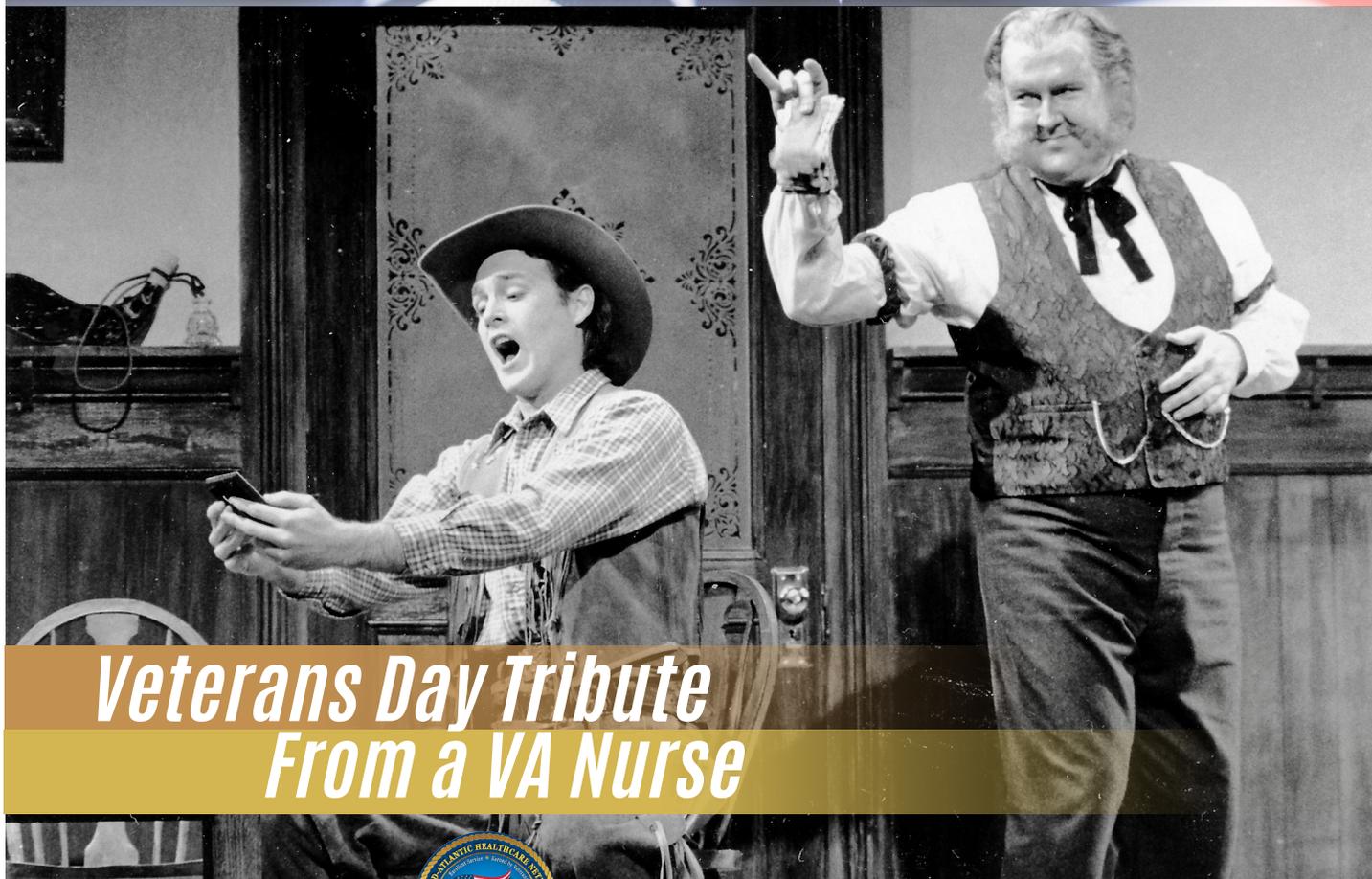


# VOICES OF VISN 6

— Excellent Care — Earned by Veterans — Delivered Here —



## Veterans Day Tribute From a VA Nurse



### Inside This Issue

By Megan Kon

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For Veterans Day, Central Virginia VA Health Care System (CVHCS) in Richmond wanted to do something a little different by asking registered nurse Tracey Welborn to sing a tribute to Veterans to be shared on our social media channels. Prior to his health care profession, Welborn trained and toured as an opera singer. Learn about his history and enjoy his rendition of “The Star-Spangled Banner,” which he has graciously devoted to the group of men and women we are proud to call Veterans.

### How Welborn Went From the Opera House to the Veterans Hospital

After years of singing and performing for audiences across the globe, Tracey Welborn decided it was time to become a registered nurse. Luckily for CVHCS, Welborn landed in the education department, where he trains fellow staff members how to engage with patients in a clinical setting.

“All the world’s a stage and part of life is performing,” Welborn stated, quoting William Shakespeare. “There is a connection that can happen when you perform on an emotional or even empathetic level. If you can tap into that with a patient, putting yourself in their shoes, you find the humanity in those interactions.”

**TOP PHOTO:** Welborn (left) performing in “Don Pasquale” at the Virginia Opera. This opera is usually set in Rome, but the director, David Gately, set the stage for the Wild West, making it a lot of fun to perform.



## MESSAGE FROM THE NETWORK DIRECTOR

I am sure that you have heard by now that I have decided to retire from VA, effective Dec. 31st, after 37-years of service. Let me say that I love the VA, the staff, and our Veterans. My decision to retire is purely a personal choice to spend more time with my husband and family. I have given this decision months of deliberation, praying on it, and all the signs suggest that yes, it is time.

I know because of each of you, the VA will be in good hands. **Steph Young** has agreed to serve as acting Network Director while recruitment is underway. Since selecting her to direct the Charles George VA Medical Center in Asheville in early 2018, she has impressed me as an astute, compassionate, wise and charismatic leader, driven toward excellence.

Steph is the perfect person to lead the VISN during the transition and the ever-changing COVID-19 landscape that

she knows so well. Coming from a medical center in the mountains, she is also familiar with the challenges of ensuring coverage in hard-to-reach areas. She will bring her experience to bear in addressing the comprehensive application of operations while the VISN team focuses on safely, efficiently inoculating staff and Veterans throughout the system.

We are also in the middle of a leadership transition at the top of the chain. I must tell you that I am immensely proud of our team and its ability to concentrate on our mission to deliver health care to Veterans despite the community's political and civil turmoil. There will be changes in policy and operations over the coming months as the new administration takes control of our organization. But what you've witnessed in the last presidential transition, implementation of the MISSION Act, and COVID-19 pandemic response is our team members' ability to put their heads down and dig in, with dogged

determination to serve. I expect you'll see more examples that our dedication to Veterans' health care comes first.

I wish all of you a happy and safe holiday season! Please do what you can to help others during this time of uncertainty. Remember to mask up and do whatever else you can to protect yourselves, your families, and others. Find ways to stay alert and refreshed. Finally, thank you for the incredible support I have received in these past few years that I've served as a VISN director, and in all of the time before, in my previous roles throughout my VA career. VA has been my home and my rock, and you have been a huge reason why it will remain central in my core.

*Thank you for everything, and God bless each of you!*

**– DeAnne M. Seekins**  
VISN 6 Network Director

## Greenville Psychiatrist Installed as NC Medical Board President

By Steve Wilkins | VISN 6 PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Venkata “Amba” Jonnalagadda, MD, was recently sworn in as the North Carolina Medical Board’s (NCMB) 122nd President. Dr. Jonnalagadda was appointed to NCMB in 2016 and reappointed in 2018. She will serve as NCMB President through October 2021.

NCMB is the agency responsible for licensing, monitoring, disciplining and guiding physicians, physician assistants and the other health care professionals it regulates to ensure their fitness and competence. The medical board is made up of 13 members, including physicians, allied health professionals and non-clinician members of the public.

Dr. Jonnalagadda represented NCMB on the Federation of State Medical Boards Committee on Sexual Boundaries Violations, which this year released a significantly revised and updated Policy on Physician

Sexual Misconduct.

Dr. Jonnalagadda is Associate Chief of Staff for the Greenville VA Health Care Center, overseeing the eastern region of the state for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Durham. She practices as a clinical psychiatrist with the VA and is also a partner in private practice with Greenville Psychiatric Association, P.A., in Greenville, N.C.

In addition, she serves on the adjunct teaching faculty in the Department of Pediatrics at East Carolina University’s Brody School of Medicine. Previously, Dr. Jonnalagadda was Medical Director for the North Carolina Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services.

Dr. Jonnalagadda completed her undergraduate education at East Carolina University and completed medical education at the Brody School of Medicine and Spartan



Dr. Venkata “Amba” Jonnalagadda was recently sworn in as the North Carolina Medical Board’s (NCMB) 122nd President. She will serve in the capacity through October 2021.

Health Sciences University (St. Lucia). She completed postgraduate training in psychiatry and a fellowship in child/adolescent psychiatry at Pitt County Memorial Hospital/Vidant Health in Greenville. She is board certified in child and adolescent psychiatry, as well as adult psychiatry, and is a Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association.





STORY CONTINUED FROM COVER

Tracey Welborn was an opera singer prior to his career as a registered nurse at the Central Virginia VA Health Care System.

## Richmond Veterans Day Tribute

Welborn, who received a full scholarship to study at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music, credits his path in life to his mentor, Edward Lowe. Lowe was the choir director at Guilford College and would give free vocal lessons to Welborn. He urged Welborn to pursue further training as a singer.

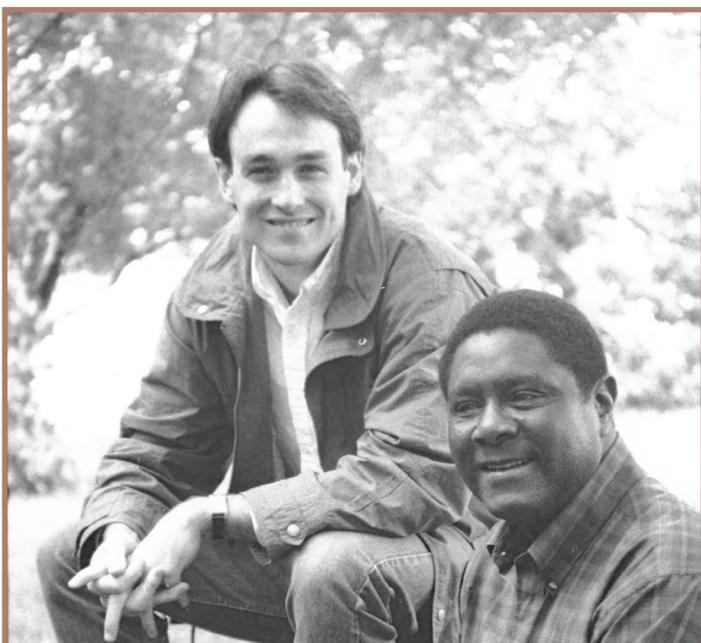
"I've been lucky my whole life," said Welborn, whose favorite song to sing is "Without a Song" by Vincent Youmans.

"My work with Ed was a gift that has given me my beautiful family, a life in the arts and now a life caring for Veterans," said Welborn. "I am a lucky man."

Throughout his singing career, Welborn performed at the New York City Opera, Opera de Lausanne, Canadian Opera Company, Los Angeles Philharmonic and many others. Since the pandemic happened in early 2020, Welborn has since gone virtual, partnering with the National Virtual Medical Orchestra (NVMO) to serve as a tenor soloist for Giacomo Puccini's "Nessun Dorma." (LINK: <https://youtu.be/FOKW42q7HWE>)

"I heard him singing 'Nessun Dorma' and could tell in just a few seconds that he was a one-of-a-kind talent in the medical/musical community," said John Masko, conductor of NVMO.

NVMO provides a space for medical musicians whose orchestras have been shuttered by COVID-19 to come together to play their instruments, decompress and share their talents with a wider audience.



Tracey Welborn and Edward Lowe posing for a promotional picture for a concert on the campus of Guilford College in 1992.

# PEER Support Specialist Lends Experience to Help Veterans in Crisis

By Todd Goodman | SALISBURY VA HCS PUBLIC AFFAIRS

When it comes to mental health, many are familiar with psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers. However, there is another valuable resource — PEER Support Specialists — a group that draws on past experiences to help bridge the gap between Veteran and provider.

Coast Guard Veteran Lavinia Jackson knows how valuable a knowledgeable PEER Support Specialist can be on the road to recovery. Jackson was diagnosed with PTSD from a rape while on active duty.

"It wasn't from a fellow Coastie," she said. "It happened a block from base by a civilian. One or two men, I couldn't remember."

She'd had one drink at the enlisted club prior to going to a party off base. "This guy hands me this cup with red liquid," she said. She refused it. Minutes later he was still talking. "He forced me to drink it because it spilled on my clothes."

Several minutes later she felt strange, woozy, and was walked to her car. "I remember sitting on the couch and then I woke up and my clothes were torn," she said.

She didn't even remember the drive home the next day. Friends kept her calm. She took a shower, which she was not supposed to do. A rape kit was performed on her, but nothing was found. Jackson began to have flashbacks and her life was changed completely. The perpetrators were never caught. "I couldn't remember faces," she said. "There was no way for me to identify ... I don't know."

Jackson's current attitude is something at which to marvel. "There is always a lesson and a blessing even in the greatest of tragedies," she said.

Enter PEER Support Specialist Sherrie Cook, an Air Force Veteran, with 10 years of VA experience with the Salisbury VA Health Care System. She decided she wanted to help Veterans

who were challenged with mental health issues and to educate them about recovery and what is possible.

"You can get back to a semblance about what normal living is like," said Cook. "One of the keywords I have is hope. Recovery is possible because there is hope. You don't have to look at the world from the bottom. You can look up and see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. And that can bring you ways of changing how you think about life



Air Force Veteran Sherrie Cook, a VA PEER Support specialist, draws on past experiences to help Veterans in crisis.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



# VA, Federal Partners Plan for COVID-19 Vaccination Distribution

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced that it is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other federal partners to develop a comprehensive COVID-19 vaccine plan to ensure that VA safely and equitably distributes vaccines once authorized.

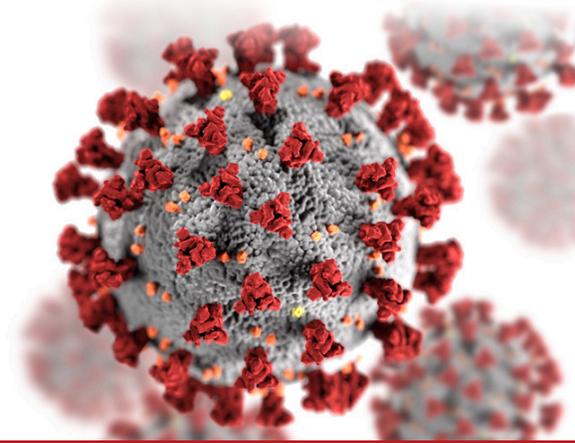
The plan will be a phased approach based on scientific and historical evidence, lessons learned from past pandemic vaccine plans and input from scientific experts both within and outside VA.

“In October, staff at VA medical facilities conducted important planning exercises in preparation for the vaccine,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “These exercises help us to address vaccine distribution, allocation, safety monitoring and supply tracking.”

COVID-19 vaccine implementation will include an initial limited-supply phase followed by a general implementation phase, when large supplies of the vaccine will be available to Veterans who want to receive one. VA experts in ethics, health equity, infectious disease, logistics, pandemic planning, pharmacy and public health, as well as those in the areas of change management, clinicians from various disciplines, data, education, IT, safety and training, along with government partners, were sought for input to help develop the plan. VA also conducted Veteran

listening sessions for valuable feedback in the planning process.

To learn the latest information, visit [CDC COVID-19 Vaccine](#).



## WNC VA Health Care System Continues to Thrive During COVID-19 Pandemic

By Vance Janes | WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM PAO

ASHEVILLE, NC — Despite COVID-19 restrictions, CDC guidelines, masks and physical distancing, the Western North Carolina VA Health Care System continues to serve its Veterans without missing a beat.

Whether it has been distribution of flu shots, the annual Veterans Day Ceremony or the simple act of a Veteran coming to one of the Health Care System's facilities, the staff have made changes in the way they do business to accommodate them all.

Flu shots were a special challenge this year with the Charles George VA Medical Center and the Hickory, Franklin and Rutherford County constructing temporary drive-through shot clinics. Nearly 3,500 Veterans took advantage of the drive throughs as of Oct. 31. More than 8,000 Veterans had received the flu shot at that time.

### Flu shots are still being offered in three ways:

**OPTION 1:** Scheduled appointments. Veterans who already have a scheduled appointment may receive a flu shot at that time. That includes Primary Care, Specialty Care Clinics, and the Franklin, Hickory and Rutherford County Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs).

**OPTION 2:** Walk-in request. No appointment, no problem! Veterans who do not have a scheduled appointment at the facility may receive a flu shot at either Primary Care 1 or 3. Franklin, Hickory and Rutherford County Community Based Outpatient Clinics will also provide flu shots without an appointment.

**OPTION 3:** Community Care Network: Enrolled Veterans (active within the past 24 months) can receive a flu shot through the Community Care Network (CCN). CCN retail pharmacies or urgent care/walk-in care (standalone visit) will provide flu shots at no cost with no co-payment. Retail pharmacy examples are CVS Pharmacy and Walmart Pharmacy.

One Veteran, Teresa Courtney, lauded the effort on the Health Care System's social media, stating “Thank you for your excellent care and service at the CGVAMC ... I received my shot at the drive-through service!”

Another Veteran, Leslie Wilson, echoed the sentiment.

“I got my shot a couple of weeks ago, and the process was quick, painless and efficient,” she said. “Great staff. Thanks, VA.”

As Veterans Day approached, the Health Care System worked hand in hand with the

City of Asheville personnel and local Veterans Organizations to plan, advertise and participate in the annual Veterans Day Ceremony ... albeit virtually.

Dr. PJ Moore, a 100-year-old Battle of the Bulge Army surgeon, and Stephanie Young, WNC VA Health Care System Director, were among the speakers during the event. Three Veterans also shared their stories they had written to help them with post-traumatic stress disorder. The ceremony, which was broadcast on the City of Asheville's YouTube channel, was viewed more than 800 people. More than 1,000 people were reached through social media.

“We can be proud of our ceremony honoring those who wore the uniform in war and in peacetime,” Allan Perkal, Buncombe County Veterans Council Chairperson, said. “A giant shout-out to (Dr.) PJ Moore for his powerful story of caring for those who had borne the battle, and Stephanie Young, who let us know what it means to those who take care of us at the Charles George VA Medical Center.”

Although the Health Care System has migrated to a virtual-care-first culture, many of the services have begun seeing patients face to face. In order to ensure that physical distancing and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines were met in waiting rooms and common areas, the health care system developed a virtual waiting room for Veterans.

All the Health Care System's facilities —

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 7**



Melissa Oliver recently was recognized as a finalist for the Robert L. Jesse Award for Excellence in Innovation.

## CVHCS Recognizes Our Innovation Leaders

Many great medical professionals have matriculated out of Richmond. From our academic affiliation with Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), CVHCS has helped train some of the best minds in medicine, one of which is the late Dr. Robert L. Jesse, a VCU graduate who led a brilliant career in cardiology. In 2019, VA established the Dr. Robert L. Jesse Award to recognize VA employees who demonstrate excellence and enable the discovery and spread of health care innovation.

Congratulations to Melissa Oliver. She was a finalist for the Robert L. Jesse Award for Excellence in Innovation announced at VA's recent annual Innovation Experience (iEX) virtual event.

Oliver is the program manager for the

Assistive Technology and Rehabilitation team and has expanded 3D printing capabilities across the country.

Dr. Carolyn Clancy, Deputy Under Secretary of Health for Discovery, Education and Affiliate Networks, said Oliver was the primary catalyst for the innovative application of 3D printing technology throughout VA. Since 2010, she has worked to expand 3D printing capabilities by leveraging telehealth service agreements with VAMCs across the country and assists with program development.

Oliver works collaboratively across the network to provide Veterans with access to 3D printing to augment clinical care.

Thank you, Melissa Oliver, for your service to our nation's heroes.

### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

including Charles George VA Medical Center, Rutherford County, Franklin and Hickory Community Based Outpatient Clinics — are now using VEText Mobile Check-in as another way to protect Veterans during the COVID-19 pandemic.

VEText Mobile Check-in provides an option for Veterans to check in using their cell phones and then wait in their vehicles until their providers are ready to see them.

Once Veterans arrive at the facility for their scheduled appointment and park, they text the word "here" to 53079. That alerts the care team that the Veteran is at the facility and waiting to be called to his or her appointment.

The Veteran will receive a text response from the facility verifying that the care team is aware that he or she is on site.

Once the care team is ready, the Veteran receives a text instructing him or her to enter the building and proceed to their appointment. When the Veteran enters the facility, he or she will report to the clinic as scheduled.

To help reduce foot traffic, Pharmacy curbside service and satellite sites for lab, Audiology and immunizations have been added. Currently all medical center clinics and CBOCs are now seeing between 25 and 50 percent of pre-COVID levels.

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### Other efforts the Health Care System is continuing to use include:

- Modified traffic routes
- Staff and patient screening
- Universal masking
- Processing of community care consults beyond emergent/urgent care has resumed
- A limited number of volunteers returned in late October
- The Residential Substance Abuse program reopened (limit of six Veterans) on Nov. 3, and
- The lab and imaging functions are now fully open.

# CLINICAL HYPNOSIS

## is Positive Whole Health Care

By Steve Wilkins | VISN 6 PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Whole health invites us to use alternative methods of caring for our physical and mental health in ways that strengthen and protect us. Among the vast array of approaches to caring for our whole selves is hypnosis. In a clinical setting, hypnosis isn't a gimmick or trick.

Therapists can help us into intensely focused attention. Many believe that focus is an altered state of mind with singular awareness, enabling deep processing of suggestion. It has been recognized as helpful in pain management and behavior control, like insomnia, weight loss and smoking cessation.

According to Dr. John Hall, a board-certified psychologist and hypnotherapist working as a Whole Health Pain Psychologist with the Whole Health team at the Charlotte Community Based Outpatient Clinic, "Chronic pain is a notoriously tough problem to solve." He contends that pain, designed to prevent us from further aggravating an area we just damaged, is problematic when it lingers.

"For instance, when we break a leg the pain tells us to stop moving to avoid doing any more damage. In a chronic pain situation, the pain continues even though there's no healing left for the bone to do. This can lead us to avoid doing things for fear of hurting ourselves, or to focus excessively on our pain."

Bill Hayes is a licensed clinical social worker and therapist who works with Veterans in the Hefner VA Medical Center, in Salisbury. He is also a board-certified hypnotherapist. A Veteran himself, Hayes says, "I often use the example of sighting a rifle with paper targets (something most Veterans have done during their service) as a trance experience."

According to Hayes, in those moments, you learn to breathe in a specific and methodical manner, and your focus heightens on the target. It is a familiar practice that Veterans can relate to blocking out peripheral noise. "All around you, others are firing their weapons, and you may even have a range sergeant or drill instructor yelling commands, but you stay calm and relaxed —

and you achieve your goal."

Hayes says that learning to develop that focus, for use whenever a person needs to harness their mental strength in the office or at home to control pain, reduce anxiety, calm gastrointestinal issues, or any number of problems, is what clinical hypnosis is all about.

**Hall explains:** "Imaging studies show that when we talk about an experience, like perhaps sitting in front of a fire, only the parts of our brain that deal with memories and language show any activity." *He says the hypnosis enables a person to focus more intently. "When we do the same studies for people under hypnosis, we see that parts of the brain process what the fire smells like, how warm the fire feels on that side of our face."*

Hall added that hypnosis can help the deep brain learn to cope with pain by putting it into perspective with the other sensations the body might experience.

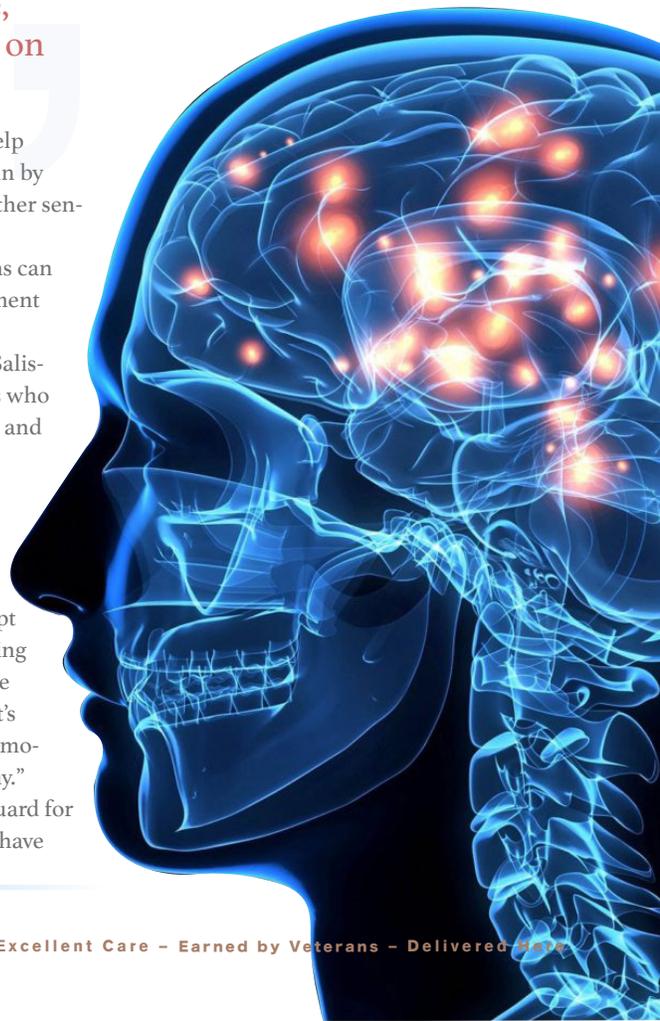
So, without medication, Veterans can learn to better control their environment and their conditions. Hayes offers, "I work in the mental health clinic [at Salisbury VAHCS] and often see Veterans who deal with anxiety, depression, PTSD, and many other concerns." He explains that stress tends to heighten the symptoms of any mental, and often physical, condition. So, learning how to relax and develop a sense of calm can be a foreign concept to some Veterans. He continues, adding how he is gratified when Veterans use the therapy properly and it works, "It's almost like watching that 'lightbulb' moment when someone has an epiphany."

Many have not let down their guard for decades and no longer know how to have

this sense of calm. By teaching them hypnosis, Hayes said he has seen so many positive changes. "I feel that this clinical tool has aided my therapy practice in so many beneficial ways," he says. "I am honored to be able to use it with the Veterans I work with."

Although hypnosis is something people learn to do on their own, it should be monitored closely by a trained therapist. Check with the clinicians in your local mental health clinic for more information. Remember, they are waiting to help.

"Like most in the medical field, I got into this to help folks," Hall declared. "It's very rewarding to have a Veteran come in who's completely frustrated because nothing has worked and providers have given up on them, and I can give them a tool that lets them decrease or change, or even get rid of their pain. For most folks, the realization that they can get back to most of what they enjoyed about their life before pain is overwhelmingly happy. Helping them realize that is enormously rewarding."



# Hampton VA Encourages Early Detection for Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Women are the fastest growing group of U.S. Veterans. With the number of women Veterans expected to increase dramatically in the next 10 years, Hampton VA is committed to meeting this growing need for specialty care.

In support of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Hampton VA wanted to underscore the importance of early detection. Each day in October was devoted to raising awareness. Some notable achievements:

- Dissemination of blankets to women Veterans receiving a mammogram
- Pillows provided to women Veterans undergoing breast biopsies
- Radiology team building through “Hampton Hands of Hope”
- Staff in Hematology/Oncology participated in outreach to women Veterans who were scheduled for services
- Collaboration and acceptance of donations from community organizations and agencies (e.g., Women Veterans Service Organization of Hampton Roads, Women Veterans of Foreign Wars, Norfolk Based Women Quilting Group)
- Dissemination of Breast Cancer Awareness items (pink solo cups and informational items) at the facility screenings tents and canteen
- Hosting a socially distanced awareness event, “Bra-ha-ha,” in the facility main lobby during which decorated bras were on display and staff were provided with a photo booth
- The women Veterans “Arts for the Heart” group decorated T-shirts to honor the “Clothesline Project,” which raises awareness for survivors of assault and abuse



Ms. Marie Luma, RN Medical Service



Ms. Sharon Durio, EA to the Chief of Staff



“Bra Ha Ha” bras on display



“Arts for the Heart” therapy group T-shirts



“Hands of Hope” staff members showing support of Breast Cancer Awareness

## Battling COVID-19 in Oahu

By Amber Brown | CGVAMC SYSTEMS REDESIGN COORDINATOR

ASHEVILLE, N.C. — When you think about taking a trip to Hawaii, you may think about the sun, fun, luaus and relaxation.

What you don't think about is COVID-19.

But that was precisely what awaited two dedicated Surgical Intensive Care nurses from the Western North Carolina VA Health Care System who recently set off to a hospital in Oahu, Hawaii, to help combat the pandemic.

In September, COVID-19 cases were declining at hospitals stateside, but Hawaii was experiencing a nursing shortage. The two deployed as part of the Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System, or DEMPS, which provides support to VA hospitals as well as community needs.

Megan Shoop, on her second deployment through the program, and Marissa Ledford, joined 13 other VA Intensive Care Nurses at Kuakini Medical Center.

Shoop said the local hospital was struggling; however, the onsite VA support along with the gratitude of the locals more than made up for it.

Shoop and Ledford said the local nurses were quick to express their gratitude for the help and that their presence was making it better for the patients.

In one such story, a local nurse was able to “pamper” her patient by providing the basic care that would have been an expectation before COVID-19.

With the DEMPS nurses present, the local nurses were able to return to the basics and spend more time with all their patients, providing quality care.



Megan Shoop, on her second deployment through the program, and Marissa Ledford, joined 13 other VA Intensive Care Nurses at Kuakini Medical Center.

*Shoop and Ledford have now returned from their deployment and are again taking care of our local Veterans in the Surgical Intensive Care Unit. We are enormously proud to have nurses like Shoop and Ledford representing us. Thank you for your continued dedication to providing quality care to all patients!*



## VETERANS EXPERIENCE OFFICE

## National VA Report Lists 71 Top Customer Experience Improvements and Initiatives

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) has released the [VA Customer Experience Accomplishments Report](#) detailing 71 major initiatives to improve customer service for Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors.

Improving customer service as a top priority at VA was established in 2018 and it challenged the department to rethink VA customer interactions, designating the [Veterans Experience Office](#) as the “voice of the Veteran.”

“The goal is to provide Veterans a modern, streamlined and responsive customer experience,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “VA actively engages in efforts that maximize the collective impact of stakeholders delivering federal, state and local services for improving outcomes where Veterans live, work and raise their families.”

Veterans have validated VA's efforts with trust in [VA health care](#) reaching an all-time high in April and [VA-wide trust](#) up 16 points since January 2016. Relying on 5.7 million real-time responses from 66 customer feedback

surveys to improve service recovery and guide program improvements, the report shares the accomplishments representing major achievements in the strategic deployment of VEO's shared CX capabilities to include:

- Implementing a [new electronic health record system](#) providing seamless Veteran patient records access between Department of Defense, community care providers and VA.
- Connecting with transitioning Veterans during their first year of separation via [Solid Start](#).
- Honoring nearly 4 million Veterans interred at VA national cemeteries with a [digital memorial space](#).
- Improving access to the Board of Veterans' Appeals with [virtual hearings](#).
- Connecting Veterans to resources more than 238 million times via VA's [weekly e-mail](#).
- Answering close to 3 million cus-

tomers calls via 800-MyVA411 and the [White House VA Hotline](#) which both offer general assistance agents available immediately.

VA has integrated this culture of customer service for creating the department's first customer service policy and CX directive, codifying customer experience principles in the Code of Federal Regulations and publishing a practitioner's guide — the [CX cookbook](#). This guide will help other government agencies to adopt customer-centric principles as part of its role as the Lead Agency Partner for the [President's Management Agenda](#) Cross-Agency Priority Goal on Improving Customer Experience with Federal Services.

Watch the State of Veteran Customer Experience for more information, or visit the Veterans Experience Office.

DECEMBER is

# Universal Human Rights Month

## VA Solid Start Program Makes Strides in First Year

*Successful contact made with recently separated Veterans during first 365-days following transition from military service*

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently announced, as **VA Solid Start** celebrated its one-year anniversary — the Veterans Benefits Administration connected with nearly 70,000 newly separated service members.

Annually, the program aims to proactively contact Veterans three times during their first year of transition from military to civilian life at the 90-, 180- and 360-day mark after separation.

“The department’s efforts have been effective,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “Approximately 124,000 service members separated from the military in fiscal year 2020, and nearly 60 percent of those Veterans called, answered — resulting in VA connecting recently separated Veterans to earned VA benefits, including helping Veterans in crisis immediately connect with Suicide Prevention Specialists.”

VA, in collaboration with the Department of Defense and Homeland Security, launched VA Solid Start in December 2019 in response to [Executive Order \(EO\) 13822: Supporting Our Veterans During Their Transition from Uniformed Service to Civilian Life](#). The EO was issued to improve transitioning service members’ mental health care and access to suicide prevention resources in the year following discharge, separation or retirement.

If a Veteran has separated from the military in the past 90 days and has not been contacted by **VA Solid Start**, call 1-800-827-1000 to reach a highly training VA Solid Start representative.

*If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, contact the Veterans Crisis Line to receive free, confidential support and crisis intervention available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Call 800-273-8255 and Press 1, text to 838255 or chat online at*

*[VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](https://VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat)*

# 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

### Durham VAMC

508 Fulton Street  
Durham, NC 27705  
919-286-0411 | 888-878-6880  
www.durham.va.gov

### Fayetteville VAMC

2300 Ramsey Street  
Fayetteville, NC 28301  
910-488-2120 | 800-771-6106  
www.fayettevilleenc.va.gov

### Hampton VAMC

100 Emancipation Dr.  
Hampton, VA 23667  
757-722-9961 | 866-544-9961  
www.hampton.va.gov

### Richmond VAMC

1201 Broad Rock Blvd.  
Richmond, VA 23249  
804-675-5000 | 800-784-8381  
www.richmond.va.gov

### Salem VAMC

1970 Roanoke Blvd.  
Salem, VA 24153  
540-982-2463 | 888-982-2463  
www.salem.va.gov

### Salisbury VAMC

1601 Brenner Ave.  
Salisbury, NC 28144  
704-638-9000 | 800-469-8262  
www.salisbury.va.gov

## OUTPATIENT CLINICS

### Albemarle CBOC

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

### Brunswick County CBOC

18 Doctors Cl., Units 2 & 3  
Supply, NC 28462 | 910-754-6141

### Charlotte CBOC

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

### Charlotte HCC

3506 W. Tyvola Rd.  
Charlotte, NC 28208  
704-329-1300

### Charlottesville CBOC

590 Peter Jefferson Pkwy  
Charlottesville, VA 22911  
434-293-3890

### Chesapeake CBOC

1987 S. Military Highway  
Chesapeake, VA 23320  
757-722-9961

### Clayton CBOC

11618 US Hwy 70 Business Highway West,  
Suites 100 & 200  
Clayton, NC 27520

### 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 HCC

7300 So. Raeford Rd  
Fayetteville NC 28304  
910-488-2120 | 800-771-6106

### Fayetteville Rehabilitation Clinic

4101 Raeford Rd. Ste 100-B  
Fayetteville NC 28304  
910-908-2222

### Franklin CBOC

647 Wayah Street  
Franklin, NC 28734-3390  
828-369-1781

### Fredericksburg CBOC

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

### Fredericksburg at Southpoint CBOC

10401 Spotsylvania Ave, Ste 300  
Fredericksburg, VA 22408  
540-370-4468

### Goldsboro CBOC

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

### 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

2580 Henderson Drive  
Jacksonville, NC 28546  
910-353-6406

### Jacksonville 2 VA Clinic

306 Brynn Marr Road  
Jacksonville, NC 28546  
910-353-6406

### Jacksonville 3 VA Clinic

4 Josh Court  
Jacksonville, NC 28546  
910-353-6406

### Kernersville HCC

1695 Kernersville Medical Pkwy  
Kernersville, NC 27284  
336-515-5000

### 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

### Raleigh CBOC

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

### Raleigh II Annex

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

### Raleigh III CBOC

2600 Atlantic Ave, Ste 200  
Raleigh, NC 27604  
919-755-2620

### Robeson County CBOC

139 Three Hunts Drive  
Pembroke, NC 28372  
910-272-3220

### Rutherford County CBOC

2270 College Avenue, Suite 145  
Forest City, NC 28043-2459  
828-288-2780

### Sanford CBOC

3112 Tramway  
Road Sanford, NC 27332  
919-775-6160

### Staunton CBOC

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

### Tazewell CBOC

141 Ben Bolt Ave.  
Tazewell, VA 24651  
276-988-8860

### Virginia Beach CBOC

244 Clearfield Avenue  
Virginia Beach, VA  
757-722-9961

### Wilmington HCC

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

### 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

### 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

3515 W Market Street, Suite 120  
Greensboro, NC 27403  
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

### Raleigh Vet Center

8851 Ellstree Lane  
Raleigh, NC 27617  
(919) 361-6419

### Roanoke Vet Center

1401 Franklin Rd SW  
Roanoke, VA 24016  
540-342-9726

### Virginia Beach Vet Center

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

## VISN 6 Newsletter

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Questions or comments about the newsletter, email [stephen.wilkins2@va.gov](mailto:stephen.wilkins2@va.gov) or call 919-956-5541

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