



VA MID-ATLANTIC HEALTH CARE NETWORK - VISN 6

Vol. 5, No. 8

"Excellent Care – Earned by Veterans – Delivered Here"

# Voices of VISN 6

Official news from around *your* VISN

May 31, 2015

## Power Soccer Gets SCI, CLC Veterans Back In The Game

By Daniel Henry,  
Hampton VAMC  
public affairs

Hampton VAMC spinal cord and long term care patients who use motorized wheel chairs learned the nuances of dribbling and scoring goals during a Power Soccer skills training May 26, at the Fort Monroe Authority community center.

Dubbed the first competitive team sport designed specifically for motorized wheel chair users, Power Soccer al-

lows Hampton Veterans living with mobility issues the opportunity for recreation that is therapeutic and collegial.

Guards on the front of the wheel chairs allow participants to move a large ball around a basketball court. The game is well suited to patients who are paralyzed, yet have a means to operate their wheel chairs independently.

Paul Burchuk, a Hampton VAMC recreational therapist who

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**Daniel Henry**  
*Hampton VAMC Veteran Lorenzo Hughes, masters dribbling skills during Power Soccer practice at the Fort Monroe Community Center.*

## Call Center Aims For Customer Satisfaction

Staff Contribution  
Fayetteville VAMC

Fayetteville VAMC now has a "one stop" shop to answer patients' questions and concerns about their care.

The new PACT Call Center opened May 8 to provide exceptional customer service to Veterans assigned to PACT Clinics in Bldgs. 1 and 50 and Village Green.

Most Veterans receiving care in VA are now assigned to Patient Aligned Care Teams, known as PACT Teams, comprised of nursing and administrative staff who collaborate with a doctor to provide the most complete, per-



**Brad Garner**  
*Kayla Smith fields an incoming call at Fayetteville VAMC's new "one stop" Call Center. In April, the call center addressed more than 18,000 calls.*

sonal, comprehensive care possible for each patient.

Call center staff are equipped to assist Veter-

ans and family members with their questions and

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## From The Director

On a national scale, VA is searching for ways to increase Veteran's access to medical care in four main areas: 1) increased critical staffing, 2) increased space, 3) increased care in the community, and 4) increased productivity.

Over the last year, we have worked harder than ever to increase access at every VISN 6 site of care. We've hired more people, been able to offer more competitive salaries, contracted for more space, worked our way through the scheduling process, extended hours, increased the use of telehealth, and referred many more Veterans for fee-based care in their communities.

Wait times at Fayetteville and Hampton, remain in the limelight. It's simply a fact that the areas encompassing Naval Station Norfolk, Fort Bragg, and Camp Lejeune attract large numbers of Veterans. And, as America draws down the number of people serving in uniform, the scale is balanced by the growth in Veterans seeking VA health care.

Let me assure you that we are leaving no stone unturned in our efforts to increase efficiencies and access throughout the network and putting extra effort in both of these regions. Bear in mind that as available clinic time, space, and the number of providers grows, wait times across the board will continue to recede.

I would like to highlight the progress that Mike Dunfee and the Hampton team have made in increasing access. Since January, Mike has hired 12 new Primary Care providers and activated 14 additional Primary Care exam rooms. Additionally, he's in the midst of working an emergency lease for an additional 10 Primary Care exam rooms in the Chesapeake area. All their efforts appear to be bearing fruit. The public release of information slated for June 18 will show that Hampton has reduced wait times by 44 percent since April 1.

I also want to mention that Betty Goolsby and her Fayetteville team are also working to squeeze every possible appointment out of their enterprise and the space constraints experienced in Fayetteville will soon be addressed with the new Health Care Center slated to open in the fall.



In May, VA expanded eligibility for the Choice program, changing mileage requirements from straight-line distance to driving distance between a Veteran's residence and the nearest VA medical facility. In June, VA is slated to institute Choice First, which will enable even more Veterans the opportunity to receive care in the community.

Currently, Veterans are eligible due to our not having an appointment available in 30 days or that they live more than 40 miles from a VA facility. Choice First includes Veterans that don't meet either requirement.

Choice First will be an option for any Veteran when services are not available locally through VA. Veterans may choose to keep their medical care within VA or use the Choice Program, in which case Health Net will work with the Veteran to schedule the appointment with a provider who has signed on with the Program.

Our efforts to reduce wait times have resulted in skyrocketing costs associated with the legacy Non-VA Care Program. Our dollars designated for non-VA care will quickly be exhausted, but Congress has funded the Choice Program. These funds are protected and available, so this program will be our primary means to send eligible Veterans for care in the community in the near term.

Here's where we need everyone's help. Building a provider base is critical to the success of the Choice Program. In some areas, providers are scarce. We asked all our medical centers to encourage more community providers to become Choice Providers, and now we're asking everyone who has a stake in VA health care to help spread the word and encourage local providers to sign a Choice Provider Agreement with Health Net.

Please help us get the word out that Health Net is seeking to contract with more providers. I encourage you to share the following link with every provider in your community.

How to become a Veterans Choice Program and/or Patient-Centered Community Care Provider: [www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/documents/FactSheets/VACAA\\_Provider\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_Choice\\_Program\\_508c\\_Internet.pdf](http://www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/documents/FactSheets/VACAA_Provider_Fact_Sheet_Choice_Program_508c_Internet.pdf).

Until next month, I wish you well.

Sincerely,

Dan Hoffmann

Voices of VISN 6 is published monthly by VA Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network.



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### Hampton Veteran-Centered Recovery Program Highlighted

Veteran “X” a peer-led, Veteran-centered recovery program established in November 2009 at the Hampton VAMC, is being highlighted as a best practice initiative at the VA Mental Health Showcase held in Washington, D.C.

The Showcase is an event to promote VA mental health programs and initiatives to mental health community stakeholders including Veteran’s service organizations, community partners, professional disciplines, congressional staffers and others interested in the health and well-being of Veterans.

The Veteran X program, which presents a scenario of a fictitious Veteran who has an abundance of social issues, including: mental illness, addiction, poor physical health, homelessness, economic hardships, and family issues, is used as platform for a Veteran experiencing the same or similar issues to build upon in their own recovery.

Dr. David Shaw, a Hampton VAMC clinical psy-

chologist who serves as the program lead, notes a unique aspect of the program is the fact that Veterans themselves role play as members of Veteran X’s treatment team.

“By helping Veteran X,” Dr. Shaw said, “they are learning to resolve their own difficulties.”

According to Shaw, the group members serve as a treatment team that empowers Veteran “X” to move forward in his recovery efforts.

The group helps Veteran “X” navigate many of the challenging obstacles on the path of recovery in a supportive, collaborative environment with peers through role-play, brainstorming, information-gathering, and facilitator-led group exercises.

More than 1,600 Veterans in the Hampton Roads area have been helped by Hampton’s Veteran X program, which has also trained 48 program facilitators for 26 programs established at 19 VA medical facilities nationwide.

### VISN 6 Welcomes SCI Service Line Chief, Associate Director

Dr. Timothy (Tim) Lavis has been selected as the VISN 6 Spinal Cord Injury and Disorders (SCI&D) Service Line Coordinator, effective May 14. In this key role for the VISN, Dr. Tim Lavis will provide oversight and guidance for SCI&D programs within the network.

Dr. Lavis joined VA in 2008 as an attending physician in SCI&D at Richmond VAMC and later served as an in-patient section chief. In 2013, Dr. Lavis was named the service chief of SCI&D at Richmond.

After serving in the U.S. Air Force, Dr. Lavis earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Biology (Magna Cum Laude) from the University of North Texas in 1997, followed by Medical School at the University of Texas – Southwestern, graduating in 2001. He completed an internship in Internal Medicine at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Phoenix, AZ, a Residency in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Colorado and a fellowship in Spinal Cord Injury Medicine and Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Michigan.



*Dr. Tim Lavis*

Sean N. Turner has been selected as the Associate Director for Fayetteville VAMC, effective May 17.

In this key role, Turner will be responsible for providing direct oversight for facility operations and resources for a \$317 million operational budget, which served more than 61,000 Veterans in 2014.

Turner previously served as the Chief, Health Administration Service at the VA Medical Centers in Gainesville and Lake City, Florida. He received a Bachelor’s of Science degree in Psychology from the University of Florida, Gainesville.



*Sean Turner*



# Asheville VAMC Volunteer Receives Long Leaf Pine Award

By Paul Waldrop  
Asheville VAMC public affairs

What do Andy Griffith, Dale Earnhardt and Oprah Winfrey all have in common with Charles Asheville VA Medical Center's own Bob Scruggs? They have each received the prestigious Long Leaf Pine Award, one of the most sought after and valued awards conferred by the Governor of North Carolina. Named after the state tree, the Long Leaf Pine Award is presented to outstanding North Carolinians who have a proven record of service to the state.

Darlene Laughter, chief Voluntary Service, at Asheville, says Bob Scruggs certainly has a proven record of service.

"With more than 43 years and 19,519 volunteer hours, Bob is considered a mainstay of the medical center's volunteer force," Laughter said. "He is held in the highest esteem for his hard work, dedication and the genuine concern he conveys toward all his fellow Veterans," she added.

Though Scruggs is a disabled Veteran himself, he has not allowed his personal health to stand in the way. In addition to volunteering two days a week at the medical center, he also serves his fellow Veterans and community as a member of the Disabled American Veterans, American Legion, Masonic Lodge, and Veterans of Foreign Wars and more.

Laughter says Scruggs focuses on the most important and valuable activity for the Veterans: making contact with them. "He personally takes the time to engage



**Sharonda Pearson**

*April Riddle, the Western Regional Director for North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory's office, presents Bob Scruggs with the Long Leaf Pine Award May 1.*

his fellow Veterans with genuine interest and concern, conveying the warmth and care so important to the healing process," she said.

Scruggs, was presented with the award by a representative of North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory's office in early May at the medical centers 2015 Annual Volunteer Recognition Reception and Program.

## New VA Clinic In Princeton, West Virginia To Open June 8

The new VA Clinic in Princeton, W.Va. opens June 8. The clinic is located at 1511 North Walker Street, Princeton, and is an extension of the Beckley VAMC.

The clinic will offer primary care and telehealth services for up to 1,200 Veterans. Eligible Veterans living in the southern portion of West Virginia are encouraged to seek primary care through this new clinic.

Veterans currently receiving primary care services at the Mobile Outpatient Clinic in Bluefield will be re-assigned to the Princeton VA Clinic.

Veterans with scheduled appointments or needing care before June 8 will be seen at the Mobile Clinic. The telephone number for the Princeton VA Clinic will be 304-425-8105.

## Call Center continued from Pg 1

other needs by telephone from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each weekday.

Because registered nurses also staff the Call Center, Veterans can use the service to ask about their care, schedule, change, or cancel appointments, or request to speak with members of their PACT Team.

"Our mission is to provide exceptional customer service with live personnel available to assist in a timely manner, said Jennifer C. Davis, Call Center supervi-

sor. "We strive to serve our Veterans with compassion, competence & accountability."

The service will also allow Veterans to renew or refill prescriptions, receive lab or test results and get status on consults.

For more information call 910-488-2120 ext. 7816 or check the Fayetteville VAMC web page at [www.fayettevillenc.va.gov/features/Fayetteville\\_VAMC\\_Call\\_Center.asp#sthash.C8j1q2wN.dpuf](http://www.fayettevillenc.va.gov/features/Fayetteville_VAMC_Call_Center.asp#sthash.C8j1q2wN.dpuf).

# Improved Access Drives Positive Change In Salisbury VA PTSD Pgm

By Bart Major  
Salisbury VAMC PAO

Beginning in August, the Salisbury VAMC's inpatient PTSD unit will begin enrolling Veterans on a two-week cycle. The change, which won't affect Veterans currently enrolled or scheduled for the July class, means that Veterans with combat-related PTSD will have even better access to the intensive inpatient program.

"Last minute emergencies and other items can sometimes delay a Veteran from starting the program with their scheduled cohort. A rolling admissions model will allow our program to admit a smaller group of Veterans every two weeks, which provides improved access," said Dr. Kristin Humphrey, the Salisbury VA inpatient PTSD coordinator. "We expect to admit new Veterans in two weeks or less instead of waiting six weeks or more to begin receiving the treatment they need."

"Our ultimate goal is to admit Veterans who need more involved treatment into one of our intensive inpatient mental health programs as soon as needed," said David Buyck, VISN 6 chief of Mental Health.

The Salisbury VA inpatient PTSD program has been serving combat Veterans for almost 20 years and currently accepts referrals from across the country, including referrals from the active duty military. Currently, the program admits a group of combat Veterans every six weeks.

The program, which is recovery-focused and uses all evidence-based and holistic treatment for PTSD, has 23 beds, including four for women Veterans, and is housed in a brand-new, state-of-the-art facility that was opened in the spring of 2014.

"We're not just doing the traditional therapy that most people probably have heard about," said Hum-

phrey, "we're also doing things like tai chi, yoga... we do a lot of exercise, we have a PTSD therapy dog, so it's really a holistic program to work with Veterans with their combat PTSD issues and readjusting."

In addition to changes in Salisbury VA's PTSD program, other programs in the VISN 6 Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network are also looking at adopting changes to improve access and best serve Veterans.

The Salem VA inpatient PTSD program is scheduled to start a pilot program July 1 where Veterans will also be enrolled on a rolling basis, with a stronger focus on non-combat PTSD Veterans. Veterans seeking treatment for combat-related PTSD will be referred to Salisbury as part of the pilot.

"We are honored to serve the combat Veterans from the Salem area, and we will continue to refer our Veterans who have non-combat PTSD to the Salem residential PTSD program," said Humphrey.

Veterans scheduled for Salem's June inpatient PTSD program are not affected and the changes have no impact on outpatient PTSD treatment programs or support groups at either facility.

To see a video with Veterans speaking about the Salisbury inpatient PTSD program, visit [www.facebook.com/VASalisbury/videos](http://www.facebook.com/VASalisbury/videos).



## Don't Pay for Your Benefits!

The quickest way to navigate the claims process is to work with an **Accredited** Veteran Service Officer--whose services are FREE. Paying for services WILL NOT expedite the process.

844-NC4-VETS

[www.NC4VETS.com](http://www.NC4VETS.com)

**Veterans**  
**Crisis Line** 1-800-273-8255  
PRESS 1

# Your Health



## HELP RAISE PTSD AWARENESS

*Everyone makes a difference. Help us spread the word about PTSD and effective treatments.*

### Learn

PTSD Treatment Works

#### Discover the facts.

- Visit [www.ptsd.va.gov](http://www.ptsd.va.gov) to start with [PTSD Basics](#), key information about trauma, PTSD and treatment options. Take the [PTSD Overview Course](#) or other free, in-depth [Continuing Education Courses](#) (with the option to earn CE/CMEs).

#### Explore your options.

- Take the mystery out of PTSD treatment. Our short whiteboard video [PTSD Treatment: Know your Options](#) reviews the best treatments. And visit [AboutFace](#), a website where Veterans, their family members and clinicians talk about turning life around with PTSD treatment.

### Connect

Reach Out to Someone

#### Help someone. Help yourself.

- Do you think you might have PTSD or know someone at risk? Take action for yourself or someone you care about. We outline steps to help you [know whether you might have PTSD](#) and locate [where to get help](#).

#### Give support. Get support.

- Managing PTSD can be easier with the support of others. If you are getting treatment, or have finished treatment, our [self-help information and tools](#) can help you manage stress. Caregivers can look to organizations that offer [support for family and friends](#) for tips on self-care too.

### Share

Spread the Word

#### Pass along what you learn.

- Use [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) to share up-to-date information or ask us questions about PTSD and treatment. [Subscribe](#) to our email publications – PTSD Monthly Update, Clinician's Trauma Update-Online, and the PTSD Research Quarterly - and let others know they are free.

#### Work together.

- Join our PTSD Awareness campaign! We have [promotional materials](#) to help you organize an event or share information about PTSD and effective treatments.



**YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY**

For more information, visit [www.ptsd.va.gov](http://www.ptsd.va.gov)

# Virginia Wounded Warrior Pgm Offers Family Programming

By Martha Utley  
VWWP Regional Director – Central

Within the Virginia Department of Veterans Services resides the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP) which monitors and coordinates behavioral health and rehabilitative services and support services through an integrated, comprehensive and responsive system of public and private partnerships.

VWWP facilitates these services for Virginia Veterans, members of the Virginia National Guard and Armed Forces Reserves (not in federal service), and their families with a special emphasis on those affected by stress related conditions or traumatic brain injuries resulting from military service.

Hallmarks of VWWP Family Services are programs for relationship and family resiliency skills building called “Mission: Healthy Relationships” and “Mission: Healthy Families.” VWWP offers these weekend workshops four times a year and will be hosting the next workshops this summer.

### “MISSION: HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS” (MHR)

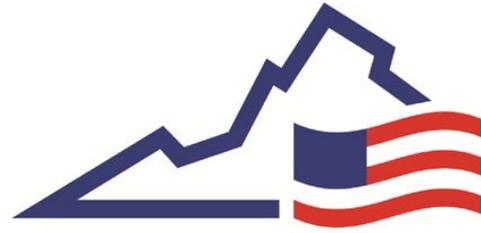
*Mission: Healthy Relationships* is a relationship enhancement program, focused on effective communication skills for couples. MHR has been adapted from 8 Hours to a Lifetime of Relationship Satisfaction, a workshop designed by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society in conjunction with the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

The workshop is a relationship strengthening program for committed couples who have experienced deployment and are also coping with the effects of Operational Combat Stress, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury as well as those Veterans who may be suffering from sub-clinical levels of trauma.

The program’s purpose is to teach a skills-based approach to managing some of the relationship challenges attendant to recovery from trauma. The goal of the intervention is to improve overall health and well-being and relationship satisfaction.

The next MHR workshop will be held at the Hotel Roanoke & Convention Center in Roanoke, Virginia July 17-19, 2015. All Veterans, National Guard and Reserve members and their spouses are eligible to attend.

The only cost is a \$25 registration fee – lodging, meals and programming is free. For more information or to register, please contact Leanna Craig at 540-556-9112 or email: [leanna.craig@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:leanna.craig@dvs.virginia.gov).



## Virginia Wounded Warrior Program

Virginia Department of Veterans Services

### “MISSION: HEALTHY FAMILIES” (MHF)

*Mission: Healthy Families* retreats enhance Veteran and family wellbeing by allowing the families to step away from daily stressors and grow and support one another as a unit.

The retreats also allow families to engage with supportive services providers outside of a formal treatment setting which can decrease stigma and promote help-seeking behaviors.

This event brings together various partner organizations with a common mission to serve and support Veteran families.

Through partnership with Virginia Commonwealth University, a Resilience Skills Training was developed and is facilitated by Dr. Amy Armstrong and Dr. Carolyn Hawley of VCU’s Department of Rehabilitation Counseling.

The Adult Programming Training Objectives are to:

- Understand the concept of Resilience and strategies that can enhance resilience
- Recognize our body’s response to Stress and techniques to better manage it
- Develop an understanding of strategies to increase overall Wellbeing.

The youth activities focus on resilience skills-building, such as positive communication, coping with change, and healthy stress management. VWWP utilizes Project Y.E.S! to facilitate our youth programming. Project Y.E.S! is a national internship program engaging college students in service to meet the needs of military families and is a partnership from the Department of Defense and United States Department of Agriculture <http://militaryfamilies.extension.org/>.

The dynamic Project YES! team lead youth in a variety of innovative, fun, and educational activities on communication skills building, team work, conflict resolution, and stress management.

In 2015, Mission: Healthy Families is being spon-

**Continued on Pg 8**



## VWWP

continued from Pg 7

sored through a grant awarded from Major League Baseball Player Justin Verlander's "Wins for Warriors" charitable organization. Wins for Warriors partners with organizations to provide mental health support for veterans and their families, while also using its platform to be part of the national movement to change the conversation and shift focus to the fact that all Veterans can be game changers! For more information visit [www.winsforwarriors.org](http://www.winsforwarriors.org).

The next retreat will be held June 12-14 at the 4H Camp in Wakefield, Va. Veterans, National Guard and Reserve members and their families are eligible to attend. The only cost is a \$20 registration fee – lodging, meals and activities are free.

For more information or to register, please contact Kerri Gerke at 804-839-6993 or email: [gerkek@rbha.org](mailto:gerkek@rbha.org).

For more information about the Virginia Department of Veterans Services' Virginia Wounded Warrior Program, please visit [www.dvs.virginia.gov](http://www.dvs.virginia.gov).



## MISSION: HEALTHY FAMILIES



### FAMILY RETREAT: June 12-14, 2015

Virginia Wounded Warrior Program is hosting a fun, family-oriented skills building course for military veterans and families coping with the impact of deployment, military service, post traumatic stress, operational stress or traumatic brain injury.

Sacrifices inherent in serving our nation such as deployments and recovery from both visible and invisible wounds often take a toll on service members, spouses, and children.

This weekend event will help parents and children build communication, conflict resolution, and coping skills to foster resilience among military and veteran families. Parents and school-age children will be participating in both separate and family activities to promote bonding.

**Please note:** This event will involve group activities and is most appropriate for school age children or older who can operate in a group environment away from their parents.

*Mission: Healthy Families retreats in 2015 are made possible thanks to a grant awarded through "Wins for Warriors" - Major League Baseball player Justin Verlander's charitable organization. For more information about Wins for Warriors please visit [www.winsforwarriors.org](http://www.winsforwarriors.org)*

### REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

DATE: June 12-14, 2015  
WHERE: Airfield 4H Conference Center  
15189 Airfield Road, Wakefield, VA 23888

CHECK-IN: 4pm-6pm  
CHECK-OUT: 12 Noon  
COST: \$20 Registration Fee

### CONTACT:

Kerri Gerke, Family Resource Specialist • (804)862-8002 ext 3035 • Email: [Gerkek@RBHA.org](mailto:Gerkek@RBHA.org)

## Power Soccer continued from Pg 1

works with Veterans with spinal cord injuries, noted that he has seen first-hand how the sport has impacted Veterans who are given the freedom to participate.

"One of our quadriplegic Veterans who had been very athletic before his injury, would rarely get out of bed," Burchuk said. "Once he came out to the training, he realized that he was able to do everything that the other players did with his chin controls."

Hampton Veterans began learning the sport in April. Burchuk expects the game's popularity to grow. "We're hoping to have at least four spinal cord patients and an equivalent number from the community living center join. It gives patients a chance to feel like they don't have a disability."

Steve Belechak, a local youth soccer coach, disabled Veteran and former U.S. Marine Corps soccer player introduced the sport to fellow Hampton Veterans. "This is a very grueling sport, mentally and physically. Once players are in the chair not only do they

have to concentrate on the sport but also concentrate on driving," he said. "One unique aspect is the fact that in soccer, you must defend by running backwards, so participants must learn to navigate backwards in order to properly defend their goal," says Belechak.

Belechak envisions expanding the sport to more Veterans and starting teams at different VAMCs that can compete against one another. He says that the city providing Hampton Veterans the space to practice and is key. "Fort Monroe is fantastic... it's one of the most handicapped friendly places in the region," he said.

Bruce Sturk, director of federal facilities support for the City of Hampton, noted the ability to provide recreational opportunities for Hampton's Veterans is an excellent example of partnering with the VA to meet their unique needs.

"We appreciate the opportunity to serve those who have served," Sturk says. "Working with the medical center to ensure access to our facilities really reflects the importance we place on Veterans in our community."

# Remembering The Army's Birthday Of June 14, 1775

By John R. Maass, Historian  
U.S. Army Center of Military History

When the American Revolution broke out, the rebellious colonies did not possess an army in the modern sense. Rather, the revolutionaries fielded an amateur force of colonial troops, cobbled together from various New England militia companies. They had no unified chain of command, and although Artemas Ward of Massachusetts exercised authority by informal agreement, officers from other colonies were not obligated to obey his orders. The American volunteers were led, equipped, armed, paid for, and supported by the colonies from which they were raised.

In the spring of 1775, this "army" was about to confront British troops near Boston, Mass. The revolutionaries had to re-organize their forces quickly if they were to stand a chance against Britain's seasoned professionals. Recognizing the need to enlist the support of all of the American seaboard colonies, the Massachusetts Provincial Congress appealed to the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia to assume authority for the New England army. Reportedly, at John Adams' request, Congress voted to "adopt" the Boston troops on June 14, although there is no written record of this decision. Also on this day, Congress resolved to form a committee "to bring in a draft of rules and regulations for the government of the Army," and voted \$2,000,000 to support the forces around Boston and those at New



Courtesy Army.mil

*Defenders of the Constitution by H. Avery Chenoweth.*

York City. Moreover, Congress authorized the formation of 10 companies of expert riflemen from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, which were directed to march to Boston to support the New England militia.

George Washington received his appointment as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army the next day, and formally took command at Boston on July 3, 1775.



## June 14 Is Flag Day

On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress approved the design of a national flag. It was resolved that "the Flag of the thirteen United States shall be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union be

thirteen stars, white on a blue field, representing a new constellation."

Since 1916, when President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation establishing June 14 as national Flag Day, Americans have commemorated the adoption of the Stars and Stripes. Congressional legislation designating that date as national Flag Day was signed into law by President Harry Truman in 1949.

According to legend, in 1776 George Washington commissioned Philadelphia seamstress Betsy Ross to create a flag for the new nation. Scholars debate this legend, but agree that Ross most likely knew Washington and sewed flags.

To date, there have been 27 official versions of the flag, but the arrangement of the stars varied according to the flag-makers' preferences until 1912 when President Taft standardized the then-new flag's forty-eight stars into six rows of eight.

The forty-nine star flag (1959-60), as well as the fifty-star flag, also have standardized star patterns. The current version of the flag dates to July 4, 1960, after Hawaii became the fiftieth state on Aug. 21, 1959.

### Fitness Bug Takes Hold In May

Fitness was promoted far and wide across the VISN in May. All major VA medical centers and many CBOC community members, Veterans, and employees covered 1.2 miles during the 5th Annual VA2K Walk and Roll May 20.

People from throughout the community joined Veterans and staff to run, walk or roll through a 5K to benefit the Veterans Creative Arts festival in Durham.

Veterans also joined active duty military in the 2015 Valor Games for the physically challenged May 19-21. The competition took place at Duke University's Cameron Indoor Stadium in Durham, UNC's Dean Smith Center in Chapel Hill and Lake Crabtree Park in Raleigh.

Then, active duty and retired armed forces members participated in the Guard 2 Beach ride, sponsored by the Warrior Ride non-profit organization, from the North Carolina National Guard headquarters in Raleigh to Wilmington, May 22 as a way to challenge combat injured Veterans, while building morale and camaraderie.



**Sgt. Leticia Samuels**

*Military active duty, Veteran and retired members from every branch of service participate in the Guard 2 Beach ride from Raleigh to Wilmington May 22.*



**Sgt. 1st Class Robert Jordan**

*Program officials encourage an athlete during the rowing competition in Cameron Indoor Stadium at Duke University in Durham, during the 2015 Valor Games, May 19-21.*

*Right: Veteran athletes compete during the 2015 Valor Games Ping Pong competition in Cameron Indoor Stadium at Duke University in Durham, May 19-21.*

**Sgt. 1st Class Robert Jordan**



**Daniel Henry**

*Veterans, caregivers, staff and community members at Hampton VAMC took a step towards better fitness with their participation in the 5th Annual VA2K Walk and Roll May 20.*



### VA Announces New Initiative: National ‘Summer Of Service’

VA announced a new nationwide initiative designed to build upon its existing partnerships to grow the number of individuals and organizations serving Veterans in their communities. The department is renewing its commitment to Veterans and embarking upon a “Summer of Service” that seeks the help of citizens across the country to honor that commitment.

“We have made progress over the past year addressing the challenges we face in delivering care and benefits to millions of Veterans and their families,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald. “While there is more work to do to honor our sacred commitment to Veterans, we also recognize that VA cannot do it alone. We are asking Americans everywhere to join the Summer of Service and help us give back to those who have given so much to our nation.”

In the coming weeks, VA will be working closely with Congressional partners, Veterans Service Organizations, Mayors and local communities, private sector and non-profit organizations, and VA employees to identify new and innovative ways to support VA’s commitment to care for those who “have borne the battle” and their families.

As part of VA’s Summer of Service, the department has committed to holding an open house in VA facilities the week of June 28 to spur increased local engagement and welcome members of the community interested in supporting the needs of Veterans. VA has also established the following goals to achieve by Labor Day:

- **Increasing Volunteers:** Committed to engaging with 100,000 volunteers to support care and benefits programs and local events.

- **Increasing Community Partners:** Committed to expanding current agreements to provide services and support reaching more than 15,000 Veterans and family.

- **Recruiting Medical Professionals:** Hiring clinicians and clinical support staff to further expand access to care and homelessness.

- **Congress:** Host Congressional Members and Staffs at VA facilities across the country.

The department has an outstanding volunteer program, which will be highlighted throughout the country this summer. VA will build upon the ongoing work of its more than 350,000 employees and 76,000 volunteers around the nation. While the central focus of the campaign will be increasing volunteerism and partnerships, it will also provide individuals and communities an opportunity to support other important priorities.

Despite a hiring effort that brought more than 11,000 net new employees onboard over the past year, VA still needs more health care providers, claims specialists, medical support assistants, and cemetery directors to continue to expand needed services. VA’s partners can help by getting the word out this summer.

Volunteers can help serve Veterans by visiting [www.volunteer.va.gov/](http://www.volunteer.va.gov/) to find out the needs of your local VA facility.

### VA Waives Resident-Rate Rqmts Of Choice Act Through Dec 2015

In order to make it easier for Veterans and their families to receive their GI Bill benefits where they choose, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has used his authority to waive the provisions of Section 702 of the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014 (Choice Act). This action will ensure all GI Bill® students are able to continue training at their chosen institutions.

Under Section 702, VA must disapprove education programs at public institutions for Post-9/11 GI Bill and Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty (MGIB-AD) benefits if a school charges individuals tuition and fees in excess of the resident rate for terms beginning after July 1.

VA recognizes that the time allotted for states and territories to comply with Section 702 of the Choice Act is challenging for some schools due to the process required to make legislative or policy changes. This limited waiver by Secretary Robert McDonald covers programs that are not in compliance for all terms beginning prior to January 1, 2016, in order to allow time for non-compliant states and territories to make the requisite legislative and policy changes.

“Our military members and their families make sacrifices that require them to pack up and move with little notice,” said McDonald. “They shouldn’t be penalized after they leave military service by burdensome residency requirements. This waiver will allow students to continue receiving the GI Bill benefits they’ve earned as states work to comply with this important law.”

A list of states that are in compliance is posted on the GI Bill website. In general, the resident-rate provisions of the Choice Act cover Veterans, their spouses and children, using Post-9/11 GI Bill or MGIB-AD who live in the state where they are attending school and who enrolled within three years of the Veteran’s qualifying discharge.

To remain approved, schools must charge tuition and fees at the resident rate to these covered individuals. For more information on GI Bill resident-rate requirements and to see which states comply, visit [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/702.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/702.asp). Updates will also be posted on the GI Bill Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/gibillEducation](http://www.facebook.com/gibillEducation).



# VISN 6 Sites Of Care & VA Vet Centers

## MEDICAL CENTERS

**Asheville VAMC**  
1100 Tunnel Road  
Asheville, NC 28805  
828-298-7911, 800-932-6408  
[www.asheville.va.gov/](http://www.asheville.va.gov/)

**Beckley VAMC**  
200 Veterans Avenue  
Beckley, WV 25801  
304-255-2121, 877-902-5142  
[www.beckley.va.gov/](http://www.beckley.va.gov/)

**Durham VAMC**  
508 Fulton St.  
Durham, NC 27705  
919-286-0411, 888-878-6890  
[www.durham.va.gov/](http://www.durham.va.gov/)

**Fayetteville VAMC**  
2300 Ramsey St.  
Fayetteville, NC 28301  
910-488-2120, 800-771-6106  
[www.fayettevillenc.va.gov/](http://www.fayettevillenc.va.gov/)

**Hampton VAMC**  
100 Emancipation Dr.  
Hampton, VA 23667  
757-722-9961, 866-544-9961  
[www.hampton.va.gov/](http://www.hampton.va.gov/)

**Richmond VAMC**  
1201 Broad Rock Blvd.  
Richmond, VA 23249  
804-675-5000, 800-784-8381  
[www.richmond.va.gov/](http://www.richmond.va.gov/)

**Salem VAMC**  
1970 Roanoke Blvd.  
Salem, VA 24153  
540-982-2463, 888-982-2463  
[www.salem.va.gov/](http://www.salem.va.gov/)

**Salisbury VAMC**  
1601 Brenner Ave.  
Salisbury, NC 28144  
704-638-9000, 800-469-8262  
[www.salisbury.va.gov/](http://www.salisbury.va.gov/)

## OUTPATIENT CLINICS

**Albemarle CBOC**  
1845 W City Drive  
Elizabeth City, NC 27909  
252-331-2191

**Brunswick Outreach Clinic**  
20 Medical Campus Drive  
Supply, NC 28462  
910-754-6141

**Charlotte CBOC**  
8601 University East Drive  
Charlotte, NC 28213  
704-597-3500

**Charlottesville CBOC**  
650 Peter Jefferson Pkwy  
Charlottesville, VA 22911  
434-293-3890

**Danville CBOC**  
705 Piney Forest Rd.  
Danville, VA 24540  
434-710-4210

**Emporia CBOC**  
1746 East Atlantic Street  
Emporia, VA 23847  
434-348-1500

**Fayetteville CBOC**  
2919 Breezewood Avenue, Ste 101  
Fayetteville, NC 28304  
910-488-2120, Ext. 6100/6101  
800-771-6106, Ext. 6100/6101

**Franklin CBOC**  
647 Wayah St.  
Franklin, NC 28734-3390  
828-369-1781

**Fredricksburg CBOC**  
130 Executive Center Pkwy  
Fredericksburg, VA 22401  
540-370-4468

**Goldsboro CBOC**  
2610 Hospital Road  
Goldsboro, NC 27909  
919-731-4809

**Greenbrier County CBOC**  
804 Industrial Park Road  
Maxwelton, WV 24957  
304-497-3900

**Greenville HCC**  
401 Moye Blvd.  
Greenville, NC 27834  
252-830-2149

**Hamlet CBOC**  
100 Jefferson Street  
Hamlet, NC 28345  
910-582-3536

**Hickory CBOC**  
2440 Century Place, SE  
Hickory, NC 28602  
828-431-5600

**Hillandale Rd. Annex**  
1824 Hillandale Road  
Durham, North Carolina 27705  
919-383-6107

**Jacksonville CBOC**  
241 Freedom Way, Suite 1  
Midway Park, NC 28544  
910-353-6406

**Jacksonville II CBOC**  
306 Brynn Marr Road  
Jacksonville, NC 28546  
910-343-5301

**Lynchburg CBOC**  
1600 Lakeside Drive  
Lynchburg, VA 24501  
434-316-5000

**Morehead City CBOC**  
5420 U.S. 70  
Morehead City, NC 28557  
252-240-2349

**Princeton VA Clinic**  
1511 North Walker Street  
Princeton, WV 24740  
304-425-8105

**Raleigh CBOC**  
3305 Sungate Blvd.  
Raleigh, NC 27610  
919-212-0129

**Raleigh II Annex**  
3040 Hammond Business Place  
Raleigh, NC 27603  
919-899-6259

**Robeson County CBOC**  
139 Three Hunts Drive  
Pembroke, NC 28372  
910-521-8452

**Rutherford County CBOC**  
374 Charlotte Road  
Rutherfordton, NC 28139  
828-288-2780

**Staunton CBOC**  
102 Lacy B. King Way  
Staunton, VA 24401  
540-886-5777

**Tazewell CBOC**  
123 Ben Bolt Ave.  
Tazewell, VA 24651  
276-988-2526

**Village Green Annex**  
1991 Fordham Drive  
Fayetteville, NC 28304  
910-488-2120 ext. 4020,

**Virginia Beach CBOC**  
244 Clearfield Avenue  
Virginia Beach, VA  
757-722-9961, ext. 1900

**Wilmington HCC**  
1705 Gardner Rd.  
Wilmington, NC 28405  
910-343-5300

**Winston-Salem CBOC**  
190 Kimel Park Drive  
Winston-Salem, NC 27103  
336-768-3296

**Winston-Salem Annex**  
2101 Peters Creek Parkway  
Winston-Salem, NC 27127  
336-761-5300

**Wytheville CBOC**  
165 Peppers Ferry Rd.  
Wytheville, VA 24382-2363  
276-223-5400

## DIALYSIS CENTERS

**VA Dialysis and Blind Rehabilitation Clinics at Brier Creek**  
8081 Arco Corporate Drive  
Raleigh, NC 27617  
919-286-5220

**VA Dialysis Clinic Fayetteville**  
2301 Robeson Street, Ste. 101  
Fayetteville, NC 28305  
910-483-9727

## VET CENTERS

**Beckley Vet Center**  
1000 Johnstown Road  
Beckley, WV 25801  
304-252-8220

**Charlotte Vet Center**  
2114 Ben Craig Dr.  
Charlotte, NC 28262  
704-549-8025

**Fayetteville Vet Center**  
2301 Robeson Street  
Fayetteville, NC 28305  
910-488-6252

**Greensboro Vet Center**  
2009 S. Elm-Eugene St.  
Greensboro, NC 27406  
336-333-5366

**Greenville Vet Center**  
1021 W.H. Smith Blvd.  
Greenville, NC 27834  
252-355-7920

**Jacksonville, N.C. Vet Center**  
110-A Branchwood Drive  
Jacksonville, NC 28546  
910-577-1100

**Norfolk Vet Center**  
1711 Church Street  
Norfolk, VA 23504  
757-623-7584

**Princeton Vet Center**  
905 Mercer Street  
Princeton, WV 24740  
304-425-5653

**Raleigh Vet Center**  
1649 Old Louisburg Rd.  
Raleigh, NC 27604  
919-856-4616

**Roanoke Vet Center**  
350 Albemarle Ave., SW  
Roanoke, VA 24016  
540-342-9726

**Virginia Beach Vet Center**  
324 Southport Circle, Suite 102  
Virginia Beach, VA, 23452  
757-248-3665