Bryan became a 2023 Presidential Scholar at the G.W. Bush Presidential Center through the Stand To Veteran Leadership Program.

In 2003, Bryan enlisted into the United States Marine Corps as a Combat Engineer. He completed three tours in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He attained the rank of Sergeant and was awarded the Purple Heart, Navy Achievement Medal, and Combat Action Ribbon. Bryan returned to his hometown of Houston, Texas to pursue a degree in Communications, with minors in both Philosophy & Psychology, from the University of Houston-Downtown.



In 2010, while in college, Bryan started to apply his military leadership to community leadership. He started five veteran-focused nonprofit programs and delivered lectures centered on developing a positive post-military identity. Bryan specializes in blending software and collaborative community strategy to create large scale networks of veteran-services.



## Department of Veterans Affairs

### Senior Executive Biography

#### **Lourdes Tiglao**

*Director, Center for Women Veterans  
Office of the Secretary*

Lourdes Tiglao serves as primary advisor to the Secretary on Department policies, programs, and legislation that affect women Veterans. In addition, she oversees the Center's activities, which include monitoring and coordinating VA's administration of health care, benefits, services, and programs for women Veterans; serving as an advocate for cultural transformation (both within VA and in the general public) in recognizing the service and contributions of women Veterans and servicemembers; and raising awareness of the responsibility to treat women Veterans with dignity and respect.



Prior to joining the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), she was the Global Partnerships Manager at Airbnb's Open Homes (now Airbnb.org) program, overseeing a globally distributed team and a portfolio of 70+ nonprofit, private sector, and international aid agencies across six continents. She focused on strategy, standards and processes, and strategic partnerships both domestically and globally, while helping to lead the Veterans Employee Resource Group (ERG)'s functional area in engagement.

Her background traverses sectors in the military, federal, and nonprofit organizations, spanning over a decade in leadership roles as mentor, educator, and manager in the US Air Force (USAF) and the nonprofit environment across business, communications, and healthcare.

During her military tenure, she utilized her medical expertise to help save lives during her extensive critical care air & ground transport experience globally on the Critical Care Air Transport Team (CCATT). She deployed to multiple locations including Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, and others. Her final assignment was in Okinawa, Japan, where she helped launch the very first Critical Care Medical Attendant Team (CCMAT), which provides critical care medical evacuation services. The effort also officially integrated Naval personnel on the team as a joint force effort to serve the Pacific region.

After transitioning from the military, Ms. Tiglao developed her disaster skills with Team Rubicon, a veteran-led non-profit disaster response organization, deploying with the organization during Hurricane Sandy in New York and Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. She later became Team Rubicon Global Strategic Partnerships Officer, connecting the network with government and organizations around the world. A staunch veteran advocate, she is a former member on the MyVA Advisory Board for the US Department of Veterans Affairs and has sat on several veteran-focused boards to improve service access for minority veterans and enhance their lives through the arts. She has spoken on topics ranging from nonprofit management, medicine, Veteran reintegration, humanitarian response, and volunteer mobilization globally, including at the Philippine Embassy,



### *Department of Veterans Affairs*

#### *Senior Executive Biography*

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##### **James Wartski**

*Executive Director, Veterans, Family, and Community Engagement Directorate,  
Veterans Experience Office*

Jim serves as the Executive Director for the Veterans, Family, and Community Engagement (VFCE) Directorate of the Veterans Experience Office (VEO). He leads his team in fostering relationships with community partners and stakeholders, setting the standards for delivering excellent customer experience to Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. Through a collaborative effort, VFCE provides Veterans Experience Action Centers (VEAC) that enhance the customer experience across the VA. VEAC events bring together representatives from VA, state, and community partners - local and non-profit organizations - to connect service members, Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors, with one-on-one personalized assistance in both virtual and in person settings, as well as a combined dynamic hybrid model. VEACs provide services, resources, and information, including VA benefits and health care, crisis support, memorial affairs, and peer-to-peer connections to Veterans, families, caregivers, survivors, and transitioning service members. VEACs are designed to improve engagement and assistance to underserved Veterans, including women, homeless, seniors, and rural. The future of VEACs is currently underway as Jim and his team continue to lead the way in increasing the VA's ability to serve more Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors, by expanding VEACs through a scalable Train-the-Trainer model, empowering other VA facilities working in collaboration across the enterprise to plan and execute their own VEAC events.



Jim entered the United States Military Academy through the Preparatory School (USMAPS) and graduated West Point in 1982. As a commissioned Second Lieutenant assigned to the Armor Branch, Jim was stationed at 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (Mechanized), First Brigade, 1-40<sup>th</sup> Armor Battalion. His assignments included Platoon Leader, Company Executive Officer and Battalion Adjutant. During his tenure with 5<sup>th</sup> Mechanized Division, Jim served on two National Training Center rotations and a REFORGER Exercise in Europe. Jim then returned to Fort Knox, KY with assignments as the Force Integration/Development officer at the Directorate of Combat Developments. Jim served an extended Troop Command as the Commander of B-Troop, 2-10 Cavalry, 194<sup>th</sup> Separate Armored Brigade, XVIII Airborne. Missions included Heavy Armor Support to Rapid Deployment Forces (First Heavy Armor on the Ground). Later Jim served in the Tank Systems Management office responsible for classified briefings on the Abrams Tank. After additional schooling, Jim was assigned to Orlando, Florida as the Project Director for Tank Training Devices. Jim's experience and knowledge spans tanks from the M-48A5 to the present state of technology with the M-1A2 Abrams. Jim served as an officer for five years with the US Army Reserves as a Corps of Engineers project officer with worldwide missions. Being close to his alma-mater, Jim served as the liaison officer for the Admissions Department back at West Point. Jim was then mobilized to serve as an Engineering and Facility Consultant on the Command Group at Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC), Washington, DC. He remained at WRAMC for two-years through the transition to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center at Bethesda, Maryland. Jim retired at the rank of Colonel. In the private sector, Jim held leadership roles in private corporations, Industrial Data Link (a San Diego, California based company), Lockheed Martin Information Systems, Walt Disney Company. Jim retired from The Walt Disney Company in May 2015.





**Bill Biggs**

**CEO and President, Health Management Resources Veterans Services, Inc.**



William S. “Bill” Biggs, President of Health Management Resources Veterans Services, Inc. With more than two decades of health care experience and more than 15 years of serving the health care needs of veterans, Mr. Biggs oversees the daily operations of the HMRVSI managed facilities. He is a veteran of the United States Army and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Health Care Management from Southern Illinois University.

As a former President of the South Carolina Health Care Association and current Board Member, Mr. Biggs takes special care to remain responsive to developments and changes in the Long Term Care industry and the Veterans Administration. An active member of the National Association of State Veterans Homes and the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs, Mr. Biggs ensures that HMRVSI remains attentive to the needs of the states that we serve and support.

Mr. Biggs remains active in local Veterans Service organizations as a life member of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Disabled American Veterans. In 2001, Mr. Biggs was selected as the Legionnaire of the Year by American Legion Post 184, a post that he helped to organize. In 2001, South Carolina Governor Jim Hodges appointed him to the State Veterans Trust Fund Board of Directors which he chaired.

Mr. Biggs is very involved in continuing education as a member of the Coastal Carolina University Board of Trustees in his home state of South Carolina.



### ***Don Weber***

#### ***Founder and CEO, Weber Health Logistics***

Don Weber is an entrepreneur, philanthropist, and exemplary supporter of our military—but he is proudest to be known simply as a Wisconsin farm boy and Marine. Weber's goal has always been threefold: to create local jobs, support our men and women who serve, our veterans and their families and strengthen our communities.

Weber has been a health care innovator creating businesses that have grown to be some of the most trusted health care providers to the United States Department of Defense. He is also the founder of The Weber Group, a La Crosse, Wisconsin company that employs over 500 in the service industry, health care and various business entrepreneurial endeavors. Over the past two decades Weber has founded several additional businesses that have helped grow the economic base in Wisconsin including Weber Health Logistics and Riverside Corporate Wellness. All of his business efforts have a focus on health, wellness, and providing quality no-cost health care to his employees, recognizing them as a valuable resource.



Weber was also founder of Freedom Fest, a fundraiser which throughout its duration raised more than half a million dollars for Veterans' causes. Weber continues to maintain an endowment fund which began in tandem with Freedom Fest, providing college scholarships to Veterans and their families. Other philanthropic efforts include his personal daily deliveries of meals to unsheltered individuals and families. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Don could be found at the noon hour in the local La Crosse parks, not only delivering meals, but giving sincere words of encouragement and support.

Weber is a United States Marine Corps Vietnam War Combat Veteran. For his distinguished military service, he has received many awards, among them the Purple Heart and two Bronze Stars.



## ***Marta Wray***

### ***CapTel Field Marketing Programs Manager, Heroes with Hearing Loss***

Marta lives in Richmond, VA and is the National CapTel Field Marketing Programs Manager for Hamilton CapTel. She divides her time between Hamilton CapTel's Heroes With Hearing Loss, Hearing Healthcare, and Senior Care programs to educate and assist professionals with real life solutions to provide a direct impact on their veterans, patients, or residents while creating an indirect impact on their businesses, objectives and communities they live in. She combines her personal and professional experiences throughout each program to create lasting relationships with professionals, customers, and colleagues she works with. She is driven by her passion for helping others and commitment to making a difference in the lives of those who have hearing loss.



Working with veterans and their families has a special place in her heart. She comes from a family with a long line of service to our country. She has two grandfathers who were World War Two Army veterans, her father is an Army veteran, her father and brother in-law are Air Force veterans, along with her uncle who is an Air Force veteran, and his son is a retired Air Force veteran. Her brother is a retired Air Force veteran while his wife is still serving in the Air Force.

Marta has been with Hamilton CapTel since June 2011. Her background prior to joining Hamilton CapTel is in healthcare/high-end rehab devices and sales & marketing. She holds her B.S. in Business-Human Resource Management. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, paddle boarding, live music and visiting the beach whenever possible.





### ***Department of Veterans Affairs***

### ***Senior Executive Biography***

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#### ***Stephanie Birdwell, MSW***

#### ***Director, Office of Tribal Government Relations***

Stephanie Elaine Birdwell is the Department of Veterans Affairs' Director, Office of Tribal Government Relations (OTGR), which is located within the Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs. The VA OTGR was established in 2011 as part of the agency's effort to implement the VA tribal consultation policy and enhance relationships with 566 tribal governments located in 38 states.



Ms. Birdwell has twenty years experience working in Indian Affairs, at both the federal and tribal government levels. She began her federal career as a social worker with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Northern Pueblos Agency in New Mexico. Ms. Birdwell moved on from the agency social service program to serve as the BIA southwest regional social worker (Albuquerque, NM) and BIA division chief, human services at the headquarters level (Washington, D.C.). She also served in various leadership and management capacities (BIA Southwest Regional Office Acting Deputy Director, Indian Services; BIA Central Office Acting Assistant to the Deputy Bureau Director, Office of Indian Services; BIA Central Office Acting Assistant to the Deputy Bureau Director, Office of Trust Services, Bureau of Indian Education Deputy Director, Policy, Evaluation and Post Secondary Education) within DOI/BIA/BIE and was selected to participate in the DOI Senior Executive Candidate Development Class #16. Along the way, she served for two years with the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census managing field operations in New Mexico, Utah and Navajo Nation during the 2000 Decennial "undercount" survey.

Ms. Birdwell earned her Master's Degree in Social Welfare from the University of California at Berkeley and her Bachelor's Degree in Journalism from the University of Oklahoma.

On a personal note, she is an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma, where she was born and raised, and is mother to twin daughters. Ms. Birdwell was inspired to become a social worker by her father, Dwight Birdwell, a Vietnam Veteran.



### ***Nadhal Eadeh***

#### ***Senior Vice President of Federal Relations, WellHive***

Nadhal Eadeh joined WellHive in April of 2019 to lead the technology company's marketing, strategy, congressional outreach, and government services portfolio. In his previous role, Nadhal spent 11 years at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and served under multiple Under Secretary for Benefits (USB). In his last position, Nadhal served as the Special Assistant and Intergovernmental and Veteran Service Organization liaison for the USB. Still active in Veterans issues, Mr. Eadeh serves as President of Veterans' Voice of America, an affiliate of Vietnam Veterans of America. He is the recipient of the 2021 National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs "Dedicated Advocate for Veterans" President's award.

Nadhal earned his Master's degree from the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University and his bachelor's degree from John Carroll University.





### ***Zaneta Inez Adams***

#### ***Deputy Assistant Secretary for Intergovernmental Affairs***

As Deputy Assistant Secretary, Ms. Adams provides strategic advice and guidance to the OPIA Assistant Secretary, Secretary, Undersecretaries for Health, Benefits and Memorial Affairs, and all other VA staff offices by fostering and enhancing government partnerships and acting as liaison between VA and the White House, federal, state, county, municipal, tribal, insular and international governments, rural and faith-based communities.

Prior to being named Deputy Assistant Secretary, Ms. Adams served as Director of the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency under Gov. Gretchen Whitmer from June 2019 thru December 2022. She was the first woman Veteran in Michigan history to be appointed to a governor's cabinet position.



In 2006, after eight years of enlisted service in the U.S. Army, National Guard and Reserve, Adams was medically discharged with honor. During her time in the military, Adams served as a Joint Counter Narcotics Task Force Agent for the National Guard. Prior to her appointment to the MVAA, she was an attorney at Williams Hughes PLLC, assisting Veterans with compensation and pension appeals.

Adams has consistently demonstrated leadership through service and board membership. She is the former President and founded WINC For All Women Veterans. She recently served on the advisory board for Fisher House Michigan and as a board member for the USS Silversides Submarine Museum, Mercy Health Physician Partners and Challenge America. She was also an appointed member of the VA's Sexual Harassment and Assault Prevention Workgroup.

In 2021, Adams was named a Women Veteran Trailblazer by the VA's Center for Women Veterans. She also recently told her story for a VA's Million Veteran Program documentary, which was recently submitted for a regional Emmy. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Columbia College and a Juris Doctor from Western Michigan Cooley Law School, where she also taught veterans' law as an adjunct professor. She has been married to Joseph Adams, an Army Veteran for over 23 years and has 6 children (including 2 sets of twins).





## **Reuben Dickenson** ***Strategic Partnerships Leader, Telemetry***

Hailing from Kentucky originally, Reuben attended West Point, graduating with an engineering degree in 1984, then served in Army Aviation as a commissioned officer stationed in Germany. Reuben left the military in 1990, and attended Vanderbilt University where he received his Masters of Engineering in 1992. He then joined GE Healthcare where he led multiple teams over the course of 14 years in Imaging, Cardiology and IT-related strategic alliances. Reuben then moved to Thermo Fisher, learned the Life Sciences space, and led multiple commercial teams in North and Latin America. Reuben has since then worked with several startup companies and has founded 2 companies.

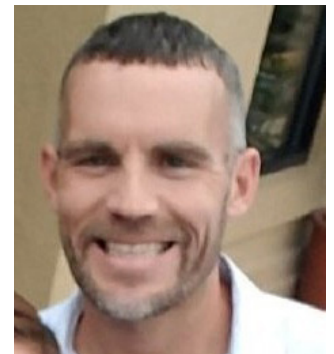


Reuben, his wife Laura are residents of Huntsville, AL and have 4 great kids – Julia (Auburn grad, Fulbright Scholar in Poland, field biotech scientist), Dabney (TN Tech, college golfer, Boeing Engineer), Russell (recent graduate: UT-Chattanooga) and Robert (United States Naval Academy Midshipman, future Naval Officer).

In his spare time, Reuben enjoys general fitness activities, as well as the farm he and Laura own locally and finally and serving in a variety of military-related roles: District Coordinator for his congressional district for Admissions (USMA), and active member of his church and community. Reuben has a passion for helping improve the mental health care crisis for those in need – especially for those who serve and their loved ones.

## **Eric Sexton** ***Commercial Account Manager, Telemetry***

Eric Sexton comes from a background in the U.S. Coast Guard and sales. Eric spent 8 years as an Aviation Survival Technician, focused on search and rescue of trapped civilians all across the US from a MH-60 Jayhawk. He was commissioned in North Carolina and stationed both there and in Oregon, with many survival schools throughout. Eric has a long family history of military service across all branches—to name a few, his grandfathers served in the Air Force and Marine Corps, and his dad served in the Navy during the Vietnam War. Eric is passionate on both a personal and professional level about raising awareness around mental healthcare for our service members and veterans.



Eric left the military in 2009 and has spent the last decade and a half pursuing his own education under the G.I. Bill (while working at the Veteran's Certification Office at UTSA), working in technology sales, and coaching group fitness with all that he learned through the military's rigorous fitness regimens, all while raising a family. Eric is the proud father of his 11-year-old son Liam and his 3-year old daughter Rylee, who he is raising alongside his wonderful wife Jessica while she pursues a JD at St. Mary's Law School in Texas.

Outside of work, Eric loves to swim (a skill heavily utilized in the USCG), run with his Rhodesian Ridgeback named Rocky, and play bass guitar, a skill he hopes one of his kids will pick up. Eric is proud of his military background and understands the challenges and mental health struggles that can come with this career. He hopes to help many veterans and service members reach their highest potential mentally, physically, and emotionally.



### ***Pete Jeffries, MBA***

#### ***National Director, Strategic Campaigns & Integrated Management, AARP***

Pete Jeffries leads the Strategic Campaigns & Integrated Management Team for AARP, America's largest membership organization with 38 million people. Pete's role includes driving team success through nationwide issues advocacy, brand building and voter engagement at the national, state and local levels, particularly in the areas of financial and health security for 50+ Americans.

Known for his strategic leadership and organizational management, Pete previously served as National Director for AARP's Veterans and Military Families (VMF) Initiative which delivers a suite of value-added and award-winning products and services on caregiving, fighting fraud, and securing employment unmatched in the non-profit Veterans marketplace. As a Veteran Caregiver Survivor for his U.S. Army Korean War Combat Father, Pete has walked the journey firsthand with the unique challenges facing Military Veteran Caregivers across the country.



Prior to AARP, Pete served as a senior Congressional Leadership staffer under two Speakers of the U.S. House of Representatives and then ran Hill & Knowlton's Public Affairs Practice based in Washington, DC. Pete and his wife Kristin, both University of Iowa grads, now live west of Des Moines in central Iowa and have two children – a Hawkeye senior majoring in Business Marketing and a high school senior who's a National Champion competitive cheerleader.



## *Department of Veterans Affairs*

### *Senior Executive Biography*

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#### **Matthew T. Quinn**

##### ***Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs***

The Honorable Matthew T. Quinn was nominated by President Biden, and confirmed by the Senate on June 17, 2021, to serve as the 7th Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs. He leads 155 VA national cemeteries and 119 VA grant funded state and tribal Veteran cemeteries in providing a dignified burial in national shrines for Veterans and eligible family members.

His responsibilities include maintaining the cemeteries as national shrines; design and construction activities related to the establishment of new national cemeteries; overseeing memorial programs to honor the service of Veterans, including the provision of headstones, markers, medallions and Presidential Memorial Certificates; and administering federal grants to help states, territories and tribal governments establish Veterans cemeteries.

Additional responsibilities include NCA's evolving programs to modernize memorialization of Veterans through its Veterans Legacy Memorial and Veterans Legacy Program initiatives. These programs utilize modern technology and collaboration with educational professionals and students to tell the stories of the nearly 4 million Veterans interred in VA cemeteries.

He is a retired Major General having served nearly 37 years in the Army and Army National Guard, culminating in his selection as the 27th Adjutant General for the State of Montana. As commander of the Montana National Guard and Director of the Department of Military Affairs, he was responsible for state disaster and emergency management, homeland security, and Veterans affairs. Between June 2019 and January 2021, he was president of the Adjutants General Association of the United States.

Prior to selection as Adjutant General, he was president of ELM Locating and Utility Services, while serving in the Montana National Guard as a traditional (drill status) Guardsman.

Quinn served as commander of A Company, 34th Signal Battalion in Operation Desert Storm, 1991 and commander of the 495th Transportation Battalion in Operation Iraqi Freedom, 2003-2004. He is the recipient of numerous military awards, including the Distinguished Service Medal, the Bronze Star (with one bronze oak leaf cluster), and the Meritorious Service Medal (with three bronze oak leaf clusters).

Quinn earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Montana State University, a Master of Business Administration from the University of Montana, and a Master of Strategic Studies from the US Army War College.







### ***Department of Veterans Affairs***

### ***Senior Executive Biography***

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#### ***Joshua Jacobs***

#### ***Senior Advisor for Policy Performing the Delegable Duties of the Under Secretary for Benefits***

Joshua Jacobs serves as the Senior Advisor for Policy Performing the Delegable Duties of the Under Secretary for Benefits. In this role, he leads more than 25,000 Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) employees in the delivery of non-medical benefits programs. VBA provides disability compensation benefits to nearly 6 million Veterans and their survivors and administers pension benefits for over 350,000 Veterans and their survivors. Through a nationwide network of 56 regional offices, special processing centers, and VBA Headquarters, he oversees the execution of nearly \$135 billion in direct benefits to Veterans and their dependents.



Josh previously served as Senior Advisor for Policy in the Office of the Secretary, where he helped to design and implement a new structure and process for enterprise governance and policy development. In this role, Josh established and chaired a new Evidence Based Policy Council, which meets on a regular basis to drive enterprise policy making. Josh also developed a new interagency policy development process to coordinate and implement more than 50 interagency policy efforts.

Prior to rejoining VA in 2021, Josh Jacobs was a Senior Associate at Booz Allen Hamilton. From 2013 to 2017, Josh served as Senior Advisor in the Office of the Secretary of VA, where he was awarded the Secretary's Meritorious Service Award. Josh also served nine years in the U.S. Senate, including two years as Deputy Staff Director for the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. Josh is a graduate of the University of Washington. He and his wife, Julia, have three children.



## ***Guy T. Kiyokawa***

### ***Acting Deputy Secretary, USDVA***

The Honorable Guy T. Kiyokawa was nominated by President Biden on June 9, 2021, and confirmed by the U.S. Senate on October 28, 2021, to serve as Assistant Secretary for the Office of Enterprise Integration (OEI). In this role, he advises the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and senior leaders on strategic planning, performance and risk management; policy and analysis; data analytics, statistics and governance; and interagency coordination and collaboration.

OEI provides the Office of the Secretary with integrated management capabilities to oversee the Department and effectively fulfill its statutory responsibilities to America's Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors.

Prior to his nomination, Mr. Kiyokawa served as Deputy Director of the Defense Health Agency (DHA), a joint, integrated Combat Support Agency that enables the Army, Navy, and Air Force medical services to provide a medically ready force to Combatant Commands in both peacetime and wartime. Prior to joining the senior executive service, Mr. Kiyokawa served in the U.S. Army as a Medical Service Corps officer. He completed his military service as the Chief of Staff of the DHA, where he played a pivotal role in standing up the Defense Health Agency. With the creation of the DHA, he drew upon his decades of experience leading people and organizations through large-scale change.



Mr. Kiyokawa previously served as the Director for Facilities, U.S. Army Medical Command, where he was responsible for all facets of life cycle management for 33.4 million square feet of medical infrastructure. His career features leadership positions at all levels of health care operations including clinics, community hospitals, regional medical centers, and regional medical commands. Mr. Kiyokawa also served as an Aeromedical Evacuation Pilot, flying the UH-1V Huey helicopter.

Mr. Kiyokawa was born and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii. He holds a Master's Degree in Health Administration from Baylor University and a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Southern California.



### ***Mark Swofford (PhD, FACHE)***

#### ***CEO, Health Services, Optum Serve***

Dr. Mark Swofford has been part of Optum since 2019, joining us from WellMed (OptumCare), where he most recently served as the Senior Vice President of Enterprise Care and Value Operations. Dr. Swofford brings with him 27 years of military experience, serving as a Colonel in the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps, where he provided health services administration and operational expertise to the Army Medical Department and its subordinate units.

Dr. Swofford is a board-certified health care executive with more than 29 years of experience in DoD and Medicare Advantage health care including development and delivery of clinical programs, executive leadership positions in inpatient and outpatient medical treatment facilities with annual operating budgets up to \$1.2 billion, and supervision of multiple government contracts totaling over \$300 million annually. Previous roles include health care delivery in hospitals and health clinics, analytics and policy development at the regional and national levels, and the provision of care management, utilization management, and population health management to patients in a full risk environment. Skilled in strategy development, change management, and program execution.

Dr. Swofford has a PhD, Health Services Organization Research from Virginia Commonwealth Univ and Master's in Health Administration from Baylor University. Dr. Swofford has more than 29 years of experience developing and implementing clinical programs in inpatient and outpatient facilities at the regional and national levels.





### ***Kerry Buck, AIA, LEED AP***

#### ***Managing Principal, SFCS Architects***

With 37 years of experience, Kerry is a project principal with SFCS and has led the architectural design, engineering design, and planning for more than 30 veterans' facilities and life plan communities across the country, dedicating the past 25 years of his professional career to the design of innovative environments for veterans and seniors that support independence and provide a high quality of life. Kerry has worked on State Veterans Home projects in RI, MI, OK, KS, and WV. Kerry's work has received recognition, such as from the 2021 Senior Housing News Best Skilled Nursing/Post-Acute Design of 2021, located in Chesterfield, MI.

#### **EDUCATION:**

Bachelor of Architecture,  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

#### **AFFILIATIONS:**

American Institute of Architects  
Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Accredited Professional







### ***Jana Goldberg, MD, FACC***

#### ***Cardiologist + National Medical Director at Heartbeat Health***

##### ***Bio:***

A Tufts and UPenn-trained cardiologist, Dr Jana Goldberg served as an Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania with a joint appointment at the Philadelphia VA Medical Center, where she was both Director of the Cardiac Care Unit and Assistant Program Director of the the Cardiovascular Fellowship Program at the VA. Dr. Goldberg joined Heartbeat in 2019 and serves as National Medical Director. Dr. Goldberg brings a wealth of experience in cardiovascular disease and innovation which has helped scale the company nationally, build the highest standards of cardiac care, and contribute to the literature, particularly the impact of virtual cardiology on patient outcomes. She has been named one of the Top 25 Women Leaders in Consumer Health Tech (2021). She lives outside Philadelphia with her husband, a VA cardiologist, and children.



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### ***David Dempsey***

#### ***COO at Heartbeat Health***

##### ***Bio:***

A seasoned business & legal executive with diverse experience in both high-growth and matrixed environments, David Dempsey has helped build companies from start-up to scale. After working as a partner at one the world's leading law firms, Kirkland & Ellis, David joined Rally Health, which he helped to a \$3 billion sale to UnitedHealth Group in 2017. David next led Optum's global Prevention & Well-Being portfolio – and a team of nearly 3,000 worldwide – before joining Heartbeat Health, where he now serves as Chief Operating Officer. David graduated from Princeton and Harvard Law School, and lives in Washington, D.C. with his wife and two kids.





FRED S. SGANGA, MPH, FACHE, LNHA

Fred S. Sganga is the Executive Director of the Long Island State Veterans Home at Stony Brook University, a 350-bed Skilled Nursing Facility serving honorably discharged veterans and their families. Board certified in Health Care Management and a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator, Mr. Sganga has worked in a variety of senior level healthcare positions in academic medical centers, community hospitals, long-term care facilities and physician practice management. Mr. Sganga earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Community Health from Hunter College and his Masters of Public Health from Columbia University.

Mr. Sganga serves as an adjunct professor in the Graduate Healthcare Administration Programs at Stony Brook University and Hofstra University. He lectures extensively on the topics of Healthcare Leadership and Long-Term Care Management.

Mr. Sganga is currently the Legislative Officer of the National Association of State Veterans Homes. Mr. Sganga also served as President of this organization in 2011-2012. In his current role as Legislative Officer, Mr. Sganga advocates on behalf on the 161 State Veterans Homes in all 50 States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The State Veterans Home program consists of 30,000 beds and is the largest provider of long term care to our nation's veterans.

He is also a Board Member of the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners. In addition, Mr. Sganga has served as Regent for the American College of Healthcare Executives representing the Greater New York area and is a member the Association's faculty.

Mr. Sganga has received numerous awards during his career including the 2000 Award of Distinction from the Metropolitan Health Administration Association. In 2008, he received the MHA Program Professor of the Year from Hofstra University. Also in 2012, he received the Secretary's Award from the Veterans Administration for his commitment and dedication to our nation's veterans.

Mr. Sganga resides on Long Island with his wife Marianne, and they have two daughters; Danielle, a pediatric cardiologist at Boston Children's Hospital, and Nicole, a journalist at CBS News in Washington, D.C.



**TRACY M. SCHANER, LNHA, LRCA, SHRM-CP, PHR**

Tracy M. Schaner began her career in the healthcare industry in 1999 with the Idaho Division of Veterans Services (IDVS). She attended and obtained her Bachelor of Business Administration from Boise State University and is licensed as both a Nursing Home Administrator and a Residential Care Administrator.

In 24 ½ years with IDVS, Ms. Schaner has risen to Deputy Chief Administrator of the agency, the role she currently serves. She oversees the Idaho State Veterans Homes and is also responsible for managing and overseeing the state home construction grant projects.

Continuous education and training have been a priority for Ms. Schaner throughout her career. This is reflected in her achieving her professional licenses in nursing home and residential care as well as her obtaining both certifications from the Certified Professional in Human Resources (PHR)

and from the HR Certification Institute Society for Human Resource Management.

Ms. Schaner has a passion to serve and has participated and held positions on several boards and committees over the years to include being the past Treasurer for both the Human Resources Association of Treasure Valley and the Idaho State Council of Society for Human Resource Management. Ms. Schaner was also a team member on the State of Idaho's Coronavirus Long-Term Care Strike Team and she is currently the President for the National Association of State Veterans Homes.

Throughout her career in healthcare and Veterans Services, Ms. Schaner is most proud of the quality care and services she and her team provide to Idaho's Veterans. Seeing the positive differences and accomplishments they've made that directly impact the lives of our Veterans has been the biggest highlight of her career.

Ms. Schaner and her husband (who also works in the nursing home healthcare industry) are both natives to the Great State of Idaho. Together they enjoy spending time with their three children who are ages 22, 15, and 13.



## OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS

### Michael R. Odle

Director, Department of Defense/Veterans Affairs Collaboration Office



Mr. Michael (Mike) Odle serves as the Director of the Department of Defense/Veterans Affairs Collaboration Office (DVCO). As such, he is the central point of contact within the Office of the Secretary of Defense for the White House, Congress, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Federal agencies, and stakeholders regarding Service member and Veteran programs. He regularly provides strategic communication, planning, and operational oversight in support of DoD/VA enhanced collaboration, coordination and established interagency goals.

Appointed to the Senior Executive Service in November 2015, Mr. Odle was the Veterans Health Administration's senior communications official responsible for executing the national policy, planning, management and evaluation of communications programs for the largest integrated health care system in the country, serving nearly nine million Veterans annually at over 1,200 health care sites. His office encompassed media engagement, digital media, advertising, internal information, history and nearly 150,000 volunteers serving America's Veterans. He worked to enhance communication with Veterans, Veteran Service Organizations, VA's dedicated volunteers, the news media, and the American public.

He has more than 20 years of accomplished public, legislative, intergovernmental affairs and marketing experience with the government, military, non-profit and private sector. He has held leadership positions with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Interior and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Mr. Odle is an Air Force Veteran and currently serves as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Air Force Reserve, assigned to U.S. Southern Command, Doral, Fla. During his military career, Mr. Odle served as the Assistant Director, Military Compensation Policy in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower & Reserve Affairs), Pentagon; Senior Press Officer for the International Security Assistance Force in Kabul, Afghanistan; spearheaded the Multinational Public Affairs Office in Bangladesh during a United Nations peacekeeping support operation; and served as a Public Affairs Officer in Louisiana during critical phases of rescue and relief efforts during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Mr. Odle received his bachelor's degree in hospitality and tourism with an emphasis in marketing from Black Hills State University, S.D. and a bachelor's degree in international business from the University of the Potomac, Washington, D.C. He earned a master's in international management from Western Sydney University, Australia. Mr. Odle is a recipient of the Defense Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, the Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, and the State of California Commendation Medal for crisis communications.





### Glenn Gray

**Director, Customer Care & Community Relations, TriWest Healthcare Alliance**



**Glenn Gray** is Director of Customer Care and Community Relations for TriWest Healthcare Alliance, a Department of Veterans Affairs contractor headquartered in Phoenix, AZ, which supports the VA nationally through the recent implementation of the MISSION Act Community Care Program, further expanding the access to care for our nation's Veterans.

Glenn has more than 25 years of experience and accomplishments in the public, private and non-profit sectors in varying leadership roles. In his current role, he is responsible for oversight of TriWest's customer care operations, which include educating Veterans, providers, Members of Congress and Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) about the programs and services TriWest provides through its VA contract, as well as addressing customer service concerns for Veterans. Glenn also directs TriWest's community outreach efforts across the country and represents TriWest at local, regional and national VSO meetings and conventions.

In addition to his 22 years at TriWest, Glenn has also held roles as the Executive Director of the ASU Alumni Association, Director of Casework and Community Engagement for the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) and as a constituent services staff member for the late Senator John McCain.

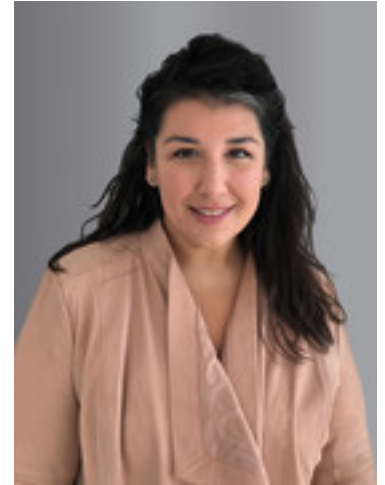
Glenn is an Arizona native and graduate of Arizona State University, earning his BS in Political Science. He and his wife and three children reside in Chandler, AZ.



***Lisa-Ann Cuccurullo, PsyD***

***National Center for PTSD***

Lisa-Ann Cuccurullo is a clinical psychologist whose current work is focused on facilitating the use of empirically supported treatments by clinicians treating veterans in rural areas. Her clinical work has focused on cognitive behavioral treatments for PTSD and other post-trauma related symptoms. She is trained in Cognitive Processing Therapy and is a consultant in the VA's national rollout of Prolonged Exposure. Prior to her position at the National Center for PTSD, she was the Military Sexual Trauma Coordinator and Assistant Director of Psychology Clinical Training at the Southeast Louisiana Veteran's Health Care System, and a clinical instructor at Tulane University School of Medicine. Dr. Cuccurullo's current research interests focus on implementation of empirically supported treatments and posttraumatic symptom presentation. Dr. Cuccurullo received her doctorate in clinical psychology from La Salle University and completed her clinical internship and a PTSD focused fellowship at the Southeast Louisiana Veteran's Health Care System.





### ***Kathryn C. Monet***

#### ***Chief Executive Officer of the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans***

Ms. Kathryn C. Monet is the Chief Executive Officer of the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV). In this role, she focuses on the execution of NCHV's strategic policy and technical assistance agenda and on expanding NCHV's strategic partnerships to more effectively end Veteran homelessness.

Kathryn has spent over a decade in the public and nonprofit sectors working to address housing instability and homelessness among Veterans. Before joining NCHV, she was with the National Alliance to End Homelessness focusing on the promotion of data-driven, evidence-based interventions to end homelessness, particularly among Veterans. Kathryn also was involved in Veteran homelessness in a legislative capacity during her time at the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

She earned a Master of Public Administration from Villanova University and a Bachelor of Science in Diplomacy and International Relations from Seton Hall University. Kathryn currently serves on the VA Advisory Committee for Homeless Veterans, the U.S. VETS DC Advisory Council, the Board of Directors for the National Low Income Housing Coalition and the Board of Governors for the National Housing Conference.

Currently, Ms. Monet resides in Washington, District of Columbia.





## ***Deborah Dean***

### ***Chief Tech Commercialization Officer, LetsGetChecked***

Deborah Dean is Chief Tech Commercialization Officer at LGC. Dean works collaboratively with LGC teams to develop and refine the company's government strategy, integrating with sales and business development.

With more than 25 years industry experience, Dean is a highly respected executive with extensive C-Level expertise. Her experience includes operations, technology, data integration, analytics, applications development, informatics and technical infrastructure.

Most recently, Dean served as executive vice president of MiMedx, where she had broad responsibilities, including technology, informatics, clinical trial management, quality and regulatory. Prior to joining MiMedx, she was president and chief operating officer of HolaDoctor, a leading Hispanic digital site. Additional experience includes Matria Healthcare, where she served as executive vice president and chief technology officer and was awarded CIO of the year by the Georgia CIO Leadership Association (GCLA). She has also served as senior vice president of research for Quovadx, Inc. (now Lawson software) and earlier in her career, held a range of positions in data warehousing and informatics for Medstat.



Dean earned a bachelor's degree in health services administration from Arkansas State University. She lives in Atlanta and is on the board of Glytec.





### **Dr. Andree' M. Sutton, DBH, LPC, NCC**

Dr. Andree' M. Sutton, currently serves as the Deputy Director, Veteran and Military Spouse Talent Engagement Program. In this role she is tasked with providing operational support and oversight to the VMSTEP Executive Director.

She previously served as the Chief of Reasonable Accommodation Services, Office of Resolution Management Diversity, and Inclusion. In this role she is tasked with providing management and oversight of the VA's Reasonable Accommodation (RA) and Personal Assistance Services (PAS) programs nationwide.

Previous positions include Chief of Field Operations for the Veterans Employment Service Office (VESO). Where she led a 30-person virtual staff in a national effort to attract, recruit and retain Veterans into the VA workforce. She also represented the VA as the Veteran Employment Program Officer (VEPO) supporting the Presidential Executive Order 13518.

Prior to that position, she served as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for the Newark, NJ, Regional Office under the Veterans Benefits Administration, where she serviced the disabled veteran population of the Southern and Eastern New Jersey region. In this role she provided a variety of vocational career counseling services to transitioning military members and Veterans with disabilities. She also conducted entitlement assessments, administered vocational batteries, developed, and implemented vocational rehabilitation plans.

Dr. Sutton retired from the United States Air Force at the rank of Chief Master Sergeant (E-9). She was a Regional Human Resources Director/Senior Recruiter managing various Air Force recruiting operating locations with a national and global reach.

A native of Brooklyn, New York, she is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) and a National Certified Counselor (NCC), specializing in Career Counseling, Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling, Mental Health, and Marriage and Family Therapy. She holds a Doctor of Behavioral Health (DBH) degree from Arizona State University, a post graduate degree (Ed.S.) in Marriage and Family Therapy, two master's degrees, one, in Instructional Education from Central Michigan University, and the second in Community Agency Counseling from The College of New Jersey. She is a past president of the American Counselors and Educators in Government (ACEG), a Division of the American Counseling Association. As well as a member of the Chi Sigma Iota Counseling Academic and Professional Honors Society, National Employment Counseling Association, and the American Counseling Association.



## Department of Veterans Affairs

### Senior Executive Biography

#### **Donna P. Mallia**

#### **Regional Office Director Veterans Benefits Administration – Northeast District**

Donna P. Mallia was appointed as Director of the Buffalo VA Regional Office on October 31, 2004. In this position, she is responsible for managing the full range of non-medical benefits provided to Veterans and their dependents in the 31 western counties of New York State, and Education benefits in the 31 states, the District of Columbia, the US Virgin Islands, and foreign schools. Prior to this position, Mrs. Mallia served as Executive Management Officer, Office of Field Operations from August 2002 to December 2004. While serving in this position, Mrs. Mallia provided technical and policy guidance to VBA Area Offices and Regional Offices on matters relating to the administration of a comprehensive array of benefits and services associated with VBA's fifty-seven regional offices. Mrs. Mallia served as Assistant Director, Washington Regional Office, Veterans Benefits Administration from December 2000 to August 2002.



Mrs. Mallia began her career as a Veterans Claims Examiner at the Philadelphia Regional Office and Insurance Center in April 1990. While at the Philadelphia Regional Office and Insurance Center, she transitioned to the management analyst field serving as a management analyst in the Office of the Director from February 1992 to November 1996. Upon departure from the Philadelphia Regional Office and Insurance Center, Mrs. Mallia moved to the Central Area office in Livonia, Michigan as a Management Analyst. Mrs. Mallia worked as a Management Analyst in the Central Area office from November 1996 to February 1998 until moving from the Central Area to Veterans Benefits Administration, Central Office. In July 1999, Mrs. Mallia assumed the position of Lead Management Analyst until her appointment as Assistant Director, Washington Regional Office in December 2000.

#### **CAREER CHRONOLOGY:**

2004 – Present	Director of the Buffalo VA Regional Office
2002 – 2004	Executive Management Officer, Office of Field Operations

#### **EDUCATION:**

2006	Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program
2005	The Brookings Institution
2004	Federal Executive Institute
1999	Leadership VA
1987	B.S., Statistics, The University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA

#### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND ASSOCIATIONS:**

Advanced Management Training (AMT) program instructor  
Member of VAs Executive Resources Board  
Member of the Senior Executives Association  
Member of VBAs Directors Advisory Council



### **Nichole Coleman**

#### ***Executive Director, Hancock County Veterans Service Office***

Nichole Coleman is a County Veterans Service Officer and the Executive Director of the Hancock County Veterans Service Office. Since she assumed this position in 2011, the office has more than quadrupled the number of veterans served locally, and the amount of VA expenditures for county veterans has increased by 11.5 million dollars with 1,100 fewer veteran residents.

During her seven years in the U.S. Air Force, Nichole provided security for the Electronic Security Command in Texas and Saudi Arabia during Desert Storm. She also provided public relations support and media coverage during Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia.

In 2021, Nichole was elected as the President of the National Association of County Veteran Service Officers. She served a three-year term on the Advisory Committee on Veterans' Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach for the U.S. Department of Labor. She served as the President for the Ohio State Association of County Veteran Service Officers.



Under Nichole's leadership, four innovative programs were created to provide mental health support, additional recovery tools, and better quality of life. Battle Buddies is a peer support program designed to link veterans in need of support with professionally trained veteran peers. The purpose is to aid in the overall mental, physical, and spiritual well-being of everyone. G.I. Tunes is a unique program designed to provide veterans the opportunity to engage in and explore how music listening can positively impact ongoing symptoms of PTSD and other mental wellness needs. The program offers the support and guidance of a music therapist in assessing, developing, and implementing a personalized playlist for at-home listening. Nichole facilitates a group she started at her church called Veterans Discovering New Life, where veterans are encouraged to stand strong together and grow in God's love. This program offers a safe place for veterans to discuss trials and joys and to share life goals where they receive encouragement move toward their best life. Guitars for Vets is a national program that was brought to Hancock County in 2019, where it is the first location to offer the program outside a VA facility. Before the implementation of this program, veterans in Hancock County would have had to travel 80-100 miles one way weekly to participate in the program.

She has owned and operated Nichole Renae Portraits since 2004, where she enjoys photographing people and events. She has been married to her husband, Jimmy Coleman, since 1992, and he is a 10-year Air Force veteran and the owner/operator of Aloha Shiny Windows. Their daughter resides in Findlay with her husband, and their son also lives in Findlay.

Nichole is a 1990 graduate of Findlay High School and earned an Associate of Arts Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies from Ohio Christian University. She completed the Public and Nonprofit Leadership Certificate Program at The Ohio State University in the second veterans cohort. Nichole serves on the Hancock County Board of Corrections Committee and the Hancock County Job and Family Services Planning Committee. She has served on the Hancock Leadership Alumni Association Board, the Findlay Kiwanis Board, and is a past president for the Findlay Enrichment Program Board for Findlay City Schools. Nichole was a Charter Member of the Sunrise Toastmasters of Findlay.



## National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO)

660 North Capitol St. NW Suite 400 Washington, DC 20001

[www.nacvso.org](http://www.nacvso.org)

Christopher Hinton Bio

President, NACVSO

Christopher Hinton is a veteran, advocate, entrepreneur, and father.

Mr. Hinton joined the Navy in April of 2000 serving aboard the USS Rodney M. Davis providing small craft maritime and narcotic interdiction operations in the Gulf of Oman, Persian Gulf and South America achieving the rank of Second-Class Petty Officer.

Upon separating in 2006, Mr. Hinton began a mortgage company and pursued a degree in Industrial Maintenance Mechanics.

After the passage of the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Act of 2008, Mr. Hinton returned to school earning a degree in Law Enforcement and securing a position with his local Sheriff's department.

In 2012, Mr. Hinton was offered an opportunity to join the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) where, alongside a strong team of creative legal advocates, he was able to assist in the creation of a multi-faceted legal assistance program for veterans in need. It was here that Mr. Hinton found his passion for veteran advocacy, eventually moving into his current role as the Director of Veteran Services for Waseca County Minnesota in 2016.

After becoming a Veteran Service Officer, Mr. Hinton became active in the National Association of County Veteran Service Officers (NACVSO), serving as an assistant to the Washington Liaison.

In 2019, Mr. Hinton was elected to the Executive Board and later elected as the First Vice President in 2022.

While not advocating for veterans at home and in Washington DC, Mr. Hinton manages several small businesses and enjoys spending time with his four sons, daughter, and fiancé on his farm outside of Janesville, Minnesota.



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### ***Becky Curtis***

#### ***Director of Coaching, Override Health***

Becky Curtis' life changed drastically in 2005 when a car accident left her with a near-fatal C4 spinal cord injury. Following her fight for survival and months of physical recovery, she faced excruciating nerve pain. As the chronic pain intensified two years later, Becky realized the missing element for most people in pain: ongoing support and the ability to personally manage their pain. To address this, she created Take Courage Coaching™, a leading pain management coaching program, empowering individuals to regain control over their lives through a proven bio-psycho-social approach to care.

In 2022, Override, a virtual telehealth company specializing in chronic pain care, acquired Take Courage Coaching expanding the clinically proven team-based approach that matches patients with a multidisciplinary team of specialists in pain medicine, physical therapy, and behavioral health. Their collaboration aims to make chronic pain care more accessible and effective. Becky's contributions have been recognized through prestigious awards, including the 2016 Workers' Injury Law & Advocacy Group Beacon Award and the 2015 Magna Comp Laude Winner.



### ***Kurt Cegielski***

#### ***Chief Commercial Officer, MOBE***

Kurt Cegielski, a seasoned leader in health care technology, boasts 20+ years of industry experience. Currently serving as the Chief Commercial Officer at MOBE, he previously co-founded RedBrick Health (now Virgin Pulse). Kurt has held senior vice president positions in multiple organizations dedicated to revolutionizing the health industry and empowering individuals to enhance their personal well-being. He is passionately committed to supporting MOBE's mission of providing health plans and employers with innovative solutions to engage members, enhance their health care journey, and reduce unnecessary costs. Kurt is an alumnus of Drake University and holds an MBA from the University of Iowa.





**Jackie Breitenstein, CCMC, CTRS**  
**Program Manager at Shepherd Center**

Jackie has over 19 years of experience in therapeutic recreation and case management. As Program Manager at Shepherd Center, a leading rehabilitation hospital for people with spinal cord and brain injuries, she oversees the Complex Concussion Clinic which is a multidisciplinary program that provides comprehensive assessment and treatment for patients with persistent post-concussion symptoms. She manages the SHARE Military Initiative, a program that offers specialized rehabilitation and community reintegration services for veterans and service members with brain injuries. She received her Master's degree in Therapeutic Recreation/Recreational Therapy from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and is a Certified Clinical Case Manager and a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist. She is passionate about improving the quality of life and outcomes for people with neurological impairments and has developed and implemented innovative and evidence-based interventions and protocols to achieve this goal. She has also collaborated with various stakeholders and partners, such as the Veterans Healthcare Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration, the Marcus Foundation, and the Brain Injury Association of Georgia, to advocate for the needs and rights of this population. Jackie is committed to advancing the field of rehabilitation and supporting the mission and vision of Shepherd Center. She brings a diverse perspective and experience to the team, as well as a strong work ethic, a collaborative spirit, and a compassionate attitude.



### *Department of Veterans Affairs*

### *Senior Executive Biography*

#### **John W. Boerstler**

#### **Chief Veterans Experience Officer Veterans Experience Office**

John W. Boerstler was sworn-in on February 16, 2021, as the Chief Veterans Experience Officer at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Prior to his current position, he served as the Chief Executive Officer of Combined Arms, a collaborative backbone organization whose purpose was to unite collaborative methodology and technology in order to more effectively connect Veterans to thousands of government and non-profit services. As Chief Veterans Experience Officer, John will provide executive oversight of the many innovative projects and programs housed within the Veterans Experience Office (VEO) and work collaboratively within VA's leadership to help achieve greater access and outcomes for Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors.



John has a distinguished career as a leader in the Veteran services field as a recipient of both the Eisenhower and Marshall Memorial Fellowships, having travelled to the United Kingdom, France, Denmark, Israel, Bosnia, Hungary and Ukraine to write comparative papers on their military transition systems. As the first Marshall Prize recipient, John recently completed a 3-year project in Ukraine to assist in the development of their Ministry of Veterans Affairs – the first of its kind in Europe. John was also honored to be selected in the inaugural cohort of Stand-To Scholars at the George W. Bush Institute's Veteran Leadership Program in 2018.

John is a native Texan who served honorably in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1999-2007 as a non-commissioned officer and infantry unit leader, including one combat tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from 2004-2005 and Operation Natural Fire in the Republic of Kenya in 2006. John has also served as the Executive Director of NextOp, a program manager with Wounded Warrior Project, the Mayor of Houston's Office of Veterans Affairs, and as a policy and district staffer for a U.S. Representative. In 2009, John helped found the Lone Star Veterans Association which became the largest network of Post-9/11 Veterans in Texas and successfully merged with Combined Arms in March 2019.

#### **CAREER CHRONOLOGY:**

2021 – Present	Chief Veterans Experience Officer, Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington, DC
2019 – 2021	Chief Executive Officer, Combined Arms, Houston, TX
2015 – 2019	Executive Director, NextOp, Houston, TX
2013 – 2015	Business Development Manager, Infinite Energy, FL and TX
2011 – 2013	Regional Program Manager, Wounded Warrior Project, FL and TX
2009 – 2011	Deputy Director, City of Houston Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs
2007 – 2009	Regional Field Representative, U.S. House of Representatives

#### **EDUCATION:**

John holds a Bachelor's degree from Texas A&M and a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Houston.



### ***Solomon “Sol” Jennings IV***

#### ***Deputy Director, Green & Gold Congressional Aide Program***

Solomon “Sol” Jennings IV serves as the Deputy Director for the Green & Gold Congressional Aide Program (G&G CAP), Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, U.S. House of Representatives.

Mr. Jennings joined the G&G CAP in March of 2016, bringing years of recruiting, retention and program management experience to his position.

Mr. Jennings is a retired Marine Staff Sergeant and veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). During his career he served as an Infantryman, Personal Security Detachment (PSD) Platoon Sergeant, and Retention Specialist.

Mr. Jennings is originally from Los Angeles, California and earned his undergraduate degree in business management from the University of Phoenix, and a master’s degree in public administration from Norwich University. Mr. Jennings is a Project Management Institute (PMI) certified Project Management Professional (PMP), and a Senior Stennis Fellow of the 117th Congress. Mr. Jennings, and his wife live in Upper Marlboro, MD.







**John M. Garcia**  
**District Director**  
**U.S. Small Business Administration**  
**New Mexico District Office**

John M. Garcia is the District Director of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) New Mexico District Office. Garcia is responsible for the statewide delivery of SBA programs and services to the 33 counties in the state. He supports business owners in starting and growing their businesses, creating jobs and developing local economies throughout New Mexico.

Garcia is both an experienced small business owner and public servant and has earned high acclaim for his achievements as a veteran advocate and small business champion at the city, state, and national levels. As past president and owner of Garcia and Associates, a service-disabled veteran owned consulting company, he advised both public and private sector senior leaders in strategic planning, tactical marketing, and business development with a special emphasis on veteran wellness and entrepreneurial development. As the White House appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Garcia oversaw the agency's Intergovernmental, Tribal Government, International and Consumer Affairs programs. In this role, he worked with mayors, governors, tribal leaders, and international governments to the benefit of our country's veterans, including the VA National Veteran Business Outreach efforts. He has served as a strong advocate for veteran small business owners through appointments to the National SBA Veteran Business Advisory Board, the U.S. Association of Veterans in Business, and the White House Task Force on Veteran Business Development.

In addition to being a national champion for small business and veterans, Garcia has been integral to veteran's advocacy and economic development in his home state of New Mexico. Garcia served honorably in the U.S. Army in Vietnam with the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and upon returning home, he began what is now a rich legacy of service to veterans and their families.

His advocacy on behalf of veterans and their families includes an appointment as the first Cabinet Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Veterans Services under then Governor Bill Richardson. He established the New Mexico Veterans Business Outreach Center under his tenure. He also served as Deputy Chief of Staff and Cabinet Secretary for Economic Development under Governor Bruce King's administration, where he oversaw international trade and economic development throughout the state.

Garcia has been recognized for his outstanding contributions to veterans, small businesses, and economic development through numerous recognitions. Most recent awards include the *Profile of Courage Award* from the Vietnam Veterans of New Mexico, the *New Mexico Veteran Small Business Advocate of the Year* from the SBA and the *Iron Mike Award* from the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs for his leadership as president.

Throughout his career, Garcia has demonstrated cultural sensitivity, planning and project management skills and a strong tactical understanding of the needs and concerns of small business owners, veterans, their families, and members of the military. Garcia brings his solid background and a wealth of experience in service to the small business owners and veterans of our state.



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# Delivering quality care for Veterans

Optum Serve is proud to partner with Veterans Affairs (VA) on critical initiatives to support and improve the health needs of Veterans



## **VA Community Care Network**

Access is everything. Through the VA Community Care Network, Optum gives Veterans quality care options. That means more choices, less travel and less time waiting to see a provider.

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## **VBA Medical Disability Examinations**

Through the VBA Medical Disability Examinations program, Optum Serve offers convenient and thorough compensation and pension exams to Veterans and separating Service Members.

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## **Telephonic Lifestyle Coaching Program**

The VA Telephonic Lifestyle Coaching Program, supported by Optum Serve, helps Veterans with resources to promote positive healthy behavior change, including management of stress, eating wisely, increasing physical activity and more.







# Management options for State Veterans Homes



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Serving those  
who served.



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or visit us online at [www.weberhl.com](http://www.weberhl.com)

Don Weber  
Founder of WHL







# Empowering better veteran health.

As a health outcomes company, we help people improve their physical and mental well-being. We are a proud sponsor of the NASDVA conference, and we fully support NASDVA's goal to make a positive difference in the lives of veterans and their families.

“ At MOBE, our mission is guiding people to better health and more happiness. Veterans—we thank you and honor you for serving our nation. We are committed to helping you in a safe, holistic way. ”

– Mike Ott, CEO, MOBE and Colonel, USAF Retired



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[in](#) [twitter](#) [MOBEforlife.com](https://mobe4life.com)



# We're on a Mission to Support Veterans and Military Families

When you're a United States veteran with more than 40,000 organizations trying to help you, it can be tough to find the right information. That's why AARP connects veterans and military families to community programs and provides free, tailored tools for family caregiving, fighting fraud, finding meaningful employment, and accessing military service benefits.

Find out more at [aarp.org/Veterans](https://aarp.org/Veterans)







# OPTUM VENTURES

Optum Ventures is a venture capital firm partnering with extraordinary entrepreneurs to fundamentally change healthcare.

OV was created by UnitedHealth Group to help execute on its mission:

**“To help people live healthier lives and to help make the health system work better for everyone.”**

## Leadership

OV's funds are managed by **Larry C. Renfro**, Vice Chairman of UnitedHealth Group and former CEO of Optum.



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MANAGING PARTNER  
BOSTON



**LAURA VERONEAU**  
PARTNER  
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**HEATHER ROXBOROUGH**  
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**DEAN McCAUSLAND**  
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## OUR COMPANIES



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We are revolutionizing cardiovascular care, one virtual intervention at a time.

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High-quality virtual reads



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All Heartbeat virtual cardiologists are board certified & credentialed through the VA



**VA** | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



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## Who we serve

With consumer demands shifting towards access over in-person care<sup>1</sup>, our 360-degree platform is transforming the way health care is delivered and reducing barriers to care for those most in need.



### Consumers

Providing consumers with care from their home.



### Providers and Health Plans

Enabling healthcare systems to close gaps in care.



### Public Sector

Supporting the government in improving access to care.



### Life Sciences

Improving clinical trial recruitment and retention.



### Employers

Helping employers offer competitive benefits.





Learn more at [www.nvlsp.org](http://www.nvlsp.org)



## National Veterans Legal Services Program

- Representing veterans and their families before the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC) and the Federal Circuit
- Training and mentoring service officers and other veterans' advocates
- Litigating class action cases in support of the veteran community
- Representing veterans in discharge upgrade proceedings
- Offering PACT Act expertise and assisting veterans through our Burn Pits Claims Assistance Program
- Authoring the preeminent treatise of veterans law—The Veterans Benefits Manual (VBM)

Doing all this at no cost to our veterans or their survivors.....EVER!

Thank you for allowing us to help you support our veterans since 1981!

# zeel

[ZEEL.COM/VA](http://ZEEL.COM/VA)

## Massage Therapy: Non-Opioid Chronic Pain Care

Zeel is the leading and largest provider of in-home medical massage, and we are proud to support Veterans' health through the Community Care Network. With Zeel's expert care, Veterans experience pain relief and better quality of life without drugs, side effects, or even travel.



### PERSONALIZED CARE THAT CATERS TO VETS

Therapists provide treatment in the comfort of home. In many locations, office-based treatment is also available.



### MODERN, STREAMLINED SCHEDULING

Vets, caregivers, or prescribers can book online or by calling our dedicated VA Patient Care Coordination team.

To learn more, contact **Amy Wegel**, VA Relationship Manager, at (407) 694-2993, or email [amy.wegel@zeel.com](mailto:amy.wegel@zeel.com).



# Zeel is Honored to Serve Those Who Have Served Our Country.





Architecture that honors our nation's heroes



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*making the unseen, seen*

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## HEROES WITH HEARING LOSS

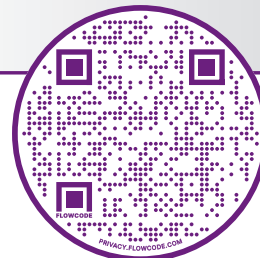
# You've earned this freedom

For millions of veterans, hearing loss is a very personal, solitary challenge. The Heroes With Hearing Loss® program brings veterans like you, veteran families and hearing healthcare professionals together to share proven, lifestyle-focused solutions that make a life-changing difference.

Stop by the Heroes With Hearing Loss booth to see how veterans can obtain a captioned telephone and service\* at no cost from the program sponsor, Hamilton® CapTel®.

Visit: [HeroesWithHearingLoss.org/self-certify](https://HeroesWithHearingLoss.org/self-certify)

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\*The captioning service is provided at no cost to the user.

Provided by Hamilton® CapTel®. FEDERAL LAW PROHIBITS ANYONE BUT REGISTERED USERS WITH HEARING LOSS FROM USING INTERNET PROTOCOL (IP) CAPTIONED TELEPHONES WITH THE CAPTIONS TURNED ON. Advanced speech recognition software is used to process calls, and, in certain circumstances, a live communications assistant may be included on the call. There is a cost for each minute of captions generated, paid from a federally administered fund. To learn more, visit [fcc.gov](https://fcc.gov). Third-party charges may apply; the Hamilton CapTel phone requires high-speed internet access (Wi-Fi capable) and in some cases, may require telephone service. Third-party trademarks mentioned are the property of their respective owners. The Bluetooth® word mark and logos are registered trademarks owned by Bluetooth SIG, Inc. and any use of such marks is under license. CapTel is a registered trademark of Ultratec, Inc. Copyright ©2023 Hamilton Relay. Hamilton is a registered trademark of Nedelco, Inc. d/b/a/ Hamilton Telecommunications.

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On a Mission to Serve®

— Since 1996 —

## Opening Doors to Care for Our Nation's Heroes

For TriWest, there is no other mission. We've spent more than 25 years providing access by building and maintaining strong networks of high-performing medical professionals to care for our nation's heroes.

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## Cohen Veterans Network

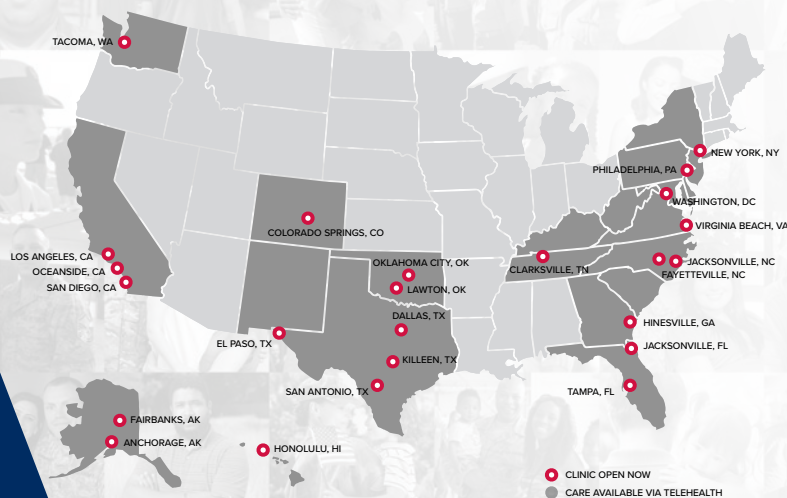
### Therapy for Veterans, Service Members, and Military Families

Cohen Clinics provide therapy to post-9/11 veterans, service members, and their families, including those from the National Guard / Reserves.

CVN Telehealth, face-to-face video therapy available.

Learn more:  
[cohenveteransnetwork.org](http://cohenveteransnetwork.org)

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find a  
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**AVALON**  
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Winning the Battle Within



## AVALON ACTION ALLIANCE

is the post-trauma wellness nonprofit helping veterans, first responders, and their families gain control over issues related to mental wellness and brain health. Avalon provides a single point of contact and one integrative assessment for the symptoms of TBI and PTSD to identify and guide clients to the most effective clinical or non-clinical pathway towards healing.



@AVALONACTIONALLIANCE

[AVALONACTIONALLIANCE.ORG](http://AVALONACTIONALLIANCE.ORG)



**The Veterans Consortium is Committed  
to Assisting Veterans Nationwide.**

## How TVC Serves Veterans

Provides free legal representation before the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (US CAVC) to qualifying **veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.**

Operates a **national information helpline for pro se appellants** at the US CAVC to help veterans understand the processes.

Provides free legal services for qualifying **discharge upgrades**

Operates the **Women Veterans** Legal Assistance Program (WVLAP).

Operates the **Veterans Naturalization Assistance** Program (VNAP)

Serving Veterans  
Since 1992

For more information contact us at [www.vetsprobono.org](http://www.vetsprobono.org)

#theyfoughtforus



**CAPITAL CARING HEALTH ANNOUNCES DELIVERING COMPANION  
ROBOTIC PETS FOR VETERANS SUFFERING WITH DEMENTIA TO  
ALL 146 VA COMMUNITY LIVING CENTERS NATIONWIDE.**



Capital Caring Health in the summer and fall of 2023 is providing a Dementia Care Package for every Community Living Center run by the Veteran's Administration.

Each Care Package includes 2 pups, 2 cats, 2 birds and 2 each of brand new intergenerational games—the Game of Life, Scrabble, and Trivial Pursuit.

Of the 30,000 Veterans residing at these Centers, 50% have some form of dementia including Alzheimers. The Pets and the games are specifically provided for their use and enjoyment.

Also included in each Care Package are instructions for additional orders, accolades about the pets from several professional dementia caregivers, and a summary of VA clinical studies showing the marvelous effects these pets have with Veterans suffering from dementia.

## OUR COMPANIONS



**PUPS**

**CATS**

**BIRDS**

To learn more about other ways these Pets and Games can be provided to Veterans suffering from dementia contact Steve Cone at [scone@capitalcaring.org](mailto:scone@capitalcaring.org)



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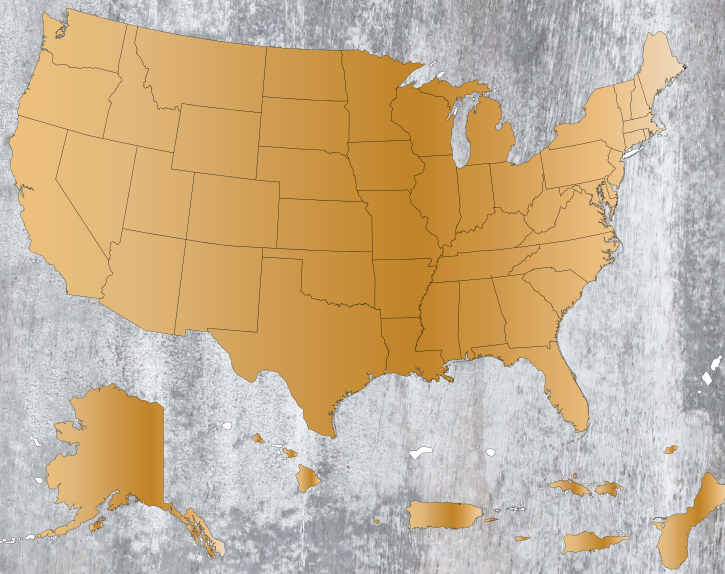












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