

**Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**  
**Center for Development and Civic Engagement (CDCE)**  
**VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee (NAC)**  
**Executive Committee (EC) Meeting**  
**Wednesday, April 27, 2022 - 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

**Call to Order:** Mary Morgan, National Representative, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, and EC Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

**Invocation:** Charles Gallina, Knights of Columbus, provided the invocation.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** John Kleindienst, Disabled American Veterans (DAV), led participants in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call:** Joseph Dooley, National Representative, United Veterans Service, and EC Vice Chairperson performed the roll call. Executive Committee attendance was duly recorded as follows:

	<u>Present (P)/ Absent (A)</u>
American Gold Star Mothers	P
American Legion	P
American Legion Auxiliary	P
AMVETS Auxiliary	P
Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks	P
Corporation for National and Community Service	P
Disabled American Veterans	P
Fleet Reserve Association	A
Home of the Brave	A
I.B.P.O Elks of the World, Inc.	A
Knights of Columbus	P
Marine Corps League Auxiliary	P
Military Women Across the Nation	A
National Society Daughters of the American Revolution	P
National Society Sons of the American Revolution	A
Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc.	P
Sons of the American Legion	A
United Veterans Services	P
Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary	P
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.	P

**VA and Other Staff Present:**

Mary Barcikowski, Administrative Officer, VA CDCE, VA Central Office (VACO),  
Washington, DC

John P. Brown, AMVETS, President, James H. Parke Memorial Scholarship Board  
Elizabeth Cazares, Assistant Chief, CDCE, South Texas Veterans Health Care  
System, San Antonio, TX

Sabrina C. Clark, Director, VA CDCE, Veterans Health Administration,  
Designated Federal Officer (DFO), NAC  
Eva M. Gergely, Chief, CDCE, VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System, Aurora, CO  
Marcena C. Gunter, Chief, Public Affairs & CDCE, VA St. Louis Health Care  
System, St. Louis, MO  
Virginia (Ginny) Hoover, Voluntary Service Specialist, VA CDCE, VACO  
Lawrence M. Kelly, Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc., Treasurer, VA Voluntary  
Service (VAVS) Partners, Inc.  
Joyce Kuwae, Voluntary Service Specialist, VA Maryland Health Care System, Perry  
Point, MD  
Jeffrey Moragne, Director, VA Advisory Committee Management Office  
Karen O'Neal, Chief, Voluntary Service, Erie VA Medical Center (VAMC), Erie, PA,  
and Co-Chair, Partnership Subcommittee  
Anne Parker, Blue Star Mothers of America, Chair, Recommendations Subcommittee  
Ronald Rolfes, Jr., Forty and Eight, Co-Chair, Partnership Subcommittee  
Vicki Sarracino, Soldiers' Angels, Chair, Recruitment Subcommittee  
Prince Taylor, Deputy Director, VA CDCE, VACO  
Nathan Witt, Voluntary Service Specialist, VA CDCE, VACO

**Review Goals & Objectives:** Chairperson Morgan reviewed the goals and objectives for the 76th Annual NAC meeting.

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

**Host Welcome:** Ms. Gergely welcomed attendees to Denver and highlighted opportunities to enjoy the area around the conference site.

**76th Annual Meeting Agenda Overview:** The NAC meeting planners outlined the meeting's agenda.

**Subcommittee Reports:**

Recommendations: Anne Parker, Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc., announced that the Subcommittee was submitting to the EC the following recommendation from the American Legion Auxiliary: *The NAC membership recommends that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs approve the addition of Honorary Representative to the member organizations of the VAVS National Advisory Committee at the National level, with each member organization entitled to appoint, at their discretion, an Honorary Representative (without vote).*

Mr. Gallina said that such a change could be accomplished by revising the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). Dr. Clark agreed. Mr. Kleindienst made a motion to reject the recommendation for submission to the Secretary for review and consideration. Melvin Brown, American Legion, seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition or abstention. Pamela Schweitzer, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, made a motion that the EC transition, take a look at the recommendation, and incorporate it into the SOP. Sandra Kriebel, Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary, seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition or abstention.

Volunteer of the Year: Chairperson Morgan reminded members that nominees were judged on five categories, each worth five points:

- Direct contact with Veterans in a hospital, community living center, or outpatient setting
- Adequate supportive documentation
- Working with Veterans in the community and service organizations to improve the lives of Veterans
- Hosting functions for Veterans outside the Lodge, Post, Chapter, etc.
- Additional noteworthy factors

Chairperson Morgan noted that nominations were due on December 31 each year. She stressed the importance of a strong nomination letter on organization letterhead of less than 500 words, accompanied by strong letters of support.

Recruitment: Vicki Sarracino, Soldiers' Angels, told member organizations that volunteers were their most important resource. Organizations should commit to delivering programs in a culturally competent manner and having a diverse and high-performing cadre of volunteers who reflect the communities they serve. They should strive to create a culture where supervisors are developing and empowering volunteers, and where volunteers know they are valued. Volunteer hours are a snapshot of the labor, time, and resources it takes to accomplish goals, so it was important to log hours and communicate the value of logging hours to volunteers.

Membership: Ms. Kriebel reminded attendees that NAC membership had been extended through the end of 2022 because of the pandemic. She welcomed Student Veterans of America and Warrior Rising, which were joining NAC as Strategic Engagement Members. The following organizations were seeking information about NAC membership:

- Help Heal Veterans
- Semper Fi & America's Fund
- Combined Arms Institute
- Mission Barbecue

Partnership: Ms. O'Neal reported that the Subcommittee was presenting the EC with the following recommendation: *The NAC membership recommends that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs approve either a modification to the existing software package for USAccess or a universal photo identification badging system to accommodate volunteer identification badges for VA youth volunteers. NAC membership also recommends that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs approve the development of a task force to research and develop an avenue for youth volunteers to receive computer access at the level required to perform their assigned duties.*

Ms. O'Neal added that the Subcommittee was renewing two recommendations it first presented to the EC in 2021:

- *The NAC membership recommends that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs approve the inclusion of VA volunteer drivers in the VA Drug Free Workplace Program.*
- *The NAC membership recommends that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs approve the proposed standardized listing of material (non-monetary) donation values to promote a consistent and more accurate reporting of donation values.*

These recommendations had been approved by the EC and NAC at the 2021 meeting, but additional work was needed on them, and they had not been forwarded to the Secretary. The Subcommittee was reintroducing them with expanded background information.

Mr. Kleindienst made a motion to approve all three recommendations. James Moss, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., seconded the motion. The recommendations were approved without opposition or abstention.

NAC SOP Revision: Patricia Kranzow, American Legion Auxiliary, said she wanted to address changes to the SOP that the EC had discussed at its fall meeting, but that required referencing the minutes from that meeting, which had not been approved. Mr. Gallina made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Schweitzer seconded the motion. The minutes were approved without opposition or abstention.

The EC had approved a series of changes to the SOP at the fall meeting, but after further input and discussion with staff, the consensus held that it would be better to keep the changes simple. Ms. Kranzow suggested someone make a motion to rescind the changes made at the fall meeting, after which she would present the new set of changes. Such a motion would require a second and a two-thirds vote because there was no prior notice. Donna Ray, American Legion Auxiliary, made a motion to that

effect. Melvin Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition or abstention.

Ms. Kranzow presented the EC with the following changes to the SOP (new language in **bold**):

- Page 1, new paragraph 2: "**The national VAVS office was renamed to VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement (CDCE) on January 26, 2021. The VAVS NAC operates within the framework of CDCE.**"
- Page 3, second to last paragraph: "...may be appointed when the need is justified and approved by the Director, **CDCE**." In light of the discussion earlier in the meeting, Ms. Kranzow suggested the following change also be made in the second to last paragraph: "Each member organization may appoint one (1) National Representative, **one (1) Honorary Representative**, and up to two (2) Deputy National Representatives." Chairperson Morgan supported including that change, and no one objected.
- Page 3, last paragraph: "The NAC Chairperson is the **Director, CDCE**, Central Office, Washington, D.C. The **Deputy Director, CDCE**, Central Office will be the Deputy Chairperson."
- Page 6, paragraph 4: "The Chairperson of the National Advisory Committee, and the Director, **CDCE Central Office**, will be ex officio members of the Executive Committee and its Subcommittees."

Mr. Kleindienst made a motion to approve all proposed changes to the SOP. Marie Rorrio, AMVETS Auxiliary, seconded the motion. The motion was approved without opposition or abstention.

The EC recessed from 10:34 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.

**James H. Parke Memorial Scholarship Board Update and Treasurer's Report:** John P. Brown reported that the Parke Board received \$11,195 in 2021. So far in 2022, it had received \$20,670. Its current net worth was \$1,523,299. This year, the Parke Board was awarding over \$40,000 worth of scholarships. The \$20,000 scholarship winner, Emma Gardner, Veterans Health Care System of the Ozarks, Fayetteville, AR, would be present at the Parke Award Luncheon the following day. Mr. Brown encouraged member organizations to nominate deserving youth for Parke Board scholarships. He reminded attendees that the Board was conducting membership elections and would hold a reorganizational meeting immediately following the luncheon. He asked each National Representative to obtain and fill out a ballot. Ms. Rorrio made a motion to accept the report. Mr. Kleindienst seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition or abstention.

#### **New Business:**

CDCE Portal: Ms. Hoover reported that since the EC's fall meeting, there had been four major releases to increase the new portal system's functionality. The system was brand new, and staff was working diligently to make it user-friendly. Ms. Hoover said she hoped the new system would allow CDCE to be more flexible and responsive, and that member organizations would see its value as it grew. She presented attendees

with a summary of volunteer activity for each NAC membership organization in the first and second quarters of fiscal year (FY) 2022 using the new system. The spreadsheet arranged each organization according to category of membership and displayed the numbers of each organization's Regular Scheduled (RS) volunteers, RS hours, Occasional hours, total hours, Representative/Deputy (Rep/Dep) count, committee hours and facilities with representation. While the new system contains all data of its predecessor it currently looks different and takes longer to obtain the data. CDCE had submitted a request for American Rescue Plan funding, which would allow it to continue development until November of that year. If it did not receive that funding, the contract with the developers would end in approximately two weeks, so additional funding through VA channels was being sought.

Volunteer Reintegration: Ms. O'Neal told the EC that the Partnership Subcommittee had discussed volunteer reintegration during a conference call a few months previously. Virtually everyone was eager to welcome back volunteers, but it had to be done safely. Ms. O'Neal acknowledged that reintegration would be different at each specific site. Some places were almost back to normal, others had just resumed onboarding, and others had not yet begun the process. Ms. O'Neal said she had asked VISN liaison chiefs to reach out to their CDCE program managers to check their reintegration status. Most had responded, and Ms. O'Neal was able to provide data from two weeks previously, acknowledging that circumstances might have changed in the meantime.

Virtual/Remote Assignments/Timekeeping: Several CDCE field staff members discussed ways in which their volunteers had adapted to volunteer work, like making phone calls on behalf of VA from home, conducting virtual fundraisers, designing brochures, strategic planning and research, virtual bingo, the Compassionate Contact Corps, and virtual concerts.

EC & NAC Quarterly Meetings: Mr. Witt said that staff planned to revive a quarterly series of informal meetings for EC and NAC member organizations. These meetings would concentrate on fostering two-way communication within and among the organizations, as well as educating members on EC and NAC operations. The first meeting would likely take place in July.

VAVS Partners Website: Chairperson Morgan announced that plans were in the works for a website called NAC News, a complement to the CDCE website. NAC News would post the latest SOP and all the NAC presentations in a central location and provide an opportunity for members to share success stories. Chairperson Morgan expected to be able to share the website with members in the next couple weeks.

**VAVS Partners, Inc. Treasurer's Report:** Mr. Kelly reported that VAVS Partners, Inc.'s income since January 1, 2021, totaled \$35,753.09. Supplies were \$11, bank charges were \$1,965.26, and accounting fees were \$350. 75th NAC event boxes cost \$15,429. Expenses to date for the 76th NAC came to \$2,492.50. Total expenses were \$17,041.92, leaving VAVS Partners, Inc. with a net profit thus far of \$18,711.17. That

did not include the price of the NAC meeting, for which it owed over \$30,000. On December 6, 2021, VAVS Partners, Inc. had a balance of \$52,265.49. Between that date and March 31, 2022, income totaled \$19,842.83, expenses were \$3,206.38, giving VAVS Partners, Inc. a balance of \$68,901.94. Ms. Kriebel made a motion to approve the report. Mr. Kleindienst seconded the motion. The report was approved without opposition or abstention.

**New Business continued:**

CDCE Staffing & Communications: Dr. Clark introduced Wesley Walls, who would be taking over communications at CDCE as of May 22. She noted this was Nathan Witt's first in-person EC meeting. Also present was Sanitria McKenzie, who handled budget and human resources (HR) actions. Dr. Clark reminded the EC that she was on the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program, which would require her to go on a four-month detail at a time to be determined. She expressed every confidence in her staff's ability to carry on in her absence.

**Unfinished Business:** There was no unfinished business.

**Q&A/Good of the Order:** Mr. Kleindienst asked how many missed meetings would cause a member organization to be removed from the EC. Ms. Kranzow said the SOP prescribed that an organization be removed after missing three consecutive meetings, after which it could reapply. Mr. Kleindienst suggested the EC audit member organization attendance at EC and NAC meetings. Ms. Kriebel made a motion that the EC investigate those organizations that were not attending. Mr. Gallina seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition or abstention.

Ms. Kranzow asked if there were any plans for the EC's fall meeting. Chairperson Morgan said there were no plans as of yet. Dr. Clark promised that staff would be in touch with members about scheduling.

**Adjournment:** Mr. Kleindienst made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Melvin Brown seconded the motion. There was no opposition or abstention. Chairperson Morgan adjourned the meeting at 12:09 p.m.

**Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Center for Development and Civic Engagement (CDCE)**  
**VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee (NAC) Business Session**  
**Thursday, April 28, 2022 - 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.**

**Call to Order:** Joseph Dooley, National Representative, United Veterans Services, and Executive Committee (EC) Vice Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Debby Krueger, Marine Corps League Auxiliary, led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Invocation:** Brett A. Campbell, Chaplain, VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System, gave the invocation.

**Welcome:** Michael T. Kilmer, Director, VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System, welcomed the NAC to Denver.

**Roll Call:** Mr. Dooley performed the roll call. National Advisory Committee attendance was duly recorded as follows:

<b>Service Member Organizations</b>	<u>Present (P)/ Absent (A)</u>
American Gold Star Mothers	P
American Legion, The	P
American Legion Auxiliary	P
American Red Cross	P
AMVETS	P
AMVETS Auxiliary	P
Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks	P
Blinded Veterans Association	P
Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.	P
Disabled American Veterans	P
Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary	P
Forty and Eight	P
Jewish War Veterans of the USA	P
Knights of Columbus	P
Korean War Veterans Association	A
Marine Corps League	A
Marine Corps League Auxiliary	P
Masonic Service Association of North America	P
Military Order of the Cootie	A
Military Order of the Cootie Auxiliary	P
Military Order of the Purple Heart Auxiliary	P
Military Order of the Purple Heart of the U.S.A., Inc.	A
Military Women Across the Nation	A
National Society Daughters of the American Revolution	P
National Society Sons of the American Revolution	A
Paralyzed Veterans of America	P
Polish Legion of American Veterans, U.S.A.	A
Salvation Army	P
Soldiers' Angels	P
Sons of the American Legion	A
United Daughters of the Confederacy	P
United Veterans Services	P
Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary	P

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.	P
Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.	A

**Associate Service Member Organizations**

Corporation for National and Community Service	P
Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, 1861-1865	A
Fleet Reserve Association	A
Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.	A
I.B.P.O Elks of the World, Inc.	P
Ladies Auxiliary to the Polish Legion of American Veterans, U.S.A.	A
National Society United States Daughters of 1812	A
Women's Army Corps Veterans' Association	A

**Donor Member Organizations**

Bowlers to Veterans Link (BVL), Inc., The	A
Veterans Voices Writing Project	P

**Strategic Engagement Members**

Home of the Brave	A
Project Healing Waters and Fly Fishing, Inc.	P
Student Veterans of America	A
Warrior Rising	A
YMCA of the USA	A

**Honorary Members**

Ladies Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association	P
National Ladies Auxiliary, Jewish War Veterans of the USA, Inc.	A
Silver Star Families of America	A
Sons of AMVETS	P
Women Marines Association	P

**VA and Other Staff Present:**

Mary Barcikowski, Administrative Officer, VA Central Office (VACO), VA CDCE  
Elizabeth Cazares, Assistant Chief, CDCE, South Texas Veterans Health Care System, San Antonio, TX  
Sabrina C. Clark, Director, VA CDCE, Veterans Health Administration, Designated Federal Officer (DFO), NAC  
Jessica Downey, Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 19 Communications Service, Creative Consolidated Unit, Eastern Colorado Health Care System  
Vicki Eatmon, Voluntary Service Specialist, Western North Carolina VA Health Care System, Asheville, NC  
Eva M. Gergely, Chief, CDCE, VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System, Aurora, CO  
Tyrone Green, Program Analyst, VA CDCE  
Marcena C. Gunter, Chief, Public Affairs & CDCE, VA St. Louis Health Care System, St. Louis, MO

Virginia Hoover, Voluntary Service Specialist, VA CDCE, VACO  
Tabitha Ingram, Chief, CDCE, Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center,  
Indianapolis, IN  
Lawrence M. Kelly, Treasurer, VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) Partners, Inc.  
Joyce Kuwae, Voluntary Service Specialist, VA Maryland Health Care System, Perry  
Point, MD  
Carolann Miragliuolo, Senior Advisor, VA CDCE  
Kevin Stanford, Health Systems Specialist, VA CDCE  
Prince Taylor, Deputy Director, VA CDCE  
Nathan Witt, Voluntary Service Specialist, VA CDCE

**Opening Remarks and Meeting Objectives:** Mr. Dooley reviewed the agenda for the meeting and asked participants to review the goals and objectives for the 76<sup>th</sup> Annual NAC Meeting and Conference (see page 2 of the minutes).

**Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Administrative Operations, Tammy Czarnecki:** Ms. Czarnecki said that volunteers formed the backbone of VA, and she assured attendees that VA had not forgotten them during the pandemic. VA was examining how it could handle future crises without closing its doors again. At the same time, it was continuing its modernization efforts. The big takeaway from the past two years was that VA could be flexible and resilient, meeting Veterans' needs in a variety of different ways. Volunteers had been instrumental in helping VA expand telehealth and other virtual opportunities by delivering care and food, making phone calls to Veterans, donating personal protective equipment (PPE), and serving as screeners at medical centers. A newly developed program, the Compassionate Contact Corps, helped reach Veterans experiencing isolation and loneliness.

Ms. Czarnecki also praised Dr. Clark and her team for their work, particularly setting up a website for clinicians to volunteer time, continuing to work on legislation to help Veterans, developing the Volunteer Transportation Network, but noted that none of that could have been accomplished without volunteer support.

The Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR) Commission was an initiative to study the current and future health care needs of Veterans across America, and to evaluate VA's health care infrastructure to ensure it was ready and able to provide Veterans with world-class access and outcomes. It was not clear yet what the long-term effects of the Commission's work would be, but VA was committed to being transparent with Veterans and volunteers.

National Volunteer Week had been observed the week prior. In FY2021, 25,000 volunteers served more than 2.6 million volunteer hours. Individuals and partnering organizations gave over \$101 million in gifts and donations. This effort accounted for a total value of more than \$175 million in resources to Veterans at VA medical facilities across the country.

Ms. Czarnecki encouraged volunteers to communicate ideas with their local CDCE chiefs.

## **Subcommittee Reports:**

Recommendations: Anne Parker, Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc., announced that the Subcommittee had submitted to the EC the following recommendation from the American Legion Auxiliary: *The NAC membership recommends that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs approve the addition of Honorary Representative to the member organizations of the VAVS National Advisory Committee at the National level, with each member organization entitled to appoint, at their discretion, an Honorary Representative (without vote).* The EC had decided to include that change in a revision to the SOP rather than make it a formal recommendation to the Secretary.

Volunteer of the Year: Charles Gallina, Knights of Columbus, reminded members that nominees were judged on five categories, each worth five points:

- Direct contact with Veterans in a hospital, community living center, or outpatient setting
- Adequate supportive documentation
- Working with Veterans in the community and service organizations to improve the lives of Veterans
- Hosting functions for Veterans outside the Lodge, Post, Chapter, etc.
- Additional noteworthy factors

Mr. Gallina noted that nominations were due on December 31st each year.

Recruitment: Vicki Sarracino, Soldiers' Angels, told member organizations that volunteers were their most important resource. Organizations should commit to delivering programs in a culturally competent manner and having a diverse and high-performing workforce of volunteers who reflect the communities they serve. They should strive to create a culture where supervisors were developing and empowering volunteers, and where volunteers knew they were valued. Volunteer hours were a snapshot of the labor, time, and resources it took to accomplish goals, so it was important to log them and communicate the value of logging them to volunteers.

Membership: Sandra Kriebel, Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary, welcomed Student Veterans of America and Warrior Rising, which were joining NAC as Strategic Engagement Members. The following organizations were seeking information about NAC membership:

- Help Heal Veterans
- Semper Fi & America's Fund
- Combined Arms Institute
- Mission Barbecue

Ms. Kriebel reminded attendees that NAC membership had been extended through the end of 2022 due to the pandemic.

Partnership: Ronald Rolfe, Jr., Forty and Eight, and Karen O'Neal, Erie VA Medical Center, presented the NAC with the following EC-approved recommendation: *The NAC membership recommends that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs approve*

*either a modification to the existing software package for USAccess or a universal photo identification badging system to accommodate volunteer identification badges for VA youth volunteers. NAC membership also recommends that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs approve the development of a task force to research and develop an avenue for youth volunteers to receive computer access at the level required to perform their assigned duties.*

Mr. Rolfes moved that the NAC approve the recommendation. John Kleindienst, Disabled American Veterans, seconded the motion. The recommendation was approved without opposition or abstention.

Ms. O'Neal added that the Subcommittee was renewing two recommendations it first presented in 2021:

- *The NAC membership recommends that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs approve the inclusion of VA volunteer drivers in the VA Drug Free Workplace Program.*
- *The NAC membership recommends that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs approve the proposed standardized listing of material (non-monetary) donation values to promote a consistent and more accurate reporting of donation values.*

These recommendations had been approved by the EC and NAC at the 2021 meeting but had not been forwarded to the Secretary. The Subcommittee was reintroducing them with expanded background information. The EC had again voted to approve them. Another full NAC vote was not necessary.

Standard Operating Procedures: Patricia Kranzow, American Legion Auxiliary, presented the NAC with the following EC-approved changes to the SOP (new language in **bold**):

- Page 1, new paragraph 2: "**The national VAVS office was renamed to VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement (CDCE) on January 26, 2021. The VAVS NAC operates within the framework of CDCE.**"
- Page 3, second to last paragraph: "Each member organization may appoint one (1) National Representative, **one (1) Honorary Representative**, and up to two (2) Deputy National Representatives. Additional deputies, up to a maximum of eight (8) may be appointed when the need is justified and approved by the Director, **CDCE**."
- Page 3, last paragraph: "The NAC Chairperson is the **Director, CDCE**, Central Office, Washington, D.C. The **Deputy Director, CDCE**, Central Office will be the Deputy Chairperson."
- Page 6, paragraph 4: "The Chairperson of the National Advisory Committee, and the Director, **CDCE Central Office**, will be ex officio members of the Executive Committee and its Subcommittees."

Melvin Brown, American Legion, made a motion to accept the report of the SOP Subcommittee. Patricia Davis, Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary, seconded the motion. The report was accepted without opposition or abstention.

The NAC recessed from 10:14 a.m. to 10:35 a.m.

**Federal Advisory Committee Act 101:** Jeffrey Moragne, Director, VA Advisory Committee Management Office, explained that the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) was a federal statute that governed the establishment, termination, and management of federal advisory committees (FACs). FAC requirements included:

- A signed and filed charter
- A designated federal officer (DFO)
- Public meetings announced in the Federal Register 15 days in advance with an agenda
- Balanced membership
- Records maintained and available for public inspection

NAC was different from other VA FACs in that it had a unique charter. Its membership was composed of Veteran service organization (VSO) representatives who could speak openly about the value of their organizations. The charter allowed VSOs to fund NAC events and activities during the Committee's meetings.

Committee members could testify or speak on FAC matters only in their personal capacity. They were expected to clarify that they were providing their personal opinion and not speaking on behalf of the VA or the FAC.

VA FAC best practices included:

- Mastering the Committee calendar
- Knowing one's role as a Committee member
- Using subcommittees to do the heavy lifting
- Dedicating meeting time for Committee discussion
- Cross-committee collaboration
- Using the Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, Time-Based (SMART) template to craft recommendations
- Using VA Library Services for data and information services
- Conducting annual field visits
- Engaging subject matter experts
- Consulting the DFO on FACA and ethics questions

**Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access (IDEA): VA's Cultural Transformation:** Harvey Johnson, Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Office of Resolution Management, Diversity & Inclusion, said uniting a diverse group of people behind a single mission began with cultural humility, empathy, and love for all. His job was to remove the institutional and systemic barriers that get in the way of this mission. When an individual or group of people becomes maladaptive to the higher purpose by engaging in harassment, assault, or discrimination, they become cancerous to the whole. Mr. Johnson said the Secretary believes IDEA must be in the fabric of everything the VA does. The Department is conducting listening sessions, identity insights, journey mapping, and equity assessments both for internal and external populations. The President has issued nine Executive Orders and one Executive Memorandum in support of IDEA. The Secretary set up the IDEA Task Force, consisting of about 20 thought leaders across the Department. The task force came up with an action plan with 20 recommendations and 68 sub-recommendations. Succeeding the task force was the IDEA Subcouncil, which was dedicated to making sure the plan's recommendations were carried out.

The NAC recessed for the day at 11:22 a.m.

**Friday, April 29, 2022 - 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

**Call to Order:** Mary Morgan, National Representative, Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks and EC Chairperson, called the meeting back to order at 1:04 p.m.

**Pivot with Purpose: 2022 CDCE Update:** Sabrina C. Clark, Ph.D., Director, VA CDCE, spoke of the disruptive effect the past two years had had on VA and its volunteers. She reminded volunteers that they were still a treasure to VA, which is working hard to integrate them back into its strategic framework. Prior to the pandemic, CDCE was known as VAVS, and it was under the auspices of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Office of Communications. In that office, the emphasis was on reacting to what was happening, and the prevailing philosophy was "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." It has since changed its name and moved to the VHA Office of the Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Operations, where it was more centered on aligning with VA priorities and strategies. Now the thinking was "What's broken? Let's fix it!" or even "Break it! Make it better!"

Dr. Clark cited some of CDCE's recent accomplishments, including:

- Winning an Anthem Award
- Being mentioned in the Innovators Network Annual Report
- Graduating the first class of the Student Leadership Council
- Establishing a structured mentoring program
- Directly addressing Presidential Executive Orders, such as for the Volunteer Transportation Network and IDEA
- Starting the VHA Health Care Talent Academy
- VETSERVE

The pillars of CDCE are voluntary service, philanthropic engagement, and partnership solutions. Dr. Clark stressed the need for volunteers to pivot with purpose and expand beyond their comfort zone. She challenged them to be positively disruptive, master personal transformation, seize opportunity, and thrive.

**Promoting Access to Voting: VA's Strategy:** Melissa Bryant, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, addressed attendees on supporting Veteran access to voting. She mentioned Executive Order 14019, which promoted access to voting, and VHA Directive 1060, which provided voting assistance for VA inpatients and residents. It was part of a broader effort across the entire federal government to make voting easier. VA created an online resource at [va.gov/vote](http://va.gov/vote) and deployed an all-Veteran survey on voting habits and barriers to voting. It was partnering with state governments to register Veterans in VA facilities. A pilot program was launched in Michigan, Oklahoma, Hawaii, Alaska, New Mexico, and Georgia. Ms. Bryant exhorted attendees to encourage Veterans to complete the survey at [va.gov/vote](http://va.gov/vote), check their voter registration status at [vote.gov](http://vote.gov), and provide feedback.

**The Future of Volunteerism & Civic Engagement:** Nichole Cirillo, Executive Director, International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE), presented on global trends in

volunteering. IAVE's mission is to create a more just and sustainable world by enabling the leaders, organizations, and environments that empower volunteers. Ms. Cirillo praised VA volunteers for their transformative leadership and values-driven advocacy during the pandemic, which created a culture of collaboration based on supporting and developing others, showcasing creativity and innovation, and leading change. She identified six global trends in volunteerism during that time:

1. Broader recognition of who volunteers are
2. Inclusive volunteering for social change
3. Technology as an enabler of volunteering
4. Deeper government and private sector engagement with volunteering
5. Partnerships and collaboration
6. Coalitions for shared action and learning

In response to these trends, Ms. Cirillo offered six policy pointers:

1. Recognize, work with, and support community-led volunteering systems, involving them as equal partners in the volunteering space.
2. Address barriers to volunteering faced by marginalized groups, ensuring all volunteers are valued and supported as partners in social change.
3. See technology as an enabler of a blended volunteering future, working to address barriers to participation and access.
4. Engage governments and private sector as partners, and advocate for policies supporting an enabling environment for volunteering.
5. Explore national and global partnerships and collaborations to leverage efforts towards supporting and promoting volunteering.
6. Identify the coalitions that would lead to systemic change.

The NAC recessed from 2:28 p.m. to 2:48 p.m.

**Panel Discussion:** Dr. Clark asked each panelist to reflect on the trends Ms. Cirillo listed and discuss what they had to do with VHA health care and how they impacted the work of CDCE. She then asked them what they needed from CDCE, and what they would like to see from their teams in the field to move forward.

Mark Murdock, Director, Dayton VA Medical Center, said he thought the important thing was partnership, both with Veterans and VSOs. He asked attendees to take a look at their organizations and identify how VA could improve Veteran and employee satisfaction while being good stewards of taxpayer dollars. He also felt it was important to help Veterans make better use of technology.

Michael T. Kilmer, Director, VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System, said what stood out to him was inequity. Before VA could ask how it delivered its services, it had to better understand who it was serving and figure out how to better align with them to get them greater access. He also stressed the importance of diversity while finding a common bond among all Veterans.

David L. Omura, Director, Columbia VA Health Care System, felt he already had the tools to improve the Veteran experience being surrounded with a team of 3,000 employees committed to volunteerism and building a better organization. He called on

every director in the VA health care system to make volunteerism a priority. He believed it was crucial to get the youth involved.

**Award Presentations:** Ms. Morgan and Dr. Clark presented the awards as follows:

NAC Male Volunteer of the Year: **Stewart Israel**, Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks, John D. Dingell VA Medical Center

NAC Female Volunteer of the Year: **Dortha Parson**, American Legion Auxiliary, Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center

American Spirit Awards

Community Organization Recruitment: **Robert Johnson**, VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System, Las Vegas, NV

Corporate Organization Recruitment: **Charles Franklin**, VA Boston Healthcare System, Boston, MA

Senior Recruitment: **Cesar Emano**, Iowa City VA Health Care System, Iowa City, IA

Student Recruitment: **Mary Golden**, VA Central California Health Care System, Fresno, CA

VSO Recruitment: **Richard Kitson**, VA Northport Healthcare System, Northport, NY

VA CDCE Awards

CDCE Unsung Hero Award: **Corky Draconi**, VA Central California Health Care System, Fresno, CA

CDCE Philanthropic Award: **Melissa Heinlein-Storti, Ph.D.**, Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VA Medical Center, Philadelphia, PA

CDCE Marketing & Communications Award: **Rhonda Moore**, VA Dayton Healthcare System, Dayton, OH

CDCE Stella Award: **Traci Palmer**, Roseburg VA Health Care System, Roseburg, OR

CDCE Award for Excellence: **Mark Frazee**, VA Connecticut Healthcare System, Newington, CT

CDCE Executive Leadership Award: **David L. Omura**, Columbia VA Health Care System, Columbia, SC

**77th Annual NAC Host Site Presentation:** Ms. Gergely provided details on the next NAC meeting, which was scheduled for April 26-28, 2023, and would also be held in Denver.

**Closing Remarks:** Ms. Morgan adjourned the meeting at 4:37 p.m.

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Designated Federal Officer, National Advisory Committee