



DIVERSITY@WORK

A PUBLICATION OF THE OFFICE OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT & EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY,
A PROGRAM OFFICE WITHIN VA'S OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1

<<http://www.va.gov/dmeeo/ca/daw.htm>>

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2007

THE SECRETARY'S 17TH ANNUAL EEO AWARDS

On Thursday, November 15, 2007, the Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Honorable Gordon H. Mansfield, will host the Secretary's 17th Annual Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Awards Ceremony.

The Secretary's EEO Awards Program was created in 1988 to recognize individual contributions and achievements by VA employees in furthering VA's EEO Program

goals and to motivate employees and managers to support and participate in accomplishing those goals.

Each year, the Office of Diversity Management and Equal Employment Opportunity (DM&EEO) coordinates nominations for the Secretary's Annual EEO Awards Program.

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CELEBRATE!

National American Indian Heritage Month and Veterans Day



VA proudly joins the Nation in observing **National American Indian Heritage Month** during November. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are an estimated 4.5 million American Indians and Alaska Natives. Their rich history speaks to us through the names of our cities, lakes, and rivers; the magnificent ruins of ancient communities; and most important, the lives of the people who retain the cultural, spiritual, linguistic, and kinship bonds that have existed for millennia.

At VA, it is especially important to honor those American Indians and Alaska Natives who have defended our Nation's freedom through their service in the U.S. Armed Forces. Approximately 12,000 served in the U.S. military during World War I. More than 44,000—of a population of less than 350,000 Native Americans—served in European and Pacific war theaters between 1941 and 1945. And approximately 42,000 American Indians, 90 percent of them volunteers, fought in Vietnam.

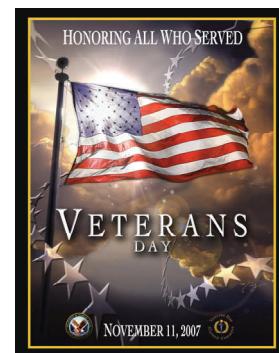
Overall, in fiscal year (FY) 2007, Native Americans made up 1.14 percent of VA's workforce and 0.62 percent of VA's

leadership (GS 13-15). Native Americans made up 1.16 percent of the total VA veteran population. For information on VA's Native American Program, contact Brenda Martin, EEO Specialist, at <Brenda.Martin@va.gov>.

VA also joins the Nation in saluting those who have served our Nation this **Veterans Day** on November 11. Veterans Day originated as "Armistice Day" on November 11, 1919, the first anniversary of the end of World War I. Congress passed a resolution in 1926 for an annual observance, and November 11 became a national holiday beginning in 1938.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed legislation in 1954 to change the name to Veterans Day as a way to honor those who served in all American wars. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are 23.7 million military veterans in the United States. In FY 2007, 30.88 percent of VA

employees were veterans, and nearly eight percent of VA employees were disabled veterans. For more information on VA's National Veterans Employment Program, visit <www.va.gov/nvep>.■



BOOKMARKS

- ▶ **alterNative Voices**
www.alternativevoices.org
- ▶ **American Indian Library Association**
<http://aila.library.sd.gov>
- ▶ **American Indian Science and Engineering Society**
www.aises.org
- ▶ **Association on American Indian Affairs**
www.indian-affairs.org
- ▶ **Bureau of Indian Affairs**
www.doi.gov/indiantrust.html
- ▶ **Native American Women's History**
http://womenshistory.about.com/od/nativeamerican/Native_American_Womens_History.htm
- ▶ **Native Web**
www.nativeweb.org
- ▶ **PowWows.com**
www.powwows.com
- ▶ **Society of American Indian Government Employees**
www.saige.org

Contact information for other diversity-related organizations can be found on the DM&EEO Web site at: www.va.gov/dmeeo/

FIELD NOTES

News You Can Use

2007 LULAC Veterans Summit

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and VA, through the Community Prosperity Partnership (CPP), are collaborating on the 2007 LULAC Veterans Summit scheduled for November 8–11, 2007, at the Coronado Springs Resort in Orlando, Florida. The Summit will consist of workshops and clinics addressing cutting-edge topics key to both veterans and the community—including health, employment, home foreclosure, post traumatic stress disorder, business enterprise, emergency preparedness and disaster loan programs, and alliance for economic inclusion. In addition, job and health fairs will be sponsored by Federal, state, and local governments, along with the private sector and institutions of higher education.

For more information on the 2007 LULAC Veterans Summit, visit LULAC's Web site at <www.lulac.org>. For more information about CPP, visit <www.va.gov/cpp>.

National Image, Inc., Conference

The upcoming National Image, Inc., Region III Annual Leadership Training Conference for Federal Employees is scheduled for November 14–16, 2007, at the Holiday Inn Rosslyn at Key Bridge in Arlington, Virginia. The theme for

this conference is "Career Training for Tomorrow's Leaders." The objective of the conference is to enhance the professionalism of Federal employees through cutting-edge workshops and panels on such relevant topics as conflict resolution, motivating employees and managers, effective communications, team building, values and ethical principles, and coaching and mentoring. The conference will include career enhancing workshops and panel presentations on timely topics in the areas of education, employment, and civil rights of relevance to Federal civil service employees. Ralph Torres, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Resolution Management, will be presenting a workshop entitled, "Organizational climate assessment for increased efficiency and effectiveness in serving our clients."

For more information, including the agenda and contact information, visit the National Image, Inc., Web site at <www.nationalimageinc.org>.

Farewell!

Judy Bee Micciche, DM&EEO's former Staff Assistant, is now serving as a VA Central Office Human Resources Service (COHRS) Chief in the Retirement and Benefits Division of HR&A. Tiffany Lewis, an intern with The Washington Center, is now serving as the Special Emphasis Program Coordinator (HR Specialist) in the Employee Programs and Services Division of COHRS. Best wishes, Ms. Micciche and Ms. Lewis!

WEB SITE SPOTLIGHT

Veterans Day (November 11)

<www.va.gov/vetsday>

Content: VA's Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs hosts this Web site full of Veterans Day resources for those wanting to know more about this celebration honoring those who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. There are posters, history, classroom activities for teachers and students, and much more!

Must-See Feature: The "Patriotic Fact Sheet" includes a collection of stories about some of America's most beloved customs and National symbols. Topics include the history of "Taps," the Pledge of Allegiance, gun salutes, the correct method for displaying and folding the American flag, and much more! Educators, students, and others should find this collection informative and helpful when researching or planning activities for National observances such as Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Flag Day.



Accessibility: This Web site is compliant with section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Contact Info: For questions or comments, contact VA's Veterans Day Coordinator at <vetsday@va.gov>■

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MIAMI VA HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Miami VA Healthcare System Wins Prestigious Governor's Sterling Award

Congratulations to the Miami VA Healthcare System which received the prestigious Governor's Sterling award recognizing Florida's best-managed organizations from the public and private sectors!

An extensive assessment process assures that the organizations selected for this award have demonstrated a full commitment to continuous improvement across their entire management systems. Each winner has undergone an in-depth assessment and evaluation that includes an expert team of examiners conducting an on-site review of the organization's management systems and organizational performance results.

The Florida Sterling Council recognized the Miami VA Healthcare System for having the largest number and breadth of physician specialties in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) healthcare system.

With more than 2,290 employees, the Miami VA Healthcare System offers medical, surgical, mental, and extended healthcare to more than 55,600 veterans in South Florida, with more than 20 percent of its workforce being veterans.

Janice Costa, EEO Program Manager



for the Miami VA Healthcare System, credits the system's leadership for reaching this milestone. It was because of their commitment to working with human resources, the Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) Coordinator, and the equal employment opportunity (EEO) staff, that this 20 percent goal was reached long before the end of fiscal year 2007.

According to Costa, veterans now compose 31.14 percent of the Miami VA Healthcare System's total workforce. These veterans represent women and all minority groups, especially African American/ Black and Hispanic. These two minority groups make up the highest veteran employment percentages in the Miami VA Healthcare System. A significant number of these minorities are also Iraqi veterans.

The Miami VA Healthcare System has been recognized for establishing national benchmarks and has achieved role model status for its innovative approaches and success targeting potential customers. Congratulations, once again, to the Miami VA Healthcare System!

For more information, please contact Janice Costa, EEO Program Manager for the Miami VA Healthcare System, at <Janice.Costa@va.gov>.■

SECRETARY'S 17TH ANNUAL EEO AWARDS

(Continued from Page 1)

These awards are the highest recognition given to Department employees who have excelled in promoting or have made significant contributions to VA's EEO Program.

VA's Strategic Plan for Employees includes the objective of attracting and retaining "a competent, committed, and diverse workforce that provides high quality service to veterans and their families." The Secretary's EEO Awards celebrate major successes that VA employees have made in realizing that objective.

Awards are given in five categories: non-supervisory employees; supervisors and managers through GS-14 (or equivalent); managers and executives GS-15 and above; EEO program managers, counselors, investigators, special emphasis program managers, EEO committee members, etc.; and employees promoting programs

for disabled veterans and people with targeted disabilities. Each recipient will receive a plaque and a cash award in the amount of \$2,500.

Look for the names of the 2007 awards recipients and descriptions of their accomplishments in future issues of *Diversity@Work*. The Secretary's 17th Annual EEO Awards Ceremony will also be featured in the December 2007 episode of *Diversity News*, available on DM&EEO's Web site at <www.va.gov/dmeeo/ca/diversitynews.htm> and on VA Communications Channel 2.

Descriptions of previous EEO award winners are available at <www.va.gov/dmeeo/ca/eeoawards.htm>.

For more information on the Secretary's Annual EEO Awards, contact DM&EEO at (202) 501-1970.■

Diversity@Work

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Visit our Web site,
<www.va.gov/dmeeo>
for additional staff
e-mail addresses.

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

Under Secretary for Health
Diversity Advisory Board
<www.va.gov/diversity>

VA's Office of Human
Resources & Administration
<www.va.gov/ofcadmin/
portal>

VA's Office of Resolution
Management
<www.va.gov/orm>

VA's Office of Human
Resources Management
<www.va.gov/ohrm>

GOT NEWS?

We want to hear from you!
If you'd like to share your
story ideas, comments, or
suggestions,
please e-mail us at
<dmeeo@va.gov>
with the words
DIVERSITY@WORK in the
subject line.

DM&EEO ON THE INTERNET <www.va.gov/dmeeo>



The DM&EEO mission is to increase awareness and acceptance of diversity and to promote a flexible and inclusive work environment throughout the Department of Veterans Affairs. Our vision is of a work environment that fosters respect, fairness, and opportunity for all employees. Here's a sampling of online tools available that can help leverage diversity and build inclusion:

- ▶ National American Indian Heritage Month, Veterans Day, and other special observance resources.
- ▶ Events, conferences, conventions, and programs.
- ▶ Links to professional and community organizations.
- ▶ Best practices for diversity management.

DM&EEO IN YOUR E-MAIL INBOX

Once a week, DM&EEO sends out *NewsLink*, an e-mail message with annotated links to current news items and other information related to leveraging diversity and building inclusion. For a FREE subscription to this weekly electronic news service, e-mail us at <dmeeo@va.gov> with the words SUBSCRIBE NEWS in the subject line. You can find a current copy of *NewsLink* on the DM&EEO Web site at this address: <www.va.gov/dmeeo/ca/newslink.htm>.

DM&EEO ON YOUR TV SCREEN (OR PC MONITOR)

Diversity News is a monthly video program produced by the VACO Broadcasting Center for DM&EEO. Each program runs for a month, immediately following *VA News*. A copy of each program will be placed on the DM&EEO Web site (when the files become available) at this address: <www.va.gov/dmeeo/ca/diversitynews.htm>.

FROM THE 2007 DIVERSITY CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

National American Indian Heritage Month

2007 LULAC Veterans Summit

November 8–11; Orlando, FL

www.lulac.org

Veterans Day

November 11

National Image, Inc., Region III Annual Leadership Training Conference for Federal Employees

November 14–16, 2007; Arlington, VA

www.nationalimageinc.org

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs' 17th Annual Equal Employment Opportunity Awards Ceremony

November 15

Thanksgiving

November 22

DECEMBER

Universal Human Rights Month

Rosa Parks Day

December 1

International Day of Disabled Persons

December 3

TASH 2007 Annual Conference

December 5–8; Seattle, WA

www.tash.org

Human Rights Day

December 10

International Forum on Disability and Development: Caring, Participation, and Action

December 10–15; Beijing, China

www.ntac.hawaii.edu

Bill of Rights Day

December 15