From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Thu, 23 Jan 2020 12:15:37 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] WeWork exits chic startup The Wing

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Thursday, January 23, 2020 12:15:12 PM (UTC+00:00) Monrovia, Reykjavik
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] WeWork exits chic startup The Wing

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The Daily Pitch: VC, PE and M&A

January 23, 2020
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TODAY'S TOP STORIES

M&A activity remained aloft despite decreased cross-border investment

Last year was marked by geopolitical uncertainty, the specter of an economic slowdown, low interest rates and a red-hot stock market. Yet North American M&A activity remained strong, as a series of mega-deals in the healthcare and media sectors helped total deal value top $2 trillion for the third time in the past five years.

The M&A market, though, wasn't entirely immune from macroeconomic headwinds. Our **2019 Annual North American M&A Report**, sponsored by KPMG, Liberty GTS and ACG, uses PitchBook data and analysis to paint a complete picture of the past 12 months. It explores several key trends in M&A, including:

- A continued decline in Chinese acquisitions of US companies
- Increased EV/EBITDA multiples
- High-priced gold mining mergers

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Who's in the newsletter today?

People

David Michael
Eric Yuan
Jesse Lane
Mike Cannon-Brookes
Ryan Smith
Tesh Gor
Ty Findley

Investors

11.2 Capital
Accel
Anthos Capital
Anzu Partners
Bain Capital Ventures
Bill Gates
BlackRock
Bookend Capital Partners
Bpifrance
CPT Capital
Canapi Ventures
Capital One Growth Ventures
Cargill

WeWork sheds more assets under turnaround plan

WeWork has sold off a series of non-core assets, making good on the troubled company's pledge to impose discipline in hopes of turning a profit.

On Wednesday, WeWork said it shed its stake in the Wing, a workplace community designed for women, unloading an investment made in late 2017. Financial terms weren't disclosed. The buyers included new investor GV, alongside existing Wing investors Sequoia and NEA. Actress-producer Mindy Kaling joined the deal.

In addition, WeWork completed its previously announced sale of Teem, a platform for managing space in the workplace, to iOffice. The deal was one of several divestitures that New York-based WeWork outlined last fall as part of revamp on the heels of SoftBank's dramatic rescue to stave off a cash crisis at the office space provider.

WeWork also said it expects within the coming weeks to tap into $1.75 billion worth of financing, under a SoftBank credit facility that was secured with Goldman Sachs in December.

Share:

PE-backed Fairway Market denies liquidation report, but bankruptcy still looms

Carl Icahn
Duff & Phelps
Emergence
Eurazeo
Exponent Private Equity
Famille C
Fifty Years
Finistere Ventures
First Round Capital
Further Global
Future Ventures
GE Ventures
GV
Glynn Capital
Goldman Sachs
HLD Europe
Homebrew
IK Investment Partners
Idinvest Partners
In-Q-Tel
Initialized Capital
Insight Partners
Iris Capital
Ironspring
Kimbal Musk
Neuberger Berman
Norwest
Permira
Pritzker Group Venture Capital
Richard Branson
Ridge Ventures
SV Angel
Sequoia
SoftBank
Stone Point Capital
Summit Partners

(Spencer Platt/Getty Images News)

Fairway Market has a loyal fan base. So when a report came out that the New York City-area grocery chain might go bankrupt and liquidate, customers were quick to express their dismay on social media.

However, Fairway, which has been backed by private equity firms since 2007, is reportedly slated to file for Chapter 11 protection rather than Chapter 7—meaning the business won't be forced to shutter its 14 locations:

read more

Share:

Anzu closes fund on $190M, opens R&D space for portfolio companies

Anzu Partners has raised $190 million for its second VC vehicle, which will focus on backing industrial tech companies in the US and Canada. Founded in 2014

Susa Ventures
TSG Consumer Partners
Temasek
The Carlyle Group
Threshold Ventures
Two Sigma
Two Sigma Ventures
Tyson Foods
Warburg Pincus

Companies

Atlassian
Bear Robotics
Built Technologies
Exxelia
Front
Goldman Sachs
HP
Lubrizol
LumApps
Luxury Brand Partners
MailChimp
Memphis Meats
NEA
NewtonX
Outlier
Planet
Qualtrics
Shopify
Stripe
Sysdig
Teem
WeWork
Wing
Xerox
Zoom
Zume
eClinical Solutions

and based in Washington, DC, Anzu closed its debut VC fund on $128 million in 2017.

"We're addressing a market gap for companies or laboratories that come out of institutions such as MIT and Harvard, where they have often received strong grant funding and endorsements from government bodies," Anzu managing partner David Michael told PitchBook.

He also said that in addition to providing capital, the firm wants to help startups scale operations by supplying space for laboratories and production all under one roof. To this end, the firm has opened a Boston-area manufacturing, R&D and flexible office space for its portfolio companies.

Anzu's portfolio includes businesses in the manufacturing, materials, modeling and monitoring & measurement sectors; the firm has also backed life sciences startups that are developing medical treatments.

Share:

Xerox reportedly plans to infiltrate HP's board

iOffice

Limited Partners

Alexander Panos

Service Providers

Citigroup

Evercore

(Open Grid Scheduler)

It's a move remarkable for today's corporate M&A world: After HP snubbed a $33 billion acquisition proposal from Xerox, the once-ubiquitous printing company now hopes to gain control of HP's board to advance a hostile takeover, according to reports.

Xerox plans to nominate as many as 11 new directors to HP's 12-person board ahead of a Friday deadline, according to The Wall Street Journal, with the aim of installing new board members more friendly to negotiating a potential merger. The Connecticut-based business reportedly acquired a small interest in HP in recent weeks that enables it to propose board changes.

The drama stretches back to November, when HP rejected Xerox's cash-and-stock offer of about $22 per share, saying it undervalued the Palo Alto-based company and expressing skepticism about Xerox's ability to finance the deal. Earlier this month, Xerox announced it had arranged $24 billion in financing for the proposed takeover—but HP maintained that the

offer was insufficient.

Activist investor Carl Icahn holds stakes in both companies and has pushed for a combination.

Related read: **Xerox secures $24B loan for hostile HP takeover**

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Recommended Reads

Law enforcement agencies don't know precisely how Clearview AI's products work, or who built them. But they're already busy using the technology to turn the internet into one giant facial-recognition database, dystopian fears be damned. [The New York Times]

With a meat alternative called Omnipork, Hong Kong businessman David Yeung is challenging social taboos in China. He's also trying to save the world. [Bloomberg]

An interview with new Alphabet boss Sundar Pichai about replacing Google's founders, the creation of Chrome, recent changes to the company's culture and much more. [Fortune]

The rise of the smartphone has already democratized many parts of our world. Will the practice of archival research be next? [The Atlantic]

Solving the mystery of wikiHow's illustrations, a bizarre corner of the art world that's alternately flummoxed and entertained the internet for 15 years. [OneZero]

At the Hotel Europe in Davos, a pianist named Barry Colson spent the past quarter-century tickling the ivories in front of the business world's elite. This year, he has a new gig. [Reuters]

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TODAY'S HEADLINES

The Daily Benchmark

2010 Vintage US PE Funds

People

Tesh Gor joins Warburg Pincus as executive-in-residence

Ironspring adds managing partner

VC Deals

Lab-grown meat startup raises $161M

Sysdig picks up $70M Series E

Goldman Sachs leads $70M Series C for LumApps

Tech luminaries back corporate email startup with $59M

Bear Robotics gobbles up $32M

Outlier pockets $22.1M

PE Deals

Stone Point group snags Duff & Phelps for $4.2B

HLD Europe eyes aerospace company

Summit gives growth backing to eClinical Solutions

Bookend Capital backs Luxury Brands with $50M

Exits

Eurazeo prepares for $2.2B Planet sale

Fundraising

Canapi scores $545M for fintech funds

BlackRock seeks $500M for climate-focused PE fund

Two Sigma Ventures closes third namesake fund on $288M

THE DAILY BENCHMARK

2010 Vintage US PE Funds

Median IRR

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

18.75%

1.52x
Median TVPI

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Ticonderoga KI

CIVC Partners Fund IV

**IRR: net of fees*

37 Funds in Benchmark »

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PEOPLE

Tesh Gor joins Warburg Pincus as executive-in-residence

Private equity firm Warburg Pincus has appointed Tesh Gor as an executive-in-residence for its industrials and business services group, where he will focus on investments in the specialty chemicals arena. Gor most recently worked at chemicals provider Lubrizol as corporate vice president of strategy and business development.

View details

Ironspring adds managing partner

Ironspring, an Austin-based venture firm that invests in the digital industrial sector, has hired Ty Findley as a managing partner. Findley was most recently a vice president focused on early-stage and growth investments at Pritzker Group Venture Capital, and before that he was a senior associate at GE Ventures.

View details

View investment »

VC DEALS

Lab-grown meat startup raises $161M

SoftBank, Norwest and Temasek have led a $161 million Series B for Memphis Meats, a developer of meat that's grown from animal cells. Threshold Ventures, Future Ventures, CPT Capital and others also participated. The startup described the funding as the largest round raised by a cell-based meat company to date. Based in Berkeley, Calif., Memphis Meats will use the capital in part to construct a pilot production facility.

Additional Investors:
Cargill, Fifty Years, Finistere Ventures, Kimbal Musk, Richard Branson, Tyson Foods, Bill Gates

View

View 14 competitors »

round

Sysdig picks up $70M Series E

Sysdig, a provider of security and monitoring services for container-based applications, has raised $70 million in a round led by Insight Partners. The new funding values the San Francisco-based startup at $480 million, according to a PitchBook estimate. Existing investors Bain Capital Ventures and Accel also participated in the funding.

Additional Investors:
Glynn Capital, Goldman Sachs

View round

View 132 competitors »

Goldman Sachs leads $70M Series C for LumApps

LumApps, the provider of a collaborative intranet platform that connects employees, has received a $70 million investment led by Goldman Sachs. Based in France, the company plans to use the funding in part to expand in locations such as Canada, Germany and the Asia-Pacific. LumApps has raised around $100 million in total VC funding, including a $24 million Series B in April.

Additional Investors:
Bpifrance, Famille C, Idinvest Partners, Iris Capital

View round

View 63 competitors »

Tech luminaries back corporate email startup with $59M

Front, the developer of a workplace email platform, has raised a $59 million Series C co-led by several tech executives including Atlassian co-founder and co-CEO Mike Cannon-Brookes, Qualtrics co-founder and CEO Ryan Smith and Zoom CEO Eric Yuan. The company was founded in 2013 and is based in San Francisco; it raised $66 million in 2017, which valued it at $200 million, according to a PitchBook estimate. Front's customers include Stripe, Shopify and MailChimp.

Additional Investors:
Sequoia, Initialized Capital, Anthos Capital

View round

View 17 competitors »

Bear Robotics gobbles up $32M

California-based Bear Robotics has secured a $32 million Series A led by SoftBank. Founded in 2017, the company is developing a robot that fills the role of a server, delivering food and dishes to and from restaurant kitchens. SoftBank is no stranger to restaurant tech—in 2018, the firm reportedly invested $375 million in Zume, which is believed to have laid off half its workforce and shut down its pizza-making robot business earlier this month.

View round

View similar company »

Outlier pockets $22.1M

Emergence has led a $22.1 million Series B for Outlier, the developer of an automated business analytics platform. Founded in 2017, the startup announced a partnership with In-Q-Tel in May that's designed to support US government agencies. Outlier was valued at more than $26 million in 2018, according to a PitchBook estimate.

Additional Investors:
Capital One Growth Ventures, Ridge Ventures, 11.2 Capital, First Round Capital, Homebrew, Susa Ventures, SV Angel

View round

View 52 competitors »

PE DEALS

Stone Point group snags Duff & Phelps for $4.2B

A consortium led by Stone Point Capital and Further Global has agreed to acquire New York-based financial advisory firm Duff & Phelps from Permira for $4.2 billion. Duff & Phelps consults with corporate clients, private equity firms and others on a range of subjects, including valuation, corporate finance, cybersecurity and compliance. Permira acquired the firm for $1.75 billion in 2018 from The Carlyle Group, Neuberger Berman and others.

View deal View 9 competitors »

HLD Europe eyes aerospace company

HLD Europe has engaged in exclusive talks to acquire Exxelia, a French provider of components from the aerospace and defense industries, from IK Investment Partners, with Reuters reporting the deal could value the business at €500 million (about $554 million). IK Investment has owned a majority stake in the Exxelia since 2014.

View deal View similar company »

Summit gives growth backing to eClinical Solutions

Growth firm Summit Partners has made a minority investment in eClinical Solutions, a Mansfield, Mass.-based provider of cloud-based enterprise software and data services for the life sciences industry. Summit principal Jesse Lane has joined the company's board of directors.

View deal View 12 competitors »

Bookend Capital backs Luxury Brands with $50M

Bookend Capital Partners has invested $50 million for a minority stake in Luxury Brand Partners, a Miami-based developer of beauty products. Founded by TSG

Consumer Partners veteran Alexander Panos, Bookend Capital invests in branded product and services companies in the consumer and industrial markets. Panos will join Luxury Brand's board of directors.

View deal

View similar company »

EXITS

Eurazeo prepares for $2.2B Planet sale

Eurazeo has hired Citigroup and Evercore to sell Irish payments company Planet in a deal that could value the business at up to €2 billion (about $2.2 billion), according to Reuters. Eurazeo acquired Planet (fka Fintrax) from Exponent Private Equity for an estimated €550 million valuation in 2015.

View details

View 57 competitors »

FUNDRAISING

Canapi scores $545M for fintech funds

Canapi Ventures has raised $545 million for its first venture capital funds. The vehicles will be used to back early- and growth-stage fintech startups. Canapi's first investment was Built Technologies, a developer of software for the construction-lending industry that it backed in 2019. The firm was founded in 2018.

View fund

View 1 investments »

BlackRock seeks $500M for climate-focused PE fund

BlackRock has announced plans to raise a private equity fund of at least $500 million dedicated to investing in the climate infrastructure industry as part of the Climate Finance Partnership, which was created alongside Hewlett and Grantham charitable foundations, France and Germany. The fund will focus on investing in a range of renewable energy solutions and electric transportation and mobility services in Southeast Asia, Latin America and Africa.

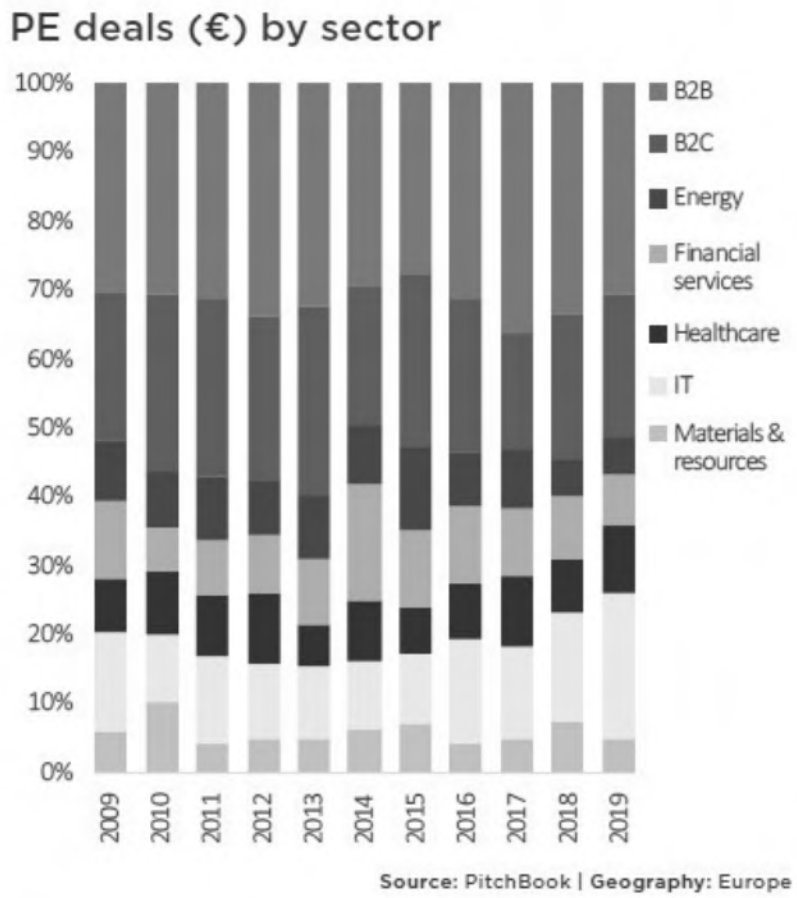
View details

View 257 investments »

Two Sigma Ventures closes third namesake fund on $288M

Two Sigma Ventures, an early-stage affiliate of New York-based hedge fund Two Sigma, has closed its third investment vehicle on $288 million. Two Sigma Ventures was founded in 2012; its portfolio includes NewtonX, the developer of an AI-based search engine.

CHART OF THE DAY



"The healthcare subsectors of telehealth, provider services and payor/payee services could be ones to watch in 2020. ... The subsector of healthcare IT is also primed for heightened capital inflows in the years ahead. Technologies used by hospitals, patients and general practitioners are often mission critical and used daily to keep healthcare companies running."

Source: **PitchBook's 2019 Annual European PE Breakdown**

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From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
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Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] VC deal value spikes 33% in Europe

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Subject: [EXTERNAL] VC deal value spikes 33% in Europe

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The Daily Pitch: VC, PE and M&A

January 30, 2020
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TODAY'S TOP STORIES

How do VC returns vary by sector?

VC firms usually expect different types of returns across different investment stages. The same is true across different sectors and verticals, particularly as more investors begin specializing in select industries.

But just how significant is the range of potential returns? Our **most recent analyst note** is the second in a series examining returns for investors at different venture stages. This time, our analysts explore VC returns in the technology and life sciences sectors and examine the differing return profiles in specific verticals like fintech and cybersecurity. Some key findings:

- Fintech, artificial intelligence and machine learning startups post robust returns compared to the broader tech industry
- Life sciences deals outperform other sectors on an adjusted basis, despite a risky reputation
- Of the industry slices analyzed, only cybersecurity deals resulted in negative adjusted return metrics

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Who's in the newsletter today?

People

Joe Lawler
Pedro Guimaraes
Warren Buffett

Investors

A.Capital Ventures
AngelList
Atlantica Ventures
Barclays
BlackRock
Bureau Veritas
Burst Capital
CMFG Ventures
Canvas Ventures
CenterOak Partners
Cerberus Capital Management
Correlation Ventures
DCVC
Eniac Ventures
Felicis Ventures
Firebolt Ventures
FullSpeed Automotive
Future Shape
HSBC

Share:

Barstool Sports valued at $450M in latest win for sports media

(Sam Greenwood/Getty Images Sport)

The digital media landscape as a whole had become increasingly bleak over the past few years, with the sports media sector as no exception.

But with Penn National Gaming's agreement Wednesday to back Barstool Sports, there may be more reason for optimism:

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Share:

European VCs spent more in 2019 than ever before

IVP
Jason Calacanis
KKR
Leonardo
Lynwood AG
Meritech Capital
Mitsui Kinzoku SBI Material Innovation Fund
Mubadala Capital
Next47
NextView Ventures
Northwestern Mutual Future Ventures
Ola
Prime Movers Lab
Project A
Providence Equity Partners
RBS
Securian Ventures
Sequoia
SoftBank
The Carlyle Group
Thiel Capital
Toyota Tsusho
Uber
Unusual Ventures
Vestar Capital Partners
Wind Point Partners
Y Combinator

Companies

Abu Dhabi National Oil
Addison Lee
Advano
American LubeFast
Attentive

Thanks to huge investments in startups such as FlixMobility, N26 and Klarna, venture capital deal value in Europe topped €30 billion last year for the first time. On a year-over-year basis, deal value climbed 33%, the largest annual leap since 2015.

What's behind the boom? Record levels of corporate venture participation are one factor. Another is increased interest in Europe from US investors. Our **2019 Annual European Venture Report** has the full details, as well as data and analysis on a host of other European VC storylines, including:

- A decade-high in fundraising value paired with a decade-low in fund count
- Record levels of investment in Germany
- A group of potential unicorn exits in 2020

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Share:

Carlyle-backed Addison Lee agrees to bank rescue

Berkshire Hathaway
Gabi
Helios & Matheson
Hippo
Kloud.io
Kobo360
Kopter Group
L Brands
Lee Enterprises
Lemonade
Lori Systems
Momentus
MoviePass
Oyo
PolySpectra
Safeco
Sendy
The Studio Director
Urban Outfitters
Verkada
Victoria's Secret

European taxi giant Addison Lee has agreed to a rescue deal that will give control of the UK company to its creditors, according to The Telegraph. Lenders will reportedly pump £45 million (about $59 million) in new capital into the struggling business, effectively wiping out The Carlyle Group's investment.

Eight banks, including Barclays, HSBC and RBS, have also reportedly agreed to refinance £100 million worth of loans for Addison Lee, which the company will have seven years to pay back.

Carlyle acquired the business for about £300 million in 2013 and is understood to have since injected an additional £100 million into it. The firm had been seeking a buyer for Addison Lee before the taxi company was due to repay £230 million in debt, the Financial Times reported in October. Cerberus Capital Management, Uber and Ola were all rumored to be potential bidders at one point.

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Recommended Reads

In eastern North Carolina and countless other corners of the US, communities are finding out what life is like when local journalism disappears. [The New Yorker]

After reaching the brink of disaster in the wake of the

financial crisis, Brian Moynihan has helped orchestrate a major turnaround at Bank of America—with a little help from Warren Buffett. [Fortune]

Researchers battling against illegal fishing boats and other vessels trying to escape electronic attention have a new ally: albatrosses. [The New York Times]

Beyond Meat is deepening its ties to KFC. Still, it's far from a sure thing that plant-based meats will be a hit in fast food. [TechCrunch]

An ongoing boom in the popularity of private credit funds is raising questions about whether institutional investors are setting themselves up for disaster. [Institutional Investor]

Some people love sports, or food, or music, or their work. But for Samanth Subramanian and millions of knowledge-obsessives like him, there's no pastime that can compete with a quiz. [The Guardian]

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Wind Point names new MD

Vestar Capital adds senior adviser

VC Deals

Verkada hits $1.6B valuation

Attentive pockets $70M for mobile messaging

Insurtech startup brings in $27M

African delivery startup Sendy raises $20M

Advano picks up $18.5M Series A

Kloud.io grabs $4M seed round

PE Deals

BlackRock, KKR eye Abu Dhabi pipeline

Providence Equity buys into studio software

CenterOak backs auto service add-on

Portfolio Companies

Oyo plans more layoffs

MoviePass owner to liquidate

Fundraising

Prime Movers Lab raises $100M fund

Corporate M&A

Victoria's Secret could sell

Berkshire Hathaway to dump newspapers for $140M

Italy's Leonardo to absorb Kopter Group

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THE DAILY BENCHMARK

2007 Vintage Global Secondaries Funds

Median IRR

8.00%

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

8.93%

1.40x

Median TVPI

Select top performers

Vintage Ventures III

W Capital Partners Fund II

Pomona Capital VII

**IRR: net of fees*

10 Funds in Benchmark »

Check out the latest version of **PitchBook Benchmarks**

PEOPLE

Wind Point names new MD

Wind Point Partners has promoted Joe Lawler to managing director. Lawler has worked at the Chicago-based private equity firm since 2009, with a focus on the food and consumer products sectors.

View details

Vestar Capital adds senior adviser

Vestar Capital Partners has hired Pedro Guimaraes as a senior adviser focused on the testing, inspection and certification sector. Guimaraes was previously CEO of the North American operating group at Bureau Veritas, an international provider of testing, inspection and certification services.

View details

VC DEALS

Verkada hits $1.6B valuation

Verkada, a developer of security cameras and related software for businesses, has raised an $80 million Series C at a $1.6 billion valuation. Investors including Sequoia and Felicis Ventures participated in the funding, which comes less than a year after the company raised $50 million at a $550 million valuation. Verkada plans to use the new capital in part to hire engineers and expand its global footprint.

Additional Investors:
Meritech Capital, Next47

View round

View 5 competitors »

Attentive pockets $70M for mobile messaging

Sequoia and IVP have co-led a $70 million Series C for Attentive, the developer of a mobile messaging platform that helps businesses market their products. The New York-based company raised $40 million at a $300 million valuation in August, according to PitchBook. Attentive has more than 750 customers, including Coach and Urban Outfitters.

Additional Investors:
Eniac Ventures, NextView Ventures

View round

View 47 competitors »

Insurtech startup brings in $27M

Insurtech startup Gabi has reportedly raised a $27 million Series B led by Mubadala Capital, with participation from Canvas Ventures, Correlation Ventures and others. The San Francisco-based business is the developer of a platform that allows users to compare home and car insurance rates from more than 40 insurance carriers, including Hippo, Lemonade and Safeco. Founded in 2016, Gabi was valued at $23.5 million in 2018, according to PitchBook.

Additional Investors:
A.Capital Ventures, CMFG Ventures, Northwestern Mutual Future Ventures, Project A, Securian Ventures, Burst Capital, AngelList

View round

View 12 competitors »

African delivery startup Sendy raises $20M

Atlantica Ventures has reportedly led a $20 million Series B for Sendy, a Kenya-based logistics startup that helps ecommerce companies and other businesses move goods. Toyota Tsusho also joined the round. The funding follows recent multimillion-dollar rounds for African logistics companies Kobo360 and Lori Systems.

View round

View 26 competitors »

Advano picks up $18.5M Series A

Advano, a developer of lithium-ion batteries with high energy density, has emerged from stealth with an $18.5 million round co-led by Mitsui Kinzoku SBI Material Innovation Fund, Future Shape and PeopleFund. Founded in 2016 and based in New Orleans, Advano is working to extend the life of rechargeable batteries used in consumer electronics and electric vehicles.

Additional Investors:
DCVC, Thiel Capital, Y Combinator

View round

View similar company »

Kloud.io grabs $4M seed round

Kloud.io, a San Jose-based provider of robotic process automation software for gathering data, has raised $4 million in seed capital led by Unusual Ventures. Jason

Calacanis and Firebolt Ventures also participated in the round.

View round

View 4 competitors »

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PE DEALS

BlackRock, KKR eye Abu Dhabi pipeline

BlackRock and KKR are among several private investors mulling offers for a minority stake in a gas pipeline unit owned by state-controlled Abu Dhabi National Oil, according to Bloomberg. A deal could reportedly give the UAE-based division an enterprise value of up to $15 billion, with initial bids expected by mid-February.

View details

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Providence Equity buys into studio software

Providence Equity Partners has purchased The Studio Director, a Denver-based creator of management

software for dance studios, martial arts studios and other children's activity centers. Studios use the company's software to process payments, schedule classes, manage events and more.

View deal View similar company »

CenterOak backs auto service add-on

FullSpeed Automotive has purchased American LubeFast, a Georgia-based provider of quick lube services that operates 50 locations in the US Southeast. FullSpeed, a franchisor and operator of auto service centers, changed its name from Grease Monkey International in 2017 and was acquired by CenterOak Partners later that year. The company plans to convert American LubeFast to the Grease Monkey brand.

View deal View similar company »

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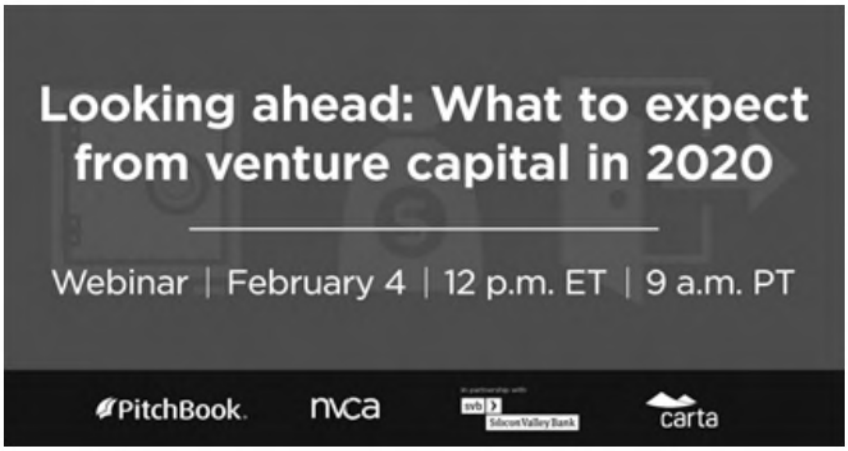

Join PitchBook and NVCA for a discussion of the current state of US venture capital. Featuring industry experts from Silicon Valley Bank and Carta, the webinar will explore key trends highlighted in the Q4 2019 PitchBook-NVCA Venture Monitor, including the latest in fundraising, deal flow and exit activity.

The panel will also look at what lies ahead for venture capital, including the competitive environment and other market considerations. The webinar will be held next Tuesday at 12 p.m. ET/9 a.m. PT.

Register now

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PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

Oyo plans more layoffs

SoftBank-backed hotel operator Oyo plans to shed a number of sales personnel and sales support staff in the US, according to Business Insider. The move comes a few weeks after Bloomberg reported that the company had laid off some 1,800 people across India and China.

View details

View 32 competitors »

MoviePass owner to liquidate

MoviePass owner Helios & Matheson has filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy and will liquidate. MoviePass offered unlimited movie theater screenings to

customers who paid just under $10 per month. Its owner formally shut down the service in September.

View details

View 22 competitors »

FUNDRAISING

Prime Movers Lab raises $100M fund

Jackson, Wyo.-based Prime Movers Lab has brought in some $100 million for its maiden early-stage vehicle. The firm plans to invest in startups across the energy, transportation, infrastructure and related sectors. Prime Movers Lab has already deployed the fund to back space transportation provider Momentus and 3D printing company PolySpectra, among others.

View fund

View 14 investments »

CORPORATE M&A

Victoria's Secret could sell

The longtime CEO of Victoria's Secret, Leslie Wexner, is considering strategic alternatives for the lingerie chain and may step down from his chief role, according to The Wall Street Journal. Although shares of Victoria's Secret's parent company L Brands have dropped precipitously since a 2015 peak when they were trading at nearly $100 each, they jumped around 13% Wednesday to close at $23.22 apiece.

View details

View similar company »

Berkshire Hathaway to dump newspapers for $140M

Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway has agreed to sell its portfolio of more than 30 daily newspapers and dozens of other weekly publications to newspaper conglomerate Lee Enterprises for $140 million in cash. Berkshire Hathaway will also provide a $576 million loan to Lee to help the company pay for the takeover and refinance some $400 million in existing debt. The assets include daily newspapers in 10 states in the US.

View details

View 1 competitors »

Italy's Leonardo to absorb Kopter Group

Italian aerospace company Leonardo has agreed to acquire 100% of Swiss helicopter designer Kopter Group from Lynwood AG for $185 million, plus potential future earnouts. Kopter, which has developed a new single-engine helicopter called the SH09, will operate as an autonomous entity within Leonardo's existing helicopter division.

View details

View similar company »

CHART OF THE DAY

"The angel & seed stage saw another strong quarter in 2019, logging $2.1 billion across 981 deals in Q4. On an annual basis, it recorded $9.1 billion in deal value, in line with the prior year's record; count, on the other hand, plateaued with 4,556 deals closed. Deal reporting at this stage tends to be delayed; we have marked roughly $1.7 billion in additional 2018 angel & seed funding since the Q4 2018 PitchBook-NVCA Venture Monitor and would not be surprised to see a similar lift in 2019."

Source: **PitchBook-NVCA Q4 2019 Venture Monitor**

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Venture capital, private equity and M&A financial information technology provider.

From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Fri, 14 Feb 2020 11:59:22 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Private equity is dominating the NBA

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2020 6:58:14 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Private equity is dominating the NBA

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The Daily Pitch: VC, PE and M&A

February 14, 2020
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The most active VC firms, PE firms and more of 2019

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What do Accel, Kleiner Perkins and Sequoia have in common? All are among the most well-known venture capital firms in Silicon Valley. And all were among the 10 most active VC firms in the world last year, according to PitchBook's **2019 Annual Global League Tables**.

This edition of the League Tables, sponsored by Corporate Resolutions, offers rankings of the private market's busiest investors, bankers, advisers and law firms from 2019, broken down by dozens of criteria.

Which investment banks worked on the most PE- and VC-backed IPOs? Which VC firms struck the most late-stage deals? It's all inside:

check out the rankings

Share:

Private equity is dominating the NBA in 2020

Who's in the newsletter today?

People

Logan Bartlett

Investors

Alphabet

Andreessen Horowitz

Apax Partners

Bain Capital Ventures

Battery Ventures

Bessemer Venture Partners

Bloomberg Beta

Capital Point

CapitalG

Fox Factory

GGV Capital

Hans Tung

Happiness Capital

Insight Partners

Intermountain Ventures

Kinderhook Industries

Morgan Stanley Capital Partners

Morgan Stanley

Milwaukee Bucks star Giannis Antetokounmpo
(Harry How/Getty Images North America)

Rich guys like to own professional sports teams. Private equity produces a lot of rich guys. So it's little surprise that buyout billionaires have been snapping up NBA franchises for the past two decades.

In recent years, a few of those franchises have achieved unprecedented success. In fact, private equity tycoons have turned the league's Eastern Conference into their own personal playground:

read more

Share:

Astranis raises $90M for satellite internet in Alaska

Expansion Capital
NewView Capital
dyssey Investment artners
urCrowd
edpoint Ventures
ound Hill nvestments
amsung Next
equoia
oftBank
ompo Holdings
parx Group
noma Bravo
oyota AI Ventures
riplePoint Capital
Union Tech Ventures
Upfront Ventures
Venrock
iRobot

Companies

Armis
Astranis
Best Buy
Blue Origin
Cadence Education
Citizens Financial Group
Deutsche Telekom
GoDaddy
GumGum
Hulu
Instructure
Intuition Robotics
Over
Root Insurance
SCA Performance
SpaceX
Spangler Candy Company

(Jose Luis Stephens/EyeEm/Getty Images)

SpaceX is plowing ahead with plans to have 720 internet satellites in low-Earth orbit this year. Astranis, a startup that has announced $90 million in new equity and debt financing, has more modest aspirations.

Astranis thinks it can vastly improve broadband access for rural Alaskans using just one satellite. Eventually, the company hopes to launch up to 30 more satellites to spread its services elsewhere, according to Fortune.

Venture investing in space tech companies hit a record $2.3 billion across 116 deals last year, according to PitchBook data. But investors are often reluctant to challenge vertically integrated giants like SpaceX and Blue Origin in their core businesses.

"I will not invest in a company that is trying to compete in global ubiquitous internet activity," said Tess Hatch, a vice president at Bessemer Venture Partners, in an interview last month. "But I think

Sprint
Stripe
T-Mobile
Trinity Capital
Twilio
Uniregistry
Vedantu

there's a spectrum."

Venrock led the $40 million equity portion of Astranis' new round, with participation from Andreessen Horowitz and other existing backers. TriplePoint Capital will provide up to $50 million in debt funding.

Share:

Valar Ventures leads $30M round to double down on crypto bet

BlockFi co-founders Flori Marquez and Zac Prince (Courtesy of BlockFi)

BlockFi, a New Jersey-based cryptocurrency fintech startup, just raised a $30 million Series B, less than six months after its previous round.

Peter Thiel-backed Valar Ventures has led both rounds, representing the fintech-focused firm's first crypto bet.

BlockFi plans to use the fresh cash to court cautious retail investors and launch a credit card that earns

bitcoin rewards:

read more

Share:

Sweethearts make triumphant return after PE destroys parent company

(Joe Raedle/Getty Images News)

Fear not, hopeless romantics.

Spangler Candy Company has brought back Sweethearts candies in a limited capacity for Valentine's Day after buying the brand from Round Hill Investments in 2018.

The heart-shaped candies, a Valentine's Day staple, were unavailable last year after the New England Confectionary Company (better known as Necco), the former maker of Sweethearts, went into bankruptcy earlier in 2018. The company ultimately shut down after more than a century in business. Round Hill, a

family office in Connecticut, paid a reported $17.3 million for the Sweethearts and Necco wafers brands, continuing the candy's long, not-so-sweet relationship with private equity.

PitchBook detailed the **rocky journey** last year in the lead-up to Valentine's Day.

Share:

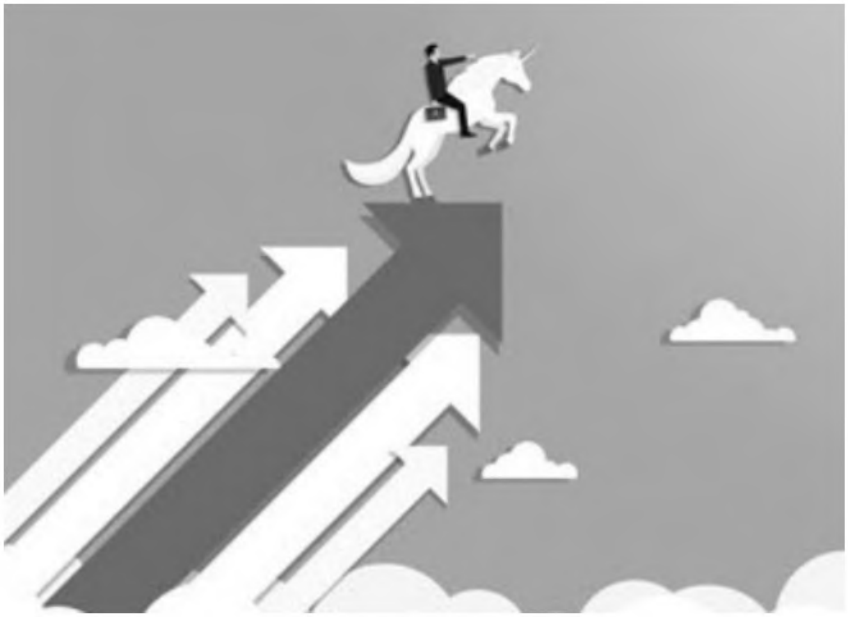
Weekly Recap

Some highlights from our recent content:

• The private equity world's hopes of producing a president have been put on hold with the news that Deval Patrick **has shut down his campaign**.

• T-Mobile and Sprint emerged from federal court this week **with a major victory** in their fight to win approval for a $26.5 billion merger.

• VC in Europe has flourished over the past decade, ushering in **an unprecedented number of unicorns**.



(pishit/iStock/Getty Images Plus)

• It's Oscar season, so we **handed out some virtual awards** to private equity's biggest movers and shakers of 2019.

• Once-profitable Airbnb reportedly **booked a net loss** of more than $300 million for last year as it eyes a potential 2020 IPO.

• Reports emerged this week that SoftBank **may end up collecting less than half** of the original target amount for its second Vision Fund.

Share:

Recommended Reads

SoftBank's millions turned Zume Pizza from a punchline into a unicorn. But ultimately, all that cash couldn't save the company from serious problems. [Bloomberg]

Uber and Lyft's recent earnings reports (and Wall Street's reaction to them) reveal the diverging strategic paths the rivals are taking. [Wired]

Jeff Bezos' recent $165 million purchase of a dreamy Hollywood estate is the latest example of what nine figures can get you in the modern real estate market. [The Wall Street Journal]

Diagnosing the state of the market with Mark Spitznagel, a hedge fund pro who believes the central banks have created a monster and spends his time preparing investors for the crash to come. [Vanity Fair]

A growing crop of immuno-oncology treatments offer life-saving promise. Investors are paying attention, too. [Fortune]

Around the world, mattresses are an environmental nightmare. The rise of direct-to-consumer startups in the sleep space aren't helping. [The Guardian]

Since yesterday, the PitchBook Platform added:

193	1557	547	14
Deals	People	Companies	Funds

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TODAY'S HEADLINES

The Daily Benchmark

2009 Vintage Global PE Funds with more than $1B

People

Redpoint Ventures adds MD

VC Deals

Digital companion developer nails down $36M

Indian edtech startup secures $24M

GumGum pockets $22M Series D

PE Deals

Instructure spurns Thoma Bravo

Insight completes $1.1B deal for VC-backed Armis

Apax strikes SBO pact for preschool provider

Exits

Kinderhook to unload SCA Performance for $328M

Fundraising

Odyssey tops $3B for buyout fund

Corporate M&A

T-Mobile owner wants to renegotiate Sprint deal

GoDaddy to add Uniregistery assets

Citizens Financial to take over Trinity Capital

Lower Middle Market.
Higher Expectations.
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Twin Brook
CAPITAL PARTNERS

THE DAILY BENCHMARK

2009 Vintage Global PE Funds with more than $1B

Median IRR

11.70%

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

20.67%

1.49x
Median TVPI

Select top performers
Odyssey Investment Partners Fund IV
Clayton Dubilier & Rice Fund VIII
Charlesbank Equity Fund VII

**IRR: net of fees*

13 Funds in Benchmark »

Check out the latest version of **PitchBook Benchmarks**

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS
NXT CAPITAL
AN ORIX COMPANY
NXT CAPITAL
CELEBRATING 10 YEARS
OF DIRECT LENDING

PEOPLE

Redpoint Ventures adds MD

Logan Bartlett has joined Redpoint Ventures as a managing director focused on enterprise companies. Bartlett has joined the firm's growth team, which has made previous investments in Stripe, Root Insurance and Twilio. He was most recently a principal at Battery Ventures for roughly six years.

View details

VC DEALS

Digital companion developer nails down $36M

Intuition Robotics has raised $36 million in Series B funding co-led by Sparx Group and OurCrowd, with participation from other backers. The startup has now raised around $60 million in total financing. Founded in 2016 and based in Israel, Intuition is a developer of AI-based digital companions that interact empathetically with users.

Additional Investors:
Bloomberg Beta, Capital Point, Happiness Capital, Samsung Next, Sompo Holdings, Toyota AI Ventures, Union Tech Ventures, iRobot

View round

View 10 competitors »

Indian edtech startup secures $24M

Vedantu has raised $24 million led by GGV Capital as part of its ongoing Series C, according to TechCrunch. The Bengaluru-based company is the operator of a live tutoring platform for students. Hans Tung, a managing partner at GGV Capital, will reportedly join the company's board.

View round

View 35 competitors »

GumGum pockets $22M Series D

GumGum has landed $22 million in new funding from Morgan Stanley Expansion Capital, NewView Capital and Upfront Ventures, according to TechCrunch. Founded in 2007, the California-based company uses machine learning to help marketing teams at companies such as Hulu and Best Buy add contextual messages, secure content and manage sponsorships. GumGum was valued at $167.4 million in 2015, according to PitchBook data.

View round

View 31 competitors »

PE DEALS

Instructure spurns Thoma Bravo

The board of educational software developer Instructure has rejected an increased takeover bid of $48.50 per share from Thoma Bravo that was submitted after the firm's original offer seemed unlikely to win the required shareholder approval. The Salt Lake City-based company will put the original offer—which values Instructure at $47.60 per share, or about $2 billion—to a shareholder vote Friday. Thoma Bravo originally agreed to purchase Instructure in December before investors raised concerns about the price.

View deal View 94 competitors »

Insight completes $1.1B deal for VC-backed Armis

Insight Partners has wrapped up its previously announced acquisition of California-based cybersecurity provider Armis, valuing the business at $1.1 billion. The deal included a $100 million investment from CapitalG, the growth equity arm of Google parent Alphabet. Armis, which had received prior backing from investors including Sequoia, Bain Capital Ventures and Intermountain Ventures, is a developer of tech that helps protect internet of things devices from cyberattacks.

View deal View 101 competitors »

Apax strikes SBO pact for preschool provider

Apax Partners has agreed to acquire preschool operator Cadence Education from Morgan Stanley Capital Partners, which bought the company in 2016. Based in Scottsdale, Ariz., Cadence operates more than 225 schools across the US.

View deal

View 5 competitors »

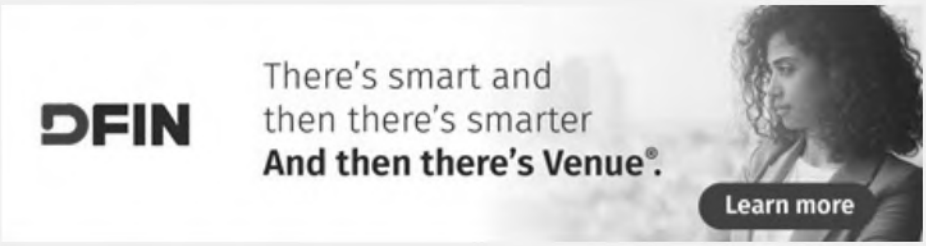
EXITS

Kinderhook to unload SCA Performance for $328M

Kinderhook Industries portfolio company Southern Rocky Holdings has agreed to sell SCA Performance, an Alabama-based manufacturer of specialty light-duty trucks and SUVs, to Fox Factory for $328 million. Kinderhook has backed SCA since 2018. Fox Factory is a designer and manufacturer of performance products for trucks, snowmobiles, motorcycles and other vehicles.

View details

View 3 competitors »



FUNDRAISING

Odyssey tops $3B for buyout fund

Odyssey Investment Partners has closed its sixth flagship fund on $3.25 billion, exceeding a predecessor that closed on $2 billion in 2014. With offices in New York and Los Angeles, Odyssey makes control investments in middle-market companies in the industrial and business services sectors.

View fund

View 194 investments »

CORPORATE M&A

T-Mobile owner wants to renegotiate Sprint deal

Germany's Deutsche Telekom, the majority owner of T-Mobile, is seeking to renegotiate the terms of T-Mobile's deal to acquire rival Sprint, according to the Financial Times, arguing Sprint's finances have worsened since the terms of the deal were originally agreed to nearly two years ago. Sprint is controlled by SoftBank. A US federal judge ruled in favor of the $26.5 billion merger **earlier this week**.

View details

View 69 investments »

GoDaddy to add Uniregistery assets

Arizona-based web hosting company GoDaddy has agreed to acquire Uniregistry's domain registrar and marketplace businesses, as well as a portfolio of more than 350,000 domain names. The deal represents GoDaddy's second acquisition agreement of 2020, following last month's pact to purchase Over, which helps businesses create social media content.

View details

View similar company »

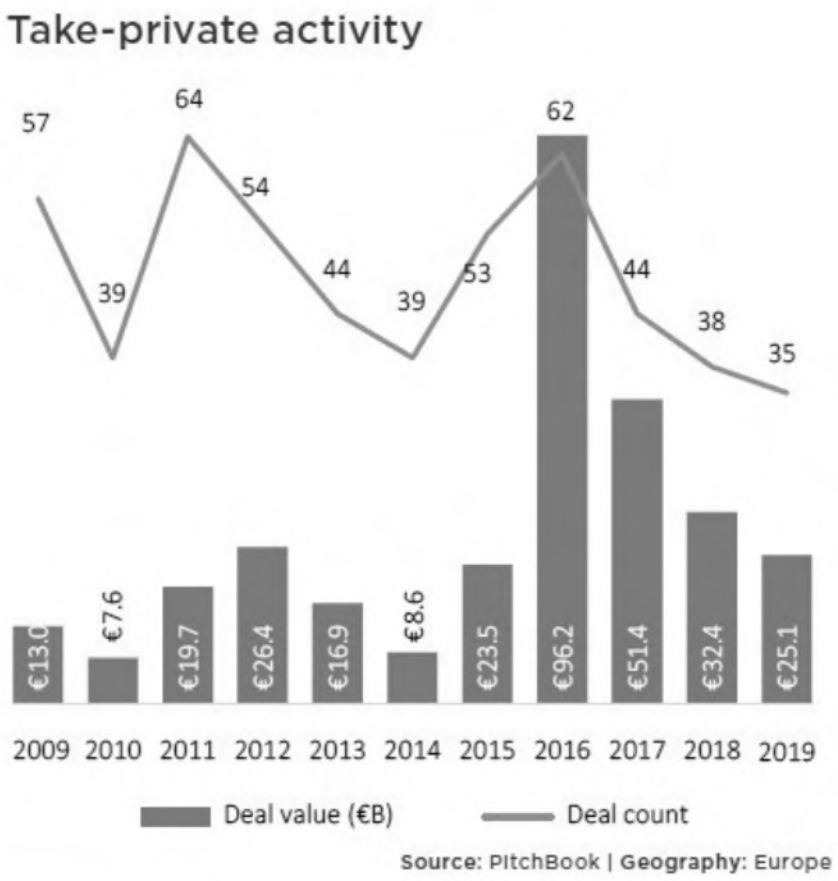
Citizens Financial to take over Trinity Capital

Providence, R.I.-based bank Citizens Financial Group has agreed to buy Trinity Capital. Trinity is a Los Angeles-based advisory firm that guides middle-market companies on debt restructuring, buyouts and private placements of debt and equity.

View details

View similar company »

CHART OF THE DAY



"Although the tumbling quantity of publicly traded companies was heavily publicized throughout 2019, take-private activity dropped for the third year in a row. The second-largest take-private in 2019 was the €3.1 billion acquisition of UK-based pub and brewing group Greene King by CK Asset Holdings (HKG: 1113)."

Source: **PitchBook's 2019 Annual European M&A Report**

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From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Sun, 26 Jan 2020 21:32:14 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] Morning Consult Brands: Week in Review & What's Ahead

From: Morning Consult
Sent: Sunday, January 26, 2020 9:30:53 PM (UTC+00:00) Monrovia, Reykjavik
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] Morning Consult Brands: Week in Review & What's Ahead

By Joanna Piacenza

Week in Review

Super Bowl

- Planters is successfully drumming up attention for its Super Bowl ad after announcing in a pregame ad the death of its 104-year-old mascot, Mr. Peanut, who perished to save actors Wesley Snipes and Matt Walsh during a road trip.

- During the Super Bowl, Fox will run its own promotional ads alongside campaign ads from President Donald Trump and Michael Bloomberg so that other advertisers aren't sharing the same commercial breaks as the politicians, according to a person familiar with the matter. Trump's ad is expected to run during the first half, while Bloomberg's will appear during halftime, a second source said.

- Tide is coming back to the Super Bowl after taking 2019 off and after a successful 2018 multi-spot campaign featuring "Stranger Things" actor David Harbour, who argued in a commercial during every quarter of the big game that every ad could be a Tide ad if the clothes are clean.

Advertising

- Kotex launched a new ad campaign on social media and streaming TV depicting menstrual blood as red, making it the first big brand to show a realistic blood-red fluid, instead of the usual antiseptic-blue liquid, when marketing a menstrual product.

- Netflix Inc. CEO Reed Hastings reiterated that there is no reason to change its "simpler" ad-free business model as the streaming wars heat up because Netflix is "not interested" in investing heavily in the infrastructure required to sell ads on a streaming platform as Google and Amazon.com Inc. do, plus the company prefers to stay out of government crosshairs when it comes to user data privacy.

- The Association of National Advertisers appointed L'Oreal USA and Colgate-Palmolive Co. alum Nadine Karp McHugh to serve as the president

of its SeeHer initiative, a new position for the four-year program aimed at pushing for more accurate portrayals of women and girls in advertising.

Departures

- Bill Abbott, CEO of the parent company of the Hallmark Channel, is abruptly stepping down weeks after the network sparked a controversy over its decision to pull ads that featured a same-sex wedding, a move that was later reversed.
- Gap Inc. confirmed that CMO Alegra O'Hare has left the company just shy of a year after taking on the role, as the clothing brand looks to "redefine" the position.

What's Ahead

- Companies reporting earnings this week include Apple Inc. (Jan. 28), McDonald's Corp. (Jan. 28), Starbucks Corp. (Jan. 28), Microsoft Corp. (Jan. 28), Amazon (Jan. 29), Boeing Co. (Jan. 29) and Hershey Co. (Jan. 30).
- Super Bowl LIV, and its annual showcase of the advertising industry's most creative work, airs Feb. 2.
- The Public Affairs Council's four-day Advocacy Conference - aimed at teaching best practices in grassroots, communications and engagement strategy - kicks off Feb. 3 in Las Vegas. Representatives from eBay Inc., Target Corp. and the National Retail Federation will be in attendance. Also, Morning Consult Managing Director Caroline Bye will be presenting new polling data during a panel on social media, political advertising and the 2020 election.

Events Calendar (All Times Local)

01/28/2020

AdExchanger's Industry Preview	
Amazon Strategies	
IAB: Digital Fundamentals	8:30 am
Ad Age's Inside Pages: Super Bowl	6:00 pm

01/29/2020

AdExchanger's Industry Preview	
MediaPost's Forecast 2020 and Beyond: Media+Data+Privacy	8:00 am

View full calendar

Special Report: The State of Consumer Trust

As the new decade begins, Morning Consult's **The State of Consumer Trust** report is the first look at how today's societal forces are shaping a new era of trust. Based on interviews with thousands of consumers, the report provides actionable intelligence into how companies can earn and deepen trust with customers.

Download the full report.

Morning Consult Brands Top Reads

1) Brands Should Be Wary of Bragging About Doing the Right Thing, Polling Shows
Joanna Piacenza, Morning Consult

2) Planters really has killed off Mr. Peanut, with a funeral planned for the Super Bowl

Jessica Wohl, Ad Age

3) 2020 Edelman Trust Barometer
Edelman

4) This Company Says It Will Fix Your Smile. It May Shush You if It Doesn't.
Erin Griffith and Peter Eavis, The New York Times

5) Planters kills off its mascot in supposed Super Bowl commercial leak
Jessica Wohl, Ad Age

6) Google's latest user-hostile design change makes ads and search results look identical
Natasha Lomas, TechCrunch

7) Gap looks to 'redefine' CMO role as Alegra O'Hare exits after 11 months
Katie Deighton, The Drum

8) The rise and fall of Bed Bath & Beyond, one of America's most iconic big box retailers
Bethany Biron, Business Insider

9) Hallmark TV Chief Leaves After Dispute Over Same-Sex Wedding Ad
John Koblin, The New York Times

10) Industry standouts: The companies most admired by the business world
Scott DeCarlo and Matthew Heimer, Fortune

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From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Wed, 22 Jan 2020 14:03:10 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] Morning Consult Brands: Netflix CEO Reiterates No Interest in Ads Even as Streaming Wars Heat Up

From: Morning Consult
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2020 1:43:04 PM (UTC+00:00) Monrovia, Reykjavik
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] Morning Consult Brands: Netflix CEO Reiterates No Interest in Ads Even as Streaming Wars Heat Up

By Joanna Piacenza

Top Stories

- Netflix Inc. CEO Reed Hastings reiterated that there is no reason to change its "simpler" ad-free business model as the streaming wars heat up because Netflix is "not interested" in investing heavily in the infrastructure required to sell ads on a streaming platform as Google and Amazon.com Inc. do, plus the company prefers to stay out of government crosshairs when it comes to user data privacy. His comments came after Netflix said it added fewer domestic users than predicted (420,000 compared to an expected 600,000) in the last quarter of 2019 but attracted more global subscribers than anticipated (8.76 million compared to a predicted 7.6 million). (Fox Business)

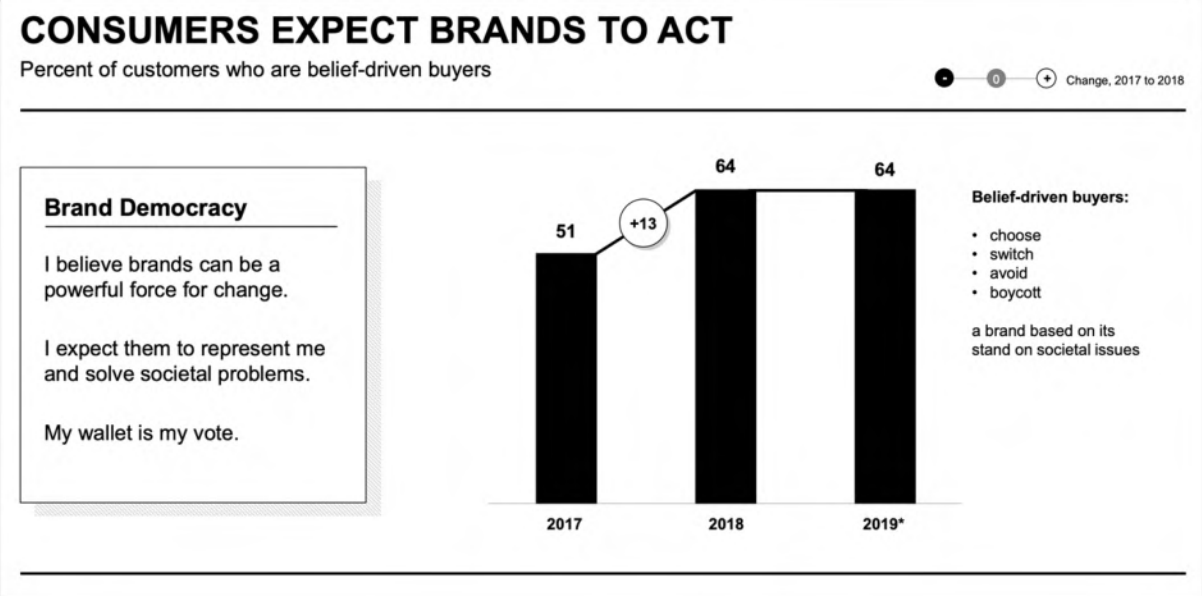
- The Association of National Advertisers appointed L'Oreal USA Inc. and Colgate-Palmolive Co. alum Nadine Karp McHugh to serve as the president of its SeeHer initiative, a new position for the four-year program aimed at pushing for more accurate portrayals of women and girls in advertising. (Adweek)

- SmileDirectClub Inc., a direct-to-consumer seller of teeth aligners, has limited the influence of dissatisfied customers by asking those who requested refunds to sign confidentiality agreements that prohibit them from telling anyone about the refund and mandating they delete negative social media comments about the brand. SmileDirectClub's chief legal officer said that the vast majority of its clients are satisfied and that its legal moves were necessary to protect itself from what it believes is "an organized campaign to damage our reputation amongst consumers, dentists and/or investors." (The New York Times)

Chart Review

2020 Edelman Trust Barometer

Edelman



Events Calendar (All Times Local)

View full calendar

Special Report: The State of Consumer Trust

As the new decade begins, Morning Consult's **The State of Consumer Trust** report is the first look at how today's societal forces are shaping a new era of trust. Based on interviews with thousands of consumers, the report provides actionable intelligence into how companies can earn and deepen trust with customers.

Download the full report.

Advertising

Planters Kills Off Its Mascot In Supposed Super Bowl Commercial Leak
Jessica Wohl, Ad Age

This cryptic tweet is surely a new way to drum up attention for a Super Bowl spot.

Missy Elliott and H.E.R. Star In Pepsi's Super Bowl Ad
E.J. Schultz, Ad Age

The brand will plug its 'zero sugar' variety, a style that is gaining favor with drinkers averse to drinks labeled 'diet.'

How YouTube shields advertisers (not viewers) from harmful videos
Olivia Goldhill, Quartz

The difference between the protections YouTube offers its advertisers and those it provides consumers is stark.

Muhtayzik Hoffer Rebrands Back From 'Alphabet Soup'
Lindsay Rittenhouse, Ad Age

In October 2018, Muhtayzik Hoffer ditched the phonetic spelling (Muh-tay-zik Hof-fer) of its founders' tough-to-spell last names-John Matejczyk and Matt Hofherr, who formed the agency in 2008-and rebranded as M/H VCCP.

Budweiser Teases Super Bowl Ad With Emotional Reactions From Its Own Stars
Mónica Marie Zorrilla, Adweek

Spot features the Free Hugs Guy, an Army veteran and two World Cup champs.

How publishers are planning for the end of the third-party cookie
Lucinda Southern, Digiday

As they brace for the death of the third-party cookie, publishers are cooking up alternative ways of identifying users to target and serve ads to.

J.Lo Appears in First Coach Ads
Jean E. Palmieri, WWD

Coach has released its first campaign images featuring new global face

Jennifer Lopez. She is the female face of the brand's "Originals Go Their Own Way," while Michael B. Jordan appears in the men's ads.

Etsy Ads Pushed Onto Google Shopping As Marketplace Struggles To Find Footing
Laurie Sullivan, MediaPost

Etsy, the marketplace where sellers can sell handmade items, launched its Google Shopping advertising channel for sellers of goods in 2016, but one seller says the site has begun to push listings into Google Shopping from those who do not advertise.

Little Caesars to make its Super Bowl debut with ad touting new pizza delivery service
Amelia Lucas, CNBC

Little Caesars is heading to the Super Bowl for the first time. The pizza chain's ad will spotlight its new delivery partnership with DoorDash.

'Sense of urgency': Ad agencies are now offering more mental health and wellness benefits to employees
Kristina Monllos, Digiday

Agencies are providing these mental health-focused perks not only to help employees manage their stress and anxiety better but also to help the agencies' business.

Media and Entertainment

Two Ad Characters. Five Shows. One Day. No Sweat For Old Spice (Well, Maybe a Little)
Brian Steinberg, Variety

To help draw attention to a new campaign for its Old Spice body wash, Procter & Gamble has negotiated with three different media companies for placement on four different networks for five special tie-ins in Thursday's broadcasts of

ABC's "Good Morning America" and "Jimmy Kimmel Live"; "ESPN's "SportsCenter"; NBC's "The Good Place"; and TNT's coverage of the Los Angeles Lakers taking on the Brooklyn Nets.

Ousted Grammys CEO Deborah Dugan sues Recording Academy, claims retaliation for exposing 'boys club'
Maureen Lee Lenker, Entertainment Weekly

Embattled Recording Academy CEO Deborah Dugan alleges she was sexually harassed and placed on leave as "retaliation" for raising concerns about the "boys' club" atmosphere within the organization that hands out the Grammy awards.

Apple Planning to Make Original Podcasts Promoting Its TV Shows
Lucas Shaw and Mark Gurman, Bloomberg

Apple Inc. is discussing making original podcasts related to programs on its Apple TV+ video streaming service, another sign of the technology giant's growing ambitions in entertainment, according to people familiar with the plans.

Social Media and Technology

Inside Walmart's thriving TikTok account, which has over 127,000 followers and is luring a new generation of Gen Z shoppers to the superstore
Shoshy Ciment, Business Insider Prime

Walmart joining TikTok might just be the crossover event of the century.

Less ownership, less data: Why some brands refuse to sell on Instagram
Katie Richards, Glossy

In the last few months, fashion brands have jumped into Instagram Shopping, from high-end Prada and Balmain to direct-to-consumer Outdoor Voices and

Uniqlo.

Fake it 'till you make it: meet Floresta, The Drum's first virtual influencer
Sam Bradley, The Drum

These days, influence is big business. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube and Twitch have enabled social media stars across the planet to grow vast fanbases and wield valuable commercial sway.

PR and Marketing

Starbucks Pledges to Slash Water Use and Waste
Heather Haddon, The Wall Street Journal

Coffee giant is latest company to set fresh sustainability targets.

Kim Kardashian West and Nordstrom just announced a major deal
Hayley Peterson, Business Insider

Kim Kardashian West said Tuesday that her shapewear brand, Skims, will soon be sold in Nordstrom stores.

Audi of America replaces one PR AOR with four agency partners
Diana Bradley, PRWeek

Brand comms leader Tara Rush said the auto industry is facing unprecedented change.

Boeing Pushes Back Expected MAX Return
Andrew Tangel and Andy Pasztor, The Wall Street Journal

The new estimate for the FAA's signoff is expected in June or July.

The rise and fall of Bed Bath & Beyond, one of America's most iconic big box retailers

Bethany Biron, Business Insider

Since its founding in 1971, Bed Bath & Beyond has been a go-to destination for home goods, appealing to shoppers with its convenient and affordable "superstore" model.

Woke brands walk a thin line with 'moral merch'
Kati Chitrakorn, Vogue Business

Brands are increasingly releasing products that feature a social cause, but they run the risk of coming across as cynical.

Shop online? Your packages may have toxins hiding in plain sight
Elizabeth Segran, Fast Company

Brands plaster their packaging with logos and designs to improve the unboxing experience, but the inks they use often contain VOCs that are bad for the environment.

David Glass, Walmart Boss and K.C. Royals Owner, Dies at 84
Katharine Q. Seelye, The New York Times

He introduced selling groceries alongside general merchandise in Supercenters, positioning Walmart to compete with Amazon today. His Royals won a World Series.

Opinions, Editorials, Perspectives and Research

When Community Becomes Your Competitive Advantage
Jeffrey Bussgang and Jono Bacon, Harvard Business Review

We've seen a precipitous decline in participation in civic organizations in recent years; membership numbers are down for religious groups, labor organizations and non-profits.

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To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] WeWork exits chic startup The Wing

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The Daily Pitch: VC, PE and M&A

January 23, 2020
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TODAY'S TOP STORIES

M&A activity remained aloft despite decreased cross-border investment

Last year was marked by geopolitical uncertainty, the specter of an economic slowdown, low interest rates and a red-hot stock market. Yet North American M&A activity remained strong, as a series of mega-deals in the healthcare and media sectors helped total deal value top $2 trillion for the third time in the past five years.

The M&A market, though, wasn't entirely immune from macroeconomic headwinds. Our **2019 Annual North American M&A Report**, sponsored by KPMG, Liberty GTS and ACG, uses PitchBook data and analysis to paint a complete picture of the past 12 months. It explores several key trends in M&A, including:

- A continued decline in Chinese acquisitions of US companies
- Increased EV/EBITDA multiples
- High-priced gold mining mergers

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Who's in the newsletter today?

People

David Michael
Eric Yuan
Jesse Lane
Mike Cannon-Brookes
Ryan Smith
Tesh Gor
Ty Findley

Investors

11.2 Capital
Accel
Anthos Capital
Anzu Partners
Bain Capital Ventures
Bill Gates
BlackRock
Bookend Capital Partners
Bpifrance
CPT Capital
Canapi Ventures
Capital One Growth Ventures
Cargill

WeWork sheds more assets under turnaround plan

WeWork has sold off a series of non-core assets, making good on the troubled company's pledge to impose discipline in hopes of turning a profit.

On Wednesday, WeWork said it shed its stake in the Wing, a workplace community designed for women, unloading an investment made in late 2017. Financial terms weren't disclosed. The buyers included new investor GV, alongside existing Wing investors Sequoia and NEA. Actress-producer Mindy Kaling joined the deal.

In addition, WeWork completed its previously announced sale of Teem, a platform for managing space in the workplace, to iOffice. The deal was one of several divestitures that New York-based WeWork outlined last fall as part of revamp on the heels of SoftBank's dramatic rescue to stave off a cash crisis at the office space provider.

WeWork also said it expects within the coming weeks to tap into $1.75 billion worth of financing, under a SoftBank credit facility that was secured with Goldman Sachs in December.

Share:

PE-backed Fairway Market denies liquidation report, but bankruptcy still looms

Carl Icahn
Duff & Phelps
Emergence
Eurazeo
Exponent Private Equity
Famille C
Fifty Years
Finistere Ventures
First Round Capital
Further Global
Future Ventures
GE Ventures
GV
Glynn Capital
Goldman Sachs
HLD Europe
Homebrew
IK Investment Partners
Idinvest Partners
In-Q-Tel
Initialized Capital
Insight Partners
Iris Capital
Ironspring
Kimbal Musk
Neuberger Berman
Norwest
Permira
Pritzker Group Venture Capital
Richard Branson
Ridge Ventures
SV Angel
Sequoia
SoftBank
Stone Point Capital
Summit Partners

(Spencer Platt/Getty Images News)

Fairway Market has a loyal fan base. So when a report came out that the New York City-area grocery chain might go bankrupt and liquidate, customers were quick to express their dismay on social media.

However, Fairway, which has been backed by private equity firms since 2007, is reportedly slated to file for Chapter 11 protection rather than Chapter 7—meaning the business won't be forced to shutter its 14 locations:

read more

Share:

Anzu closes fund on $190M, opens R&D space for portfolio companies

Anzu Partners has raised $190 million for its second VC vehicle, which will focus on backing industrial tech companies in the US and Canada. Founded in 2014

Susa Ventures
TSG Consumer Partners
Temasek
The Carlyle Group
Threshold Ventures
Two Sigma
Two Sigma Ventures
Tyson Foods
Warburg Pincus

Companies

Atlassian
Bear Robotics
Built Technologies
Exxelia
Front
Goldman Sachs
HP
Lubrizol
LumApps
Luxury Brand Partners
MailChimp
Memphis Meats
NEA
NewtonX
Outlier
Planet
Qualtrics
Shopify
Stripe
Sysdig
Teem
WeWork
Wing
Xerox
Zoom
Zume
eClinical Solutions

and based in Washington, DC, Anzu closed its debut VC fund on $128 million in 2017.

"We're addressing a market gap for companies or laboratories that come out of institutions such as MIT and Harvard, where they have often received strong grant funding and endorsements from government bodies," Anzu managing partner David Michael told PitchBook.

He also said that in addition to providing capital, the firm wants to help startups scale operations by supplying space for laboratories and production all under one roof. To this end, the firm has opened a Boston-area manufacturing, R&D and flexible office space for its portfolio companies.

Anzu's portfolio includes businesses in the manufacturing, materials, modeling and monitoring & measurement sectors; the firm has also backed life sciences startups that are developing medical treatments.

Share:

Xerox reportedly plans to infiltrate HP's board

iOffice

Limited Partners

Alexander Panos

Service Providers

Citigroup

Evercore

(Open Grid Scheduler)

It's a move remarkable for today's corporate M&A world: After HP snubbed a $33 billion acquisition proposal from Xerox, the once-ubiquitous printing company now hopes to gain control of HP's board to advance a hostile takeover, according to reports.

Xerox plans to nominate as many as 11 new directors to HP's 12-person board ahead of a Friday deadline, according to The Wall Street Journal, with the aim of installing new board members more friendly to negotiating a potential merger. The Connecticut-based business reportedly acquired a small interest in HP in recent weeks that enables it to propose board changes.

The drama stretches back to November, when HP rejected Xerox's cash-and-stock offer of about $22 per share, saying it undervalued the Palo Alto-based company and expressing skepticism about Xerox's ability to finance the deal. Earlier this month, Xerox announced it had arranged $24 billion in financing for the proposed takeover—but HP maintained that the

offer was insufficient.

Activist investor Carl Icahn holds stakes in both companies and has pushed for a combination.

Related read: **Xerox secures $24B loan for hostile HP takeover**

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Recommended Reads

Law enforcement agencies don't know precisely how Clearview AI's products work, or who built them. But they're already busy using the technology to turn the internet into one giant facial-recognition database, dystopian fears be damned. [The New York Times]

With a meat alternative called Omnipork, Hong Kong businessman David Yeung is challenging social taboos in China. He's also trying to save the world. [Bloomberg]

An interview with new Alphabet boss Sundar Pichai about replacing Google's founders, the creation of Chrome, recent changes to the company's culture and much more. [Fortune]

The rise of the smartphone has already democratized many parts of our world. Will the practice of archival research be next? [The Atlantic]

Solving the mystery of wikiHow's illustrations, a bizarre corner of the art world that's alternately flummoxed and entertained the internet for 15 years. [OneZero]

At the Hotel Europe in Davos, a pianist named Barry Colson spent the past quarter-century tickling the ivories in front of the business world's elite. This year, he has a new gig. [Reuters]

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TODAY'S HEADLINES

The Daily Benchmark

2010 Vintage US PE Funds

People

Tesh Gor joins Warburg Pincus as executive-in-residence

Ironspring adds managing partner

VC Deals

Lab-grown meat startup raises $161M

Sysdig picks up $70M Series E

Goldman Sachs leads $70M Series C for LumApps

Tech luminaries back corporate email startup with $59M

Bear Robotics gobbles up $32M

Outlier pockets $22.1M

PE Deals

Stone Point group snags Duff & Phelps for $4.2B

HLD Europe eyes aerospace company

Summit gives growth backing to eClinical Solutions

Bookend Capital backs Luxury Brands with $50M

Exits

Eurazeo prepares for $2.2B Planet sale

Fundraising

Canapi scores $545M for fintech funds

BlackRock seeks $500M for climate-focused PE fund

Two Sigma Ventures closes third namesake fund on $288M

THE DAILY BENCHMARK

2010 Vintage US PE Funds

Median IRR

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

18.75%

1.52x
Median TVPI

Select top performers

Lone Star Fund VII

Ticonderoga KI

CIVC Partners Fund IV

**IRR: net of fees*

37 Funds in Benchmark »

Check out the latest version of **PitchBook Benchmarks**

PEOPLE

Tesh Gor joins Warburg Pincus as executive-in-residence

Private equity firm Warburg Pincus has appointed Tesh Gor as an executive-in-residence for its industrials and business services group, where he will focus on investments in the specialty chemicals arena. Gor most recently worked at chemicals provider Lubrizol as corporate vice president of strategy and business development.

View details

Ironspring adds managing partner

Ironspring, an Austin-based venture firm that invests in the digital industrial sector, has hired Ty Findley as a managing partner. Findley was most recently a vice president focused on early-stage and growth investments at Pritzker Group Venture Capital, and before that he was a senior associate at GE Ventures.

View details

View investment »

VC DEALS

Lab-grown meat startup raises $161M

SoftBank, Norwest and Temasek have led a $161 million Series B for Memphis Meats, a developer of meat that's grown from animal cells. Threshold Ventures, Future Ventures, CPT Capital and others also participated. The startup described the funding as the largest round raised by a cell-based meat company to date. Based in Berkeley, Calif., Memphis Meats will use the capital in part to construct a pilot production facility.

Additional Investors:
Cargill, Fifty Years, Finistere Ventures, Kimbal Musk, Richard Branson, Tyson Foods, Bill Gates

View

View 14 competitors »

round

Sysdig picks up $70M Series E

Sysdig, a provider of security and monitoring services for container-based applications, has raised $70 million in a round led by Insight Partners. The new funding values the San Francisco-based startup at $480 million, according to a PitchBook estimate. Existing investors Bain Capital Ventures and Accel also participated in the funding.

Additional Investors:
Glynn Capital, Goldman Sachs

View round

View 132 competitors »

Goldman Sachs leads $70M Series C for LumApps

LumApps, the provider of a collaborative intranet platform that connects employees, has received a $70 million investment led by Goldman Sachs. Based in France, the company plans to use the funding in part to expand in locations such as Canada, Germany and the Asia-Pacific. LumApps has raised around $100 million in total VC funding, including a $24 million Series B in April.

Additional Investors:
Bpifrance, Famille C, Idinvest Partners, Iris Capital

View round

View 63 competitors »

Tech luminaries back corporate email startup with $59M

Front, the developer of a workplace email platform, has raised a $59 million Series C co-led by several tech executives including Atlassian co-founder and co-CEO Mike Cannon-Brookes, Qualtrics co-founder and CEO Ryan Smith and Zoom CEO Eric Yuan. The company was founded in 2013 and is based in San Francisco; it raised $66 million in 2017, which valued it at $200 million, according to a PitchBook estimate. Front's customers include Stripe, Shopify and MailChimp.

Additional Investors:
Sequoia, Initialized Capital, Anthos Capital

View round

View 17 competitors »

Bear Robotics gobbles up $32M

California-based Bear Robotics has secured a $32 million Series A led by SoftBank. Founded in 2017, the company is developing a robot that fills the role of a server, delivering food and dishes to and from restaurant kitchens. SoftBank is no stranger to restaurant tech—in 2018, the firm reportedly invested $375 million in Zume, which is believed to have laid off half its workforce and shut down its pizza-making robot business earlier this month.

View round

View similar company »

Outlier pockets $22.1M

Emergence has led a $22.1 million Series B for Outlier, the developer of an automated business analytics platform. Founded in 2017, the startup announced a partnership with In-Q-Tel in May that's designed to support US government agencies. Outlier was valued at more than $26 million in 2018, according to a PitchBook estimate.

Additional Investors:
Capital One Growth Ventures, Ridge Ventures, 11.2 Capital, First Round Capital, Homebrew, Susa Ventures, SV Angel

View round

View 52 competitors »

PE DEALS

Stone Point group snags Duff & Phelps for $4.2B

A consortium led by Stone Point Capital and Further Global has agreed to acquire New York-based financial advisory firm Duff & Phelps from Permira for $4.2 billion. Duff & Phelps consults with corporate clients, private equity firms and others on a range of subjects, including valuation, corporate finance, cybersecurity and compliance. Permira acquired the firm for $1.75 billion in 2018 from The Carlyle Group, Neuberger Berman and others.

View deal View 9 competitors »

HLD Europe eyes aerospace company

HLD Europe has engaged in exclusive talks to acquire Exxelia, a French provider of components from the aerospace and defense industries, from IK Investment Partners, with Reuters reporting the deal could value the business at €500 million (about $554 million). IK Investment has owned a majority stake in the Exxelia since 2014.

View deal View similar company »

Summit gives growth backing to eClinical Solutions

Growth firm Summit Partners has made a minority investment in eClinical Solutions, a Mansfield, Mass.-based provider of cloud-based enterprise software and data services for the life sciences industry. Summit principal Jesse Lane has joined the company's board of directors.

View deal View 12 competitors »

Bookend Capital backs Luxury Brands with $50M

Bookend Capital Partners has invested $50 million for a minority stake in Luxury Brand Partners, a Miami-based developer of beauty products. Founded by TSG

Consumer Partners veteran Alexander Panos, Bookend Capital invests in branded product and services companies in the consumer and industrial markets. Panos will join Luxury Brand's board of directors.

View deal

View similar company »

EXITS

Eurazeo prepares for $2.2B Planet sale

Eurazeo has hired Citigroup and Evercore to sell Irish payments company Planet in a deal that could value the business at up to €2 billion (about $2.2 billion), according to Reuters. Eurazeo acquired Planet (fka Fintrax) from Exponent Private Equity for an estimated €550 million valuation in 2015.

View details

View 57 competitors »

FUNDRAISING

Canapi scores $545M for fintech funds

Canapi Ventures has raised $545 million for its first venture capital funds. The vehicles will be used to back early- and growth-stage fintech startups. Canapi's first investment was Built Technologies, a developer of software for the construction-lending industry that it backed in 2019. The firm was founded in 2018.

View fund

View 1 investments »

BlackRock seeks $500M for climate-focused PE fund

BlackRock has announced plans to raise a private equity fund of at least $500 million dedicated to investing in the climate infrastructure industry as part of the Climate Finance Partnership, which was created alongside Hewlett and Grantham charitable foundations, France and Germany. The fund will focus on investing in a range of renewable energy solutions and electric transportation and mobility services in Southeast Asia, Latin America and Africa.

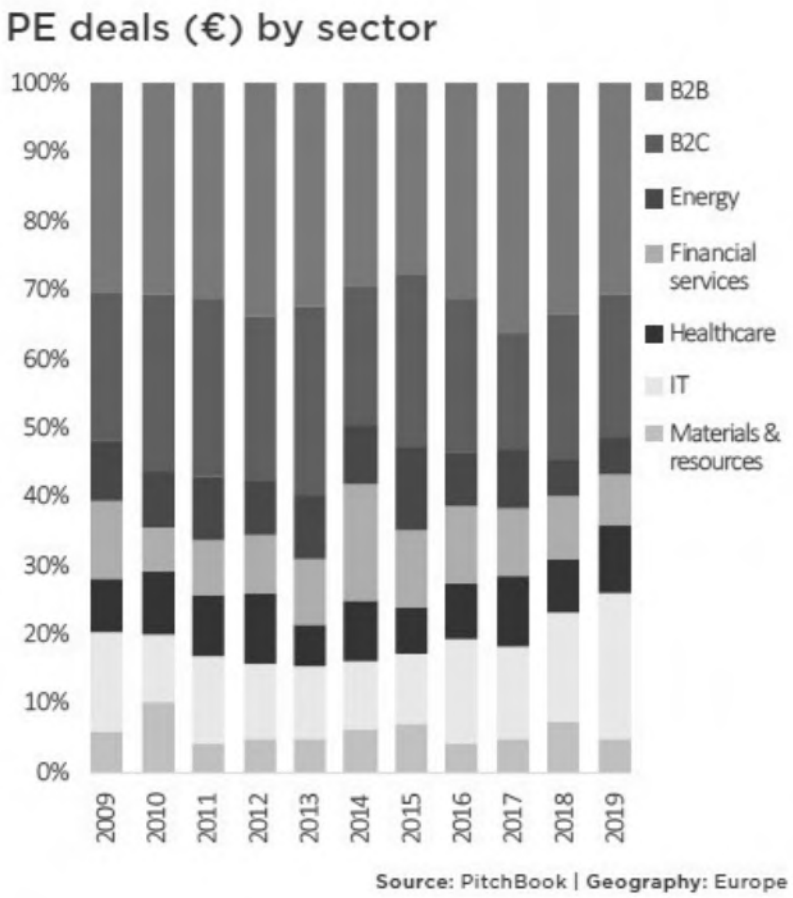
View details

View 257 investments »

Two Sigma Ventures closes third namesake fund on $288M

Two Sigma Ventures, an early-stage affiliate of New York-based hedge fund Two Sigma, has closed its third investment vehicle on $288 million. Two Sigma Ventures was founded in 2012; its portfolio includes NewtonX, the developer of an AI-based search engine.

CHART OF THE DAY



"The healthcare subsectors of telehealth, provider services and payor/payee services could be ones to watch in 2020. ... The subsector of healthcare IT is also primed for heightened capital inflows in the years ahead. Technologies used by hospitals, patients and general practitioners are often mission critical and used daily to keep healthcare companies running."

Source: **PitchBook's 2019 Annual European PE Breakdown**

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Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] VC deal value spikes 33% in Europe

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Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2020 10:59:38 AM (UTC+00:00) Monrovia, Reykjavik
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The Daily Pitch: VC, PE and M&A

January 30, 2020
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TODAY'S TOP STORIES

How do VC returns vary by sector?

VC firms usually expect different types of returns across different investment stages. The same is true across different sectors and verticals, particularly as more investors begin specializing in select industries.

But just how significant is the range of potential returns? Our **most recent analyst note** is the second in a series examining returns for investors at different venture stages. This time, our analysts explore VC returns in the technology and life sciences sectors and examine the differing return profiles in specific verticals like fintech and cybersecurity. Some key findings:

- Fintech, artificial intelligence and machine learning startups post robust returns compared to the broader tech industry
- Life sciences deals outperform other sectors on an adjusted basis, despite a risky reputation
- Of the industry slices analyzed, only cybersecurity deals resulted in negative adjusted return metrics

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Who's in the newsletter today?

People

Joe Lawler
Pedro Guimaraes
Warren Buffett

Investors

A.Capital Ventures
AngelList
Atlantica Ventures
Barclays
BlackRock
Bureau Veritas
Burst Capital
CMFG Ventures
Canvas Ventures
CenterOak Partners
Cerberus Capital Management
Correlation Ventures
DCVC
Eniac Ventures
Felicis Ventures
Firebolt Ventures
FullSpeed Automotive
Future Shape
HSBC

Share:

Barstool Sports valued at $450M in latest win for sports media

(Sam Greenwood/Getty Images Sport)

The digital media landscape as a whole had become increasingly bleak over the past few years, with the sports media sector as no exception.

But with Penn National Gaming's agreement Wednesday to back Barstool Sports, there may be more reason for optimism:

read more

Share:

European VCs spent more in 2019 than ever before

IVP
Jason Calacanis
KKR
Leonardo
Lynwood AG
Meritech Capital
Mitsui Kinzoku SBI Material Innovation Fund
Mubadala Capital
Next47
NextView Ventures
Northwestern Mutual Future Ventures
Ola
Prime Movers Lab
Project A
Providence Equity Partners
RBS
Securian Ventures
Sequoia
SoftBank
The Carlyle Group
Thiel Capital
Toyota Tsusho
Uber
Unusual Ventures
Vestar Capital Partners
Wind Point Partners
Y Combinator

Companies

Abu Dhabi National Oil
Addison Lee
Advano
American LubeFast
Attentive

Thanks to huge investments in startups such as FlixMobility, N26 and Klarna, venture capital deal value in Europe topped €30 billion last year for the first time. On a year-over-year basis, deal value climbed 33%, the largest annual leap since 2015.

What's behind the boom? Record levels of corporate venture participation are one factor. Another is increased interest in Europe from US investors. Our **2019 Annual European Venture Report** has the full details, as well as data and analysis on a host of other European VC storylines, including:

- A decade-high in fundraising value paired with a decade-low in fund count
- Record levels of investment in Germany
- A group of potential unicorn exits in 2020

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Share:

Carlyle-backed Addison Lee agrees to bank rescue

Berkshire Hathaway
Gabi
Helios & Matheson
Hippo
Kloud.io
Kobo360
Kopter Group
L Brands
Lee Enterprises
Lemonade
Lori Systems
Momentus
MoviePass
Oyo
PolySpectra
Safeco
Sendy
The Studio Director
Urban Outfitters
Verkada
Victoria's Secret

European taxi giant Addison Lee has agreed to a rescue deal that will give control of the UK company to its creditors, according to The Telegraph. Lenders will reportedly pump £45 million (about $59 million) in new capital into the struggling business, effectively wiping out The Carlyle Group's investment.

Eight banks, including Barclays, HSBC and RBS, have also reportedly agreed to refinance £100 million worth of loans for Addison Lee, which the company will have seven years to pay back.

Carlyle acquired the business for about £300 million in 2013 and is understood to have since injected an additional £100 million into it. The firm had been seeking a buyer for Addison Lee before the taxi company was due to repay £230 million in debt, the Financial Times reported in October. Cerberus Capital Management, Uber and Ola were all rumored to be potential bidders at one point.

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Recommended Reads

In eastern North Carolina and countless other corners of the US, communities are finding out what life is like when local journalism disappears. [The New Yorker]

After reaching the brink of disaster in the wake of the

financial crisis, Brian Moynihan has helped orchestrate a major turnaround at Bank of America—with a little help from Warren Buffett. [Fortune]

Researchers battling against illegal fishing boats and other vessels trying to escape electronic attention have a new ally: albatrosses. [The New York Times]

Beyond Meat is deepening its ties to KFC. Still, it's far from a sure thing that plant-based meats will be a hit in fast food. [TechCrunch]

An ongoing boom in the popularity of private credit funds is raising questions about whether institutional investors are setting themselves up for disaster. [Institutional Investor]

Some people love sports, or food, or music, or their work. But for Samanth Subramanian and millions of knowledge-obsessives like him, there's no pastime that can compete with a quiz. [The Guardian]

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People

Wind Point names new MD

Vestar Capital adds senior adviser

VC Deals

Verkada hits $1.6B valuation

Attentive pockets $70M for mobile messaging

Insurtech startup brings in $27M

African delivery startup Sendy raises $20M

Advano picks up $18.5M Series A

Kloud.io grabs $4M seed round

PE Deals

BlackRock, KKR eye Abu Dhabi pipeline

Providence Equity buys into studio software

CenterOak backs auto service add-on

Portfolio Companies

Oyo plans more layoffs

MoviePass owner to liquidate

Fundraising

Prime Movers Lab raises $100M fund

Corporate M&A

Victoria's Secret could sell

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THE DAILY BENCHMARK

2007 Vintage Global Secondaries Funds

Median IRR

8.00%

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

8.93%

1.40x

Median TVPI

Select top performers

Vintage Ventures III

W Capital Partners Fund II

Pomona Capital VII

**IRR: net of fees*

10 Funds in Benchmark »

Check out the latest version of **PitchBook Benchmarks**

PEOPLE

Wind Point names new MD

Wind Point Partners has promoted Joe Lawler to managing director. Lawler has worked at the Chicago-based private equity firm since 2009, with a focus on the food and consumer products sectors.

View details

Vestar Capital adds senior adviser

Vestar Capital Partners has hired Pedro Guimaraes as a senior adviser focused on the testing, inspection and certification sector. Guimaraes was previously CEO of the North American operating group at Bureau Veritas, an international provider of testing, inspection and certification services.

View details

VC DEALS

Verkada hits $1.6B valuation

Verkada, a developer of security cameras and related software for businesses, has raised an $80 million Series C at a $1.6 billion valuation. Investors including Sequoia and Felicis Ventures participated in the funding, which comes less than a year after the company raised $50 million at a $550 million valuation. Verkada plans to use the new capital in part to hire engineers and expand its global footprint.

Additional Investors:
Meritech Capital, Next47

View round

View 5 competitors »

Attentive pockets $70M for mobile messaging

Sequoia and IVP have co-led a $70 million Series C for Attentive, the developer of a mobile messaging platform that helps businesses market their products. The New York-based company raised $40 million at a $300 million valuation in August, according to PitchBook. Attentive has more than 750 customers, including Coach and Urban Outfitters.

Additional Investors:
Eniac Ventures, NextView Ventures

View round

View 47 competitors »

Insurtech startup brings in $27M

Insurtech startup Gabi has reportedly raised a $27 million Series B led by Mubadala Capital, with participation from Canvas Ventures, Correlation Ventures and others. The San Francisco-based business is the developer of a platform that allows users to compare home and car insurance rates from more than 40 insurance carriers, including Hippo, Lemonade and Safeco. Founded in 2016, Gabi was valued at $23.5 million in 2018, according to PitchBook.

Additional Investors:
A.Capital Ventures, CMFG Ventures, Northwestern Mutual Future Ventures, Project A, Securian Ventures, Burst Capital, AngelList

View round

View 12 competitors »

African delivery startup Sendy raises $20M

Atlantica Ventures has reportedly led a $20 million Series B for Sendy, a Kenya-based logistics startup that helps ecommerce companies and other businesses move goods. Toyota Tsusho also joined the round. The funding follows recent multimillion-dollar rounds for African logistics companies Kobo360 and Lori Systems.

View round

View 26 competitors »

Advano picks up $18.5M Series A

Advano, a developer of lithium-ion batteries with high energy density, has emerged from stealth with an $18.5 million round co-led by Mitsui Kinzoku SBI Material Innovation Fund, Future Shape and PeopleFund. Founded in 2016 and based in New Orleans, Advano is working to extend the life of rechargeable batteries used in consumer electronics and electric vehicles.

Additional Investors:
DCVC, Thiel Capital, Y Combinator

View round

View similar company »

Kloud.io grabs $4M seed round

Kloud.io, a San Jose-based provider of robotic process automation software for gathering data, has raised $4 million in seed capital led by Unusual Ventures. Jason

Calacanis and Firebolt Ventures also participated in the round.

View round

View 4 competitors »

Share:

PE DEALS

BlackRock, KKR eye Abu Dhabi pipeline

BlackRock and KKR are among several private investors mulling offers for a minority stake in a gas pipeline unit owned by state-controlled Abu Dhabi National Oil, according to Bloomberg. A deal could reportedly give the UAE-based division an enterprise value of up to $15 billion, with initial bids expected by mid-February.

View details

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Providence Equity buys into studio software

Providence Equity Partners has purchased The Studio Director, a Denver-based creator of management

software for dance studios, martial arts studios and other children's activity centers. Studios use the company's software to process payments, schedule classes, manage events and more.

View deal View similar company »

CenterOak backs auto service add-on

FullSpeed Automotive has purchased American LubeFast, a Georgia-based provider of quick lube services that operates 50 locations in the US Southeast. FullSpeed, a franchisor and operator of auto service centers, changed its name from Grease Monkey International in 2017 and was acquired by CenterOak Partners later that year. The company plans to convert American LubeFast to the Grease Monkey brand.

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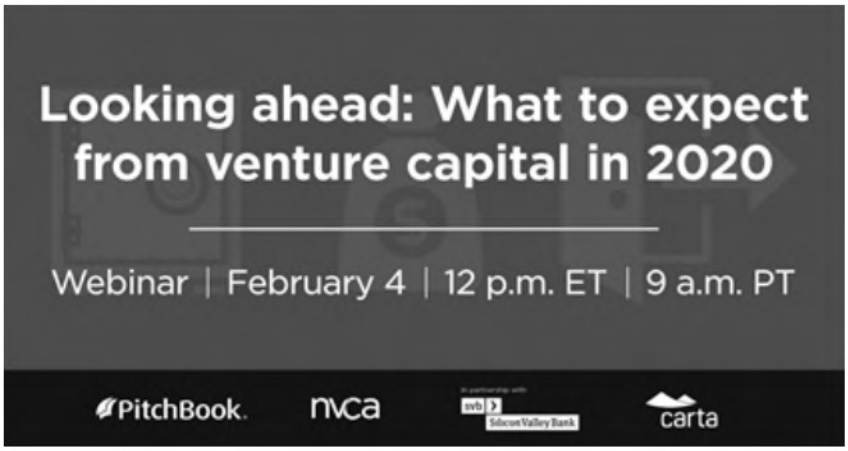

Join PitchBook and NVCA for a discussion of the current state of US venture capital. Featuring industry experts from Silicon Valley Bank and Carta, the webinar will explore key trends highlighted in the Q4 2019 PitchBook-NVCA Venture Monitor, including the latest in fundraising, deal flow and exit activity.

The panel will also look at what lies ahead for venture capital, including the competitive environment and other market considerations. The webinar will be held next Tuesday at 12 p.m. ET/9 a.m. PT.

Register now

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PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

Oyo plans more layoffs

SoftBank-backed hotel operator Oyo plans to shed a number of sales personnel and sales support staff in the US, according to Business Insider. The move comes a few weeks after Bloomberg reported that the company had laid off some 1,800 people across India and China.

View details

View 32 competitors »

MoviePass owner to liquidate

MoviePass owner Helios & Matheson has filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy and will liquidate. MoviePass offered unlimited movie theater screenings to

customers who paid just under $10 per month. Its owner formally shut down the service in September.

View details

View 22 competitors »

FUNDRAISING

Prime Movers Lab raises $100M fund

Jackson, Wyo.-based Prime Movers Lab has brought in some $100 million for its maiden early-stage vehicle. The firm plans to invest in startups across the energy, transportation, infrastructure and related sectors. Prime Movers Lab has already deployed the fund to back space transportation provider Momentus and 3D printing company PolySpectra, among others.

View fund

View 14 investments »

CORPORATE M&A

Victoria's Secret could sell

The longtime CEO of Victoria's Secret, Leslie Wexner, is considering strategic alternatives for the lingerie chain and may step down from his chief role, according to The Wall Street Journal. Although shares of Victoria's Secret's parent company L Brands have dropped precipitously since a 2015 peak when they were trading at nearly $100 each, they jumped around 13% Wednesday to close at $23.22 apiece.

View details

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Berkshire Hathaway to dump newspapers for $140M

Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway has agreed to sell its portfolio of more than 30 daily newspapers and dozens of other weekly publications to newspaper conglomerate Lee Enterprises for $140 million in cash. Berkshire Hathaway will also provide a $576 million loan to Lee to help the company pay for the takeover and refinance some $400 million in existing debt. The assets include daily newspapers in 10 states in the US.

View details

View 1 competitors »

Italy's Leonardo to absorb Kopter Group

Italian aerospace company Leonardo has agreed to acquire 100% of Swiss helicopter designer Kopter Group from Lynwood AG for $185 million, plus potential future earnouts. Kopter, which has developed a new single-engine helicopter called the SH09, will operate as an autonomous entity within Leonardo's existing helicopter division.

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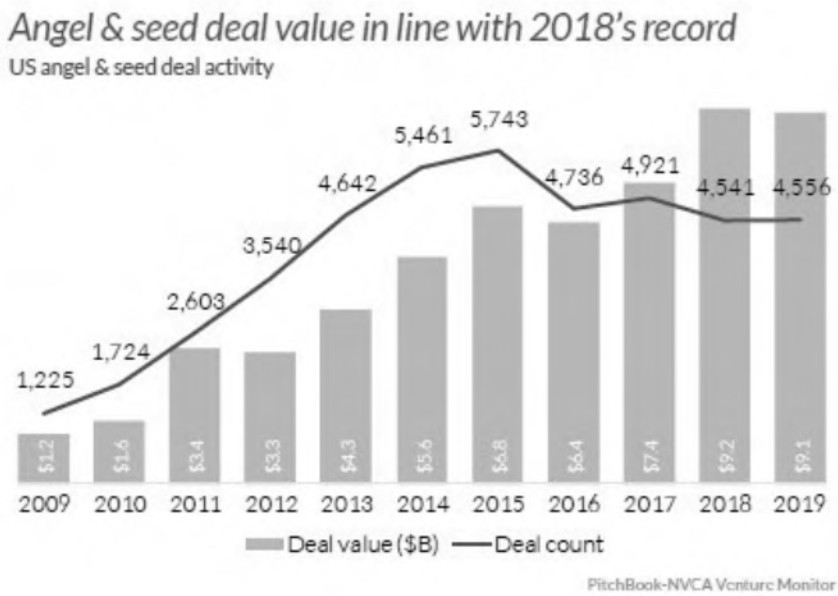
CHART OF THE DAY



"The angel & seed stage saw another strong quarter in 2019, logging $2.1 billion across 981 deals in Q4. On an annual basis, it recorded $9.1 billion in deal value, in line with the prior year's record; count, on the other hand, plateaued with 4,556 deals closed. Deal reporting at this stage tends to be delayed; we have marked roughly $1.7 billion in additional 2018 angel & seed funding since the Q4 2018 PitchBook-NVCA Venture Monitor and would not be surprised to see a similar lift in 2019."

Source: **PitchBook-NVCA Q4 2019 Venture Monitor**

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From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Fri, 31 Jan 2020 12:16:12 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Apollo, Blackstone reveal Q4 earnings

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 12:14:53 PM (UTC+00:00) Monrovia, Reykjavik
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Apollo, Blackstone reveal Q4 earnings

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The Daily Pitch: VC, PE and M&A

January 31, 2020
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TODAY'S TOP STORIES

Apollo stock slumps despite return to Q4 profitability

Apollo Global Management chairman and founder Leon Black (left), w wife, Debra Black, and businessman Robert Tuttle in 2017. (Dia Dipasupil/Getty Images)

Apollo Global Management reported a major year-over-year increase in income, and its distributable earnings easily outstripped consensus analyst forecasts.

But Apollo's share price still closed down almost 9% Thursday, a signal that Wall Street had higher hopes for the publicly traded PE firm's Q4 earnings report after its stock nearly doubled in value during 2018:

read more

Share:

One Medical prices at low end of IPO range

Who's in the newsletter today?

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8VC

AEA Investors

AXA Venture Partners

Angular Ventures

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Blackstone

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DST Global

Elliott Management

Erie Street Capital

Freeman Spogli

GV

Google

Greenoaks Capital

Hewlett Packard Enterprise

Insight Partners

Intermediate Capital Group

Jackson Square Ventures

Joe Lonsdale

Courtesy of One Medical

Primary care startup One Medical has priced its IPO at the bottom of its target range, selling 17.5 million shares at $14 apiece and raising $245 million in the process. The offering gives the company an initial market cap of roughly $1.7 billion; it was valued at $1.5 billion in 2018.

One Medical, which pairs technology with a network of primary care clinics, is the latest unprofitable unicorn to test the public markets. The stock will debut today on the Nasdaq under the ticker ONEM.

The San Francisco startup has raised more than $500 million from investors including The Carlyle Group (26.8% pre-IPO stake), Benchmark (13.0%) and Oak Investment Partners (11.4%). Google is a major customer—accounting for a tenth of One Medical's revenue—and holds a 5.9% stake through its venture arm GV.

J.P. Morgan Securities and Morgan Stanley are the joint book-running managers of the offering.

KKR
Kennet Partners
Lakeview Capital
Lightspeed
MassMutual Ventures
Morgan Stanley Expansion Capital
Norwest Venture Partners
Oak Investment Partners
Oxx
Revolution Ventures
Ribbit Capital
Sapphire Ventures
Silvertech Ventures
SoftBank
Susa Ventures
The Carlyle Group
Thoma Bravo
Transamerica Ventures
Yamasa

Companies

Affirm
Alto Pharmacy
Aquant
Boom Supersonic
Brex
Codility
Compuware
Credit Karma
Epsilon
Galco Industrial Electronics
Indio
Microsoft
Nokian
One Medical

Share:

A record $2.9B in VC invested in Florida last year

SPONSORED

The Florida venture ecosystem experienced a record 2019 in terms of VC invested, with startups hauling in $2.9 billion in aggregate. Although that tally is skewed by mega-deals by the likes of Magic Leap, the volume of financings also persisted at a historically robust rate, capping off a strong multiyear stretch for venture in the state.

In its 2019 Florida Venture Report, the Florida Venture Forum draws on multiple PitchBook datasets, such as financings by metro and median deal sizes, to uncover key trends shaping the state's venture scene.

Read more

Share:

Blackstone sees slight stock dip despite posting big profits in Q4

Blackstone has announced Q4 profits of $483.1 million, or 71 cents per share, marking a positive turn after the buyout juggernaut posted a $10.9 million loss, or 2 cents per share, in the same period a year earlier, according to the firm's latest earnings report.

OpsRamp
Palantir
Performance Improvement Partners
Pirelli
Policygenius
Rakuten
Robinhood
Slack
The Bouqs
The Mochi Ice Cream Co.
Wolters Kluwer

Service Providers

J.P. Morgan Securities
Morgan Stanley

Blackstone also generated Q4 distributable earnings—the amount available to pay shareholders—of $914 million, or 72 cents per share, up from $722.1 million, or 57 cents per share, in Q4 2018.

Blackstone's AUM soared 21% YoY to hit a firm-record $571.1 billion by the end of 2019, pushing it closer to its reported goal of managing $1 trillion by 2026. That was aided in large part by the firm scoring $26 billion in capital inflows for Q4, pushing its annual total capital inflows to $134.4 billion.

Despite the positive developments, Blackstone's stock closed Thursday down 2.46% at $61.11 per share, slightly paring gains after it nearly doubled over the past year thanks in large part to the firm's conversion from a partnership to a C-Corporation in July.

Related read: **Stephen Schwarzman reveals Blackstone's $26B fund in new book**

Share:

Private equity has yet to strike a chord in music production

(Dan Kitwood/Getty Images News)

This week, TPG Growth exited its stake in Fender Musical Instruments, the maker of legendary electric guitars such as the Stratocaster.

Private equity and rock 'n' roll ... it's an unexpected pairing that's slowly seeing a rise in deal flow. Why aren't there more PE deals in the music production space?

read more

Share:

KKR teams with VC firms on $100M insurtech round

Policygenius, a New York-based online insurance startup founded in 2014, has secured a $100 million Series D led by private equity behemoth KKR. Existing investors including Norwest Venture Partners, Revolution Ventures, Susa Ventures, AXA

Venture Partners, MassMutual Ventures and Transamerica Ventures also supported the fundraise.

KKR's investment hails from its second Next Generation Technology Growth Fund, which closed on $2.2 billion earlier this month. It's dedicated to growth equity tech deals that can take the form of either minority or majority stakes.

The deal comes hot on the heels of a record-breaking year for the insurtech industry. Companies in the space amassed nearly $4.3 billion in 2019, according to PitchBook data—a major jump from the $2.7 billion raised the year prior.

Share:

Airbnb-inspired startup Neighbor raises $10M to crack self-storage puzzle

(Maskot/Maskot/Getty Images)

More than a decade after Airbnb was founded, startups are still testing the sharing economy model.

The latest entrant, Neighbor, which develops a peer-to-peer self-storage platform, has announced a $10 million round.

Backed by a crew of Silicon Valley heavyweights, Neighbor is setting out to disrupt the self-storage industry—one spare garage or basement at a time:

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PE firms aren't keeping portfolio companies as long as they used to

Sports writing startup hits $500M valuation

Big tech keeps up acquisitions amid antitrust probes

WeWork's smaller rivals are flashing warning lights

Exit value tops $256B as 2019 closes a record-setting decade in US VC [datagraphic]

Healthcare leaders brace for short-term volatility in election year

Thoma Bravo's big year of dealmaking, fundraising sets up for even bigger 2020

Platinum Equity becomes latest PE heavyweight to raise $10B fund

VC's decade in data: How the 2010s reshaped a market

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In a private equity-fueled battle for a piece of Thyssenkrupp's enormous elevator unit, firms such as The Carlyle Group and CVC Capital Partners are taking different tacks. [Bloomberg]

Macho attitudes and misogyny have long been a serious issue in the venture capital industry. Does Spain in particular have a problem? [Sifted]

There was a time when American eaters feared for their health if they ate MSG. But now, a nation has learned to stop worrying and love the umami. [The Wall Street Journal]

A tragedy for Christine Cheers and her family turned into a life-saving miracle for Mike Cohen. More than 18 months and a 1,426-mile bike ride later, their paths crossed again. [Bicycling]

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SoftBank backs Alto Pharmacy

Aquant picks up $30M

OpsRamp brings in $37.5M

Flower delivery startup blooms with $30M

Codility secures $22M Series A

PE Deals

Lakeview strikes deal for mochi maker

AEA sells Galco to Freeman Spogli

Erie Street acquires IT provider PIP

Exits

Thoma Bravo hoping for $2B exit from Compuware

Fundraising

ICG pulls in $2.4B for secondaries-focused fund

8VC seeks $640M

Ribbit Capital eyes $420M for Fund VI

Corporate M&A

Elliott Management building Nokian stake

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Median IRR

9.45%

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

11.22%

1.56x
Median TVPI

Select top performers
Horsley Bridge IX
Five Points Small Buyout Strategies I
Fort Washington Private Equity Investors VI

**IRR: net of fees*

32 Funds in Benchmark »

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VC DEALS

SoftBank backs Alto Pharmacy

Alto Pharmacy (fka ScriptDash) has secured a $250 million investment led by SoftBank that values the San Francisco-based company at $600 million, according to a PitchBook estimate. Backed by investors including Greenoaks Capital, DST Global and Jackson Square Ventures, Alto Pharmacy is the developer of a digital pharmacy platform for managing prescription deliveries and other medical services.

View round

View 6 competitors »

Aquant picks up $30M

Insight Partners has led a $30 million Series B for Aquant, the developer of an AI-based intelligence platform designed to predict outcomes and manage customer experience. Lightspeed, Angular Ventures and Silvertech Ventures also participated in the funding. The New York-based company has raised $40 million in funding to date and was valued at $18.5 million in 2018, according to PitchBook.

View round

View 15 competitors »

OpsRamp brings in $37.5M

OpsRamp has raised $37.5 million in a round led by Morgan Stanley Expansion Capital, with participation from Sapphire Ventures and Hewlett Packard Enterprise. The San Jose-based startup develops software intended to manage IT operations across

hybrid infrastructures for customers including Wolters Kluwer and Epsilon. OpsRamp was valued at $85 million in 2017, according to PitchBook.

View round

View 80 competitors »

Flower delivery startup blooms with $30M

Online floral retailer The Bouqs has raised $30 million in a round led by Yamasa, according to TechCrunch. The Marina del Rey, Calif.-based company, which raised a $24 million Series C in 2017, is reportedly planning to expand its same-day delivery operations across Japan.

View round

View 9 competitors »

Codility secures $22M Series A

Codility has raised $22 million in a round co-led by Oxx and Kennet Partners. Founded in 2009, the San Francisco-based company is the developer of a recruiting platform for hiring tech professionals; its customers include Slack, Rakuten and Microsoft.

View round

View 33 competitors »

Deloitte.
What does the future hold for M&A?
Explore the 2020 M&A Trends report to learn more

PE DEALS

Lakeview strikes deal for mochi maker

Family office Lakeview Capital has acquired The Mochi Ice Cream Co., a California-based manufacturer of My/Mo Mochi Ice Cream, from Century Park Capital Partners, which originally acquired the company (fka Mikawaya) in 2015. Craig Berger will continue as company president and CEO and the rest of the management team will remain in place.

View deal View similar company »

AEA sells Galco to Freeman Spogli

Freeman Spogli has acquired Galco Industrial Electronics from AEA Investors, which had backed the Michigan-based industrial and commercial electronics company since 2014. Freeman Spogli, which has offices in Los Angeles and New York, typically invests in middle-market companies across a wide swath of consumer- and distribution-related industries.

View deal View 1 competitors »

Erie Street acquires IT provider PIP

Erie Street Capital has acquired Connecticut-based

Performance Improvement Partners, an IT consultancy founded in 2003 that supports more than 230 private equity firms. Based in Chicago, Erie Street invests in companies related to business services and media.

View deal

View similar company »

EXITS

Thoma Bravo hoping for $2B exit from Compuware

Thoma Bravo has brought on a financial adviser to explore a sale of Compuware that could value the Detroit-based mainframe software manufacturer at roughly $2 billion including debt, according to Bloomberg. Thoma Bravo has backed the business since taking it private in 2014 for roughly $2.4 billion.

View details

View 39 competitors »

FUNDRAISING

ICG pulls in $2.4B for secondaries-focused fund

Intermediate Capital Group has closed its third strategic equity fund on $2.4 billion, exceeding a $1.6 billion target and a 2017 predecessor that brought in $1.1 billion. Established in 2014, ICG's strategic equity segment targets GP-led secondary

transactions, focusing mostly on fund restructurings.

View fund

View 635 investments »

8VC seeks $640M

8VC is looking to raise $640 million for its third namesake vehicle, according to an SEC filing. The San Francisco-based firm was created by Palantir co-founder Joe Lonsdale in 2015; its portfolio includes aerospace company Boom Supersonic and insurance software developer Indio.

View fund

View 146 investments »

Ribbit Capital eyes $420M for Fund VI

Early-stage investor Ribbit Capital has set a $420 million target for its sixth flagship fund, according to an SEC filing. The Palo Alto-based firm targets fintech companies in the US, Canada, South Africa, Brazil and several other countries; its portfolio includes Robinhood, Affirm, Brex and Credit Karma.

View fund

View 65 investments »

CORPORATE M&A

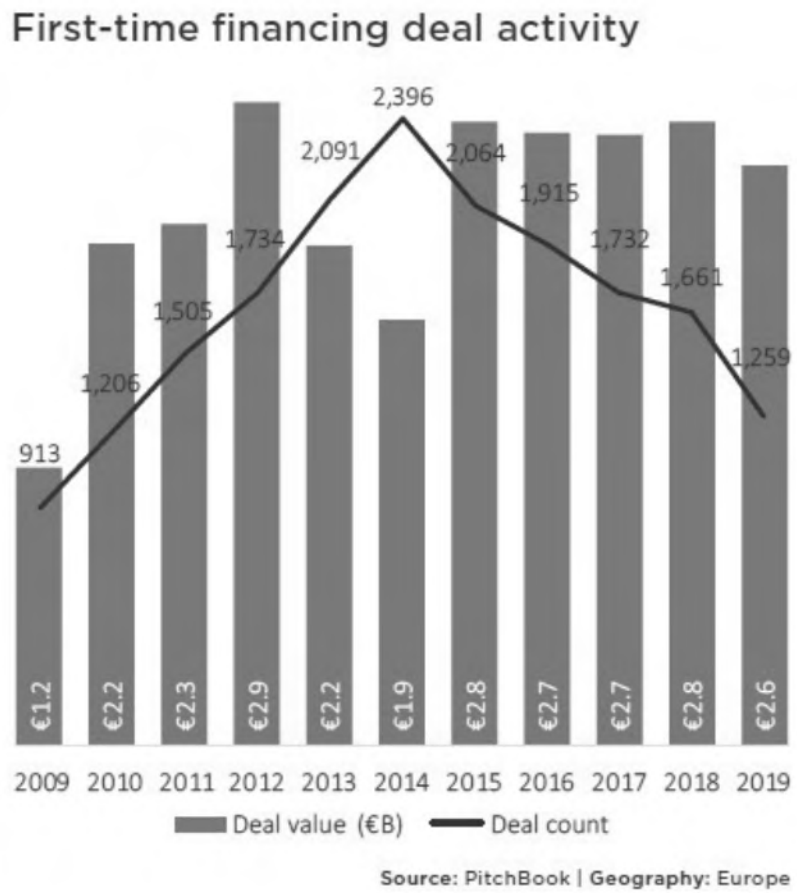
Elliott Management building Nokian stake

Activist investor Elliott Management has built a position in Nokian, a Finnish tiremaker, according to Bloomberg. Earlier this month, Nokian rebuffed reports that Italian rival Pirelli was looking to acquire it.

View details

View 14 competitors »

CHART OF THE DAY



"Capital within first-time financings dipped slightly to €2.6 billion in 2019, having exhibited minor

fluctuations in the preceding four years. However, the quantity of these rounds has halved from 2014, having declined each year since, which means these initial rounds have become more sizable in Europe."

Source: **PitchBook's 2019 Annual European Venture Report**

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Sent: Wed, 4 Mar 2020 11:11:36 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Next CVC Capital fund could top $20B

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Wednesday, March 4, 2020 6:09:42 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Next CVC Capital fund could top $20B

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TODAY'S TOP STORIES

Coronavirus is causing disruption across the tech industry

The Google I/O conference, seen here in 2019, typically draws aro 5,000 attendees. (Justin Sullivan/Getty Images News)

The widening coronavirus epidemic is rattling tech companies large and small, prompting some to curb travel, pull out of major conferences and impose work-from-home orders to protect employees from infection.

- Already Google has canceled this year's I/O developers event, which was scheduled for May 12-14 in Mountain View, Calif. The news comes on the heels of the tech giant scrapping its Cloud Next conference in San Francisco that was set to run April 6-8.

- Additionally, Microsoft called off its MVP Global Summit that was expected to run March 16-19, joining a host of other tech companies that have dropped major events. Microsoft and Google will reportedly host digital events instead.

- Earlier this week, Twitter made it mandatory

Who's in the newsletter today?

People

Alexa von Tobel
Chris Brown
Jack Dorsey
Patrick Donegan
Usain Bolt

for staff in Japan, Hong Kong and South Korea to work from home, and urged other employees to do the same. The company said it was barring workers from nonessential business travel and events as well. It also became one of several tech giants to drop out of the massive South by Southwest tech and music festival set for later this month in Austin.

- Facebook, Intel and TikTok have also pulled out of SXSW. Twitter's embattled CEO, Jack Dorsey, had been scheduled to speak at the event.

- In February, Mobile World Congress Barcelona, one of the largest gatherings in the telecom industry, was scrapped after several large companies said they were staying away because of the epidemic.

Share:

CVC Capital could collect $22B for first fund

Investors

AT&T
BC Partners
Bregal Sagemount
CVC Capital Partners
Clayton, Dubilier & Rice
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Erie Street
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First Round Capital
Francisco Partners
Goldcrest Capital
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Twitter

Companies

Bolt Mobility
Brooklinen
Cole Haan
Facebook
Firstlight Media
GFL Environmental
Gerson Lehrman

(Iryna Ustenko/iStock/Getty Images Plus)

The eye-popping buyout funds keep coming.

The latest example is from CVC Capital Partners, which aims to raise between €17 billion and €20 billion (about $19 billion to $22 billion) for its eighth flagship fund, according to Reuters. CVC, which is based in Luxembourg, uses its flagship fund series to invest across North America and Europe, typically targeting companies worth more than €500 million. The firm closed its previous vehicle in the series on €16 billion in 2017.

Last year, investors around the globe raised $474.1 billion worth of new private equity funds, a new annual high, according to PitchBook's **2019 Annual Private Fund Strategies Report**. And the bulk of that money came from mega-funds like those raised by CVC Capital. During each of the past two years, more than half of all capital collected for PE vehicles was tied up in funds with $5 billion or more in commitments, the highest rates on record.

Group
HP
Hitachi Metals
Huntsworth
KPS Capital Partners
Performance Improvement Partners
Pliant Therapeutics
Quickplay
Smith Technologies
Sourcegraph
TikTok
Warner Music
Waupaca Foundry
Xerox

Share:

Despite the WeWork debacle, co-working still works for investors

The **latest collaboration** between PitchBook and Morningstar analysts asks whether co-working has a future after WeWork's dramatic fall. By delving into publicly traded competitors, privately held startups and how the practice has fared during past recessions, our analysts offer their insights on this oft-misunderstood sector. This report also forecasts demand for such spaces and the effect on economic moats:

read the executive summary

Share:

GFL stock slumps after $1.4B PE-backed IPO

Shares of Canada's GFL Environmental closed their first day of trading on the NYSE down nearly 12%, the latest sign of investor pessimism about the the PE-backed waste management company.

GFL priced its IPO late Monday night at $19 per share, down from a target range of $20 to $21. The offering raised about $1.4 billion. In November, GFL withdrew prior plans for an IPO after investors failed to meet the company's pricing expectations. Back then, GFL hoped to raised more than $2.4 billion and to price its shares somewhere between $20 and $24 apiece.

Known for its bright green trucks, GFL provides solid waste management services to more than 4 million households, plus other liquid waste management and infrastructure offerings. An investor group led by BC Partners and the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan acquired the Ontario-based company in 2018 at an enterprise value of nearly $5.13 billion.

Though GFL completed its public offering, other recent high-profile debuts have been sidelined amid market chaos driven by the coronavirus. Reports emerged this week that both Cole Haan and Warner Music have put their IPO plans on hold.

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Recommended Reads

Americans are consuming more yogurt, cheese and milk than they have in more than half a century. So why are the nation's dairy farms disappearing? [Bloomberg]

Astronauts aren't the superstars they used to be. But if our new era of space exploration ever does find its answer to Neil Armstrong, it might be someone with a well-curated Instagram account. [The Atlantic]

With no end in sight to a nationwide slowdown driven by the coronavirus, small businesses across China are

facing an existential threat. [The Washington Post]

When a former Bridgewater Associates executive launched her own fund, LPs flocked to hand over their money. But a messier truth lies behind the hedge fund fairytale. [Institutional Investor]

Gambling gets a bad rap. There might be something to be said, though, for developing a familiarity with the fickle power of luck. [The New York Times]

Behind the scenes at Shell, where a titan of the fossil fuel industry is trying to determine a path toward profit in the age of climate change. [Intelligencer]

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Erie Street elevates Patrick Donegan to executive VP

First Round's Chris Brown joins Inspired

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Pliant Therapeutics picks up $100M

Brooklinen brings home $50M

Usain Bolt's e-scooter startup valued at $100M

Sourcegraph secures $23M

PE Deals

CD&R to pay $512M for UK communications company

Highview Capital, Firstlight strike deal for Quickplay

Francisco Partners to purchase Smith Technologies

Fundraising

Bregal Sagemount brings in $1.5B

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THE DAILY BENCHMARK

2006 Vintage Global Venture Funds with more than $250M

Median IRR

3.95%

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

11.79%

1.28x
Median TVPI

Select top performers

Summit Partners Venture Capital Fund II

Thomas McNerney & Partners II

M/C Venture Partners VI

**IRR: net of fees*

22 Funds in Benchmark »

Check out the latest version of **PitchBook Benchmarks**

PEOPLE

Erie Street elevates Patrick Donegan to executive VP

Chicago-based Erie Street has promoted Patrick Donegan to executive vice president of growth and client services of portfolio company Performance Improvement Partners, which the firm acquired in January. Previously, Donegan worked at Gerson Lehrman Group.

View details

First Round's Chris Brown joins Inspired

Chris Brown has joined Inspired Capital, a New York-based early-stage firm founded by Alexa von Tobel, as principal. Brown was formerly an investor at First Round Capital.

View details

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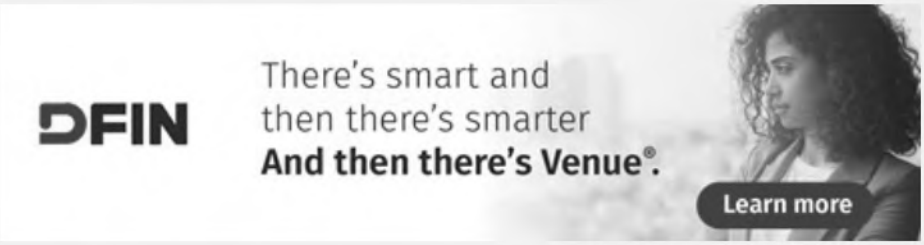

VC DEALS

Pliant Therapeutics picks up $100M

Pliant Therapeutics, which is developing therapies to treat fibrotic diseases, has raised a $100 million Series C led by Novartis. The California-based biotech company was valued at $298.2 million in January, according to PitchBook data. It plans to use the funding in part to support the clinical development of its lead drug candidate.

Select Additional Investors:
Redmile Group, Cormorant Asset Management, Farallon Capital Management

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View 15 competitors »

Brooklinen brings home $50M

Brooklinen, a luxury bedding and home goods startup, has raised $50 million in a round led by Summit Partners. The New York-based company was valued at nearly $50 million in 2017, according to PitchBook data.

View round

View 7 competitors »

Usain Bolt's e-scooter startup valued at $100M

Early-stage investor Rokk3r Fuel ExO has led a $30 million Series A investment in Bolt Mobility, valuing the electric scooter startup at $100 million. The Miami-based company builds its own scooters and operates a rental platform in select cities. Usain Bolt, who holds the world record in the 100-meter dash, is one of Bolt Mobility's co-founders.

View round

View similar company »

Sourcegraph secures $23M

Sourcegraph has raised a $23 million Series B led by Craft Ventures, with participation from existing investors including Redpoint Ventures and Goldcrest Capital. The San Francisco-based company creates universal code-search software used by other developers to navigate and explore programming code.

View round

View 14 competitors »

What's driving mid-market deal activity?
Read Transaction Trends Q1 for key insights.
Download report

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PE DEALS

CD&R to pay $512M for UK communications company

Clayton, Dubilier & Rice has agreed to acquire Huntsworth for some £400 million (about $512 million), according to reports. CD&R will reportedly pay 108 pence per share for the business—a 50% premium to its Monday closing price. Based in London, Huntsworth offers marketing and medical communications services to the healthcare industry.

View deal

View similar company »

Highview Capital, Firstlight strike deal for Quickplay

Highview Capital and Firstlight Media have agreed to acquire Quickplay from AT&T, with Quickplay and Firstlight merging as part of the deal. With operations in Toronto, San Diego and Chennai, India, Quickplay offers a platform for distributing video content to IP-connected devices.

View deal View 40 competitors »

Francisco Partners to purchase Smith Technologies

Francisco Partners has agreed to acquire Smith Technologies, a provider of pharmacy software, from JM Smith Corporation. The company will remain based in South Carolina as part of the deal.

View deal View similar company »

FUNDRAISING

Bregal Sagemount brings in $1.5B

New York-based Bregal Sagemount has closed its third flagship fund on $1.5 billion, exceeding a $1.35 billion target. Founded in 2012, Bregal typically invests between $40 million and $150 million in a range of sectors including software, digital infrastructure and healthcare IT. The firm closed its second flagship fund on $960 million in 2017.

View fund View 160 investments »

Russian VC lands $650M for new fund

Moscow-based RTP Global has launched a $650 million fund to back early-stage tech companies. The vehicle will target investments across Europe, North

America, India and Southeast Asia. Initial investment sizes will typically range from $2 million to $7 million, according to TechCrunch. The fund's predecessor closed on $200 million in 2018.

View fund

View 82 investments »

CORPORATE M&A

Hitachi Metals considers Waupaca Foundry sale

Japanese steelmaker Hitachi Metals could sell its US-based business Waupaca Foundry for around $1 billion, according to Bloomberg. Hitachi Metals paid $1.3 billion in cash to buy the unit, which is headquartered in Wisconsin, from KPS Capital Partners in 2014.

View details

View 1 competitors »

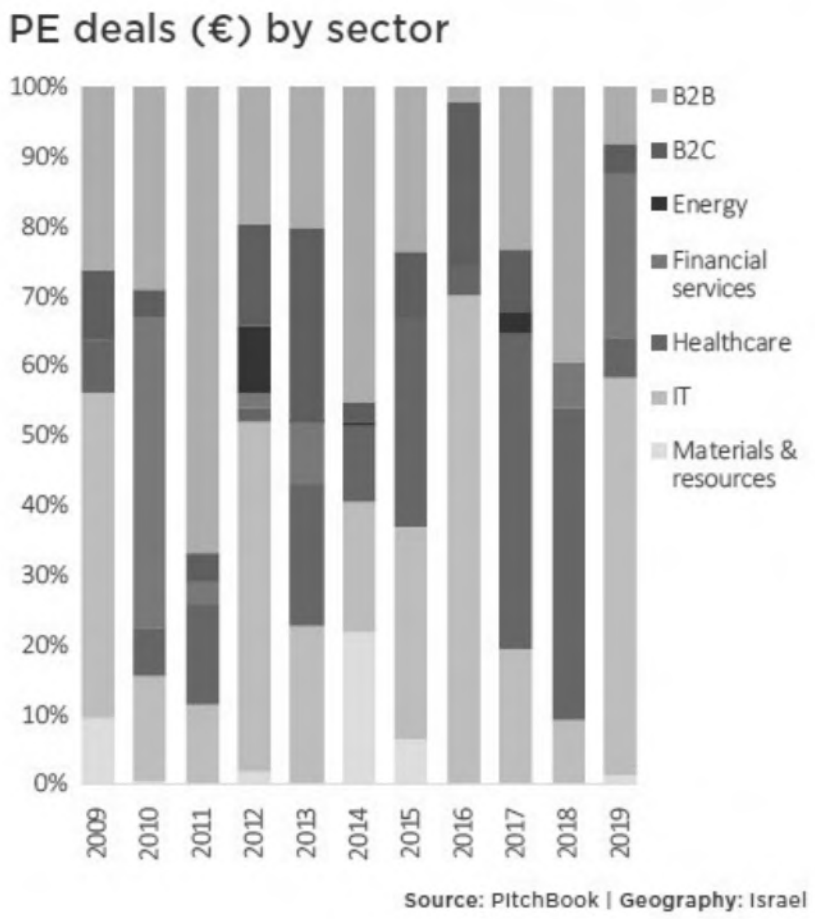
Xerox makes formal tender offer for HP

In the latest step in its monthslong hostile takeover effort, Xerox has made a formal tender offer to buy all of HP's outstanding shares at $24 apiece. Xerox is urging HP shareholders to accept the offer and elect its picks for the company's board of directors.

View details

View 17 competitors »

CHART OF THE DAY



"[T]here has been an uptick in PE's appetite for IT transactions, and this can be seen in Israel, notably in Tel Aviv. 12 deals closed in the Israeli IT sector worth a total of €2.0 billion in 2019, more than doubling 2018's readings. The largest deal to occur in Israel in 2019 was the €879.1 million MBO of cyber surveillance company NSO Group from Francisco Partners."

Source: **PitchBook's 2019 Annual European Breakdown**

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Venture capital, private equity and M&A financial information technology provider.

From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Tue, 3 Mar 2020 14:51:46 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] [HEADS-UP] Famous 'Shark' Got Hooked and Lost 400K in an Embarrassing Email Phishing Scam

From: CyberheistNews
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 9:47:52 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] [HEADS-UP] Famous 'Shark' Got Hooked and Lost 400K in an Embarrassing Email Phishing Scam

[HEADS-UP] Famous 'Shark' Got Hooked and Lost 400K in an Embarrassing Email Phishing Scam

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CYBERHEISTNEWS

arming you with the facts

CyberheistNews Vol 10 #10 | Mar. 3rd., 2020

[HEADS-UP] Famous 'Shark' Got Hooked and Lost 400K in an Embarrassing Email Phishing Scam

"Shark Tank" star Barbara Corcoran is missing nearly 400,000 Wednesday morning after her office was victimized by email scammers who used a tiny typo to gain the upper hand.

The scam started last week when an email chain was forwarded to Barbara's bookkeeper, a woman named Christine. Folks on Barbara's team tell us the email appeared to have been sent from Barbara's executive assistant, Emily

... and it informed Christine she had the green light to pay 388,700 dollars to a company called FFH Concept GmbH in Germany.

The problem is that email didn't really come from Emily.

The scammers changed Emily's email address by removing one letter, so they were the ones actually communicating with Christine ... who did ask the right questions. For instance, she asked what the money was for, and got an email back saying FFH was designing German apartment units in which Barbara had invested.

Great cover story because we're told Barbara really does invest in real estate, and FFH is a real company in Germany. Plus, all of this looks even more legit because it appears to be coming from Barbara's assistant.

Anyway, on Tuesday ... the bookkeeper fires off the wire payment to the account listed in the original email. Afterward, she emails Barbara's assistant, Emily -- at her real address -- and it's only then that Emily uncovers the scam. She noticed her address was altered on the previous chain of emails.

Unfortunately, the money is gone, but we're told Barbara's IT folks traced the original scam emails back to a Chinese IP address, and her attorneys are figuring out their next move.

Yes, even a Shark can get hooked by a phishing scam.
https://blog.knowbe4.com/breaking-news-shark-gets-hooked-for-380k-in-email-phishing-scam

[NEW] KnowBe4 Named a Leader in The Forrester Wave™ for Security Awareness and Training Solutions

We are excited to announce that Forrester Research has named KnowBe4 as a Leader in **The Forrester Wave™: Security Awareness and Training Solutions, Q1 2020** based on our scores in the strategy, market presence, and current offering categories. We received the highest scores possible in 17 out of 23 evaluation criteria, including learner content and go-to-market approach.

According to the report, **“KnowBe4’s enviable platform is powered by business strategy excellence...** Reference customers were happy with the service provided by the KnowBe4’s customer service managers and vast array of training options... If you are after a comprehensive security

awareness program tailored to how your employees like to learn, work with KnowBe4."

Being recognized as one of the organizations that lead the pack in The Forrester Wave for Security Awareness and Training Solutions is an honor for us. As the world's largest security awareness training platform, we believe being named a Leader continues to validate the success of our ability to carry out our mission to enable organizations and their users to make smarter security decisions using world-class training and simulated phishing to improve their security posture and mitigate risk.

Learn why KnowBe4 has been recognized as a Leader.

Download Your Complimentary Copy of the Report Now!
https://info.knowbe4.com/forrester-wave-security-awareness-training-chn

The Forrester Wave™: Security Awareness and Training Solutions, Q1 2020, Forrester Research, Inc., February 25, 2020

An Influence or Wire Fraud?

A 22-year-old Instagram and YouTube influencer named Kayla Massa has been arrested after allegedly convincing her followers to assist her in a fraud scheme, Quartz reports. Prosecutors say Massa posted on Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook using social engineering to tell her followers to DM her if they lived in New Jersey and wanted to make money.

When someone responded, Massa would offer to pay them to let her friend use their bank account to temporarily store some money as a tax write-off. She allegedly assured them it was legal, and told them to empty the account so they didn't suspect she was trying to steal their money.

Once Massa and her associates had access to a victim's bank account, they would allegedly deposit counterfeit money orders and fraudulent checks into the account and then withdraw it as cash. They would then block the victim on social media and leave them with an empty bank account. When the victim's bank realized the money orders and checks were fraudulent, it would recall the money and the victim's account would be thousands of dollars in the red. Continued at the KnowBe4 blog:
https://blog.knowbe4.com/an-influence-or-wire-fraud

[NEW WEBINAR] Never Assume Breach: Build a Data-Driven Defense Strategy to Secure Your Organization's Most Valuable Assets

Even the world's most successful organizations have significant weaknesses in their IT security defenses, which today's **determined hackers can exploit at will.** There's even a term for it: **Assume Breach.**

But assuming you'll be hacked isn't an option for you. Your organization can't afford a loss of assets or downtime.

Join **Roger Grimes**, KnowBe4's Data-Driven Defense Evangelist, for this informative webinar where you'll learn not only the most common reasons for data breaches in organizations like yours but how you can determine your specific weaknesses.

You'll walk away from this understanding:

- What most organizations are doing wrong and how to fix it
- How to build an action plan to improve your IT security effectiveness
- Why security awareness training is a security layer you can't afford to skip

Start creating your data-driven defense and **earn CPE credit for attending.**

Date/Time: **Wednesday, March 11 @ 2 PM (ET)**

Save My Spot!
https://event.on24.com/wcc/r/2201211/35A472D6C4E6527D41A2BC75555D82EA?partnerref=CHN1

WSJ: "Losing 450K in Three Days: Hackers Trick Victims Into Big Wire Transfers"

Great budget ammo here! Rachel Louise Ensign wrote a great story for the WSJ about CEO fraud, also known by the FBI as Business Email Compromise. I'm quoting an extract and I strongly recommend sending a link to the original WSJ article to your C-levels as it is excellent ammo to get budget for new-school security awareness training.

"In 2018, Frank Krasovec took on a 1 million dollar personal line of credit from PlainsCapital Bank. A few months later, he went on a business trip. When he returned, 450K was missing.

"Mr. Krasovec, the chairman of Dash Brands Ltd., which owns Domino's

Pizza Inc. franchises in China, said he soon learned that someone had hijacked his email and asked his assistant to wire the money to a Hong Kong account.

"Fraudsters are stealing billions of dollars each year through this type of scam, which combines sophisticated hacking with wire transfers, an old-fashioned but efficient way to move money overseas. Banks and law-enforcement officials are struggling to curb the problem, while victims like Mr. Krasovec say they are finding it nearly impossible to get their money back.

"Years ago, lenders only had to worry about real-life bank robbers. Now, the wire-transfer scam puts them in a tough position. Customers expect them to move money quickly for legitimate transactions, while also guarding against hackers that have infiltrated clients.

"The largest banks are most likely to be conduits for the wire-transfer scams, according to the American Bankers Association. But community banks, with much smaller technology budgets to build their defenses, are also vulnerable.

FBI: 2019 Losses up to 1.8 Billion from 1.3 Billion in 2018

"The Federal Bureau of Investigation received reports of nearly 1.8 billion in losses from this type of scam in 2019, up from about 1.3 billion the prior year. The agency estimates total losses world-wide, which include those not reported to the agency, were 26 billion between June 2016 and July 2019. The transfers primarily go to banks in Hong Kong and mainland China, where chances of recovering the money are slim, the agency said.

"Victims include “the elderly, college students, nonprofits, religious organizations, celebrities, CEOs of companies,” FBI Supervisory Special Agent Zacharia Baldwin said in an interview. “It could be anybody.”

"Hackers can break into a target’s email by trying out passwords made public in previous data breaches. They also may use phishing schemes like those used against political campaigns and in corporate espionage. The hackers then commandeer an account and impersonate the victim, asking assistants or colleagues to initiate a wire transfer." Send this link to your C-levels:
https://blog.knowbe4.com/wsj-losing-450000-in-three-days-hackers-trick-victims-into-big-wire-transfers

[LIVE DEMO] See Ridiculously Easy Security

Awareness Training and Phishing

Old-school awareness training does not hack it anymore. Your email filters have an average 7-10% failure rate; you need a strong human firewall as your last line of defense.

Join us **TOMORROW, Wednesday, March 4 @ 2:00 pm (ET),** for a live demonstration of how KnowBe4 introduces a new-school approach to security awareness training and simulated phishing.

See how easy it is to train and phish your users:

- Train your users with access to the **world's largest library** of awareness training content and automated training campaigns with scheduled reminder emails.
- Send fully automated **simulated phishing attacks**, using thousands of customizable templates with unlimited usage.
- **NEW Assessments!** Find out where your users are in both security knowledge and security culture to help establish baseline security metrics you can improve over time.
- **Advanced Reporting** on 60+ key awareness training indicators.
- **Active Directory Integration** to easily upload user data, eliminating the need to manually manage user changes.
- Identify and **respond to email threats faster.** Enhance your incident response efforts with the PhishER add-on!

Find out how 31,000+ organizations have mobilized their end-users as their human firewall.

Date/Time: **TOMORROW, Wednesday, March 4 @ 2:00 pm (ET)**

Save My Spot!
https://event.on24.com/wcc/r/2198105/5DA00F49B08FF658A44E49253278C580?partnerref=CHN2

KnowBe4's Fave Podcast "Hacking Humans" Surpassed 1M Downloads!

Each week the CyberWire's Hacking Humans podcast looks behind the social engineering scams, phishing schemes, and criminal exploits that make headlines and take a heavy toll on organizations around the world.

They talk to social engineering experts, security pros, cognitive scientists, and those practiced in the arts of deception (perhaps even a magician or two).

We also hear from people targeted by social engineering attacks and learn from their experiences. Trust us: check out the recent episodes and subscribe today.
https://thecyberwire.com/podcasts/hacking-humans.html

Let's stay safe out there.

Warm Regards,

Stu Sjouwerman
Founder and CEO
KnowBe4, Inc

PS: Great for a break! KnowBe4: The Making of a Unicorn. A Cybersecurity Story: https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=W9UvWQJoRfE

Quotes of the Week

"If we glance at the most important revolutions in history, we see at once that the greatest number of these originated in the periodical revolutions on the human mind."
- Wilhelm von Humboldt, Philosopher (1767-1835)

"Do your work with your whole heart, and you will succeed - there's so little competition."
- Elbert Hubbard - Writer (1859 - 1915)

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You can read CyberheistNews online at our Blog

https://blog.knowbe4.com/cyberheistnews-vol-10-10-heads-up-famous-shark-got-hooked-and-lost-400k-in-an-embarrassing-email-phishing-scam

Security News

Amazon Prime Phishbait: Lessons Learned

An Amazon phishing campaign is accidentally sending out links that lead straight to the attacker's remote access console, according to Paul Ducklin at Naked Security. Ducklin explains that Sophos came across a generic Amazon Prime phishing email which informed recipients that their Amazon account had been suspended.

The email contained a link for the user to verify their account by updating their card number and billing address. The email wasn't particularly convincing or well-written, but the Sophos researchers followed the link to see where it would take them.

The link first redirected them through two legitimate WordPress sites, which had apparently been hacked by the attacker to use as stepping stones before the actual phishing site. This is a common tactic to avoid being detected by spam filters.

After this, the attacker presumably intended to send the victim to a phishing page that would try to steal their Amazon credentials and financial details. However, the attacker seems to have made a disastrous mistake and instead used the URL to the console that controlled the hacked WordPress sites.

The attacker had planted a small, obscure PHP file on each compromised site that granted them direct access to the site's files and allowed them to do things that even the WordPress administrator couldn't do.

"In other words, the crooks have set things up so they can sidestep the WordPress administration console entirely," Ducklin explains. "They don't need a password; they won't get logged by the WordPress system; and they can add and modify files that WordPress wouldn't normally allow, essentially allowing them to hide content such as phishing pages and malware downloads in plain sight."

It's not clear how the attacker compromised these sites in the first place, but Ducklin notes that outdated and vulnerable WordPress plugins are a frequent entry point. Ducklin says the story demonstrates the importance of good security practices for website administrators as well as for regular users.

Even a minor website can have value to criminals as a staging area for future crimes. "If your site gets hacked, you'll probably end up blacklisted," he writes. "Once the crooks start using your website to host malicious content, you are likely to end up getting blocked or filtered by security products and the major browsers."

New-school security awareness training can create a culture of security within your organization by teaching all of your employees to follow security best practices. Naked Security has the story: https://nakedsecurity.sophos.com/2020/02/21/the-amazon-prime-phishing-attack-that-wasnt/

Spamming Tools Are a Commodity in the Criminal Underworld

Cheap and easy-to-use phishing kits and other social engineering tools are readily available for purchase on the black market, according to researchers at Digital Shadows. Criminals create clones of legitimate websites and package them for sale, allowing other criminals to quickly set up convincing phishing sites on their own domains.

These phishing templates usually cost between 2 and 68 bucks. Experienced cybercriminals also create phishing tutorials and offer them for sale, so even skids with minimal technical skills can learn how to start scamming people. "The barriers of entry to phishing attacks can be significantly lowered by the existence of pre-made templates, infrastructure, and tutorials for sale on cybercriminal forums and marketplaces," the researchers write.

"Phishing tutorials may be purchased on cybercriminal forums and marketplaces at an average cost of $24.83, and the tools needed to conduct an attack can cost under $20. The average cost of a prebuilt page or template is $23.27."

These phishing tools also vary depending on the type of campaign they're designed for. The researchers explain that attackers adapt their strategies based on which type of target they're going after.

“The first stage will almost always involve choosing a target,” they write. “Are you going after minnows or that elusive 1,000-lb marlin? Knowing this beforehand is important, as different targets require different tactics and tools.

For example, a large-scale, more indiscriminate phishing attack (minnows) can be more conducive to the use of impersonal and generic emails cast with a broad net (e.g. a spam botnet). Targeting a high-ranking executive (marlin), on the other hand, might require a more nuanced and personalized approach (e.g. spearphishing).”

Likewise, different attacks necessitate different defenses. Executives and employees who have the authority to transfer money are more likely to be targeted with sophisticated spearphishing attacks, while other employees are often targets of opportunity. In every case, however, the employees themselves are the key to stopping these attacks.

“Phishing pages and malware can both be detected and blocked, but direct social engineering is much harder to spot,” the researchers say. “Detection of the first two rely on technical indicators that point to a specific threat, which can be mitigated automatically by, for example, spam blockers or malware scanners. Social engineering relies on exploits against the human operating the device.”

Social engineering attacks are designed to bypass technical defenses, so organizations need to address human vulnerabilities. Digital Shadows has the story:
https://www.digitalshadows.com/blog-and-research/the-ecosystem-of-phishing/

A Single BEC Gang Is Launching Thousands of Attacks Per Year

A unique cybercriminal group launched business email compromise (BEC) attacks against more than 2,100 companies in the US between April and August 2019, according to researchers at Agari.

The group, which Agari calls “Exaggerated Lion,” is based in Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya, and it’s been conducting online scams since at least 2013. In 2017, the gang started carrying out BEC scams, and they’ve continually improved their tactics ever since.

Almost all of the group’s emails are sent from domains registered with Google’s G Suite, and most of these domains end with the “.management”

top-level domain. Agari notes that only about 12,000 ".management" domains have ever been registered, and more than ten percent of these belong to Exaggerated Lion.

Additionally, the group's domains don't host any content and are only used for sending emails, indicating that the domains are purely meant for launching BEC attacks.

Interestingly, Exaggerated Lion's domains don't try to spoof a company's website. Rather, they use long strings of technical-looking keywords separated by hyphens. For example, the emails are sent from addresses like "personnel[@]office-secure-ssl-sl-mail71521-apps-server-portal-apps-mai [dot] management."

This method is meant to remove any suspicion on the part of the recipient, since they'll assume the email was sent from a secure infrastructure and they won't wonder why it didn't come from a familiar domain.

The attackers use fake invoices generated by a free online tool, which allows them to easily change the details for each targeted company. They send these invoices to employees who work in the targeted organization's accounting department. Agari says the gang has generated millions of dollars using these techniques.

Business email compromise is an extremely profitable criminal enterprise, and it's not surprising that organized crime groups have it down to a science. This is their full-time job, so they can afford to put a great deal of effort into crafting convincing, targeted attacks. You can't assume that your employees will be able to spot any visible warning signs in these emails, because there often won't be any. New-school security awareness training can enable your employees to thwart these attacks by teaching them the fundamentals of social engineering. Agari has the story: https://www.agari.com/email-security-blog/business-email-compromise-bec-exaggerated-lion/

What KnowBe4 Customers Say

We got this feedback last week. Made me personally quite happy!

"1. Platform is very powerful and well executed (in software code sense); it allows a lot of automation (which is crucial for general IS practitioners like me with tons of responsibilities and zero time availability).

2. KnowBe4 philosophy extends well beyond of just selling the product, but you actually care if we made the most out of it. By adopting your robust

platform we not only put a check mark for compliance purpose (yes, this is important too), but we as a company are improving our IS Awareness posture in very measurable ways. And we just started.

3. Our Customer Success Manager Nick Coppley is wonderful: a) he has deep knowledge of the platform; b) he is readily available and reachable at first request; c) he not only has answers for my questions, but offering the roadmaps for my very different business cases. I very much appreciate his help.

Stu, I wish more companies were like yours - life would be better."

- F.M., Information Security Architect

The 10 Interesting News Items This Week

1. **Sodinokibi ransomware may tip NASDAQ after an attack, so they may hurt stock prices:**
   https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/sodinokibi-ransomware-may-tip-nasdaq-on-attacks-to-hurt-stock-prices/

2. **An FBI unit recovered 300 million of 3.5 billion in reported cybercrime losses last year:**
   https://www.cyberscoop.com/fbi-ic3-recovered-funds-tonya-ugoretz/

3. **North Korea Is Recycling Mac Malware. That's Not the Worst Part:**
   https://www.wired.com/story/malware-reuse-north-korea-lazarus-group/

4. **Internal Docs Show Why the U.S. Military Publishes North Korean and Russian Malware:**
   https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/5dmwyx/documents-how-cybercom-publishes-russian-north-korean-malware-virustotal

5. **Android malware can steal Google Authenticator 2FA codes:** https://www.zdnet.com/article/android-malware-can-steal-google-authenticator-2fa-codes/

6. **Guess who else is now doing security training/culture surveys?:** https://blog.knowbe4.com/guess-who-else-is-now-doing-security-training-surveys

7. **Loss Of Face. Facial Recognition Firm Clearview AI Suffers Data Breach:** https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/facial-recognition-clearview-ai/

8. **Russian hacking, spear-phishing, nondisclosure agreements: How Florida was affected in 2016 election:** https://www.tallahassee.com/story/news/local/state/2020/02/25/russian-hacking-floridas-election-system-what-we-know-four-years-later/4555126002/

9. **Ransomware victims thought their backups were safe. They were wrong:** https://www.zdnet.com/article/ransomware-victims-thought-their-backups-were-safe-they-were-wrong/

10. **IBM Survey: Only 38% of State and Local Government Employees Trained on Ransomware Prevention:** https://newsroom.ibm.com/2020-02-27-IBM-Survey-Only-38-of-State-and-Local-Government-Employees-Trained-on-Ransomware-Prevention

Cyberheist 'Fave' Links

This Week's Links We Like, Tips, Hints and Fun Stuff

- **Holy Moly! Mission Human Flight in 4K at the China Tianmen Mountain. I want one of those!:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctuByt_4eRc

- **Your 4K Virtual Vacation: New York 1911 in color and sound. Awesome!:** https://www.flixxy.com/trip-through-new-york-city-in-1911-color-and-sound.htm?utm_source=4

- **And now compare to Moscow, Tverskaya Street in 1896 - also in Color at 60fps:** https://www.flixxy.com/moscow-tverskaya-street-in-1896-color-60fps.htm?utm_source=4

- **This week's selection of awesome people performing balance tricks, soccer tricks, yoyo skills, weightlifting and more!:** https://www.flixxy.com/people-are-awesome-best-of-the-week-74.htm?utm_source=4

- **Max's Journey to the Moon" from Wriggles & Robins:** https://www.flixxy.com/maxs-journey-to-the-moon.htm?utm_source=4

- **Super Hot: Watch NASA crank up an Orion motor that could help save astronauts' lives:** https://www.cnet.com/news/see-nasa-prep-for-the-moon-with-fiery-orion-motor-test/

- **This chart shows every major technological innovation in the last 150 years — and how they have changed the way we work:** https://www.businessinsider.com/barclays-how-technology-has-changed-the-world-2018-4

- **The 'purrfect' music for calming cats. I tried it; it works:** https://phys.org/news/2020-02-purrfect-music-calming-cats.html

- **This Is How Much Quicker the Electric VW I.D. R Is Than a McLaren 720S:** https://www.thedrive.com/news/32333/this-is-how-much-quicker-the-electric-vw-i-d-r-is-than-a-mclaren-720s

- **What's It Like to Spend a Year On the Far Side of the Moon?:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuG5vYqHoHY

- **For The Kids #1:Funny Parrots Annoying Cats Compilation 2016:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2mx3m6zYCI

- **For The Kids #2: Cute Seal Catches a Ride on a Kayak:** https://www.flixxy.com/adorable-seal-catches-ride-on-kayak-national-geographic.htm

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From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Thu, 5 Mar 2020 10:54:06 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] A regional look at tech CEO compensation

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Thursday, March 5, 2020 5:53:36 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] A regional look at tech CEO compensation

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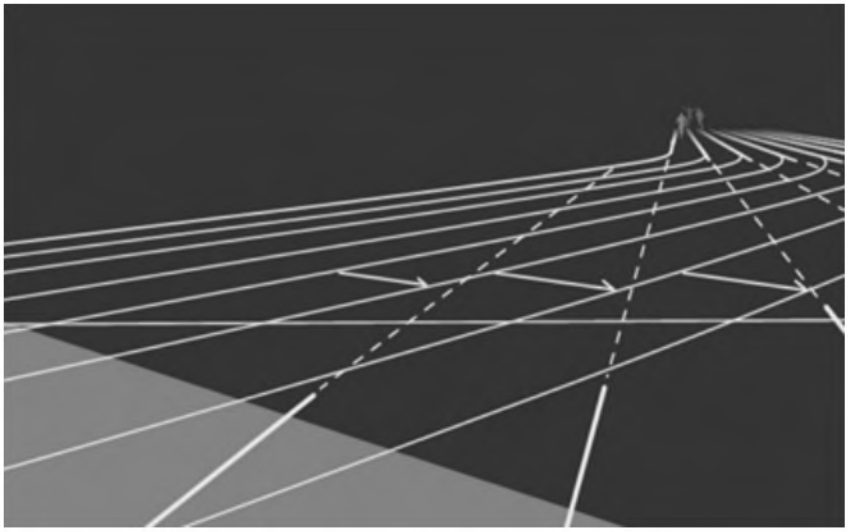
The Daily Pitch: VC, PE and M&A

March 5, 2020
Like our newsletter? The data comes from
the PitchBook Platform — our data software for VC, PE and M&A

RELY.ability
Reliability is maintaining a steadfast approach with the team you know. Even if market conditions change.
Antares Capital
Learn more >

TODAY'S TOP STORIES

The latest data on capital calls and private fund performance



There are a lot of different fund types out there on the private markets. And there are a lot of different ways to measure the performance of those funds. For investors, determining the best way to compare one fund to another might be the most critical factor in deciding where to place their money.

That's where the PitchBook Benchmarks come in. The **latest edition** of our quarterly examination of fund performance includes an extended look at the rate of capital calls, the latest installment of a running series on cash flow management. It also features more than two decades' worth of detailed private fund data from venture capital, private equity, debt and many more strategies:

read the report

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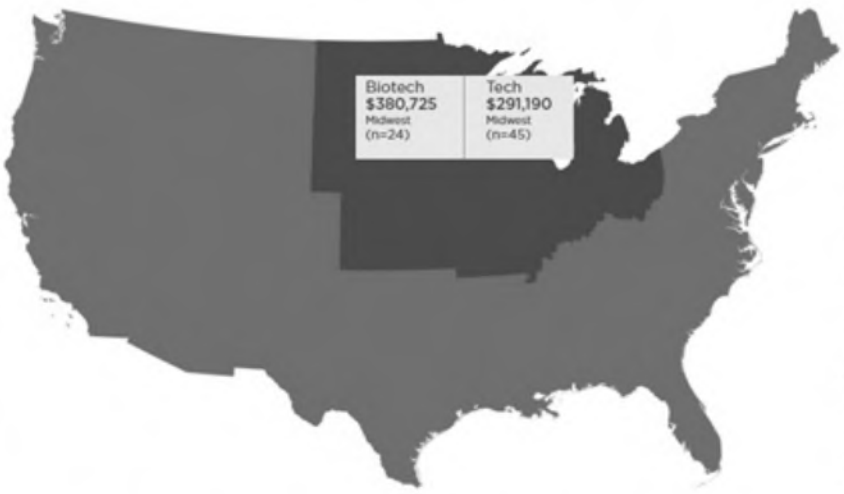
How CEO pay at tech and biotech companies varies across the US

Who's in the newsletter today?

People

Jeffrey Katzenberg
Meg Whitman
Pete Stevenson
Philip Vorobeychik
Randal Thompson



Do geographic differences affect how CEOs are paid?

We've got new data breaking down compensation at VC-backed tech and biotech companies across US regions, plus insight on the trend from NEA partner Melissa Taunton:

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China's Ant Financial takes stake in Stockholm's Klarna

Investors

AliExpress
Alibaba Group
Andreessen Horowitz
Ant Financial
Bessemer Venture Partners
Blackstone Energy Partners
Comcast Ventures
Dragoneer Investment Group
Durable Capital Partners
EQT Ventures
Eden
Fidelity Management & Research
Global Founders Capital
Great Hill Partners
Idinvest Partners
JLL
Kleiner Perkins
LBO France
La Financière Saint James
Quadria Capital
Quona Capital
Reverence Capital Partners
T. Rowe Price
Vertica Capital Partners
Vista Equity Partners

Companies

Alignment Healthcare
Coca Cola Bottlers Japan

(Courtesy of Klarna)

Alibaba Group affiliate Ant Financial has taken a minority stake in payments provider Klarna. The holding is less than 1% and values the Swedish business at slightly more than the $5.5 billion valuation it achieved in its most recent funding round, according to Reuters. The round, which brought in $460 million in August, was led by Dragoneer Investment Group.

The deal serves to develop Klarna's strategic partnership with Alibaba's global ecommerce marketplace, AliExpress, which offers Klarna's "pay later" option in multiple markets. Klarna's product is used by over 200,000 retailers and ecommerce platforms.

The announcement comes just days after Klarna posted its first ever annual loss. It generated a net loss of 902 million Swedish kronor (around $95 million) in 2019, down from a profit of 105 million kronor the year prior.

Colonies
Flexport
Gather
Klarna
Latisys
Managed by Q
NRStor
Netlify
Q'sai
Quibi
Sokowatch
Symmetry
Tripleseat
Unilever
WeWork
ZestMoney

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Recommended Reads

A startup called Banjo that brings a Palantir-like approach to gathering live data is turning Utah into a surveillance panopticon. [Vice]

The ultimate challenge for Barnes & Noble is to battle back against Amazon. For now, the company's new CEO will take functioning escalators and a little less dust. [Bloomberg]

Doug Monahan admits the do-everything backpack he raised nearly $800,000 to build has been a failure. The question the FTC is now investigating is whether it was a scam. [The Verge]

What happens to Vegas if nobody stays in Vegas? [The New York Times]

Examining the rise of beauty-centric private equity firms. [Glossy]

We often think of the human brain as a mysterious, high-powered computer. But as neuroscience progresses, that might be a metaphor we should leave behind. [The Guardian]

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TODAY'S HEADLINES

The Daily Benchmark

2016 Vintage Global Secondaries Funds

People

Great Hill adds two execs

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Quibi adds $750M to funding stockpile

Paris-based Colonies collects new funding

Alignment Healthcare picks up $135M

Netlify pockets $53M Series C

PE Deals

Blackstone buys NRStor

Vista snags Tripleseat

Exits

WeWork seals price-slashing sale of Managed by Q

Fundraising

Reverence Capital closes $1.2B fund

Healthcare-focused Quadria Capital raises $595M

Vertica Capital pulls in $205M for debut fund

Quona Capital closes sophomore fund on $203M

Corporate M&A

Coca Cola Bottlers Japan could sell kale juice maker

THE DAILY BENCHMARK

2016 Vintage Global Secondaries Funds

Median IRR

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

1.27x
Median TVPI

Select top performers
Industry Ventures Secondary VIII
Greenspring Secondaries Fund II
Timber Bay Fund I

**IRR: net of fees*

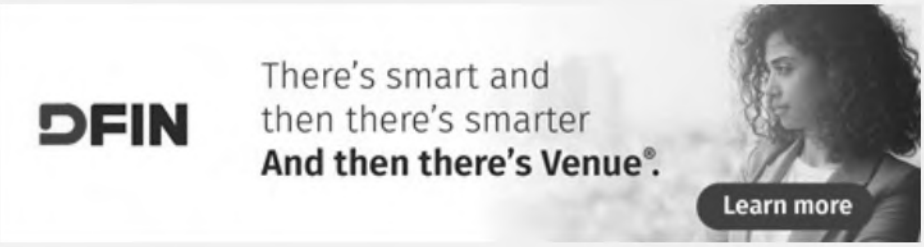
15 Funds in Benchmark »

Check out the latest version of **PitchBook Benchmarks**

PEOPLE

Great Hill adds two execs

Great Hill Partners has brought on Pete Stevenson and Randal Thompson as executives-in-residence to focus on investments in the cloud infrastructure software, security and related business services sectors. Stevenson has served as CEO of former Great Hill portfolio companies Latisys and Symmetry, while Thompson worked alongside him as a chief sales officer.



VC DEALS

Quibi adds $750M to funding stockpile

Quibi, the short-form video startup co-led by Jeffrey Katzenberg and Meg Whitman, has reportedly closed a $750 million funding round ahead of a planned launch next month. The round is said to include a previous **$400 million investment** first reported in early January, taking the Los Angeles-based streaming company's total funding to $1.75 billion.

View round

View similar company »

Paris-based Colonies collects new funding

Co-living startup Colonies has secured a €30 million (around $33 million) investment from Idinvest Partners, Global Founders Capital and La Financière

Saint James, plus another €150 million from LBO France to develop new properties. The French company plans to launch more than 50 new projects this year.

View round

View similar company »

Alignment Healthcare picks up $135M

Alignment Healthcare has raised a $135 million Series C co-led by Fidelity Management & Research, T. Rowe Price and Durable Capital Partners. The company operates a healthtech platform designed to provide and manage health plans for residents across California and North Carolina.

View round

View 6 competitors »

Netlify pockets $53M Series C

Netlify, which operates a web development platform to help customers including Flexport and Unilever build and host websites, has raised $53 million in a round led by EQT Ventures. Andreessen Horowitz, Kleiner Perkins and Preston-Werner Ventures also participated in the funding. The company raised $30 million in 2018 at a $180 million valuation, according to PitchBook data.

View round

View 27 competitors »

What's driving mid-market deal activity?
Read Transaction Trends Q1 for key insights.
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PE DEALS

Blackstone buys NRStor

Blackstone Energy Partners has acquired Toronto-based battery storage developer NRStor, which serves customers across North America. Blackstone's energy-focused private equity arm has invested or committed $16 billion globally.

View deal View similar company »

Vista snags Tripleseat

Vista Equity Partners has acquired Tripleseat, a Massachusetts-based provider of management software for restaurants, hotels and more. As part of the deal, the company will be merged with Gather, a fellow software company that Vista backed in 2017.

View deal View 22 competitors »

EXITS

WeWork seals price-slashing sale of Managed by Q

WeWork has completed its sale of Managed by Q to

fellow office management company Eden for a reported $25 million, a far cry from the $220 million WeWork was said to have paid for the startup less than a year ago. The takeover will be financed in part by a new investment in Eden from real estate services specialist JLL. Eden has raised venture funding from Bessemer Venture Partners, Comcast Ventures and several other firms, reaching a $100 million valuation in November.

View details

View 5 competitors »

FUNDRAISING

Reverence Capital closes $1.2B fund

New York-based firm Reverence Capital Partners has closed its second opportunities fund on $1.2 billion, exceeding its initial $750 million target. Commitments came from institutional investors in North America, Europe and Asia. The fund's predecessor closed in 2016.

View fund

View 19 investments »

Healthcare-focused Quadria Capital raises $595M

Quadria Capital has closed its second fund on $595 million, surpassing its $400 million target, Reuters reported. Based in Singapore, the firm makes investments in Asia across a range of healthcare

verticals including life sciences, healthcare delivery, and medical technology.

View fund

View 14 investments »

Vertica Capital pulls in $205M for debut fund

Vertica Capital Partners has closed its maiden fund on $205 million. Co-founded by Vitaly Vorobeychik and Philip Vorobeychik, the New York-based firm will invest in growth-stage software companies.

View fund

View investment »

Quona Capital closes sophomore fund on $203M

Quona Capital, a VC firm focused on investments across emerging markets, has raised $203 million for its second vehicle. The firm has backed Indian fintech business ZestMoney and Sokowatch, an ecommerce startup for retailers in East Africa. Based in Washington, DC, Quona now has $363 million in assets under management.

View fund

View 30 investments »

CORPORATE M&A

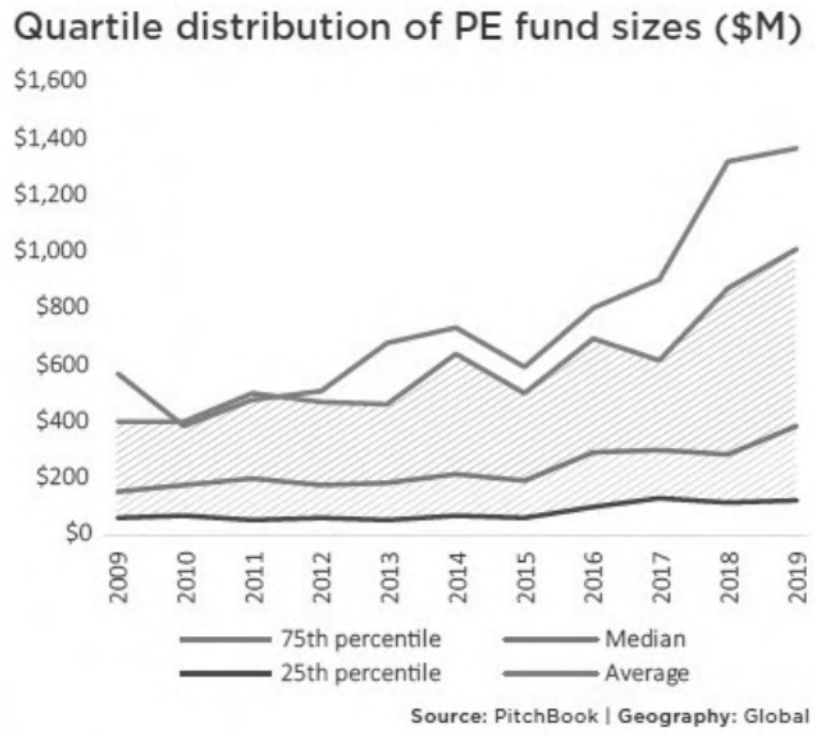
Coca Cola Bottlers Japan could sell kale juice maker

Tokyo-based Coca Cola Bottlers Japan could sell Q'sai for about $300 million, according to Bloomberg. The business sells products including supplements, skincare products and vegetable juice.

View details

View similar company »

CHART OF THE DAY



"Demonstrating how heavily a few gigantic funds such as Blackstone's have been driving results, the average PE fund was larger than the 75th percentile. To help alleviate some of the pain points for these

massive investors—and subsequently grow AUM for themselves— many GPs are choosing to offer additional strategies and larger funds."

Source: **PitchBook's 2019 Annual Private Fund Strategies Report**

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Venture capital, private equity and M&A financial information technology provider.

From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Tue, 10 Mar 2020 12:10:08 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: McAleese "Defense Programs" Conference Part #2: (1) USD Griffin; (2) Army AFC Murray; (3) Army SAE Jette; (4) USAF ACC Holmes; (5) USAF SAE MilDep Richardson; (6) F-35 PEO Fick; (7) MDA Hill; (8) NAVSEA Moore; (9) USMC Jansen.

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 8:08:27 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] McAleese "Defense Programs" Conference Part #2: (1) USD Griffin; (2) Army AFC Murray; (3) Army SAE Jette; (4) USAF ACC Holmes; (5) USAF SAE MilDep Richardson; (6) F-35 PEO Fick; (7) MDA Hill; (8) NAVSEA Moore; (9) USMC Jansen.

Secretary Wilkie:

McAleese AND ASSOCIATES

McAleese "Defense Programs" Conference: Part #2 Executive Summary: (Ronald Reagan Building, March 4, 2020).

1. Under Secretary of Defense (Research & Engineering) Dr. Mike Griffin: Dr. Griffin immediately-laid-out specific substantive responsibilities between himself & Principal Deputy USD(R&E), Dr. Lisa Porter. It is now clear, that a "Griffin/Porter Team", is taking-the-fight to China.

- **Dr. Griffin: (a) Hypersonics; (b) Space; (c) Directed Energy.**
- **Dr. Lisa Porter: (a) 5G; (b) Assured Micro-electronics; (c) Biotechnology; (d) Cyber; (e) AI; (f) Autonomy; (g) Quantum Science; (h) majority of hiring of Assistant Directors for each priority-technology, (such as Dr. Tournear for SDA); (i) PoM budgeting; and (j) Congressional out-reach.**
- **Dr. Mark Lewis is the new Director of Defense Research & Engineering for Modernization,** (with all 11 Asst. Directors of specific-technologies, reporting to him), (former Air Force Chief Scientist, twice).

a. 5G & "Next-G" [$53M 2019 5G Reprogramming; +$200M 2020 5G Congressional plus-up; and $484M 2021 5G Request] **"Dynamic-spectrum-sharing" is critical for both DoD & "commercial telecom" to share, because there is no new frequency available.**

b. Biotechnology Initiative: Humans are beginning to manipulate genomes on an industrial-scale. **Standing-up 9th "Manufacturing Institute",** focused on biotechnology, (harnessing huge DoD databases).

c. AI: [$459M 2021 DARPA "AI Next" Request] **Must field incremental-AI now!**

d. Hypersonics: Tactical-boost-glide technology is finally "close-to-being-in-hand". Next focus is DARPA's air-breathing scramjet, (because it boosts shorter-range weapons load-out).

- **Must produce tactical-boost-glide "aero-shells" at-scale: Industry must facilitize now, for "billions-of-dollars" of entry-vehicle "aero-shell" production at-scale.**

e. SDA: Today's exquisite-constellations of space assets are "juicy targets". Must proliferate large quantities of lower-value spacecraft in all orbits, (not just LEO), to ensure that China/Russia realize that they cannot attack US in Space.

f. SDA will transition into US Space Force, (under the Department of the Air Force), on ~October 1, 2022.

g. Space-Based-Sensor-Layer for hypersonic-defense: Target-acquisition/tracking/fire-control for hypersonic-defense against growing Chinese hypersonic-threat, can really only be done from Space, (with low-latency transport and tracking layers).

h. Assured Micro-electronics will be "zero-trust" risk-management architectures: [~$900M 2021 Request]

i. MDA NGI: Full-speed-ahead on NGI competition; with clear inference of also developing SM-3 Block IIA "under-layer" for interim "mid-2020s" coverage. Also planning development of more capable THAAD, for expansion of terminal defense options for STRATCOM & NORTHCOM, (presumably to also close "arctic-gap" against Russian submarines).

j. Laser-scaling: By ~2022, goal is to deploy ~300KW laser. Targeting deployment of initial ~100KW ship-based & land-based lasers in ~2020. Will also field high-powered-microwave, (presumably for electronic "soft-kill" of Chinese hypersonic-glide-vehicles; arctic-launched Russian cruise missiles; and swarming-UAVs.

2a. Army Futures Command, Gen. Mike Murray: [CSA Gen. James McConville: "Winning matters!"] Requirements & Acquisition are now welded together. Modernization must be transformative, and never-ending. **Modernization can no longer be episodic, (every ~40-45 years), or Army will be out-gunned & out-ranged.** "6 + 2" are the major "CFT" capability buckets: [LRPF; NGCV; FVL; Network; IAMD; Soldier Lethality; Assured PNT; Synthetic Training Environment] **Army is "all-in" on JADC2.**

Convergence/MDO: Future war will be 100% fighting, (on offense or defense), 100% of the time. [Super Bowl was ~14 minutes of actual play. Future Convergence/MDO will be 60 minutes of non-stop play, (in a 60 minute game), always on the offensive or defense, to overwhelm the enemy]

2b. Army ASAALT, Dr. Bruce Jette: -$30B 2020 Night Court was "really-gutsy-move", and Congress supported almost all program-trades. Another ~$13B was also transferred in 2021-2025. [-$3B shifted to OSD; -$3.1B from ~40 program kills; and ~-$4.3B from ~41 program delays; but ~+$600M re-instated

for ~12 programs; and ~+$2.1B increase for ~9 accelerated programs] **But the ~2020-2022 prototypes must perform!**

~11 Army "Section 804" Middle Tier Acquisition programs. [Much easier to start with "Characteristics", instead of frozen Requirements right upfront] **OTAs are great initial contract agreements. Must get IP rights correct, right upfront.** [Always open to specifically-negotiated-license-rights]

Long Range Hypersonic Weapon is a critical priority for Sr. Army Leadership in the INDOPACOM fight.

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3. USAF Air Combat Command, Gen. Mike Holmes: INDOPACOM fight is battle of long-range-fires, with China firing at fixed-sites, but US firing at mobile, fleeting targets. US must get better at finding those mobile targets, while also complicating Chinese-targeting.

JADC2: Will increase OPTEMPO to high-velocity, (because enemy has the same sensors and equal-range fires). [Uber is a commercial version of matching sensor-to-shooter] **But war-fighting doctrine will have to change, to fully-harness that new combat-power, or it will just make US Forces incrementally-better.**

NGAD: Digital-engineering of new aircraft-types, that forces China to react every ~five-years. **While unspoken, NGAD will clearly be twin-engined aircraft, optimized for long-range penetrating INDOPACOM fight.**

- **USAF problem is "sensor-&-weapon-density-at-range", how do you keep enough sensors & weapons forward, to drive the tempo of the fight? USAF will continue to invest in "long-range kill-chains", both with penetrating platforms & stand-off platforms.**

F-15Cs will start to be retired over the later-years of 2021-2025 FYDP, (to be replaced with F-35 & F-15EX).

"Pre-Block" F-16s will retire next, (with replacement options of F-35, NGAD, and unmanned).

ACC will shift from traditional "fighter-roadmap", to a platform-agnostic "capability-roadmap", to incorporate unmanned-capability as it matures.

Looking for ways to break kill-chains of Chinese long-range missile-attacks on vulnerable USAF Tankers.

---

4. USAF SAE Military Deputy, Lt. Gen. Duke Richardson: ["This is our time"] Air Force Acquisition can confound China, but everything must occur at-speed!

Section 804 Middle Tier Acquisition drives speed, by cutting ~-3-4 years out of initial program-start, (exempt from JCIDS Requirements approval). [No more serial-processes of Requirements; then funding; then Milestone reviews] **OPIR has saved ~-3.5 years of schedule right upfront.**

Software development moves too slowly. [Smaller chunks, must be delivered-constantly. Burn-down the backlog of required capabilities. Keep hacking away, to deliver capability]

Digital-engineering will allow final aircraft assembly to occur with simple hand-tools. [B-52 CERP re-engining competition; T-7A; GBSD]

NGAD Century-series is targeted at building the very 1st aircraft, at the ~100th aircraft unit-cost on the learning-curve. The key is designing the aircraft quickly, to confound the Chinese, to force China to react.

ABMS is the pathway to JADC2. Four-month "connect-a-thons" will accept lots-of-risk, with goal of constantly-delivering incremental-capability. [~$144M 2020 ABMS RDT&E. $302M 2021 ABMS RDT&E Request]

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5. F-35 PEO, Lt. Gen. Eric Fick: F-35 is highly-lethal, almost at 80% 2020 mission-capable-rate, (73% 2019 mission-capable-rate). Driving down cost in Block 4 C2D2 development. **Pleased with ~-5%/year Lockheed unit-cost reduction in ~$34B F-35 Lot 12-14 Block Buy, but seeing unit-cost "headwinds" on upcoming F-35 Lot 15-17 full-rate-production.**

Committed to driving, from current ~$39K F-35 Flying-hour cost, down to ~$25K F-35 Flying-hour cost target, by ~2025. Transitioning from Lockheed-owned ALIS, to DoD-owned cloud-based "ODIN" sustainment IT, (FOC by ~September 2022).

Fully-expects Lockheed to agree to give DoD at least Government Purpose License Rights in key IP, as part of potential five-year F-35 PBL contract. [Three variables of: (a) business-case for Lockheed; (b) enterprise-outcomes for DoD; and (c) performance-outcomes of Flying-hour cost & mission-capable-rates]

Does not currently-support three-year multi-year-contract for F-35 Lot 15-17 full-rate-production, (but supports Base + two Options); because current Lockheed pricing does not show sufficient cost-savings for Block 15-17 multi-year-contract.

New Lifecycle Sustainment Plan: (a) accelerated upgrades to early aircraft; (b) accelerated stand-up of organic depot maintenance by ~-36 months; (c) Navy now doing intermediate maintenance aboard-ship.

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6. MDA Director, VADM Jon Hill: All threats are now very fast, down-on-the-deck, and maneuvering. That is hard on Sensors; Fire Control; and Interceptors. Missile defense must be layered, because it is a "no-fail" mission. Must be prepared for "leakers". Avoid terminal defense, if at all possible.

$9.2B 2021 MDA Request: (a) NGI; (b) space-based-sensor-layer for hypersonic-defense, (SDA/MDA "H&BTSS"); (c) Aegis DDG-51 based "Regional Glide Phase Weapon System", (Mark 41 VLS-based); (d) C2BMC; (e) mid-course SM-3 Block IB; (f) integrating THAAD & Patriot; (g) SM-6 terminal defense; (h) SM-3 Block IIA under-layer test against ICBM; (i) GMD; (j) Sensors, (LRDR; Upgraded EWR; AN/TPY-2). **[Homeland Defense Radar-Hawaii, and Pacific Discriminating Radar, were cancelled in 2021-2025, as part of -$5.7B "DWR" Review]**

It works! FTG-11 "dual-salvo" test worked perfectly. Upcoming FTM-44 (Flight Test Mission-Maritime) will be next, (multiple shots with SM-3 Block IIA over a long path).

NGI: Two competitive suppliers through PDR, (through CDR if possible). STRATCOM and NORTHCOM are refining specific Requirements, (warhead; boost vehicle; launch infrastructure). **MDA is retaining discretion during NGI development, to be able to adapt to abrupt threat-shifts.** [MDA is also coordinating with VCJCS Gen. John Hyten]

---

7. NAVSEA VADM Tom Moore: [NAVSEA controls ~$52B/year of funding, (~83K FTE)] Current ~$207B Navy topline will achieve ~305-310 ship-fleet. Navy will not hollow-out the Fleet.

Ship Depot Maintenance O&M has grown from ~$7B in 2011, up to $11.2B in 2021. [During 2004-2013, aircraft carrier fleet shrank, pushing them harder, while Public Shipyard workforce also shrank; which cumulatively-triggered the train-wreck of late ships coming out of depot]

Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Plan (SIOP): ~$21B over 20 years. [~$1.5B/year, starting in 2022 at Pearl Harbor] [~6% of public shipyard work today, is just walking around ancient shipyard lay-out. SIOP is building new facilities, around the dry-dock itself, to keep workers on the ship]

Almost all surface ships are contracted-out to industry. Historically-competing each individual ship-availability on a stand-alone, lowest-cost, fixed-price basis, was not successful. [Industry only hired ~75% of the required workforce, and Navy would award contracts only ~30 days before ship-availability started]

Contracts are now being awarded at least ~120 days in advance. Contracts are now being bundled, at ~3-4 ships per contract. [No more lowest-price-technically-acceptable contracts] **Now best-value contracts, to make sure that ships come out of maintenance on-time.**

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8. USMC Deputy Commandant (Programs & Resources), Lt.Gen. John Jansen: Any fight with China, will immediately-become global. USMC will be a blunt-force, thrust into the fight immediately.

Commandant Berger's priorities: (a) Force design, (sea-denial & sea-control); (b) modernize, (lethality; C4ISR; forward-maneuver; unmanned-systems; light logistics); (c) long-range anti-ship-strike & air defense; (d) communications; (e) USMC will shrink to fund modernization, (-2.3K Marine reduction in 2021 alone).

USMC must be able to operate within contested-environment, using "Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations".

USMC is planning for zero topline funding-growth, "self-funding" critical modernization, by shrinking end-strength, and divesting non-lethal capabilities.

[See full discussion below]

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a. 5G & "Next-G" [$53M 2019 5G Reprogramming; +$200M 2020 5G Congressional plus-up; and $484M 2021 5G Request] **"Dynamic-spectrum-sharing" is critical for both DoD & "commercial telecom" to share, because there is no new frequency available.**

- **Dr. Griffin:** ["True power of 5G is the internet-of-things, and that will only happen if we can blend 'mid-band' and 'millimeter-wave'...an area where the United States has the lead...The future is in 'spectrum-sharing'...There is no 'greenfield' spectrum left...The flip-side of spectrum-sharing is 'anti-jam'...obviously we need to know how to do that..."]

b. Biotechnology Initiative: Humans are beginning to manipulate genomes on an industrial-scale. **Standing-up 9th "Manufacturing Institute",** focused on biotechnology, (harnessing huge DoD databases).

c. AI: [$459M 2021 DARPA "AI Next" Request] **Must field incremental-AI now!**

d. Hypersonics: Tactical-boost-glide technology is finally "close-to-being-in-hand". Next focus is DARPA's air-breathing scramjet, (because it boosts shorter-range weapons load-out). [Starting air-breathing scramjet production after ~2025]

Must produce tactical-boost-glide "aero-shells" at-scale: Industry must facilitize now, for "billions-of-dollars" of entry-vehicle "aero-shell" production at-scale.

- **Dr. Griffin:** ["Frankly, the enemy is not going to be scared where we produce one a week...that's ~500 by the end of the decade. That doesn't scare anybody...Our adversaries are accumulating these by the hundreds & thousands...**We are making a major investment of hypersonic-weaponry at-scale...I will just say that we are going to be making a major investment of many billions-of-dollars in production at-scale**...The leading-edge of that production at-scale is 'aero-shells', thermal protection systems...The United States has not been in the business of designing & producing entry-vehicle aero-shells...in decades...We need to get back in that business...**As budgets unroll over the next year...I would urge those of you in industry, to treat my comments here, as the classic 'demand-signal'...We are going to be investing in hypersonics production at-scale...**"]

e. SDA: Today's exquisite-constellations of space assets are "juicy targets". Must proliferate large quantities of lower-value spacecraft in all orbits, (not just LEO), to ensure that China/Russia realize that they cannot attack US in Space.

- **Dr. Griffin:** ["Our architecture in Space today, consists of a relatively-few, very high-value, extra-ordinarily-exquisite, unbelievably-capable space assets, for which the other name is 'targets', to the adversary...[General] John Hyten did me one-better, when he labelled them as 'juicy targets'...We have the architecture that I would design, if I knew that we did not have a threat...But...we have adversaries, and we have a threat to our space architecture...We need, above all else, to be far more resilient, because Space is absolutely-critical to everything about the way that the United States fights war...We cannot give adversaries even the faintest-idea, that they could disable our Space architecture...So we need proliferation, and not just as I am commonly-associated with the push to proliferate in LEO...I want to proliferate in all orbits...with assets that are individually-lower-value, but collectively very high-value, so they do not give the adversary a particularly-desirable aim-point..."]

f. SDA will transition into US Space Force, (under the Department of the Air Force), on ~October 1, 2022.

- **Dr. Griffin:** ["Space Development Agency will become part of the US Space Force...That date in law, can be 1 October of 2022, and that is when we are, in the Department, planning to make that transfer...That is consistent with the establishment of the Space Acquisition Czar, within the US Space Force..."]

g. Space-Based-Sensor-Layer for hypersonic-defense: Target-acquisition/tracking/fire-control for hypersonic-defense against growing Chinese hypersonic-threat, can really only be done from Space, (with low-latency transport and tracking layers).

- **Dr. Griffin:** ["In the missile defense arena, from rogue nations, North Korea & Iran, we have the problem of tracking 'dim' upper-stages...We really need to understand after a launch, whether a re-entry vehicle is targeted for Hawaii or Seattle...Until we can observe...dim upper-stages, without being dependent upon exquisite radar assets, we will be concerned..."]
- **Dr. Griffin:** ["Secondarily...the Chinese hypersonic threat...is severe and increasing...They out-run and out-range our best radars...We have to be prepared to deal with 'raids', not of one or two, but of many...It is not a particularly-difficult intercept-guidance problem...except...you have to be able to see them coming...You will not hit a target that you cannot see...It is not a region of the world that we can populate with radars...and radars are targets...So we can only do the target-acquisition, tracking, and fire control problem from Space...And because these targets are something like ~20X dimmer, or more, than the targets that we are able to track in the strategic missile world with SBIRS [High], we really need to be closer to the action...We need to proliferate. We need assets that are individually easier and cheaper to build, but lots more of them..."]
- **Dr. Griffin:** ["So that comes down to the tracking-layer...which in the Missile Defense Agency, goes by the name of 'H&BTSS' Hypersonic & Ballistic Tracking Sensor System...Between experiments

being done by DARPA, between H&BTSS assigned to MDA, and the Space Development Agency's overall architectural-responsibility, we are over the next couple of years, doing the actual experiments to figure out what sensors we have to have, to be able to track these things against the earth's clutter-background...Frankly, we don't know those answers yet...We have conjectures, but we are not going to build an architecture based on conjecture..."]

h. Assured Micro-electronics will be "zero-trust" risk-management architectures: [~$900M 2021 Request]

- **Dr. Griffin:** ["We are investing in zero-trust risk-managed architectures...We have made a break intellectually, with the 'perimeter defense' concepts, 'trusted-foundry' concepts, that weren't working, and were leaving us numerous Moore's Law generations behind the commercial state-of-the-art...DoD just does not call-the-shots. We are something like 1% of the micro-electronics demand...No one but DoD cares about 'prompt nuclear dose'...Our job is to get back on the technology-pace that the industry sets, rather than thinking that we control that..."]

i. MDA NGI: Full-speed-ahead on NGI competition; with clear inference of also developing SM-3 Block IIA "under-layer" for interim "mid-2020s" coverage. Also planning development of more capable THAAD, for expansion of terminal defense options for STRATCOM & NORTHCOM, (presumably to also close "arctic-gap" from Russian submarines).

- **Dr. Griffin:** ["In the Missile Defense Agency...we...have released three Requests-for-Information, and two draft RFPs, for what we call our 'Next Generation Interceptor'...following last year's cancellation of the Redesigned Kill Vehicle, because it was not going to meet 'spec'...So we just decided to start over...That [final RFP] procurement will be out shortly...In the meantime, to get us through the [20]20s, we are taking a very serious look at expanding the role of SM-3 IIA...Congress has demanded...in legislation, that we fly a flight test of SM-3 IIA against an ICBM-like target, and we have another one coming along after that...We are also looking at an expanded role for a more capable THAAD design..."]

j. Laser-scaling: By ~2022, goal is to deploy ~300KW laser. Targeting deployment of initial ~100KW ship-based & land-based lasers in ~2020. Will also field high-powered-microwave, (presumably for electronic "soft-kill" of Chinese hypersonic-glide-vehicles; arctic-launched Russian cruise missiles; and swarming-UAVs.

- **Dr. Griffin:** ["I want to get it out of the laboratory...and onto weapons platforms. I want to explore lethality. I want to explore beam-control...Which of the several laser-technologies, are most-useful, for which application?...We are also putting more emphasis on high-powered-micro-waves. That too is a directed energy...and has very great promise..."]

2a. Army Futures Command, Gen. Mike Murray: [CSA Gen. James McConville: "Winning matters!"] Requirements & Acquisition are now welded together. Modernization must be transformative, and never-ending. **Modernization can no longer be episodic, (every ~40-45 years), or Army will be out-gunned & out-ranged.** "6 + 2" are the major "CFT" capability buckets: [LRPF; NGCV; FVL; Network; IAMD; Soldier Lethality; Assured PNT; Synthetic Training Environment] **Army is "all-in" on JADC2.**

Convergence/MDO: Future war will be 100% fighting, (on offense or defense), 100% of the time. [Super Bowl was ~14 minutes of actual play. Future Convergence/MDO will be 60 minutes of non-stop play, (in a 60 minute game), always on the offensive or defense, to overwhelm the enemy]

- **Long Range Precision Fires:** (a) ERCA Paladin M109 is now shooting ~70 Km. Will field in ~2023; (b) Precision Strike Missile (PrSM); (c) Long Range Hypersonic Weapon (PEO RCCTO: LTG Thurgood). Will field in ~2023.
- **NGCV:** (a) OMFV re-start prioritizes "9 Characteristics", (not specific Requirements); (b) RCV-Light & RCV-Medium experiments next month; (c) Mobile Protected Firepower.
- **FVL:** (a) FLRAA is being accelerated, (both prototypes have now flown); (b) FARA (two prototyping awards imminent); (c) FTUAS (5 BCTs of different experimental UAS fielded); (d) Spike NLOS.
- **Network:** (a) Capability Set 2021 is fixed; (b) working on Capability Set 2023 now; (c) Command Post Computing is now fielded; (d) Integrated Tactical Network (includes "secure-but-unclassified"); (e) Assured PNT (mounted & dismounted).
- **IAMD:** (a) M-SHORAD (Stryker chassis, with missiles & guns, will field in ~2023); (b) 50 KW laser M-SHORAD in ~2024.
- **Soldier Lethality:** (a) ENVG-B (works in total darkness; weapon-sighting directly through goggles, saves seconds for first-shot/first-kill); (b) IVAS (Soldier test-points every three-weeks), (translates Russian signs; has compass; has blue-force-tracking), (~300 meters vision, and great peripheral-vision); (c) NGASW & NGASR (6.8mm bullet punches through anything).
- **Synthetic Training Environment:** (a) One World Terrain (for training with IVAS goggles); (b) Virtual Collective Trainers.

JADC2: All Services are partnered. ["Cannot argue against it...it is like free parking in DC...Army is all-in..."]

2b. Army ASAALT, Dr. Bruce Jette: AFC & ASAALT generally work things out internally. ["We do everything we can, to avoid having to go to mom & dad to sort it out"] (Sec. McCarthy & Gen. McConville).

-$30B 2020 Night Court was "really-gutsy-move", and Congress supported almost all program-trades. Another ~$13B of transfers in 2021-2025. [-$3B shifted to OSD; -$3.1B from ~40 program kills; and ~-$4.3B from ~41 program delays; but ~+$600M re-instated for ~12 programs; and ~+$2.1B increase for ~9 accelerated programs] **But the ~2020-2022 prototypes must perform!**

~11 Army "Section 804" Middle Tier Acquisition programs. [Big chunk of time-savings, comes from JCIDS Requirements exemption] Much easier to start with "Characteristics" that Army is seeking, instead of frozen Requirements right upfront. **OTAs are great initial contract agreements.** [~830 2019 Army OTAs, for ~$4.9B] [FAR criminal certifications terrify innovative small non-traditional contractors, driving innovation away]

Must get IP rights correct, right upfront. Always open to specifically-negotiated-license-rights. ["We can talk"] [Trade Secrets can be reverse-engineered; Software is generally-copyrighted, (with the owner paying for the continuous-updates); Patents should always be honored; Open-source software must be rigorously-checked, to make sure it is not corrupted, by third-parties]

Long Range Hypersonic Weapon is a critical priority for Sr. Army Leadership in the INDOPACOM fight.

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3. USAF Air Combat Command, Gen. Mike Holmes: INDOPACOM fight is battle of long-range-fires, with China firing at fixed-sites, but US firing at mobile, fleeting targets. US must get better at finding those mobile targets, while also complicating Chinese-targeting.

JADC2: Must increase OPTEMPO to high-velocity, (because enemy will have the same sensors and equal-range fires). Uber is a commercial version of matching sensor-to-shooter. Every aircraft will become a sensor, and a shooter. **But war-fighting doctrine, (JADC2 is overseen by VCJCS Gen. John Hyten), will have to change, to fully-harness true combat-power, or it will just make US Forces incrementally-better.**

Future squadrons will need to be able to deploy; attack; conduct C&C; defend & sustain their base; receive follow-on forces; etc. [For the past 19 years, USAF has executed permissive-environment attacks, from pre-existing Middle East infrastructure]

Combat drones: Will not require lots of training. Squadrons will "pull-them-out" several times each year to exercise. Some of them will get shot down each time.

NGAD: Digital-engineering will allow new aircraft-types, that force China to react, every ~five-years. **While unspoken, NGAD will clearly be twin-engined aircraft, optimized for long-range penetrating INDOPACOM fight.**

- **USAF problem is "sensor-&-weapon-density-at-range", how do you keep enough sensors & weapons forward, to drive the tempo of the fight? USAF will continue to invest in "long-range kill-chains", both with penetrating platforms & stand-off platforms.**

Future will be a mix of manned & unmanned: **ACC will shift from traditional "fighter-roadmap", to a platform-agnostic "capability-roadmap", to incorporate unmanned capability as it matures.**

F-15Cs will start to be retired over the later-years of 2021-2025 FYDP, (to be replaced with F-35 & F-15EX).

"Pre-Block" F-16s will retire next, (with replacement options of F-35, NGAD, and unmanned).

Looking to "free ourselves up from runways", to complicate Chinese-targeting.

Looking for ways to break kill-chains of Chinese long-range missile-attacks on USAF Tankers. [Hosting Industry Days at ACC]

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4. USAF SAE Military Deputy, Lt. Gen. Duke Richardson: ["This is our time"] Air Force Acquisition can confound China, by driving forward at-speed. Everything must occur at-speed!

Section 804 Middle Tier Acquisition drives speed, by cutting ~-3-4 years out of initial program-start, (exempt from JCIDS Requirements approval), (but still doing the same acquisition paperwork, just later). [No more serial-processes of Requirements; then funding; then Milestone reviews] **OPIR has saved ~-3.5 years of schedule right upfront.**

Software development moves too slowly. [Smaller chunks, must be delivered-constantly. Adopt Kubernetes-containerized software, (to avoid non-compatibility with legacy hardware). Burn-down the backlog of required capabilities. Keep hacking away, to deliver capability]

Digital-engineering will allow final aircraft assembly to occur with simple hand-tools. [B-52 CERP re-engining competition; T-7A; GBSD]

NGAD Century-series is targeted at building the very 1st aircraft, at the ~100th aircraft unit-cost on the learning-curve. The key is designing the aircraft quickly, to confound the Chinese, to force China to react.

ABMS is the pathway to JADC2. Four-month "connect-a-thons" will accept lots-of-risk, with goal of constantly-delivering incremental-capability. [~$144M 2020 ABMS RDT&E. $302M 2021 ABMS RDT&E Request]

- If Industry is not volunteering to participate, they will naturally be left behind. PEOs are also competing for funding.

No more small business "SBIRS churn". [~15 2019 USAF "Pitch Days"] [Then upsize 3rd Phase awards, to avoid the traditional "valley-of-death"]

No favored-programs. All programs get the same intense-attention from Dr. Roper; Ms. Darlene Costello; and Lt. Gen. Richardson. [Maj. Gen. Cameron Holt is also incentivizing contractor-performance]

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5. F-35 PEO, Lt. Gen. Eric Fick: F-35 is highly-lethal, almost at 80% 2020 mission-capable-rate, (73% 2019 mission-capable-rate). Driving down cost in Block 4 C2D2 development. **Pleased with ~-5%/year Lockheed unit-cost reduction in ~$34B F-35 Block 12-14 Block Buy, but seeing unit-cost "headwinds" in upcoming F-35 Lot 15-17 full-rate-production.**

Committed to driving to ~$25K F-35 Flying-hour cost by ~2025 target, (from ~$39K Flying-hour now). Transitioning from Lockheed-owned ALIS, to DoD-owned cloud-based "ODIN" sustainment IT, (FOC by ~September 2022). [Willing to dispute claimed Lockheed IP rights in existing software, but wants to amicably-negotiate future IP/software rights]

Fully-expects Lockheed to agree to give DoD at least Government Purpose License Rights in key IP, as part of potential five-year F-35 PBL contract. [Three variables of: (a) business-case for Lockheed; (b) enterprise-outcomes for DoD; and (c) performance-outcomes of Flying-hour cost & mission-capable-rates]

Does not currently-support three-year multi-year-contract for upcoming F-35 Lot 15-17 full-rate-production, (but supports Base + two Options); because current Lockheed pricing does not show sufficient cost-savings for Block 15-17 multi-year-contract.

New Lifecycle Sustainment Plan: (a) accelerated upgrades to early aircraft; (b) accelerated stand-up of organic depot maintenance by ~-36 months; (c) Navy now doing intermediate maintenance aboard-ship.

Just restructured F-35 PEO, to push authority down to lowest-level on: (a) capability; (b) availability; (c) affordability; (d) agility; (e) deployability.

F-35 Block 4: C2D2 now pushes out software-updates continuously.

Finally at ~73% 2019 mission-capable-rate, (~+20% better than 2018).

~$34B F-35 Block 12-14 Block Buy unit-cost reduction of -15%, (~-5%/year from Lockheed on airframe), **but facing "headwinds" in unit-cost for full-rate-production F-35 Lot 15-17.**

Must find software defects earlier. Legacy software code must be replaced, (because it requires too much regression-testing).

~$39K Flying-hour cost now. Must drive to ~$25K Flying-hour cost target by ~2025.

F-35 sensor-fusion is so good, that "red-air-sorties" are no longer required. ["F-35 simply tells them, 'bad guy at one-o'clock', go get'em..."]

Constantly-seeking pilot feedback from: (a) USAF ACC Gen. Mike Holmes; (b) Naval Air Boss VADM DeWolfe Miller; and (c) USMC LtGen Steve Rudder.

Phasing-out Lockheed-owned ALIS IT system, with new DoD-owned cloud-based "Operational Data Integrated Network" (ODIN), (FOC by ~September 2022).

Japanese Government paused Japan F-35 FACO production for one-week, due to Coronavirus.

Politely-dismissed Elon Musk's bold claims, that immediate future is entirely unmanned-combat-drones.

F-35 full-rate-production decision should occur in ~December 2020-January 2021.

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6. MDA Director, VADM Jon Hill: All threats are now very fast, down-on-the-deck, and maneuvering. That is hard on Sensors; Fire Control; and Interceptors. Missile defense must be layered, because it is a "no-fail" mission. Must be prepared for "leakers". Avoid terminal defense, if at all possible.

$9.2B 2021 MDA Request: (a) NGI; (b) space-based-sensor-layer for hypersonic-defense, (SDA/MDA "H&BTSS"); (c) Aegis DDG-51 based "Regional Glide Phase Weapon System", (Mark 41 VLS-based); (d) C2BMC; (e) mid-course SM-3 Block IB; (f) integrating THAAD & Patriot; (g) SM-6 terminal defense; (h) SM-3 Block IIA under-layer test against ICBM; (i) GMD; (j) Sensors, (LRDR; Upgraded EWR; AN/TPY-2). **[Homeland Defense Radar-Hawaii, and Pacific Discriminating Radar, were cancelled in 2021-2025, as part of -$5.7B "DWR" Review]**

It works! FTG-11 "dual-salvo" test worked perfectly. Upcoming FTM-44 (Flight Test Mission-Maritime) will be next, (multiple shots with SM-3 Block IIA over a long path). Also modifying THAAD, (to add additional layers of terminal defense protection to US).

NGI: Two competitive suppliers through PDR, (through CDR if possible). STRATCOM and NORTHCOM are refining specific Requirements for the "all-up-round", (warhead; boost vehicle; launch infrastructure). **MDA is retaining discretion during NGI development, to be able to adapt to abrupt threat-shifts.** [MDA is also coordinating with VCJCS Gen. John Hyten]

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7. NAVSEA VADM Tom Moore: [NAVSEA controls ~$52B/year of funding, (~83K FTE)] Current ~$207B Navy topline will achieve ~305-310 ship-fleet. Navy will not hollow-out the Fleet.

Ship Depot Maintenance O&M has grown from ~$7B in 2011, up to $11.2B in 2021. Ships are being pushed harder, are older, and are more complex. [During 2004-2013, aircraft carrier fleet shrank, pushing them harder, while Public Shipyard workforce also shrank; which cumulatively-triggered the train-wreck of late ships coming out of depot] [Much healthier ~36K public shipyard FTE today]

Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Plan (SIOP): ~$21B over 20 years. [~$1.5B/year, starting in 2022 at Pearl Harbor] [~$3B equipment upgrade, (~$150M/year); plus ~$4B of separate dry-dock upgrades] [~6% of public shipyard workforce effort today, is just walking, within the ancient shipyard lay-out. SIOP is building the new facilities, around the dry-dock itself, to keep workers on the ship]

Almost all surface ships are contracted-out to industry. Historically-competing each individual ship-availability on a stand-alone, lowest-cost, fixed-price basis, was not successful. [Industry only hired ~75% of the required workforce, and Navy would award contracts only ~30 days before ship-availability started]

Contracts are now being awarded ~120 days in advance, (with eventual plan of ~180 days). **Contracts are now being bundled, at ~3-4 ships per contract.** No more lowest-price-technically-acceptable contracts, (because only full-yards, with no additional capacity, could win). **Now best-value contracts, to make sure that ships come out of maintenance on-time.**

- Navy also used to withhold ~10% of monthly billings, to pressure contractors to deliver ships on-time. Now, if contractor is on-schedule, Navy only withholds -1% of billings/month, to ensure that lower-tier subcontractors are cashflow-healthy.
- CEOs need to tell VADM Moore, how they can drive down cost of each ship-availability. [Was just at GD/NASSCO, which gave him a list of ~40 proposed-actions]

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8. USMC Deputy Commandant (Programs & Resources), Lt.Gen. John Jansen: Any fight with China, will become global right-off-the-bat. USMC will be a blunt-force, thrust into the fight immediately.

Commandant's priorities: (a) Force design, (return to the sea, for sea-denial & sea-control); (b) modernize, (lethality; C4ISR; forward-maneuver; unmanned-systems; light logistics); (c) long-range anti-

ship-strike & air defense; (d) communications; (e) will shrink to fund modernization, (-2.3K Marine reduction in 2021 alone).

USMC must be able to operate within contested-environment, using "Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations". [No more assumed-access to deep-water-ports or long-runways]

USMC is planning for zero topline funding-growth: [DoD is ~15% of current Federal budget, and will fall to ~12% by ~2025; while undertaking Nuclear Triad Recap, plus growth of US Space Force]

USMC Advanced Reconnaissance Vehicle will have both UAVs & unmanned-ground-vehicles. ACV 1.1 production is now ramping-up.

From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Thu, 12 Mar 2020 13:04:41 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Coronavirus alters the merger playbook

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2020 9:01:05 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
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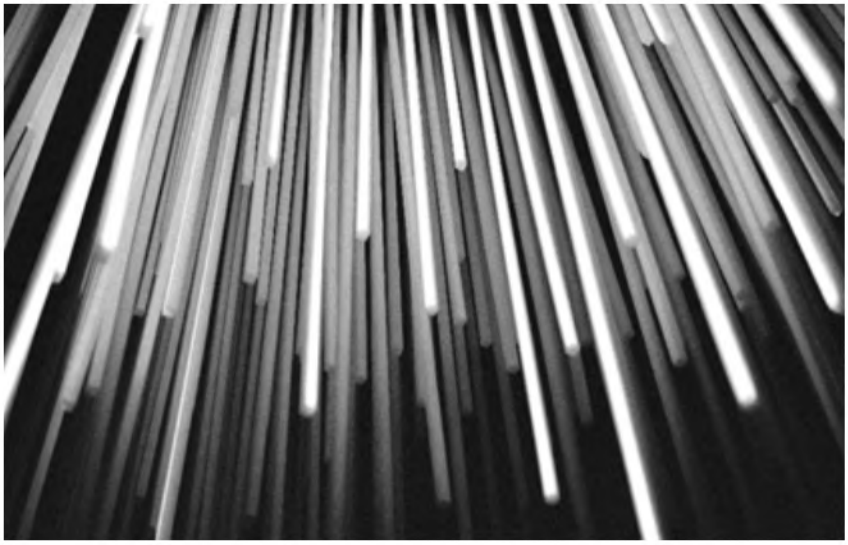

Private equity's most recent quarterly fund returns are in line with results from the past decade. Venture capital vehicles are still outperforming other strategies. Across the private markets, there are reasons for optimism among LPs about the returns coming their way.

But as outlined in PitchBook's latest **Global Fund Performance Report**, there are also signs of decline—including the fact that, through June 2019, rolling one-year horizon IRRs for private capital funds had fallen off for six consecutive quarters. The report explores the full breadth of private fund performance, with other key points including:

- Private equity returns are beginning to converge with public market equivalents
- Private debt and real assets funds continue to lag behind other strategies
- A flood of exits has pushed VC distributions to record highs

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Craig Malloy
Dan Hinkle
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read the report

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Coronavirus alters the merger playbook for dealmakers

(Justin Sullivan/Getty Images News)

When Morgan Stanley agreed last month to acquire E-Trade for $13 billion, the acquisition made headlines as the biggest takeover by a US bank in over a decade. Now, it's noteworthy for another reason: It's one of the first M&A deals to have included a reference to the novel coronavirus in its terms.

- As the pandemic rattles global markets, lawyers are urging their clients to perform more aggressive due diligence when it comes to the possible effects of the virus on dealmaking
- Key areas of scrutiny include insurance policies and whether to diversify supply chains

Liza Landsman

Thilo Schroeder

Investors

Alexandria Venture Investments

Bain Capital

Blue Cloud Ventures

Bristol-Myers Squibb

Casdin Capital

Colt Ventures

Counterpart Ventures

Crown Venture Fund

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- Uncertainty over the duration of the pandemic represents one of the biggest threats to overall M&A activity

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The expansion stage hits $120B invested in 2019

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The expansion stage of private capital investing saw close to $120 billion invested last year across nearly 3,500 financings in the US. Additionally, close to $190 billion in capital overhang is available to target this space for the next several years.

Deloitte and PitchBook's brand new Road to Next series provides a data-driven examination of this expansion stage, which is comprised of large private companies raking in growth funding from non-traditional players.

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Content will include:

1. How companies and investors utilize and build on traditional growth capital strategies.
2. How expansion-stage companies continue to expand the boundaries of traditional company lifecycles, exploring topics such as direct listings or secondary transactions folding into mega-financings.
3. Insights from Deloitte professionals and PitchBook data.

Access the report

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Share:

NEA closes $3.6B fund, promotes Liza Landsman to GP

NEA has closed its 17th flagship fund on $3.6 billion, meeting a target first disclosed in an SEC filing about a year ago. The vehicle is one of the largest VC funds ever raised, according to PitchBook data; it will focus on making early- and growth-stage investments in the technology and healthcare sectors, congruent with the firm's typical strategy. With the closing of the new fund, NEA has now reached about $24 billion in total committed capital since its creation in 1977.

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Along with the funding announcement, the firm has also promoted Liza Landsman to general partner. She joined NEA as a venture partner in 2018; before that she served as president of Jet.com, a former NEA portfolio company that was acquired by Walmart in 2016. Landsman focuses on software and services investments across the consumer sector.

Share:

Startup investors criticize UK's tech tax, other measures

Rishi Sunak (center), with treasury staff members, presents the U annual budget on Wednesday. (Peter Summers/Getty Images Nev

On Wednesday, Rishi Sunak gave his first budget speech since being appointed the UK's finance minister last month.

Among the changes are a hefty budget increase—nearly half of which will go toward coronavirus measures—as well as a life sciences investment

program and a handful of controversial taxes.

What do VCs think?

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KKR adds head of global impact for Asia

KKR has tapped Chee-Wei Wong as its head of global impact for Asia, based in Singapore. Wong will focus on sourcing deals with companies that provide commercial solutions for sustainability issues. Before joining the firm, he was a managing director at Tailwind Capital in New York and worked at EQT for nine years in various investor roles.

The hiring comes a month after KKR closed its inaugural global impact fund on $1.3 billion. Since then, the fund has made six investments, including deals with Singapore's Barghest Building Performance and India's Ramky Enviro Engineers.

Beyond the impact fund, KKR has expanded its Asian portfolio in recent years. The firm closed its third Asian Fund on $9.3 billion in 2017, and its fourth such fund is targeting $12.5 billion, according to Bloomberg.

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Maybe Art Van Furniture was destined all along to file for bankruptcy protection at some point. But it seems clear that private equity couldn't solve the company's problems. [Crain's Chicago Business]

The rapid spread of the coronavirus is presenting a new kind of challenge for gig economy workers. It's also showing why their classification as contractors is so critical. [Wired]

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VC DEALS

Cloudbeds floats off with $82M

Cloudbeds, a San Diego-based provider of hospitality management software for businesses in 157 countries, has raised $82 million in new financing led by Viking Global Investors. PeakSpan Capital, Recruit Co., Counterpart Ventures and Cultivation Capital also helped fund the round. The startup was valued at more than $110 million in October, according to PitchBook data.

View round

View 26 competitors »

Silverback bags $78.5M for solid tumor treatment

Silverback Therapeutics has raised $78.5 million in a Series B led by US Venture Partners, with participation from Nextech Invest, Hunt Investment Group and others. The Seattle-based biotech startup will use the cash to continue developing a treatment that targets HER2-expressing solid tumors, with plans to begin clinical trials later this year. USVP general partner Jonathan Root and Nextech Invest partner Thilo Schroeder have joined Silverback's board of directors.

Additional Investors:
Pontifax Venture Capital, Colt Ventures, NS Investment, OrbiMed, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Alexandria Venture Investments

View round

View 26 competitors »

Lyra lands $75M

Lyra Health, a provider of mental health benefits for employers, has collected $75 million in a Series C round. The funding was led by IVP, with participation from Meritech Capital Partners, Casdin Capital, Greylock Partners and others. Founded in 2015 and based in Burlingame, Calif., Lyra provides a digital platform that allows users to access therapists and receive personalized prescriptions for medication.

Additional Investors:
Crown Venture Fund, Glynn Capital, Providence Ventures, Tenaya Capital, Venrock

View round

View 17 competitors »

Arctic Wolf nabs $60M Series D

Cybersecurity startup Arctic Wolf has landed a $60 million Series D co-led by Blue Cloud Ventures and Stereo Capital, with participation from Delta-v Capital and NextEquity Partners. The Bay Area-based business provides threat monitoring services to help companies manage risks.

View round

View 52 competitors »

Share:

Genfleet Therapeutics secures $57M

China's Genfleet Therapeutics has raised 400 million yuan (about $57 million) in a Series B led by CDH Investments and Shenzhen Capital Group, according to Deal Street Asia. The Shanghai-based company

develops treatments for cancer and autoimmune diseases.

View round

View similar company »

Human composting startup Recompose raises $4M

Hoping to ride a wave of eco-conscious funerals, Recompose has landed $4 million of an ongoing round from undisclosed investors. The Seattle-based startup is creating reusable vessels that turn human remains into soil. Washington became the first US state to legalize the composting of human bodies last year.

View round

View similar company »

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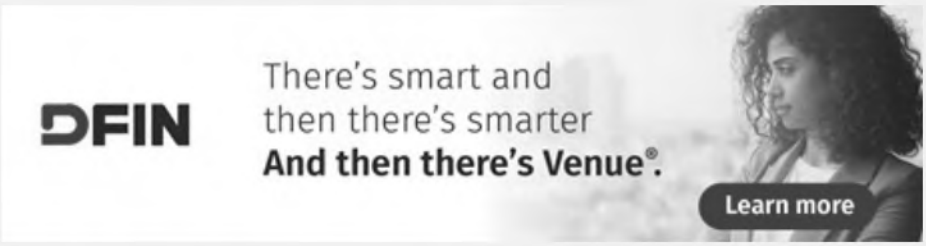


PE DEALS

Veritas to pay $5B for DXC healthcare division

Veritas Capital has agreed to acquire DXC Technology's US State and Local Health and Human

Services unit, a provider of tech to US health programs, for $5 billion in cash. Expected to close by December, the deal marks a multiple of roughly 3.5x on the division's trailing 12-month sales of $1.4 billion. Based in Tysons, Va., DXC offers IT services to a range of sectors including healthcare, aerospace and telecommunications.

View deal View similar company »

Buyout group nears completion of China Biologic deal

A group including Centurium Capital-backed Beachhead Holdings is in the final stage of negotiations to take China Biologic Products private for $120 per share, according to Bloomberg. The offer, which was initially made in September, reportedly values China Biologic at $4.6 billion. The seller of plasma products was founded in 2002 and has traded on the Nasdaq since 2009.

View deal View 10 competitors »

Eureka invests in LegalPartners

Eureka Equity Partners has recapitalized LegalPartners, a provider of outsourced legal services with offices in Atlanta and Chicago. The deal marks the first investment from Eureka IV, the Philadelphia-based firm's latest small buyout fund.

View deal View similar company »

Riverside backs National Flavors

The Riverside Company has acquired National Flavors, a Michigan-based manufacturer of flavoring ingredients for food and beverages. National Flavors interim president Dan Hinkle will continue with the company as an investor and board member, according to Crain's Cleveland Business.

View details

View 13 competitors »

Marlin combines Lifesize with Serenova

Marlin Equity Partners has acquired video software company Lifesize and merged it with Serenova, a business software company Marlin has owned since 2015. The combined business will be based in Austin, with Lifesize CEO Craig Malloy to become CEO and Serenova CEO John Lynch said to become senior VP of sales.

View deal

View 8 competitors »

Join the Rocky Mountain Corporate Growth Conference

With industries and innovation continuing to evolve against a backdrop of the longest US expansion in economic history, change is the only constant in today's middle market.

Attend the 2020 Rocky Mountain Corporate Growth Conference on April 6-7 in Denver to tackle the new questions emerging in the ever-challenging—and changing—landscape of the middle market. The event features keynote speakers including Daymond John and Terrell Davis, plus an exclusive DealSource lounge, Capital Connection reception and more.

Register now

PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

Magic Leap explores sale

Augmented reality company Magic Leap is weighing options such as a sale, a partnership or a partial sale ahead of a potential listing, according to Bloomberg. The VC-backed company has reportedly approached Johnson & Johnson and Facebook as possible acquirers, although the social media giant reportedly was not interested. Florida-based Magic Leap was last

valued at more than $6 billion.

View details

View 21 competitors »

FUNDRAISING

Felicis Ventures finalizes $510M fund

Felicis Ventures has reportedly closed its seventh flagship fund on $510 million, nearly doubling the size of a $270 million predecessor that closed in 2018. Felicis is a Menlo Park-based firm with a portfolio that includes companies such as Fitbit, Credit Karma and Planet Labs.

View details

View 317 investments »

Valar Ventures seeks $500M

Valar Ventures has set twin $250 million targets for its sixth flagship fund and its second late-stage vehicle, according to SEC filings. The New York-based firm, which spun out from Thiel Capital in 2014, invests mainly in startups from outside Silicon Valley. It closed its previous flagship fund last year on $150 million.

View fund

View 45 investments »

INVESTORS

Second PE firm shuts London office over coronavirus

Bain Capital has temporarily shut down its London office after a confirmed case of COVID-19, according to Financial News, with staff working from home until further notice. The news comes after KKR temporarily closed its two London offices after an employee tested positive for the virus.

View details

View 834 investments »

CORPORATE M&A

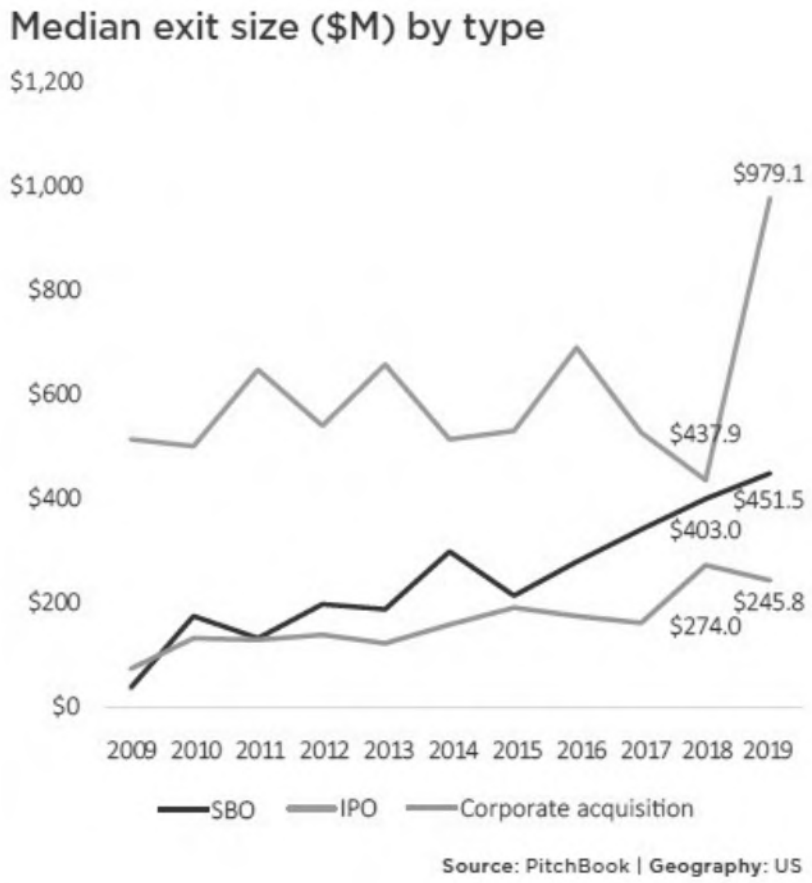
PepsiCo to pour $3.85B into Rockstar

PepsiCo has agreed to pay $3.85 billion to fully acquire Rockstar, a privately held energy drink company founded in 2001. PepsiCo previously signed a North American distribution deal with Las Vegas-based Rockstar in 2009, limiting PepsiCo's ability to distribute other energy drink brands.

View details

View similar company »

CHART OF THE DAY



Source: **PitchBook's 2019 Annual US PE Breakdown**

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From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Thu, 20 Feb 2020 10:50:22 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] PE keys boom in private capital fundraising

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2020 5:49:44 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PE keys boom in private capital fundraising

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The Daily Pitch: VC, PE and M&A

February 20, 2020
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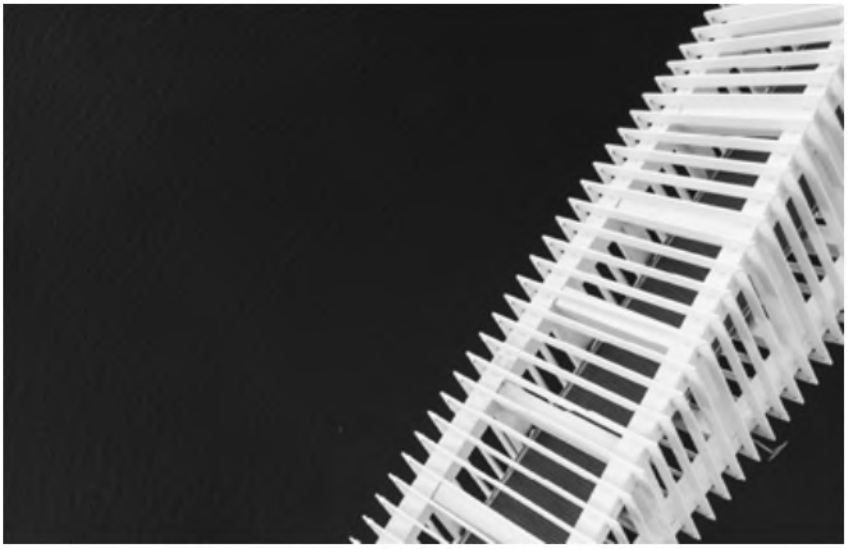
TODAY'S TOP STORIES

Private capital fundraising hits new highs in 2019



In 2019 the number of global private capital funds declined for the fourth straight year. But the amount of capital raised for those funds set a new record, reaching $888 billion—a sign of the growing role strategies such as venture capital, private equity and private debt are playing in institutional portfolios.

PitchBook's **2019 Annual Private Fund Strategies Report** drills down into the specifics, offering detailed data and analysis on fundraising trends from VC, PE, real assets, secondaries and other slices of the private market. Among the highlights:

- PE firms raised more money in 2019 than any year before
- Nearly 90% of VC funds in 2019 were larger than their predecessors, a decade high
- Private debt assets under management have swollen by more than 350% in the past 10 years
- There's reason to think the fundraising boom will

Who's in the newsletter today?

People

John Vrionis

Noah Carr

Peter Thiel

Tom Mawhinney

Investors

8VC

ATL Partners

Align Capital Partners

Andreessen Horowitz

BCI Partners

Benesse Holdings

BlackRock

Blume Ventures

Centerbridge Partners

Cisco Investments

Craft Ventures

Eastward Capital Partners

Eight Roads

F-Prime Capital

Female Founders Fund

Founders Fund

continue in 2020

read the report

Share:

Centerbridge-backed Duo Bank strikes deal for Canadian lender

(Blue Mountain Images/Getty Images)

Duo Bank of Canada, a Toronto-based financial services provider backed by bank chairman Stephen Smith, Centerbridge Partners and Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, has agreed to acquire Fairstone Financial from a group led by J.C. Flowers and Värde Partners. Based in Montreal, Fairstone offers credit solutions through direct lending services and financing for consumer retail and vehicle purchases. J.C. Flowers and Värde Partners acquired Fairstone (fka CitiFinancial Canada) from Citi in 2017.

HIG Capital
Harmony Partners
Icon Ventures
Insight Partners
J.C. Flowers
Jyoti Bansal
Marlin Equity Partners
Molex Ventures
NEA
Oak HC/FT
Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan
Point72 Ventures
Prosus Ventures
Qualcomm Ventures
Redpoint Ventures
Sequoia
Sequoia India
Serent Capital
Sky Island Capital
Spring Mountain Capital
Stephen Smith
Third Point Ventures
Tiger Global
Unusual Ventures
Värde Partners
Valor Equity Partners
Vista Equity Partners

Companies

Aéropostale
Amazon
Authentic Brands Group
Automation Anywhere
Bigmoon

Last week, Reuters reported that New York-based Centerbridge was looking to raise between $4.25 billion and $5 billion for its fourth credit fund, potentially topping a predecessor that raised $4 billion. In the past, the firm has focused its credit funds on buying the debt of struggling companies at risk of filing for Chapter 11 protection, in hopes of eventually owning the company. But the latest vehicle isn't expected to repeat that strategy, according to Reuters.

Related read: **Following a decade-long uptick, direct lending continues to rise**

Share:

Health care, IT companies looking to up their capabilities

SPONSORED

The year-end editions of RSM's Industry Spotlights are now available, in which RSM deal experts unpack PitchBook datasets to identify the drivers of M&A and private equity activity in the health care and information technology markets. Here are some key takeaways:

Health Care & Life Sciences Spotlight

- M&A volume contracted by nearly 25%, but deals got significantly larger, averaging a record $2.16 billion in 2019

Entertainment
BitGo
Brookfield Property Partners
Cardinal Health Canada
Dunzo
Duo Bank of Canada
Elenion Technologies
Embracer
Fairstone Financial
Forever 21
Fountain Plating
Harbor
Just Eat
LaunchDarkly
Maven
Naspers
Nokia
Outrider
Saber Interactive
SentinelOne
Simon Property Group
Sports Illustrated
Swiggy
Takeaway.com
Uber
Udemy
Unacademy
VIP Cinema
Valence Surface Technologies
Whatfix
Zomato

- Ongoing labor shortages are helping fuel consolidation across several segments
- Consumerization of the industry continues, as health care providers look to acquire or develop telemedicine and patient-facing capabilities

IT Spotlight

- Almost $530 billion changed hands in IT M&A transactions in 2019, while deal volume declined 16% versus 2018
- Dealmaking in cybersecurity is on the rise due to increased attacks: The average total cost of a data breach was $3.9 million last year
- Software investors with sizeable portfolios are looking to expand into other, complementary services

Read the full Spotlights

Share:

Prosus renews bet on Indian food delivery after Uber exits

(Pinkypills/iStock/Getty Images Plus)

Indian food delivery startup Swiggy has raised $113 million in a Series I led by existing investor Prosus Ventures, according to Entrackr. The round comes less than a month after Uber sold its Indian food delivery platform to rival Zomato for a reported $350 million.

Prosus, which spun out of South African internet giant Naspers, appears keen on the future of the sector. Earlier this year, it lost a bidding war with Amsterdam's Takeaway.com to acquire British food delivery provider Just Eat. The round also highlights how expensive the battle for delivery domination has become: Swiggy raised $1 billion just over a year ago and was reportedly seeking as much as $750 million last year.

With Uber Eats India out of the way, Swiggy and Zomato can claim a duopoly. But that may be short-lived, as Amazon reportedly has plans to launch its own rival service in the country.

Share:

Recommended Reads

In its early days, Google earned a reputation as a worker's paradise. With a recent employee revolt and a shift in the company's mores, times seem to be changing. [The New York Times]

In Europe, blitzscaling is falling out of favor. [Sifted]

The capabilities of artificial intelligence have come a long way in a short time. When it comes to understanding cause and effect, though, machines still have quite a way to go. [MIT Technology Review]

Private equity's interest in the in-home healthcare industry probably isn't going away any time soon. [Home Health Care News]

How climate change could bring about the next major recession. [Gizmodo]

Men like Richard Flasck and Evan Thurmond care about the stock market because of their portfolios. But also because of their vanity plates. [The Wall Street Journal]

Since yesterday, the PitchBook Platform added:

242	1387	476	11
Deals	People	Companies	Funds

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TODAY'S HEADLINES

The Daily Benchmark

2006 Vintage Global Venture Funds with more than $250M

People

Unusual Ventures builds out team

VC Deals

SentinelOne hits $1B+ valuation

Outrider drives off with $53M

Udemy books $2B valuation

Maven picks up $45M Series C

Whatfix pockets $32M

PE Deals

Forever 21 finds new PE-backed owner

Sky Island takes over Polished Metals

PE-backed Valence lands Fountain Plating

Exits

PE-backed theater seat maker files for bankruptcy

Nokia to buy Elenion

BitGo to acquire a16z-backed security token startup

Fundraising

Founders Fund stocks up with $3B across two funds

Serent raises $750M

Align Capital pulls in $450M

Blume Ventures lands $102M for Fund III

Corporate M&A

Embracer lines up addition to video game empire

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THE DAILY BENCHMARK

2006 Vintage Global Venture Funds with more than $250M

Median IRR

3.95%

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

11.79%

1.28x
Median TVPI

Select top performers
Summit Partners Venture Capital Fund II
Thomas McNerney & Partners II
M/C Venture Partners VI

**IRR: net of fees*

22 Funds in Benchmark »

Check out the latest version of **PitchBook Benchmarks**

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS
NXT CAPITAL
AN ORIX COMPANY
NXT CAPITAL
CELEBRATING 10 YEARS
OF DIRECT LENDING

PEOPLE

Unusual Ventures builds out team

Unusual Ventures, the early-stage Silicon Valley firm founded by John Vrionis and Jyoti Bansal, has added Noah Carr, a founding partner at Point72 Ventures, as a general partner. The firm also named Bill Hodak, who was formerly with LaunchDarkly, as marketing partner.

View details

View 58 investments »

VC DEALS

SentinelOne hits $1B+ valuation

SentinelOne has raised $200 million at a $1.1 billion valuation. The round was led by Insight Partners, with participation from investors including Tiger Global and Qualcomm Ventures. The California-based company offers a cybersecurity platform to detect and manage threats; it raised $120 million in 2019 at a $600 million valuation, according to PitchBook data.

Additional Investors:
Third Point Ventures, Vista Equity Partners

View round

View 36 competitors »

Outrider drives off with $53M

Outrider (fka Azevtec) has emerged from stealth with $53 million in funding from NEA and 8VC, according to reports. The Colorado-based company offers a platform to manage autonomous freight and transportation fleets.

View round

View similar company »

Udemy books $2B valuation

Udemy has raised $50 million in a round led by Japanese investor Benesse Holdings, valuing the online learning company at $2 billion. Udemy raised $60 million at a $710 million valuation in 2016, according to PitchBook data. Founded in 2010 and based in San Francisco, the company offers a platform with more than 150,000 online courses.

View round

View 29 competitors »

Maven picks up $45M Series C

Maven, the developer of a healthtech platform offering a network of healthcare providers for women, families and employers, has raised $45 million in a round led by Icon Ventures. Founded in 2014, the company raised $27 million at an $87 million valuation in 2018, according to PitchBook data. Tom Mawhinney, Icon Ventures' lead investor, will join Maven's board.

Additional Investors:
Oak HC/FT, Sequoia, Harmony Partners, Female Founders Fund, Spring Mountain Capital

View round

View 25 competitors »

Whatfix pockets $32M

Sequoia India has led a $32 million Series C for Whatfix, the developer of a platform that provides training and support for employees in real time. The San Jose-based company plans to use the funding in part to expand in Europe and Australia. Whatfix's customers include robotic process software developer Automation Anywhere and healthcare provider Cardinal Health Canada.

Additional Investors:
Cisco Investments, Eight Roads, F-Prime Capital

View round

View 30 competitors »

What's driving mid-market deal activity?
Read Transaction Trends Q1 for key insights.
Download report

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PE DEALS

Forever 21 finds new PE-backed owner

After filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in September and subsequently searching for a buyer, Forever 21 has been acquired by a consortium composed of PE-backed Authentic Brands Group and

mall owners Simon Property Group and Brookfield Property Partners. Its stores are expected to remain open. Authentic Brands, which has been backed by BlackRock since August, also holds companies like Aéropostale and Sports Illustrated in its portfolio.

View deal

View 27 competitors »

Sky Island takes over Polished Metals

Sky Island Capital has acquired a majority stake in Polished Metals, a supplier of architectural and ornamental metal. Founded in 1979 and based in New Jersey, the company serves the elevator, escalator, door, furniture, automotive and other industries.

View details

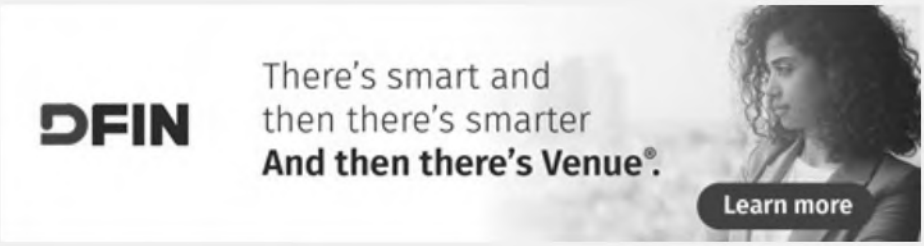
View similar company »

PE-backed Valence lands Fountain Plating

Valence Surface Technologies, which offers finishing services for the aerospace & defense industry, has acquired Fountain Plating, a Massachusetts-based provider of finishing services for aircraft engines and other components. ATL Partners and BCI Partners have backed Valence since acquiring the company in July.

View deal

View similar company »



EXITS

PE-backed theater seat maker files for bankruptcy

VIP Cinema, a St. Louis-based company that makes reclining seats for movie theaters, has reportedly filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection as it struggles with long-term debt and a saturated market. HIG Capital has backed VIP Cinema since 2017 and will reportedly control the business alongside its lenders during the reorganization.

View details

View similar company »

Nokia to buy Elenion

Nokia has agreed to buy New York-based silicon photonics company Elenion Technologies. The acquisition is intended to bolster the Finland-based telecom conglomerate's optical connectivity, including its 5G efforts. Before emerging from stealth mode in 2016, Elenion was incubated by Marlin Equity Partners. The company has also received backing from investors including Eastward Capital Partners and Molex Ventures.

View details

View similar company »

BitGo to acquire a16z-backed security token startup

BitGo, a Palo Alto-based provider of cryptocurrency financial services, has agreed to buy Harbor, a San Francisco-based security token platform founded in 2018. Harbor has received prior funding from investors including Founders Fund, Andreessen Horowitz and Valor Equity Partners, while BitGo is supported by backers including Redpoint Ventures and Craft Ventures.

View details

View 53 competitors »

FUNDRAISING

Founders Fund stocks up with $3B across two funds

Peter Thiel's Founders Fund has wrapped up its first growth-stage fund with $1.5 billion in commitments, the firm said Wednesday, a few months after closing its seventh flagship fund on $1.5 billion in November. The growth fund will write large checks for late-stage companies, and the flagship fund will invest across various sectors and stages. Founders Fund closed its previous flagship effort on $1.3 billion in 2016.

View fund

View 420 investments »

Serent raises $750M

San Francisco-based Serent Capital has raised $750 million for its fourth flagship fund, according to an SEC filing, up from a $572 million predecessor that closed in 2017. The lower-middle-market firm typically targets investments in B2B software, data and tech-enabled services companies in the US and Canada.

View fund

View 67 investments »

Align Capital pulls in $450M

Dallas-based Align Capital Partners has closed its second flagship fund on a $450 hard cap, exceeding a $400 million target. The firm focuses on lower-middle-market companies in the B2B business services, manufacturing and distribution sectors. It closed its inaugural fund on $325 million in 2016.

View fund

View 21 investments »

Blume Ventures lands $102M for Fund III

Blume Ventures, a Mumbai-based early-stage VC firm, has closed its third flagship vehicle on $102 million. The firm was established in 2010; its portfolio includes online education company Unacademy and Dunzo, the developer of a local delivery platform for household goods, food and other items. Blume closed its second namesake fund on $60 million in 2016.

View fund

View 155 investments »

CORPORATE M&A

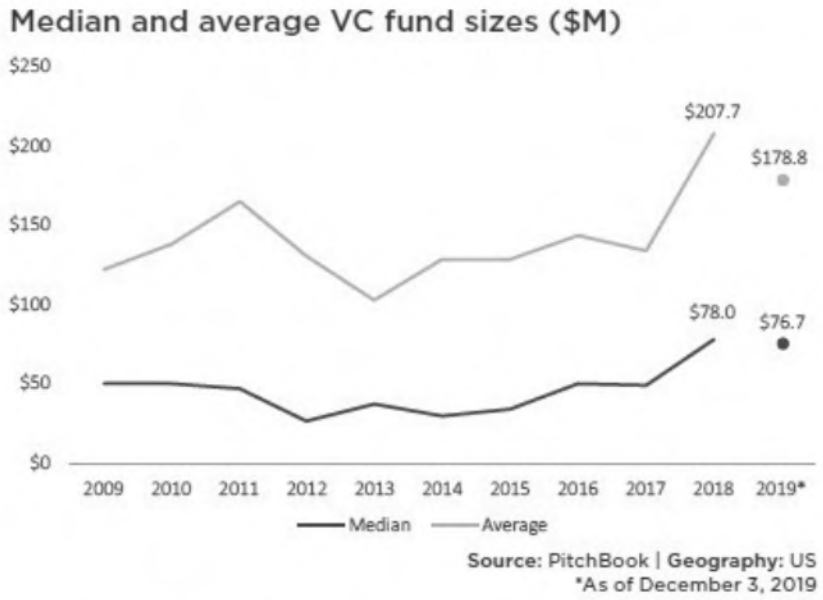
Embracer lines up addition to video game empire

Swedish video game holding company Embracer has agreed to pay up to $525 million to buy New Jersey-based game developer Saber Interactive, which is behind popular games like "World War Z" and the "NBA Playgrounds" franchise. Embracer will pay $150 million up front, plus as much as $375 million in future earn-outs based on certain milestones. Saber recently expanded into Portugal with the acquisition of local developer Bigmoon Entertainment.

View details

View similar company »

CHART OF THE DAY



"Although the median US VC fund size in 2019 has leveled off, we expect to see a significant increase in 2020 for a variety of reasons, including rising allocations to the strategy and decade-high VC fund distributions back to LPs. This has enabled GPs to raise ever-larger funds as they fuel blitzscaling strategies and strive to keep pace with rising deal sizes."

Source: **PitchBook's 2020 Venture Capital Outlook**

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From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Sun, 23 Feb 2020 11:00:17 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] Blue Apron, HQ Trivia move on to Plan B

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Sunday, February 23, 2020 5:45:54 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] Blue Apron, HQ Trivia move on to Plan B

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PitchBook

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The Weekend Pitch

February 23, 2020
Presented by Monogram Orthopaedics

Blue Apron set out to transform the way people eat. HQ Trivia wanted to build the future of TV. Both companies financed their dreams by raising a lot of money from some of venture capital's biggest names. And for a while, both companies seemed on the brink of breaking through.

But startup life can be fickle. Gradually, the early success gave way not to failure, but to what's in some ways worse: irrelevance. And when the next-big-thing buzz wore off, both Blue Apron and HQ Trivia were confronted with the realization that their original plans for supremacy might need a major adjustment.

This is The Weekend Pitch. I'm Kevin Dowd, and you can reach me at weekend@pitchbook.com. Blue Apron is publicly seeking a buyer, and HQ Trivia has

monogram

The Future of 3D Printed Custom Joint Replacement. Learn more and invest today.

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apparently risen from the dead after a raucous, live-streamed funeral. The existential angst emanating from a pair of former Silicon Valley darlings is one of 10 things you need to know from the past week:

Always have a backup plan. (wildpixel/iStock/Getty Images Plus)

1. Cooks and questions

I've written before **in some length** about the turbulent times at Blue Apron, a company that encapsulates the venture capital world's brief infatuation with meal-kit delivery startups. This week, along with its Q4 earnings, the company announced it is evaluating strategic options, including a potential merger or outright sale.

Once valued at $2 billion by VCs, life has gotten much tougher for Blue Apron since a 2017 IPO. The company has never turned an annual profit—although it did cut its losses by nearly half from 2018 to 2019, dropping from $122.1 million to $61.1 million—and

revenue has been steadily shrinking.

In addition to revealing new financial numbers and plans to sniff around a sale, Blue Apron also announced the closure of a fulfillment center this week. The combination was enough to send the company's stock price plummeting even further. It closed Friday with a market cap of less than $40 million, meaning its valuation has declined by more than 98% from its VC-backed high point.

If Blue Apron is able to find a buyer, two obvious options might be an established grocery chain or a larger food-delivery company. Those were the routes taken by some of Blue Apron's former rivals in recent years: Fellow meal-kit startup Plated sold itself to Albertsons, while Home Chef was acquired by Kroger and Maple was gobbled up by Deliveroo.

Talks of an acquisition were also at the root of HQ Trivia's recent drama.

The startup burst onto the scene in 2017 with its joke-filled, live-streamed trivia games, where users could win money by correctly answering an increasingly difficult slate of questions. The next year, it raised $15 million in a round reportedly led by Founders Fund, valuing the company at $100 million, according to PitchBook data.

Co-founder Rus Yusupov, who previously co-founded Vine, took to the pages of The New York Times to proclaim HQ Trivia's "ambitions to essentially build the future of TV." But instead, viewers slowly began to drift away, and funding dried up.

On Valentine's Day, Yusupov reportedly sent a memo to workers announcing that a planned acquisition had fallen through and that HQ Trivia would cease operations that day. That night, HQ Trivia broadcast what was purportedly its last episode ever, replete with f-bombs, spraying champagne, complaints about high-priced dog food, and statements from host Matt Richards like, "Why are we shutting down? I don't know. Ask our investors."

But Monday morning brought a twist. Yusupov tweeted that after a "busy weekend," he'd found a new buyer for HQ Trivia that wanted to keep the company up and running. Employees and fans are surely trying not to dwell on a succeeding tweet from Yusupov admitting that it's "[n]ot a done deal yet."

No matter what happens, we haven't heard the last of the story. The Hollywood Reporter indicated Friday that The Ringer is planning a new podcast charting the trivia company's rise and fall.

Today, neither Blue Apron nor HQ Trivia is where they hoped they would be back in 2017. One could go so far as to say recent events at the companies have been disastrous. But the fact remains that both have been more successful than, I don't know, 97% of all startups that get up and running. Creating a sustainable company is really hard. Almost everyone fails. And almost everyone fails long before the point of making national headlines or reaching a unicorn valuation.

And who knows: Maybe new ownership is all Blue Apron and HQ Trivia need to mount wholesale turnarounds. The past week, though, brought plenty

of reason for pessimism.

Grocery shopping may very well be transformed in the coming years, and a new future of TV may be built. But I don't think Blue Apron and HQ Trivia will be the ones doing it.

2. Mega-mergers

Wall Street got a major shakeup on Thursday, when investment banking colossus Morgan Stanley agreed to acquire plucky online trading pioneer E*Trade **for $13 billion**, the latest bit of high-priced fallout from a recent transition in the online brokerage sphere to fee-free trading. The software space is also readying for some significant consolidation, as Ultimate Software and Kronos agreed this week to create a new $22 billion giant in HR software. Both companies are backed by private equity investors Hellman & Friedman, Blackstone, GIC and JMI Equity.

3. Financial consolidation

Morgan Stanley and E*Trade's combination was far from the only major merger news in the financial world this week. Asset management giant Franklin Resources agreed to buy rival Legg Mason for $4.5 billion. Ally Financial inked a $2.65 billion pact to purchase CardWorks, which offers sub-prime credit card services. And LendingClub agreed to buy Radius Bancorp for $185 million, combining a fintech pioneer with an FDIC-regulated bank.

4. A PE shopping spree

Buyout firms have conducted a few recent deals

involving shopping-mall staples. Veteran retail investor Sycamore Partners agreed Thursday to acquire a 55% stake in Victoria's Secret at a $1.1 billion valuation, a deal that will also see Bath & Body Works spin out as a standalone company. Forever 21 finalized a reported $81 million sale to Simon Property Group, Brookfield Property Partners and Authentic Brands, the last of which is backed by BlackRock. And Cole Haan, which is backed by Apax Partners, cobbled together plans for an IPO on the Nasdaq.

5. Funds from famous founders

Founders Fund, which is led in part by Peter Thiel, confirmed a new $1.5 billion growth vehicle this week, adding to $1.5 billion the firm raised for its latest flagship fund in November. Atomico, a Europe-focused firm helmed by Skype co-founder Niklas Zennström, closed its latest vehicle **on $820 million**. And Marcy Venture Partners—which takes its name from the public housing complex where co-founder Jay-Z grew up—revealed $85 million in commitments for its first namesake fund.

These days, Jay-Z is far more than a rapper.
(Nicholas Hunt/Getty Images Europe)

6. Special deliveries

A trio of companies active in the food-delivery space reeled in major funding this week. Singapore's Grab, a do-everything startup that's also active in ridehailing, payments and more, reportedly lined up more than $700 million from Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group. India's Swiggy collected $113 million, setting the company up to capitalize on Uber's recent exit from the nation's delivery market. And the delightfully named HungryPanda broke off $20 million in new funding for Chinese food deliveries.

7. Nothing Compares 2 U

Not in the world of edtech, at least, where the 21st letter of the alphabet had a very big week. First, Unacademy, an Indian startup offering various tutoring and study services, revealed $110 million in funding from, among others, General Atlantic,

Sequoia India and Facebook—three very notable backers. Shortly thereafter, San Francisco-based Udemy, which offers a platform where instructors can create their own courses in any number of subjects, raised $50 million at a $2 billion valuation.

8. Ethical unicorns

OneTrust has ridden a wave of new privacy laws like Europe's GDPR and the California Consumer Privacy Act all the way **to unicorn status**. The company, which makes software used by other enterprises to comply with privacy regulations, collected $210 million in VC this week at a $2.7 billion valuation. Another startup concerned with online safety reached a 10-figure valuation this week, too, as endpoint security specialist SentinelOne raised $200 million, valuing it at $1.1 billion.

9. Udder madness

A little more than two months after filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, major US milk processor Dean Foods has figured out its next step, agreeing this week to sell the bulk of its assets to the Dairy Farmers of America for $425 million. The takeover by the farmer-owned cooperative is the latest step in a dairy-industry shakeup. Borden Dairy, another major US milk company, followed Dean Foods into bankruptcy protection last month.

10. Cirque du PE

Canadian pension investor Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec increased its stake in Cirque du Soleil this week to 20%, up from a reported 10%,

while also deepening the modern circus company's ties to private equity. Cirque du Soleil's majority owner is still TPG Capital, which acquired a 60% stake in the business back in 2015 at a reported valuation of $1.5 billion. Could a buyout-inspired acrobatic extravaganza be coming to a stage near you?

View the full list online

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A MESSAGE FROM MONOGRAM ORTHOPAEDICS

Invest in Monogram Orthopaedics, the future of custom joint replacement

Modern joint replacements are crude and generic to all patients. Monogram Orthopaedics is using a thoughtful synthesis of machine learning (AI), robotics, and 3D printing to revolutionize joint replacement and surgery.

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Purchasing power

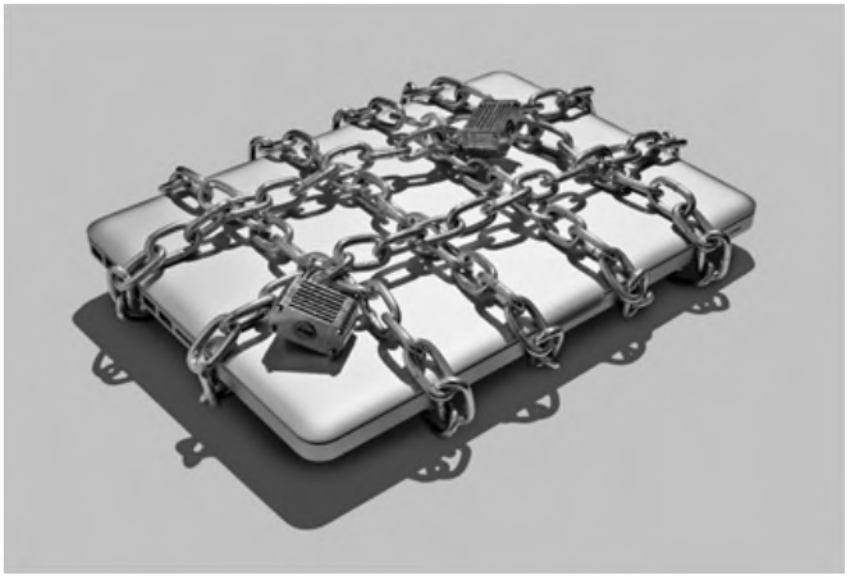
(PM Images/DigitalVision/Getty Images)

PitchBook's analysts and data experts spent a lot of time in 2019 tracking everything there is to track about fundraising in the private markets. You can find the fruits of those efforts in our 2019 Annual Private Fund Strategies Report, which compiles and compares data from venture capital, private equity, private debt, secondaries and other strategies.

Overall private capital fundraising value reached a new high, buoyed by a banner year from private equity, while the VC world continued to shift away from smaller funds. The number of new real assets vehicles plunged, and private debt dry powder continues to build.

Give it a read for analysis of those trends **and much, much more**.

Lock it down



(Tim Robberts/Stone/Getty Images)

A widespread shift to the cloud has opened up new system vulnerabilities. Hackers are ramping up their efforts to breach major businesses. So it makes sense that information security has swelled into a $120 billion-plus market—and that both venture capitalists and corporate acquirers have remained active in the space.

The latest piece of PitchBook's Emerging Tech Research is a thorough examination of all things information security, including deep dives into sub-sectors like network security, data security and endpoint security. PitchBook subscribers can read the full 95-page report, while a preview version **is available to all**.

Startup name of the week

To hydration! (katleho Seisa/E+/Getty Images)

When your product is exactly the same as all your competitors' products—in this case, a mixture of two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen—branding really is everything. Which is how you get to a company like **Liquid Death**, which raised a $9 million Series A this week to fund its heavy-metal approach to hydration.

The company sells water. In cans. It is valued at more than $55 million, according to PitchBook data.

The cans are tallboys, with "Liquid Death" spelled out in a gothic font above an ornate logo of a skull and a tagline that reads "murder your thirst." The company's latest ad campaign is called "Keep the Underworld Beautiful." I guess the idea is to make water look as much like beer as you can so that people will buy it ironically? Or maybe there's a real market for quenching the thirst of earnest Satanists. All of which is to say: If I saw a can at the store, I'd probably buy one.

We're creating the future of custom joint replacement using 3D Printing. Learn more and invest today.

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monogram

Recommended reads

Why corporate buzzwords are so annoying. [The Atlantic]

Melting glaciers have moved the border between Switzerland and Italy—or so Switzerland claims. Which presents some peculiar questions for a 49-year-old mountaineer and restaurateur who just wants to serve spaghetti. [The Wall Street Journal]

Lately, the US and the UK are taking very different stances on e-cigarettes, a sign the great vape debate is far from settled. [The Guardian]

True bitcoin believers are immersed in a "crypto winter." A push of new bitcoin mining operations could mean spring is on the horizon. [Fortune]

The American workplace has fully embraced the open-concept office—much to the chagrin of workers. [The New York Times]

A chat with climate and philanthropy experts about the efficacy of Jeff Bezos' plans for a $10 billion climate fund. [GeekWire]

The Instagram aesthetic is creating a gold rush in the house-plant industry—which, in turn, is creating the opportunity for plant-based scams. [Wired]

American politics might look very different if serving in Congress was a little bit more like jury duty. [The New Yorker]

Ongoing efforts to democratize private equity present an interesting dilemma to established industry players: Which is better, scale or exclusivity? [Institutional Investor]

For decades, Page Six defined celebrity gossip. Somehow, someway, it's still thriving in this modern age. [Esquire]

Quote of the week

"Adam was the sun and we all revolved around him. We were kings of the world."

—An anonymous WeWork employee, reflecting on the Adam Neumann era in a detailed look at the company's descent into startup infamy

The Weekend Pitch is produced by editor Kevin Dowd.

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From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Wed, 25 Mar 2020 11:17:16 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] A stress test awaits corporate VCs

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 7:16:05 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] A stress test awaits corporate VCs

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TODAY'S TOP STORIES

Facing disaster, corporate VC to undergo key stress test

Helping mid-market companies succeed is central to what we do.
More than investing. Invested. Learn more.
MADISON CAPITAL FUNDING
NEW YORK LIFE INVESTMENTS

Salesforce is one of the most active corporate venture capital inves
(Eduardo Hueck/Getty Images)

After driving much of the venture capital market's hyper-growth in recent years, corporations are poised for a decisive test of their zeal for funding startups.

- Inside boardrooms of every stripe, countless investment decisions are either being postponed or subjected to fresh scrutiny. Companies are suddenly on guard as they struggle to take the measure of an unfolding economic disaster.

- Because corporations, notably SoftBank, played a pivotal role in private fundraising recently, their willingness to stick to their VC strategies in this downturn could shape the pool of capital that will be available in the long run.

- "In that hunker-down scenario, all spending goes through a rigorous review, obviously," said Pradeep Tagare, head of the $250 million corporate venture fund at UK-based energy company National Grid. "One of the first things that gets hit is the venture capital part of it

Who's in the newsletter today?

People

April Underwood

Ev Williams

José María Loizaga Viguri

Investors

because that's an easy thing to step back on."

read more

More coronavirus news: Continuing coverage from PitchBook

Share:

White House changes course on tests, adding to confusion for startups

White House coronavirus task force leader Deborah Birx speaks a briefing Monday. (Drew Angerer/Getty Images)

Contradicting the Food and Drug Administration's recently updated guidance, the White House said coronavirus tests that consumers would do at home will be available this week.

- Officials didn't reveal which companies' tests would be used.

1955 Capital
ADM Ventures
Airbnb
Andreessen Horowitz
Ares Management
BlackRock
Breakthrough Energy Ventures
Canada Pension Plan Investment Board
Collaborative Fund
Comcast Ventures
Danone Manifesto Ventures
Elliott Management
oundry Group
ulcrum Capital
artners
eneration
vestment
anagement
lobal Infrastructure
artners
reylock Partners
illhouse Capital
itialized Capital
anagement
ner Loop Capital
KKR
M12
Madison Dearborn Partners
Mousse Partners
Mubadala
NextGen Venture Partners
Obvious Ventures
PayPal
Snam
Spark Capital

- "There was a breakthrough today, and I think we'll see that from the FDA, for all of those who are waiting for self-swabbing options, those are going to be available sometime this week," White House coronavirus task force leader Deborah Birx said in a briefing on Monday night.

- On Saturday, the FDA had explicitly barred companies from offering mail-order self-swabbing kits for processing in commercial labs, increasing the scope of a previous directive that only blocked in-home tests. As a result, a series of **biotech startups were forced to abandon** their COVID-19 product plans. Some of these companies, including Carbon Health, Everlywell and Nurx, had sold or were on the verge of selling their at-cost kits.

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A MESSAGE FROM INSIGHT2PROFIT

Pricing in a volatile market

We are in the uncharted waters of a global pandemic and macroeconomic uncertainty. In this environment, how should businesses adjust their strategies to best address the unpredictable market? Are price cuts—or price increases—warranted to protect growth and margins?

Mike Brenner | Director

TPG Capital
The Carlyle Group
The Riverside Company
USVP
Valor Equity Partners
Warburg Pincus

Companies

ACS Group
Abu Dhabi National Oil Company
Arkose Labs
Benemax Financial Group
Brex
Carbon Health
Compose Labs
Emerson
Everlywell
Fritz AI
GitHub
Iaso Biotherapeutics
Landria
Medium
Nature's Fynd
Navacord
Neiman Marcus
Neji
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Zeus Living

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PE-backed Neiman Marcus braces for possibility of bankruptcy

(Joe Raedle/Getty Images North America)

High-end fashion chain Neiman Marcus has reached out to lenders about filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection to help relieve a $4.3 billion debt load and keep some of its stores open, according to Bloomberg. The news comes as more consumers are staying at home to avoid the coronavirus and retail sales continue to plummet. Neiman Marcus has yet to make any final decisions, though the Dallas-based company has already opted to at least temporarily close all of its physical locations.

Ares Management and Canada Pension Plan Investment Board acquired Neiman Marcus from TPG

PitchBook.

Deal sourcing best practices

Webinar | Mar. 31
9 a.m. PDT | 2 p.m. BST

Capital and Warburg Pincus for roughly $6 billion in 2013. Thanks in part to the meteoric rise of online retail, it's been a slog ever since, with the company trying and failing to go public. The debt load hasn't helped, either. Last year, Neiman Marcus agreed with creditors to extend the maturity date of some of its loans in hopes of buying some time to complete a turnaround.

Related read: **PE-backed Neiman Marcus in legal stand-off after receiving lifeline**

Share:

Travel startups struck by wave of layoffs

TripActions, Sonder and Zeus Living have reportedly laid off hundreds of employees as restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak batter the travel industry.

Andreessen Horowitz-backed TripActions let go of 350 staff members, Business Insider reported. The corporate travel management startup reportedly had 1,100 employees as of February. It raised a $250 million Series D last July at a $4 billion valuation, according to PitchBook data.

Hospitality startup Sonder laid off a third of its staff, or more than 400 employees, according to The Information. The company, which operates a network of short-term accommodation rentals, was valued at $1.1 billion last May, according to PitchBook data. Its investors include Spark Capital, Greylock Partners and Valor Equity Partners.

Zeus Living shed 30% of its staff, or nearly 80 employees, according to Business Insider. The company rents furnished properties on a monthly basis to business travelers. Airbnb, Initialized Capital Management and Comcast Ventures have backed Zeus Living.

Share:

2019 a strong year for emerging supply chain technology

The rise of the digital economy is putting new pressure on the traditional global supply chain. Businesses are demanding better visibility across delivery and supply channels, quicker shipping capabilities and the ability to source products on-demand to reflect real-time conditions at the consumer level. We view this as a compelling backdrop for new entrants seeking to address gaps in the status quo and see areas of growth across the value chain.

Our most recent **Emerging Tech Research: Supply Chain Tech report** covers this and more, with key trends including:

- Supply chain tech raised $10.4 billion in VC in 2019, an uptick from 2018
- Freight tech and delivery applications drove deal activity in 2019
- The coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the need for emerging technologies that can mitigate the risk of future supply chain shocks

If you have any questions or feedback about the research, we'd love to hear from you: analystresearch@pitchbook.com.

read the preview

Share:

How PE and VC can keep investing in a recession

The coronavirus pandemic has taken hold of global markets. Major US equity indices have lost more than 30% from their peaks, and it now seems clear that COVID-19 has ushered in the next economic crisis. Apart from the obvious public health considerations, the virus poses a threat to commerce, travel and daily life.

How does anyone invest in such an environment?

We dug into our research archives in search of an answer. Originally published in 2017 as a guide for preparation, our analyst note on **how PE firms can invest in a downturn** is more relevant than ever,

touching on key themes that have since come to shape private equity.

While the catalyst is very different this time around, comparing the current climate with that of the financial crisis in 2008 can be a useful way to consider the future. Our analyst note covering **VC during the Great Recession** may give a glimpse of what the current situation has in store.

Share:

Flush with cash, PE firms confront their new reality

(Chaiyawat Sripimonwan/EyeEm/Getty Images)

In the coming months, it's probable that a decline in prices across the market will present investors with an unprecedented opportunity to buy. But they'll also need to maintain their current portfolio companies.

With hundreds of billions of private debt dry powder at the ready, both situations appear possible.

How might PE firms divvy up the funds?

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Recommended Reads

One night on the streets with Lenin Cerón, one of the delivery men making sure the Big Apple stays fed. [The New Yorker]

Industry giants like Apollo Global Management and Blackstone think increased collaboration between their portfolio companies could be one way to weather the current storm. [Bloomberg]

In some ways, a low-tech website called ProMED is a relic of an earlier internet age. That hasn't stopped it from developing an impressive track record of crowdsourcing epidemics. [Wired]

The leaders of companies like Slack, Google and Cisco weigh in on the strange realities of taking their business dealings from the boardroom to a spare room. [The New York Times]

Overall, consumer spending is expected to plummet. But for companies selling things like ammunition and marijuana, business is booming. [The Wall Street Journal]

A society where you don't leave the house and almost every meaningful social interaction takes place online? The members of Gen Z have been preparing for quarantine their whole lives. [The Atlantic]

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TODAY'S HEADLINES

The Daily Benchmark

2017 Vintage Global PE Funds

Investors

SoftBank held buyout talks with Elliott, Mubadala

People

Spanish PE pioneer dies of COVID-19

Obvious adds ex-Slack exec

VC Deals

Nature's Fynd harvests $80M Series B

Iaso Biotherapeutics picks up $60M

M12 leads $22M round for Arkose Labs

Fritz AI pockets $5M

PE Deals

BlackRock dips out of $15B race for Abu Dhabi pipelines

Riverside backs Red Nucleus

PE-backed Navacord buys Benemax Financial

Portfolio Companies

Brex snaps up a trio of startups

Exits

Fulcrum unloads Verdant

Fundraising

Carlyle hauls in $2.3B for Japanese fund

KKR seeks $750M for TMT fund in Asia

Collaborative Fund eyes $500M

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Summit Partners Europe Growth Equity Fund II

Great Hill Equity Partners VI

Veritas Capital Fund VI

**IRR: net of fees*

110 Funds in Benchmark »

Check out the latest version of **PitchBook Benchmarks**

Webinar: How coronavirus is affecting the private markets

Join PitchBook analysts as they walk through their recent reporting on COVID-19 and its impact on the private markets. Our director of research & analysis, Nizar Tarhuni, will join analysts James Gelfer, Dylan Cox and Paul Condra as they discuss what's in store for PE and VC firms in the wake of recent market volatility and the impending economic slowdown.

The webinar will be held today at 12 p.m. ET/9 a.m. PT. Topics of discussion will include:

- Historical performance and fundraising data from previous downturns
- How this bear market differs from 2008 and other years
- How emerging technologies are poised to weather the pandemic

Register for the webinar to attend live or receive a recording afterward.

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INVESTORS

SoftBank held buyout talks with Elliott, Mubadala

SoftBank recently held talks with hedge fund Elliott Management and Abu Dhabi sovereign wealth fund Mubadala about going private, The Financial Times reported. The potential buyout, which ultimately fell through, was one option the Japanese conglomerate considered before **authorizing the sale of up to 4.5 trillion yen** (around $41 billion) in assets in order to buy back shares and pay down debt.

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PEOPLE

Spanish PE pioneer dies of COVID-19

José María Loizaga Viguri, one of the founding fathers of Spanish private equity, has died after contracting the novel coronavirus. The news was confirmed by Spanish infrastructure giant ACS Group, where Loizaga, 84, was vice president and a board member. Loizaga was involved in notable deals in the 1980s, including the restructuring and subsequent merger of the two major Spanish industrial banks. He also founded Spanish PE firm Mercapital, serving as

president until 2008.

View details

Obvious adds ex-Slack exec

Former Slack chief product officer April Underwood has joined Obvious Ventures as a venture partner. She will invest in startups focused on climate, healthcare, wellness and the workplace. Obvious is a San Francisco-based firm co-founded by Ev Williams, who also co-founded Medium and Twitter.

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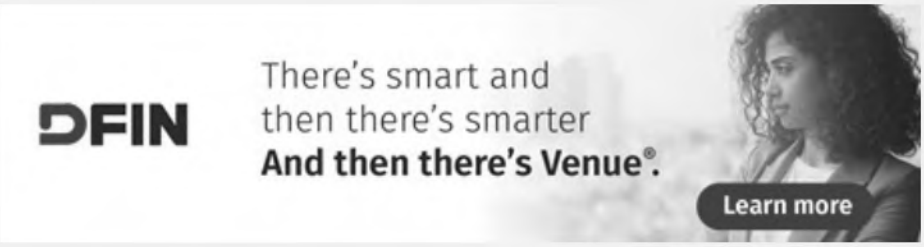

VC DEALS

Nature's Fynd harvests $80M Series B

Nature's Fynd, which is developing microbe-based proteins for meat substitutes, has raised $80 million in a round co-led by Generation Investment Management and Breakthrough Energy Ventures. The funding values the Chicago-based company at $380 million, according to PitchBook data.

Additional Investors:

1955 Capital, ADM Ventures, Danone Manifesto Ventures, Mousse Partners

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Iaso Biotherapeutics picks up $60M

Iaso Biotherapeutics has raised a $60 million Series B led by GL Ventures, a VC fund focusing on early-stage companies in healthcare and other industries that was launched by PE giant Hillhouse Capital. Founded in 2017 and based in China, Iaso is a developer of cell therapies for patients suffering from cancer; it plans to use the funding in part to advance clinical trials of its products in China and the US.

View round

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M12 leads $22M round for Arkose Labs

Arkose Labs, the developer of a cybersecurity platform intended to detect suspicious traffic and prevent fraud, has raised $22 million in a Series B led by M12. Existing investors PayPal and USVP participated in the funding. Based out of San Francisco, Arkose Labs' customers include GitHub, Roblox and Twilio.

View round

View 27 competitors »

Fritz AI pockets $5M

Fritz AI has raised $5 million in seed financing led by Foundry Group, with participation from investors including NextGen Venture Partners and Inner Loop Capital. The Boston-based startup is the provider of a project management platform designed to help app developers manage mobile machine learning projects.

View round

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PE DEALS

BlackRock dips out of $15B race for Abu Dhabi pipelines

BlackRock has left the auction to acquire the natural gas pipelines of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, according to Reuters. Previous reports had indicated that a deal could value the assets at some $15 billion. Italian infrastructure company Snam, Global Infrastructure Partners and a handful of other firms have reportedly stayed in the bidding. The news comes after BlackRock and KKR bought a 40% stake in Abu Dhabi's oil pipelines last year for $4 billion.

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Riverside backs Red Nucleus

The Riverside Company has invested in Red Nucleus, a Pennsylvania-based provider of learning and compliance services for the pharmaceutical industry. The firm plans to seek add-ons for the company in hopes of expanding its offerings and geographic

reach.

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PE-backed Navacord buys Benemax Financial

Navacord has acquired Canadian benefits management company Benemax Financial Group. Madison Dearborn Partners has backed Navacord, a Toronto-based commercial insurance broker, since it participated in a management buyout of the business in 2018.

View deal View similar company »

PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

Brex snaps up a trio of startups

Fintech startup Brex has announced three new acquisitions: security startup Neji, video company Compose Labs and Landria, which makes knowledge databases for businesses. Brex offers a corporate credit card backed by a tech-heavy underwriting process. It raised $100 million last June at a valuation of $2.6 billion, according to PitchBook data.

View details View 39 competitors »

EXITS

Fulcrum unloads Verdant

Canadian middle-market firm Fulcrum Capital Partners has sold Verdant Environmental to engineering giant Emerson. Based in Montreal, Verdant offers energy management solutions for the hospitality industry.

View details

View 2 competitors »

FUNDRAISING

Carlyle hauls in $2.3B for Japanese fund

The Carlyle Group has raised 258 yen (about $2.3 billion) for its fourth Japan buyout fund, the firm's largest vehicle targeting investments in that country, according to Reuters. The fund's predecessor closed on 120 billion yen in 2015.

View fund

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KKR seeks $750M for TMT fund in Asia

KKR has made plans to raise at least $750 million for a fund that will invest in startups in Asia's technology, media and telecommunications sector, according to Deal Street Asia. The news comes after the firm reportedly set a target of $15 billion for its next Asia-focused buyout fund, which would surpass a predecessor that pulled in $9.3 billion in 2017.

View

View 1,412 investments »

fund

Collaborative Fund eyes $500M

Collaborative Fund, a New York-based firm that traditionally makes venture investments, has set a $500 million target for its first growth fund, according to an SEC filing. The firm backs startups in the fintech, healthcare and consumer services sectors, as well as tech companies focused on child development and urban development.

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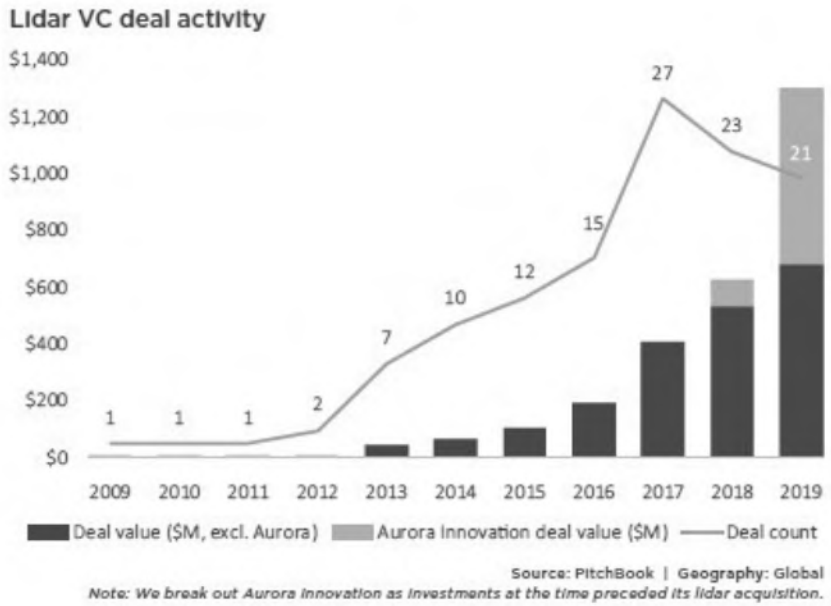
CHART OF THE DAY



"Automotive lidar is a key driver of VC investment in

the mobility and transportation industry. In 2019, investors deployed a record $1.3 billion in the space, up from $623 million the previous year. Standout deals in 2019 include the $170 million Series C round by Innoviz Technologies and the $230 million acquisition of Blackmore by Aurora Innovation. Though not included in this dataset, Hesai's $173 million Series C in January 2020 and Cepton Technologies' $50 million Series C in February 2020 are promising signs for the industry going forward."

Source: **PitchBook analyst note on the future of automotive lidar**

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From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Wed, 26 Feb 2020 11:13:45 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] UK startup stocks up for chipmaking war

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Wednesday, February 26, 2020 6:12:21 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UK startup stocks up for chipmaking war

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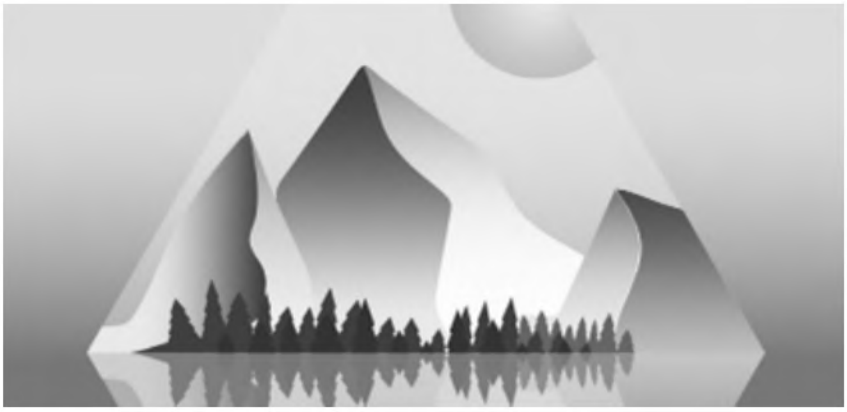
Introducing interactive League Tables



Our 2019 Annual Global League Tables went out recently in traditional PDF format, containing dozens of rankings of the most active players in VC, PE and M&A.

We are always looking for ways to better present our data and make it more useful. Consequently, we have produced an interactive version of the full 2019 Annual rankings, complete with links to publicly available PitchBook profiles for key players, making it easier than ever to slice up the data to fit your every need:

see the interactive rankings

Share:

Fighting online abuse of kids: VC-backed startups step in where big tech struggles

Who's in the newsletter today?

People

Steve Wozniak

Investors

Align Capital Partners
Alpha Square Group
BC Partners
Baidu
CDK Global
CMC Capital
Crosslink Capital
Dell Technologies Capital
Founder's Circle Capital
Foundry Group
GV
Great Hill Partners
Icon Ventures
Iconiq Capital
Intel
Inventec Appliances
Kleiner Perkins
Kohlberg & Company
Lakestar

(Maskot/Getty Images)

Advances in encryption technologies have made it challenging for software providers and law enforcement to combat online abuse of minors. But startups like Tel Aviv-based L1ght are using AI to help protect children online.

The company announced $15 million in seed funding Tuesday, and we spoke to CMO Yoav Vilner about how L1ght plans to set itself apart from its competitors:

keep reading

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'You talking to me?': The importance of interviewing your management team

Lux Capital
MUFG
Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan
RPS Ventures
Salesforce
Salesforce Ventures
SignalFire
Silicon Valley Bank
Silver Lake
Sutter Hill Ventures
TA Associates
TIS
TPG Capital
Third Point
Thoma Bravo
Thomas H. Lee Partners
Tiger Global
TransLink Capital
Tyche Partners
Uncork Capital
Water Street Healthcare Partners

Companies

AffiniPay
Airbnb
Boingo Wireless
Cyrus O'Leary's Pies
Facebook
Flock Freight
GFL Environmental
Give & Go
Gojek
Grab
HP
HeadSpin
Light Point Security
M&G

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By Joelle Scott, COO, Corporate Resolutions

A due diligence background investigation relies heavily on public record sources. But when a red flag is uncovered, the answer is not always on the written page.

Using an experienced investigator to conduct an interview helps resolve sensitive issues without compromising the investor's relationship. And a management team is often more candid when talking to an investigator about embarrassing behavior.

Nearly 30 years of due diligence experience has taught us that the interview provides insight into someone's character. Investors not only need to know the history of the management team but also how they will perform after the deal closes. We've seen an indignant doctor callously respond about patient outcomes, a CEO admitting he lied about his MBA to impress his YPO group, and, a CFO adamantly denying multiple criminal charges filed against him. In each situation, the interview impacted the deal: The doctor's situation provided leverage for investors, the CEO changed his corporate bio and, unsurprisingly, the CFO incident killed the deal.

The interview provides an assessment that cannot be achieved through document analysis alone. Investors have access to many resources during due diligence; relying on skilled investigators to broach delicate issues is another one in their arsenal.

Marco Rubber & Plastics

McAfee

Molekule

Mondelez International

Opendoor

Pinterest

Prudential

Ripcord

Sanzaru Games

Sara Lee Frozen Bakery

ServiceMax

Solvias

Superior Cake Products

Tinder

Vlocity

Xerox

Limited Partners

Daniel Loeb

Service Providers

Bank of America

Morgan Stanley

Corporate Resolutions
BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS

Share:

Chipmaker Graphcore adds to war chest to take on semiconductor rivals

Graphcore CEO Nigel Toon speaks at TechCrunch Disrupt Berlin in 2
(Noam Galai/Getty Images/CC BY 2.0)

Graphcore has added $150 million to its Series D, extending a $200 million round that was initially raised in 2018.

With Chinese export restrictions taking a toll on American semiconductor makers, the British business seems to have found an advantage:

read more

Share:

TPG-backed McAfee lines up acquisition

after nixing IPO

Cybersecurity pioneer McAfee has agreed to acquire Light Point Security, a Baltimore-based creator of security software built to protect web browsers from attacks.

TPG Capital acquired a 51% stake in McAfee at a $4.2 billion valuation in 2016, with previous owner Intel retaining a 49% stake. Thoma Bravo bought a minority interest in the security company the next year.

Last summer, McAfee brought on Morgan Stanley and Bank of America to underwrite an IPO that could have valued the business at $8 billion or more, according to Bloomberg. But the company joined a swelling number of businesses to delay IPOs late last year, a response in part to public-market investors pushing back against lofty private valuations.

Related read: **Private equity's IPO pipeline is filling up a slow 2019**

Share:

Recommended Reads

Skepticism, skittishness and other scenes from the startup reckoning. [The New York Times]

After prior opposition, Germany has decided private

equity billions aren't so bad after all. [Bloomberg]

An experiment can be a powerful thing. Just ask Big Tech. [The New Yorker]

When Facebook, Twitter or Slack undergoes an outage, a website called Downdetector turns into the internet's panic room. [The Atlantic]

Private equity firms seem to have a growing appetite for investing in professional sports. [MarketWatch]

A sneak peek inside the first example of Amazon's new concept for a full-sized grocery store that is completely free of cashiers. [GeekWire]

Since yesterday, the PitchBook Platform added:

311	1408	488	11
Deals	People	Companies	Funds

See what our data software can do

TODAY'S HEADLINES

The Daily Benchmark

2008 Vintage Global PE Funds with less than $250M

VC Deals

Grab grabs $850M+ for 'super app'

ServiceMax picks up $80M

HeadSpin tops $1.1B valuation

Molekule ropes in $58M

Flock Freight carries away $50M

Ripcord lands $45M for dealership digitization

PE Deals

Align Capital teams up with Marco Rubber & Plastics

TA to buy AffiniPay in SBO

Sara Lee lines up pie add-on

Water Street to back Solvias

Exits

GFL tries again for IPO

Salesforce secures $1.3B+ deal for Vlocity

Mondelez buying baked goods distributor from PE

Fundraising

CMC raises $950M for third fund

Lakestar raises $735M for two funds

Corporate M&A

HP to repurchase $15B of stock amid Xerox talks

Third Point discloses Prudential stake, calls for split

Facebook buys Sanzaru Games

Boingo Wireless mulls sale

THE DAILY BENCHMARK

2008 Vintage Global PE Funds with less than $250M

Median IRR

6.76%

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

12.08%

1.35x

Median TVPI

Select top performers
Energy Special Situations Fund II
Southwest Opportunity Partners
Zeus Private Equity Fund

**IRR: net of fees*

18 Funds in Benchmark »

Check out the latest version of **PitchBook Benchmarks**

VC DEALS

Grab grabs $850M+ for 'super app'

Singapore-based Grab has raised more than $850 million, with $706 million coming from Japanese banking giant MUFG and the rest from TIS. The money will be used to boost the company's financial services business, which it offers in addition to ridehailing and food delivery. The funding will also help Grab compete with fellow "super app" developer Gojek, which has

reportedly raised more than $3 billion to date.

View round

View 39 competitors »

ServiceMax picks up $80M

ServiceMax has raised $80 million in a round co-led by Salesforce Ventures and Silver Lake. The California-based company develops a management platform for field service providers in industries including manufacturing, healthcare and energy.

View round

View 49 competitors »

HeadSpin tops $1.1B valuation

HeadSpin has raised a $60 million Series C co-led by Dell Technologies Capital and Iconiq Capital. The company helps customers including Tinder and Pinterest test and monitor apps in real time across different devices and networks. HeadSpin was valued at $510 million with a $20 million funding in 2018, according to PitchBook data.

Additional Investors:
Tiger Global, Alpha Square Group

View round

View 52 competitors »

Molekule ropes in $58M

Molekule, a maker of home air purifiers, has raised $58 million in a Series C led by RPS Ventures, with participation from Founder's Circle Capital and others. The San Francisco-based company's products use specialized filters to reduce the prevalence of allergens, bacteria and other pollutants in homes.

Additional Investors:
Crosslink Capital, Foundry Group, Inventec Appliances, TransLink Capital, Uncork Capital

View round

View 6 competitors »

Flock Freight carries away $50M

Flock Freight, the developer of a freight logistics platform, has raised a $50 million Series B co-led by SignalFire and GLP Capital Partners. Backed by GV and others, Flock Freight was valued at $227.9 million in December, according to PitchBook data.

View round

View similar company »

Ripcord lands $45M for dealership digitization

Ripcord, a creator of automation and digitization tools, has raised $45 million in a Series B2 round led by CDK Global. The Bay Area startup raised $25 million in Series B1 funding at a $170 million valuation in 2017, according to PitchBook data. Existing backers including Kleiner Perkins, GV and Steve Wozniak also took part in the new round. Ripcord and CDK Global, which

focuses on retail automotive technology, will partner to develop digital tools for car sales.

Additional Investors:
Baidu, Icon Ventures, Lux Capital, Silicon Valley Bank, Tyche Partners

View round

View 17 competitors »

PE DEALS

Align Capital teams up with Marco Rubber & Plastics

Align Capital Partners has announced a majority recapitalization of Marco Rubber & Plastics, a Seabrook, N.H.-based provider of specialty rubber components for a range of applications in the aerospace, medical, semiconductor and other industries. With teams in Dallas and Cleveland, Align Capital typically makes control investments in lower-middle-market companies in the business services, manufacturing and distribution sectors.

View deal

View 3 competitors »

TA to buy AffiniPay in SBO

TA Associates has agreed to acquire Austin-based payments company AffiniPay, which is currently backed by Great Hill Partners, according to Barron's. A previous Barron's report indicated AffiniPay was expected to sell for some $600 million, a 20x multiple on its EBITDA. Great Hill made a growth investment in the company in 2015.

View deal View 38 competitors »

Sara Lee lines up pie add-on

Sara Lee Frozen Bakery, backed by Kohlberg & Company since 2018, has agreed to buy Cyrus O'Leary's Pies, a pie purveyor based in Spokane, Wash. Sara Lee bought Superior Cake Products in August in a prior in-store bakery add-on.

View deal View similar company »

Water Street to back Solvias

Water Street Healthcare Partners has agreed to invest in Solvias, a Swiss provider of pharmaceutical laboratory testing services. Established in 1999, Solvias also serves the biotech, medical device and cosmetic sectors.

View deal View similar company »

What's driving mid-market deal activity?
Read Transaction Trends Q1 for key insights.
Download report

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EXITS

GFL tries again for IPO

Canadian waste management company GFL Environmental has relaunched its IPO efforts, filing with the SEC for an offering that would raise $1.5 billion and result in a $6.7 billion valuation at a midpoint pricing. The PE-backed company scrapped plans for an offering in November after investors failed to meet its desired price. In 2018, BC Partners and Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan led a group of private equity investors that recapitalized GFL at an enterprise valuation of nearly $5.13 billion.

View details

View 8 competitors »

Salesforce secures $1.3B+ deal for Vlocity

Salesforce has agreed to pay about $1.33 billion in cash to acquire Vlocity, which makes industry-specific software that's incorporated into the Salesforce platform. Based in San Francisco, Vlocity has raised more than $160 million in prior VC funding from Salesforce Ventures, Sutter Hill Ventures and other backers, reaching a $1 billion valuation last March.

View details

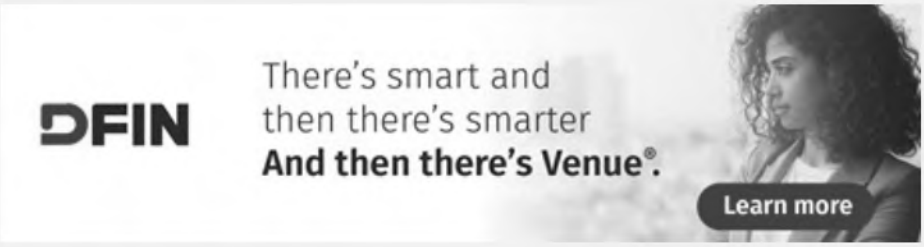
View 43 competitors »

Mondelez buying baked goods distributor from PE

Snack giant Mondelez International has agreed to purchase Give & Go from Thomas H. Lee Partners, which has owned the company since 2016. The price is $1.2 billion, according to Bloomberg. The Canadian maker of cookies, pastries and other baked goods posted net revenue of about $500 million in 2019.

View details

View 8 competitors »



FUNDRAISING

CMC raises $950M for third fund

Chinese private equity firm CMC Capital has closed its third US dollar fund on $950 million, bringing its total assets under management to more than $2.5 billion. CMC typically invests in media, entertainment, technology and consumer companies.

View fund

View 73 investments »

Lakestar raises $735M for two funds

European VC firm Lakestar has raised $735 million across two funds, according to reports. The firm will reportedly allocate two-thirds of the capital to a growth-stage fund and the rest to an early-stage vehicle. Operating in Zurich, Berlin, London, New York and Hong Kong, Lakestar targets investments in internet and tech companies. Its portfolio includes Airbnb and Opendoor.

View fund

View 66 investments »

CORPORATE M&A

HP to repurchase $15B of stock amid Xerox talks

Palo Alto-based HP has announced plans to repurchase $15 billion of its own stock in an effort to combat Xerox's hostile takeover bid. Last week, HP adopted a shareholder rights plan, also known as a poison pill, to slow Xerox's acquisition efforts.

View details

View 7 competitors »

Third Point discloses Prudential stake, calls for split

Daniel Loeb's activist hedge fund Third Point has disclosed a 5% stake in Prudential worth more than $2 billion and called for the London-based life insurance giant to separate its US and Asia operations. Last October, Prudential spun out its European operations

into a new publicly traded company called M&G.

View details

View 39 investments »

Facebook buys Sanzaru Games

Facebook has acquired Sanzaru Games, a VR-focused video game studio based in the Bay Area. Sanzaru will be incorporated into Oculus Studios, which creates games for Facebook's Oculus Rift VR headset.

View details

View similar company »

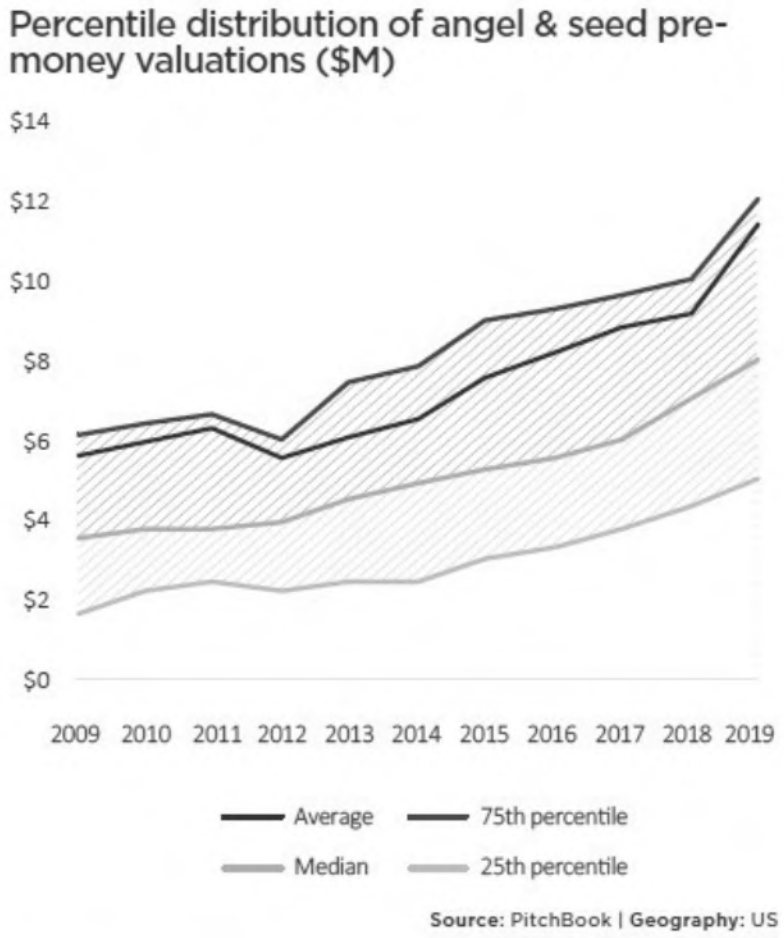
Boingo Wireless mulls sale

Airport wifi provider Boingo Wireless is considering strategic options, and a sale could attract private equity buyers, according to Bloomberg. The Los Angeles-based company debuted on the Nasdaq in 2011, and currently maintains a market cap of around $610 million. In December, it announced it would eliminate about 80 positions, or 16% of its total staff.

View details

View 40 competitors »

CHART OF THE DAY



"While US angel deal sizes haven't changed much over the past decade, seed deal sizes and pre-money valuations have continued to increase steadily over the last couple years, highlighting investors' sustained appetite for the risks associated with this stage. The underlying factors for the growth of both sizes and valuations seem to imply seed-stage companies are entering the VC pipeline with more developed business models than in the past, commanding higher multiples on the ability to provide investors a better view into their operation."

Source: **PitchBook's 2019 Annual US VC Valuations Report**

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Venture capital, private equity and M&A financial information technology provider.

From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Fri, 28 Feb 2020 14:40:59 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] BAE Systems 2019 Results: (1) impressive +7% 2019 sales growth & +38% Free Cashflow; (2) new US CEO Tom Arseneault; (3) $2.2B "golden-opportunity" acquisition; (4) growing USAF B-21 CapEx; (5) M109 Paladin is finally-fixed; (6) AMPV fund...

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2020 9:40:12 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BAE Systems 2019 Results: (1) impressive +7% 2019 sales growth & +38% Free Cashflow; (2) new US CEO Tom Arseneault; (3) $2.2B "golden-opportunity" acquisition; (4) growing USAF B-21 CapEx; (5) M109 Paladin is finally-fixed; (6) AMPV funding ...

Secretary Wilkie:

McAleese AND ASSOCIATES

BAE Systems, plc UK 2019 Results Call, (Feb. 20, 2020): **BAE Systems UK is shifting to high-growth, high-cashflow, "technology-led-model". Hungry for Free Cashflow. New US CEO Tom Arseneault, (April 2020).**

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1. Strong overall +7% 2019 sales growth; driving +5% profit growth; at impressive 10.5% operating margin; but generating +38% higher 2019 Free Cashflow of $1.1B, (from improved working-capital management). Delighted by strong: (a) +7% 2019 US Electronic Systems Sector sales growth, (at 15.5% operating margin); (b) +11% 2019 UK Air Sector sales growth, (at 11.9% operating margin); and (c) +6% 2019 US Platforms & Services sales growth, (at improving 8% operating margin).

---

2. "Golden-opportunity" $2.2B cash acquisition in "sweet-spot", paying: (a) $1.9B for UTC Collins Aerospace GPS receivers business, (~35% 2020 operating margin); plus (b) $275M for Raytheon Airborne Tactical Radio business.

---

3. BAE is front-loading an additional +$1.3B of pension-contributions into 2020, to create a "pension-holiday" during ~2022-2026; directly-increasing ~2022-2026 Free Cashflow by at least ~+$1.3B.

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4. Growing 2020 CapEx investment for US Electronic Systems Sector Classified, (presumably USAF B-21).

---

5. US Electronic Systems Sector enjoyed strong +7% 2019 sales growth, (to $5.7B); with +8% profit growth, (to $877M); from growing 15.5% operating margins; generating $858M Cashflow, (~51% of total BAE Cashflow). [F-35; APKWS; Classified (presumably USAF B-21)]

---

6. US Platforms & Services Sector enjoyed +6% 2019 sales growth, (to $4.3B); but +21% profit growth, (to $341M); from higher 8% operating margin; generating $309M Cashflow, (18% of total BAE Cashflow). [Projecting "high-single-digit" 2020 sales growth; at ~8.5% operating margin; held back by initial 2020 Army AMPV production ramp-up, plus Army Mobile Protected Firepower development]

---

7. F-35: 142 2019 UK aft-fuselage & US EW deliveries, growing +13% to peak ~160/year full-rate-production deliveries starting in 2020.

---

8. USAF B-21: Very, very pleased with "Classified" 2019 sales growth, (US Electronic Systems Sector).

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9. Army M109 Paladin PIM Howitzer: Army just-approved ~$10B M109 Paladin full-rate-production. But investors immediately-challenged -21% drop to $435M 2021 Army Paladin PIM (30 vehicle sets, at ~$4M/vehicle) procurement, as potential "bill-payer". [$553M 2020 Paladin procurement (48 vehicle sets)] [Current Paladin PIM production is funded through ~2023]

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10. Army AMPV: ~19 initial 2020 deliveries, for OT&E testing. [Potential ~$10B combined Army AMPV & USMC ACV 1.1 life-cycle sales] But investors immediately-challenged -57% drop to $192M 2021 Army AMPV (32 vehicles, at ~$3.5M/each) procurement, as potential "bill-payer". [$444M 2020 AMPV procurement (121 vehicles)] [Current AMPV production is funded through ~2023]

- Separately, strong $493M 2021 Army Bradley Upgrade funding. [Bradley Upgrade production is funded through ~2024]

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11. USMC ACV 1.1: 13 initial vehicle deliveries in 2019; with ~50 2020 deliveries. [Strong +59% jump to $478M 2021 USMC ACV 1.1 (72 vehicles, at ~$3.3M/each) procurement]

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12. No discussion of Army re-start of ~$45B OMFV competition.

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13. Surprise Army $823M IDIQ award to both Palantir & BAE Systems, to compete for firm-fixed-price DCGS-A orders, (during 2020-2027). (DoD Contracts, Feb. 25, 2020).

[See full discussion below]

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1. BAE Systems UK is shifting to high-growth, high-cashflow, "technology-led-model" under UK CEO Charles Woodburn. [Hungry for Free Cashflow, BAE Systems is now including formal Free Cashflow targets in 2020 Executive Compensation]

- [BAE is targeting ~$4.5B-$4.9B (~£3.5B-£3.8B) of 2020-2022 Free Cashflow, comprised of: (a) ~$1.3B (~£1B) 2020 Free Cashflow; (b) ~$1.5B (~£1.2B) of 2021 Free Cashflow; and (c) ~$1.8B-$1.9B (~£1.4B-£1.5B) of 2022 Free Cashflow]
- BAE Systems UK CFO, Pete Lynas, is retiring, replaced by incoming CFO Brad Greve.
- **BAE Systems US CEO Jerry DeMuro is retiring, (on special assignment through late 2020), to be succeeded by new US CEO Tom Arseneault,** (effective April 1, 2020).

Delighted by strong: (a) +7% 2019 US Electronic Systems Sector sales growth, (at 15.5% operating margin); (b) +11% 2019 UK Air Sector sales growth, (at 11.9% operating margin); and (c) +6% 2019 US Platforms & Services sales growth, (at improving 8% operating margin).

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2. Strong +7% 2019 constant-currency sales growth, (to $25.7B). [See Sector break-out below]

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3. Strong +5% 2019 constant-currency profit growth, (to $2.7B), with impressive ~10.5% 2019 sector operating margin:

- **US Electronic Systems:** 15.5% 2019 operating margin. [15.3% 2018 operating margin]
- **US/UK Cyber & Intelligence:** 5.3% 2019 operating margin. [6.6% 2018 operating margin]
- **US Platforms & Services:** 8% 2019 operating margin. [7% 2018 operating margin]
- **UK/Saudi/Qatar Air:** 11.9% 2019 operating margin. [12.8% 2018 operating margin]
- **UK Maritime:** 8.6% 2019 operating margin. [7% 2018 operating margin]

---

4. Very strong +32% higher 2019 pre-tax Cashflow, (of $1.7B), (£1.3B). [BAE "Cashflow" excludes both interest-on-debt and tax, but includes all CapEx facilities investment] [-11% lower 2019 cashflow-sapping working capital/inventory, (of only ~$3.6B)]

- **US Electronic Systems:** +49% higher 2019 Cashflow, (of $858M). **[~51% of total BAE Cashflow]**
- **US/UK Cyber & Intelligence:** -24% lower 2019 Cashflow, (of $86M). **[~5% of total BAE Cashflow]**
- **US Platforms & Services:** +873% spike in 2019 Cashflow, (to $309M). **[~18% of total BAE Cashflow]**
- **UK/Saudi/Qatar Air:** -39% lower 2019 Cashflow, (of $521M). **[~31% of total BAE Cashflow]**
- **UK Maritime:** +124% higher 2019 Cashflow, (of $192M). **[~12% of total BAE Cashflow]**
- **Corporate Headquarters**: -$296M G&A cost. **[-18% of total BAE Cashflow]**

Great +38% higher 2019 after-tax Free Cashflow, (of $1.1B), (£850M). Projecting ~$1.3B (£1B) 2020 Free Cashflow. [BAE "Free Cashflow" is after all interest-on-debt; taxes; and CapEx investments, are subtracted]

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5. -18% lower net Debt, (of -$949M), paying down ~$1.3B of 2019 debt. [Total Debt, minus cash on-hand]

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6. +7% higher $.58/share 2019 EPS, (excluding one-time +$205M 2019 tax-settlement). [$.65/share 2019 EPS, with that one-time +$205B 2019 tax-settlement]

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7. "Golden-opportunity" $2.2B cash acquisition in "sweet-spot", paying: (a) $1.9B for UTC Collins Aerospace GPS receivers business, (~$359M projected 2020 sales; with ~$127M projected 2020

EBITDA/profit; ~35% 2020 operating margin), (BAE is paying ~15X EBITDA; or ~12X EBITDA after ~$365M tax benefit); plus (b) $275M for Raytheon Airborne Tactical Radio business, ($125M 2019 sales; with unknown 2019 profit and operating margin), (~$50M tax benefit).

- [Both acquisitions are excluded from BAE's projection of "mid-single-digit" 2020 EPS growth.

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8. BAE Systems primarily-operates in four "home markets" of: (a) US (43% (~$11B) 2019 sales); **(b) UK** (22% (~$5.7B 2019 sales); **(c) Saudi Arabia** (13% (~$3.3B 2019 sales); **and (d) Australia** (3% (~$771M 2019 sales).

- **US market is aggressively-growing:** (a) F-35 EW; (b) USAF F-15 EPAWSS; (c) USAF B-21; (d) USAF AC-130J EW; (e) Army M109 Paladin PIM Howitzer; (f) USMC ACV 1.1; (g) Army AMPV; (h) Army Bradley Upgrade; (i) Navy APKWS.
- **UK market is flattish.**
- **Saudi market is quickly-falling.** [But no "sky-is-falling" panic over EU licensing/sanctions against Saudi]

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9. BAE is front-loading an additional +$1.3B of pension-contributions into 2020, to create a "pension-holiday" during ~2022-2026; directly-increasing ~2022-2026 Free Cashflow by at least ~+$1.3B, (since those required-pension-contributions will already have been made). [+$80M 2020 BAE Systems US pension-contribution; with ~$40M/year during 2021-2025]

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10. Growing 2020 CapEx investment for US Electronic Systems Sector Classified, (presumably USAF B-21). [Total BAE Systems 2019 CapEx was +$255M above 2019 Depreciation. Total BAE Systems 2020 CapEx will be ~+$383M-$510M above 2020 Depreciation]

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11. US Electronic Systems Sector enjoyed strong +7% 2019 sales growth, (to $5.7B); with +8% profit growth, (to $877M); from growing 15.5% operating margins; generating $858M Cashflow, (~51% of total BAE Cashflow). **[Projecting "mid-single-digit" 2020 sales growth; at ~15% operating margin]** [F-35; APKWS; Classified (presumably USAF B-21)]

- Targeting IRAD toward: (a) Space; (b) "underwater"; and (c) precision-guided-munitions.

---

12. US/UK Cyber & Intelligence Sector had flattish (-1%) 2019 sales, (of $2.2B); but falling -22% profit, (to $116M); from anemic 5.3% operating margin; generating only $86M Cashflow, (5% of total BAE Cashflow). [Sales in ~70% US Intelligence & Security were down -2%, (but at strong 9.1% operating margin); while sales in ~30% UK Applied Intelligence were up +4%, (but had -$25M 2019 loss, because of 1H 2019 restructuring charge)] **[Projecting "stable" (flattish) 2020 sales; at ~7.5% operating margin]**

---

13. US Platforms & Services Sector enjoyed +6% 2019 sales growth, (to $4.3B); but +21% profit growth, (to $341M); from higher 8% operating margin; generating $309M Cashflow, (18% of total BAE Cashflow). [No 2019 financial Charges] **[Projecting "high-single-digit" 2020 sales growth; at ~8.5% operating margin; held back by initial 2020 Army AMPV production ramp-up, plus Army Mobile Protected Firepower development]**

- [US Platforms & Services Sector is: (a) ~41% combat vehicles; (b) ~34% weapons; and (c) ~25% ship repair]

Aggressive 2019-2022 Army/USMC ground combat vehicle production ramp-up: [~120+ 2019 ground combat vehicle production; ramping to ~340 2020 vehicles; and "mid-400" 2021 vehicles; to stabilize at "just below 500/year" for 2022]

- **[-$13M 1H 2019 Charge, for fire at Army Holston Ammo. GOCO]**

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14. UK/Saudi/Qatar Air Sector had impressive +11% 2019 sales growth, (to $9.5B); with +3% profit growth, (to $1.1B); from falling 11.9% operating margin; generating $521M Cashflow, (31% of total BAE Cashflow). **[Projecting "mid-single-digit" 2020 sales growth; at ~12% operating margin]** [Qatar Typhoon & Hawk; F-35 aft fuselage; MBDA JV missiles]

- **[Increased ~2020-2022 IRAD on UK Tempest Future Combat Air aircraft development]**
- **[~$3.8B of total current customer cash advances]**

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15. UK Maritime Sector posted +5% 2019 sales growth, (to $4B); with impressive +28% higher profit, (of $342M); from higher 8.6% operating margin; generating $192M Cashflow, (12% of total BAE Cashflow). **[Projecting "stable" (flattish) 2020 sales; at ~8.5% operating margin]** [Dreadnought SSBN submarine and Type 26 Frigate are growing, but aircraft carrier & Offshore Patrol Vessel sales are falling]

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16. F-35: 142 2019 UK aft-fuselage & US EW deliveries, growing +13% to peak ~160/year full-rate-production deliveries starting in 2020.

---

17. USAF B-21: Very, very pleased with "Classified" 2019 sales growth, (US Electronic Systems Sector).

---

18. Army M109 Paladin PIM Howitzer: Now at "steady-state monthly production rate". **Army just-approved ~$10B M109 Paladin full-rate-production.**

- **Investors immediately-perceived -21% drop to $435M 2021 Army Paladin PIM (30 vehicle sets, at ~$4M/vehicle) procurement, as potential "bill-payer".** [$553M 2020 Paladin procurement (48 vehicle sets)] **[Current Paladin PIM production is funded through ~2023]**

---

19. Army AMPV: ~19 initial 2020 deliveries, (five-variants), for OT&E testing. [BAE views combined Army AMPV & USMC ACV 1.1, as potential ~$10B life-cycle sales]

- **Investors immediately-perceived -57% drop to $192M 2021 Army AMPV (32 vehicles) procurement, as potential "bill-payer".** [$444M 2020 AMPV procurement (121 vehicles)] **[Current AMPV production is funded through ~2023]**
- **Separately, strong $493M 2021 Army Bradley Upgrade funding. [Bradley Upgrade production is funded through ~2024]**

---

20. USMC ACV 1.1: 13 initial deliveries in 2019; with ~50 2020 deliveries. [Strong +59% jump to $478M 2021 USMC ACV 1.1 (72 vehicles, at ~$3.3M/each) procurement]

---

21. No discussion of Army re-start of ~$45B OMFV competition.

---

22. Navy Ship Depot Maintenance: 1st "tandem-ship" dry-dock contract awarded, should drive higher operating margin.

---

23. Surprise Army $823M IDIQ award to both Palantir & BAE Systems, to compete for firm-fixed-price DCGS-A orders, (from 2020-2027). (DoD Contracts, Feb. 25, 2020).

From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Wed, 22 Apr 2020 10:19:20 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Senate adds $320B to loan program

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2020 6:18:00 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Senate adds $320B to loan program

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The Daily Pitch: VC, PE and M&A

April 22, 2020
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TODAY'S TOP STORIES

Senate passes bill to replenish small-business loan program

Sen. Charles Schumer holds a protective mask and practices soci distancing while talking to reporters in Washington, DC, on Tuesday. Somodevilla/Getty Images News)

The Senate passed a bill Tuesday to add more than $320 billion to the Paycheck Protection Program, the small-business rescue effort that ran out of its initial $350 billion funding last week. Around $60 billion has been earmarked for small and mid-sized banks, community-based lenders and credit unions.

A number of venture capital-backed startups are said to have taken advantage of the loan program, including electric vehicle startup Faraday Future, according to The Verge. Many private equity-backed companies **may not qualify** under the Small Business Administration's affiliation rules.

The bill also includes $25 billion for coronavirus testing, $75 billion for hospitals, and $60 billion for the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program, another small-business relief effort. The House is expected to vote on the bill later this week.

President Trump indicated in a Tweet yesterday that

Who's in the Newsletter today?

People

Bryan Wiener
Greg Macfarlane
Jamie Toothman
Jeff Kindler
Pascal Heberling
Sandor Palfy
Sarah Hofstetter

Investors

Abu Dhabi Investment Authority
Accel
Altimeter Capital Management
Apollo Global Management
Artis Ventures
Aws Gründerfonds
BC Partners
Bpifrance
CVC Capital Partners
CVC Credit Partners
Cinven
Condé Nast
Conviction Capital

more fiscal relief would be coming after the current bill is signed into law.

More coronavirus news: Continuing coverage from PitchBook

Share:

COVID-19 is set to turn European PE upside down

As the coronavirus outbreak went global during March, European nations such as Italy, France and Spain were initially among those hit hardest. As a result, several countries in the region have already entered sudden recessions. In the months to come, private equity firms may be among those feeling the economic pain.

Full of the usual numbers and analysis from the past three months, our **Q1 2020 European PE Breakdown** also anticipates what havoc the pandemic might wreak on the industry as a whole.

Cuir Invest
Eurazeo
Felix Capital
Fidelity International
Foundation Capital
Franklin Templeton Investments
Harvest Partners
IVP
Iconiq Capital
Index Ventures
KKR
KKR Growth
Kleiner Perkins
Korelya Capital
Latitude Ventures
Lux Capital
Luxury Tech Fund
Mangrove Capital Partners
Meritech Capital
Norwest Venture Partners
Oaktree Capital Management
Osceola Capital
Revelstoke Capital Partners
Riverwood Capital
Route 66 Ventures
SAP.iO Foundry
Sapphire Ventures
Scaleworks
Sequoia
Silver Lake
Target
Triplepoint Capital
Vaultier7
Velocity Capital
Vitruvian Partners

Among the takeaways:

- European PE fundraising fell substantially in Q1, and 2020 could be on track for historically poor fundraising totals
- After back-to-back annual decreases, exit activity could plunge in 2020
- Add-on, take-private and PIPE deals may all become more frequent

read it now

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A MESSAGE FROM BETTS RECRUITING

How to sharpen remote management skills and stay productive during this pandemic

Carolyn Betts Fleming

This year, in Q1 alone, thousands of companies switched to fully remote workflows as the coronavirus chased us out of the office and into our homes. Now, many of those companies are finding that the processes they've long taken for granted don't work nearly as well when applied to remote-work scenarios. The result is reduced transparency in the interview process, slower onboarding, and lost productivity.

What can company leaders do to ensure a seamless

Vulcan Capital
Yukon Partners

Companies

360i
8 Securities
Adverity
Airbnb
Alimentation Couche-Tard
Bob Popp Building Services
Caltex Australia
Casper
Centrexion Therapeutics
Coatue Management
Comscore
Confluent
Crossroads Treatment Centers
Epic Games
Expedia
Faraday Future
ForgeRock
Houzz
Ikea
LogMeIn
Mind Candy
Pfizer
Profitero
SoFi
Top Gun Pressure Washing
Unilever
Vestiaire Collective

end-to-end transition to remote processes, including sourcing, interviewing, onboarding, and managing new employees? Time is money, and a company's ability to keep producing revenue at the same rate during this time depends on how they answer that question. Hint: It starts with learning how to identify the kind of candidate that can truly thrive in a remote environment.

Learn how to do that, and a host of other best practices, here.

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Recommended Reads

For VC-backed companies, the question of whether to apply for government stimulus money is about more than economics. [The Wall Street Journal]

Running is the simplest of all sports. But for a magazine editor-in-chief to run the best marathon of his life at 44, it had to get a little complicated. [Wired]

Inigo Philbrick was a fast-rising star in the glamorous world of fine art. But eventually, the tangled web he was weaving began to unravel. [GQ]

The coronavirus pandemic might accelerate a growing trend of young professionals moving away from America's biggest cities. [The New York Times]

Social distancing means a temporary hiatus on weddings, graduations and many other festive gatherings. Which is turning into an $8.5 billion

disaster for the flower industry. [Bloomberg]

It increasingly seems like no sector of the economy has been able to escape the ravages of the coronavirus. Not even illegal drug cartels. [AP]

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People

Artis adds former Pfizer CEO Jeff Kindler

Harvest Partners brings on Jamie Toothman

BC Partners hires Pascal Heberling

VC Deals

Epic Games could raise another $1B

Confluent nets $250M for real-time event streaming

ForgeRock hammers out Series E

France's Vestiaire Collective pockets $64M

Adverity raises $30M for marketing analytics

Ecommerce startup Profitero announces $20M, new leadership

Mind Candy rounds up $12M

PE Deals

Apollo, Silver Lake could back Expedia

PE-backed Top Gun buys window cleaning service provider

Yukon backs Crossroads clinics alongside Revelstoke

Portfolio Companies

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Casper to exit Europe, cut 21% of staff

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Select top performers

Nautic Partners VII

Consonance Private Equity

BVIP Fund VIII

**IRR: net of fees*

78 Funds in Benchmark »

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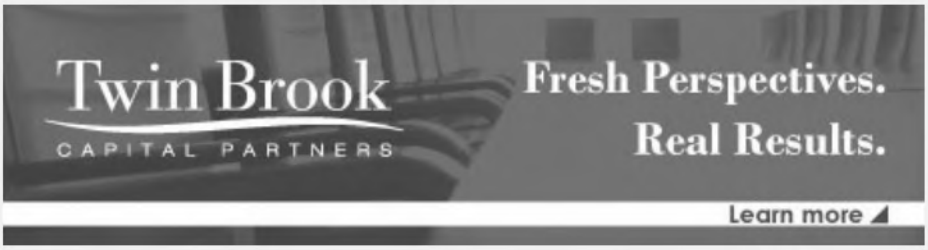

PEOPLE

Artis adds former Pfizer CEO Jeff Kindler

San Francisco-based Artis Ventures has appointed Jeff Kindler as an operating partner to lead its Healthcare Pioneers program, counsel portfolio companies and help vet investments. Kindler currently serves as CEO of Centrexion Therapeutics, a biotech company focused on non-opioid treatments for pain. Prior to that, he held the same position at biopharma giant Pfizer for four years. Kindler has also worked as a venture partner at Lux Capital.

View details

Harvest Partners brings on Jamie Toothman

Harvest Partners has announced the addition of Jamie Toothman as general counsel and chief compliance officer to handle legal and compliance matters. Toothman was previously a senior vice president at Oaktree Capital Management, where she managed fund formation and operations, regulatory compliance and other legal issues. Based in New York, Harvest Partners targets middle-market companies in healthcare, manufacturing, distribution and other sectors.

View details

BC Partners hires Pascal Heberling

London-based BC Partners has added Pascal Heberling as a partner. Most recently, Heberling served as a senior member of the private equities investment team at Abu Dhabi Investment Authority. Before that, he spent 12 years at Cinven, also in London.

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NXT'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

Our commitment to you and our community.

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VC DEALS

Epic Games could raise another $1B

Epic Games has discussed raising between $500 million and $1 billion in funding that could value the company "significantly" above the estimated $15 billion valuation it reached in 2018, according to Bloomberg. Epic Games owns the video game "Fortnite" and Houseparty, a group video-chat app that has seen demand skyrocket amid lockdown measures. Epic reportedly took in $1.25 billion two years ago from investors including KKR, Kleiner Perkins and Vulcan Capital.

View round

View 42 competitors »

Confluent nets $250M for real-time event streaming

Confluent has nearly doubled its valuation to $4.5 billion after raising a $250 million Series E led by Coatue Management. The Bay Area-based startup, which operates a live event streaming platform, announced that annual recurring revenue has doubled year over year as demand for remote work tools soars. Confluent will release new products and capabilities starting next month.

Additional Investors:

Sequoia, Index Ventures, Altimeter Capital Management, Franklin Templeton Investments

View round

View 110 competitors »

ForgeRock hammers out Series E

ForgeRock has raised $93.5 million in a Series E led by Riverwood Capital, giving the digital identity specialist more than $230 million in overall growth funding. In addition to the round, the San Francisco-based startup announced it has surpassed $100 million in annual revenue. ForgeRock raised $88 million in 2017 at a $646.5 million valuation, according to PitchBook data.

Additional Investors:
Accel, Foundation Capital, KKR Growth, Meritech Capital

View round

View 69 competitors »

Share:

France's Vestiaire Collective pockets $64M

Vestiaire Collective, the provider of a luxury resale marketplace that operates in 90 countries, has raised $64 million from Korelya Capital, Vaultier7, Fidelity International and others. Founded in 2009, the French company sells clothes, shoes, handbags and other apparel. It was valued at $236 million with a $40 million round last June, according to PitchBook data.

Additional Investors:

Cuir Invest, Eurazeo, Bpifrance, Vitruvian Partners, Condé Nast, Luxury Tech Fund

View round

View 24 competitors »

Adverity raises $30M for marketing analytics

Sapphire Ventures has led a $30 million Series C for Adverity, a Vienna-based startup that offers marketing data analytics and automation. Founded in 2015, the startup works with customers including Unilever and Ikea.

Additional Investors:
Felix Capital, Mangrove Capital Partners, SAP.iO Foundry, Aws Gründerfonds

View round

View 93 competitors »

Ecommerce startup Profitero announces $20M, new leadership

Boston-based ecommerce company Profitero has raised $20 million in a round led by Scaleworks, with participation from Conviction Capital. The startup operates a SaaS analytics platform that helps brands sell products across the web. Profitero also named former Comscore chief Bryan Wiener as CEO, former head of 360i Sarah Hofstetter as president, and former LogMeIn technology lead Sandor Palfy as CTO.

View round

View 75 competitors »

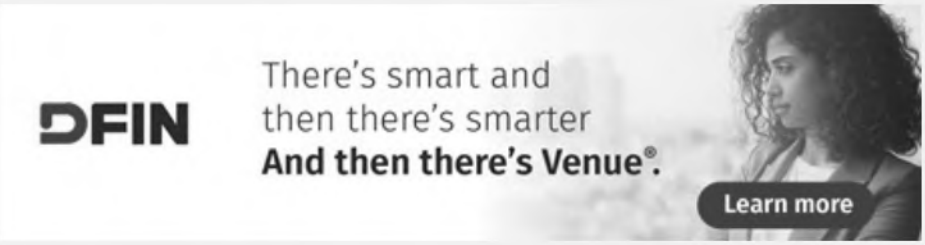
Mind Candy rounds up $12M

Mind Candy, a children's entertainment company best known as the creator of the Moshi Monsters brand, has raised a $12 million round led by Accel as part of a shift toward a relaxation and bedtime story app for kids, according to Bloomberg. The UK-based company will also reportedly pursue a sale of its Petlandia business, which allows users to create custom books featuring their pets.

Additional Investors:
Triplepoint Capital, Latitude Ventures

View round

View 18 competitors »



PE DEALS

Apollo, Silver Lake could back Expedia

Apollo Global Management and Silver Lake are in talks to make an investment of around $1 billion in Expedia in a deal that could give the two firms board seats at the Seattle-based travel-booking company, according to The Wall Street Journal. Expedia closed Tuesday trading with a market cap of about $8 billion. Both Apollo and Silver Lake made separate

investments earlier this month in Airbnb, another travel company whose finances have been severely disrupted by the coronavirus.

View details

View 3 competitors »

PE-backed Top Gun buys window cleaning service provider

Osceola Capital portfolio company Top Gun Pressure Washing has acquired Bob Popp Building Services, a Denver-based window cleaner for commercial businesses. Also based in Colorado, Top Gun is a provider of pressure washing, graffiti removal, building restoration and other related services. Osceola led a recapitalization of the company in August.

View deal

View similar company »

Yukon backs Crossroads clinics alongside Revelstoke

Yukon Partners has announced an investment in Crossroads Treatment Centers as part of Revelstoke Capital Partners' recapitalization of the company. Based in South Carolina, the company offers medication-assisted treatment services at 94 outpatient clinics across 10 states.

View deal

View similar company »

PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

Houzz lays off 155 employees

Home renovation startup Houzz has cut about 10% of its staff, or 155 employees, and reduced executive pay, according to TechCrunch. Demand for the company's professional subscriptions has reportedly declined during the coronavirus outbreak. Last valued at $4 billion in 2017, Houzz has raised about $600 million to date from investors including Iconiq Capital and Sequoia.

View details

View similar company »

Casper to exit Europe, cut 21% of staff

Ahead of its first earnings report as a public company, Casper has announced it will shutter its European operations by the end of the year and shed 21% of its global workforce, or 78 employees. CFO and COO Greg Macfarlane will also leave the company next month. The direct-to-consumer mattress startup received venture backing from Target, IVP and Norwest Venture Partners; it has seen its stock fall by around 50% since going public in February.

View details

View 18 competitors »

EXITS

SoFi takeover aids launch in Hong Kong

Personal finance specialist SoFi has agreed to acquire the parent company of 8 Securities, a Hong Kong-based online brokerage. SoFi plans to use the 8 Securities platform as the basis for its newly announced expansion into Hong Kong, the San Francisco-based company's first international market. 8 Securities has raised prior VC from Route 66 Ventures, Velocity Capital and other investors.

View details

View 10 competitors »

FUNDRAISING

CVC Capital Partners' credit arm pulls in $657M

CVC Credit Partners, the credit arm of CVC Capital Partners, has closed its second US-focused direct-lending fund on $657 million, surpassing a $500 million target. The vehicle will invest in middle-market companies with EBITDA of $10 million to $40 million.

View fund

View 2 investments »

CORPORATE M&A

Couche-Tard walks away from $5.6B Caltex Australia deal

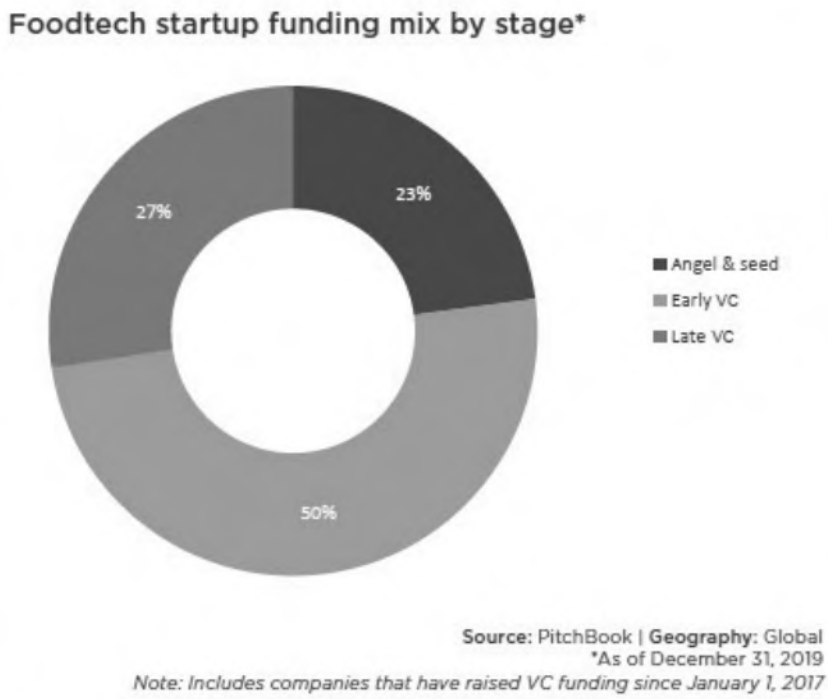
Canadian convenience store chain Alimentation Couche-Tard has abandoned its deal to acquire gas

station operator Caltex Australia for a reported A$8.8 billion (about $5.6 billion) as the pandemic continues to disrupt the oil industry. Couche-Tard, which initially proposed an acquisition of Caltex in October, said it had secured financing for the deal and would consider picking it back up after the crisis abates.

View details

View 3 competitors »

CHART OF THE DAY



"While demand for delivery could recede after the recession, we expect the market will expand permanently as more consumers become accustomed to food delivery. This could increase venture interest across the food delivery ecosystem for technologies that improve the speed, capabilities and efficiency of

delivery, such as ghost kitchens, delivery robots and kitchentech."

Source: **PitchBook analyst note about the ripple effects of COVID-19 on emerging tech**

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Venture capital, private equity and M&A financial information technology provider.

From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Tue, 31 Mar 2020 09:53:40 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] How coronavirus is reshaping US PE

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Tuesday, March 31, 2020 5:52:49 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] How coronavirus is reshaping US PE

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Gauging investor sentiment

PitchBook is taking the pulse of investors on the effects of the pandemic crisis. If you're an LP or GP, please take a moment to participate in this brief, anonymous survey of your firm's investment outlook. We'll share the findings later this week.

Take the survey now

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TODAY'S TOP STORIES

How COVID-19 is affecting the US PE market

(Spencer Platt/Getty Images News)

As the coronavirus epidemic reshapes the global economy, it's also shifting the focus in certain areas of the market. For private equity—in many ways a bet on future economic growth—that means first looking to secure current investments before sourcing new deals.

The **latest research note** from our PE analysts details how the outbreak is transforming the market and how the private equity industry is likely to respond as it continues. Key findings include:

- Median time to exit will likely be driven up as firms hold companies rather than sell at a discount
- Fundraising will continue its slowdown, and prospective investors in nascent funds are likely

Who's in the newsletter today?

People

Bill Gryzenia

Mary Petrovich

Investors

83North

Abano Healthcare

to be more risk-averse

- As the pandemic's full effects become clearer, GPs are likely to pursue carveouts, divestitures and PIPE deals in greater numbers

read it now

More coronavirus news: Continuing coverage from PitchBook

Share:

Insurtech reaches record $6.2B in 2019

The long-overdue digital transformation of the insurance industry has arrived, as insurtech startups disrupt the traditional value chain. Key highlights from our latest piece of **Emerging Tech Research** include:

- Global VC investment in insurtech totaled $6.2 billion in 2019, a nearly 50% increase over the previous record

- Development has not been uniform, with

All Iron Ventures
AlleyCorp
Apollo Global Management
Ardian
BGH
Broadscale Group
Calera Capital
Diligent Capital
EDBI
EcoR1 Capital
EduCapital
Ervington Investments
F2 Ventures
Founders Fund
Hearst Ventures
Hoxton Ventures
Kamet Ventures
MPM Capital
Macquarie Capital
Mori Building
Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan
Palm Beach Capital
Peter Thiel
Pitango
Planven Ventures
Point Nine Capital
Redmile Group
Resilience Capital Partners
RiverPark Ventures
Samsara BioCapital
Surveyor Capital
The Family
The Invus Group
Vertex Ventures
WeWork

Companies

customer acquisition and policy issuance technologies at a more mature stage than underwriting and claims technologies

- Reinsurers are stepping up participation in insurance innovation via investments, partnerships and sponsorships

If you have any questions or feedback about the research, we'd love to hear from you: analystresearch@pitchbook.com.

read it now

Share:

Private equity fundraising totals sure to tumble due to the coronavirus

(Anton Petrus/Moment Collection/Getty Images)

Private equity fundraising in the US surged over the past decade, with annual figures climbing from less than $60 billion in 2010 to a record $301 billion in

Air Doctor
ElevateBio
Gray Television
Harold Levinson Associates
J. Polep Distribution Services
Leader Auto Resources
Meetup
PayPal
Preply
Sprint
T-Mobile
Tegna
Thayer Power & Communication
Via

Limited Partners

The Phoenix Insurance Company

Service Providers

Barclays
Deutsche Bank
Morgan Stanley

2019.

But now that the coronavirus outbreak has reduced travel, dealmaking has slowed, and limited partners have begun to worry about the economy, the fundraising market could be in line for its first serious decline since the last financial crisis:

read more

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Our top 13 articles of March

Don't miss our most popular content of the past month:

What $2T in stimulus does—and doesn't do—for private markets

Gloom over a new recession shifts the VC narrative for 2020

Telemedicine startups see sharp demand driven by coronavirus fears

Coronavirus alters the merger playbook for dealmakers

Oil price nosedive leaves private equity investors scrambling

Trading outages cast a shadow over Robinhood's lofty valuation

As pandemic anxieties worsen, mental health startups rise to the challenge

Facing disaster, corporate venture capital to undergo key stress test

Changing FDA rules leave startups in limbo over at-home COVID-19 tests

Flush with cash, PE firms confront their new reality

Toys R Us creditors sue Bain Capital, KKR execs

PE digs in as battle to end surprise medical bills rages on

Seattle startups find one solution to coronavirus worries is close to home

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Recommended Reads

The social-distancing culture war has begun. [The Atlantic]

Sports of all kinds have been shut down globally. Will living without them teach us something about how much we really need them? [The Washington Post]

German scientists have uncovered a microbe that can break down polyurethane, a major component of plastic that's been historically difficult to recycle. [UPI]

Endowments and operating budgets at US universities are feeling a squeeze from the coronavirus pandemic. [Institutional Investor]

The current turmoil in the markets will likely reshape secondary deal volume and valuations in the coming year. [The Wall Street Journal]

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2016 Vintage Global PE Funds between $250M and $500M

VC Deals

WeWork sells Meetup at a discount

Via rides past $2B valuation

ElevateBio picks up $170M

Edtech startup books $10M

Air Doctor collects $7.8M Series A

PE Deals

BGH, OTPP drop Abano Healthcare buyout

Resilience Capital backs Leader Auto Resources

Calera Capital snags Thayer

Apollo withdraws bid for Tegna

Palm Beach Capital backs Allen Brothers

Fundraising

Founders Fund closes $101.5M fund

Ardian hauls in $18B for secondaries deals

Corporate M&A

Lenders must fork out $23B for T-Mobile, Sprint merger

THE DAILY BENCHMARK

2016 Vintage Global PE Funds between $250M and $500M

Median IRR

12.05%

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

27.94%

1.22x

Median TVPI

Select top performers

Gemspring Capital Fund I

Ufenau V German Asset Light

DW Healthcare Partners II

**IRR: net of fees*

26 Funds in Benchmark »

Check out the latest version of **PitchBook Benchmarks**

Webinar: COVID-19's impact on private equity

Join us for a frank and forward-looking discussion on the coronavirus pandemic and its impact on the PE market. PitchBook senior analyst Alex Lykken and Randy Schwimmer of Churchill Asset Management will discuss how firms are responding to the economic fallout and the steps investors are taking to maintain their portfolios.

The webinar will also cover lessons from the global financial crisis, how PE firms may finance deals in the current lending environment, and how cooperation between investors and lenders will shape private equity this year.

The webinar will be held on Thursday at 3 p.m. ET/12 p.m. PT. **Register now** to attend live or receive a recording of the event.

Share:

VC DEALS

WeWork sells Meetup at a discount

A group of investors led by AlleyCorp, a New York-based incubator and VC firm, has acquired global social media and networking company Meetup from WeWork. Terms of the deal were not disclosed, but Fortune reported that the sale price was "a fraction" of the $156 million WeWork paid to acquire the startup in 2017. Meetup, which operates in 193 countries, was reportedly valued at $200 million at the time of that deal.

View round

View 19 competitors »

Via rides past $2B valuation

Transit tech startup Via has raised a $200 million Series E led by Exor, the holding company of Italy's Agnelli family. The Series E, which values the New York-based business at $2.25 billion, also drew new investors Shell, Macquarie Capital and Mori Building, as well as several existing investors. Via's technology aims to make public transportation networks more efficient, with a focus on ridesharing and electric and driverless vehicles. Via was valued at $1 billion in 2017, according to PitchBook data.

Additional Investors:
83North, Pitango, Hearst Ventures, Ervington Investments, Planven Ventures, Broadscale Group, RiverPark Ventures

View round

View 25 competitors »

ElevateBio picks up $170M

ElevateBio, a developer of cell and gene therapies, has raised a $170 million Series B from investors including The Invus Group, Surveyor Capital, EDBI and Vertex Ventures. Based in the Boston area, the company works with academic researchers, medical centers and corporate partners. ElevateBio launched in May 2019 with a $150 million financing co-led by MPM Capital and F2 Ventures.

Additional Investors:
F2 Ventures, MPM Capital, EcoR1 Capital, Redmile Group, Samsara BioCapital

View

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round

Edtech startup books $10M

Preply, which offers an online language learning platform, has raised $10 million in a round led by Hoxton Ventures. The Massachusetts-based company was valued at $12 million in 2017, according to PitchBook data.

Additional Investors:
Point Nine Capital, All Iron Ventures, The Family, EduCapital, Diligent Capital

View round

View 35 competitors »

Air Doctor collects $7.8M Series A

Air Doctor has reportedly raised $7.8 million in a round led by Kamet Ventures and The Phoenix Insurance Company. Founded in 2016 and based in Jerusalem, the startup operates an online platform that helps travelers locate medical professionals abroad. Air Doctor reportedly secured a $3.1 million seed round in 2018.

View round

View similar company »

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then there's smarter
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PE DEALS

BGH, OTPP drop Abano Healthcare buyout

BGH and the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan have reportedly canceled their bid to acquire Abano Healthcare. The company, which operates more than 239 dental practices under the Australian brand Maven Dental and the New Zealand brand Lumino the Dentists, has temporarily closed its clinics due to the coronavirus pandemic. OTPP and BGH, a PE firm operating in both Australia and New Zealand, originally agreed to acquire Abano for about NZ$150 (about $95 million at the time) in November.

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Resilience Capital backs Leader Auto Resources

Resilience Capital Partners has invested in Leader Auto Resources, a Montreal-based provider of automotive services for dealerships in Canada and the US Northeast. The company's existing locations in the US will be renamed DealerShop and be led by chairman Mary Petrovich and president and CEO Bill Gryzenia.

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Calera Capital snags Thayer

Calera Capital has teamed with company management to acquire Thayer Power & Communication, a Columbus, Ohio-based provider of repair, maintenance and upgrade services for the utility and telecom industries. The deal marks the middle-market firm's eighth investment from its fifth flagship fund, which closed on $555 million in 2017.

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Apollo withdraws bid for Tegna

Citing the coronavirus pandemic, Apollo Global Management has reportedly withdrawn a bid to acquire Tegna that would have valued the Tysons, Va.-based television broadcaster at around $8.5 billion. The news comes after rival broadcaster Gray Television pulled its offer earlier this month due to the same reason, according to Reuters. Shares of Tegna (NYSE: TGNA) dropped nearly 19% Monday to close at $10.68 apiece.

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Palm Beach Capital backs Allen Brothers

Palm Beach Capital has invested in Allen Brothers Wholesale Distributors, a Pennsylvania-based provider of candy, snacks, coffee and other products to grocery stores and convenience stores. The firm has also announced the establishment of National Convenience Distributors, which will become the

parent company of Allen Brothers and existing portfolio companies J. Polep Distribution Services and Harold Levinson Associates. The Allen Brothers investment came from Palm Beach Capital's third flagship fund.

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FUNDRAISING

Founders Fund closes $101.5M fund

Founders Fund has wrapped up its growth-stage principals fund with $101.5 million in commitments, according to an SEC filing. Founded by PayPal co-founder Peter Thiel, the firm raised $1.5 billion for a separate growth-stage fund in February.

View fund

View 424 investments »

Ardian hauls in $18B for secondaries deals

Ardian has raised about $18 billion for its eighth secondaries fund, according to Bloomberg. It will reportedly invest in US and European buyout funds being sold by the vehicle's current backers, and could close as soon as next month. The firm raised $10.8 billion for its seventh secondaries fund in 2016.

View fund

View 841 investments »

CORPORATE M&A

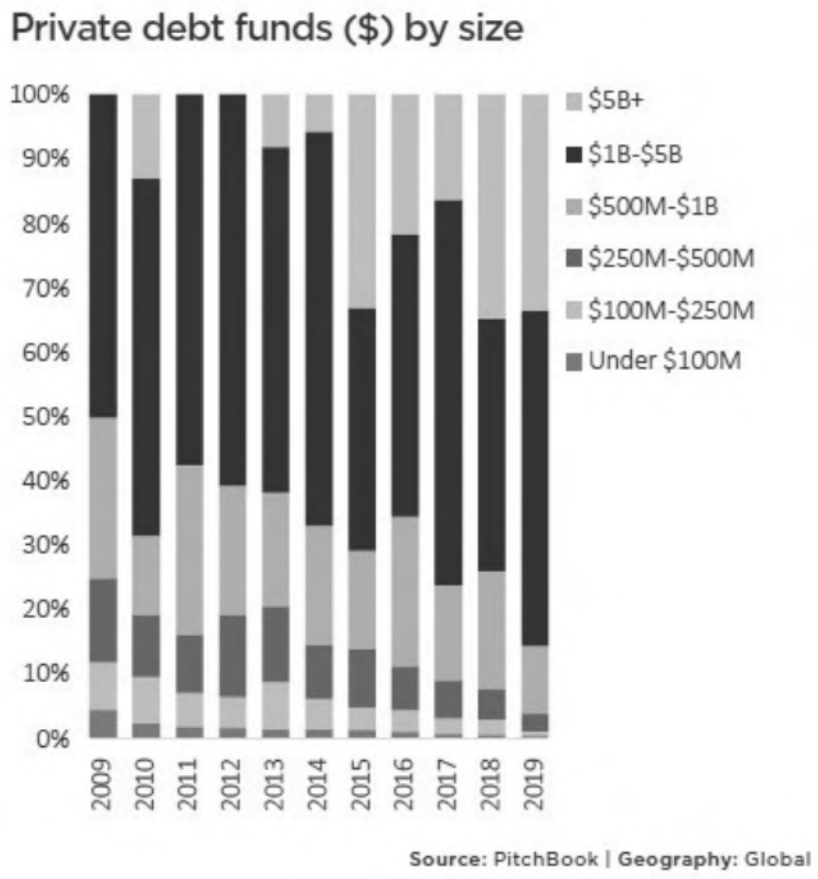
Lenders must fork out $23B for T-Mobile, Sprint merger

A group of 16 banks that includes Deutsche Bank, Morgan Stanley and Barclays, has been formally notified that they must scrape together $23 billion in loans by April 1 so that T-Mobile is able to complete its $26.5 billion all-stock merger with rival Sprint, according to Bloomberg. After a long regulatory battle, the deal **received approval** from a federal judge in February.

View details

View 24 competitors »

CHART OF THE DAY



Source: **PitchBook's H2 2019 Global Private Debt Report**

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From: Powers, Pamela
Sent: Fri, 3 Apr 2020 20:56:12 +0000
To: (b)(6)
EOP/OMB;(b)(6) @omb.eop.gov
Cc: (b)(6) EOP/OMB;(b)(6)
EOP/OMB(b)(6) EOP/OMB;(b)(6) EOP/OMB(b)(6) EOP/OMB(b)(6)
(b)(6). EOP/OVP;Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris)(b)(6) EOP/WHO;(b)(6)
(b)(6) EOP/WHO;Cashour, Curtis;Tucker, Brooks;Nevins, Kristan K. EOP/WHO;(b)(6)
(b)(6) EOP/WHO
Subject: RE: Agency Report - VA
Attachments: VA_4.3.20_COVID19 Daily Report.docx, VA Employee COVID Cases 4-3-2020.pdf, VA Veteran COVID Cases 4-3-2020.docx

Attached is the daily report for the Department of Veterans Affairs on our response to COVID-19. Of note:

• VA announced today a number of actions to provide Veterans with financial, benefits and claims help amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
• Secretary Wilkie briefed the FEMA Task Force today. VA is prepared to open 1500 beds across our system to help relieve the pressure on states and localities. Each Veterans Affairs network has put in place contingency plans to expand the number of beds available, first for veterans and then our fellow citizens.
• VA is working with Dept. of Treasury on a solution to ensure that Veterans and Survivors who do not file tax returns and rely solely on VA benefits for income still receive stimulus checks via the CARES Act.
• VA contracted with Battelle for use of their Critical Care Decontamination Systems (CCDS) to sanitize N95 masks for Brooklyn, Manhattan, and East Orange, NY medical centers. Great partnership with HHS and FDA led to the approval to reuse masks 20x after sanitization.

Have a great weekend!

Pam

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Choose VA

COVID-19 – Agency Response
4/3/2020
Department of Veterans Affairs

Administrative Actions, Waivers, and Other Programmatic Changes that Impact Agency Provision of Service or Mission Delivery (Externally Facing)

- **VA announced today a number of actions to provide Veterans with financial, benefits and claims help amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The financial relief actions include the following until further notice:**
  - **Suspending all actions on Veteran debts under the jurisdiction of the Treasury Department.**
  - **Suspending collection action or extending repayment terms on preexisting VA debts, as the Veteran prefers.**
  - **For Veterans who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and need immediate action on their appeals, as opposed to a filing extension, the Board of Veterans' Appeals will Advance their appeal on Docket (AOD). Click here to find out how to file for AOD and what documentation is required.**
- **Secretary briefed the FEMA Task Force today. VA is prepared to open 1500 beds across our system to help relieve the pressure on states and localities. Each Veterans Affairs network has put in place contingency plans to expand the number of beds available, first for veterans and then our fellow citizens.**
- **VA is working with Dept. of Treasury on a solution to ensure that Veterans and Survivors who do not file tax returns and rely solely on VA benefits for income still receive stimulus checks via the CARES Act.**
- **VA contracted with Battelle for use of their Critical Care Decontamination Systems (CCDS) to sanitize N95 masks for Brooklyn, Manhattan, and East Orange, NY medical centers. Great partnership with HHS and FDA led to the approval to reuse masks 20x after sanitization.**
- VA has administered more than 18,900 tests and has more than 3,000 additional tests on hand.
- Mobile Vet Center Update 4/3/2020:
  - New York, NY (Deployment Started)
    Operation Gotham at the Javits Center in New York City began to receive patients on the afternoon of 31 March 2020. Vet Center staff connected with 28 Service members over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 2 civilians.
  - Pasadena, CA (Deployment Started)
    Operation started on 1 April 2020 and staff are located in a shopping center in Pasadena, CA. Vet Center staff connected with 5 Veterans, Service members and families over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 15 civilians
  - Portland, OR (Deployment Started)
    Operation started on 31 March 2020 and staff are located in a shopping center in Portland, OR. Vet Center staff connected with 20 Veterans, Service members and families over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 7 civilians
  - Altoona, PA (Deployment Started)
    MVC stationed at VAMC to assist with screening. Veteran Outreach Program Specialist on site.
- Contract awarded for Alternate Care Sites-Four (4) 125 bed, soft-sided, portable medical structure. Awaiting delivery and selection of sites.
- Contract awarded for Mobile Field Hospital. Awaiting delivery and selection of site.

- Regional resource coordination center liaison officers working with HHS on initial pharmaceutical orders under the Mission Assignment
- Starting Thursday, April 9, 2020, NCA will no longer provide the option for families to witness interments at Calverton National Cemetery to help improve workload efficiency and increase the capacity of interment operations at this cemetery, which is located in the NYC epicenter. This change is being communicated to funeral homes in NY and families with interments scheduled on this date and beyond.
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), families have postponed 2,077 scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns. 8 COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries
- Increased enrollment and turnover of patients into the Home Telehealth (HT) program is overloading the ability of logistics to acquire the HT items. Primary shortages are thermometers and pulse-oximeters. Home Telehealth's new COVID-19 requirements to monitor COVID-19 higher risk patients have increased the burden on the supply chain. Program Offices are notifying the HT Care Coordinators to return these shortage items to the Denver Logistics Center for refurbishment and re-issue.
- OPM has authorized VA Direct Hire Authority for one year for the following positions at all grade levels nationwide for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency: Industrial Hygienist, GS-0690 Plumber, WG-4206 Maintenance Worker, WG-4749 Supervisory Engineer, GS-0801 Specialty Engineer, GS-0800 Laborer, WG-3502 Cook, WG-7404 Cemetery Caretaker, WG-4754. OPM has also authorized DHA for the following occupation and at this specific grade level: Human Resources Specialist, GS-0201-12.
- As of close of business on April 2, 2020, VBA contract vendors had reported a cumulative total of **45,945** unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic.
- Veterans Group Life Insurance: Prudential has extended grace periods by 90-days for premium payments and reinstatements, including the time allowed to submit the Attending Physician Statement (APS) required for some medical underwriting applications.

[NEW] CARES ACT IMPLEMENTATION – KEY ACTIVITIES AND MILESTONES
(Please also include activities related to the implementation of other COVID-related supplementary funding legislation, including P.L. 116-127 and P.L. 116-123)

- Finalizing internal controls including reporting requirements for obligations, expenditures, and planned activities) for CARES Act Supplemental funding.
- OMB approved CARES Act Supplemental funding apportionments for VHA, VBA, Gen Ad, OIG, and Grants for Construction of State Extended Care Facilities. OIT apportionments are pending finalization of account allocations ($2.15B)
- CARES Act, Section 4022. Foreclosure Moratorium and Consumer Right to Request Forbearance: notified OMB's Veterans Affairs and Defense Health Branch of interpretation concerns to ensure that all federal housing agencies impacted by these sections are consistent in implementing the new law, as requested by OMB.
- OIT will complete circuit installs at all four gateways by April 3rd, doubling network bandwidth to 160GBs
- OIT has approved 31 COVID-19 Memos valued at $371.02M
- Working with VHA, VBA, OIT to prepare spend plans and regular reporting templates for CARES Act funding.

- VBA Received $13M in GOE supplemental funding for COVID-19 related issues such as purchase of equipment and supplies to support telework posture and employee health and safety as well as scheduled deep cleaning of buildings/offices occupied by VBA personnel
- More information on CARES implementation is being developed and will be forthcoming

Major upcoming decisions that require POTUS or Task Force-level decisions (only the biggest, most sensitive items should be included here, many agencies may not have anything to report in this section)

- NSTR

Guidance, Communication and Outreach with Stakeholders

- SECVA Media
  - Sec. Wilkie interviewed on The Sam Malone Show (Houston, TX Radio)
  - Sec. Wilkie interviewed on The Dale Jackson Show (Huntsville, AL Radio)
- VHA Executive in Charge Richard Stone briefed House Veterans Affairs, Senate Veterans Affairs and Appropriation Committee staff members on COVID-19 response.
- Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Michigan on Thursday, April 2 focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 31,582 participants.
- **VHA Guidance to the field:**
  - Changes to In-Person Identity Verification for the My HealtheVet Website
  - COVID-19 Bed Expansion Planning Signed
  - Move! Weight Management Program Guidance for COVID-19 Pandemic Response
  - EIC Memorandum Authorization to pay for Lodging and Meals
  - Contracted Outpatient Sites of Care COVID-19 Virtual Care Information and Updates

- **Other Notable Responses**

  - **2,184 Positive Veteran COVID-19 Cases**

    - This is an increase of 263 cases from yesterday's numbers
    - 548 Veterans are in inpatient care (155 in ICU, 393 in Acute Care)
    - 1,558 are in outpatient care and are quarantined at home
    - 363 of these veterans are in New Orleans, which remains a hot spot for VA
    - 338 cases are in greater New York City Area (Bronx, Hudson Valley, Northport, Brooklyn)
    - Other emerging hotspots include Connecticut (48), Indianapolis (69), New Jersey (89), Aurora/Denver (71), Chicago (113), Atlanta (64), Detroit (88), Washington, DC (59)
    - Veteran Deaths: 78 veterans have died from COVID-19 (+10 from yesterday)
      ***Note**: See attached document (VA Veteran COVID Cases 4-3-2020) for complete breakdown

  - **635 VA Positive Employee cases**

    - This is an increase of 71 cases from yesterday's numbers.

- Similar to the Veteran data above, there are a large cluster of employee cases in New Orleans with 73 employees testing positive.
- **NOTE: Yesterday's report noted an increase of 59 employees testing positive in Indianapolis for a total of 64 employees. That number was reported in error. That actual number of cases in Indianapolis is 20.**
- Other employee hot spots include Aurora (22), Chicago (36), Houston (21)
- To date there have been three employee deaths. One in Ann Arbor, one in Detroit and one in Indianapolis. The death in Indianapolis is new today.
  ***Note:** See attached document (VA Employee COVID Cases 4-3-2020) for complete breakdown.

Historical Inputs:

- Within a day of the first confirmed US case, VA began planning for COVID-19 by establishing screening and triage, isolation and quarantine, and infection control strategy and plans.
- Activated Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Emergency Management Coordination Cell (EMCC) to Level 1 on January 20, 2020 and it remains activated.
- Screening points established at every major VHA Healthcare Facility (170 hospitals that serve nearly 9 million veterans across the country) (March 10, 2020)
- Limited admissions to Spinal Cord Injury Units - 24 major centers; 24,000 Veterans (March 10, 2020)
- Restricted admission to VA Community Living Centers (CLC) (134 nationwide nursing homes supporting 41,000 Veterans) (March 10, 2020)
- Daily crisis action team meetings at 3pm to discuss updates and remain in sync internally and with other federal guidance. (3/9/2020)
- All VA Regional Benefit Offices (ROs) are closed to the public. Benefits are still being processed virtually.
- Provided HR Emergency Preparedness Guide to employees and managers to answer questions on a wide-range of human capital topics (e.g., travel, leave, telework, employee relations, labor relations, compensation, staffing, reasonable accommodation); continue to update based on new guidance.
- Released system-wide policy released directing curtailment of routine appointments and elective surgeries at all VA facilities (3/17/20)
- Released guidance for Geriatrics & Extended Care Home & Community Based Services Programs to protect Veterans and staff including strict limitations on visitors in geriatric facilities, increasing the use of virtual modalities for clinical care, and screening all essential visitors or residents of a Veterans home prior to initiating contact.
- Released Chaplain guidance related to COVID-19 transmitted to the field (3/17/20) that continues to provide spiritual support to Veterans while using appropriate PPE or and utilizing virtual modalities for worship services. Any large-scale chaplain events have been cancelled.
- Implementation of an Episodic Special Patient Icon in Bed Management Solution sent to the field
  - VA recently launched an Episodic Patient Icon to identify inpatient Veterans who are presumptive or confirmed positive cases during epidemics. These icons can also be used to identify negative pressure rooms which allows for real-time bed capacity across the enterprise.
- Insurance services extended premium payment grace periods; reinstatement deadlines; and Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI) application deadlines. (3/17/20)

- Board of Veterans Appeals suspended all travel board, video, and central office hearings and is prepared to provide virtual hearings where possible if Veterans and the Representative are willing and have the necessary equipment. (3/17/20)
- Submitted Task Order to HHS to receive an additional 250K masks in Martinsburg; 1.5M masks at the SDC in Hines, IL
- VA is experiencing a reduction in surgical case load due to delaying non-emergent care; down from 1,900 per day to 1,300 per day. Additionally, there has been a 5% drop in ER visits; increased bed capacity by 1/3 across the VA. (3/16/20)
- Converting all ICU beds to negative airflow beds with a goal of reengineering by 3/30.
- VA's Loan Guaranty Service issued program guidance for VA's Real Estate Owned and Portfolio Servicing Contract (RPSC) contractor, placing a moratorium on evictions for VA-owned properties for 60 days due to COVID-19.
- VA's Debt Management Center, through coordination with the Veterans Benefits Administration and Veterans Service Organizations, implemented a 60-day COVID-19 debt relief plan to provide temporary financial relief in accordance with Veterans' request.
- Issuing proposed COVID-19 Interim Suitability & Fingerprint Guidance to comply with social distancing recommendations; guidance includes temporarily suspension of an initial fingerprint check (SAC) prior to new employees and contractor's entry-on-duty (EOD); VA continuing other investigatory measures such as initiation of e-Quip.
- Finalized a response to various union demands to bargain implementation of measures and precautions being put in place by the Department to protect people and property during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The general response denies immediate negotiations while advising any impact and implementation bargaining will occur post-implementation when the pandemic ceases. The Department is willing to meet all of its legal obligations, including negotiating with unions representing VA employees, but must also focus on providing care to our Veterans while protecting the safety and security of our facilities and the health of all in them.
- VetResources emails, providing Coronavirus information and prevention guidance, were sent to 10.8 million subscribers. (February 5 and February 26)
- A VA Acquisition Insider alert is being distributed to the VA Acquisition community concerning possible fraudulent vendor/merchant activity. Some of this activity might include instances of price gouging.
- VAntage blog published January 31 and continually updated since: https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/70999/cdc-coronavirus-information-and-resources/
- Sent letter to governors regarding VA's Fourth Mission to improve the nation's preparedness and be a "safety net" for response to war, terrorism, national emergencies, and natural disasters. (March 17, 2020)
- CAO and VA's Director of Operations and Emergency Management communicated with HHS to ensure VA's Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needs are prioritized. HHS has agreed to release a stop gap quantity of N95 protective masks to VA this week. (March 16, 2020)
- Notified GI Bill Beneficiaries and school officials through email and social media. If schools change modality of training to online classes for the current term, VA will continue to pay benefit payments.
- VA is pausing attendance at hearings involving the Secretary and his Undersecretaries for the remainder of March, at the guidance of OMB. One Senate hearing on the 2021 VA Budget proposal and a House hearing on Sexual Assault Prevention will not be attended by senior leaders. Subcommittee attendance from VA witnesses will continue on a case by case basis.

- Secretary Wilkie sent a message to all VA employees expressing appreciation for their support during the COVID-19 pandemic, assuring them that their health and safety and that of our patients is critical, and offering resources to promote employee wellness during this time. (March 16, 2020)
- Implemented VEText outreach to 8,858,481 Veterans to receive COVID-19 information and updates via text. Texts began at 1200EST on 3/17/2020.
- Facilitated a briefing to Senate and House Authorizing committee staffers on VA's Emergency Management Disaster Plan for COVID-19.
- Partnering with Facebook and the American Red Cross Military Veteran Caregiver Network to support Veterans and their families/caregivers in their homes through use of 7,488 free Facebook Portal devices.
- Partnering with Amazon, to purchase 500 tablets to enable access for Veterans, families and caregivers via VHA Telehealth Service to help ensure medical access and reduce possible exposure estimated launch (3/30/2020).
- Deployed 16 Nursing Assistants to assist with screening of AMCITs repatriated (all have been demobilized)
- Deployed 5 Area Emergency Managers to assist Health and Human Services (HHS) Incident Management Teams at each repatriation site
- Deployed a Liaison Officer to the HHS Secretary's Operations Center (SOC) to assist with response coordination
- Conducted analysis of VA Medical facilities contingency data to identify locations for potential COVID-19 dedicated facilities
- Manilla, Philippines Embassy will close in the next two weeks, in which case our VA clinic will close. Eight employees will be returned to the US (1 VHA and 7 VBA) and this will impact 6,000 veterans who receive care from that clinic.
- OIT created a new Veteran-facing FAQ page, which is with OPIA to obtain final (i.e. White House) clearance.
- Issued guidance memorandum authorizing waiver of the biweekly pay limitation on premium pay for workers performing duties in response to COVID-19, permitting overtime and premium pay for eligible workers up to the annual limitation.
- OPM signed dual-compensation waiver to allow hiring of reemployed annuitants (i.e. retired employees) during COVID-19 by streamlining current delegations of authority for waiver of salary offset; VA Comms team is working with WH Comms on a Press Release.
- Coordinating with OM on procedures for authorizing Hazard Pay if regulatory criteria met
- **Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** Prepared to increase scope of the EAP contract with FOH for COVID-19 counselling if needed.
- Now sending daily detailed updates to both House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees
- VHA has detailed four personnel to FEMA HQ to support the operations: Dr. John Areno, VISN16 Chief Medical Officer & Pulmonary/Critical Care physician; Mary Mather, IPEC/National Program Manager for LTC; Andrew Centineo, PL&O; Michael Forgy, OEM
- Secretary Wilkie joined President Trump on a stakeholder call with leaders of Veterans Service organizations to update them on the government wide response to COVID-19 (3/21/20)
- VA's Financial Services Center established an Emergency Buyers sub-group of 13,000 Government Purchase Cardholders within VA's Amazon Business Account providing special access to select vendors for critically needed supplies in accordance with the Chief Acquisition Officer's COVID-19 supply chain efforts

- VA Office of Information and Technology (OIT) has concluded testing of its network. Based on stress testing this week, OIT believes we can support 175,000-200,000 CAG connections, in addition to 300,000 RESCUE connections (3/21/2020)
- Future deployment of the Mobile Vet Center to New Orleans, LA will start week of 23 Mar 2020. VA reviewing locations for additional deployments. VA to set up Vet Center Community Access Point to provide direct counseling to Veterans receiving treatment through the HHS location.
- Effective Monday, March 23, 2020, committal services and the rendering of military funeral honors will not be conducted until further notice at VA national cemeteries. Immediate family members (limited to no more than 10 individuals) of the deceased may witness the interment if requested. Currently, approximately 1174 families have postponed scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns. This is up significantly from yesterday.
- VA will receive 20,000 testing swabs tomorrow 3/23
- Davita and Fresenius Dialysis companies establishing joint cohorting sites for individual markets where COVID 19 dialysis patients can be treated in isolation.
- On Saturday, March 21, 2020, the President signed into law S. 3503, which clarifies how the Department of Veterans Affairs should treat in-person courses of study that convert to distance learning formats due to health-related situations and other emergencies. https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/bill-announcement-89/
- VA announced the policy change that allows for a dual compensation waiver for retired annuitants (retired VA employees) to be hired back to VA to meet the increased need of healthcare workers during COVID-19
- Packaged 50,000 masks today for shipment tomorrow to Denver and Brooklyn (3/23/2020)
- All Area Emergency Managers are in place at each FEMA region.
- VA working with OPM to expedite blanket requests from VA to exceed the limits on recruitment, relocation, and retention incentives for Title 5 employees to help provide necessary staff
- VA is concerned with the national ventilator shortage and is working with FEMA Task Force (TF) to find other sources of supply. VA will receive 25 ventilators this week and an additional 25 next week.
- Working to purchase facepiece elastomeric respirators based on CDC Guidance for managing COVID-19 patients; It is recommended that elastomeric respirators be used in order to conserve Surgical 95 and N95 filtering facepieces for high risk procedures that require a sterile field. (3/24/2020)
- VA experiencing a high reduction (20%) in urgent care utilization showing Veterans are heeding advice to stay home (3/24/2020)
- 20k hand sanitizer bottles have been received and will be deployed to the facilities starting tomorrow. (3/24/2020)
- Coordinated with DOD to identify approximately 8581 employees who are reserve/guard members and 669 are currently activated – 122 nurses and 24 doctors included in this number.
- During the COVID-19 emergency, private sector entities have offered to donate equipment and supplies needed to protect personnel from contracting COVID-19. VA OGC worked a delegation of approval to VISN Directors to ensure efficient approval of donated gifts.
- Effective immediately, the Board of Veterans Appeals will advance on docket (AOD) appeals for Veterans diagnosed with COVID-19. (3/24/2020)
- The Board of Veterans Appeals will accept AMA Notices of Disagreement (NOD) with a typed signature in lieu of a wet signature. (3/24/2020)
- Construction projects in Massachusetts, California, New York, Pennsylvania and Puerto Rico have been ether stopped completely or activities severly curtailed by this national emergency and shelter in place orders.

- Effective COB March 24, 2020 the National Personnel Records Center will be closing its facility in accordance with local St. Louis municipal guidance. Critical VA personnel will remain behind to continue to process priority records requests.
- MyVA311 call center (located in Salt Lake City) successfully started handling VISN 22 general COVID calls last night and VISN20 is scheduled for tonight; this effort was to free up hospital call centers for local issues.
- In consultation with DoD, NCA has discontinued disinterment efforts with the Defense POW/MIA Accountability Agency (DoD) at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) effective immediately and until further notice in order to focus NCA resources on essential burial operations.
- Sent 541 letters to Members of Congress and Committees clarifying the process for requests from states and localities for VA to activate it's 4th MISSION (3/24/2020)
- Internal bulletin being drafted to implement new OPM guidance on flexible on-boarding this coming pay period and as needed during COVID to minimize physical proximity (such as the oath of office, the form I-9, fingerprinting, orientation, physical examinations, drug testing).
- Secretary Wilkie hosted a call with State and Local Government Stakeholders to provide them an update on VA's response to COVID-19.
- US Army Corps of Engineers will visit the former Denver medical facility to assess the building's viability for FEMA/HHS use.
- Penn Medicine submitted a request for a Mission Assignment for the transfer of COVID-19 non-Veteran patients to the Philadelphia VAMC.
- VA activating DEMPS for New Orleans (160 Clinical Staff) and New York (50 Nurses). We will begin moving people there starting today.
- Preparing to create a Federal Medical Shelter (FMS) in the Pacific NW (Location to be determined) with 160 personnel. Waiting for official FEMA tasking.
- Five Eyes Conference Ministerial Veterans Summit (scheduled for May 2020) has been postponed due to COVID-19.
- Submitted to OPM: (1) request for dual comp waiver to cover 2210 (IT Specialists) series occupations, and (2) direct hire authority for VBA positions-- Veteran Service Representative, Rating Veterans Service Representative, and Legal Administrative Specialist.
- On March 24th, CAO reported to VA OIG a vendor in Louisiana who is offering medical supplies and equipment up to 1000% above average cost and likely does not meet FDA guidelines.
- SECVA had the following phone interviews with press:
  - Jeff "Goldy" Goldberg, WFNC Radio (3/24/20)
  - NBC 4 w/ Scott MacFarlane (3/24/20)
  - Jim Blythe, Alliance 4 the Brave (Dallas) (3/24/20)
  - Kirsti Marohn, Minnesota Public Radio (3/24/20)
  - Ware Morning Show (Radio), San Antonio (3/25/20)
  - Fox News Rundown (Taped) (3/25/20)
  - Wake Up Tucson, AZ (3/25/20)
  - Fred Thys, WBUR Radio (NPR Boston) (3/25/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by the Moon Griffon Show (LA radio). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Leo Shane of Military Times (print). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Pensacola's Morning News (FL radio). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by WWL Radio (New Orleans, LA radio). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Drive with Lee Matthews (Oklahoma City, OK radio). (3/27/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Kevin Miller in the Morning (Boise, ID radio). (3/27/20)

- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Marc Cox morning Show (St Louis, MO radio). (3/27/20)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Larry O'Connor, WMAL (DC/CA radio). (3/27/20)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by KOAN Radio (Anchorage, AK). (3/27/20)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Montana Talks Radio. (3/30/20)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by the Ross Kaminsky Show (CO radio). (3/30/20)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Lisa Rein, The Washington Post. (3/30/20)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Conservative Circus (Phoenix radio). (3/31/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Bob Rose Show (FL radio). (3/31/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by the Charlie James Show (SC radio). (3/31/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Mobile Mornings (AL radio). (3/31/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Mark Sterling Show (NC radio).
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Fox Across America (Fox News Radio).
- Sec. Wilkie interviewed by Richmond's Morning News (VA radio).
- Sec. Wilkie interviewed by Ringside Politics (LA radio/tv).
- Sec. Wilkie interviewed by The Erick Erickson Show (GA radio).

- SECVA had the following studio interviews:
  - COX Media w/ Samantha Manning; held in VACO Broadcast Studio (3/25/20)
- Guidance sent to HR offices of a temporary postponement of pre-employment applicant drug testing for testing designated positions (TDP) for up to 180 days.
- Authority to Approve Weather & Safety Leave for Employees
- Guidance for Elective Gastroenterology and Hepatology Procedures – COVID-19
- Guidance for VHA Eye Care Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- OCHCO Bulletin – Temporary Authorization to Delay Pre-Placement and Recurring Physical Exams
- Guidance for VHA Emergency Child Care Center Operations
- Changes to In-Person Identity Verification for the My HealtheVet Website
- Dual Compensation Waiver Guidance for VHA
- Guidance on Safeguards for Military Environmental Registry Exams to Protect Veterans
- Guidance on Patient Specimen Shipments - UPS shipping
- Guidance on Preparedness for Mechanical Ventilation of COVID-19 patients during Pandemic
- VA met with OIRA and OMB on MISSION Act considerations. VA is not pausing the MISSION Act. The department is ensuring the best medical interests of Veterans are met by adhering to the law in a manner that takes into account whether referrals for community care are clinically appropriate during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- VA is no longer considering issuing a temporary waiver of the >90% bed hold requirement and the 75% Veteran bed requirement for State Veterans Homes to help ensure they remain solvent during this crisis. After further review, OGC advised that VA has no authority to waive the regulatory requirement. In addition, we were asked to review draft legislative language that would waive the above requirement. The State Homes have a hotline to Congress so we assume this is something they asked for and we will support.
- A total of 631 Transition Assistance events have been cancelled to date due to installation restrictions. We are offering these transition related courses virtually (via eLearning) to all Servicemembers and their families.
- VBA continues to exceed output targets for some benefits during the pandemic
  - Last week, Veterans filing claims for Education benefits continued to receive decisions on original claims in 15 days and on supplemental claims in under seven days, well below target levels of 28 days for original claims and 14 days for supplemental claims.

- Nearly 100 percent of Veterans seeking a loan guaranty certificate of eligibility received it within the goal of 5 days, and approximately 90 percent were delivered within one day.
- Call Centers are exceeding targets for service delivery—last week, Veterans needing to discuss their claims or benefits with a call center agent waited an average of one minute to speak to an agent, with 88 percent of callers reaching an agent within our target of two minutes.
- VBA is maximizing its use of alternatives to in-person appointments including the use of phone and video capabilities.

- Conducted a "Lunch and Learn" a virtual online meeting to provide Veteran Service Organizations and community partners access to VA resources including COVID-19 response resources.
- Published VETResources to a total of 10.7M Veterans via email (25 March 2020).
- Acting PDUSH met with NYC Emergency Management Commissioner to discuss need for HHS tasking, sharing of data, and the process for referral of COVID positive and negative patients, preferably Veterans, to be admitted at VA facilities.
- Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System (DEMPS) activation memo issued and recruitment initiated for New Orleans and Manhattan
- Area Emergency Managers supporting repatriation centers:
    - Travis and Lackland demobilizing today (3/26/2020)
    - Dobbins and Miramar will demobilize tomorrow (3/27/2020)
- VA working with various vendors for purchase of Chloroquine Phosphate and ventilators.
- Collaborating with Peace Corps who has 7,000 volunteers ready to work (due to evacuations); working with them on open position advertising and employment opportunities to support VA's mission during this national emergency and beyond.
- VA identified a potential shortage of 1K nurses in certain hotspots of the nation and is working a combination of solutions to include:
    - Rehire of retired nurses
    - Hire of new employees through special hiring authorities and waivers
    - DEMPS moves from other non-stressed areas in VA
    - Use of the new Open Opportunities, a governmentwide platform offering professional development opportunities to current federal employees, as a central location for federal agencies to post details, microdetails, and/or temporary assignments.
- Collaborating with DOL and DHS/USCIS on a waiver of labor market review for non-citizens.
- Examining with OPM on a waiver or use of existing interchange agreements to detail excepted to competitive positions
- Activating enhanced Tele-ICU hub
- Growing the roster for Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System (DEMPS) volunteers for deployment to New York City and New Orleans.
- To support volunteerism, VHA is authorizing Special Contribution Awards up to the limit and asking OPM for authority to go above $10,000 but under $25,000 where needed and also making an exception to policy (VA Directive 5007) to allow per regulation recruitment, relocation and retention bonuses for any appointment at least 6 months in duration.
- Received shipment of N-95 masks, swabs and test kits for distribution (3/27/2020)
- With support from our Center for Strategic Partnerships, Office of Research and Development is establishing agreements with two commercial Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) that has allowed four of our medical centers to join in ongoing COVID-19 clinical trials and positions us to be ready for any future trials using these IRBs. VA opened trials in Palo Alto, Atlanta, New Orleans and Denver, where VA is seeing a surge of COVID patients.

- Issued joint guidance with Pension & Fiduciary Service and Appeals Management Office that the COVID-19 pandemic qualifies as "good cause" for granting extension requests. Specifically, if a claimant requests an extension to file forms or documents because the COVID-19 pandemic affected their ability to meet such deadlines, VBA will grant the requested extension, provided the time period expired on or after March 13, 2020 (the date the President issued a national emergency).
- Collaborating with the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association to let that community participate in helping VA fill its openings.
- The Child Care Subsidy Program has expanded the total family income ceiling from $89,999 to the maximum limit of $144,000. As a result of this expansion, there will be an increase in the monetary reimbursement required from participating Administrations and Staff Offices. (3/27/2020)
- Certain VA national cemeteries, located on active military installations, are being impacted by changes in base access (Fort Richardson, AK; Leavenworth, KS). Due to a change in base operating status, the general public is restricted from accessing the cemetery located on the base. NCA has coordinated with base authorities to ensure funeral homes are able to access the cemetery so direct casket/cremation interment operations are still available (without the option to "witness"). (3/27/2020)
- Currently supporting approximately 2,500 concurrent telehealth appointments, with a goal of 10,000 concurrent appointments (3/27/2020)
- VA OGC partnered with the VA Voluntary Service to create a universal gift form for distribution within VA listing general departmental needs during the COVID-19 emergency. Each VAMC Director can solicit and accept the listed donations pursuant to VHA Directive 4721, VHA General Post Fund – Gifts and Donations. (3/27/2020)
- VA send new (coordinated) guidance to the field on MISSION Act considerations (3/27/20).
- VA released the VHA COVID-19 Response Plan which provides guidance to the field. The operations plan includes strategies to address a large number of COVID-19 cases to include alternative sites of care for Veterans with COVID-19. (3/27/20)
- VA Veterans Health Administration sent the following guidance to the field (3/27/2020)
  - Delegation of Authority – Group Recruitment and Retention Incentives for Title 38 Employees
  - Recruitment, Hiring and Organizational Changes During COVID-19
  - COVID-19 VHACO Clinician Request
  - Postponement of Long-Term Care Surveys
  - Establishment of New Hire Processing Timeline
  - Office of Nursing Services Recruitment – Retired Annuitants and Travel Nurse Corps
- Developing language for HHS sub-task on FEMA Mission Assignment to VHA for $1.5M in pharmaceutical support to Javits shelter in NYC.
- Assisting Homeless Program on development of Assessment and Recovery Center.
- Executing Mission Assignment as directed by and in coordination with FEMA in support of the New York State request. VHA will provide 15 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and 35 Acute Care beds at the Manhattan/Brooklyn VAMC for immediate and short-term medical treatment of civilian (non-veteran) patients from city hospitals as required. (3/28/2020)
- Recommending OMP delay Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) by 3 months. VA is considering delay of VA's annual All Employee Survey (AES) to September.
- OPM approved direct hire authority for the following VBA positions: Veterans Service Representative; Rating Veterans Service Representative; Legal Administrative Specialist.
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), approximately 1,626 families have postponed scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns.

- For the past week, overall interments/inurnments are down in national cemeteries compared to last year by nearly 40% (2020: 1,219 interments/inurnments vs. 2019: 1,970 interments)
- Modifying Bulletin on waiving physical examinations during COVID-19 to address stress on Employee Occupational Health (EOH) offices who are focused on COVID-19 screening.
- NY Harbor VA Hospital received four civilian patients from Elmhurst Hospital. One was in respiratory failure and admitted to the ICU. Information about the other three is pending. (3/29/2020)
  - Four to five additional patients are expected overnight from Elmhurst Hospital.
  - The five patients that were to be transferred from Lincoln Hospital have not arrived yet.
- VA Office of Information and Technology (OIT) will complete circuit installs at all four gateways by April 3rd doubling bandwidth to 160GBs. We have also upgraded the number of concurrent Skype sessions in Gateway East, North and South, with Gateway West pending. The number of sessions increasing to 5000 at each gateway. These upgrades will allow for greater bandwidth, increased telework and increased telehealth to aid in our COVID-19 response. (3/29/2020)
- Working modifications to HRSmart to support mass hiring to support deployable medical personnel. 3/29/2020)
- Submitting request to OPM for broad authority to approve Special Contribution Awards (SCA) above the $10K agency limit; drafting changes to current policy (VAH 5017) to delegate from SECVA to EIC authority to approve SCAs up to $10K.
- VA OGC provided legal support for several important research projects in furtherance of efforts to develop a therapy for the COVID-19 infection. OGC is negotiating on an expedited basis a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) between Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc. and the Atlanta VA Health Care System to assess the efficacy and safety of a drug approved by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) for another use on Veterans hospitalized with COVID-19.
- VA working an Agreement with Reliance for the use of Advarra as the commercial IRB of record for a COVID-19 study using Gilead's Remdesvir at the Palo Alto VA Medical Center.
- VA OGC negotiated to allow the VA James J. Peters Medical Center, Bronx, New York to partner with Genentech/Roche and participate in study to evaluate the safety and efficacy of Tocilizumab (Actemra) in patients with severe COVID-19 pneumonia in the hope that that drug can interrupt a serious inflammatory response that can occur as a complication of some infections. The drug has been cleared by the FDA as a treatment for several forms of arthritis and also as a cancer therapy.
- On March 30th, the Denver Logistics Center (DLC) will receive a shipment of 500 iPads for the VA Video Connect (VVC) Community. These iPads are designed to allow "skype" type appointments between the Veteran patient and the Care Provider. The DLC will prepare the iPads for immediate shipment to fulfill backorders.
- VA received a new Mission Assignment to provide 20 (5 ICU and 15 Med Surge) beds for non-veteran patients in East Orange, NJ.
- Coordinated with FEMA/HHS Region IX, Arizona State officials, and Navajo Nation officials regarding cluster of cases in Tuba City, AZ and potential impacts to Veterans and VA facility.
- As of close of business on Sunday, March 29, 2020, VBA contract vendors had reported a cumulative total of **33,379** unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic.
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S., families have postponed **1,940** scheduled funeral services citing COVID-19 concerns. (3/30
- Notified HR offices on COVID-19 Excepted Service Hiring Authority for Schedule A approved by OPM. this allows us to quickly hire any Title 5 positions that are in direct response COVID-19. VA may use this to fill positions on a temporary basis for up to one year as needed in response to, or as a result of COVID-19. (3/30/2020)

- Deployed a second VEText based message to our Veterans that have a mobile phone number registered with VA at 1200 EST today (3/30/2020);
  - The text will reach approximately 7.1 million Veterans and take 8 hours to send to all recipients.
  - The message: "Dept of Veterans Affairs COVID-19 update: Stay home, stay safe, stay connected. VA has online tools for your appointments, prescriptions, and more. https://go.usa.gov/xdJkp
- Developed a COVID-19 quick start guide (QSG) to be posted as part of the VA welcome kit and broadly distributed to Veterans. This distribution includes:
  - All MOU partners (corporate partners), Veteran Service Organizations (VSO), posted on social media pages (Twitter, Facebook, etc.), VA Program Offices for sharing across their partner networks, National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA). (3/30/2020)
- VHA Executive In Charge, Richard Stone and Assistant Secretary from Management Jon Rychalski briefed HVAC Chairman Takano on the $19.6 Billion received in the supplemental funding bill (3/30/2020)
- VA conducted 3,094 concurrent telehealth appointments yesterday, a new high-water mark (3/31/2020)
- Coordinated with Department of Treasury to suspend the collection of all debt owed to VA until May 31, 2020 for any Veterans seeking debt assistance due to COVID-19. This includes suspending referrals to the Treasury Offset (TOP) and Cross Servicing (CS) processes.
- OPM sending VA job opportunities to over 1M retirees.
- VA All Employee Survey postponed until September 2020.
- Notified Human Resources (HR) offices of the Federal employee leave provisions under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the requirement to post the Families First Coronavirus Response Act Notice at VA facilities.
- In accordance with OMB and VA COVID-19 guidance, National Diversity Internship Program (NDIP) FY 20 summer session has been cancelled.
- VHA New Guidance to the field (3/31/2020):
  - Leveraging Capacity to Support Surges in Demand for COVID-19
  - Credentialing and Privileging COVID-19 (Reduced credentialing process for providers in order to expedite onboarding of critical medical staff)
  - Resilience Rehabilitation Treatment Programs (RRTP) Hardening Guidance (Details guidance on efforts to protect staff and patients in our Domiciliary Units)
  - Supplemental Information - Radiology and Nuclear Scheduling and Orders Management During the COVID-19 Pandemic
  - Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Guidance for Urgent and Emergent Surgical Procedures
  - Guidance on Access Standards in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updated (coordinated with OMB)
- Invocation of the Defense Production Act (DPA) resulted in confusion in the commercial sector as to how to prioritize orders, resulting in delays and cancellations on orders and deliveries to VA. Under the DPA, the FEMA Task Force, used its authority to divert materiel originally offered to VA for delivery to the SNS.
  - VA orders for masks, gowns, gloves, and PARP have been cancelled by our vendors. This is high risk for not only our enterprise, but for the Administration as our hospitals will be without supplies starting late this week.
  - FEMA and HHS have been made aware; VA is awaiting resolution from them.
    *Issue has since been resolved
- Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System Deployments (Various Specialties) (4/1/2020)
  - (27) Personnel being processed for deployment.

  - (14) Personnel deployed/on the ground at various locations.
  - (2) VISNS requested personnel deployed through DEMPS
- Mobile Vet Center Update as of 4/1/2020:
  - New Orleans, LA Mobile Vet Center Deployment Ended. Vet Center staff connected with 100 Veterans, Servicemembers and families over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 71 civilians. Deployment ended 30 Mar 2020. One deployed employee is currently under investigation with symptoms and awaiting test results. As a precaution, all deployed staff (4 total individuals) will telework for 14 days monitoring for symptoms before returning to work at their respective Vet Centers.
  - Pasadena, CA operations started on 31 Mar 2020.
  - Portland, OR operations started on 31 Mar 2020.
  - New York, NY operations started on March 31, 2020. There will be no physical Mobile Vet Center but counselors and outreach staff will be at the Javits Center to provide direct counseling to Veterans, Servicemembers, and their families.
- VA OGC advised that the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has the authority during the COVID-19 global pandemic emergency to procure lodging for employees working at their local worksite (e.g., if staff have a need to stay away from their homes/family members and continue to work (e.g. Emergency Department physicians), or a need to stay close by for faster response time, if VHA documents in writing why it has concluded that this event at all or some facilities involves imminent danger to human life and why paying for employee meals and lodging is necessary to combat that imminent danger.
- VA Acquisition Office is working with the VHA's Care in the Community Program Office to establish a Global Nurse Advice Line contract to support increased phone consults for Veteran care in support of Coronavirus.
- VA Acquisition Office is working with VHA to contract with Battelle for use of their Critical Care Decontamination Systems (CCDS) that can sanitize 80K N95 masks per day. There are two units in operation – New York and Camp Murray, WA.
- Assistant Secretary HRA/OSP and Assistant Secretary OIT co-signed a memorandum dated March 31 outlining temporary procedures for personnel security vetting and appointment of new employees and alternative PIV credentials for eligible users during Coronavirus 2019 National Emergency; this guidance implements direction issued to executive departments and agencies from the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Personnel Management.
- VHA Guidance Issued to the Field: (4/1/2020)
  - COVID-19 Definitions of Bed Categories
  - Suspension of Registered Nurse Transition to Practice Residency Program
  - COVID - Clinical Resource Hub Guidance
  - Guidance for the Hiring Compensation and Utilization of Alternate Nurse and Unlicensed Assistive Personnel
  - COVID-19 - Process for Cancellation of Non-urgent Operating Room Procedures
- SECVA hosted a phone call with VSO leaders to provide them with an update on VA's response to the COVID 19 Pandemic. This will be a weekly call going forward. (4/1/2020)
- Published public blog with guidance for Veterans/Caregivers seeking access to DoD facilities. (4/1/2020)
- Provided guidance on March 26 to field claims processors and the public on good cause for extending claims filing deadlines based on COVID-19. (4/1/2020)

    - Specifically, under existing VA regulations, if the time limits within which claimants or beneficiaries are required to act in order to perfect a claim, file an appeal, or challenge an adverse VA decision expired, the time may be extended for "good cause" shown.
    - Accordingly, claimants impacted by COVID-19 may request an extension for filing based on good cause. VBA regional office claims processors will grant the extension request, provided the time limit in question expired on or after March 13, 2020.
- **FEMA Mission Assignments Update:** 4 signed (4/2/2020)
  1. Resource Request: National Level Activation – Activate VA to locations identified by FEMA.
     - Status: Complete. 10 VHA Office of Emergency Management Liaisons deployed to each FEMA Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC)
  2. Resource Request: VHA Pharmaceutical and medication supply to support ESF8 response operations
     - Status: In progress. Validating actual requirements. VA will meet Veteran needs first.
  3. Resource Request: NYS requests VHA provide 15 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and 35 Acute Care beds at the Manhattan/Brooklyn VAMC for immediate and short-term medical treatment for non-veteran patients.
     - Status: In progress; 22 of the 50 beds are filled by non-veterans and many of the patients arrive in critical condition. <u>One civilian death at the Brooklyn VAMC.</u>
  4. Resource Request: VHA will provide 5 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and 15 Acute Care beds at the East Orange VAMC for non-veteran patients.
     - Status: In progress; status of beds unknown
- VA resolved the issue with FEMA and HHS regarding contracts under the DPA; working with FEMA to ensure VA is included in the National Supply Chain Priorities List. (4/2/2020)
- Regional response coordination center liaison officers receiving multiple inquiries regarding the pharmaceutical MA and PPE and medical supplies for state VA nursing homes under the supplemental appropriation
- JAVITS NY Medical Station and USNS Comfort Transfer guidance received
- VA processed 156,438 disability compensation and pension rating claims in March 2020, besting the prior record of 135,324, set in March 2014 (16% increase over prior best March output). This is significant evidence that VA is still providing world class service to Veterans during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
    - VBA is maintaining all phases of full business operations as we are maximizing telework (96% of employees) and continuing to reach veterans via phone and video appointments.
    - Veterans seeking assistance with claims may reach us via phone or email and may file claims through va.gov or via mail.
    - If a Veteran or claimant requests an extension for filing based on the COVID-19 pandemic, VBA will grant the extension under the good cause provision.
- Per HHS guidance, Office of Information Technology (OIT) has suspended privacy restrictions and will allow doctors to use technologies such as FaceTime and Google Hangouts for telehealth appointments. (4/2/2020)
- Notified HR offices of the Federal employee leave provisions under the <u>Families First Coronavirus Response Act</u> and the requirement to post the Families First Coronavirus Response Act notice at VA facilities. This provides up to two weeks (up to 80 hours) of emergency paid sick leave to all federal civil service employees if they are unable to work (or telework) under specified circumstances related to COVID-19 – unless they are in an exempted category.
- Direct Hire Authority allowed by OPM for certain additional positions in NCA and VHA.

- The Board of Veterans Appeals has scheduled 61 virtual hearings the week on March 30. To date, the Board has successfully completed 361 virtual hearings.
- Conducted a "Lunch and Learn" virtual online meeting to provide Veteran Service Organizations and community partners information on VA Mental Health resources and highlight the Cohen Veterans Network (CVN) mental health initiatives.
    - The recorded session is here: http://va-eerc-ees.adobeconnect.com/veocvebllcohen/
- White House VA Hotline and MyVA311 Call centers remain fully operational.
    - 3035 Total Covid-19 calls have been answered by the MyVA311 call center.
- Under Secretary for VBA Paul Lawrence and Executive in Charge for VHA Richard Stone briefed Rep. Takano, Rep. Roe, Sen. Tester and Sen. Moran on COVID-19 Responses for Health and Benefits. (4/2/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie briefed Sen. Boozman on Appropriations related issues. (4/2/2020)

Employees and Contractors COVID-19 Confirmed Positives

as of 3 Apr 2020, 1000 ET

Source: Administration / Staff Offices, VHA Health Operations Center

A/SO	Location	Facility	Total
HRA	Houston, TX	HRA/ORM	1
HRA	Salt Lake City, UT	HRA/ORM*	1
HRA	Washington, DC	HRA/OA	1
OIT	Bossier City, LA	ITOPS-Enterprise Command Operations	1
OIT	Columbia, SC	ITOPS-Wm. Jennings VAMC	1
OIT	New Orleans, LA	ITOPS -New Orleans	1
OIT	New York City, NY	ITOPS-Bronx	2
OIT	Washington, DC	VACO – OIT/EPMO (1) VACO – OIT/ITRM (1)(+1) VACO – ITOPS (4)(-1)	6
OM	Washington, DC	VACO – OM	1
VBA	Atlanta, GA	Atlanta RO	2
VBA	Buffalo, NY	Buffalo RO	1
VBA	Denver, CO	Denver RO	1
VBA	Detroit, MI	Detroit RO	3
VBA	Nashville, TN	VBA Central Office*	1(+1)
VBA	New York City, NY	New York RO	1
VBA	Philadelphia, PA	Philadelphia RO (3)(+1) VBA Central Office / Insurance Service (1)*	4(+1)
VBA	Phoenix, AZ	Phoenix RO	1
VBA	St. Louis, MO	St. Louis RO	3
VBA	St. Petersburg, FL	St. Petersburg RO	1
VBA	Wichita, KS	Wichita RO	1(+1)
VEO	Shepherdstown, WV	White House Veterans Line	1
VHA	Albuquerque, NM	New Mexico HCS	3
VHA	Alexandria, LA	Alexandria HCS	1
VHA	Amarillo, TX	Thomas E Creek VAMC	1(+1)
VHA	Ann Arbor, MI	Ann Arbor HCS	8(+1)
VHA	Asheville, NC	Charles George VAMC	3
VHA	Atlanta, GA	Atlanta HCS	3
VHA	Augusta, GA	Augusta VAMC	4
VHA	Aurora, CO	Eastern Colorado Health Care System	22
VHA	Battle Creek, MI	Battle Creek VAMC	4(+1)
VHA	Bedford, MA	Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial VAMC	3(+1)
VHA	Biloxi, MS	Gulf Coast HCS	3
VHA	Birmingham, AL	Birmingham VAMC	4(+1)
VHA	Boise, ID	Boise VAMC	5(+1)
VHA	Boston, MA	Jamaica Plain VAMC	14(+2)
VHA	Butler, PA	Butler HCS	1(+1)
VHA	Charleston, SC	Ralph H. Johnson VAMC	3

Employees and Contractors COVID-19 Confirmed Positives

as of 3 Apr 2020, 1000 ET

Source: Administration / Staff Offices, VHA Health Operations Center

VHA	Cheyenne, WY	Cheyenne VAMC	1
VHA	Chicago, IL	Jesse Brown VAMC (16) Edward Hines Jr VAMC (8)((+2) Captain James A. Lovell VAMC (12)((+5)	36(+7)
VHA	Cincinnati, OH	Cincinnati VAMC	2(+1)
VHA	Clarksburg, WV	Louis A. Johnson VAMC	2(+2)
VHA	Cleveland, OH	Cleveland VAMC	9
VHA	Coatesville, PA	Coatesville VAMC	1
VHA	Columbia, MO	Harry S Truman Memorial VAMC	1
VHA	Columbia, SC	Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn VAMC	9
VHA	Columbus, OH	Chalmers P. Wylie VA Ambulatory Care Center	2(+2)
VHA	Dallas, TX	Dallas VAMC	10(+1)
VHA	Dayton, OH	Dayton VAMC	5(+1)
VHA	Des Moines, IA	Central Iowa HCS	2
VHA	Detroit, MI	John D. Dingell VAMC	16(-6)
VHA	Dublin, GA	Carl Vinson VAMC	4
VHA	East Orange, NJ	New Jersey HCS	5(+3)
VHA	El Paso, TX	El Paso HCS	1
VHA	Fort Meade, SD	Black Hills HCS	1
VHA	Fresno, CA	Central California HCS	3
VHA	Gainesville, FL	Malcom Randall VA Medical Center	6
VHA	Grand Junction, CO	VA Western Colorado HCS	1(+1)
VHA	Hampton, VA	Hampton VAMC	12(+3)
VHA	Houston, TX	Michael E. DeBakey VAMC	21(+2)
VHA	Huntington, WV	Hershel Woody Williams VAMC	1(+1)
VHA	Indianapolis, IN	Richard L. Roudebush VAMC	20(-44)
VHA	Iowa City, IA	Iowa City HCS	7(+2)
VHA	Jackson, MS	G.V. Sonny Montgomery VAMC	3(+1)
VHA	Johnson City, TN	James H. Quillen VA HCS	1
VHA	Kansas City, MO	Kansas City VAMC	17(+2)
VHA	Las Vegas, NV	Southern Nevada HCA	11(+1)
VHA	Lebanon, PA	Lebanon VAMC	1(+1)
VHA	Lexington, KY	Lexington HCS	1
VHA	Little Rock, AR	Central Arkansas Health Care System	1
VHA	Loma Linda, CA	Loma Linda HCS	4(+2)
VHA	Long Beach, CA	Long Beach HCS	5(+1)
VHA	Los Angeles, CA	Greater Los Angeles Health Care System	3
VHA	Louisville, KY	Robley Rex VAMC	3

Employees and Contractors COVID-19 Confirmed Positives

as of 3 Apr 2020, 1000 ET

Source: Administration / Staff Offices, VHA Health Operations Center

VHA	Madison, WI	William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans' Hospital	4
VHA	Manchester, NH	Manchester VAMC	1(+1)
VHA	Martinsburg, WV	Martinsburg VAMC	1
VHA	Mather, CA	Sacramento VAMC	2(+1)
VHA	Memphis, TN	Memphis VAMC	4
VHA	Miami, FL	Miami VA HCS	14(+9)
VHA	Milwaukee, WI	Milwaukee VAMC	8(+5)
VHA	Minneapolis, MN	Minneapolis HCS	3
VHA	Montgomery, AL	Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System (CAVHCS)- West Campus	1
VHA	Montrose, NY	Hudson Valley HCS	3
VHA	Nashville, TN	Tennessee Valley HCS	3(+1)
VHA	New Orleans, LA	New Orleans VAMC	73(+10)
VHA	New York City, NY	Manhattan VAMC	2(+1)
VHA	New York City, NY	Northport VAMC	3(+3)
VHA	Northampton, MA	Central Western Massachusetts HCS	4
VHA	Oklahoma City, OK	Oklahoma City HCS	7(+2)
VHA	Omaha, NE	Nebraska Iowa HCS	1
VHA	Orlando, FL	Orlando VA HCS	16(+1)
VHA	Palo Alto, CA	Palo Alto VAMC	7
VHA	Philadelphia, PA	Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VAMC	3(+1)
VHA	Phoenix, AZ	Phoenix Health Care System	1
VHA	Pittsburgh, PA	Pittsburgh VA Medical Center-University Drive	2(+1)
VHA	Poplar Bluff, MO	John J. Pershing VAMC	1
VHA	Prescott, AZ	Northern Arizona VA Health Care System	2
VHA	Reno, NV	VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System	14(+10)
VHA	Richmond, VA	Hunter Holmes McGuire VAMC	1(+1)
VHA	Roseburg, OR	Roseburg Health Care System	2
VHA	Saginaw, MI	Aleda E. Lutz VAMC	1
VHA	Salem, VA	Salem VAMC	1(+1)
VHA	Salt Lake City, UT	Salt Lake City VAMC	4(+1)
VHA	San Diego, CA	San Diego VAMC	11(+1)
VHA	San Francisco, CA	San Francisco Health Care System	7(+2)
VHA	San Juan, PR	San Juan VAMC	6(+2)
VHA	Seattle, WA	Puget Sound Health Care System	12(+1)
VHA	Shreveport, LA	Overton Brooks VA Medical Center	9(+2)
VHA	Spokane, WA	Mann-Grandstaff VAMC	9(+8)
VHA	St. Louis, MO	St Louis HCS	7(+1)

Employees and Contractors COVID-19 Confirmed Positives

as of 3 Apr 2020, 1000 ET

Source: Administration / Staff Offices, VHA Health Operations Center

VHA	Syracuse, NY	Syracuse VAMC	1(+1)
VHA	Tampa, FL	Tampa VAMC	3
VHA	Temple, TX	Olin E. Teague VAMC	2
VHA	Tomah, WI	Tomah VAMC	1
VHA	Topeka, KS	Eastern Kansas Health Care System	4
VHA	Washington, DC	Washington DC VAMC	15(+2)
VHA	West Haven, CT	West Haven VAMC	8(+5)
VHA	West Palm Beach, FL	West Palm Beach VA Medical Center	2
VHA	White River Junction, VT	White River Junction VAMC	2(+1)
VHA	Wilmington, DE	Wilmington VAMC	2
		Total:	**635(+71)**

OIT/ITOPS only has 4 confirmed positives. The reported 5 cases yesterday was an error.

Indianapolis discrepancy was a data entry error and Detroit discrepancy is possibly related to positive employees becoming recovered.

* Geographically separated employees

VBA Employee assigned to VBA Central Office.

HRA Employee works for HRA/ORM but lives in Salt Lake City, UT

April 3, 2020

Veteran Cases

Veteran Status by Location	Total	VA Outpatient	VA Inpatient, ICU	VA Inpatient, Acute	Deceased
Total	**2184**	**1558**	**155**	**393**	**78**
(402) Togus ME	1	1			
(405) White River Junction VT	3	2			1
(436) Montana HCS (Fort Harrison MT)	1	1			
(437) Fargo, ND	3	1		1	1
(438) Sioux Falls SD	2	2			
(442) Cheyenne WY	5	5			
(459) VA Pacific Islands HCS (Honolulu HI)	1	1			
(460) Wilmington DE	8	7	1		
(463) Alaska VAHSRO (Anchorage AK)	2	2			
(501) New Mexico HCS (Albuquerque NM)	5	4		1	
(502) Alexandria, LA	3	3			
(504) Amarillo HCS (Amarillo TX)	1		1		
(506) Ann Arbor, MI	31	14	7	9	1
(508) Atlanta, GA	69	53	4	10	2
(509) Augusta, GA	7	4		3	
(512) Maryland HCS (Baltimore MD)	4	3	1		
(515) Battle Creek, MI	1	1			
(516) Bay Pines,FL	6	4	1	1	
(518) Bedford,MA	3	3			
(520) Biloxi, MS	1		1		
(521) Birmingham, AL	5	2	3		
(523) Boston HCS (Boston)	20	15	2	3	
(526) Bronx, NY	106	80	6	12	8
(528) Upstate New York HCS	26	18	3	3	2
(529) Butler, PA	1	1			
(531) Boise,ID	1			1	
(537) Chicago (Westside), IL	58	47	4	6	1
(538) Chillicothe, OH	1	1			
(539) Cincinnati, OH	20	18	1	1	
(540) Clarksburg, WV	1			1	
(541) Cleveland, OH	23	15	1	7	
(542) Coatesville, PA	2	2			
(544) Columbia, SC	23	19	4		
(546) Miami, FL	35	18	2	13	2

(548) West Palm Beach, FL	7	2	2	3	
(549) North Texas HCS (Dallas TX)	7	2	3	2	
(552) Dayton, OH	4	3	1		
(553) Detroit, MI	88	59	4	21	4
(554) Eastern Colorado HCS (Denver CO)	71	65	2	3	1
(556) North Chicago, IL	55	54	1		
(558) Durham, NC	1	1			
(561) New Jersey HCS (East Orange)	89	62	6	17	4
(562) Erie, PA	1	1			
(565) Fayetteville, NC	5	5			
(568) Black Hills HCS (Fort Meade SD)	1	1			
(570) Central California HCS (Fresno CA)	2	2			
(573) N. Florida/S. Georgia HCS (Gainesville FL)	7	5	1	1	
(575) Grand Junction, CO	1	1			
(578) Hines, IL	12	10	2		
(580) Houston, TX	12	6	1	5	
(581) Huntington, WV	3			3	
(583) Indianapolis, IN	69	28	5	32	4
(586) Jackson, MS	3	3			
(589) VA Heartland West (Kansas City MO)	20	14	1	3	2
(590) Hampton, VA	25	9		16	
(593) Southern Nevada HCS (Las Vegas NV)	15	10	2	3	
(595) Lebanon, PA	7	7			
(596) Lexington, KY	3	2	1		
(598) Central Arkansas HCS (Little Rock AR)	6	4	2		
(600) Long Beach HCS (Long Beach CA)	21	14	2	5	
(603) Louisville, KY	15	11	4		
(605) Loma Linda, CA	8	8			
(607) Madison, WI	4	3			1
(610) Northern Indiana HCS (Marion, IN)	1			1	
(612) Northern California HCS (Martinez CA)	10	9		1	
(613) Martinsburg, WV	3	2		1	
(614) Memphis, TN	7	6		1	
(618) Minneapolis, MN	12	9		1	2
(619) Central Alabama HCS (Montgomery AL)	4	1	1	2	
(620) Hudson Valley HCS (Castle Point, Montrose)	47	25		22	
(621) Mountain Home, TN	6	6			
(623) Muskogee, OK	2	2			
(626) Tennessee Valley HCS (Nashville TN)	18	14	1	2	1
(629) New Orleans, LA	363	304	10	32	17
(630) New York HHS (Brooklyn)	135	78	14	33	10

(631) Northampton, MA	4	4			
(632) Northport, NY	50	30	5	13	2
(635) Oklahoma City, OK	3	2	1		
(636) Central Plains HCS (Omaha NE)	10	6	2	2	
(637) Asheville, NC	1	1			
(640) Palo Alto HCS (Palo Alto CA)	15	11		3	1
(642) Philadelphia, PA	22	19	3		
(644) Phoenix, AZ	4	1	3		
(646) Pittsburgh HCS (Pittsburgh PA)	4	1	2	1	
(648) Portland, OR	7	3	3		1
(649) Northern Arizona HCS (Prescott AZ)	4	4			
(652) Richmond, VA	30	27	3		
(653) Roseburg HCS (Roseburg OR)	1	1			
(654) Sierra Nevada HCS (Reno NV)	2		1	1	
(657) VA Heartland East (Saint Louis MO)	18	7		11	
(659) Salisbury, NC	1	1			
(660) Salt Lake City HCS (Salt Lake City UT)	5	5			
(662) San Francisco, CA	8	4		2	2
(663) Puget Sound HCS (Seattle WA)	30	25	4	1	
(664) San Diego HCS (San Diego CA)	18	18			
(667) Shreveport, LA	19	13	1	3	2
(668) Spokane, WA	3	1	1	1	
(671) South Texas HCS (San Antonio TX)	7	2	5		
(672) San Juan, PR	36	33	3		
(673) Tampa, FL	7	4	1	2	
(674) Central Texas HCS (Temple TX)	2	2			
(675) Orlando, FL	33	27		6	
(676) Tomah, WI	1	1			
(678) Southern Arizona HCS (Tucson AZ)	7	3		4	
(688) Washington DC	59	40	6	11	2
(689) Connecticut HCS (Westhaven)	48	34	3	11	
(691) Greater Los Angeles HCS (Los Angeles CA)	32	10		20	2
(693) Wilkes-Barre, PA	4	4			
(695) Milwaukee, WI	39	18		19	2
(757) Columbus, OH	1	1			

From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Fri, 24 Apr 2020 09:44:20 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] Virus weighs on Blackstone's earnings

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 5:43:46 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] Virus weighs on Blackstone's earnings

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April 24, 2020
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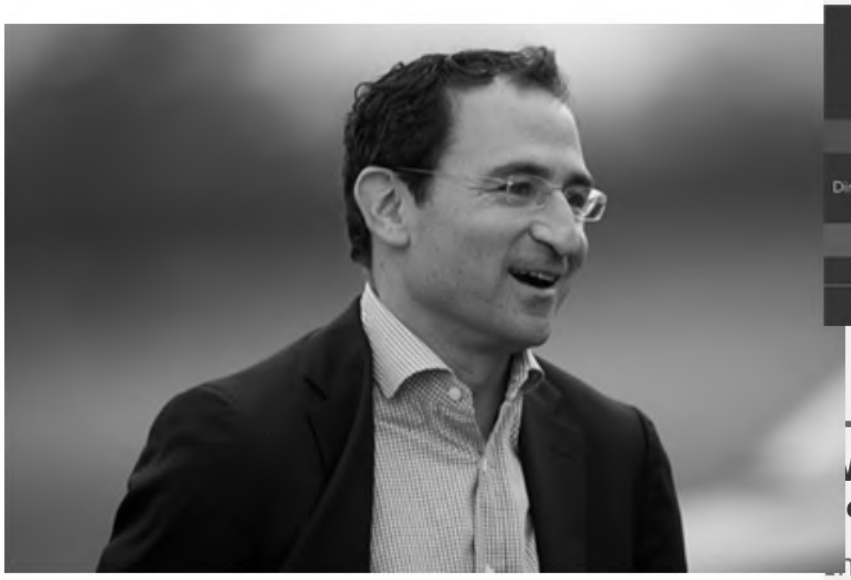
TODAY'S TOP STORIES

Coronavirus takes toll on Blackstone's earnings, but stock surges



Blackstone president Jonathan Gray said the firm will slow dowr fundraising in 2020. (Drew Angerer/Getty Images News)

Asset values dropped in each of Blackstone's four main divisions during the first quarter of 2020, the firm announced Thursday.

But public investors were still encouraged by the firm's first earnings report since the coronavirus pandemic began, an announcement that provided the first formal clue to how publicly traded buyout firms will fare in the midst of an unforeseen crisis:

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More coronavirus news: Continuing coverage from PitchBook

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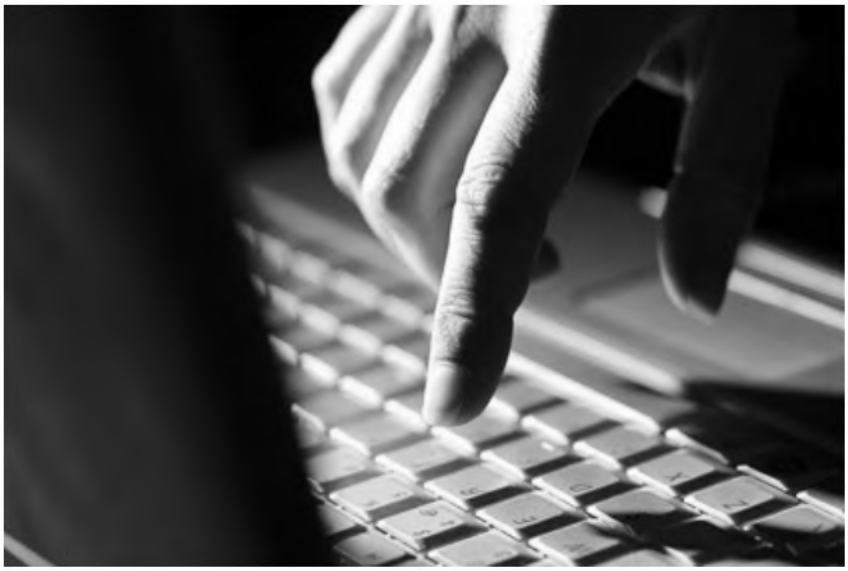
Cybercriminals scam three UK PE firms in $1.3M heist

Who's in the newsletter today?

Investors

ABB Technology Ventures
Abbvie Ventures
Apax Partners
Apollo Global Management
Atlas Venture
BP Ventures
Bain Capital Life Sciences
Droia Oncology Ventures
EcoR1 Capital
Energy Innovation Capital
Francisco Partners
GV
Genstar Capital
Golden Gate Capital
Mastercard
Merit Capital Partners
NS Investment Partners
Peter Thiel
Pivot Investment Partners



(Peter Cade/Stone/Getty Images)

An investigation by cybersecurity provider Check Point found that a trio of unnamed British private equity firms recently fell victim to a £1.1 million (around $1.3 million) cyberattack.

While cybersecurity is top of mind for many investors, cybercriminals are becoming more adept at their craft, launching attacks that often continue for weeks or months—and VC and PE firms are lucrative targets:

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How one fintech segment is poised to weather the economic storm

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Silver Lake
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The Column Group
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Venrock
Viking Global Investors
Ziff Capital Partners

Companies

Accent Therapeutics
Affinivax
Atai Life Sciences
AvidXchange
California Pizza Kitchen
Coalfire
Compass Pathways
Corvidia
Expedia
Freewire Technologies
Keros Therapeutics
PayPal
Prometheus Group
WorkTech

Small retail shops, such as South Carolina's State Street Trading Con have been hit especially hard by the shutdown. (Sean Rayford/Ge Images News)

Small and medium-sized businesses have been disproportionately hurt by the havoc wrought by the coronavirus pandemic—particularly those that rely on foot traffic, such as retail stores and restaurants. Fintech companies serving this portion of the market are feeling related pressures, leading to layoffs and reduced operations.

Yet, according to our new **emerging technology research note**, a recovery may offer unique opportunities for a specific segment of the fintech space that's well-positioned to ride out the storm:

read it now

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Will venture debt play a bigger role during the crisis?

Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky at the Fortune Global Forum in San Francis
2015. Airbnb recently raised a total of $2 billion across two debt rou
(Kimberly White/Getty Images Entertainment)

PitchBook's **venture debt research note** examines how the strategy could prove a useful avenue for VC-backed companies looking to extend their runways during pandemic-related economic distress.

Breaking down the pros and cons of utilizing venture debt, the note also explores how venture lending could transform during the current, unprecedented situation:

read it now

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Weekly Recap

In case you missed it:

• After **a chaotic week on the oil markets**, stressful times are likely ahead for private equity firms investing in the energy sector.

• According to a recent survey from J.Thelander Consulting, **pandemic-related salary cuts** are affecting CEOs and rank-and-file employees alike.

• Magic Leap was one of the latest companies to announce layoffs, with plans to cut **about half of its staff**. Meanwhile, the startup's CEO has indicated the augmented reality company is still looking to raise new funding.

• Some private equity portfolio companies won access this month to a $2.3 trillion lending program launched by the Federal Reserve—but critics wonder **whether that's such a good thing**.

• As lockdowns have created an increased need for ecommerce and digital payments, fintech startup **Stripe raised $600 million in new funding** from VC stalwarts including Sequoia and Andreessen Horowitz.

• Sycamore Partners is attempting to walk away from a deal **to take control of Victoria's Secret**, a potential legal test of whether coronavirus fallout will be considered grounds for canceling deals.

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Recommended Reads

Few startups have ascended to unicorn status faster than Bird. But the scooter company's unceasing focus on growth may have come at the expense of the people who made it happen. [The Verge]

Sycamore Partners doesn't want to take control of Victoria's Secret anymore. What are the lingerie retailer's options now? [Bloomberg]

A mysterious disaster off the Norwegian coast is raising new questions about Russia's ambitions for sending manned submarines to the deepest depths of the world's oceans. [The New York Times]

Some in Silicon Valley think psychedelics are the next frontier in wellness and healthcare. Is that such a good idea? [OneZero]

After a recent boom, the market for secondary stakes in private equity funds could dry up in 2020. [Institutional Investor]

Amid overwhelming demand, whether or not a business won access to the recent $350 billion coronavirus relief bill in the US too often came down to one question: Who do you know? [Forbes]

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The Daily Benchmark

2006 Vintage Global Venture Funds with more than $250M

VC Deals

AvidXchange banks $128M

Affinivax brings in $120M Series B

Accent Therapeutics picks up $63M

Peter Thiel backs psychedelic-drug startup Atai

Freewire Technologies scores $25M in debt and equity

PE Deals

Apollo, Silver Lake take $1.2B stake in Expedia

Apax wraps Coalfire SBO

PE-backed Prometheus purchases WorkTech

Portfolio Companies

PE-backed California Pizza Kitchen eyes restructuring

Fundraising

Merit Capital shoots for $550M

Venrock raises nearly $447M for healthcare fund

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3.56%

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

11.74%

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Median TVPI

Select top performers

Summit Partners Venture Capital Fund II

Thomas McNerney & Partners II

M/C Venture Partners VI

**IRR: net of fees*

22 Funds in Benchmark »

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VC DEALS

AvidXchange banks $128M

AvidXchange, which offers businesses an automation platform for processing invoices and payments, has raised $128 million. The company collected $260 million in January at a $2 billion valuation, according to a PitchBook estimate; the latest funds are part of that earlier round. Founded in 2000 and based in Charlotte, AvidXchange is backed by investors including Pivot Investment Partners, TPG Sixth Street Partners and Mastercard.

View round

View 40 competitors »

Affinivax brings in $120M Series B

Affinivax, a developer of vaccines and immunotherapies for bacterial infections, has raised a $120 million round led by Viking Global Investors, with Bain Capital Life Sciences and Ziff Capital Partners also participating. The clinical-stage biotech company plans to use the funding in part to advance its pneumococcal vaccine program.

View round

View 17 competitors »

Accent Therapeutics picks up $63M

Accent Therapeutics has raised a $63 million Series B led by EcoR1 Capital, with participation from investors including GV, Abbvie Ventures and The Column Group. The Boston-area company is developing RNA modification treatments for cancer patients. It raised $40 million in 2018 at a $52.5 million valuation, according to PitchBook data.

Additional Investors:
NS Investment Partners, Droia Oncology Ventures, Atlas Venture, The Mark Foundation for Cancer Research

View round

View 45 competitors »

Peter Thiel backs psychedelic-drug startup Atai

German biotech company Atai Life Sciences has raised $24 million in a convertible-note round from a group of investors that includes PayPal co-founder Peter Thiel. Atai, which is developing psychoactive compounds to treat mental health disorders, is considering an IPO in the next 12 months, according to Bloomberg. It is an investor in Compass Pathways, which received a breakthrough therapy designation from the Food and Drug Administration in 2018 for its psilocybin-based depression treatment.

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Freewire Technologies scores $25M in debt and equity

Freewire Technologies, which offers charging services for electric vehicles, has raised $25 million in a round led by BP Ventures, with support from Silicon Valley Bank and others. The company was valued at $46.1 million in September, according to PitchBook data.

Additional Investors:
ABB Technology Ventures, Energy Innovation Capital

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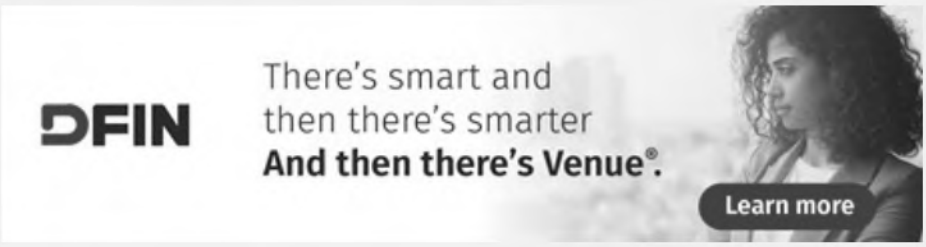
View 11 competitors »



PE DEALS

Apollo, Silver Lake take $1.2B stake in Expedia

Apollo Global Management and Silver Lake have acquired a $1.2 billion stake in Expedia. The firms have also each secured a seat on Expedia's board. The Seattle-based travel-booking company appointed a new CEO on Thursday after going without a chief executive since December.

View deal

View 3 competitors »

Apax wraps Coalfire SBO

Apax Partners has completed its acquisition of Coalfire, a Denver-area cybersecurity consultancy. The Carlyle Group and The Chertoff Group sold the company, which they had owned since 2015.

View deal

View 6 competitors »

PE-backed Prometheus purchases

WorkTech

Prometheus Group, a Raleigh, N.C.-based provider of asset management operations and optimization software, has acquired WorkTech, a Cambridge, Mass.-based developer of contractor management and productivity software. Genstar Capital acquired Prometheus from Francisco Partners for more than $1 billion in May.

View deal

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PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

PE-backed California Pizza Kitchen eyes restructuring

California Pizza Kitchen is looking to avoid bankruptcy by restructuring its debt as the pandemic continues to take a toll on the restaurant industry, according to The Wall Street Journal. The Los Angeles-based casual-dining chain is reportedly also seeking a $30 million bridge loan in the meantime. Golden Gate Capital has backed California Pizza Kitchen since it took the company private for around $470 million in 2011.

View details

View 5 competitors »

FUNDRAISING

Merit Capital shoots for $550M

Merit Capital Partners has established a $550 million goal for its seventh flagship private equity fund, according to an SEC filing. Merit Capital is a Chicago-based firm that typically invests both equity and subordinated debt in every transaction.

View fund

View 113 investments »

Venrock raises nearly $447M for healthcare fund

Venrock has closed its latest healthcare-focused vehicle on almost $447 million, according to an SEC document. The fund follows a $400 million predecessor that closed in 2018. The VC firm's biotech investments include Corvidia, a developer of treatments for cardio-renal diseases, and Keros Therapeutics, a creator of therapies for blood and musculoskeletal disorders that **recently went public**.

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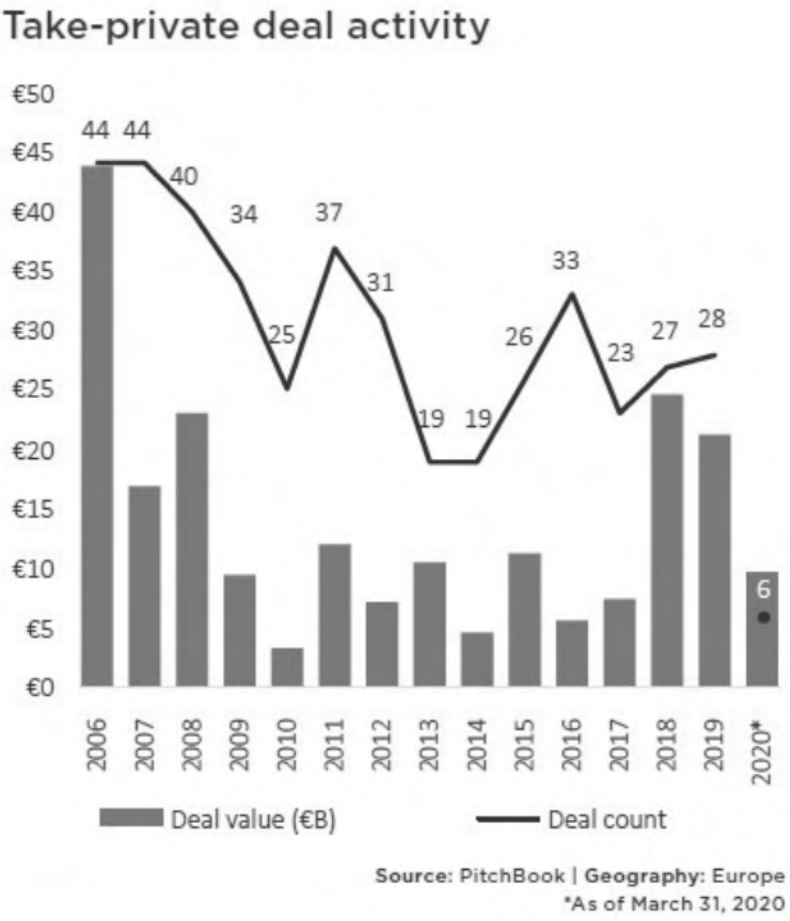
View 440 investments »

CHART OF THE DAY



"We expect to see more European take-privates in the coming quarters due to COVID-19. €9.8 billion worth of European take-privates closed in Q1, Europe's highest first-quarter absolute figure in a decade."

Source: **PitchBook's Q1 2020 European PE Breakdown**

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From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Thu, 28 May 2020 09:37:10 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Menopause market draws growing VC interest

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2020 5:36:02 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Menopause market draws growing VC interest

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TODAY'S TOP STORIES

Narrative change: VCs are finally ready to talk about menopause

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The femtech boom of the past few years hasn't extended to startu
focused on menopause. But that might be starting to change.
(Carol Yepes/Getty Images)

VC investors have poured millions into startups that bring technological solutions to problems related to women's health. Much of the focus, however, has been on menstruation and pregnancy, with menopause startups continuing to face societal stigma.

But with 1.1 billion women throughout the world estimated to become postmenopausal by 2025, the vast size of the market is becoming an opportunity that investors can't ignore:

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More coronavirus news: Continuing coverage from PitchBook

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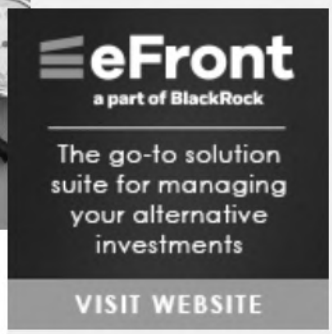
NordStar Capital to take over Toronto Star



Who's in the newsletter today?

People

Colin Day
Keith Cargill
Kevin Mayer

Investors

Adams Street
Alfred Chuang
Amazon
Amazon Alexa Fund
August Capital
Bain Capital Ventures
Balderton Capital
Blackbird Ventures
CRV
Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec

parent in $38M deal

(True Art/EyeEm/Getty Images)

Canadian private equity firm NordStar Capital has agreed to acquire Torstar, the parent company of the Toronto Star newspaper and related businesses, in a deal that values Torstar at around C$52 million (about $38 million).

NordStar will pay 63 cents per share, marking a 66.7% premium to the company's 20-day weighted-volume average share price on the Toronto Stock Exchange. David Peterson, former Ontario premier, will become vice chair of the Toronto Star upon the deal's completion.

The coronavirus crisis has caused new financial woes at many newspapers and other media companies that were already struggling with lagging revenue before a pandemic arrived, as the advertisers that once provided a good chunk of their revenue have cut back on spending.

In the US, more than 30 newsrooms have closed, and

Chris McCann
DCVC
DCVC Bio
DTCP
Draper Esprit
Edith Yeung
Eli Lilly
Energy Impact Partners
Fifth Wall
Fosun Capital
Founders Fund
General Electric
IDG Capital
Index Ventures
JAB Holding
KKR
Next World Capital
NordStar Capital
Oracle
OrbiMed
Peter Thiel
Phil Chen
Presight Capital
Proof of Capital
RET Ventures
Race Capital
SoftBank
Spark Capital
Susquehanna Growth Equity
Swisscom Ventures
TA Associates
TPG Capital
Tahoma Ventures
The Carlyle Group
Third Point Ventures
Threshold Ventures
Trinity Ventures

a recent New York Times estimate indicated more than 36,000 newsroom employees have lost their jobs, seen their pay reduced or been furloughed.

Related read: **Apollo doles out $1.8B loan for newspaper merger**

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Kentik
Keysight Technologies
Savant Systems
SmartRent
Texas Capital Bank
TikTok
Torstar
Toutiao
Uber
WeWork
ZoomInfo
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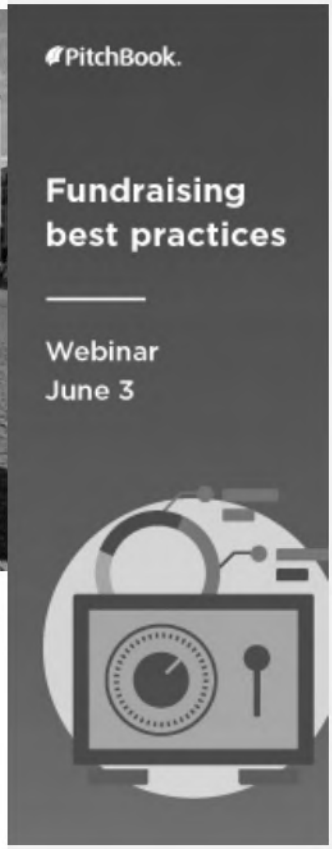
iCIMS

shape the future of shared mobility

E-scooter startup Lime received emergency funding from Uber at an valuation drop. (Sean Gallup/Getty Images)



The coronavirus outbreak has severely affected the transportation industry, with demand plummeting amid lockdowns. Yet if the new normal drives persistent changes in behavior, the shared mobility space may see a market expansion in the long term. Our latest **emerging technology research note** explores this possibility in depth. Key takeaways include:

- Micromobility is likely to play a role as cities face the dual challenges of social distancing and commuter congestion
- Success indicators will include exposure to delivery, public-private partnerships and the ability to scale down efficiently
- Investors and tech companies could pick up deals at attractive valuations as incumbent automakers are under pressure

We'll delve more deeply into these topics at 1 p.m. EDT/10 a.m. PDT today in our **shared mobility webinar**, which will feature PitchBook analysts Paul Condra and Asad Hussain, as well as Zoba co-founder Daniel Brennan.

read the note

Share:

TikTok parent posted $3B net profit last year

ByteDance, the Chinese owner of video-sharing service TikTok, posted a $3 billion net profit last year as revenue more than doubled to $17 billion, according to Bloomberg.

TikTok was downloaded more than 315 million times in the first quarter of 2020, the most quarterly downloads of any app ever, according to Sensor Tower data. ByteDance's family of apps, which includes TikTok's Chinese counterpart Douyin and news provider Toutiao, reportedly attracted 1.5 billion monthly active users last year.

As it has exploded in popularity, TikTok has faced widespread skepticism in the US due to national security risks, and many US military personnel are banned from using the app.

But TikTok has been making moves to shore up its reputation in the states. ByteDance recently hired former Disney exec Kevin Mayer as CEO of TikTok. It also launched a "transparency center" in Los Angeles

to allow experts to observe the company's content moderation, and has said that US user data is not stored on servers in China.

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As an art thief named Octave Durham knows, sometimes stealing a masterpiece is the easy part. Figuring out what to do with it next is when things get tough. [The New York Times]

From an economic perspective, millennials might be the unluckiest generation in American history. [The Washington Post]

Estonia already lives online. Will the coronavirus crisis inspire other countries to follow suit? [The Atlantic]

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SmartRent snags $60M Series C

Gatsby picks up $28M

Kentik secures $23.5M in debt and equity

PE Deals

KKR to invest $1B in European data centers

PE-backed Savant Systems to snag GE Lighting

Portfolio Companies

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Exits

JDE Peet's eyes $17.6B valuation in IPO

Amazon could be nearing purchase of VC-backed Zoox

ZoomInfo sets price range for Nasdaq debut

Keysight to buy Carlyle's Eggplant

Fundraising

BEA Systems co-founder launches venture fund

Investors

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LET'S TALK

PEOPLE

Susquehanna brings on senior adviser

Susquehanna Growth Equity has hired Colin Day as a senior adviser; he will work with the management teams of the firm's portfolio companies. Day is the founder, chairman and former CEO of iCIMS, a provider of cloud-based recruitment software. Based in Pennsylvania, Susquehanna targets growth-stage tech companies in the software, information services, internet and fintech industries.

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COVID-19 shifts the focus to liquidity.
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VC DEALS

AbCellera lands $105M as it chases coronavirus treatment

Canadian biotech company AbCellera has closed a $105 million Series B co-led by OrbiMed and DCVC Bio. The funds will be used to grow AbCellera's capacity and invest in its antibody discovery technology, which is being used to create therapies for COVID-19 in partnership with Eli Lilly. In early May, the Canadian government committed up to C$175.6 million (around $127.4 million at today's conversion rate) to fund AbCellera's coronavirus

efforts.

Additional Investors:
Eli Lilly, Founders Fund, Peter Thiel, Presight Capital, University of Minnesota Endowment, Viking Global Investors

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Voice platform developer collects $65M Series C

Aircall, the developer of a cloud-based phone system for businesses, has raised $65 million in a round led by DTCP, with backing from other investors including Swisscom Ventures and Adams Street. Founded in 2014, the New York-based company has now raised more than $100 million in VC financing.

Additional Investors:
eFounders, Draper Esprit, Balderton Capital, Next World Capital

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SmartRent snags $60M Series C

SmartRent, a provider of home automation solutions, has secured $60 million in a round led by Spark Capital. Fifth Wall, Energy Impact Partners, Amazon Alexa Fund, Bain Capital Ventures and RET Ventures also participated in the funding. The Arizona-based startup was last valued at $120 million after a funding round in June, according to PitchBook data.

View

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round

Gatsby picks up $28M

Index Ventures has led a $28 million Series B for Gatsby, which provides open-source tools designed to help developers create and maintain apps and websites. Existing investors CRV and Trinity Ventures also participated in the funding. Founded in 2017 and based in Berkeley, Calif., Gatsby is used by clients including DraftKings, IBM and Impossible Foods.

View round

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Kentik secures $23.5M in debt and equity

Kentik, the developer of a network intelligence platform designed to provide data insights and manage traffic in real time, has raised $23.5 million in a round led by Vistara Capital Partners. Existing backers DCVC, August Capital, Third Point Ventures and Tahoma Ventures also participated in the funding. Kentik was valued at $78.6 million in 2016, according to PitchBook data.

View round

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PE DEALS

KKR to invest $1B in European data

centers

KKR has committed $1 billion to the formation of a new European data center platform called Global Technical Realty, which will develop and build data centers for large tech companies across Europe. The equity investment will be combined with debt financing to support over $2.5 billion in asset development.

View details

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PE-backed Savant Systems to snag GE Lighting

Savant Systems, a provider of home automation products, has agreed to buy Cleveland-based GE Lighting from General Electric. KKR invested about $90 million in Savant at a $215 million valuation in 2014, according to The Wall Street Journal.

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PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

Cirque du Soleil receives $200M government loan

Montreal-based Cirque du Soleil has received a $200 million loan from the Canadian government to help it stay afloat amid the coronavirus pandemic. TPG Capital, Fosun Capital and Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec recently loaned $50 million in

emergency funds to the entertainment company.

View details

View 5 competitors »

EXITS

JDE Peet's eyes $17.6B valuation in IPO

JDE Peet's, a portfolio company of JAB Holding formed in recent months by the merger of Peet's Coffee and Dutch coffee company Jacobs Douwe Egberts, has set a price range for its upcoming IPO in Amsterdam. Seeking a valuation as high as €16 billion (about $17.6 billion), the business expects to list more than 23.3 million shares at a price of between €30 and €32.25 apiece. JDE Peet's reported revenue of €6.9 billion and adjusted EBIT of €1.6 billion in the 2019 financial year.

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Amazon could be nearing purchase of VC-backed Zoox

Self-driving vehicle startup Zoox is in advanced talks to be acquired by Amazon, with a deal likely valuing the company below the $3.2 billion it was worth in 2018, according to multiple reports. The news comes after reports earlier this month that the California-based startup was looking for a buyer. Zoox has raised VC from investors including Blackbird Ventures, Threshold Ventures and IDG Capital. The company is

believed to have laid off around 100 employees in April.

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ZoomInfo sets price range for Nasdaq debut

ZoomInfo, the Vancouver, Wash.-based developer of a business intelligence platform for sales and marketing teams, has filed with the SEC to sell 44.5 million shares at between $16 and $18 apiece; a midpoint pricing would raise $756.5 million. The company, which was acquired by rival DiscoverOrg in February 2019, is backed by investors including TA Associates and The Carlyle Group.

View details

View 105 competitors »

Keysight to buy Carlyle's Eggplant

Software testing company Keysight Technologies has agreed to pay €350 million (about $385 million) for London-based rival Eggplant, according to PE Hub. The seller was The Carlyle Group, which has owned Eggplant since 2016.

View details

View 11 competitors »

FUNDRAISING

BEA Systems co-founder launches venture fund

More than a decade after selling BEA Systems to Oracle for $8.5 billion, Alfred Chuang has launched Race Capital, an early-stage venture capital fund. Joining Chuang as partners in the fund are Edith Yeung, Chris McCann and Phil Chen, who previously led the blockchain-focused firm Proof of Capital. The team plans to raise between $125 million and $150 million for the fund, according to Business Insider.

View fund

View 5 investments »

INVESTORS

SoftBank plans Vision Fund job cuts

Job cuts within SoftBank's Vision Fund could affect some 10% of the 500 employees in its London, San Francisco and Tokyo offices, according to Bloomberg. The layoffs will reportedly impact all levels of staff. Earlier this month, the Vision Fund reported a loss of 1.9 trillion yen (about $17.7 billion) for its last fiscal year, much of which was attributed to the Japanese conglomerate's Uber and WeWork investments.

View details

View 139 investments »

CORPORATE M&A

Texas lenders ditch $5.5B merger

Texas Capital Bank and Independent Bank Group have called off a $5.5 billion merger that would have created a commercial bank with about $48 billion in assets under management. Consequently, Texas Capital's CEO Keith Cargill has resigned. The Texas-based banks had first announced the deal in December.

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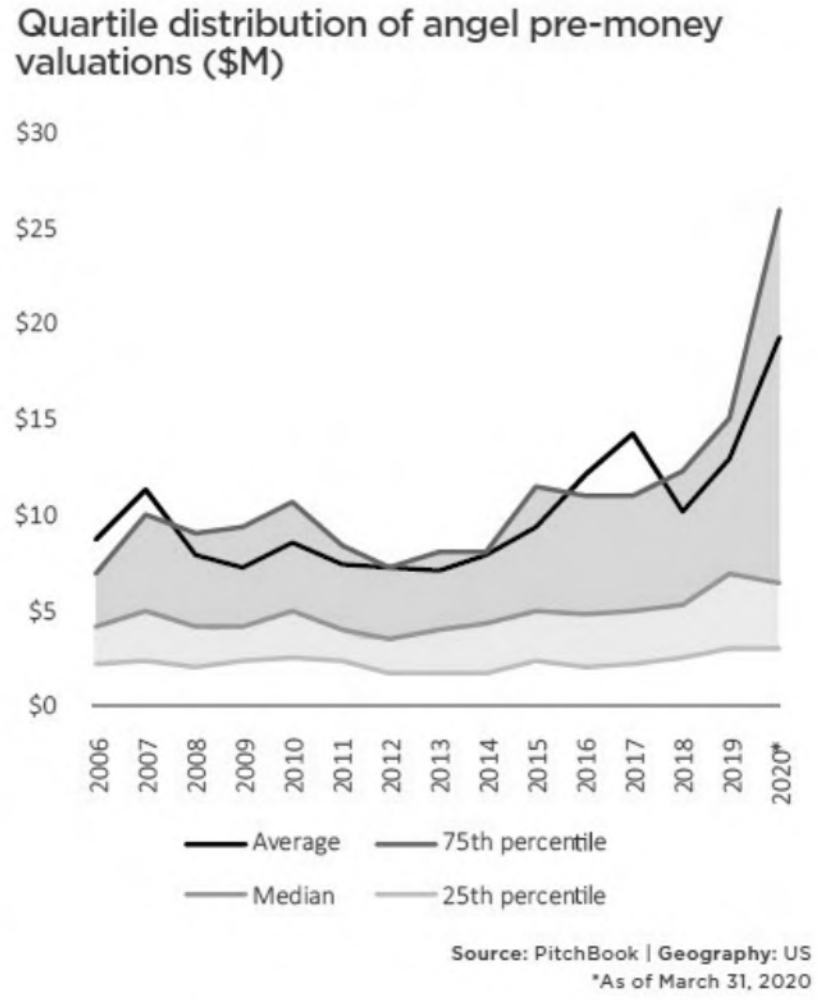
CHART OF THE DAY



"A contraction of valuations will likely be seen across venture stages as the looming economic recession digs deeper and drags on further. However, at the angel and seed stages of financing, the rout will be determined more by how market investors react to the risks of these stages, rather than by the comparison of these companies to the public markets and near-term growth prospects, as will be the case with the later stages."

Source: **PitchBook's Q1 2020 US VC Valuations Report**

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Venture capital, private equity and M&A financial information technology provider.

From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Mon, 1 Jun 2020 10:02:10 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: Trump "throws-down-the-gauntlet" to China. SASC "Pacific Deterrence Initiative". Sudden Sec. Esper focus on Shipbuilding. USAF: Long-Range-Strike & Nuclear Triad. Army: "Convergence" & Hypersonics. CEO Briefings: [Lockheed/Northrop/HII/Leidos]

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, June 1, 2020 6:00:12 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Trump "throws-down-the-gauntlet" to China. SASC "Pacific Deterrence Initiative". Sudden Sec. Esper focus on Shipbuilding. USAF: Long-Range-Strike & Nuclear Triad. Army: "Convergence" & Hypersonics. CEO Briefings: [Lockheed/Northrop/HII/Leidos]

Secretary Wilkie:

McAleese AND ASSOCIATES

1a. NASA/SpaceX Falcon 9 Launch Vehicle/Dragon Crew Capsule successfully-carried Astronauts Robert Behnken & Doug Hurley to International Space Station, with Trump & VP Pence cheering them on. Returning to the Moon by ~2024 is next. [Elon Musk's shining-moment] (Cape Canaveral, FL, May 30, 2020). [NASA Administrator, James Bridenstine; USAF CSAF Gen. Dave Goldfein; and US Space Force CSO Gen. Jay Raymond; were present] **[Trump also referenced his personal-tour of NASA Orion Crew Exploration Vehicle earlier in the week, (with Lockheed CEO Marillyn Hewson)]**

- **1b. Potential inference that retiring Lockheed CEO Marillyn Hewson, could possibly-return as a future Senior Cabinet Appointee, or Ambassador,** (given increasing-frequency of Trump/Hewson sightings; including latest Trump tour of Lockheed Orion Crew Capsule, at Cape Canaveral, FL, May 27, 2020).

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2. Navy Sec. Kenneth Braithwaite is formally-sworn-in. (Navy, May 29, 2020).

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3. Trump throws down the gauntlet on China, for: (a) Hong Kong security-seizure; (b) strictly-blockading COVID-19 within Wuhan, while allowing millions of infected Chinese to flee to US and Europe; and (c) recent flurry of criminal Chinese IP theft in US universities.

Trump formally-suspended visas for entry of Chinese post-graduate students, (associated with China's "Civil-Military-Fusion" strategy). [Undergraduate Chinese students are not impacted] (White House, May 29, 2020): [Amb. O'Brien; Sec. Pompeo; Sec. Mnuchin; Peter Navarro; Larry Kudlow]

- **a. China seized control over Hong Kong security this week, in violation of 1984 Sino-UK Agreement,** (27 years early). Hong Kong is no longer autonomous. **US will sever all preferential-treatment treaties with Hong Kong.**
- **b. US is formally-terminating its ~$400M/year of WHO funding.**
- **c. Treasury will "study differing practices of Chinese companies, listed on the US financial markets". Chinese companies must "play by the same rules", or they will be excluded from US stock listings.**

["Executive Order on the Suspension of Entry as Nonimmigrants of Certain Students and Researchers from the People's Republic of China", White House, May 29, 2020]

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4. SASC Chairman James Inhofe (R-OK) & Ranking Member Jack Reed (D-RI) will create "Pacific Deterrence Initiative" in 2021 NDAA, to fund INDOPACOM Adm. Phil Davidson's recent ~$18.5B 2022-2026 proposed investment strategy, (initial ~$1.6B in 2021), including: (a) Guam missile defense; (b) Long Range Precision Fires, (Maritime Tomahawk; JASSM; ATACMS; Naval Strike Missile); (c) Homeland Defense Radar-Hawaii; (d) Space-based Persistent Radar, (presumably for hypersonic-defense); (e) power-projection/dispersal/training facilities. (Inhofe & Reed Op-Ed in War-on-The-Rocks, May 28, 2020).

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5. Formal release of new "Space Acquisition Report" to Congress is imminent, presumably requesting: (a) "program new-start" delegation; (b) budgeting of US Space Force acquisition into functional-categories, (to avoid lengthy program-specific Reprogramming delays); (c) incremental-funding of "block buy" mature spacecraft procurement; (d) "modified JCIDS" process, to speed schedule. (Space News; Breaking Defense; C4ISRNet; Defense Daily).

- **Separately, JROC has approved, "enterprise-wide review of missile defense portfolio",** (with potential impact to USAF SMC; SDA; and possibly modest portions of MDA). (Inside Defense; Aerospace Daily; C4ISRNet).

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6. Sec. Mark Esper; CJCS Gen. Mark Milley; SEAC Ramon "CZ" Colon-Lopez, (DoD, May 28, 2020): **At ~$25T National Debt, future funding cuts are now possible. But DoD still needs ~+3%-5% annual funding increase, or China will become the world's super-power by default.** DoD will squeeze maximum-value from every dollar.

- a. Lessons learned for potential 2nd COVID-19 wave: Deploy military doctors & nurses immediately into infected hospitals; focus less on building spare hospital capacity; stockpile PPE & ventilators.
- b. "Operation Warp Speed" will produce ~300m vaccine doses by ~January 2021. [Gen. Gus Perna is in DC now. Must accelerate manufacturing of vaccine]
- c. DoD may reduce quarantine time to ~10 days, (down from current 14 days). [Incubation period for virus is ~5-6 days]

The entire Nation is feeling extra-ordinary pain. Service Members are being paid & have health care. That is not true for ~40M unemployed Americans. Stay focused on the mission.

7a. Sec. Mark Esper supports 355+ ship-fleet, with more submarines; smaller surface combatants; unmanned/lightly-manned ships; plus Columbia SSBN. Must have distributed-lethality. New Shipbuilding Plan will be complete in ~July-August. [No discussion of aircraft carrier fleet-size] (Hugh Hewitt Radio Show, May 22, 2020).

7b. Sec. Mark Esper: Navy fleet must be larger than 355 ships, to deter China, with more submarines; smaller surface combatants; unmanned/lightly-manned ships; plus Columbia SSBN. Must have distributed-lethality, to survive Chinese missile salvoes. (US Naval Academy Commencement, May 22, 2020).

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8. VCJCS Gen. John Hyten, (Town Hall, May 20, 2020): This is just another cycle to adapt to, just like 9/11; Desert Storm; Cold War; North Korea; etc. **The US will have a vaccine.** US Forces are ready to fight today. **Would like to see major structural-changes to household goods shipments; personnel management/HR; Defense Health Program; etc.**

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9. Air Force VCSAF, Gen. Seve Wilson, (AFA Mitchell Institute, May 20, 2020): **COVID-19 is a wake-up call to the American public, requiring a true "whole-of-nation" effort to compete with China. Cutting US defense spending, is exactly what China is hoping for,** (accelerating "Belt-&-Road" Initiative; belligerence in South China Sea; and now seizure of Hong Kong security). **US must recapitalize Nuclear Triad; enable JADC2, (through AMBS); and control Space.**

- a. Long Range Strike: Eliminate redundancies as budgets shrink. USAF is optimized for long-range-strike, (B-21; JADC2; stand-off B-52).
- b. Cannot deviate from Nuclear Triad Recap, (because China & Russia have already-fielded three-legged triads, plus hypersonic missiles), requiring B-21; GBSD; NC3.

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10. Army Futures Command, Gen. Mike Murray & ASAALT Dr. Bruce Jette, (GWU, May 27, 2020): **Defense funding may fall, because of severe ~$25T National Debt pressure from COVID-19 emergency relief. This places tremendous pressure on Army's "31 + 3" development portfolio.**

"Convergence" is the massing of massive Army/USAF/Navy/USMC fires simultaneously on future Chinese targets. Army will likely propose a joint Army/USAF JADC2 Experiment during 2021. [Army is seeking to integrate IBCS missile defense network, with its ATADS indirect-fire/artillery network, as its JADC2 contribution] [Army is also looking at SpaceX Starlink LEO, (plus undisclosed others), for potential targeting for Long Range Precision Fires, (LRHW; PrSM)]

- a. Army/Navy hypersonic missile programs are tightly-integrated between: (i) Navy Conventional Prompt Strike; (ii) Navy design of Common-Hypersonic Glide Body; (iii) Army production of C-HGB; and (iv) Army Long Range Hypersonic Weapon, (~$1.7B/year combined RDT&E funding, during ~2020-2025). Army shares information with USAF, but USAF's ARRW hypersonic missile program is entirely-independent from Army/Navy CPS/C-HGB/LRHW programs.

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11. USAF "AFWIC" Acting Director, Maj. Gen. Clint "Q" Hinote, (AFA Mitchell Institute, May 27, 2020): **COVID-19 is the natural "forcing-function", to trade aging permissive-environment force-structure, to**

modernize for high-end peer fight, (JADC2; Space; mix of penetrating & stand-off combat-power). **Must anticipate reduction in future defense funding.**

- a. Must fight on China's doorstep, because US Allies are there. China has now developed massive "missile-salvo" capability; plus cyber-attacks; plus Space attacks. [Desert Storm build-up of major forces & materiel, will not be allowed by China]
- b. Must generate "convergence", through JADC2, pouring massed-fires from USAF/Navy/Army/USMC onto Chinese targets.
- c. Need access to Space, (for targeting; communications; assured PNT; missile defense; ISR).
- d. Air combat-power comes from a mixture of both penetrating capability, (F-35; B-21; defendable-forward-bases), and massed stand-off capability, (B-52; JASSM; ARRW hypersonic missiles; C-17 & C-130 "palletized munitions", (of expendable "CLEAVER" missiles)).
- e. Need to have as many fighter/bomber operating bases as possible, and then disperse to fight, to complicate Chinese targeting.
- f. Must also have dispersed-Airmen, firing expendable "weapons-in-a-box", (e.g., "palletized-munitions"; Skyborg; targeting-UAS).

Contractor CEO briefings:

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1. Lockheed CEO Marillyn Hewson, (Bernstein Investor Conference, May 27, 2020): **Sudden ~-15% reduction in 2020 F-35 deliveries, does almost no financial-damage, because of recent increase to 90% DoD Progress-payments:** [Lockheed had already-reduced -$375M of 2020 F-35 sales guidance, during 1Q Results, (but is still expecting ~+6% overall 2020 sales growth, to ~$63B). Lockheed then recently-announced ~-15% reduction in expected 2020 F-35 deliveries, (~-18-24 delayed 2020 aircraft deliveries, from COVID-19 "supplier delays"), (down from ~141 2020 planned aircraft deliveries). **At new 90% DoD Progress-payments, (up from previous 80%), DoD will only retain ~$13.1M for each 2020 F-35 delivery that is delayed, (~$6.1M cost + ~$7M profit), resulting in ~-$275M lower 2020 F-35 sales, from ~-15% fewer 2020 F-35 deliveries,** (~-18-24 aircraft)]

- **a. Monstrous ~$8.4B of 2020 Cashflow is likely:** [Lockheed issued formal ~$7.6B 2020 Cashflow guidance. But investors are generally-expecting ~+$350M more 2020 Cashflow from 90% DoD Progress-payments increase during 2Q-4Q, (from previous 80%); plus ~+$460M additional 2020 Cashflow, from delayed 2020 payroll tax payment under CARES Act, (paying $230M in 2021, and $230M in 2022)] **[$7.6B 2020 Cashflow guidance + ~$350M increased 90% DoD Progress-payments + ~$460M from delayed 2020 payroll tax payment = ~$8.4B 2020 Cashflow]**
- **b. F-35 currently-drives ~28% (~$18B) of Lockheed's entire ~$63B sales; but F-35 production sales peak in ~2022, (at ~170 aircraft/year). Hungry for initial ~$15B five-year sole-source F-35 Sustainment contract, to sustain F-35 sales growth in perpetuity,** (committing to 80% mission-capable-rate, plus ~$25K/flying-hour cost, (in FY2012 dollars), (~$34K/flying-hour cost in ~2025).

- **c. CEO Hewson will remain Executive Chairman,** ("at least through the end of the year and beyond"), as current Board Member, James Taiclet, becomes new CEO on June 15, 2020, (and Frank St. John becomes new COO).

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2. Northrop CEO Kathy Warden & CFO Dave Keffer (Bernstein Investor Conference, May 27, 2020): [First ~20 minutes of webcast was corrupted, of 50 minute briefing]

- **a. GBSD: USAF is adamant that GBSD must achieve 2029 IOC. [While unspoken, USAF is presumably-tailoring cost-plus-incentive-fee GBSD EMD contract structure, to achieving specific schedule milestones]** [$557M 2020 GBSD RDT&E; $1.5B 2021 GBSD RDT&E Request]
- **b. B-21:** USAF is pleased with program-execution; and is publicly-advocating to expand B-21 fleet, beyond original ~100 aircraft.
- **c. New ~$8B Space Sector is "growth-engine":** Almost all legacy spacecraft programs are now being recapitalized, from increased China & Russia targeting of US spacecraft constellations.
- **d. ~$1.35B 2020 CapEx: Clearly targeted at B-21 & GBSD, (robust ~3.8% of 2020 sales).** [Also planning for $1.35B in 2021 CapEx, before falling in 2022]
- **e. Wants to be 3rd missile prime contractor,** (showcasing Navy AARGM-ER).

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3. HII CEO Mike Petters & CFO Chris Kastner, (Bernstein Investor Conference, May 28, 2020):

- **a. COVID-19 impact:** School closings are biggest employee-attendance driver. Now "unwinding liberal-leave", to recall full workforce. [Fully-supports continued tele-working of ~25% workforce, (~11K FTE)]
- **b. Trying to contain COVID-19 impact to 2Q:** HII is still meeting short-term shipbuilding milestones. **[While unspoken, Navy must still expect significant 2020 shipbuilding cost-growth, because ~25% (2Q) of HII's 2020 Overhead/G&A must still be allocated to current cost-plus-incentive-fee & fixed-price-incentive-firm shipbuilding contracts,** (which are really cost-plus contracts, where Navy still bears 100% of all cost growth, up to fixed-price ceiling)] ["There is no question that there has been some impact to schedules. The attendance issue alone, is enough to say that there is going to be some schedule impact."]
- **c. HII will still generate beefy ~$3B of 2020-2024 Free Cashflow.** [Shipbuilding sales are growing at least ~+3%/year, while ~$450M/year of CapEx finally falls in 2021] ["Best that this franchise has ever seen."]
- **d. Now fully-facilitized (CapEx) for ~20% HII workshare on 2021 Columbia SSBN order.** ["Newport News has got a big imbalance between new work and mature work right now, and that is going to keep pressure on Newport News [operating margin] for a while."] [NNS has new workforce; new tools; new capital; and new contracts] **[But views NNS at ~9% long-term operating margin]**

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4. Leidos CEO Roger Krone, (Bernstein Investor Conference, May 28, 2020):

- **a. COVID-19 impact: April-May are highest-impact months** in: (i) Intel, (Intel customers have now gone to two-shifts, to keep one uninfected workforce in-reserve), (being reimbursed under Section

3610 of CARES Act for wage-reimbursement, but no profit/fee on the un-used workforce being held in reserve); plus (ii) VA face-to-face medical exams (~2K-3K/day), are simply-delayed, but still has fixed-cost impacts in 2Q.

- **b. Bought Dynetics for $1.7B cash, because of USD(R&E) Mike Griffin's prioritization of hypersonics, (Army C-HGB production); autonomy/UAV, (DARPA Gremlins); and EW.**
- c. ~$11B sales: (i) $3.9B Defense (34%); (ii) $2.6B Intel (23%); (iii) $2.8B Civil (25%); (iv) $2.1B Health (18%). [Always hire the best people. Invest in B&P/IRAD/CapEx early. Must have "qualified-credentials", to win programs like recent $7.7B Navy/USMC NGEN-R competition, (currently under protest). Cannot be the lowest-cost bidder, and still be technically-superior]
- d. Defense Sector is at ~8% operating margin because of "contract mix"; must shift to more fixed-price contracts over time, to achieve ~9%-10% operating margin.

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5. USAF awards ~$950M JADC2 five-year IDIQ contracts to ~28 companies, (including: BAE; Boeing; CACI; Collins Aerospace; Dell; GD; Honeywell; L3Harris; Lockheed Aeronautics; Northrop Aeronautics Systems; Palantir; Raytheon Intelligence & Space). (DoD Contract Awards, May 29, 2020).

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6. Army awards $3.4B 2020-2026 contract to GD Combat Systems for Hydra 70mm rockets. (DoD Contract awards, May 29, 2020).

From: Powers, Pamela
Sent: Sun, 10 May 2020 00:55:41 +0000
Subject: Fwd: VA_5.9.20_COVID19 Daily Report (002) (002) (002)
Attachments: VA_5.9.20_COVID19 Daily Report (002) (002) (002).docx, VA Employee Cases 5-9-2020.pdf

(b)(6)
Office of the Deputy Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
202-461(b)(6) (Office)
202-823 (Mobile)
Sent via mobile
From: Tucker, Brooks (b)(6) @va.gov>
Sent: Saturday, May 9, 2020 4:39:41 PM
To: (b)(6) EOP/OMB (b)(6) omb.eop.gov>; DL OMB Dir Office OMB_COVID19OPS (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov>
Cc: RLV (b)(6) @va.gov>; Powers, Pamela <(b)(6) va.gov>; Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris) (b)(6) @va.gov>; Mashburn, John K. (b)(6) va.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov>; Hutton, James (b)(6) @va.gov>; Cashour, Curtis (b)(6) @va.gov>; Haverstock, Cathy (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) (b)(6) @va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B. (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov>; Nevins, Kristan K. EOP/WHO (b)(6) @who.eop.gov>; (b)(6) EOP/WHO (b)(6) @who.eop.gov>; (b)(6) EOP/WHO (b)(6) @who.eop.gov>; (b)(6) @who.eop.gov>; (b)(6) @who.eop.gov <(b)(6) @who.eop.gov>; (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) (b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov <(b)(6) @omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) (b)(6) EOP/OVP <(b)(6) t@ovp.eop.gov>
Subject: Fwd: VA_5.9.20_COVID19 Daily Report (002) (002) (002)

All, Light report for today. Convalescent case number continues to rise, a good sign.

- 1 Emergency Mission Assignment: Four ventilators were sent to Southwest Medical Center in Liberal, Kansas: This was an emergency request from the FEMA Deputy Federal Coordinating Officer for Kansas. The four requested ventilators had been delivered by the staff of the Robert J. Dole VA Medical &Regional Office Center to the Wichita Dwight D. Eisenhower National Airport; they were then delivered via Army National Guard helicopter to the Southwest Medical Center in Liberal, Kansas (over 200 miles away from Wichita). Our total time from emergency request to delivery was less than 4 hours.
- Four Mission Assignments under consideration in New Jersey, New York, Oregon and Rhode Island
- Case Data
  - 9,148 Total Positive Veteran COVID-19 Cases (+371 cases from yesterday)
  - 2,226 Active Positive Veteran Cases (-20 cases from yesterday)

- 6,104 Convalescent Veteran Cases (+368 cases from yesterday). Convalescent cases are defined as 14 days post positive test results for outpatients and discharged status for inpatients. These are essentially "recovered" cases.
    - Veteran Deaths: 818 veterans have died from COVID-19 (+23 from yesterday)
    - No new employee deaths to report
    - Breakdown of cases for employee attached, breakdown of Veteran Cases not available today.

Brooks D. Tucker
Acting Chief of Staff
202-290-(b)(6)

COVID-19 – Agency Response
5/9/2020
Department of Veterans Affairs

Administrative Actions, Waivers, and Other Programmatic Changes that Impact Agency Provision of Service or Mission Delivery (Externally Facing)

- Supply Chain:
  - **VA will be accepting 500,000 masks from the Republic of Korea (ROK). Delivery will come via Andrews Air Force Base. Delivery was supposed to be Sunday May 10 but has been pushed to Tuesday May 12.**
  - VHA supply chain for Continuous Renal Replacement Therapy (CRRT) machines and consumables, and the entire national dialysis industry is constrained. Demand for CRRT fluids has gone up >500%. The handful of CRRT fluid manufacturers are at max capacity; quantities are in small quantities, including foreign suppliers. As of 5/8/2020 this is still an open issue, VA is working with FEMA/HHS at national level.
- **Update on FEMA Active VA Mission Assignments, (No new admissions today 5/9/2020):**
  - VA NY Harbor: 111 patients, 79 discharges, 18 deaths
  - VA New Jersey: 31 patients, 19 discharge, 7 deaths
  - VA San Francisco: 1 discharge, no deaths
  - VA Miami: 1 discharge, no deaths
  - VA Ann Arbor: 36 patients, 21 discharges, 6 deaths
  - Detroit: 22 patients, 15 discharge, 7 death
  - Albuquerque: 5 patients from Navajo Nation, previously in Gallup IHS facility. 4 discharged, 1 death.
  - VA Chicago (Hines, Jesse Brown Marion) – 23 patients, 6 discharges, 1 death
  - Spokane, WA – 2 patients, no discharges, no deaths
  - Hew Haven CT – Homeless Outreach Assistance, 3 clinicians
  - Louisiana (Shreveport) – 16 Med/Surg, 2 ICU. No patients received at this time.
  - Oregon / Roseburg VAMC - 25 Med/Surg beds. No patients received at this time.
  - New Jersey State Veterans Homes (Paramus & Meno Park) – Nurses, staffing, telehealth, and supplies.
  - Massachusetts Soldiers Home Support (Chelsea and Holyoke) - Acute care, intensive care, and skilled nursing (nursing home) care for residents/patients.
  - Florida Nursing Home Support: Starting today, VA will begin providing staffing and technical support to 12 non-VA nursing homes in Florida, a state that has seen COVID-19 emerge among these vulnerable populations. More than 80 physicians, nurses and nurses aides will begin rotations at these homes to provide direct care and advice about controlling infectious disease.
  - Rhode Island Group Home Support - Initial request is for 6 registered nurses and 9 certified nursing assistants or similar for a total of 15 personnel.
  - Portland Oregon Beds - 25 short term acute care (med/surg) and 5 intensive care (ICU) beds at the Portland VAMC for non-covid and covid-positive patients.
  - Washington State Veteran Home support and testing support
  - Alabama - Bill Nichols State Veterans Home in Alexander City, AL, provide 4 registered nurses and 5 nursing assistants
  - Pennsylvania - Nursing Home Staff - Spring City, PA Staff RN/LPN (20)

- Delaware – Department of Public Health Staff Support. VA is sending 10 RN/LPN/NA to cover 3 nursing homes
- Wisconsin – Provide 2 pharmacists and 2 respiratory therapists to a mission in Milwaukee
- Nebraska – VA will provide testing support in Omaha
- Des Moines/Iowa City – 20 med/surg or ICU beds, no patients received to date
- Iowa – VA to provide staffing to support State Veteran Home at Marshalltown, Iowa. Staffing to include RN (4); LPN (16); NA (27)
- California - Nursing Home Staff support. Four 6-person teams to provide nursing consultation support to long term care (nursing home) facilities in Los Angeles County region
- Illinois Nursing Home Support – VA will provide 60 of our Community Living Center beds for Illinois civilian nursing home patients. The beds will be provided at the Edward J. Hines Medical (Chicago), Danville Medical Center (Danville) and/or Lovell Federal Health Care Center (North Chicago).
- Illinois Inpatient Beds – This is an extension of the Mission Assignment in Chicago listed above for beds Hines, Jesse Brown and Marion.
- New Jersey – VA to provide 4 licensed social workers to support patients in State Veterans homes; specific location TBD
- Texas – VA will provide State Veterans Homes Testing and Support, will also provide staff and support services to assist Texas Veterans Land Board with collection and processing of biological samples for testing and analysis. Services will be provided for patients and staff at state veterans homes in Floresville, TX and Temple, TX.
- VA also extended our liaisons detail to the FEMA National Response Coordination Center until June 3, 2020.
- Support to Indian Health Centers and Navajo Nation: 15 personnel for a 30-day period. (May 5 – June 5). IHS Indian Medical Center in Gallup NM, seven (7) ER nurses and 2 RNs; IHS Crownpoint, Hospital two (2) RN's; IHS Kayenta Health Center, two (2) RNs; IHS Northern Navajo Medical Center, two (2) RNs
- Navajo Nation Nursing Support – Tuba City. VA will provide (6) Med Surge Nurses (RNs), (6) Emergency Room RNs and (4) Intensive Care Unit Nurses (RNs)
- North Carolina – VA will provide testing services in support of vulnerable residents/patients and staff at licensed care facilities.
- North Carolina - Staff Support to nursing home including: 1 van driver, 3 Community Living Center nurses, 2 infection control nurses, 1 social work, 1 public affairs officer, 4 nurse screeners, 1 Administrative lead, 4 RNs, and 4 LPNs.
- **Four ventilators were sent to Southwest Medical Center in Liberal, Kansas: This was an emergency request from the FEMA Deputy Federal Coordinating Officer for Kansas. The four requested ventilators had been delivered by the staff of the Robert J. Dole VA Medical & Regional Office Center to the Wichita Dwight D. Eisenhower National Airport; they were then delivered via Army National Guard helicopter to the Southwest Medical Center in Liberal, Kansas (over 200 miles away from Wichita). Our total time from emergency request to delivery was less than 4 hours!**

- Pending Mission Assignments:
  - **New Jersey: five 10-person strike teams including to provide training to long-term care facility staff on infection control practices and proper use of PPE**
  - **New York: Delivering Crisis Support to Civilian Healthcare Providers**
  - **Oregon: private nursing home support - VHA staff to include providing training to long-term care facility staff on infection control practices and proper use of PPE**
  - **Rhode Island: 12 nursing assistants to provide patient care at State Veterans Home in Bristol**

- Albuquerque - HHS Indian Health Services ventilators
- North Dakota/Minnesota – delivery of meals to elderly and infirm Veterans and civilians
- The State of Virginia has requested 500 test kits for Hampton Roads – a Mission Assignment is expected
- Salisbury North Carolina – request for beds

- The board of Veterans Appeals has **106** Virtual Hearings scheduled for the week of May 4 with more being scheduled for the remainder of the week. To date, the Board has achieved **787** virtual hearings during COVID-19. The Board has also rendered **63,062** decisions continuing strong production despite challenging circumstances.
- As of 5/8/2020 1,330 (+50 from Thursday May 7) COVID related internments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries (1,144 completed, 186 pending). During the pandemic, 3,115 internments have been cancelled citing COVID-19 as the reason.
- VA's National Cemetery at Calverton, NY (near epicenter) completed 251 internments this week with another 171 scheduled for next week.

CARES ACT IMPLEMENTATION – KEY ACTIVITIES AND MILESTONES
(Please also include activities related to the implementation of other COVID-related supplementary funding legislation, including P.L. 116-127 and P.L. 116-123)

- Finalizing internal controls including reporting requirements for obligations, expenditures, and planned activities) for CARES Act Supplemental funding.
- OMB approved CARES Act Supplemental funding apportionments for VHA, VBA, Gen Ad, OIG, and Grants for Construction of State Extended Care Facilities.
- CARES Act, Section 4022. Foreclosure Moratorium and Consumer Right to Request Forbearance: notified OMB's Veterans Affairs and Defense Health Branch of interpretation concerns to ensure that all federal housing agencies impacted by these sections are consistent in implementing the new law, as requested by OMB.
- OIT will complete circuit installs at all four gateways by April 3rd, doubling network bandwidth to 160GBs
- OIT has approved 31 COVID-19 Memos valued at $371.02M
- Working with VHA, VBA, OIT to prepare spend plans and regular reporting templates for CARES Act funding.
- VBA Received $13M in GOE supplemental funding for COVID-19 related issues such as purchase of equipment and supplies to support telework posture and employee health and safety as well as scheduled deep cleaning of buildings/offices occupied by VBA personnel
- Office of Information Technology CARES Act Supplemental Funding apportionment ($2.15B) approved by OMB. Funds are available for execution.
- VHA to begin initial distribution to the Healthcare Networks of $5.3 billion (from the total $14.4 billion) in Medical Services funding from the CARES Act Supplemental based upon:
    - FY 2020 Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation (VERA) Model
    - VHA's Bed Management System
    - VHA's Managerial Cost Accounting (MCA) system
- Office of Information Technology has used funding to double network bandwidth across all gateways to improve telehealth and telework capabilities. Also placing equipment orders for our Veterans Health Administration

- As of 6 April 2020, VA reported $768.1 million in total COVID -19 obligations, an increase of $371 million from 2 April 2020.
- OIT has Increased telehealth capacity by 15% and can support 11K concurrent sessions
- As of April 9, VA obligated $768M in total COVID -19 obligations and anticipates surpassing $1B in COVID-19 related obligations by the end of this week.
    - Examples of VA Purchases
        - Centralized Contracting: 60 awards valued at $338,803,651.
        - National Acquisition Center (NAC): $2,499,317 (Pharmacy/Medical Equipment)
        - Technology Acquisition Center (TAC): $308,789,039 (IT Equipment)
        - Strategic Acquisition Center (SAC): $27,515,605 (Medical Surgical Supplies)
        - Veterans Health Administration (VHA) at the regional and local level: 1,633 awards valued at $519,933,615 (Medical Surgical Supplies)
        - Contracts to support national purchases of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and medical equipment (e.g., ventilators) as well as costs associated with level-setting PPE and medical equipment throughout the country
        - Travel, housing, and other support for employees deploying to other medical centers
        - Salary costs incurred to hire and retain staff to support the pandemic
        - Medical facility costs mostly related to reconfiguring space to open additional beds and creating negative pressure rooms
        - Costs associated with Community Care to cover increased demand in the community by Veterans for both COVID-19 related and non-COVID related medical care
- As of April 14, VA obligated $959 million in total COVID -19 obligations.
- OIT continues to stay ahead of equipment demand in response to COVID-19
    - 164 Laptops shipped to 16 sites yesterday to be distributed to Homelessness Staff
    - 3 laptops shipped for BVA
    - 637 additional activation shipments (802 total shipped yesterday)
- As of April 21, VA's COVID-19 total obligations are $1.160 billion:
    - VHA obligations: $841 million
    - OIT obligations: $319 million
    - To date, $49 million has been spent on Telehealth capabilities and enhancements, which include $4 million in bandwidth upgrades and $42 million to purchase 38K mobile devices and 22K laptops.
- VHA spending on State Home Grants, PPE to state homes, etc.
    - **State Homes:** To date, 23 grant packages totaling $23 million have been received for COVID-19 related projects. Statutory and legislative challenges in the current program are impacting VA's ability to provide the funds before 1 October 2020. Legislative relief is necessary.
    - **Medical Facilities:** To date, $170 million has been distributed to the Office of Emergency Management in response to operational issues and overtime pay, and $40 million has been distributed to facilities for expansion of inpatient bed capabilities to include HVAC equipment for negative-pressure rooms and engineering staff overtime.
    - **PPE to State Homes:** VHA facilities considering a request from a State Veteran Home for PPE must take into account the impact that providing PPE to State Veteran Homes has on VHA facility operational stock.
- As of Apr 28, VA's COVID-19 total obligations are $1.531 billion (+$371 million from Apr 22)
    - VHA obligations: $1.21 billion (+$369 million), including recent obligations for:

        - $192 million in grants for the homelessness programs (Grant and Per Diem and Supportive Services for Veterans Families); $52 million for supplies including protective gear such as masks and gowns; and $66 million for medical equipment
    - OIT obligations: $321 million (+$2 million), including:
        - Expansion of Telehealth to include 38,000 mobile devices and 22,000 laptops; doubled bandwidth at 30 sites; hardware upgrades to increase video teleconferencing systems by 1,200 concurrent calls; and increased cloud capability to increase capacity by 6,000 concurrent calls
- OIT continues to stay ahead of equipment demand in response to COVID-19
    - Equipment shipped last week include:
        - Laptops Shipped 926 (18 locations)
        - Desktops Shipped 2,028 (10 locations)
        - Monitors Shipped 2,591 (17 locations)
        - 2,462 iPhones ordered (pending shipment)
        - 5,000 laptops expected to ship this week
- As of May 5, VA's COVID-19 total obligations are $1.688 billion (+$156 million from Apr 28)
    - VHA obligations: $1.326 billion (+$117 million); Significant procurements this week include $6.7 million for PPE and $4 million in testing support for COVID-19.
    - OIT obligations: $357 million (+$36 million)
    - VBA obligations: $3 million (+$3 million)

Major upcoming decisions that require POTUS or Task Force-level decisions (only the biggest, most sensitive items should be included here, many agencies may not have anything to report in this section)

- **NSTR**

Guidance, Communication and Outreach with Stakeholders

- SECVA Media:
    - No SECVA Media
- SECVA calls to Governors or Members of Congress on COVID-19 related issues:
    - No calls made today
- VA Issues the following press releases (5/8/2020)
    - No press releases today

- **Other Notable Responses**

    - 9,148 Total Positive Veteran COVID-19 Cases (+371 cases from yesterday)
    - 2,226 Active Positive Veteran Cases (-20 cases from yesterday)
    - 6,104 Convalescent Veteran Cases (+368 cases from yesterday). Convalescent cases are defined as 14 days post positive test results for outpatients and discharged status for inpatients. These are essentially "recovered" cases.
    - **Veteran Deaths: 818 veterans have died from COVID-19 (+23 from yesterday)**
    - 200 Active Veteran cases remain greater New York City Area (Bronx, Hudson Valley, Northport, Brooklyn)

- Two other areas where significant Active Veteran cases remain is Chicago with 134 cases at our 3 Chicago area Medical Centers and our East Orange New Jersey Medical Center with 163 cases
- Other areas with 50 or more active veteran cases include Connecticut (85), Washington, DC (80), Philadelphia (102), Boston (67), Albany (56), Bedford, MA (83), Indianapolis (62), Omaha (51)
- **Note:** No breakdown by facility is available today, 5/9/2020

- **2,526 VA Positive Employee cases**

  - This is an increase of 9 case from yesterday
  - The largest clusters of employee cases are our New Orleans Medical Center with 185 employees testing positive, our Greater New York City Area Medical Centers (Bronx, Hudson Valley, Northport, Brooklyn) with 368 employees testing positive and our East Orange New Jersey Medical Center with 170 employee cases
  - Other employee hot spots at our Medical Centers include: Chicago (131), Indianapolis (84), Miami (43), Washington, DC (63), Shreveport (41), Boston (68), Columbia, SC (26), Detroit (32), Dallas (56), Philadelphia (84), Ann Arbor (45), Bedford Massachusetts (35), Reno (21), Greater Los Angeles (27), Cleveland (31), St. Louis (39), Jackson, MS (34), Connecticut (33), Richmond (31), Atlanta (35), Cincinnati (25), Pittsburgh (21), Lebanon PA (22), Baltimore (22), Gainesville, FL (25), Little Rock (20), Orlando (28), Puerto Rico (26), Seattle (25), Dayton (21), Houston (60), Kansas City (34), Milwaukee (20)
  - To date there have been 26 employee deaths: 1 in Ann Arbor, 1 in Detroit, 3 in Indianapolis, 3 in Reno, 1 in Shreveport, 1 in Houston, 1 in Los Angeles. 1 in West Palm Beach, 2 in the Bronx (NY), 1 Manhattan (NY), 1 in Denver and 1 in Brockton (Boston), 1 in Washington, DC and 1 in Northport (NY), 1 in Miami and 1 in New Orleans, 1 in Wilkes-Barre (PA), 3 in New Jersey and 1 in Loma Linda (CA).
  - **Note:** Detailed breakdown is attached (VA Employee COVID Cases 5-9-2020)

Historical Inputs:

- Within a day of the first confirmed US case, VA began planning for COVID-19 by establishing screening and triage, isolation and quarantine, and infection control strategy and plans.
- Activated Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Emergency Management Coordination Cell (EMCC) to Level 1 on January 20, 2020 and it remains activated.
- Screening points established at every major VHA Healthcare Facility (170 hospitals that serve nearly 9 million veterans across the country) (March 10, 2020)
- Limited admissions to Spinal Cord Injury Units - 24 major centers; 24,000 Veterans (March 10, 2020)
- Restricted admission to VA Community Living Centers (CLC) (134 nationwide nursing homes supporting 41,000 Veterans) (March 10, 2020)
- Daily crisis action team meetings at 3pm to discuss updates and remain in sync internally and with other federal guidance. (3/9/2020)
- All VA Regional Benefit Offices (ROs) are closed to the public. Benefits are still being processed virtually.

- Provided HR Emergency Preparedness Guide to employees and managers to answer questions on a wide-range of human capital topics (e.g., travel, leave, telework, employee relations, labor relations, compensation, staffing, reasonable accommodation); continue to update based on new guidance.
- Released system-wide policy released directing curtailment of routine appointments and elective surgeries at all VA facilities (3/17/20)
- Released guidance for Geriatrics & Extended Care Home & Community Based Services Programs to protect Veterans and staff including strict limitations on visitors in geriatric facilities, increasing the use of virtual modalities for clinical care, and screening all essential visitors or residents of a Veterans home prior to initiating contact.
- Released Chaplain guidance related to COVID-19 transmitted to the field (3/17/20) that continues to provide spiritual support to Veterans while using appropriate PPE or and utilizing virtual modalities for worship services. Any large-scale chaplain events have been cancelled.
- Implementation of an Episodic Special Patient Icon in Bed Management Solution sent to the field
    - VA recently launched an Episodic Patient Icon to identify inpatient Veterans who are presumptive or confirmed positive cases during epidemics. These icons can also be used to identify negative pressure rooms which allows for real-time bed capacity across the enterprise.
- Insurance services extended premium payment grace periods; reinstatement deadlines; and Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI) application deadlines. (3/17/20)
- Board of Veterans Appeals suspended all travel board, video, and central office hearings and is prepared to provide virtual hearings where possible if Veterans and the Representative are willing and have the necessary equipment. (3/17/20)
- Submitted Task Order to HHS to receive an additional 250K masks in Martinsburg; 1.5M masks at the SDC in Hines, IL
- VA is experiencing a reduction in surgical case load due to delaying non-emergent care; down from 1,900 per day to 1,300 per day. Additionally, there has been a 5% drop in ER visits; increased bed capacity by 1/3 across the VA. (3/16/20)
- Converting all ICU beds to negative airflow beds with a goal of reengineering by 3/30.
- VA's Loan Guaranty Service issued program guidance for VA's Real Estate Owned and Portfolio Servicing Contract (RPSC) contractor, placing a moratorium on evictions for VA-owned properties for 60 days due to COVID-19.
- VA's Debt Management Center, through coordination with the Veterans Benefits Administration and Veterans Service Organizations, implemented a 60-day COVID-19 debt relief plan to provide temporary financial relief in accordance with Veterans' request.
- Issuing proposed COVID-19 Interim Suitability & Fingerprint Guidance to comply with social distancing recommendations; guidance includes temporarily suspension of an initial fingerprint check (SAC) prior to new employees and contractor's entry-on-duty (EOD); VA continuing other investigatory measures such as initiation of e-Quip.
- Finalized a response to various union demands to bargain implementation of measures and precautions being put in place by the Department to protect people and property during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The general response denies immediate negotiations while advising any impact and implementation bargaining will occur post-implementation when the pandemic ceases. The Department is willing to meet all of its legal obligations, including negotiating with unions representing VA employees, but must also focus on providing care to our Veterans while protecting the safety and security of our facilities and the health of all in them.
- VetResources emails, providing Coronavirus information and prevention guidance, were sent to 10.8 million subscribers. (February 5 and February 26)

- A VA Acquisition Insider alert is being distributed to the VA Acquisition community concerning possible fraudulent vendor/merchant activity. Some of this activity might include instances of price gouging.
- VAntage blog published January 31 and continually updated since: https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/70999/cdc-coronavirus-information-and-resources/
- Sent letter to governors regarding VA's Fourth Mission to improve the nation's preparedness and be a "safety net" for response to war, terrorism, national emergencies, and natural disasters. (March 17, 2020)
- CAO and VA's Director of Operations and Emergency Management communicated with HHS to ensure VA's Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needs are prioritized. HHS has agreed to release a stop gap quantity of N95 protective masks to VA this week. (March 16, 2020)
- Notified GI Bill Beneficiaries and school officials through email and social media. If schools change modality of training to online classes for the current term, VA will continue to pay benefit payments.
- VA is pausing attendance at hearings involving the Secretary and his Undersecretaries for the remainder of March, at the guidance of OMB. One Senate hearing on the 2021 VA Budget proposal and a House hearing on Sexual Assault Prevention will not be attended by senior leaders. Subcommittee attendance from VA witnesses will continue on a case by case basis.
- Secretary Wilkie sent a message to all VA employees expressing appreciation for their support during the COVID-19 pandemic, assuring them that their health and safety and that of our patients is critical, and offering resources to promote employee wellness during this time. (March 16, 2020)
- Implemented VEText outreach to 8,858,481 Veterans to receive COVID-19 information and updates via text. Texts began at 1200EST on 3/17/2020.
- Facilitated a briefing to Senate and House Authorizing committee staffers on VA's Emergency Management Disaster Plan for COVID-19.
- Partnering with Facebook and the American Red Cross Military Veteran Caregiver Network to support Veterans and their families/caregivers in their homes through use of 7,488 free Facebook Portal devices.
- Partnering with Amazon, to purchase 500 tablets to enable access for Veterans, families and caregivers via VHA Telehealth Service to help ensure medical access and reduce possible exposure estimated launch (3/30/2020).
- Deployed 16 Nursing Assistants to assist with screening of AMCITs repatriated (all have been demobilized)
- Deployed 5 Area Emergency Managers to assist Health and Human Services (HHS) Incident Management Teams at each repatriation site
- Deployed a Liaison Officer to the HHS Secretary's Operations Center (SOC) to assist with response coordination
- Conducted analysis of VA Medical facilities contingency data to identify locations for potential COVID-19 dedicated facilities
- Manilla, Philippines Embassy will close in the next two weeks, in which case our VA clinic will close. Eight employees will be returned to the US (1 VHA and 7 VBA) and this will impact 6,000 veterans who receive care from that clinic.
- OIT created a new Veteran-facing FAQ page, which is with OPIA to obtain final (i.e. White House) clearance.
- Issued guidance memorandum authorizing waiver of the biweekly pay limitation on premium pay for workers performing duties in response to COVID-19, permitting overtime and premium pay for eligible workers up to the annual limitation.

- OPM signed dual-compensation waiver to allow hiring of reemployed annuitants (i.e. retired employees) during COVID-19 by streamlining current delegations of authority for waiver of salary offset; VA Comms team is working with WH Comms on a Press Release.
- Coordinating with OM on procedures for authorizing Hazard Pay if regulatory criteria met
- **Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** Prepared to increase scope of the EAP contract with FOH for COVID-19 counselling if needed.
- Now sending daily detailed updates to both House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees
- VHA has detailed four personnel to FEMA HQ to support the operations: Dr. John Areno, VISN16 Chief Medical Officer & Pulmonary/Critical Care physician; Mary Mather, IPEC/National Program Manager for LTC; Andrew Centineo, PL&O; Michael Forgy, OEM
- Secretary Wilkie joined President Trump on a stakeholder call with leaders of Veterans Service organizations to update them on the government wide response to COVID-19 (3/21/20)
- VA's Financial Services Center established an Emergency Buyers sub-group of 13,000 Government Purchase Cardholders within VA's Amazon Business Account providing special access to select vendors for critically needed supplies in accordance with the Chief Acquisition Officer's COVID-19 supply chain efforts
- VA Office of Information and Technology (OIT) has concluded testing of its network. Based on stress testing this week, OIT believes we can support 175,000-200,000 CAG connections, in addition to 300,000 RESCUE connections (3/21/2020)
- Future deployment of the Mobile Vet Center to New Orleans, LA will start week of 23 Mar 2020. VA reviewing locations for additional deployments. VA to set up Vet Center Community Access Point to provide direct counseling to Veterans receiving treatment through the HHS location.
- Effective Monday, March 23, 2020, committal services and the rendering of military funeral honors will not be conducted until further notice at VA national cemeteries. Immediate family members (limited to no more than 10 individuals) of the deceased may witness the interment if requested. Currently, approximately 1174 families have postponed scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns. This is up significantly from yesterday.
- VA will receive 20,000 testing swabs tomorrow 3/23
- Davita and Fresenius Dialysis companies establishing joint cohorting sites for individual markets where COVID 19 dialysis patients can be treated in isolation.
- On Saturday, March 21, 2020, the President signed into law S. 3503, which clarifies how the Department of Veterans Affairs should treat in-person courses of study that convert to distance learning formats due to health-related situations and other emergencies. https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/bill-announcement-89/
- VA announced the policy change that allows for a dual compensation waiver for retired annuitants (retired VA employees) to be hired back to VA to meet the increased need of healthcare workers during COVID-19
- Packaged 50,000 masks today for shipment tomorrow to Denver and Brooklyn (3/23/2020)
- All Area Emergency Managers are in place at each FEMA region.
- VA working with OPM to expedite blanket requests from VA to exceed the limits on recruitment, relocation, and retention incentives for Title 5 employees to help provide necessary staff
- VA is concerned with the national ventilator shortage and is working with FEMA Task Force (TF) to find other sources of supply. VA will receive 25 ventilators this week and an additional 25 next week.
- Working to purchase facepiece elastomeric respirators based on CDC Guidance for managing COVID-19 patients; It is recommended that elastomeric respirators be used in order to conserve Surgical 95 and N95 filtering facepieces for high risk procedures that require a sterile field. (3/24/2020)

- VA experiencing a high reduction (20%) in urgent care utilization showing Veterans are heeding advice to stay home (3/24/2020)
- 20k hand sanitizer bottles have been received and will be deployed to the facilities starting tomorrow. (3/24/2020)
- Coordinated with DOD to identify approximately 8581 employees who are reserve/guard members and 669 are currently activated – 122 nurses and 24 doctors included in this number.
- During the COVID-19 emergency, private sector entities have offered to donate equipment and supplies needed to protect personnel from contracting COVID-19. VA OGC worked a delegation of approval to VISN Directors to ensure efficient approval of donated gifts.
- Effective immediately, the Board of Veterans Appeals will advance on docket (AOD) appeals for Veterans diagnosed with COVID-19. (3/24/2020)
- The Board of Veterans Appeals will accept AMA Notices of Disagreement (NOD) with a typed signature in lieu of a wet signature. (3/24/2020)
- Construction projects in Massachusetts, California, New York, Pennsylvania and Puerto Rico have been ether stopped completely or activities severly curtailed by this national emergency and shelter in place orders.
- Effective COB March 24, 2020 the National Personnel Records Center will be closing its facility in accordance with local St. Louis municipal guidance. Critical VA personnel will remain behind to continue to process priority records requests.
- MyVA311 call center (located in Salt Lake City) successfully started handling VISN 22 general COVID calls last night and VISN20 is scheduled for tonight; this effort was to free up hospital call centers for local issues.
- In consultation with DoD, NCA has discontinued disinterment efforts with the Defense POW/MIA Accountability Agency (DoD) at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) effective immediately and until further notice in order to focus NCA resources on essential burial operations.
- Sent 541 letters to Members of Congress and Committees clarifying the process for requests from states and localities for VA to activate it's 4th MISSION (3/24/2020)
- Internal bulletin being drafted to implement new OPM guidance on flexible on-boarding this coming pay period and as needed during COVID to minimize physical proximity (such as the oath of office, the form I-9, fingerprinting, orientation, physical examinations, drug testing).
- Secretary Wilkie hosted a call with State and Local Government Stakeholders to provide them an update on VA's response to COVID-19.
- US Army Corps of Engineers will visit the former Denver medical facility to assess the building's viability for FEMA/HHS use.
- Penn Medicine submitted a request for a Mission Assignment for the transfer of COVID-19 non-Veteran patients to the Philadelphia VAMC.
- VA activating DEMPS for New Orleans (160 Clinical Staff) and New York (50 Nurses). We will begin moving people there starting today.
- Preparing to create a Federal Medical Shelter (FMS) in the Pacific NW (Location to be determined) with 160 personnel. Waiting for official FEMA tasking.
- Five Eyes Conference Ministerial Veterans Summit (scheduled for May 2020) has been postponed due to COVID-19.
- Submitted to OPM: (1) request for dual comp waiver to cover 2210 (IT Specialists) series occupations, and (2) direct hire authority for VBA positions-- Veteran Service Representative, Rating Veterans Service Representative, and Legal Administrative Specialist.
- On March 24th, CAO reported to VA OIG a vendor in Louisiana who is offering medical supplies and equipment up to 1000% above average cost and likely does not meet FDA guidelines.

- SECVA had the following phone interviews with press:
  - Jeff "Goldy" Goldberg, WFNC Radio (3/24/20)
  - NBC 4 w/ Scott MacFarlane (3/24/20)
  - Jim Blythe, Alliance 4 the Brave (Dallas) (3/24/20)
  - Kirsti Marohn, Minnesota Public Radio (3/24/20)
  - Ware Morning Show (Radio), San Antonio (3/25/20)
  - Fox News Rundown (Taped) (3/25/20)
  - Wake Up Tucson, AZ (3/25/20)
  - Fred Thys, WBUR Radio (NPR Boston) (3/25/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by the Moon Griffon Show (LA radio). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Leo Shane of Military Times (print). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Pensacola's Morning News (FL radio). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by WWL Radio (New Orleans, LA radio). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Drive with Lee Matthews (Oklahoma City, OK radio). (3/27/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Kevin Miller in the Morning (Boise, ID radio). (3/27/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Marc Cox morning Show (St Louis, MO radio). (3/27/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Larry O'Connor, WMAL (DC/CA radio). (3/27/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by KOAN Radio (Anchorage, AK). (3/27/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Montana Talks Radio. (3/30/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by the Ross Kaminsky Show (CO radio). (3/30/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Lisa Rein, The Washington Post. (3/30/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Conservative Circus (Phoenix radio). (3/31/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Bob Rose Show (FL radio). (3/31/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by the Charlie James Show (SC radio). (3/31/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Mobile Mornings (AL radio). (3/31/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Mark Sterling Show (NC radio). (4/1/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Fox Across America (Fox News Radio). (4/1/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie interviewed by Richmond's Morning News (VA radio). (4/2/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie interviewed by Ringside Politics (LA radio/tv). (4/2/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie interviewed by The Erick Erickson Show (GA radio). (4/2/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie interviewed on The Sam Malone Show (Houston, TX Radio) (4/3/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie interviewed on The Dale Jackson Show (Huntsville, AL Radio) (4/3/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by AM Tampa Bay Radio (4/6/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The John Fredericks Radio Show. (4/6/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Matt and Aunie Show (AL radio). (4/6/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Schilling Show (VA radio). (4/7/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Annie Frey Show (St. Louis radio). (4/7/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Wilkow Majority on Sirius XM radio. (4/7/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Bernie and Sid in the Morning (NYC radio). (4/8/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Tom Jordan and Roberta Jasina (Detroit radio). (4/8/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Frank Beckmann Show (Detroit radio). (4/9/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Heidi Harris Show (Las Vegas radio). (4/9/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Steve Gruber Show (Lansing/Flint, MI radio). (4/13/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Morning Talk with Martha Zoller (Atlanta, GA radio). (4/13/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Brian Kilmeade Show (Fox News Radio). (4/14/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The David Webb Show (SiriusXM radio). (4/14/2020)

- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Todd Starnes Show (Fox News Radio, Scheduled last minute this morning). (4/14/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Joe Piscopo in the Morning (NYC Radio). (4/15/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by South Florida's First News with Jimmy Cefalo (Miami/Ft. Lauderdale Radio). (4/15/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Bill Spadea Show (NJ Radio). (4/15/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie will be interviewed by The Kuhner Report (Boston Radio). (4/16/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Mornings with Brian Haldane (Baton Rouge, LA Radio). (4/16/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie will be interviewed by Pat Kime of Military.com. (4/16/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Ben Kesling of The Wall Street Journal. (4/17/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Joyce Kaufman Show (South Florida radio). (4/17/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Quil Lawrence of NPR (4/20/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interview by MSNBC Live with Stephanie Ruhle (4/22/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interview by WTKR TV Norfolk, VA (4/22/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interview by KSWB TV San Diego (4/22/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interview by WCAU-TV Philadelphia (4/22/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interview by WGN-TV National (4/22/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interview by WFAA-TV Dallas (4/22/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Midday News with James MacKay (Boston Radio) (4/23/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by JJ Green of WTOP (DC Radio) (4/28/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Liz MacDonald on Fox Business (4/28/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by Martha MacCallum of Fox News (Evening of 4/30/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by AM Tampa Bay radio (5/1/2020)
- SECVA will be interviewed by Lars Larson (radio) (5/1/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by The Fayetteville Observer. (5/4/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by Prairie Public Radio (Fargo, ND). (5/5/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by KTTH Seattle (radio). (5/5/2020)
- SecVA was interviewed by the Birmingham Fox Affiliate (local Birmingham, AL tv). (5/6/2020)
- SecVA will be interviewed on Fox News @ Night with Shannon Bream tonight between 11:00 – 11:15 p.m. (5/6/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by Nebraska Public Radio. (5/7/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by WTOP Radio (DC). (5/7/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by "Think" Show, Dallas NPR. (5/7/2020)

- SECVA had the following studio interviews:
  - COX Media w/ Samantha Manning; held in VACO Broadcast Studio (3/25/20)
- SECVA made calls to the following Governors over the last several days to discuss nursing home/State Veteran Home support and other COVID-19 issues:
  - Maine – Janet Mills (4/20/2020)
  - Oregon – Governor Kate Brown Janet Mills (4/20/2020)
  - Alabama – Kay Ivey (4/17/2020)
  - New Hampshire – Chris Sununu (4/20/2020)
  - New Jersey – Phil Murphy (4/13/2020)
  - South Carolina – Henry McMaster (4/20/2020)
  - Oklahoma – Kevin Stitt (4/17/2020)
  - Georgia – Brian Kemp (4/20/2020)
  - South Dakota – Kristi Noem (4/20/2020)
  - Tennessee – Bill Lee (4/20/2020)

  - Arkansas – Asa Hutchinson (4/20/2020)
  - Ohio – Mike Dewine (4/20/2020)
  - Iowa – Kim Reynolds (4/20/2020)
  - Kansas – Laura Kelly (4/20/2020)
  - Florida Governor Ron DeSantis (4/21/2020)
  - Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy (4/21/2020)
  - Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo (4/23/2020)
  - Idaho Governor Brad Little (4/23/2020)
  - Maryland Governor Larry Hogan (5/4/2020)
- Guidance sent to HR offices of a temporary postponement of pre-employment applicant drug testing for testing designated positions (TDP) for up to 180 days.
- Authority to Approve Weather & Safety Leave for Employees
- Guidance for Elective Gastroenterology and Hepatology Procedures – COVID-19
- Guidance for VHA Eye Care Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- OCHCO Bulletin – Temporary Authorization to Delay Pre-Placement and Recurring Physical Exams
- Guidance for VHA Emergency Child Care Center Operations
- Changes to In-Person Identity Verification for the My HealtheVet Website
- Dual Compensation Waiver Guidance for VHA
- Guidance on Safeguards for Military Environmental Registry Exams to Protect Veterans
- Guidance on Patient Specimen Shipments - UPS shipping
- Guidance on Preparedness for Mechanical Ventilation of COVID-19 patients during Pandemic
- VA met with OIRA and OMB on MISSION Act considerations. VA is not pausing the MISSION Act. The department is ensuring the best medical interests of Veterans are met by adhering to the law in a manner that takes into account whether referrals for community care are clinically appropriate during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- VA is no longer considering issuing a temporary waiver of the >90% bed hold requirement and the 75% Veteran bed requirement for State Veterans Homes to help ensure they remain solvent during this crisis. After further review, OGC advised that VA has no authority to waive the regulatory requirement. In addition, we were asked to review draft legislative language that would waive the above requirement. The State Homes have a hotline to Congress so we assume this is something they asked for and we will support.
- A total of 631 Transition Assistance events have been cancelled to date due to installation restrictions. We are offering these transition related courses virtually (via eLearning) to all Servicemembers and their families.
- VBA continues to exceed output targets for some benefits during the pandemic
  - Last week, Veterans filing claims for Education benefits continued to receive decisions on original claims in 15 days and on supplemental claims in under seven days, well below target levels of 28 days for original claims and 14 days for supplemental claims.
  - Nearly 100 percent of Veterans seeking a loan guaranty certificate of eligibility received it within the goal of 5 days, and approximately 90 percent were delivered within one day.
  - Call Centers are exceeding targets for service delivery—last week, Veterans needing to discuss their claims or benefits with a call center agent waited an average of one minute to speak to an agent, with 88 percent of callers reaching an agent within our target of two minutes.
  - VBA is maximizing its use of alternatives to in-person appointments including the use of phone and video capabilities.
- Conducted a "Lunch and Learn" a virtual online meeting to provide Veteran Service Organizations and community partners access to VA resources including COVID-19 response resources.

- Published VETResources to a total of 10.7M Veterans via email (25 March 2020).
- Acting PDUSH met with NYC Emergency Management Commissioner to discuss need for HHS tasking, sharing of data, and the process for referral of COVID positive and negative patients, preferably Veterans, to be admitted at VA facilities.
- Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System (DEMPS) activation memo issued and recruitment initiated for New Orleans and Manhattan
- Area Emergency Managers supporting repatriation centers:
    - Travis and Lackland demobilizing today (3/26/2020)
    - Dobbins and Miramar will demobilize tomorrow (3/27/2020)
- VA working with various vendors for purchase of Chloroquine Phosphate and ventilators.
- Collaborating with Peace Corps who has 7,000 volunteers ready to work (due to evacuations); working with them on open position advertising and employment opportunities to support VA's mission during this national emergency and beyond.
- VA identified a potential shortage of 1K nurses in certain hotspots of the nation and is working a combination of solutions to include:
    - Rehire of retired nurses
    - Hire of new employees through special hiring authorities and waivers
    - DEMPS moves from other non-stressed areas in VA
    - Use of the new Open Opportunities, a governmentwide platform offering professional development opportunities to current federal employees, as a central location for federal agencies to post details, microdetails, and/or temporary assignments.
- Collaborating with DOL and DHS/USCIS on a waiver of labor market review for non-citizens.
- Examining with OPM on a waiver or use of existing interchange agreements to detail excepted to competitive positions
- Activating enhanced Tele-ICU hub
- Growing the roster for Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System (DEMPS) volunteers for deployment to New York City and New Orleans.
- To support volunteerism, VHA is authorizing Special Contribution Awards up to the limit and asking OPM for authority to go above $10,000 but under $25,000 where needed and also making an exception to policy (VA Directive 5007) to allow per regulation recruitment, relocation and retention bonuses for any appointment at least 6 months in duration.
- Received shipment of N-95 masks, swabs and test kits for distribution (3/27/2020)
- With support from our Center for Strategic Partnerships, Office of Research and Development is establishing agreements with two commercial Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) that has allowed four of our medical centers to join in ongoing COVID-19 clinical trials and positions us to be ready for any future trials using these IRBs. VA opened trials in Palo Alto, Atlanta, New Orleans and Denver, where VA is seeing a surge of COVID patients.
- Issued joint guidance with Pension & Fiduciary Service and Appeals Management Office that the COVID-19 pandemic qualifies as "good cause" for granting extension requests. Specifically, if a claimant requests an extension to file forms or documents because the COVID-19 pandemic affected their ability to meet such deadlines, VBA will grant the requested extension, provided the time period expired on or after March 13, 2020 (the date the President issued a national emergency).
- Collaborating with the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association to let that community participate in helping VA fill its openings.
- Certain VA national cemeteries, located on active military installations, are being impacted by changes in base access (Fort Richardson, AK; Leavenworth, KS). Due to a change in base operating status, the general public is restricted from accessing the cemetery located on the base. NCA has

coordinated with base authorities to ensure funeral homes are able to access the cemetery so direct casket/cremation interment operations are still available (without the option to "witness"). (3/27/2020)

- Currently supporting approximately 2,500 concurrent telehealth appointments, with a goal of 10,000 concurrent appointments (3/27/2020)
- VA OGC partnered with the VA Voluntary Service to create a universal gift form for distribution within VA listing general departmental needs during the COVID-19 emergency. Each VAMC Director can solicit and accept the listed donations pursuant to VHA Directive 4721, VHA General Post Fund – Gifts and Donations. (3/27/2020)
- VA send new (coordinated) guidance to the field on MISSION Act considerations (3/27/20).
- VA released the VHA COVID-19 Response Plan which provides guidance to the field. The operations plan includes strategies to address a large number of COVID-19 cases to include alternative sites of care for Veterans with COVID-19. (3/27/20)
- VA Veterans Health Administration sent the following guidance to the field (3/27/2020)
  - Delegation of Authority – Group Recruitment and Retention Incentives for Title 38 Employees
  - Recruitment, Hiring and Organizational Changes During COVID-19
  - COVID-19 VHACO Clinician Request
  - Postponement of Long-Term Care Surveys
  - Establishment of New Hire Processing Timeline
  - Office of Nursing Services Recruitment – Retired Annuitants and Travel Nurse Corps
- Developing language for HHS sub-task on FEMA Mission Assignment to VHA for $1.5M in pharmaceutical support to Javits shelter in NYC.
- Assisting Homeless Program on development of Assessment and Recovery Center.
- Executing Mission Assignment as directed by and in coordination with FEMA in support of the New York State request. VHA will provide 15 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and 35 Acute Care beds at the Manhattan/Brooklyn VAMC for immediate and short-term medical treatment of civilian (non-veteran) patients from city hospitals as required. (3/28/2020)
- Recommending OMP delay Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) by 3 months. VA is considering delay of VA's annual All Employee Survey (AES) to September.
- OPM approved direct hire authority for the following VBA positions: Veterans Service Representative; Rating Veterans Service Representative; Legal Administrative Specialist.
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), approximately 1,626 families have postponed scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns.
- For the past week, overall interments/inurnments are down in national cemeteries compared to last year by nearly 40% (2020: 1,219 interments/inurnments vs. 2019: 1,970 interments)
- Modifying Bulletin on waiving physical examinations during COVID-19 to address stress on Employee Occupational Health (EOH) offices who are focused on COVID-19 screening.
- NY Harbor VA Hospital received four civilian patients from Elmhurst Hospital. One was in respiratory failure and admitted to the ICU. Information about the other three is pending. (3/29/2020)
  - Four to five additional patients are expected overnight from Elmhurst Hospital.
  - The five patients that were to be transferred from Lincoln Hospital have not arrived yet.
- VA Office of Information and Technology (OIT) will complete circuit installs at all four gateways by April 3rd doubling bandwidth to 160GBs. We have also upgraded the number of concurrent Skype sessions in Gateway East, North and South, with Gateway West pending. The number of sessions increasing to 5000 at each gateway. These upgrades will allow for greater bandwidth, increased telework and increased telehealth to aid in our COVID-19 response. (3/29/2020)

- Working modifications to HRSmart to support mass hiring to support deployable medical personnel. 3/29/2020)
- Submitting request to OPM for broad authority to approve Special Contribution Awards (SCA) above the $10K agency limit; drafting changes to current policy (VAH 5017) to delegate from SECVA to EIC authority to approve SCAs up to $10K.
- VA OGC provided legal support for several important research projects in furtherance of efforts to develop a therapy for the COVID-19 infection. OGC is negotiating on an expedited basis a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) between Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc. and the Atlanta VA Health Care System to assess the efficacy and safety of a drug approved by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) for another use on Veterans hospitalized with COVID-19.
- VA working an Agreement with Reliance for the use of Advarra as the commercial IRB of record for a COVID-19 study using Gilead's Remdesvir at the Palo Alto VA Medical Center.
- VA OGC negotiated to allow the VA James J. Peters Medical Center, Bronx, New York to partner with Genentech/Roche and participate in study to evaluate the safety and efficacy of Tocilizumab (Actemra) in patients with severe COVID-19 pneumonia in the hope that that drug can interrupt a serious inflammatory response that can occur as a complication of some infections. The drug has been cleared by the FDA as a treatment for several forms of arthritis and also as a cancer therapy.
- On March 30th, the Denver Logistics Center (DLC) will receive a shipment of 500 iPads for the VA Video Connect (VVC) Community. These iPads are designed to allow "skype" type appointments between the Veteran patient and the Care Provider. The DLC will prepare the iPads for immediate shipment to fulfill backorders.
- VA received a new Mission Assignment to provide 20 (5 ICU and 15 Med Surge) beds for non-veteran patients in East Orange, NJ.
- Coordinated with FEMA/HHS Region IX, Arizona State officials, and Navajo Nation officials regarding cluster of cases in Tuba City, AZ and potential impacts to Veterans and VA facility.
- As of close of business on Sunday, March 29, 2020, VBA contract vendors had reported a cumulative total of **33,379** unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic.
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S., families have postponed **1,940** scheduled funeral services citing COVID-19 concerns. (3/30
- Notified HR offices on COVID-19 Excepted Service Hiring Authority for Schedule A approved by OPM. this allows us to quickly hire any Title 5 positions that are in direct response COVID-19. VA may use this to fill positions on a temporary basis for up to one year as needed in response to, or as a result of COVID-19. (3/30/2020)
- Deployed a second VEText based message to our Veterans that have a mobile phone number registered with VA at 1200 EST today (3/30/2020);
  - The text will reach approximately 7.1 million Veterans and take 8 hours to send to all recipients.
  - The message: "Dept of Veterans Affairs COVID-19 update: Stay home, stay safe, stay connected. VA has online tools for your appointments, prescriptions, and more. https://go.usa.gov/xdJkp
- Developed a COVID-19 quick start guide (QSG) to be posted as part of the VA welcome kit and broadly distributed to Veterans. This distribution includes:
  - All MOU partners (corporate partners), Veteran Service Organizations (VSO), posted on social media pages (Twitter, Facebook, etc.), VA Program Offices for sharing across their partner networks, National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA). (3/30/2020)
- VHA Executive In Charge, Richard Stone and Assistant Secretary from Management Jon Rychalski briefed HVAC Chairman Takano on the $19.6 Billion received in the supplemental funding bill (3/30/2020)

- VA conducted 3,094 concurrent telehealth appointments yesterday, a new high-water mark (3/31/2020)
- Coordinated with Department of Treasury to suspend the collection of all debt owed to VA until May 31, 2020 for any Veterans seeking debt assistance due to COVID-19. This includes suspending referrals to the Treasury Offset (TOP) and Cross Servicing (CS) processes.
- OPM sending VA job opportunities to over 1M retirees.
- VA All Employee Survey postponed until September 2020.
- Notified Human Resources (HR) offices of the Federal employee leave provisions under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the requirement to post the Families First Coronavirus Response Act Notice at VA facilities.
- In accordance with OMB and VA COVID-19 guidance, National Diversity Internship Program (NDIP) FY 20 summer session has been cancelled.
- VHA New Guidance to the field (3/31/2020):
  - Leveraging Capacity to Support Surges in Demand for COVID-19
  - Credentialing and Privileging COVID-19 (Reduced credentialing process for providers in order to expedite onboarding of critical medical staff)
  - Resilience Rehabilitation Treatment Programs (RRTP) Hardening Guidance (Details guidance on efforts to protect staff and patients in our Domiciliary Units)
  - Supplemental Information - Radiology and Nuclear Scheduling and Orders Management During the COVID-19 Pandemic
  - Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Guidance for Urgent and Emergent Surgical Procedures
  - Guidance on Access Standards in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updated (coordinated with OMB)
- Invocation of the Defense Production Act (DPA) resulted in confusion in the commercial sector as to how to prioritize orders, resulting in delays and cancellations on orders and deliveries to VA. Under the DPA, the FEMA Task Force, used its authority to divert materiel originally offered to VA for delivery to the SNS.
  - VA orders for masks, gowns, gloves, and PARP have been cancelled by our vendors. This is high risk for not only our enterprise, but for the Administration as our hospitals will be without supplies starting late this week.
  - FEMA and HHS have been made aware; VA is awaiting resolution from them.
    *Issue has since been resolved
- Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System Deployments (Various Specialties) (4/1/2020)
  - (27) Personnel being processed for deployment.
  - (14) Personnel deployed/on the ground at various locations.
  - (2) VISNS requested personnel deployed through DEMPS
- Mobile Vet Center Update as of 4/1/2020:
  - New Orleans, LA Mobile Vet Center Deployment Ended. Vet Center staff connected with 100 Veterans, Servicemembers and families over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 71 civilians. Deployment ended 30 Mar 2020. One deployed employee is currently under investigation with symptoms and awaiting test results. As a precaution, all deployed staff (4 total individuals) will telework for 14 days monitoring for symptoms before returning to work at their respective Vet Centers.
  - Pasadena, CA operations started on 31 Mar 2020.
  - Portland, OR operations started on 31 Mar 2020.

- New York, NY operations started on March 31, 2020. There will be no physical Mobile Vet Center but counselors and outreach staff will be at the Javits Center to provide direct counseling to Veterans, Servicemembers, and their families.

- VA OGC advised that the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has the authority during the COVID-19 global pandemic emergency to procure lodging for employees working at their local worksite (e.g., if staff have a need to stay away from their homes/family members and continue to work (e.g. Emergency Department physicians), or a need to stay close by for faster response time, if VHA documents in writing why it has concluded that this event at all or some facilities involves imminent danger to human life and why paying for employee meals and lodging is necessary to combat that imminent danger.
- VA Acquisition Office is working with the VHA's Care in the Community Program Office to establish a Global Nurse Advice Line contract to support increased phone consults for Veteran care in support of Coronavirus.
- VA Acquisition Office is working with VHA to contract with Battelle for use of their Critical Care Decontamination Systems (CCDS) that can sanitize 80K N95 masks per day. There are two units in operation – New York and Camp Murray, WA.
- Assistant Secretary HRA/OSP and Assistant Secretary OIT co-signed a memorandum dated March 31 outlining temporary procedures for personnel security vetting and appointment of new employees and alternative PIV credentials for eligible users during Coronavirus 2019 National Emergency; this guidance implements direction issued to executive departments and agencies from the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Personnel Management.
- VHA Guidance Issued to the Field: (4/1/2020)
  - COVID-19 Definitions of Bed Categories
  - Suspension of Registered Nurse Transition to Practice Residency Program
  - COVID - Clinical Resource Hub Guidance
  - Guidance for the Hiring Compensation and Utilization of Alternate Nurse and Unlicensed Assistive Personnel
  - COVID-19 - Process for Cancellation of Non-urgent Operating Room Procedures
- SECVA hosted a phone call with VSO leaders to provide them with an update on VA's response to the COVID 19 Pandemic. This will be a weekly call going forward. (4/1/2020)
- Published public blog with guidance for Veterans/Caregivers seeking access to DoD facilities. (4/1/2020)
- Provided guidance on March 26 to field claims processors and the public on good cause for extending claims filing deadlines based on COVID-19. (4/1/2020)
  - Specifically, under existing VA regulations, if the time limits within which claimants or beneficiaries are required to act in order to perfect a claim, file an appeal, or challenge an adverse VA decision expired, the time may be extended for "good cause" shown.
  - Accordingly, claimants impacted by COVID-19 may request an extension for filing based on good cause. VBA regional office claims processors will grant the extension request, provided the time limit in question expired on or after March 13, 2020.
- **FEMA Mission Assignments Update:** 4 signed (4/2/2020)
  1. Resource Request: National Level Activation – Activate VA to locations identified by FEMA.
     - Status: Complete. 10 VHA Office of Emergency Management Liaisons deployed to each FEMA Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC)
  2. Resource Request: VHA Pharmaceutical and medication supply to support ESF8 response operations
     - Status: In progress. Validating actual requirements. VA will meet Veteran needs first.

3. Resource Request: NYS requests VHA provide 15 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and 35 Acute Care beds at the Manhattan/Brooklyn VAMC for immediate and short-term medical treatment for non-veteran patients.
    - Status: In progress; 22 of the 50 beds are filled by non-veterans and many of the patients arrive in critical condition. One civilian death at the Brooklyn VAMC.
4. Resource Request: VHA will provide 5 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and 15 Acute Care beds at the East Orange VAMC for non-veteran patients.
    - Status: In progress; status of beds unknown

- VA resolved the issue with FEMA and HHS regarding contracts under the DPA; working with FEMA to ensure VA is included in the National Supply Chain Priorities List. (4/2/2020)
- Regional response coordination center liaison officers receiving multiple inquiries regarding the pharmaceutical MA and PPE and medical supplies for state VA nursing homes under the supplemental appropriation
- JAVITS NY Medical Station and USNS Comfort Transfer guidance received
- VA processed 156,438 disability compensation and pension rating claims in March 2020, besting the prior record of 135,324, set in March 2014 (16% increase over prior best March output). This is significant evidence that VA is still providing world class service to Veterans during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
    - VBA is maintaining all phases of full business operations as we are maximizing telework (96% of employees) and continuing to reach veterans via phone and video appointments.
    - Veterans seeking assistance with claims may reach us via phone or email and may file claims through va.gov or via mail.
    - If a Veteran or claimant requests an extension for filing based on the COVID-19 pandemic, VBA will grant the extension under the good cause provision.

- Per HHS guidance, Office of Information Technology (OIT) has suspended privacy restrictions and will allow doctors to use technologies such as FaceTime and Google Hangouts for telehealth appointments. (4/2/2020)
- Notified HR offices of the Federal employee leave provisions under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the requirement to post the Families First Coronavirus Response Act notice at VA facilities. This provides up to two weeks (up to 80 hours) of emergency paid sick leave to all federal civil service employees if they are unable to work (or telework) under specified circumstances related to COVID-19 – unless they are in an exempted category.
- Direct Hire Authority allowed by OPM for certain additional positions in NCA and VHA.
- The Board of Veterans Appeals has scheduled 61 virtual hearings the week on March 30. To date, the Board has successfully completed 361 virtual hearings.
- Conducted a "Lunch and Learn" virtual online meeting to provide Veteran Service Organizations and community partners information on VA Mental Health resources and highlight the Cohen Veterans Network (CVN) mental health initiatives.
    - The recorded session is here: http://va-eerc-ees.adobeconnect.com/veocvebllcohen/
- White House VA Hotline and MyVA311 Call centers remain fully operational.
    - 3035 Total Covid-19 calls have been answered by the MyVA311 call center.
- Under Secretary for VBA Paul Lawrence and Executive in Charge for VHA Richard Stone briefed Rep. Takano, Rep. Roe, Sen. Tester and Sen. Moran on COVID-19 Responses for Health and Benefits. (4/2/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie briefed Sen. Boozman on Appropriations related issues. (4/2/2020)

- VA announced today a number of actions to provide Veterans with financial, benefits and claims help amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The financial relief actions include the following until further notice: (4/3/2020)
    - Suspending all actions on Veteran debts under the jurisdiction of the Treasury Department.
    - Suspending collection action or extending repayment terms on preexisting VA debts, as the Veteran prefers.
    - For Veterans who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and need immediate action on their appeals, as opposed to a filing extension, the Board of Veterans' Appeals will Advance their appeal on Docket (AOD). Click here to find out how to file for AOD and what documentation is required.
- Secretary briefed the FEMA Task Force today. VA is prepared to open 1500 beds across our system to help relieve the pressure on states and localities. Each Veterans Affairs network has put in place contingency plans to expand the number of beds available, first for veterans and then our fellow citizens. (4/3/2020)
- VA contracted with Battelle for use of their Critical Care Decontamination Systems (CCDS) to sanitize N95 masks for Brooklyn, Manhattan, and East Orange, NY medical centers. Great partnership with HHS and FDA led to the approval to reuse masks 20x after sanitization. (4/3/2020)
- VA has administered more than 18,900 tests and has more than 3,000 additional tests on hand. (4/3/2020)
- Contract awarded for Alternate Care Sites-Four (4) 125 bed, soft-sided, portable medical structure. Awaiting delivery and selection of sites. (4/3/2020)
- Contract awarded for Mobile Field Hospital. Awaiting delivery and selection of site. (4/3/2020)
- Starting Thursday, April 9, 2020, NCA will no longer provide the option for families to witness interments at Calverton National Cemetery to help improve workload efficiency and increase the capacity of interment operations at this cemetery, which is located in the NYC epicenter. This change is being communicated to funeral homes in NY and families with interments scheduled on this date and beyond.
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), families have postponed 2,077 scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns. 8 COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries
- Increased enrollment and turnover of patients into the Home Telehealth (HT) program is overloading the ability of logistics to acquire the HT items. Primary shortages are thermometers and pulse-oximeters. Home Telehealth's new COVID-19 requirements to monitor COVID-19 higher risk patients have increased the burden on the supply chain. Program Offices are notifying the HT Care Coordinators to return these shortage items to the Denver Logistics Center for refurbishment and re-issue.
- OPM has authorized VA Direct Hire Authority for one year for the following positions at all grade levels nationwide for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency: Industrial Hygienist, GS-0690 Plumber, WG-4206 Maintenance Worker, WG-4749 Supervisory Engineer, GS-0801 Specialty Engineer, GS-0800 Laborer, WG-3502 Cook, WG-7404 Cemetery Caretaker, WG-4754. OPM has also authorized DHA for the following occupation and at this specific grade level: Human Resources Specialist, GS-0201-12.
- Veterans Group Life Insurance: Prudential has extended grace periods by 90-days for premium payments and reinstatements, including the time allowed to submit the Attending Physician Statement (APS) required for some medical underwriting applications.
- VHA Executive in Charge Richard Stone briefed House Veterans Affairs, Senate Veterans Affairs and Appropriation Committee staff members on COVID-19 response.

- Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Michigan on Thursday, April 2 focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 31,582 participants.
- **VHA Guidance to the field:**
  - Changes to In-Person Identity Verification for the My HealtheVet Website
  - COVID-19 Bed Expansion Planning Signed
  - Move! Weight Management Program Guidance for COVID-19 Pandemic Response
  - EIC Memorandum Authorization to pay for Lodging and Meals
  - Contracted Outpatient Sites of Care COVID-19 Virtual Care Information and Updates
- VA has increased telehealth capacity by 15% to 11,000 max concurrent user call capacity
- VA OIT has implemented a plan for mid-April to have 15 high priority sites enabled for tele-ICU
- Mobile Vet Center Deployment Update (4/4/2020)
  - New York, NY (Deployment Started)
    Operation Gotham at the Javits Center in New York City began to receive patients on the afternoon of 31 March 2020. Vet Center staff connected with 64 Service members over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 2 civilians.
  - Pasadena, CA (Deployment Started)
    Operation started on 1 April 2020 and ended April 3. Minimal contact, will seek a better location.
  - Portland, OR (Deployment Started)
    Operation started on 31 March 2020 and staff are located in a shopping center in Portland, OR. Vet Center staff connected with 40 Veterans, Service members and families over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 12 civilians
  - Altoona, PA (Deployment Started)
    MVC stationed at VAMC to assist with screening. Veteran Outreach Program Specialist on site.
  - Dayton, OH (Under Development)
    Request Mobile Vet Center at Dayton Medical Center to assist with COVID screening, will begin Monday April 6
- Medical Centers are experiencing serious PPE shortage. Several sites doing 3D printing, but it is not enough. Soon, PPE will be rationed; one surgical mask issued per week, one N95 per day. VISN 6 began mask sterilization with Berrett – 2400 mask in a 24-hour period. (4/4/2020)
- Developing requirements for Morgue Expansion Capabilities. (4/4/2020)
- Working to identify medical consumables/equipment for recently purchased Field ICU Unit. Location for deployment of Unit still under consideration. (4/4/2020)
- Developing policy on the ability of VA law enforcement personnel, with proper notice, to inspect the personal effects of employees exiting VA healthcare facilities in order to prevent the theft of personal protective equipment needed to protect health care workers during the on-going public health emergency. This is becoming an issue during the Pandemic. (4/4/2020)
- VA released a press statement extending financial, benefits and claims relief to veterans. The financial relief actions include suspending all actions on Veteran debts under the jurisdiction of the Treasury Department and suspending collection action or extending repayment terms on preexisting VA debts, as the Veteran prefers.
- **Update on Additional Mission Assignments (4/5/2020)**
  - The VA Medical Center in Boise, Idaho is providing assistance and support for diagnostic testing for the Idaho Dept. of Health and Welfare
  - VA is providing a 53-foot pharmacy trailer and one technical specialist to Detroit, Michigan for a 30 day deployment to help the city.

- The Manchester, NH VA Medical Center is providing 20 nursing staff to assist with two Massachusetts State run Veterans Nursing homes who have been hard hit by COVID-19.

- VA sent a list of critical PPE supplies with requested quantities to RADM Polowczyk, Supply Chain Sub-Task Force Director for consideration and prioritization. (4/5/2020)
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), families have postponed 2,244 scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns. 55 COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries (4/5/2020)
- Mobile Pharmacy Mission Assignment is set up at the Convention Center in Detroit. Patients have yet to be admitted to the hospital. (4/6/2020)
- VA Supply Chain Update:
    - Order for 20M Masks (sitting at a warehouse in Chicago) was sold out from under us today from a broker in Norway. (4/6/2020)
- National Acquisition Center's (NAC) Service & Distribution Center is providing additional warehouse space for VHA ordered and FEMA provided PPE products; VHA to identify space required and delivery schedules. (4/6/2020)
- As of April 3, VBA has temporarily suspended all in-person appointments provided by VBA's contract examination vendors, where the Veteran physically reports to the medical provider's office. The contract exam vendors will continue to complete as many examinations as possible using virtual means that do not involve an in-person examination, including tele-exams and ACE. For some disabilities, in-person examinations are required and cannot be completed through an alternate method. (4/6/2020)
- VA signed a memorandum regarding the Child Care Subsidy Program that has temporarily expanded the total family income ceiling from $89,999 to the maximum limit of $144,000 for support during the COVID-19 crisis; allows eligible employees to seek reimbursement on some child-care costs. (4/6/2020)
- Veterans Health Administration guidance sent to field: (4/6/2020)
    - Grade and Pay Determinations for Nurses/Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA) During COVID-19
    - Homeless Program Office (HPO) Guidance on Face to Face Visits
    - On-Hand Inventory Reporting Requirements for Critical Care and Coronavirus Drugs
    - Update: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Facemask and N95 Respirator Use
    - Tip Sheet for Caregivers During COVID-19
    - VHA COVID 19 Priorities During Transition to VA's New EHRM
    - COVID-19 Employee Deployment - Special Contribution Award Guidance
- VA Public Health, Coronavirus website to provide Veterans & Staff guidance and information now active. Website visited 191,348 times with 172,253 unique visits (4/6/2020)
- VA Chief Acquisition Officer briefed House Veterans Affairs Minority Staff on procurement, supply chain, etc. (4/6/2020)
- New Mission Assignment: Deployment of a 53-foot mobile pharmacy truck to Chicago, IL will be completed today (4/7/2020)
- Mobile Vet Center (MVC) Update: (4/7/2020)
    - Altoona, PA (Deployment Started). MVC stationed at VAMC to assist with COVID-19 screening. Veteran Outreach Program Specialist on site.
    - Dayton, OH (Deployment Under Development). Request for MVC stationed at VAMC to assist with COVID-19 screening.

  - New York, NY (Deployment Paused). Vet Center staff have connected with 99 service members over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 2 civilians
  - Pasadena, CA and Portland, OR deployments ended
- Identified a total of 20 tribal governments that have Emergency Declarations
- Continuing to roster DEMPS volunteers for deployments (Various Specialties) (4/8/2020)
  - Total Volunteers: 1406
  - (199) Personnel in process
  - (45) Personnel deployed on the ground
- The Board of Veterans Appeals has 67 virtual hearings scheduled for the week on April 6th. To date, the Board has successfully completed 376 virtual hearings. Through April 5th, the Board has signed 54,298 decisions. (4/7/2020)
- Boston Regional Benefits Office – Implemented two-week suspension of local mail processing effective April 7, 2020, ending April 21, 2020 during the anticipated peak in COVID-19 infections in the Boston community. Employees will not be authorized to access any of the three Boston, Manchester, White River Junction (BMW) facilities without prior approval as determined by the Director or Assistant Director on a case-by-case basis. (4/7/2020)
- Calverton National Cemetery (closest to NYC Epicenter) is seeing an increase in internment rates. On average, Calverton performs 20 interments daily. Yesterday, the cemetery performed 31 interments – 9 were COVID related. For the remainder of the week, the cemetery has over 30 interments scheduled each day. NCA is building capacity (personnel and contract support) to handle 40 per day by next week. (4/7/2020)
- Published policy revision updates to VA Handbook 5005 to remove the requirement for Professional Standards Boards for the following occupations listed in 38 U.S.C. § 7401 (3), which will reduce the time to hire for these positions by streamlining the process: physical therapy assistant; occupational therapy assistant; marriage family therapist; therapeutic radiologic technologist; kinesiotherapist; orthotist and prosthetist; medical records administration; blind rehabilitation specialist; blind rehabilitation outpatient specialist; licensed professional mental health counselor, prosthetic representative; nuclear medicine technologist; occupational therapist; physical therapist; dietitian and nutritionist; medical records technician; and therapeutic medical physicist. (4/7/2020)
- VA has decided to defer the Leadership VA (LVA) FY20 Class until FY21 and increase the size from 80 to 100 to make up for some of the leadership development throughput lost from postponing the current cohort. (4/7/2020)
- Veterans Health Administration Guidance to the Field: (4/7/2020)
  - COVID-19 VHA Guidance for Tuberculosis Testing of New Employees
  - Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) Compliance Inspection During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Accreditation Contract Delayed
  - 2020 US Census Participation for Veterans in VA Residential Settings
  - Continuity in Mental Health Services and Suicide Prevention Activities During COVID-19
  - COVID-19 Temporary/Expedited Appointment Credentialing Process
  - Release of Updated Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 and New FY 2021 Basic and Prevailing State Home Per Diem Rates for State Veteran Homes
  - Focused Professional Practice Evaluation and Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation Process during Presidential Declared State of Emergency – COVID-19
  - Guidance on Anticoagulation Use and Monitoring for Veterans Health Administration Anticoagulation Programs During VHA's COVID-19 Emergency Response
  - Contact Center Script and Screening (COVID-19) Updated
- The COVID Quick Start Guide (QSG) is now posted on https://www.va.gov/welcome-kit/ (4/7/2020)

- Advertising Campaign for VHA recruiting begins broadcasting this week in select markets and outlets. (4/7/2020)
- VA/VHA CFOs briefed HAC and SAC staffers (4 Corners) on VHA's Supplemental Funding distribution plan for the Families First and CARES Acts. (4/7/2020)
- VA developing "live" map journal to model next VA "hot spots" for our healthcare system (4/8/2020)
- PREVENTS is reaching out to Vets during the COVID crisis, releasing informational videos and concrete steps that Veterans and their families can take to care for their emotional well-being under the tag #MoreThanEverBefore and with the help of lead PREVENTS Ambassador Second Lady Karen Pence. (4/8/2020)
- Telemental health services being provided during COVID-19:
  - VA mental health providers have doubled telephone outreach calls from normal rate (over 76,000 calls in March)
  - VA mental health providers have tripled video connect appointments (over 63,000 appointments in March).
- #LiveWholeHealth-Self Care Resources campaign for Veterans during Coronavirus crisis just launched. (4/8/2020)
  - The first Vantage and first Facebook post of a self-care resource blog went out. A blog post will be going out every day with an associated Facebook post.
  - https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/73363/live-whole-health-self-care-episode-1/
- Human Resources and Administration office briefed House Veterans Affairs and Senate Veteran's Affairs Committee staff on workforce challenges during COVID-19. The briefing covered 1) what VA is doing to recruit/hire nurses and staff; 2) how VA is keeping staff safe; 3) how VA is incorporating feedback from union leaders and safety officers during this COVID-19 response. (4/8/2020)
- USB hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Pennsylvania on Tuesday, April 7, focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates. The event reached over 30,000 participants. (4/8/2020)
- VA released the following press statements: (4/8/2020)
  - CARES Act helping VA boost protections for Veterans - The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has begun implementing the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act or CARES Act, signed into law March 27, to protect America's Veterans. (Approved by TF) (4/8/20)
  - VA appeals production at all time high - The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) VA Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) hit a production milestone, April 1, at the fiscal year (FY) 2020 halfway point issuing more than 52,000 decisions which is approximately 15% more than the previous year. (4/8/20)
- VA received one new Mission Assignment for 35 beds in Michigan. 10 of those will be ICU beds. (4/9/2020)
- VA was prepared to accept a donation of 1 million N-95 masks and other PPE from Salesforce. However, FEMA General Counsel determined that the donation was too large for VA to accept. Secretary Wilkie sent a formal letter to FEMA Administrator asking for authority to accept the donation OR purchase the materials directly. (4/9/2020)
- Received approval from DOD to use MilAir, when aircraft and pilots are available, to deploy medical staff due to challenges with booking commercial flights (Awaiting first assignment) (4/10/2020)
- Our contracting office has drafted and disseminated an updated policy letter from the Senior Procurement Executive to all VA Heads of Contracting Activities, providing information on acquisition flexibilities in response to this National Emergency. This policy allows for more flexibilities in the procurement of supplies and services in response to the National Emergency. (4/9/2020)

- Secretary Wilkie conducted update calls on VA's response to COVID with House Appropriations MilConVA Subcommittee Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman-Shultz, House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Jerry Moran (4/9/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie participated in a conference call on mental health services with the President, First Lady, the Vice President, Second Lady and HHS Sec. Alex Azar. (4/9/2020)
- USB hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Ohio on Wednesday, April 8, focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates. The event reached over 33,000 participants. (4/9/2020)
- VA published a circular on Loan Guaranty Service to inform the public of changes due to CARES Act which requires a moratorium on foreclosures of Federally backed mortgage loans and a forbearance period for payments on such loans for borrowers who are experiencing a financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to the COVID–19 emergency. (4/9/2020)
- VA Public Health, Coronavirus website has been visited 213,360 (+4,320) times with 191,405 (+3,642) unique visits. (4/9/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie sent a memo to the President requesting Advanced Payment Authority to add increased flexibility in procurement of critical medical supplies to aid in VA's response to COVID-19. While other agencies already have this flexibility, the Department of Veterans Affairs is NOT covered. Awaiting POTUS signature (4/10/20)

- Continued development of plan on how VA might assist IHS and other tribal nations health systems (4/10/2020)
- Determining the need of resourcing second order of trailers for fatality management (4/10/2020)
- VA awarded an $8M urgent sole source contract to SDV Office Systems for 97 Tablo® Helodialysis Systems for treating patients with COVID-19 infection. The contractor will deliver as many units as possible before July 31, 2020. The need is particularly pressing for patients with end-stage kidney disease being treated with intermittent hemodialysis (HD). (4/10/2020)
- Update on Mask sterilization efforts with Battelle: (4/10/2020)
    - Sites either currently running or will be running within two weeks: Stoneybrook, NY; Brooklyn, NY; Plain City, OH; Boston, MA; Chicago, IL; Washington, DC
    - Planned future states: Connecticut, New Jersey, Indiana, Florida, Texas, Michigan
- VA received approval from OPM to waive the salary off-set for 2210 (Grades 07-15) and 340 series (Grades 12-14) positions. (4/11/2020)
- VA received notice of investigation from GAO in regard to implementation of the CARES Act. GAO insinuated this would start immediately. This provides significant challenges due to our response to COVID and that our offices, especially our Health Administration cannot take time away from caring for Veterans to provide information and interview to GAO (4/11/2020)
- Sent a Mental-health focused VEText message today, Friday 4/10 to be distributed to ~9 million Veterans (4/10/2020)
- Published *Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Financial Relief Actions and Time Limit Extensions* to VBA's Fact Sheets site. (4/10/2020)
- Published VBA COVID-19 FAQs on April 09, 2020 to help address routine and non-urgent questions. (4/10/2020)
- COVID-19 Messaging Update: Since the issuance of the Presidential Order of the National Emergency (31 Jan 2020), there has been a total of 307,731,582 e-mail messages sent. Of that total, 146,046,389 were COVID-19 related e-mails. This is a percentage of 47.5% demonstrating VA's active approach to information sharing to our Veterans and the Public (4/10/2020)

- To Date, there are 96 virtual hearings scheduled for the week of April 6. **To date, the board has successfully completed 447 virtual hearings**. (4/11/2020)
- VA distributed the following Press Release (4/11/2020)
    - VA's Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System provides surge-support to combat COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5417
- Supply Chain Update (4/11/2020)
    - VA request to POTUS for Advanced Payment Authority was approve and signed by POTUS (4/11/2020)
    - VA completed a temporary delegation which will apply to the Federal Supply Schedule for Healthcare Staffing Services' ceiling price determination for field contracting officers to use. This delegation, which is available for use until July 1, 2020, will provide immediate nursing staff augmentation for our medical centers. (4/11/2020)
    - VA reported to OIG regarding a potential case of price gouging. DOJ issued a press release on April 10th concerning the arrest of Christopher Parris, who attempted to sell VA $750 million of nonexistent masks and other PPE: https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/georgia-man-arrested-attempting-defraud-department-veterans-affairs-multimillion-dollar-covid
    - GSA has approved VA Health IT DPA Authority
- 2 Medical Centers have a greater than 70% occupancy of Med/Surg beds with COVID patients: Bronx, NY (86% occupancy) and Boston, MA (72%) (4/11/2020)
- VA has issued guidance that starting immediately all CLC Staff and Veterans will be tested for COVID-19. CLCs are VA's nursing homes and care for particularly vulnerable Veterans. (4/11/2020)
- National Cemetery Update: **246 (+55 from yesterday)** COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries (143 completed, 103 pending). Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), families have postponed **2,482 (+238 from last week)** scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns. (4/11/2020)
- As of close of business on April 10, 2020, VBA contract vendors had reported a cumulative total of **88,002** unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic. (4/11/2020)
- American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and the National Nurses United (NNU) unions have begun campaigns amongst their membership to attack VA healthcare facilities over alleged PPE issues. (4/12/2020)
    - AFGE organized a tele-town hall and encouraged members to file OSHA complaints, grievances and contact the press
    - NNU distributed flyers asking their members to call Congress
- Dayton VAMC initiating conversation of capability to support community as Ohio situation continues to worsen (4/12/2020)
- Massachusetts Chelsea Soldiers' Home (Non-VA Facility) (4/12/2020)
    - 7 veteran resident deaths
    - 22 veteran residents who have tested positive
    - 29 staff tested positive
    - VA Boston has accepted patients for care- total count pending
- On April 10th President Trump signed the "VA Tele-Hearing Modernization Act". (4/13/2020)
- OPM approved VA's request for direct hire authority for the following additional 11 positions at all grade levels on a nationwide basis to support COVID-19. The approval begins today and is for one year: personnel security specialist; program support assistant; cemetery representative; health systems specialist; construction control representative; electronics industrial control mechanic;

painter; equipment servicer; air conditioning equipment operator; equipment operator; laundry worker. (4/13/2020)

- Notified HR offices of flexibilities to defer random drug testing in certain conditions due to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. Establishes limited conditions in which a facility director may approve a deferral of a random drug test for an employee occupying a testing designated position. (4/13/2020)
- National Cemetery Administration: Effective, Wednesday, April 15, 2020, witnessing family members will now be asked to view the interment from their cars or the road very near their cars. This change will further promote social distancing at national cemeteries and will be communicated to the funeral home community via Gov Delivery; online and to the Hill via OCLA. Families may continue to visit the gravesite in the days following the interment consistent with CDC guidelines and local travel restrictions. (4/13/2020)
- VA issued the following press release: VA Tele-mental health visits on the rise amid COVID-19
    - https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5418 (4/13/2020)
- Veterans Health Administration Executive in Charge Richard Stone had a phone briefing with HVAC Chairman Mark Takano on VA response to COVID-19 (4/13/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie joined White House Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Doug Hoelscher for a briefing on VA and White House response to COVID-19. Over 200 State and Local Leaders joined the call. Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence and Executive in Charge for the Veterans Health Administration Richard Stone were also on the call. (4/14/2020)
- VA Issued the following press releases: (4/14/2020)
    - VA Mobilizes 3D Printing Resources nationwide to fight COVID-19
    - https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5419
    - VA Announces "Fourth Mission" Actions to Help American Respond to COVID-19
    - https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5420
- Notified HR offices of the required annual notification of VA's United States Flag Recognition Benefit for Deceased Federal Civilian Employees. The Civilian Service Recognition Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-73) authorized a U.S. flag to be furnished to a beneficiary on behalf of an employee who died of injuries incurred in connection with his/her federal employment under specific circumstances. An eligible employee is an individual who: was an employee of the Department (as defined in 5 U.S.C. 2105); and who died on or after December 20, 2011, of injuries incurred in connection with such individual's employment with the Federal Government, suffered as a result of a criminal act, act of terrorism, a natural disaster, or other circumstances as determined by the President. (4/14/2020)
- Based on consultation with the General Services Administration Building Manager and the Federal Protective Service (FPS), Assistant Secretary HRA/OSP signed April 13th letter to FPS to restrict access to VACO facilities by requesting FPS to apply March 18th DHS guidance on entry into VACO buildings, by asking a series of questions to persons entering the building about travel and exposure to COVID. (4/14/2020)
- VA Office of Information Technology has completed 15 sites for Tele-ICU devices plug-in. Completed sites (Phoenix, Brooklyn, Manhattan, New Orleans, Fresno, Tampa, San Francisco, West Palm Beach, San Diego, Miami, Puget Sound, Bronx, Denver, Boston, New Jersey) have the capability to move devices from room to room. (4/14/2020)
- VA Issues the following press release: (4/15/2020)
    - Secretary Wilkie thanks Wounded Warrior Project for $10 million commitment to aid Veterans https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5421
    - VA, Facebook and American Red Cross provide Portal video calling devices to Veterans, caregivers, and families https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5422

- Sec. Wilkie, VHA Executive In Charge Dr. Stone, and Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence held a briefing with over 80 representatives from the Veterans Service Organizations to update our stakeholders on VA's response to COVID-19 (4/15/2020)
- DepSec (PTDO) Powers held separate conference calls with Sen Moran (SVAC Chair), Sen Bozeman (SAC-VA), CM Takano (HVAC Chair), and CM Roe (HVAC Ranking); discussed COVID response (4/15/2020)
- VA's public affairs office has now received over 1,100 COVID related media inquiries as of 4/15/2020
- Under Sec Lawrence hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Wisconsin focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 32,800 participants. (4/15/2020)
- Pennsylvania Governor Wolf signed EO that allows the state to commandeer PPE and ventilators from in-state health care providers and manufacturers and transfer the supplies to other facilities in need in PA. This would have impacting VA's prime vendor. **This issue has since been resolved, the Governor's EO was not intended to stop the flow of supplies to the Federal Government. VA will monitor closely and ensure supplies move as planned. (4/15/2020)**
- VA has submitted requests to Inspector General to investigate two more potentially fraudulent companies offering to sell VA masks (4/16/2020)
- VA has partnered with Facebook to provide more than 7,400 Facebook portal devices. The American Red Cross Military Veteran Caregiver Network will store and ship the devices to qualifying Veterans in pairs. Devices are available today (4/15/2020), for Veterans and their caregivers and families to reduce isolation, improve mental health, wellness, and social connectedness at home. (4/15/2020)
- VA received multiple COVID related grievances from labor unions (4/15/2020)
    - AFGE alleging VA is failing to properly compensate bargaining unit employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. They specifically allege several VA facilities, e.g., Palo Alto VAHCS and Salem VAMC, implemented policies and procedures requiring AFGE bargaining unit employees to report for screenings and questioning during uncompensated periods such as before their shifts and during lunch breaks.
    - NNU alleging VA has failed to: (1) provide appropriate PPE; (2) implement safe policies to ensure nurses are quarantined when exposed to COVID 19 positive patients and staff; (3) provide training and retraining to nurses on best safety practices; and (4) adequately communicate with the union changes in working conditions.
    - NFFE alleging VA has failed to properly pay Hazardous Duty Pay and/or Environmental Differential Pay.
- VHA is in the process of testing all Community Living Center veterans and staff and should have this complete next week. Approximately 7000 veterans live in our CLCs across the nation. (4/16/2020)
- Since the CARES act passed VA has worked with Dept. of Treasury on a solution to ensure that Veterans and Survivors who do not file tax returns and rely solely on VA benefits for income still receive stimulus checks via the CARES Act. (4/16/2020)
    - VA is securely providing beneficiary data to the IRS to ensure that no action will be required of Compensation and Pension benefit payment recipients or surviving family members receiving survivors benefits to receive their 'Economic Impact Payment' (EIP) if they do not file an annual tax return.
    - The IRS has also set up a website portal for Economic Impact Payments (EIP) if veterans, survivors or other non-filers wish to submit their information that way.
    - VA will notify press, stakeholders and Congress of these actions over the coming days.
    - This effort is complete
- Sec. Wilkie had the scheduled weekly call with Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Jerry Moran and Ranking Member Jon Tester. (4/16/2020)

- Sec. Wilkie had the scheduled weekly call with House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano and Ranking Member Phil Roe. (4/16/2020)
- VHA Executive in Charge Dr. Stone held a call with members of the House Appropriations Committee
- Chief Information Officer Jim Gferer held a call with House and Senate MilConVA Subcommittee staff. (4/16/2020)
- Delivered VETResources digital newsletter to 10.7 Million Veterans. Topics included: (4/16/2020)
    - VFW unmet needs program grant funds which provides up to $1,500 to eligible Veterans, service members and military families who face an unexpected financial hardship related to their military service.
    - Facebook portals for Veterans announcement.
    - A call to action for Veterans who have recovered from COVID-19 to donate plasma for other Veterans for COVID-19 treatment.
- VA launched a new website on VA's external blog (4/16/2020) (https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/roll-of-honor/), called the "Roll of Honor". This new webpage page came about as a result of not being able to provide committal services due to the COVID-19 crisis. The site provides an opportunity to remember those Veterans interred during this crisis and reflects interments in our cemeteries starting on April 13. Each day, NCA will add the names; branch of service and location of burial for each Veteran interred in a national cemetery on the previous day. This new website was promoted on Gov Delivery and with our VSO and congressional partners.
- VA acquired the former Garland-Baylor, Scott & White hospital, April 3, to increase its capacity to care for Veterans and support the department's response to COVID-19. The 470,000 square foot facility was donated by Baylor, Scott & White and will eventually serve as an outpatient and specialty care clinic within the VA North Texas Health Care System. The hospital will be able to open Monday April 20. (4/17/2020)
- VSignals is a real-time survey that goes out to veterans when they have contact with VA. Trust score for VHA reported by my VEO Data and PX teams, has maintained a steady increase over the past 4 years with the overall Trust improving from 85% in FY17, to 87% in FY18, to 88% in FY19 and **most recent data from April, 2020 puts Trust at 90%. The excellence of VA's Customer Service and the resulting positive Patient Experience has led to Trust scores improving during this pandemic. (4/17/2020)**
- There are 67 virtual hearings scheduled for the week on April 13th. To date, the Board has successfully completed 516 virtual hearings. Through April 12th, the Board has signed 56,522 decisions, continuing strong output even through COVID-19 Pandemic. (4/17/2020)
- OIT has completed 19 sites Tele-ICU Devices Plug-in - All completed sites (Phoenix, Brooklyn, Manhattan, New Orleans, Fresno, Tampa, San Francisco, West Palm Beach, San Diego, Miami, Puget Sound, Bronx, Denver, Boston, New Jersey, Orlando, Albany, N. California, and Palo Alto for Tele-ICU Expansion and have the capability to move devices from room to room (4/18/2020)
    - OIT will begin Syracuse and Loma Linda today
- VA's My HealtheVet team is hosting a webinar for Veterans about how to access VA telehealth services, in coordination with the Elizabeth Dole Foundation (4/17/2020)
    - My HealtheVet team will focus communications and marketing outreach on enrolling new patients in the coming week
- VA sent out the following press release: VA Partners with IRS/Dept. of Treasury to Deliver Economic Impact Payments. (4/17/2020)
    - https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5423

- As of close of business on April 17, 2020, VBA contract vendors had reported a cumulative total of **107,770** unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic. (4/19/2020)
- Mobile Vet Center (MVC) Update (4/20/2020)
    - MVC providing screening assistance at Altoona, PA; Dayton, OH; El Paso, TX; Ft. Collins, CO
    - MVC providing space for blood draw/services at Sioux Falls, SD
- Revised Guidance on new hire applicant drug testing: April 17 revised bulletin issued updating prior guidance regarding how long an applicant drug test may be postponed; prior bulletin issued on March 25, 2020 advised that due to COVID-19, applicant testing could be postponed for up to 180 days after the applicant's entrance on duty in order for VA to meet emergency hiring needs. The revised bulletin includes the following statement: "It is the responsibility of the HR office to schedule the drug test as soon as practicable, but <u>no later than 90 calendar</u> days from the date of appointment." (4/19/2020)
- VA hosting a Red Cross blood drive in the main building (810 Vermont), next Thursday, April 23, 2020; SECVA to be first donor; Donors will be scheduled every 15 minutes, to stagger the flow and allow for preparation for next donor and there will be no "walk-ins" for this event; Masks will be provided by the Red Cross upon registration; Social distancing (6 feet) will be enforced. (4/19/2020)
- VHA has submitted a request for 10 portable x-rays units and 8 portable ultrasound units in support of COVID-19 response. We expect to award the orders within two workdays. (4/17/2020)
- VA National Acquisition Center FSS coordinated with National Association of State Procurement Officials (NAPSO) authorizing State and Local governments to procure Covid-19 support using FSS vendors/contracts. (4/17/2020)
- OIT has enabled 21 (increase of 4 since last report) sites with tele-ICU capabilities to move devices from room to room (4/19/2020)
    - OIT will begin Western New York and Dublin VAMC Monday
- VA received approval from OPM on its request to waive the 25 percent limit on recruitment, relocation, and individual retention incentives, and the 10 percent limit on group retention incentives for certain occupations that are responding to workload surges due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). (4/20/2020)
- On April 20, 2020, published a notice in the Federal Register which provides that, for the purpose of determining entitlement to benefits, any correspondence that is received by VA from any claimant during the period March 1, 2020 through 60 calendar days from the date the President ends the national state of emergency, that contains claims, information, or evidence, will be considered received on the date of postmark. (4/20/2020)
- ADEPSEC Powers had a call with Senator Brian Schatz (Hawaii), Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee MilConVA (4/20/2020)
- VA sent out the following press releases (4/20/2020)
    - VA's telehealth system grows as Veterans have access to unlimited data while using VA Video Connect https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5426
    - VA, DoD implement new capability for bidirectional sharing of health records with community partners https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5425
    - VA acquires Texas community hospital to fight COVID-19 and care for Veterans in the future https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5424
- Secretary called Comptroller Gene Dodaro and requested that an entrance conference scheduled for Thursday and a subsequent GAO review of VA's COVID-19 Response be postponed until mid/late May due to VA's unique role in responding to the pandemic via our healthcare system and caring for Veterans. Comptroller Dodaro agreed to this request. (4/21/2020)

- Secretary visited the Washington DC hospital today to thank staff and visit veterans. (4/21/2020)
- Responding to numerous requests for help from various states, VA has deployed more than 150 nurses and nursing aides to nearly 20 non-VA nursing homes in nine states while accepting more than 40 non-Veteran residents in department-run nursing homes. (4/21/2020)
- Under Secretary of Memorial Affairs Randy Reeves hosted a phone call with State Leaders to discuss issues regarding our National Cemeteries during COVID-19 (4/21/2020)
- VA Issued the following press releases today: (4/21/2020)
    - Timeline on how VA prepared for COVID-19 outbreak and continues to keep Veterans safe https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5427
    - VA researchers to study COVID-19 in aging Veterans with dementia https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5428
- Under Secretary for Benefits, Paul Lawrence, hosted a Tele-townhall for Veterans in Florida, focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 33,990 participants. (4/21/2020)
- VA has seen significant Call Traffic from 3/23/2020 – 4/20/2020 to MyVA 311 on COVID related matters (4/21/2020)
    - Total COVID-19 Calls: 6,333
    - Total COVID-19 calls Resolved: 4,556 (72% resolution rate)
    - Total Covid-19 calls escalated to Clinical Center for Action: 1,777
- SECVA hosted a teleconference with the Veteran Service Organizations along with VBA Under Secretary Paul Lawrence and VHA Executive in Charge Richard Stone (4/22/2020)
- SECVA hosted a teleconference with the Baltimore Veteran Treatment Court staff to include their Public Defender, District Attorney, veteran mentors and student attorneys. (4/22/2020)
- Provided notices to the field to remind all employees of the services that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers to them and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic (guidance was pre-cleared through OMB/OPM). (4/22/2020)
- Provided guidance of required steps for expediting onboarding for new VA hires. Steps have been streamlined to meet urgent staffing needs created by COVID-19 (guidance was pre-cleared through OMB/OPM). (4/22/2020)
- Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence hosted a Tele-townhall for Veterans in Colorado on Tuesday, April 21, focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 15,400 participants. (4/22/2020)
- Veteran's Health Administration CFO and VA budget staff briefed House and Senate Appropriations staffers on VHA's CARES Act Supplemental Funding supporting the VA Homelessness Program. (4/22/2020)
    - Discussed efforts to date for allocating, executing, and tracking $300 million for homeless Veteran and family member support services.
    - VHA shared COVID-19 related challenges impacting the VA Homelessness Program, including reductions in voucher issuance and move-ins, discontinuing outreach to prisons, etc., and the unknowns related to potential COVID-19 demand/response changes (e.g. shifting hotspots).
- Sec. Wilkie hosted his weekly phone call with Chairman Jerry Moran and Ranking Member Jon Tester of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee (4/23/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie hosted his weekly phone call with Chairman Mark Takano and Ranking Member Phil Roe of the House Veterans Affairs Committee (4/23/2020)
- Total VA email messages sent from January 24, 2020 with reference to COVID-19 and/or Coronavirus in either the subject line or body content up to today: 180,183,128 (increase of 17.9m since last report) (4/23/2020)

- VA email percentage directly related to COVID-19 Outreach is 180,183,128/362,523,574 or 49.7%. (up from 48.7%) (4/23/2020)
- VA has placed over 3,700 TV spots and 700 radio spots with ads featuring Sec. Wilkie and VHA EIC Stone asking healthcare workers to come help VA during COVID (4/23/2020)
- VA Office of Intergovernmental Affairs has already reached out to 250 State Leaders to discuss topics such as support for states, updates or support on State Veterans homes, etc. (4/23/2020)
- The Secretary signed a Delegation of Authority (April 23) that allows VA Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries and Other Key Officials at equivalent level of authority, the authority to exclude an employee, who is a health care provider or emergency responder, from application of the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act, Division E and the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act Division C of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). Accompanying guidance (that was vetted by OMB) was issued to the field as well via a Chief Human Capital Officer Bulletin. (4/23/2020)
- VA launched a COVID-19 chatbot on VA.gov this week. The chatbot helps answer veterans' questions about COVID-19 and direct them to available VA resources (4/23/2020)
- To date VA has received 6 National Grievances, 30 RFIs, 3 letters demanding policy changes, we are aware of 15 OSHA complaints and have received numerous demands to bargain from our 4 national unions including AFGE, NFEE, NAGE, and NNU. (4/23/2020)
- The Strategic Acquisition Center awarded a purchase order for 5 million, 3-ply disposable medical masks (non-N95) valued at $2.8M. The contract was signed on April 22, 2020. (4/23/2020)
- VA contract vendors reported a cumulative total of 131,905 unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic. (4/24/2020)
- 218,520 disability examinations are pending, including those being held for in-person exams.
- OIT has enabled 29 sites (increase of two new sites since yesterday) with tele-ICU capabilities to move devices from room to room (4/24/2020)
    - OIT will begin work in Pittsburgh today
- VA has 118 virtual hearings scheduled for the week of April 20. To date the Board of Veterans Appeals have successfully completed 620 virtual hearings. The Board has signed 58,738 decisions this year, continuing to keep strong production during the pandemic. (4/24/2020)
- National Cemetery Update: (4/24/2020)
    - As of 4/23/2020 - 766 (+44 from yesterday) COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries (581 completed; 185 pending).
    - **248 internments were completed this week alone at Calverton National Cemetery, which is located outside the New York City epicenter. The average for each week is typically 100. There are already 226 internments scheduled for next week**
    - Since March 5 – 2,696 families have rescheduled services due to COVID-19 concerns.
- Veterans Health Administration and Office of Information and Technology SMEs briefed House and Senate Appropriations staff on the use and expansion of Telehealth capabilities in response to COVID-19 (4/25/2020)
- DOD approved MilAir transport to send nurses from Maine and Washington State to New York City. The mission is underway. (4/26/2020)
- VA is sending is sending at least 1 NP and 1 Nurse to the IHS Shiprock Clinic to assist with the Navajo COVID-19 crisis. (4/26/2020)
- Two union protests occurred in recent days at Atlanta and at VA's Bay Pines VA Medical Centers. Both were in regard to the union's claims of alleged PPE shortage (4/26/2020)
- VA has an increased need for Oxygen concentrators and portable ventilators. FEMA is being prioritized over VA and these are becoming increasingly hard to obtain. Update: VA began

discussions with manufacturers regarding these items today. The issue is that the vendors received 10 months' worth of demand in three weeks and it has depleted current inventory. Vendors have increased product lines and estimate mid-May before supply availability. (4/23/2020)

- VA may now utilize the contract HHS funded through DLA to receive N95 mask decontamination and transportation services from Battelle without reimbursing HHS (no cost to supplemental funding). (4/24/2020)
- VA issued the following press releases (4/27/2020)
    - VA health app now available to Veterans across all mobile and web platforms https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5430
    - VA hiring jumps 37% in response to COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5429
- VHA CFO briefed House and Senate Appropriations staff on the $150 million for State Home Construction Grants and $606 million for Medical Facilities including Non-Recurring Maintenance, as well as, the provision that allows VHA to provide PPE to State Homes in response to COVID-19. (4/27/2020)
- **VA has completed all 30 top priority sites ahead of schedule to allow Tele-ICU Devices Plug-in:** Phoenix, Brooklyn, Manhattan, New Orleans, Fresno, Tampa, San Francisco, West Palm Beach, San Diego, Miami, Puget Sound, Bronx, Denver, Boston, New Jersey, Orlando, Albany, N. California, Palo Alto, Syracuse, Loma Linda, Western NY, Dublin (Ga.), North Florida, Shreveport, Northport, Long Beach, Bay Pines, Houston and Pittsburgh HCS (4/27/2020)
- SECVA signed a delegation of authority VA Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries and Other Key Officials, the authority to waive certain limitations on pay for work done in support of the response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The following pay limits are listed in the guidance as covered: basic pay, nurse executive and pharmacist executive special pay, aggregate pay, annual pay, premium pay, and incentives and awards. (4/27/2020)
- The Indianapolis VA Medical Center has received a notice of OSHA investigation regarding a patient death – this was accompanied by requests of 1,080 pages of documentation and various requests for other information. VA is receiving a growing number of notifications of investigation, most of these are driven by requests to OSHA from various VA affiliated labor unions. (4/28/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie had his weekly call with House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano and Ranking Member Phil Roe (4/28/2020)
- Veterans Health Administration SMEs are briefing House Veterans Affairs Committee staff on VA's support of State Veterans Homes across the country during COVID-19. (4/28/2020)
- VA Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and SMEs from VA's office of mental health held a briefing call with State and Local leaders including State Veterans Affairs Directors, County Veterans Service Officers, etc. on VA's efforts to serve Veterans with mental health issues during COVID-19. (4/28/2020)
- Apple has started producing and donating 1 million face shields per week and will be making an order available to VA. On an ad hoc basis, they have already filled requests from individual VA Medical Centers totaling more than 50,000 face shields. (4/29/2020)
- VA issued the following press releases (4/29/2020)
    - Joint Statement from DHS and VA on Continued Collaboration Throughout COVID-19 Pandemic https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5431
    - VA establishes the department's first history office https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5432
    - VA joins XPRIZE Pandemic Alliance to combat COVID-19 and future outbreaks https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5433

- Secretary Wilkie held a briefing with the Veteran Service Organizations to update them on VA's response to COVID-19. VBA Under Secretary Paul Lawrence and VHA Executive in Charge Richard Stone also joined the call. (4/29/2020)
- VHA SMEs held a call with the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Staff to brief them on VA's support for State Veteran Homes (4/29/2020)
- VA received a question on our authority to release the names and addresses of persons who have or are suspected of having COVID-19 to the Shawnee County Health Department in Kansas for purposes of contact tracing. The information is protected by the Privacy Act and HIPAA. OGC advised that both laws allow for the release. Under HIPAA, 45 C.F.R. § 164.512 allows the release of information to public health authorities both for notification of infectious disease exposure and for tracing purposes (according to the Center for Disease Control interpretation of the statute). Under the Privacy Act, a letter from the Director of the County Public Health Department could be considered a valid (b)(7) law enforcement letter that would allow release under that exception. OGC will work with VHA officials to determine the scope of the release in order to balance privacy interest against the needs of the State. (4/29/2020)
- A variation of the National Surveillance Tool developed by OIT was published on the Access to Care site for state, CDC, and media access (4/29/2020)
    - Surpassed 44,000 accesses with significant media interest and a number of articles that leverage the site
    - Preparing to publish FAQ section for COVID-19
- Plane load of Chinese-made PPE arrived in New Hampshire this afternoon. VA worked an agreement with the State of New Hampshire via Governor Chris Sununu to procure a large amount of the supplies. ADEPSEC Powers traveled to NH to meet the plane with Governor Sununu and provided remarks at the event. (4/30/2020)
- VA issued the following press releases (4/30/2020)
    - VA Trust in Veteran Health Care Rises above 90% for the first time https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5435
- Sec. Wilkie held a phone call with West Virginia Senators Manchin and Shelly Capito Moore (4/30/2020)
- VA has sent **195,929,858** email messages with reference to COVID-19 and/or Coronavirus in either the subject line or body content email messages from January 24, 2020 through April 30, 2020. **VA email percentage directly related to COVID-19 Outreach is 195,929,859/387,033,651 or 50.62%. (4/30/2020)**
- Update on Support for State Veteran Homes (as of 4/30/2020)
    - Bedford: Transferred 25 State Veterans' Home patients (COVID-19 positive unit) total; 9 current, 2 deaths
    - Boston: 12 patients, 2 deaths
    - Brockton: 2 patients
    - Providence: 7 community nursing home patients (COVID-19 positive unit); 6 of the 7 were transferred back to the community nursing home; the remaining patient died.
    - Long Beach: 5 community nursing home patients are being transferred; 2 of the 5 tested positive and placed in the COVID-19 positive unit. Remaining 3 waiting results.
    - New Jersey State Veterans Homes (Paramus & Meno Park) – Nurses, staffing, telehealth, and supplies.
    - Manhattan, New York: 2 patients
    - Brooklyn, New York: 2 patients
    - Birmingham: 9 patients

    - Miami: 2 patients
    - Jackson (MS): 4 patients
    - San Antonio: 9 patients
    - Muskogee: 1 patient
    - Oklahoma City: 3 patients
    - Greater Los Angeles: 1 patient
    - Salem, VA: 1 patient
    - Spokane: 2 patients
    - Minneapolis: 1 patient
    - Fresno, CA: 1 patient
    - Omaha, NE: 1 patient
- VA Issues the following press releases (5/1/2020)
    - VA expands access to virtual hearings https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5436
    - VA names Brooks Tucker Acting Chief of Staff https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5437
    - VA participating in drug, plasma trials in fight against COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5438
- Leaderships from the Office of Logistics and Constructions and VHA Procurement Office briefed House Veterans Affairs minority staff on supply chain efforts (5/1/2020)
- VA sent a text message via VETtext to 8.2M Veterans today. Content is focused on financial hardship, and specifically action certain Veterans must take to claim an additional $500 per dependent in stimulus funds. (5/1/2020)
- There are 79 virtual hearings were completed the week of April 27. To date, the Board of Veterans Appeals has successfully completed 695 virtual hearings. (5/1/2020)
- VBA contract vendors reported a cumulative total of **157,102** unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic. (5/1/2020)
- **245,288** disability examinations are pending, including those being held for in-person exams. 5/1/2020)
- As of 5/1/2020, 1,075 (+64 from Thursday) COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries (874 completed: 201 pending). (5/1/2020)
    - Calverton National Cemetery continues to see extreme numbers of internments due to its proximity to the New York epicenter. 254 internments are scheduled this week, which is more than double the cemeteries weekly average of 100 internments.
- On April 28, 2020, POTUS signed House Bill 6322, or Student Veteran Coronavirus Response Act of 2020, into Public Law 116-140. This new law gives VA additional authorities to continue GI Bill payments for the period beginning on March 1, 2020 and ending on December 21, 2020. VA is currently working to implement the changes: (5/1/2020)
    - continue payments to students participating in the Work Study Program who are furloughed or have to stop working.
    - continue to pay benefits for up to 4 weeks to GI Bill students whose classes are suspended, even if school is still open.
    - restoration of entitlement for GI Bill students who lose credit due to school closure or schools' suspension of training.
    - extend the delimiting date for Montgomery GI Bill and Post-9/11 G Bill students if they are unable to attend training due to COVID-19.
- VA Issues the following press releases (5/4/2020)

    - VA is protecting and Serving All of America https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5439
- Veterans Benefit Administration April Update: In April, VBA completed 124K core rating-related disability decisions, about 7% under the monthly average number of completions, fiscal year to date for FY20. This decrease is primarily due to COVID-19 impact on our evidence supply chain (exams and federal records). (5/5/2020)
- Because in-person examinations to support compensation claims could not be completed, VBA turned to other work areas.
    - VBA doubled output of other rating work, to include burials, claims for accrued benefits at time of death, survivor pension, legacy remands, corrective actions, and adjustments
    - To improve responsiveness in this time of need, VBA is realigning claims processing activities to respond to more claims for adjusted pension benefits based on income changes. April completions in this category were up 75% over the fiscal year monthly average. Adjustments to pension benefits based on changes in dependency were up 22% over the fiscal year monthly average.
- On 5/4/20, the Strategic Acquisition Center awarded a contract to Hanes for 2.4M cloth masks valued at $1.9M. This contract has ten optional Contract Line Item Number (CLINs) with the possibility to supply ten million additional masks. (5/5/2020)
- SECVA held a weekly phone call with House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano and Ranking Member Phil Roe (5/5/2020)
- SECVA held a phone call with Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Ranking Member Jon Tester (5/5/2020)
- VA Issues the following press releases (5/5/2020)
    - VA Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry reaches a major milestone https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5441
    - VA Enhances National COVID-19 Reporting Summary Tool https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5440
- On 5/1/20, the National Acquisition Center's Federal Supply Schedule Service (FSS) awarded a contract for COVID-19 testing to Eurofins Viracor. The vendor offers the following capacity: 10,000 daily COVID-19 testing to VA nationwide. (5/6/2020)
- VA will be accepting a donation of 800,000 face shields from Apple. The shipment should arrive in the next two weeks. (5/6/2020)
- VA Issues the following press releases (5/6/2020)
    - VA Gets Boost from CARES Act to provide emergency assistance to Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness during COVID-19 crisis. https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5442
- SECVA calls to Governors or Members of Congress on COVID-19 related issues: (5/6/2020)
    - SECVA had a phone call with HAC MilCon Subcommittee Chair Debbie Wasserman Schulz to update on COVID and formally decline the Subcommittee's invite for a May hearing with SECVA
- SECVA held his weekly call with VSO stakeholders to update them on the VA's response to COVID-19. (5/6/2020)
- VA Issues the following press releases (5/7/2020)
    - Department of Veterans Affairs Announces Process for Charting the Course - Agency Plan on Returning to Pre-COVID-19 Operations https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5443

- Under Secretary for benefits hosted a Tele-townhall for Veterans in New York focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 59,302 participants.
- VA released our final post-COVID-19 Operations Plan to VA Leaders and Staff. Press release announcing the plan is linked below (5/7/2020)
    - https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5443
- SECVA calls to Governors or Members of Congress on COVID-19 related issues: (5/8/2020)
    - SECVA had phone call with Sen. Jack Reed on PPE request for state of Rhode Island
    - Acting DEPSEC had a call with Sen. Hassan, follow up to event attended last week in New Hampshire where VA partnered with the State on PPE shipment
- VA Issues the following press releases (5/8/2020)
    - VA and Parkinson's Foundation partner to help Veterans Living with Parkinson's disease https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5444
    - VA Kicks off Mental Health Campaign emphasizing mental health support https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5445
- VBA executives briefed staff from SVAC (Majority and Minority) and HVAC (Majority and Minority) on COVID-19 efforts as well as updates on Compensation and Pension contract exams, disability benefits questionnaires, claims processing and appeals. (5/8/2020)
- Assistant Secretary of OIT, Jim Gfrerer briefed Reps. Lee and Levin on technological implications of COVID-19 on the GI Bill (5/8/2020)
- Under Secretary for Benefits hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Kansas focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 18,955 participants. (5/8/2020)
- Leadership from Office of Logistics and Construction leadership briefed the Minority Staff for SVAC on supply chain issues related to VA's 4th Mission (5/8/2020)
- VA continues to expand the use of Tele-ICU carts to allow the Tele-ICU care team members to monitor and assess patients, alerting the bedside team whenever a situation requires their intervention (5/8/2020)
    - OIT is continuing priority network configurations, yesterday in Huntington and Durham and today in Richmond and Reno
- VA OIT continues to stay ahead of equipment demand in response to COVID-19 (5/8/2020)
    - 750 Laptops shipped May 7th, 107 Laptops shipped May 6th
    - Emergency equipment requested on May 5th by Texas Valley Coastal Bend for activation of two nursing wards was delivered on May 6th. Wards scheduled to open Monday, May 11th
- 100 Laptops, 200 Monitors shipped

Employees and Contractors COVID-19 Confirmed Positives

as of 9 May 2020, 1000 ET

Source: Administration / Staff Offices, VHA Health Operations Center

A/SO	Location	Facility	Total	Change
BVA	Washington, DC	VACO	1	
HRA	Houston, TX	HRA/ORM	1	
OEI	Washington, DC	VACO	2	
OGC	Las Vegas, NV	Pacific District at VAMC	1	
OIG	Los Angeles, CA	OIG	1	
OIG	San Antonio, TX	OIG	1	
OIT	Chicago, IL	ITOPS-Edward Hines, Jr VAMC	2	
OIT	Columbia, SC	ITOPS-Wm. Jennings VAMC	1	
OIT	Encinitas, CA	SO – Remote Employee	1	
OIT	Gainesville, FL	Malcolm Randall VAMC	1	
OIT	New York City, NY	ITOPS-Bronx (1) ITOPS-Brooklyn (1)	2	
OIT	Tinton Falls, NJ	Tinton Falls BOC – OIS CSOC	1	
OIT	San Diego, CA	San Diego VAMC	1	
OIT	Washington, DC	VACO – OIT/EPMO (1) VACO – OIT/ITRM (1) VACO – AMO (1) VACO – OSS (1) VACO – Contractor (1)	5	
OALC	Washington, DC	OALC/VACO Contractor	1	
OM	Washington, DC	VACO – OM	1	
VBA	Atlanta, GA	Atlanta RO	2	
VBA	Buffalo, NY	Buffalo RO	1	
VBA	Cleveland, OH	Cleveland RO	1	
VBA	Columbia, SC	Columbia RO	1	
VBA	Denver, CO	Denver RO	1	
VBA	Detroit, MI	Detroit RO	6	
VBA	Jackson, MI	VBA Central Office*	1	+1
VBA	Nashville, TN	VBA Central Office*	1	
VBA	New York City, NY	New York RO	2	
VBA	Philadelphia, PA	Philadelphia RO (6) VBA Central Office / Insurance Service (1)	7	
VBA	St. Louis, MO	St. Louis RO	2	
VEO	Salt Lake City, UT	White House Veterans Line	3	
VEO	Shepherdstown, WV	White House Veterans Line	1	
VHA	Albany, NY	Albany Stratton VAMC	5	
VHA	Albuquerque, NM	New Mexico HCS	1	
VHA	Alexandria, LA	Alexandria HCS	5	
VHA	Ann Arbor, MI	Ann Arbor HCS	45	
VHA	Asheville, NC	Charles George VAMC	5	
VHA	Atlanta, GA	Atlanta HCS	35	+2
VHA	Aurora, CO	Rocky Mountain Regional VAMC	11	-1
VHA	Baltimore, MD	Baltimore VAMC	22	

Employees and Contractors COVID-19 Confirmed Positives

as of 9 May 2020, 1000 ET

Source: Administration / Staff Offices, VHA Health Operations Center

VHA	Bath, NY	Bath VAMC	3	
VHA	Battle Creek, MI	Battle Creek VAMC	16	
VHA	Bay Pines, FL	CW Bill Young VAMC	8	
VHA	Bedford, MA	Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial VAMC	35	-62
VHA	Biloxi, MS	Gulf Coast HCS	11	
VHA	Birmingham, AL	Birmingham VAMC	6	
VHA	Boise, ID	Boise VAMC	6	
VHA	Boston, MA	Jamaica Plain VAMC	68	+4
VHA	Buffalo, NY	Buffalo VAMC	17	
VHA	Butler, PA	Butler HCS	6	
VHA	Charleston, SC	Ralph H. Johnson VAMC	1	
VHA	Cheyenne, WY	Cheyenne VAMC	1	
VHA	Chicago, IL	Jesse Brown VAMC (41)(+23) Capt James A. Lovell VAMC (45)(-1) Edward Hines Jr VAMC (45) (+23)	131	+45
VHA	Chillicothe, OH	Chillicothe VAMC	8	
VHA	Cincinnati, OH	Cincinnati VAMC	25	+1
VHA	Cleveland, OH	Cleveland VAMC	31	
VHA	Coatesville, PA	Coatesville VAMC	7	
VHA	Columbia, SC	Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn VAMC	26	
VHA	Columbus, OH	Chalmers P. Wylie VA Ambulatory Care Center	7	
VHA	Dallas, TX	Dallas VAMC	56	
VHA	Dayton, OH	Dayton VAMC	21	
VHA	Des Moines, IA	VA Central Iowa Health Care System	5	+1
VHA	Detroit, MI	John D. Dingell VAMC	32	
VHA	Dublin, GA	Carl Vinson VAMC	4	
VHA	Durham, NC	Durham VA Health Care System	6	-7
VHA	East Orange, NJ	New Jersey HCS	170	+3
VHA	El Paso, TX	El Paso HCS	2	
VHA	Erie, PA	Erie VAMC	1	
VHA	Fargo, ND	Fargo VAMC	1	
VHA	Fayetteville, AR	Fayetteville VAMC	1	
VHA	Fayetteville, NC	Fayetteville VA Coastal Health Care System	3	
VHA	Fresno, CA	Central California HCS	2	
VHA	Gainesville, FL	Malcom Randall VA Medical Center	25	
VHA	Hampton, VA	Hampton VAMC	18	
VHA	Harlingen, TX	Harlingen VA Clinic	2	+1
VHA	Houston, TX	Michael E. DeBakey VAMC	60	
VHA	Indianapolis, IN	Richard L. Roudebush VAMC	84	-1
VHA	Iowa City, IA	Iowa City HCS	5	-1
VHA	Jackson, MS	G.V. Sonny Montgomery VAMC	34	

Employees and Contractors COVID-19 Confirmed Positives

as of 9 May 2020, 1000 ET

Source: Administration / Staff Offices, VHA Health Operations Center

VHA	Kansas City, MO	Kansas City VAMC	34	
VHA	Las Vegas, NV	Southern Nevada HCA	10	-1
VHA	Lebanon, PA	Lebanon VAMC	22	
VHA	Lexington, KY	Lexington VAMC - Franklin R. Sousley Campus	1	
VHA	Little Rock, AR	Central Arkansas Health Care System	20	
VHA	Loma Linda, CA	Loma Linda HCS	15	+1
VHA	Long Beach, CA	Long Beach HCS	13	
VHA	Los Angeles, CA	Greater Los Angeles Health Care System	27	
VHA	Louisville, KY	Robley Rex VAMC	2	-5
VHA	Madison, WI	William S. Middleton VAMC	10	+1
VHA	Marion, IN	Marion VAMC	1	
VHA	Martinsburg, WV	Martinsburg VAMC	9	+2
VHA	Mather, CA	Sacramento VAMC	5	
VHA	Memphis, TN	Memphis VAMC	2	-1
VHA	Miami, FL	Miami VA HCS	43	
VHA	Milwaukee, WI	Milwaukee VAMC	20	+15
VHA	Minneapolis, MN	Minneapolis HCS	5	
VHA	Montgomery, AL	Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System (CAVHCS)- West Campus	8	
VHA	Montrose, NY	Hudson Valley HCS	25	+1
VHA	Nashville, TN	Tennessee Valley HCS	6	-2
VHA	New Orleans, LA	New Orleans VAMC	185	
VHA	New York City, NY	James J. Peters VAMC (103) (-2) NY Harbor HCS – Manhattan Campus (129) (+1) Northport VAMC (111)(+1)	343	0
VHA	Northampton, MA	Central Western Massachusetts HCS	6	
VHA	Oklahoma City, OK	Oklahoma City HCS	8	
VHA	Omaha, NE	Nebraska Iowa HCS	10	
VHA	Orlando, FL	Orlando VA HCS	28	
VHA	Palo Alto, CA	Palo Alto VAMC	4	+1
VHA	Philadelphia, PA	Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VAMC	84	
VHA	Phoenix, AZ	Phoenix Health Care System	3	-1
VHA	Pittsburgh, PA	Pittsburgh VA Medical Center-University Drive	21	
VHA	Portland, OR	Portland VAMC	15	+12
VHA	Prescott, AZ	Northern Arizona VA Health Care System	3	
VHA	Providence, RI	Providence VAMC	18	
VHA	Reno, NV	VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System	21	
VHA	Richmond, VA	Hunter Holmes McGuire VAMC	31	
VHA	Roseburg, OR	Roseburg Health Care System	4	

Employees and Contractors COVID-19 Confirmed Positives

as of 9 May 2020, 1000 ET

Source: Administration / Staff Offices, VHA Health Operations Center

VHA	Saginaw, MI	Aleda E. Lutz VAMC	7	
VHA	Salem, VA	Salem VAMC	1	
VHA	Salisbury, NC	W. G. (Bill) Hefner VA Medical Center	6	
VHA	San Antonio, TX	Audie L. Murphy VAMC	14	
VHA	San Diego, CA	San Diego VAMC	18	
VHA	San Francisco, CA	San Francisco Health Care System	6	
VHA	San Juan, PR	San Juan VAMC	26	
VHA	Seattle, WA	Puget Sound Health Care System	25	+2
VHA	Shreveport, LA	Overton Brooks VA Medical Center	41	
VHA	Sioux Falls, SD	Royal C. Johnson Veterans Memorial Hospital	2	+1
VHA	Spokane, WA	Mann-Grandstaff VAMC	1	
VHA	St. Cloud, MN	St. Cloud VAMC	1	
VHA	St. Louis, MO	St Louis HCS	39	
VHA	Syracuse, NY	Syracuse VAMC	10	
VHA	Tampa, FL	Tampa VAMC	7	
VHA	Temple, TX	Olin E. Teague VAMC	3	
VHA	Tomah, WI	Tomah VAMC	2	
VHA	Topeka, KS	Eastern Kansas Health Care System	4	
VHA	Tucson, AZ	Tucson VAMC	5	
VHA	Tuscaloosa, AL	Tuscaloosa VAMC	1	
VHA	Walla Walla, WA	Jonathan M. Wainwright Memorial VAMC	2	
VHA	Washington, DC	Washington DC VAMC	63	-2
VHA	West Haven, CT	West Haven VAMC	33	
VHA	West Palm Beach, FL	West Palm Beach VA Medical Center	6	
VHA	Wilkes-Barre, PA	Wilkes-Barre VAMC	5	-1
VHA	Wilmington, DE	Wilmington VAMC	10	
		Total:	**2,526**	**+9**

Red numbers indicate recovered cases / employees returning to duty.

* Geographically separated employees
    VBA Employees assigned to VBA Central Office.
    HRA Employee works for HRA/ORM but lives in Salt Lake City, UT

From: Powers, Pamela
Sent: Mon, 11 May 2020 18:03:19 +0000
To: (b)(6) @deloitte.com
Subject: Daily Summary
Attachments: VA_5.9.20_COVID19 Daily Report (002) (002) (002).docx

Great to talk with you, (b)(6) Per our conversation, attached is the most recent daily VA update to OMB. The White House started asking for daily updates the week of March 16th and each day Agency updates are posted to a MAX site for interagency sharing purposes. Because it was such a dynamic situation and VA was transforming each day with new policies and processes, I started including the historical record early on in the update process. That historical section starts on page 6. As you can see, this organization has accomplished a lot in a few short months and this does not capture everything. VHA has kept a good record of all guidance documents released, as has HR&A and OGC. If there is anything you need clarification on, or would like access to, please do not hesitate to reach out.

I am here to help.

Best,
Pam

Pamela Powers
Acting Deputy Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
Office: 202-461-(b)(6)
Cell: 202-430(b)(6)
(b)(6) @VA.gov

Choose VA

COVID-19 – Agency Response
5/9/2020
Department of Veterans Affairs

Administrative Actions, Waivers, and Other Programmatic Changes that Impact Agency Provision of Service or Mission Delivery (Externally Facing)

- Supply Chain:
  - **VA will be accepting 500,000 masks from the Republic of Korea (ROK). Delivery will come via Andrews Air Force Base. Delivery was supposed to be Sunday May 10 but has been pushed to Tuesday May 12.**
  - VHA supply chain for Continuous Renal Replacement Therapy (CRRT) machines and consumables, and the entire national dialysis industry is constrained. Demand for CRRT fluids has gone up >500%. The handful of CRRT fluid manufacturers are at max capacity; quantities are in small quantities, including foreign suppliers. As of 5/8/2020 this is still an open issue, VA is working with FEMA/HHS at national level.
- **Update on FEMA Active VA Mission Assignments, (No new admissions today 5/9/2020):**
  - VA NY Harbor: 111 patients, 79 discharges, 18 deaths
  - VA New Jersey: 31 patients, 19 discharge, 7 deaths
  - VA San Francisco: 1 discharge, no deaths
  - VA Miami: 1 discharge, no deaths
  - VA Ann Arbor: 36 patients, 21 discharges, 6 deaths
  - Detroit: 22 patients, 15 discharge, 7 death
  - Albuquerque: 5 patients from Navajo Nation, previously in Gallup IHS facility. 4 discharged, 1 death.
  - VA Chicago (Hines, Jesse Brown Marion) – 23 patients, 6 discharges, 1 death
  - Spokane, WA – 2 patients, no discharges, no deaths
  - Hew Haven CT – Homeless Outreach Assistance, 3 clinicians
  - Louisiana (Shreveport) – 16 Med/Surg, 2 ICU. No patients received at this time.
  - Oregon / Roseburg VAMC - 25 Med/Surg beds. No patients received at this time.
  - New Jersey State Veterans Homes (Paramus & Meno Park) – Nurses, staffing, telehealth, and supplies.
  - Massachusetts Soldiers Home Support (Chelsea and Holyoke) - Acute care, intensive care, and skilled nursing (nursing home) care for residents/patients.
  - Florida Nursing Home Support: Starting today, VA will begin providing staffing and technical support to 12 non-VA nursing homes in Florida, a state that has seen COVID-19 emerge among these vulnerable populations. More than 80 physicians, nurses and nurses aides will begin rotations at these homes to provide direct care and advice about controlling infectious disease.
  - Rhode Island Group Home Support - Initial request is for 6 registered nurses and 9 certified nursing assistants or similar for a total of 15 personnel.
  - Portland Oregon Beds - 25 short term acute care (med/surg) and 5 intensive care (ICU) beds at the Portland VAMC for non-covid and covid-positive patients.
  - Washington State Veteran Home support and testing support
  - Alabama - Bill Nichols State Veterans Home in Alexander City, AL, provide 4 registered nurses and 5 nursing assistants
  - Pennsylvania - Nursing Home Staff - Spring City, PA Staff RN/LPN (20)

- Delaware – Department of Public Health Staff Support. VA is sending 10 RN/LPN/NA to cover 3 nursing homes
- Wisconsin – Provide 2 pharmacists and 2 respiratory therapists to a mission in Milwaukee
- Nebraska – VA will provide testing support in Omaha
- Des Moines/Iowa City – 20 med/surg or ICU beds, no patients received to date
- Iowa – VA to provide staffing to support State Veteran Home at Marshalltown, Iowa. Staffing to include RN (4); LPN (16); NA (27)
- California - Nursing Home Staff support. Four 6-person teams to provide nursing consultation support to long term care (nursing home) facilities in Los Angeles County region
- Illinois Nursing Home Support – VA will provide 60 of our Community Living Center beds for Illinois civilian nursing home patients. The beds will be provided at the Edward J. Hines Medical (Chicago), Danville Medical Center (Danville) and/or Lovell Federal Health Care Center (North Chicago).
- Illinois Inpatient Beds – This is an extension of the Mission Assignment in Chicago listed above for beds Hines, Jesse Brown and Marion.
- New Jersey – VA to provide 4 licensed social workers to support patients in State Veterans homes; specific location TBD
- Texas – VA will provide State Veterans Homes Testing and Support, will also provide staff and support services to assist Texas Veterans Land Board with collection and processing of biological samples for testing and analysis. Services will be provided for patients and staff at state veterans homes in Floresville, TX and Temple, TX.
- VA also extended our liaisons detail to the FEMA National Response Coordination Center until June 3, 2020.
- Support to Indian Health Centers and Navajo Nation: 15 personnel for a 30-day period. (May 5 – June 5). IHS Indian Medical Center in Gallup NM, seven (7) ER nurses and 2 RNs; IHS Crownpoint, Hospital two (2) RN's; IHS Kayenta Health Center, two (2) RNs; IHS Northern Navajo Medical Center, two (2) RNs
- Navajo Nation Nursing Support – Tuba City. VA will provide (6) Med Surge Nurses (RNs), (6) Emergency Room RNs and (4) Intensive Care Unit Nurses (RNs)
- North Carolina – VA will provide testing services in support of vulnerable residents/patients and staff at licensed care facilities.
- North Carolina - Staff Support to nursing home including: 1 van driver, 3 Community Living Center nurses, 2 infection control nurses, 1 social work, 1 public affairs officer, 4 nurse screeners, 1 Administrative lead, 4 RNs, and 4 LPNs.
- **Four ventilators were sent to Southwest Medical Center in Liberal, Kansas: This was an emergency request from the FEMA Deputy Federal Coordinating Officer for Kansas. The four requested ventilators had been delivered by the staff of the Robert J. Dole VA Medical & Regional Office Center to the Wichita Dwight D. Eisenhower National Airport; they were then delivered via Army National Guard helicopter to the Southwest Medical Center in Liberal, Kansas (over 200 miles away from Wichita). Our total time from emergency request to delivery was less than 4 hours!**

- Pending Mission Assignments:
  - **New Jersey: five 10-person strike teams including to provide training to long-term care facility staff on infection control practices and proper use of PPE**
  - **New York: Delivering Crisis Support to Civilian Healthcare Providers**
  - **Oregon: private nursing home support - VHA staff to include providing training to long-term care facility staff on infection control practices and proper use of PPE**
  - **Rhode Island: 12 nursing assistants to provide patient care at State Veterans Home in Bristol**

- Albuquerque - HHS Indian Health Services ventilators
- North Dakota/Minnesota – delivery of meals to elderly and infirm Veterans and civilians
- The State of Virginia has requested 500 test kits for Hampton Roads – a Mission Assignment is expected
- Salisbury North Carolina – request for beds

- The board of Veterans Appeals has **106** Virtual Hearings scheduled for the week of May 4 with more being scheduled for the remainder of the week. To date, the Board has achieved **787** virtual hearings during COVID-19. The Board has also rendered **63,062** decisions continuing strong production despite challenging circumstances.
- As of 5/8/2020 1,330 (+50 from Thursday May 7) COVID related internments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries (1,144 completed, 186 pending). During the pandemic, 3,115 internments have been cancelled citing COVID-19 as the reason.
- VA's National Cemetery at Calverton, NY (near epicenter) completed 251 internments this week with another 171 scheduled for next week.

CARES ACT IMPLEMENTATION – KEY ACTIVITIES AND MILESTONES
(Please also include activities related to the implementation of other COVID-related supplementary funding legislation, including P.L. 116-127 and P.L. 116-123)

- Finalizing internal controls including reporting requirements for obligations, expenditures, and planned activities) for CARES Act Supplemental funding.
- OMB approved CARES Act Supplemental funding apportionments for VHA, VBA, Gen Ad, OIG, and Grants for Construction of State Extended Care Facilities.
- CARES Act, Section 4022. Foreclosure Moratorium and Consumer Right to Request Forbearance: notified OMB's Veterans Affairs and Defense Health Branch of interpretation concerns to ensure that all federal housing agencies impacted by these sections are consistent in implementing the new law, as requested by OMB.
- OIT will complete circuit installs at all four gateways by April 3rd, doubling network bandwidth to 160GBs
- OIT has approved 31 COVID-19 Memos valued at $371.02M
- Working with VHA, VBA, OIT to prepare spend plans and regular reporting templates for CARES Act funding.
- VBA Received $13M in GOE supplemental funding for COVID-19 related issues such as purchase of equipment and supplies to support telework posture and employee health and safety as well as scheduled deep cleaning of buildings/offices occupied by VBA personnel
- Office of Information Technology CARES Act Supplemental Funding apportionment ($2.15B) approved by OMB. Funds are available for execution.
- VHA to begin initial distribution to the Healthcare Networks of $5.3 billion (from the total $14.4 billion) in Medical Services funding from the CARES Act Supplemental based upon:
    - FY 2020 Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation (VERA) Model
    - VHA's Bed Management System
    - VHA's Managerial Cost Accounting (MCA) system
- Office of Information Technology has used funding to double network bandwidth across all gateways to improve telehealth and telework capabilities. Also placing equipment orders for our Veterans Health Administration

- As of 6 April 2020, VA reported $768.1 million in total COVID -19 obligations, an increase of $371 million from 2 April 2020.
- OIT has Increased telehealth capacity by 15% and can support 11K concurrent sessions
- As of April 9, VA obligated $768M in total COVID -19 obligations and anticipates surpassing $1B in COVID-19 related obligations by the end of this week.
    - Examples of VA Purchases
        - Centralized Contracting: 60 awards valued at $338,803,651.
        - National Acquisition Center (NAC): $2,499,317 (Pharmacy/Medical Equipment)
        - Technology Acquisition Center (TAC): $308,789,039 (IT Equipment)
        - Strategic Acquisition Center (SAC): $27,515,605 (Medical Surgical Supplies)
        - Veterans Health Administration (VHA) at the regional and local level: 1,633 awards valued at $519,933,615 (Medical Surgical Supplies)
        - Contracts to support national purchases of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and medical equipment (e.g., ventilators) as well as costs associated with level-setting PPE and medical equipment throughout the country
        - Travel, housing, and other support for employees deploying to other medical centers
        - Salary costs incurred to hire and retain staff to support the pandemic
        - Medical facility costs mostly related to reconfiguring space to open additional beds and creating negative pressure rooms
        - Costs associated with Community Care to cover increased demand in the community by Veterans for both COVID-19 related and non-COVID related medical care
- As of April 14, VA obligated $959 million in total COVID -19 obligations.
- OIT continues to stay ahead of equipment demand in response to COVID-19
    - 164 Laptops shipped to 16 sites yesterday to be distributed to Homelessness Staff
    - 3 laptops shipped for BVA
    - 637 additional activation shipments (802 total shipped yesterday)
- As of April 21, VA's COVID-19 total obligations are $1.160 billion:
    - VHA obligations: $841 million
    - OIT obligations: $319 million
    - To date, $49 million has been spent on Telehealth capabilities and enhancements, which include $4 million in bandwidth upgrades and $42 million to purchase 38K mobile devices and 22K laptops.
- VHA spending on State Home Grants, PPE to state homes, etc.
    - **State Homes:** To date, 23 grant packages totaling $23 million have been received for COVID-19 related projects. Statutory and legislative challenges in the current program are impacting VA's ability to provide the funds before 1 October 2020. Legislative relief is necessary.
    - **Medical Facilities:** To date, $170 million has been distributed to the Office of Emergency Management in response to operational issues and overtime pay, and $40 million has been distributed to facilities for expansion of inpatient bed capabilities to include HVAC equipment for negative-pressure rooms and engineering staff overtime.
    - **PPE to State Homes:** VHA facilities considering a request from a State Veteran Home for PPE must take into account the impact that providing PPE to State Veteran Homes has on VHA facility operational stock.
- As of Apr 28, VA's COVID-19 total obligations are $1.531 billion (+$371 million from Apr 22)
    - VHA obligations: $1.21 billion (+$369 million), including recent obligations for:

        - $192 million in grants for the homelessness programs (Grant and Per Diem and Supportive Services for Veterans Families); $52 million for supplies including protective gear such as masks and gowns; and $66 million for medical equipment
    - OIT obligations: $321 million (+$2 million), including:
        - Expansion of Telehealth to include 38,000 mobile devices and 22,000 laptops; doubled bandwidth at 30 sites; hardware upgrades to increase video teleconferencing systems by 1,200 concurrent calls; and increased cloud capability to increase capacity by 6,000 concurrent calls
- OIT continues to stay ahead of equipment demand in response to COVID-19
    - Equipment shipped last week include:
        - Laptops Shipped 926 (18 locations)
        - Desktops Shipped 2,028 (10 locations)
        - Monitors Shipped 2,591 (17 locations)
        - 2,462 iPhones ordered (pending shipment)
        - 5,000 laptops expected to ship this week
- As of May 5, VA's COVID-19 total obligations are $1.688 billion (+$156 million from Apr 28)
    - VHA obligations: $1.326 billion (+$117 million); Significant procurements this week include $6.7 million for PPE and $4 million in testing support for COVID-19.
    - OIT obligations: $357 million (+$36 million)
    - VBA obligations: $3 million (+$3 million)

Major upcoming decisions that require POTUS or Task Force-level decisions (only the biggest, most sensitive items should be included here, many agencies may not have anything to report in this section)

- **NSTR**

Guidance, Communication and Outreach with Stakeholders

- SECVA Media:
    - No SECVA Media
- SECVA calls to Governors or Members of Congress on COVID-19 related issues:
    - No calls made today
- VA Issues the following press releases (5/8/2020)
    - No press releases today

- **Other Notable Responses**

    - 9,148 Total Positive Veteran COVID-19 Cases (+371 cases from yesterday)
    - 2,226 Active Positive Veteran Cases (-20 cases from yesterday)
    - 6,104 Convalescent Veteran Cases (+368 cases from yesterday). Convalescent cases are defined as 14 days post positive test results for outpatients and discharged status for inpatients. These are essentially "recovered" cases.
    - **Veteran Deaths: 818 veterans have died from COVID-19 (+23 from yesterday)**
    - 200 Active Veteran cases remain greater New York City Area (Bronx, Hudson Valley, Northport, Brooklyn)

- Two other areas where significant Active Veteran cases remain is Chicago with 134 cases at our 3 Chicago area Medical Centers and our East Orange New Jersey Medical Center with 163 cases
- Other areas with 50 or more active veteran cases include Connecticut (85), Washington, DC (80), Philadelphia (102), Boston (67), Albany (56), Bedford, MA (83), Indianapolis (62), Omaha (51)
- **Note:** No breakdown by facility is available today, 5/9/2020

- **2,526 VA Positive Employee cases**

  - This is an increase of 9 case from yesterday
  - The largest clusters of employee cases are our New Orleans Medical Center with 185 employees testing positive, our Greater New York City Area Medical Centers (Bronx, Hudson Valley, Northport, Brooklyn) with 368 employees testing positive and our East Orange New Jersey Medical Center with 170 employee cases
  - Other employee hot spots at our Medical Centers include: Chicago (131), Indianapolis (84), Miami (43), Washington, DC (63), Shreveport (41), Boston (68), Columbia, SC (26), Detroit (32), Dallas (56), Philadelphia (84), Ann Arbor (45), Bedford Massachusetts (35), Reno (21), Greater Los Angeles (27), Cleveland (31), St. Louis (39), Jackson, MS (34), Connecticut (33), Richmond (31), Atlanta (35), Cincinnati (25), Pittsburgh (21), Lebanon PA (22), Baltimore (22), Gainesville, FL (25), Little Rock (20), Orlando (28), Puerto Rico (26), Seattle (25), Dayton (21), Houston (60), Kansas City (34), Milwaukee (20)
  - To date there have been 26 employee deaths: 1 in Ann Arbor, 1 in Detroit, 3 in Indianapolis, 3 in Reno, 1 in Shreveport, 1 in Houston, 1 in Los Angeles. 1 in West Palm Beach, 2 in the Bronx (NY), 1 Manhattan (NY), 1 in Denver and 1 in Brockton (Boston), 1 in Washington, DC and 1 in Northport (NY), 1 in Miami and 1 in New Orleans, 1 in Wilkes-Barre (PA), 3 in New Jersey and 1 in Loma Linda (CA).
  - **Note:** Detailed breakdown is attached (VA Employee COVID Cases 5-9-2020)

Historical Inputs:

- Within a day of the first confirmed US case, VA began planning for COVID-19 by establishing screening and triage, isolation and quarantine, and infection control strategy and plans.
- Activated Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Emergency Management Coordination Cell (EMCC) to Level 1 on January 20, 2020 and it remains activated.
- Screening points established at every major VHA Healthcare Facility (170 hospitals that serve nearly 9 million veterans across the country) (March 10, 2020)
- Limited admissions to Spinal Cord Injury Units - 24 major centers; 24,000 Veterans (March 10, 2020)
- Restricted admission to VA Community Living Centers (CLC) (134 nationwide nursing homes supporting 41,000 Veterans) (March 10, 2020)
- Daily crisis action team meetings at 3pm to discuss updates and remain in sync internally and with other federal guidance. (3/9/2020)
- All VA Regional Benefit Offices (ROs) are closed to the public. Benefits are still being processed virtually.

- Provided HR Emergency Preparedness Guide to employees and managers to answer questions on a wide-range of human capital topics (e.g., travel, leave, telework, employee relations, labor relations, compensation, staffing, reasonable accommodation); continue to update based on new guidance.
- Released system-wide policy released directing curtailment of routine appointments and elective surgeries at all VA facilities (3/17/20)
- Released guidance for Geriatrics & Extended Care Home & Community Based Services Programs to protect Veterans and staff including strict limitations on visitors in geriatric facilities, increasing the use of virtual modalities for clinical care, and screening all essential visitors or residents of a Veterans home prior to initiating contact.
- Released Chaplain guidance related to COVID-19 transmitted to the field (3/17/20) that continues to provide spiritual support to Veterans while using appropriate PPE or and utilizing virtual modalities for worship services. Any large-scale chaplain events have been cancelled.
- Implementation of an Episodic Special Patient Icon in Bed Management Solution sent to the field
    - VA recently launched an Episodic Patient Icon to identify inpatient Veterans who are presumptive or confirmed positive cases during epidemics. These icons can also be used to identify negative pressure rooms which allows for real-time bed capacity across the enterprise.
- Insurance services extended premium payment grace periods; reinstatement deadlines; and Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI) application deadlines. (3/17/20)
- Board of Veterans Appeals suspended all travel board, video, and central office hearings and is prepared to provide virtual hearings where possible if Veterans and the Representative are willing and have the necessary equipment. (3/17/20)
- Submitted Task Order to HHS to receive an additional 250K masks in Martinsburg; 1.5M masks at the SDC in Hines, IL
- VA is experiencing a reduction in surgical case load due to delaying non-emergent care; down from 1,900 per day to 1,300 per day. Additionally, there has been a 5% drop in ER visits; increased bed capacity by 1/3 across the VA. (3/16/20)
- Converting all ICU beds to negative airflow beds with a goal of reengineering by 3/30.
- VA's Loan Guaranty Service issued program guidance for VA's Real Estate Owned and Portfolio Servicing Contract (RPSC) contractor, placing a moratorium on evictions for VA-owned properties for 60 days due to COVID-19.
- VA's Debt Management Center, through coordination with the Veterans Benefits Administration and Veterans Service Organizations, implemented a 60-day COVID-19 debt relief plan to provide temporary financial relief in accordance with Veterans' request.
- Issuing proposed COVID-19 Interim Suitability & Fingerprint Guidance to comply with social distancing recommendations; guidance includes temporarily suspension of an initial fingerprint check (SAC) prior to new employees and contractor's entry-on-duty (EOD); VA continuing other investigatory measures such as initiation of e-Quip.
- Finalized a response to various union demands to bargain implementation of measures and precautions being put in place by the Department to protect people and property during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The general response denies immediate negotiations while advising any impact and implementation bargaining will occur post-implementation when the pandemic ceases. The Department is willing to meet all of its legal obligations, including negotiating with unions representing VA employees, but must also focus on providing care to our Veterans while protecting the safety and security of our facilities and the health of all in them.
- VetResources emails, providing Coronavirus information and prevention guidance, were sent to 10.8 million subscribers. (February 5 and February 26)

- A VA Acquisition Insider alert is being distributed to the VA Acquisition community concerning possible fraudulent vendor/merchant activity. Some of this activity might include instances of price gouging.
- VAntage blog published January 31 and continually updated since: https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/70999/cdc-coronavirus-information-and-resources/
- Sent letter to governors regarding VA's Fourth Mission to improve the nation's preparedness and be a "safety net" for response to war, terrorism, national emergencies, and natural disasters. (March 17, 2020)
- CAO and VA's Director of Operations and Emergency Management communicated with HHS to ensure VA's Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needs are prioritized. HHS has agreed to release a stop gap quantity of N95 protective masks to VA this week. (March 16, 2020)
- Notified GI Bill Beneficiaries and school officials through email and social media. If schools change modality of training to online classes for the current term, VA will continue to pay benefit payments.
- VA is pausing attendance at hearings involving the Secretary and his Undersecretaries for the remainder of March, at the guidance of OMB. One Senate hearing on the 2021 VA Budget proposal and a House hearing on Sexual Assault Prevention will not be attended by senior leaders. Subcommittee attendance from VA witnesses will continue on a case by case basis.
- Secretary Wilkie sent a message to all VA employees expressing appreciation for their support during the COVID-19 pandemic, assuring them that their health and safety and that of our patients is critical, and offering resources to promote employee wellness during this time. (March 16, 2020)
- Implemented VEText outreach to 8,858,481 Veterans to receive COVID-19 information and updates via text. Texts began at 1200EST on 3/17/2020.
- Facilitated a briefing to Senate and House Authorizing committee staffers on VA's Emergency Management Disaster Plan for COVID-19.
- Partnering with Facebook and the American Red Cross Military Veteran Caregiver Network to support Veterans and their families/caregivers in their homes through use of 7,488 free Facebook Portal devices.
- Partnering with Amazon, to purchase 500 tablets to enable access for Veterans, families and caregivers via VHA Telehealth Service to help ensure medical access and reduce possible exposure estimated launch (3/30/2020).
- Deployed 16 Nursing Assistants to assist with screening of AMCITs repatriated (all have been demobilized)
- Deployed 5 Area Emergency Managers to assist Health and Human Services (HHS) Incident Management Teams at each repatriation site
- Deployed a Liaison Officer to the HHS Secretary's Operations Center (SOC) to assist with response coordination
- Conducted analysis of VA Medical facilities contingency data to identify locations for potential COVID-19 dedicated facilities
- Manilla, Philippines Embassy will close in the next two weeks, in which case our VA clinic will close. Eight employees will be returned to the US (1 VHA and 7 VBA) and this will impact 6,000 veterans who receive care from that clinic.
- OIT created a new Veteran-facing FAQ page, which is with OPIA to obtain final (i.e. White House) clearance.
- Issued guidance memorandum authorizing waiver of the biweekly pay limitation on premium pay for workers performing duties in response to COVID-19, permitting overtime and premium pay for eligible workers up to the annual limitation.

- OPM signed dual-compensation waiver to allow hiring of reemployed annuitants (i.e. retired employees) during COVID-19 by streamlining current delegations of authority for waiver of salary offset; VA Comms team is working with WH Comms on a Press Release.
- Coordinating with OM on procedures for authorizing Hazard Pay if regulatory criteria met
- **Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** Prepared to increase scope of the EAP contract with FOH for COVID-19 counselling if needed.
- Now sending daily detailed updates to both House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees
- VHA has detailed four personnel to FEMA HQ to support the operations: Dr. John Areno, VISN16 Chief Medical Officer & Pulmonary/Critical Care physician; Mary Mather, IPEC/National Program Manager for LTC; Andrew Centineo, PL&O; Michael Forgy, OEM
- Secretary Wilkie joined President Trump on a stakeholder call with leaders of Veterans Service organizations to update them on the government wide response to COVID-19 (3/21/20)
- VA's Financial Services Center established an Emergency Buyers sub-group of 13,000 Government Purchase Cardholders within VA's Amazon Business Account providing special access to select vendors for critically needed supplies in accordance with the Chief Acquisition Officer's COVID-19 supply chain efforts
- VA Office of Information and Technology (OIT) has concluded testing of its network. Based on stress testing this week, OIT believes we can support 175,000-200,000 CAG connections, in addition to 300,000 RESCUE connections (3/21/2020)
- Future deployment of the Mobile Vet Center to New Orleans, LA will start week of 23 Mar 2020. VA reviewing locations for additional deployments. VA to set up Vet Center Community Access Point to provide direct counseling to Veterans receiving treatment through the HHS location.
- Effective Monday, March 23, 2020, committal services and the rendering of military funeral honors will not be conducted until further notice at VA national cemeteries. Immediate family members (limited to no more than 10 individuals) of the deceased may witness the interment if requested. Currently, approximately 1174 families have postponed scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns. This is up significantly from yesterday.
- VA will receive 20,000 testing swabs tomorrow 3/23
- Davita and Fresenius Dialysis companies establishing joint cohorting sites for individual markets where COVID 19 dialysis patients can be treated in isolation.
- On Saturday, March 21, 2020, the President signed into law S. 3503, which clarifies how the Department of Veterans Affairs should treat in-person courses of study that convert to distance learning formats due to health-related situations and other emergencies. https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/bill-announcement-89/
- VA announced the policy change that allows for a dual compensation waiver for retired annuitants (retired VA employees) to be hired back to VA to meet the increased need of healthcare workers during COVID-19
- Packaged 50,000 masks today for shipment tomorrow to Denver and Brooklyn (3/23/2020)
- All Area Emergency Managers are in place at each FEMA region.
- VA working with OPM to expedite blanket requests from VA to exceed the limits on recruitment, relocation, and retention incentives for Title 5 employees to help provide necessary staff
- VA is concerned with the national ventilator shortage and is working with FEMA Task Force (TF) to find other sources of supply. VA will receive 25 ventilators this week and an additional 25 next week.
- Working to purchase facepiece elastomeric respirators based on CDC Guidance for managing COVID-19 patients; It is recommended that elastomeric respirators be used in order to conserve Surgical 95 and N95 filtering facepieces for high risk procedures that require a sterile field. (3/24/2020)

- VA experiencing a high reduction (20%) in urgent care utilization showing Veterans are heeding advice to stay home (3/24/2020)
- 20k hand sanitizer bottles have been received and will be deployed to the facilities starting tomorrow. (3/24/2020)
- Coordinated with DOD to identify approximately 8581 employees who are reserve/guard members and 669 are currently activated – 122 nurses and 24 doctors included in this number.
- During the COVID-19 emergency, private sector entities have offered to donate equipment and supplies needed to protect personnel from contracting COVID-19. VA OGC worked a delegation of approval to VISN Directors to ensure efficient approval of donated gifts.
- Effective immediately, the Board of Veterans Appeals will advance on docket (AOD) appeals for Veterans diagnosed with COVID-19. (3/24/2020)
- The Board of Veterans Appeals will accept AMA Notices of Disagreement (NOD) with a typed signature in lieu of a wet signature. (3/24/2020)
- Construction projects in Massachusetts, California, New York, Pennsylvania and Puerto Rico have been ether stopped completely or activities severly curtailed by this national emergency and shelter in place orders.
- Effective COB March 24, 2020 the National Personnel Records Center will be closing its facility in accordance with local St. Louis municipal guidance. Critical VA personnel will remain behind to continue to process priority records requests.
- MyVA311 call center (located in Salt Lake City) successfully started handling VISN 22 general COVID calls last night and VISN20 is scheduled for tonight; this effort was to free up hospital call centers for local issues.
- In consultation with DoD, NCA has discontinued disinterment efforts with the Defense POW/MIA Accountability Agency (DoD) at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) effective immediately and until further notice in order to focus NCA resources on essential burial operations.
- Sent 541 letters to Members of Congress and Committees clarifying the process for requests from states and localities for VA to activate it's 4th MISSION (3/24/2020)
- Internal bulletin being drafted to implement new OPM guidance on flexible on-boarding this coming pay period and as needed during COVID to minimize physical proximity (such as the oath of office, the form I-9, fingerprinting, orientation, physical examinations, drug testing).
- Secretary Wilkie hosted a call with State and Local Government Stakeholders to provide them an update on VA's response to COVID-19.
- US Army Corps of Engineers will visit the former Denver medical facility to assess the building's viability for FEMA/HHS use.
- Penn Medicine submitted a request for a Mission Assignment for the transfer of COVID-19 non-Veteran patients to the Philadelphia VAMC.
- VA activating DEMPS for New Orleans (160 Clinical Staff) and New York (50 Nurses). We will begin moving people there starting today.
- Preparing to create a Federal Medical Shelter (FMS) in the Pacific NW (Location to be determined) with 160 personnel. Waiting for official FEMA tasking.
- Five Eyes Conference Ministerial Veterans Summit (scheduled for May 2020) has been postponed due to COVID-19.
- Submitted to OPM: (1) request for dual comp waiver to cover 2210 (IT Specialists) series occupations, and (2) direct hire authority for VBA positions-- Veteran Service Representative, Rating Veterans Service Representative, and Legal Administrative Specialist.
- On March 24th, CAO reported to VA OIG a vendor in Louisiana who is offering medical supplies and equipment up to 1000% above average cost and likely does not meet FDA guidelines.

- SECVA had the following phone interviews with press:
  - Jeff "Goldy" Goldberg, WFNC Radio (3/24/20)
  - NBC 4 w/ Scott MacFarlane (3/24/20)
  - Jim Blythe, Alliance 4 the Brave (Dallas) (3/24/20)
  - Kirsti Marohn, Minnesota Public Radio (3/24/20)
  - Ware Morning Show (Radio), San Antonio (3/25/20)
  - Fox News Rundown (Taped) (3/25/20)
  - Wake Up Tucson, AZ (3/25/20)
  - Fred Thys, WBUR Radio (NPR Boston) (3/25/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by the Moon Griffon Show (LA radio). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Leo Shane of Military Times (print). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Pensacola's Morning News (FL radio). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by WWL Radio (New Orleans, LA radio). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Drive with Lee Matthews (Oklahoma City, OK radio). (3/27/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Kevin Miller in the Morning (Boise, ID radio). (3/27/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Marc Cox morning Show (St Louis, MO radio). (3/27/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Larry O'Connor, WMAL (DC/CA radio). (3/27/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by KOAN Radio (Anchorage, AK). (3/27/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Montana Talks Radio. (3/30/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by the Ross Kaminsky Show (CO radio). (3/30/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Lisa Rein, The Washington Post. (3/30/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Conservative Circus (Phoenix radio). (3/31/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Bob Rose Show (FL radio). (3/31/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by the Charlie James Show (SC radio). (3/31/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Mobile Mornings (AL radio). (3/31/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Mark Sterling Show (NC radio). (4/1/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Fox Across America (Fox News Radio). (4/1/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie interviewed by Richmond's Morning News (VA radio). (4/2/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie interviewed by Ringside Politics (LA radio/tv). (4/2/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie interviewed by The Erick Erickson Show (GA radio). (4/2/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie interviewed on The Sam Malone Show (Houston, TX Radio) (4/3/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie interviewed on The Dale Jackson Show (Huntsville, AL Radio) (4/3/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by AM Tampa Bay Radio (4/6/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The John Fredericks Radio Show. (4/6/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Matt and Aunie Show (AL radio). (4/6/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Schilling Show (VA radio). (4/7/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Annie Frey Show (St. Louis radio). (4/7/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Wilkow Majority on Sirius XM radio. (4/7/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Bernie and Sid in the Morning (NYC radio). (4/8/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Tom Jordan and Roberta Jasina (Detroit radio). (4/8/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Frank Beckmann Show (Detroit radio). (4/9/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Heidi Harris Show (Las Vegas radio). (4/9/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Steve Gruber Show (Lansing/Flint, MI radio). (4/13/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Morning Talk with Martha Zoller (Atlanta, GA radio). (4/13/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Brian Kilmeade Show (Fox News Radio). (4/14/2020)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The David Webb Show (SiriusXM radio). (4/14/2020)

- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Todd Starnes Show (Fox News Radio, Scheduled last minute this morning). (4/14/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Joe Piscopo in the Morning (NYC Radio). (4/15/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by South Florida's First News with Jimmy Cefalo (Miami/Ft. Lauderdale Radio). (4/15/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Bill Spadea Show (NJ Radio). (4/15/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie will be interviewed by The Kuhner Report (Boston Radio). (4/16/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Mornings with Brian Haldane (Baton Rouge, LA Radio). (4/16/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie will be interviewed by Pat Kime of Military.com. (4/16/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Ben Kesling of The Wall Street Journal. (4/17/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Joyce Kaufman Show (South Florida radio). (4/17/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Quil Lawrence of NPR (4/20/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interview by MSNBC Live with Stephanie Ruhle (4/22/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interview by WTKR TV Norfolk, VA (4/22/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interview by KSWB TV San Diego (4/22/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interview by WCAU-TV Philadelphia (4/22/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interview by WGN-TV National (4/22/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interview by WFAA-TV Dallas (4/22/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Midday News with James MacKay (Boston Radio) (4/23/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by JJ Green of WTOP (DC Radio) (4/28/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Liz MacDonald on Fox Business (4/28/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by Martha MacCallum of Fox News (Evening of 4/30/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by AM Tampa Bay radio (5/1/2020)
- SECVA will be interviewed by Lars Larson (radio) (5/1/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by The Fayetteville Observer. (5/4/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by Prairie Public Radio (Fargo, ND). (5/5/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by KTTH Seattle (radio). (5/5/2020)
- SecVA was interviewed by the Birmingham Fox Affiliate (local Birmingham, AL tv). (5/6/2020)
- SecVA will be interviewed on Fox News @ Night with Shannon Bream tonight between 11:00 – 11:15 p.m. (5/6/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by Nebraska Public Radio. (5/7/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by WTOP Radio (DC). (5/7/2020)
- SECVA was interviewed by "Think" Show, Dallas NPR. (5/7/2020)

- SECVA had the following studio interviews:
  - COX Media w/ Samantha Manning; held in VACO Broadcast Studio (3/25/20)
- SECVA made calls to the following Governors over the last several days to discuss nursing home/State Veteran Home support and other COVID-19 issues:
  - Maine – Janet Mills (4/20/2020)
  - Oregon – Governor Kate Brown Janet Mills (4/20/2020)
  - Alabama – Kay Ivey (4/17/2020)
  - New Hampshire – Chris Sununu (4/20/2020)
  - New Jersey – Phil Murphy (4/13/2020)
  - South Carolina – Henry McMaster (4/20/2020)
  - Oklahoma – Kevin Stitt (4/17/2020)
  - Georgia – Brian Kemp (4/20/2020)
  - South Dakota – Kristi Noem (4/20/2020)
  - Tennessee – Bill Lee (4/20/2020)

  - Arkansas – Asa Hutchinson (4/20/2020)
  - Ohio – Mike Dewine (4/20/2020)
  - Iowa – Kim Reynolds (4/20/2020)
  - Kansas – Laura Kelly (4/20/2020)
  - Florida Governor Ron DeSantis (4/21/2020)
  - Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy (4/21/2020)
  - Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo (4/23/2020)
  - Idaho Governor Brad Little (4/23/2020)
  - Maryland Governor Larry Hogan (5/4/2020)
- Guidance sent to HR offices of a temporary postponement of pre-employment applicant drug testing for testing designated positions (TDP) for up to 180 days.
- Authority to Approve Weather & Safety Leave for Employees
- Guidance for Elective Gastroenterology and Hepatology Procedures – COVID-19
- Guidance for VHA Eye Care Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- OCHCO Bulletin – Temporary Authorization to Delay Pre-Placement and Recurring Physical Exams
- Guidance for VHA Emergency Child Care Center Operations
- Changes to In-Person Identity Verification for the My HealtheVet Website
- Dual Compensation Waiver Guidance for VHA
- Guidance on Safeguards for Military Environmental Registry Exams to Protect Veterans
- Guidance on Patient Specimen Shipments - UPS shipping
- Guidance on Preparedness for Mechanical Ventilation of COVID-19 patients during Pandemic
- VA met with OIRA and OMB on MISSION Act considerations. VA is not pausing the MISSION Act. The department is ensuring the best medical interests of Veterans are met by adhering to the law in a manner that takes into account whether referrals for community care are clinically appropriate during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- VA is no longer considering issuing a temporary waiver of the >90% bed hold requirement and the 75% Veteran bed requirement for State Veterans Homes to help ensure they remain solvent during this crisis. After further review, OGC advised that VA has no authority to waive the regulatory requirement. In addition, we were asked to review draft legislative language that would waive the above requirement. The State Homes have a hotline to Congress so we assume this is something they asked for and we will support.
- A total of 631 Transition Assistance events have been cancelled to date due to installation restrictions. We are offering these transition related courses virtually (via eLearning) to all Servicemembers and their families.
- VBA continues to exceed output targets for some benefits during the pandemic
  - Last week, Veterans filing claims for Education benefits continued to receive decisions on original claims in 15 days and on supplemental claims in under seven days, well below target levels of 28 days for original claims and 14 days for supplemental claims.
  - Nearly 100 percent of Veterans seeking a loan guaranty certificate of eligibility received it within the goal of 5 days, and approximately 90 percent were delivered within one day.
  - Call Centers are exceeding targets for service delivery—last week, Veterans needing to discuss their claims or benefits with a call center agent waited an average of one minute to speak to an agent, with 88 percent of callers reaching an agent within our target of two minutes.
  - VBA is maximizing its use of alternatives to in-person appointments including the use of phone and video capabilities.
- Conducted a "Lunch and Learn" a virtual online meeting to provide Veteran Service Organizations and community partners access to VA resources including COVID-19 response resources.

- Published VETResources to a total of 10.7M Veterans via email (25 March 2020).
- Acting PDUSH met with NYC Emergency Management Commissioner to discuss need for HHS tasking, sharing of data, and the process for referral of COVID positive and negative patients, preferably Veterans, to be admitted at VA facilities.
- Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System (DEMPS) activation memo issued and recruitment initiated for New Orleans and Manhattan
- Area Emergency Managers supporting repatriation centers:
    - Travis and Lackland demobilizing today (3/26/2020)
    - Dobbins and Miramar will demobilize tomorrow (3/27/2020)
- VA working with various vendors for purchase of Chloroquine Phosphate and ventilators.
- Collaborating with Peace Corps who has 7,000 volunteers ready to work (due to evacuations); working with them on open position advertising and employment opportunities to support VA's mission during this national emergency and beyond.
- VA identified a potential shortage of 1K nurses in certain hotspots of the nation and is working a combination of solutions to include:
    - Rehire of retired nurses
    - Hire of new employees through special hiring authorities and waivers
    - DEMPS moves from other non-stressed areas in VA
    - Use of the new Open Opportunities, a governmentwide platform offering professional development opportunities to current federal employees, as a central location for federal agencies to post details, microdetails, and/or temporary assignments.
- Collaborating with DOL and DHS/USCIS on a waiver of labor market review for non-citizens.
- Examining with OPM on a waiver or use of existing interchange agreements to detail excepted to competitive positions
- Activating enhanced Tele-ICU hub
- Growing the roster for Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System (DEMPS) volunteers for deployment to New York City and New Orleans.
- To support volunteerism, VHA is authorizing Special Contribution Awards up to the limit and asking OPM for authority to go above $10,000 but under $25,000 where needed and also making an exception to policy (VA Directive 5007) to allow per regulation recruitment, relocation and retention bonuses for any appointment at least 6 months in duration.
- Received shipment of N-95 masks, swabs and test kits for distribution (3/27/2020)
- With support from our Center for Strategic Partnerships, Office of Research and Development is establishing agreements with two commercial Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) that has allowed four of our medical centers to join in ongoing COVID-19 clinical trials and positions us to be ready for any future trials using these IRBs. VA opened trials in Palo Alto, Atlanta, New Orleans and Denver, where VA is seeing a surge of COVID patients.
- Issued joint guidance with Pension & Fiduciary Service and Appeals Management Office that the COVID-19 pandemic qualifies as "good cause" for granting extension requests. Specifically, if a claimant requests an extension to file forms or documents because the COVID-19 pandemic affected their ability to meet such deadlines, VBA will grant the requested extension, provided the time period expired on or after March 13, 2020 (the date the President issued a national emergency).
- Collaborating with the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association to let that community participate in helping VA fill its openings.
- Certain VA national cemeteries, located on active military installations, are being impacted by changes in base access (Fort Richardson, AK; Leavenworth, KS). Due to a change in base operating status, the general public is restricted from accessing the cemetery located on the base. NCA has

coordinated with base authorities to ensure funeral homes are able to access the cemetery so direct casket/cremation interment operations are still available (without the option to "witness"). (3/27/2020)

- Currently supporting approximately 2,500 concurrent telehealth appointments, with a goal of 10,000 concurrent appointments (3/27/2020)
- VA OGC partnered with the VA Voluntary Service to create a universal gift form for distribution within VA listing general departmental needs during the COVID-19 emergency. Each VAMC Director can solicit and accept the listed donations pursuant to VHA Directive 4721, VHA General Post Fund – Gifts and Donations. (3/27/2020)
- VA send new (coordinated) guidance to the field on MISSION Act considerations (3/27/20).
- VA released the VHA COVID-19 Response Plan which provides guidance to the field. The operations plan includes strategies to address a large number of COVID-19 cases to include alternative sites of care for Veterans with COVID-19. (3/27/20)
- VA Veterans Health Administration sent the following guidance to the field (3/27/2020)
  - Delegation of Authority – Group Recruitment and Retention Incentives for Title 38 Employees
  - Recruitment, Hiring and Organizational Changes During COVID-19
  - COVID-19 VHACO Clinician Request
  - Postponement of Long-Term Care Surveys
  - Establishment of New Hire Processing Timeline
  - Office of Nursing Services Recruitment – Retired Annuitants and Travel Nurse Corps
- Developing language for HHS sub-task on FEMA Mission Assignment to VHA for $1.5M in pharmaceutical support to Javits shelter in NYC.
- Assisting Homeless Program on development of Assessment and Recovery Center.
- Executing Mission Assignment as directed by and in coordination with FEMA in support of the New York State request. VHA will provide 15 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and 35 Acute Care beds at the Manhattan/Brooklyn VAMC for immediate and short-term medical treatment of civilian (non-veteran) patients from city hospitals as required. (3/28/2020)
- Recommending OMP delay Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) by 3 months. VA is considering delay of VA's annual All Employee Survey (AES) to September.
- OPM approved direct hire authority for the following VBA positions: Veterans Service Representative; Rating Veterans Service Representative; Legal Administrative Specialist.
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), approximately 1,626 families have postponed scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns.
- For the past week, overall interments/inurnments are down in national cemeteries compared to last year by nearly 40% (2020: 1,219 interments/inurnments vs. 2019: 1,970 interments)
- Modifying Bulletin on waiving physical examinations during COVID-19 to address stress on Employee Occupational Health (EOH) offices who are focused on COVID-19 screening.
- NY Harbor VA Hospital received four civilian patients from Elmhurst Hospital. One was in respiratory failure and admitted to the ICU. Information about the other three is pending. (3/29/2020)
  - Four to five additional patients are expected overnight from Elmhurst Hospital.
  - The five patients that were to be transferred from Lincoln Hospital have not arrived yet.
- VA Office of Information and Technology (OIT) will complete circuit installs at all four gateways by April 3rd doubling bandwidth to 160GBs. We have also upgraded the number of concurrent Skype sessions in Gateway East, North and South, with Gateway West pending. The number of sessions increasing to 5000 at each gateway. These upgrades will allow for greater bandwidth, increased telework and increased telehealth to aid in our COVID-19 response. (3/29/2020)

- Working modifications to HRSmart to support mass hiring to support deployable medical personnel. 3/29/2020)
- Submitting request to OPM for broad authority to approve Special Contribution Awards (SCA) above the $10K agency limit; drafting changes to current policy (VAH 5017) to delegate from SECVA to EIC authority to approve SCAs up to $10K.
- VA OGC provided legal support for several important research projects in furtherance of efforts to develop a therapy for the COVID-19 infection. OGC is negotiating on an expedited basis a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) between Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc. and the Atlanta VA Health Care System to assess the efficacy and safety of a drug approved by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) for another use on Veterans hospitalized with COVID-19.
- VA working an Agreement with Reliance for the use of Advarra as the commercial IRB of record for a COVID-19 study using Gilead's Remdesvir at the Palo Alto VA Medical Center.
- VA OGC negotiated to allow the VA James J. Peters Medical Center, Bronx, New York to partner with Genentech/Roche and participate in study to evaluate the safety and efficacy of Tocilizumab (Actemra) in patients with severe COVID-19 pneumonia in the hope that that drug can interrupt a serious inflammatory response that can occur as a complication of some infections. The drug has been cleared by the FDA as a treatment for several forms of arthritis and also as a cancer therapy.
- On March 30th, the Denver Logistics Center (DLC) will receive a shipment of 500 iPads for the VA Video Connect (VVC) Community. These iPads are designed to allow "skype" type appointments between the Veteran patient and the Care Provider. The DLC will prepare the iPads for immediate shipment to fulfill backorders.
- VA received a new Mission Assignment to provide 20 (5 ICU and 15 Med Surge) beds for non-veteran patients in East Orange, NJ.
- Coordinated with FEMA/HHS Region IX, Arizona State officials, and Navajo Nation officials regarding cluster of cases in Tuba City, AZ and potential impacts to Veterans and VA facility.
- As of close of business on Sunday, March 29, 2020, VBA contract vendors had reported a cumulative total of **33,379** unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic.
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S., families have postponed **1,940** scheduled funeral services citing COVID-19 concerns. (3/30
- Notified HR offices on COVID-19 Excepted Service Hiring Authority for Schedule A approved by OPM. this allows us to quickly hire any Title 5 positions that are in direct response COVID-19. VA may use this to fill positions on a temporary basis for up to one year as needed in response to, or as a result of COVID-19. (3/30/2020)
- Deployed a second VEText based message to our Veterans that have a mobile phone number registered with VA at 1200 EST today (3/30/2020);
  - The text will reach approximately 7.1 million Veterans and take 8 hours to send to all recipients.
  - The message: "Dept of Veterans Affairs COVID-19 update: Stay home, stay safe, stay connected. VA has online tools for your appointments, prescriptions, and more. https://go.usa.gov/xdJkp
- Developed a COVID-19 quick start guide (QSG) to be posted as part of the VA welcome kit and broadly distributed to Veterans. This distribution includes:
  - All MOU partners (corporate partners), Veteran Service Organizations (VSO), posted on social media pages (Twitter, Facebook, etc.), VA Program Offices for sharing across their partner networks, National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA). (3/30/2020)
- VHA Executive In Charge, Richard Stone and Assistant Secretary from Management Jon Rychalski briefed HVAC Chairman Takano on the $19.6 Billion received in the supplemental funding bill (3/30/2020)

- VA conducted 3,094 concurrent telehealth appointments yesterday, a new high-water mark (3/31/2020)
- Coordinated with Department of Treasury to suspend the collection of all debt owed to VA until May 31, 2020 for any Veterans seeking debt assistance due to COVID-19. This includes suspending referrals to the Treasury Offset (TOP) and Cross Servicing (CS) processes.
- OPM sending VA job opportunities to over 1M retirees.
- VA All Employee Survey postponed until September 2020.
- Notified Human Resources (HR) offices of the Federal employee leave provisions under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the requirement to post the Families First Coronavirus Response Act Notice at VA facilities.
- In accordance with OMB and VA COVID-19 guidance, National Diversity Internship Program (NDIP) FY 20 summer session has been cancelled.
- VHA New Guidance to the field (3/31/2020):
  - Leveraging Capacity to Support Surges in Demand for COVID-19
  - Credentialing and Privileging COVID-19 (Reduced credentialing process for providers in order to expedite onboarding of critical medical staff)
  - Resilience Rehabilitation Treatment Programs (RRTP) Hardening Guidance (Details guidance on efforts to protect staff and patients in our Domiciliary Units)
  - Supplemental Information - Radiology and Nuclear Scheduling and Orders Management During the COVID-19 Pandemic
  - Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Guidance for Urgent and Emergent Surgical Procedures
  - Guidance on Access Standards in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updated (coordinated with OMB)
- Invocation of the Defense Production Act (DPA) resulted in confusion in the commercial sector as to how to prioritize orders, resulting in delays and cancellations on orders and deliveries to VA. Under the DPA, the FEMA Task Force, used its authority to divert materiel originally offered to VA for delivery to the SNS.
  - VA orders for masks, gowns, gloves, and PARP have been cancelled by our vendors. This is high risk for not only our enterprise, but for the Administration as our hospitals will be without supplies starting late this week.
  - FEMA and HHS have been made aware; VA is awaiting resolution from them.
    *Issue has since been resolved
- Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System Deployments (Various Specialties) (4/1/2020)
  - (27) Personnel being processed for deployment.
  - (14) Personnel deployed/on the ground at various locations.
  - (2) VISNS requested personnel deployed through DEMPS
- Mobile Vet Center Update as of 4/1/2020:
  - New Orleans, LA Mobile Vet Center Deployment Ended. Vet Center staff connected with 100 Veterans, Servicemembers and families over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 71 civilians. Deployment ended 30 Mar 2020. One deployed employee is currently under investigation with symptoms and awaiting test results. As a precaution, all deployed staff (4 total individuals) will telework for 14 days monitoring for symptoms before returning to work at their respective Vet Centers.
  - Pasadena, CA operations started on 31 Mar 2020.
  - Portland, OR operations started on 31 Mar 2020.

- New York, NY operations started on March 31, 2020. There will be no physical Mobile Vet Center but counselors and outreach staff will be at the Javits Center to provide direct counseling to Veterans, Servicemembers, and their families.

- VA OGC advised that the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has the authority during the COVID-19 global pandemic emergency to procure lodging for employees working at their local worksite (e.g., if staff have a need to stay away from their homes/family members and continue to work (e.g. Emergency Department physicians), or a need to stay close by for faster response time, if VHA documents in writing why it has concluded that this event at all or some facilities involves imminent danger to human life and why paying for employee meals and lodging is necessary to combat that imminent danger.
- VA Acquisition Office is working with the VHA's Care in the Community Program Office to establish a Global Nurse Advice Line contract to support increased phone consults for Veteran care in support of Coronavirus.
- VA Acquisition Office is working with VHA to contract with Battelle for use of their Critical Care Decontamination Systems (CCDS) that can sanitize 80K N95 masks per day. There are two units in operation – New York and Camp Murray, WA.
- Assistant Secretary HRA/OSP and Assistant Secretary OIT co-signed a memorandum dated March 31 outlining temporary procedures for personnel security vetting and appointment of new employees and alternative PIV credentials for eligible users during Coronavirus 2019 National Emergency; this guidance implements direction issued to executive departments and agencies from the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Personnel Management.
- VHA Guidance Issued to the Field: (4/1/2020)
  - COVID-19 Definitions of Bed Categories
  - Suspension of Registered Nurse Transition to Practice Residency Program
  - COVID - Clinical Resource Hub Guidance
  - Guidance for the Hiring Compensation and Utilization of Alternate Nurse and Unlicensed Assistive Personnel
  - COVID-19 - Process for Cancellation of Non-urgent Operating Room Procedures
- SECVA hosted a phone call with VSO leaders to provide them with an update on VA's response to the COVID 19 Pandemic. This will be a weekly call going forward. (4/1/2020)
- Published public blog with guidance for Veterans/Caregivers seeking access to DoD facilities. (4/1/2020)
- Provided guidance on March 26 to field claims processors and the public on good cause for extending claims filing deadlines based on COVID-19. (4/1/2020)
  - Specifically, under existing VA regulations, if the time limits within which claimants or beneficiaries are required to act in order to perfect a claim, file an appeal, or challenge an adverse VA decision expired, the time may be extended for "good cause" shown.
  - Accordingly, claimants impacted by COVID-19 may request an extension for filing based on good cause. VBA regional office claims processors will grant the extension request, provided the time limit in question expired on or after March 13, 2020.
- **FEMA Mission Assignments Update:** 4 signed (4/2/2020)
  1. Resource Request: National Level Activation – Activate VA to locations identified by FEMA.
     - Status: Complete. 10 VHA Office of Emergency Management Liaisons deployed to each FEMA Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC)
  2. Resource Request: VHA Pharmaceutical and medication supply to support ESF8 response operations
     - Status: In progress. Validating actual requirements. VA will meet Veteran needs first.

3. Resource Request: NYS requests VHA provide 15 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and 35 Acute Care beds at the Manhattan/Brooklyn VAMC for immediate and short-term medical treatment for non-veteran patients.
    - Status: In progress; 22 of the 50 beds are filled by non-veterans and many of the patients arrive in critical condition. One civilian death at the Brooklyn VAMC.
4. Resource Request: VHA will provide 5 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and 15 Acute Care beds at the East Orange VAMC for non-veteran patients.
    - Status: In progress; status of beds unknown

- VA resolved the issue with FEMA and HHS regarding contracts under the DPA; working with FEMA to ensure VA is included in the National Supply Chain Priorities List. (4/2/2020)
- Regional response coordination center liaison officers receiving multiple inquiries regarding the pharmaceutical MA and PPE and medical supplies for state VA nursing homes under the supplemental appropriation
- JAVITS NY Medical Station and USNS Comfort Transfer guidance received
- VA processed 156,438 disability compensation and pension rating claims in March 2020, besting the prior record of 135,324, set in March 2014 (16% increase over prior best March output). This is significant evidence that VA is still providing world class service to Veterans during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
    - VBA is maintaining all phases of full business operations as we are maximizing telework (96% of employees) and continuing to reach veterans via phone and video appointments.
    - Veterans seeking assistance with claims may reach us via phone or email and may file claims through va.gov or via mail.
    - If a Veteran or claimant requests an extension for filing based on the COVID-19 pandemic, VBA will grant the extension under the good cause provision.

- Per HHS guidance, Office of Information Technology (OIT) has suspended privacy restrictions and will allow doctors to use technologies such as FaceTime and Google Hangouts for telehealth appointments. (4/2/2020)
- Notified HR offices of the Federal employee leave provisions under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the requirement to post the Families First Coronavirus Response Act notice at VA facilities. This provides up to two weeks (up to 80 hours) of emergency paid sick leave to all federal civil service employees if they are unable to work (or telework) under specified circumstances related to COVID-19 – unless they are in an exempted category.
- Direct Hire Authority allowed by OPM for certain additional positions in NCA and VHA.
- The Board of Veterans Appeals has scheduled 61 virtual hearings the week on March 30. To date, the Board has successfully completed 361 virtual hearings.
- Conducted a "Lunch and Learn" virtual online meeting to provide Veteran Service Organizations and community partners information on VA Mental Health resources and highlight the Cohen Veterans Network (CVN) mental health initiatives.
    - The recorded session is here: http://va-eerc-ees.adobeconnect.com/veocvebllcohen/
- White House VA Hotline and MyVA311 Call centers remain fully operational.
    - 3035 Total Covid-19 calls have been answered by the MyVA311 call center.
- Under Secretary for VBA Paul Lawrence and Executive in Charge for VHA Richard Stone briefed Rep. Takano, Rep. Roe, Sen. Tester and Sen. Moran on COVID-19 Responses for Health and Benefits. (4/2/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie briefed Sen. Boozman on Appropriations related issues. (4/2/2020)

- VA announced today a number of actions to provide Veterans with financial, benefits and claims help amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The financial relief actions include the following until further notice: (4/3/2020)
    - Suspending all actions on Veteran debts under the jurisdiction of the Treasury Department.
    - Suspending collection action or extending repayment terms on preexisting VA debts, as the Veteran prefers.
    - For Veterans who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and need immediate action on their appeals, as opposed to a filing extension, the Board of Veterans' Appeals will Advance their appeal on Docket (AOD). Click here to find out how to file for AOD and what documentation is required.
- Secretary briefed the FEMA Task Force today. VA is prepared to open 1500 beds across our system to help relieve the pressure on states and localities. Each Veterans Affairs network has put in place contingency plans to expand the number of beds available, first for veterans and then our fellow citizens. (4/3/2020)
- VA contracted with Battelle for use of their Critical Care Decontamination Systems (CCDS) to sanitize N95 masks for Brooklyn, Manhattan, and East Orange, NY medical centers. Great partnership with HHS and FDA led to the approval to reuse masks 20x after sanitization. (4/3/2020)
- VA has administered more than 18,900 tests and has more than 3,000 additional tests on hand. (4/3/2020)
- Contract awarded for Alternate Care Sites-Four (4) 125 bed, soft-sided, portable medical structure. Awaiting delivery and selection of sites. (4/3/2020)
- Contract awarded for Mobile Field Hospital. Awaiting delivery and selection of site. (4/3/2020)
- Starting Thursday, April 9, 2020, NCA will no longer provide the option for families to witness interments at Calverton National Cemetery to help improve workload efficiency and increase the capacity of interment operations at this cemetery, which is located in the NYC epicenter. This change is being communicated to funeral homes in NY and families with interments scheduled on this date and beyond.
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), families have postponed 2,077 scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns. 8 COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries
- Increased enrollment and turnover of patients into the Home Telehealth (HT) program is overloading the ability of logistics to acquire the HT items. Primary shortages are thermometers and pulse-oximeters. Home Telehealth's new COVID-19 requirements to monitor COVID-19 higher risk patients have increased the burden on the supply chain. Program Offices are notifying the HT Care Coordinators to return these shortage items to the Denver Logistics Center for refurbishment and re-issue.
- OPM has authorized VA Direct Hire Authority for one year for the following positions at all grade levels nationwide for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency: Industrial Hygienist, GS-0690 Plumber, WG-4206 Maintenance Worker, WG-4749 Supervisory Engineer, GS-0801 Specialty Engineer, GS-0800 Laborer, WG-3502 Cook, WG-7404 Cemetery Caretaker, WG-4754. OPM has also authorized DHA for the following occupation and at this specific grade level: Human Resources Specialist, GS-0201-12.
- Veterans Group Life Insurance: Prudential has extended grace periods by 90-days for premium payments and reinstatements, including the time allowed to submit the Attending Physician Statement (APS) required for some medical underwriting applications.
- VHA Executive in Charge Richard Stone briefed House Veterans Affairs, Senate Veterans Affairs and Appropriation Committee staff members on COVID-19 response.

- Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Michigan on Thursday, April 2 focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 31,582 participants.
- **VHA Guidance to the field:**
  - Changes to In-Person Identity Verification for the My HealtheVet Website
  - COVID-19 Bed Expansion Planning Signed
  - Move! Weight Management Program Guidance for COVID-19 Pandemic Response
  - EIC Memorandum Authorization to pay for Lodging and Meals
  - Contracted Outpatient Sites of Care COVID-19 Virtual Care Information and Updates
- VA has increased telehealth capacity by 15% to 11,000 max concurrent user call capacity
- VA OIT has implemented a plan for mid-April to have 15 high priority sites enabled for tele-ICU
- Mobile Vet Center Deployment Update (4/4/2020)
  - New York, NY (Deployment Started)
    Operation Gotham at the Javits Center in New York City began to receive patients on the afternoon of 31 March 2020. Vet Center staff connected with 64 Service members over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 2 civilians.
  - Pasadena, CA (Deployment Started)
    Operation started on 1 April 2020 and ended April 3. Minimal contact, will seek a better location.
  - Portland, OR (Deployment Started)
    Operation started on 31 March 2020 and staff are located in a shopping center in Portland, OR. Vet Center staff connected with 40 Veterans, Service members and families over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 12 civilians
  - Altoona, PA (Deployment Started)
    MVC stationed at VAMC to assist with screening. Veteran Outreach Program Specialist on site.
  - Dayton, OH (Under Development)
    Request Mobile Vet Center at Dayton Medical Center to assist with COVID screening, will begin Monday April 6
- Medical Centers are experiencing serious PPE shortage. Several sites doing 3D printing, but it is not enough. Soon, PPE will be rationed; one surgical mask issued per week, one N95 per day. VISN 6 began mask sterilization with Berrett – 2400 mask in a 24-hour period. (4/4/2020)
- Developing requirements for Morgue Expansion Capabilities. (4/4/2020)
- Working to identify medical consumables/equipment for recently purchased Field ICU Unit. Location for deployment of Unit still under consideration. (4/4/2020)
- Developing policy on the ability of VA law enforcement personnel, with proper notice, to inspect the personal effects of employees exiting VA healthcare facilities in order to prevent the theft of personal protective equipment needed to protect health care workers during the on-going public health emergency. This is becoming an issue during the Pandemic. (4/4/2020)
- VA released a press statement extending financial, benefits and claims relief to veterans. The financial relief actions include suspending all actions on Veteran debts under the jurisdiction of the Treasury Department and suspending collection action or extending repayment terms on preexisting VA debts, as the Veteran prefers.
- **Update on Additional Mission Assignments (4/5/2020)**
  - The VA Medical Center in Boise, Idaho is providing assistance and support for diagnostic testing for the Idaho Dept. of Health and Welfare
  - VA is providing a 53-foot pharmacy trailer and one technical specialist to Detroit, Michigan for a 30 day deployment to help the city.

- The Manchester, NH VA Medical Center is providing 20 nursing staff to assist with two Massachusetts State run Veterans Nursing homes who have been hard hit by COVID-19.

- VA sent a list of critical PPE supplies with requested quantities to RADM Polowczyk, Supply Chain Sub-Task Force Director for consideration and prioritization. (4/5/2020)
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), families have postponed 2,244 scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns. 55 COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries (4/5/2020)
- Mobile Pharmacy Mission Assignment is set up at the Convention Center in Detroit. Patients have yet to be admitted to the hospital. (4/6/2020)
- VA Supply Chain Update:
    - Order for 20M Masks (sitting at a warehouse in Chicago) was sold out from under us today from a broker in Norway. (4/6/2020)
- National Acquisition Center's (NAC) Service & Distribution Center is providing additional warehouse space for VHA ordered and FEMA provided PPE products; VHA to identify space required and delivery schedules. (4/6/2020)
- As of April 3, VBA has temporarily suspended all in-person appointments provided by VBA's contract examination vendors, where the Veteran physically reports to the medical provider's office. The contract exam vendors will continue to complete as many examinations as possible using virtual means that do not involve an in-person examination, including tele-exams and ACE. For some disabilities, in-person examinations are required and cannot be completed through an alternate method. (4/6/2020)
- VA signed a memorandum regarding the Child Care Subsidy Program that has temporarily expanded the total family income ceiling from $89,999 to the maximum limit of $144,000 for support during the COVID-19 crisis; allows eligible employees to seek reimbursement on some child-care costs. (4/6/2020)
- Veterans Health Administration guidance sent to field: (4/6/2020)
    - Grade and Pay Determinations for Nurses/Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA) During COVID-19
    - Homeless Program Office (HPO) Guidance on Face to Face Visits
    - On-Hand Inventory Reporting Requirements for Critical Care and Coronavirus Drugs
    - Update: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Facemask and N95 Respirator Use
    - Tip Sheet for Caregivers During COVID-19
    - VHA COVID 19 Priorities During Transition to VA's New EHRM
    - COVID-19 Employee Deployment - Special Contribution Award Guidance
- VA Public Health, Coronavirus website to provide Veterans & Staff guidance and information now active. Website visited 191,348 times with 172,253 unique visits (4/6/2020)
- VA Chief Acquisition Officer briefed House Veterans Affairs Minority Staff on procurement, supply chain, etc. (4/6/2020)
- New Mission Assignment: Deployment of a 53-foot mobile pharmacy truck to Chicago, IL will be completed today (4/7/2020)
- Mobile Vet Center (MVC) Update: (4/7/2020)
    - Altoona, PA (Deployment Started). MVC stationed at VAMC to assist with COVID-19 screening. Veteran Outreach Program Specialist on site.
    - Dayton, OH (Deployment Under Development). Request for MVC stationed at VAMC to assist with COVID-19 screening.

  - New York, NY (Deployment Paused). Vet Center staff have connected with 99 service members over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 2 civilians
  - Pasadena, CA and Portland, OR deployments ended
- Identified a total of 20 tribal governments that have Emergency Declarations
- Continuing to roster DEMPS volunteers for deployments (Various Specialties) (4/8/2020)
  - Total Volunteers: 1406
  - (199) Personnel in process
  - (45) Personnel deployed on the ground
- The Board of Veterans Appeals has 67 virtual hearings scheduled for the week on April 6th. To date, the Board has successfully completed 376 virtual hearings. Through April 5th, the Board has signed 54,298 decisions. (4/7/2020)
- Boston Regional Benefits Office – Implemented two-week suspension of local mail processing effective April 7, 2020, ending April 21, 2020 during the anticipated peak in COVID-19 infections in the Boston community. Employees will not be authorized to access any of the three Boston, Manchester, White River Junction (BMW) facilities without prior approval as determined by the Director or Assistant Director on a case-by-case basis. (4/7/2020)
- Calverton National Cemetery (closest to NYC Epicenter) is seeing an increase in internment rates. On average, Calverton performs 20 interments daily. Yesterday, the cemetery performed 31 interments – 9 were COVID related. For the remainder of the week, the cemetery has over 30 interments scheduled each day. NCA is building capacity (personnel and contract support) to handle 40 per day by next week. (4/7/2020)
- Published policy revision updates to VA Handbook 5005 to remove the requirement for Professional Standards Boards for the following occupations listed in 38 U.S.C. § 7401 (3), which will reduce the time to hire for these positions by streamlining the process: physical therapy assistant; occupational therapy assistant; marriage family therapist; therapeutic radiologic technologist; kinesiotherapist; orthotist and prosthetist; medical records administration; blind rehabilitation specialist; blind rehabilitation outpatient specialist; licensed professional mental health counselor, prosthetic representative; nuclear medicine technologist; occupational therapist; physical therapist; dietitian and nutritionist; medical records technician; and therapeutic medical physicist. (4/7/2020)
- VA has decided to defer the Leadership VA (LVA) FY20 Class until FY21 and increase the size from 80 to 100 to make up for some of the leadership development throughput lost from postponing the current cohort. (4/7/2020)
- Veterans Health Administration Guidance to the Field: (4/7/2020)
  - COVID-19 VHA Guidance for Tuberculosis Testing of New Employees
  - Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) Compliance Inspection During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Accreditation Contract Delayed
  - 2020 US Census Participation for Veterans in VA Residential Settings
  - Continuity in Mental Health Services and Suicide Prevention Activities During COVID-19
  - COVID-19 Temporary/Expedited Appointment Credentialing Process
  - Release of Updated Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 and New FY 2021 Basic and Prevailing State Home Per Diem Rates for State Veteran Homes
  - Focused Professional Practice Evaluation and Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation Process during Presidential Declared State of Emergency – COVID-19
  - Guidance on Anticoagulation Use and Monitoring for Veterans Health Administration Anticoagulation Programs During VHA's COVID-19 Emergency Response
  - Contact Center Script and Screening (COVID-19) Updated
- The COVID Quick Start Guide (QSG) is now posted on https://www.va.gov/welcome-kit/ (4/7/2020)

- Advertising Campaign for VHA recruiting begins broadcasting this week in select markets and outlets. (4/7/2020)
- VA/VHA CFOs briefed HAC and SAC staffers (4 Corners) on VHA's Supplemental Funding distribution plan for the Families First and CARES Acts. (4/7/2020)
- VA developing "live" map journal to model next VA "hot spots" for our healthcare system (4/8/2020)
- PREVENTS is reaching out to Vets during the COVID crisis, releasing informational videos and concrete steps that Veterans and their families can take to care for their emotional well-being under the tag #MoreThanEverBefore and with the help of lead PREVENTS Ambassador Second Lady Karen Pence. (4/8/2020)
- Telemental health services being provided during COVID-19:
  - VA mental health providers have doubled telephone outreach calls from normal rate (over 76,000 calls in March)
  - VA mental health providers have tripled video connect appointments (over 63,000 appointments in March).
- #LiveWholeHealth-Self Care Resources campaign for Veterans during Coronavirus crisis just launched. (4/8/2020)
  - The first Vantage and first Facebook post of a self-care resource blog went out. A blog post will be going out every day with an associated Facebook post.
  - https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/73363/live-whole-health-self-care-episode-1/
- Human Resources and Administration office briefed House Veterans Affairs and Senate Veteran's Affairs Committee staff on workforce challenges during COVID-19. The briefing covered 1) what VA is doing to recruit/hire nurses and staff; 2) how VA is keeping staff safe; 3) how VA is incorporating feedback from union leaders and safety officers during this COVID-19 response. (4/8/2020)
- USB hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Pennsylvania on Tuesday, April 7, focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates. The event reached over 30,000 participants. (4/8/2020)
- VA released the following press statements: (4/8/2020)
  - CARES Act helping VA boost protections for Veterans - The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has begun implementing the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act or CARES Act, signed into law March 27, to protect America's Veterans. (Approved by TF) (4/8/20)
  - VA appeals production at all time high - The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) VA Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) hit a production milestone, April 1, at the fiscal year (FY) 2020 halfway point issuing more than 52,000 decisions which is approximately 15% more than the previous year. (4/8/20)
- VA received one new Mission Assignment for 35 beds in Michigan. 10 of those will be ICU beds. (4/9/2020)
- VA was prepared to accept a donation of 1 million N-95 masks and other PPE from Salesforce. However, FEMA General Counsel determined that the donation was too large for VA to accept. Secretary Wilkie sent a formal letter to FEMA Administrator asking for authority to accept the donation OR purchase the materials directly. (4/9/2020)
- Received approval from DOD to use MilAir, when aircraft and pilots are available, to deploy medical staff due to challenges with booking commercial flights (Awaiting first assignment) (4/10/2020)
- Our contracting office has drafted and disseminated an updated policy letter from the Senior Procurement Executive to all VA Heads of Contracting Activities, providing information on acquisition flexibilities in response to this National Emergency. This policy allows for more flexibilities in the procurement of supplies and services in response to the National Emergency. (4/9/2020)

- Secretary Wilkie conducted update calls on VA's response to COVID with House Appropriations MilConVA Subcommittee Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman-Shultz, House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Jerry Moran (4/9/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie participated in a conference call on mental health services with the President, First Lady, the Vice President, Second Lady and HHS Sec. Alex Azar. (4/9/2020)
- USB hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Ohio on Wednesday, April 8, focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates. The event reached over 33,000 participants. (4/9/2020)
- VA published a circular on Loan Guaranty Service to inform the public of changes due to CARES Act which requires a moratorium on foreclosures of Federally backed mortgage loans and a forbearance period for payments on such loans for borrowers who are experiencing a financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to the COVID–19 emergency. (4/9/2020)
- VA Public Health, Coronavirus website has been visited 213,360 (+4,320) times with 191,405 (+3,642) unique visits. (4/9/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie sent a memo to the President requesting Advanced Payment Authority to add increased flexibility in procurement of critical medical supplies to aid in VA's response to COVID-19. While other agencies already have this flexibility, the Department of Veterans Affairs is NOT covered. Awaiting POTUS signature (4/10/20)

- Continued development of plan on how VA might assist IHS and other tribal nations health systems (4/10/2020)
- Determining the need of resourcing second order of trailers for fatality management (4/10/2020)
- VA awarded an $8M urgent sole source contract to SDV Office Systems for 97 Tablo® Helodialysis Systems for treating patients with COVID-19 infection. The contractor will deliver as many units as possible before July 31, 2020. The need is particularly pressing for patients with end-stage kidney disease being treated with intermittent hemodialysis (HD). (4/10/2020)
- Update on Mask sterilization efforts with Battelle: (4/10/2020)
    - Sites either currently running or will be running within two weeks: Stoneybrook, NY; Brooklyn, NY; Plain City, OH; Boston, MA; Chicago, IL; Washington, DC
    - Planned future states: Connecticut, New Jersey, Indiana, Florida, Texas, Michigan
- VA received approval from OPM to waive the salary off-set for 2210 (Grades 07-15) and 340 series (Grades 12-14) positions. (4/11/2020)
- VA received notice of investigation from GAO in regard to implementation of the CARES Act. GAO insinuated this would start immediately. This provides significant challenges due to our response to COVID and that our offices, especially our Health Administration cannot take time away from caring for Veterans to provide information and interview to GAO (4/11/2020)
- Sent a Mental-health focused VEText message today, Friday 4/10 to be distributed to ~9 million Veterans (4/10/2020)
- Published *Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Financial Relief Actions and Time Limit Extensions* to VBA's Fact Sheets site. (4/10/2020)
- Published VBA COVID-19 FAQs on April 09, 2020 to help address routine and non-urgent questions. (4/10/2020)
- COVID-19 Messaging Update: Since the issuance of the Presidential Order of the National Emergency (31 Jan 2020), there has been a total of 307,731,582 e-mail messages sent. Of that total, 146,046,389 were COVID-19 related e-mails. This is a percentage of 47.5% demonstrating VA's active approach to information sharing to our Veterans and the Public (4/10/2020)

- To Date, there are 96 virtual hearings scheduled for the week of April 6. **To date, the board has successfully completed 447 virtual hearings**. (4/11/2020)
- VA distributed the following Press Release (4/11/2020)
    - VA's Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System provides surge-support to combat COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5417
- Supply Chain Update (4/11/2020)
    - VA request to POTUS for Advanced Payment Authority was approve and signed by POTUS (4/11/2020)
    - VA completed a temporary delegation which will apply to the Federal Supply Schedule for Healthcare Staffing Services' ceiling price determination for field contracting officers to use. This delegation, which is available for use until July 1, 2020, will provide immediate nursing staff augmentation for our medical centers. (4/11/2020)
    - VA reported to OIG regarding a potential case of price gouging. DOJ issued a press release on April 10th concerning the arrest of Christopher Parris, who attempted to sell VA $750 million of nonexistent masks and other PPE: https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/georgia-man-arrested-attempting-defraud-department-veterans-affairs-multimillion-dollar-covid
    - GSA has approved VA Health IT DPA Authority
- 2 Medical Centers have a greater than 70% occupancy of Med/Surg beds with COVID patients: Bronx, NY (86% occupancy) and Boston, MA (72%) (4/11/2020)
- VA has issued guidance that starting immediately all CLC Staff and Veterans will be tested for COVID-19. CLCs are VA's nursing homes and care for particularly vulnerable Veterans. (4/11/2020)
- National Cemetery Update: **246 (+55 from yesterday)** COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries (143 completed, 103 pending). Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), families have postponed **2,482 (+238 from last week)** scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns. (4/11/2020)
- As of close of business on April 10, 2020, VBA contract vendors had reported a cumulative total of **88,002** unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic. (4/11/2020)
- American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and the National Nurses United (NNU) unions have begun campaigns amongst their membership to attack VA healthcare facilities over alleged PPE issues. (4/12/2020)
    - AFGE organized a tele-town hall and encouraged members to file OSHA complaints, grievances and contact the press
    - NNU distributed flyers asking their members to call Congress
- Dayton VAMC initiating conversation of capability to support community as Ohio situation continues to worsen (4/12/2020)
- Massachusetts Chelsea Soldiers' Home (Non-VA Facility) (4/12/2020)
    - 7 veteran resident deaths
    - 22 veteran residents who have tested positive
    - 29 staff tested positive
    - VA Boston has accepted patients for care- total count pending
- On April 10th President Trump signed the "VA Tele-Hearing Modernization Act". (4/13/2020)
- OPM approved VA's request for direct hire authority for the following additional 11 positions at all grade levels on a nationwide basis to support COVID-19. The approval begins today and is for one year: personnel security specialist; program support assistant; cemetery representative; health systems specialist; construction control representative; electronics industrial control mechanic;

painter; equipment servicer; air conditioning equipment operator; equipment operator; laundry worker. (4/13/2020)

- Notified HR offices of flexibilities to defer random drug testing in certain conditions due to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. Establishes limited conditions in which a facility director may approve a deferral of a random drug test for an employee occupying a testing designated position. (4/13/2020)
- National Cemetery Administration: Effective, Wednesday, April 15, 2020, witnessing family members will now be asked to view the interment from their cars or the road very near their cars. This change will further promote social distancing at national cemeteries and will be communicated to the funeral home community via Gov Delivery; online and to the Hill via OCLA. Families may continue to visit the gravesite in the days following the interment consistent with CDC guidelines and local travel restrictions. (4/13/2020)
- VA issued the following press release: VA Tele-mental health visits on the rise amid COVID-19
    - https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5418 (4/13/2020)
- Veterans Health Administration Executive in Charge Richard Stone had a phone briefing with HVAC Chairman Mark Takano on VA response to COVID-19 (4/13/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie joined White House Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Doug Hoelscher for a briefing on VA and White House response to COVID-19. Over 200 State and Local Leaders joined the call. Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence and Executive in Charge for the Veterans Health Administration Richard Stone were also on the call. (4/14/2020)
- VA Issued the following press releases: (4/14/2020)
    - VA Mobilizes 3D Printing Resources nationwide to fight COVID-19
    - https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5419
    - VA Announces "Fourth Mission" Actions to Help American Respond to COVID-19
    - https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5420
- Notified HR offices of the required annual notification of VA's United States Flag Recognition Benefit for Deceased Federal Civilian Employees. The Civilian Service Recognition Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-73) authorized a U.S. flag to be furnished to a beneficiary on behalf of an employee who died of injuries incurred in connection with his/her federal employment under specific circumstances. An eligible employee is an individual who: was an employee of the Department (as defined in 5 U.S.C. 2105); and who died on or after December 20, 2011, of injuries incurred in connection with such individual's employment with the Federal Government, suffered as a result of a criminal act, act of terrorism, a natural disaster, or other circumstances as determined by the President. (4/14/2020)
- Based on consultation with the General Services Administration Building Manager and the Federal Protective Service (FPS), Assistant Secretary HRA/OSP signed April 13th letter to FPS to restrict access to VACO facilities by requesting FPS to apply March 18th DHS guidance on entry into VACO buildings, by asking a series of questions to persons entering the building about travel and exposure to COVID. (4/14/2020)
- VA Office of Information Technology has completed 15 sites for Tele-ICU devices plug-in. Completed sites (Phoenix, Brooklyn, Manhattan, New Orleans, Fresno, Tampa, San Francisco, West Palm Beach, San Diego, Miami, Puget Sound, Bronx, Denver, Boston, New Jersey) have the capability to move devices from room to room. (4/14/2020)
- VA Issues the following press release: (4/15/2020)
    - Secretary Wilkie thanks Wounded Warrior Project for $10 million commitment to aid Veterans https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5421
    - VA, Facebook and American Red Cross provide Portal video calling devices to Veterans, caregivers, and families https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5422

- Sec. Wilkie, VHA Executive In Charge Dr. Stone, and Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence held a briefing with over 80 representatives from the Veterans Service Organizations to update our stakeholders on VA's response to COVID-19 (4/15/2020)
- DepSec (PTDO) Powers held separate conference calls with Sen Moran (SVAC Chair), Sen Bozeman (SAC-VA), CM Takano (HVAC Chair), and CM Roe (HVAC Ranking); discussed COVID response (4/15/2020)
- VA's public affairs office has now received over 1,100 COVID related media inquiries as of 4/15/2020
- Under Sec Lawrence hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Wisconsin focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 32,800 participants. (4/15/2020)
- Pennsylvania Governor Wolf signed EO that allows the state to commandeer PPE and ventilators from in-state health care providers and manufacturers and transfer the supplies to other facilities in need in PA. This would have impacting VA's prime vendor. **This issue has since been resolved, the Governor's EO was not intended to stop the flow of supplies to the Federal Government. VA will monitor closely and ensure supplies move as planned. (4/15/2020)**
- VA has submitted requests to Inspector General to investigate two more potentially fraudulent companies offering to sell VA masks (4/16/2020)
- VA has partnered with Facebook to provide more than 7,400 Facebook portal devices. The American Red Cross Military Veteran Caregiver Network will store and ship the devices to qualifying Veterans in pairs. Devices are available today (4/15/2020), for Veterans and their caregivers and families to reduce isolation, improve mental health, wellness, and social connectedness at home. (4/15/2020)
- VA received multiple COVID related grievances from labor unions (4/15/2020)
    - AFGE alleging VA is failing to properly compensate bargaining unit employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. They specifically allege several VA facilities, e.g., Palo Alto VAHCS and Salem VAMC, implemented policies and procedures requiring AFGE bargaining unit employees to report for screenings and questioning during uncompensated periods such as before their shifts and during lunch breaks.
    - NNU alleging VA has failed to: (1) provide appropriate PPE; (2) implement safe policies to ensure nurses are quarantined when exposed to COVID 19 positive patients and staff; (3) provide training and retraining to nurses on best safety practices; and (4) adequately communicate with the union changes in working conditions.
    - NFFE alleging VA has failed to properly pay Hazardous Duty Pay and/or Environmental Differential Pay.
- VHA is in the process of testing all Community Living Center veterans and staff and should have this complete next week. Approximately 7000 veterans live in our CLCs across the nation. (4/16/2020)
- Since the CARES act passed VA has worked with Dept. of Treasury on a solution to ensure that Veterans and Survivors who do not file tax returns and rely solely on VA benefits for income still receive stimulus checks via the CARES Act. (4/16/2020)
    - VA is securely providing beneficiary data to the IRS to ensure that no action will be required of Compensation and Pension benefit payment recipients or surviving family members receiving survivors benefits to receive their 'Economic Impact Payment' (EIP) if they do not file an annual tax return.
    - The IRS has also set up a website portal for Economic Impact Payments (EIP) if veterans, survivors or other non-filers wish to submit their information that way.
    - VA will notify press, stakeholders and Congress of these actions over the coming days.
    - This effort is complete
- Sec. Wilkie had the scheduled weekly call with Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Jerry Moran and Ranking Member Jon Tester. (4/16/2020)

- Sec. Wilkie had the scheduled weekly call with House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano and Ranking Member Phil Roe. (4/16/2020)
- VHA Executive in Charge Dr. Stone held a call with members of the House Appropriations Committee
- Chief Information Officer Jim Gferer held a call with House and Senate MilConVA Subcommittee staff. (4/16/2020)
- Delivered VETResources digital newsletter to 10.7 Million Veterans. Topics included: (4/16/2020)
    - VFW unmet needs program grant funds which provides up to $1,500 to eligible Veterans, service members and military families who face an unexpected financial hardship related to their military service.
    - Facebook portals for Veterans announcement.
    - A call to action for Veterans who have recovered from COVID-19 to donate plasma for other Veterans for COVID-19 treatment.
- VA launched a new website on VA's external blog (4/16/2020) (https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/roll-of-honor/), called the "Roll of Honor". This new webpage page came about as a result of not being able to provide committal services due to the COVID-19 crisis. The site provides an opportunity to remember those Veterans interred during this crisis and reflects interments in our cemeteries starting on April 13. Each day, NCA will add the names; branch of service and location of burial for each Veteran interred in a national cemetery on the previous day. This new website was promoted on Gov Delivery and with our VSO and congressional partners.
- VA acquired the former Garland-Baylor, Scott & White hospital, April 3, to increase its capacity to care for Veterans and support the department's response to COVID-19. The 470,000 square foot facility was donated by Baylor, Scott & White and will eventually serve as an outpatient and specialty care clinic within the VA North Texas Health Care System. The hospital will be able to open Monday April 20. (4/17/2020)
- VSignals is a real-time survey that goes out to veterans when they have contact with VA. Trust score for VHA reported by my VEO Data and PX teams, has maintained a steady increase over the past 4 years with the overall Trust improving from 85% in FY17, to 87% in FY18, to 88% in FY19 and **most recent data from April, 2020 puts Trust at 90%. The excellence of VA's Customer Service and the resulting positive Patient Experience has led to Trust scores improving during this pandemic. (4/17/2020)**
- There are 67 virtual hearings scheduled for the week on April 13th. To date, the Board has successfully completed 516 virtual hearings. Through April 12th, the Board has signed 56,522 decisions, continuing strong output even through COVID-19 Pandemic. (4/17/2020)
- OIT has completed 19 sites Tele-ICU Devices Plug-in - All completed sites (Phoenix, Brooklyn, Manhattan, New Orleans, Fresno, Tampa, San Francisco, West Palm Beach, San Diego, Miami, Puget Sound, Bronx, Denver, Boston, New Jersey, Orlando, Albany, N. California, and Palo Alto for Tele-ICU Expansion and have the capability to move devices from room to room (4/18/2020)
    - OIT will begin Syracuse and Loma Linda today
- VA's My HealtheVet team is hosting a webinar for Veterans about how to access VA telehealth services, in coordination with the Elizabeth Dole Foundation (4/17/2020)
    - My HealtheVet team will focus communications and marketing outreach on enrolling new patients in the coming week
- VA sent out the following press release: VA Partners with IRS/Dept. of Treasury to Deliver Economic Impact Payments. (4/17/2020)
    - https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5423

- As of close of business on April 17, 2020, VBA contract vendors had reported a cumulative total of **107,770** unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic. (4/19/2020)
- Mobile Vet Center (MVC) Update (4/20/2020)
    - MVC providing screening assistance at Altoona, PA; Dayton, OH; El Paso, TX; Ft. Collins, CO
    - MVC providing space for blood draw/services at Sioux Falls, SD
- Revised Guidance on new hire applicant drug testing: April 17 revised bulletin issued updating prior guidance regarding how long an applicant drug test may be postponed; prior bulletin issued on March 25, 2020 advised that due to COVID-19, applicant testing could be postponed for up to 180 days after the applicant's entrance on duty in order for VA to meet emergency hiring needs. The revised bulletin includes the following statement: "It is the responsibility of the HR office to schedule the drug test as soon as practicable, but <u>no later than 90 calendar</u> days from the date of appointment." (4/19/2020)
- VA hosting a Red Cross blood drive in the main building (810 Vermont), next Thursday, April 23, 2020; SECVA to be first donor; Donors will be scheduled every 15 minutes, to stagger the flow and allow for preparation for next donor and there will be no "walk-ins" for this event; Masks will be provided by the Red Cross upon registration; Social distancing (6 feet) will be enforced. (4/19/2020)
- VHA has submitted a request for 10 portable x-rays units and 8 portable ultrasound units in support of COVID-19 response. We expect to award the orders within two workdays. (4/17/2020)
- VA National Acquisition Center FSS coordinated with National Association of State Procurement Officials (NAPSO) authorizing State and Local governments to procure Covid-19 support using FSS vendors/contracts. (4/17/2020)
- OIT has enabled 21 (increase of 4 since last report) sites with tele-ICU capabilities to move devices from room to room (4/19/2020)
    - OIT will begin Western New York and Dublin VAMC Monday
- VA received approval from OPM on its request to waive the 25 percent limit on recruitment, relocation, and individual retention incentives, and the 10 percent limit on group retention incentives for certain occupations that are responding to workload surges due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). (4/20/2020)
- On April 20, 2020, published a notice in the Federal Register which provides that, for the purpose of determining entitlement to benefits, any correspondence that is received by VA from any claimant during the period March 1, 2020 through 60 calendar days from the date the President ends the national state of emergency, that contains claims, information, or evidence, will be considered received on the date of postmark. (4/20/2020)
- ADEPSEC Powers had a call with Senator Brian Schatz (Hawaii), Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee MilConVA (4/20/2020)
- VA sent out the following press releases (4/20/2020)
    - VA's telehealth system grows as Veterans have access to unlimited data while using VA Video Connect https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5426
    - VA, DoD implement new capability for bidirectional sharing of health records with community partners https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5425
    - VA acquires Texas community hospital to fight COVID-19 and care for Veterans in the future https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5424
- Secretary called Comptroller Gene Dodaro and requested that an entrance conference scheduled for Thursday and a subsequent GAO review of VA's COVID-19 Response be postponed until mid/late May due to VA's unique role in responding to the pandemic via our healthcare system and caring for Veterans. Comptroller Dodaro agreed to this request. (4/21/2020)

- Secretary visited the Washington DC hospital today to thank staff and visit veterans. (4/21/2020)
- Responding to numerous requests for help from various states, VA has deployed more than 150 nurses and nursing aides to nearly 20 non-VA nursing homes in nine states while accepting more than 40 non-Veteran residents in department-run nursing homes. (4/21/2020)
- Under Secretary of Memorial Affairs Randy Reeves hosted a phone call with State Leaders to discuss issues regarding our National Cemeteries during COVID-19 (4/21/2020)
- VA Issued the following press releases today: (4/21/2020)
    - Timeline on how VA prepared for COVID-19 outbreak and continues to keep Veterans safe https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5427
    - VA researchers to study COVID-19 in aging Veterans with dementia https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5428
- Under Secretary for Benefits, Paul Lawrence, hosted a Tele-townhall for Veterans in Florida, focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 33,990 participants. (4/21/2020)
- VA has seen significant Call Traffic from 3/23/2020 – 4/20/2020 to MyVA 311 on COVID related matters (4/21/2020)
    - Total COVID-19 Calls: 6,333
    - Total COVID-19 calls Resolved: 4,556 (72% resolution rate)
    - Total Covid-19 calls escalated to Clinical Center for Action: 1,777
- SECVA hosted a teleconference with the Veteran Service Organizations along with VBA Under Secretary Paul Lawrence and VHA Executive in Charge Richard Stone (4/22/2020)
- SECVA hosted a teleconference with the Baltimore Veteran Treatment Court staff to include their Public Defender, District Attorney, veteran mentors and student attorneys. (4/22/2020)
- Provided notices to the field to remind all employees of the services that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers to them and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic (guidance was pre-cleared through OMB/OPM). (4/22/2020)
- Provided guidance of required steps for expediting onboarding for new VA hires. Steps have been streamlined to meet urgent staffing needs created by COVID-19 (guidance was pre-cleared through OMB/OPM). (4/22/2020)
- Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence hosted a Tele-townhall for Veterans in Colorado on Tuesday, April 21, focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 15,400 participants. (4/22/2020)
- Veteran's Health Administration CFO and VA budget staff briefed House and Senate Appropriations staffers on VHA's CARES Act Supplemental Funding supporting the VA Homelessness Program. (4/22/2020)
    - Discussed efforts to date for allocating, executing, and tracking $300 million for homeless Veteran and family member support services.
    - VHA shared COVID-19 related challenges impacting the VA Homelessness Program, including reductions in voucher issuance and move-ins, discontinuing outreach to prisons, etc., and the unknowns related to potential COVID-19 demand/response changes (e.g. shifting hotspots).
- Sec. Wilkie hosted his weekly phone call with Chairman Jerry Moran and Ranking Member Jon Tester of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee (4/23/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie hosted his weekly phone call with Chairman Mark Takano and Ranking Member Phil Roe of the House Veterans Affairs Committee (4/23/2020)
- Total VA email messages sent from January 24, 2020 with reference to COVID-19 and/or Coronavirus in either the subject line or body content up to today: 180,183,128 (increase of 17.9m since last report) (4/23/2020)

- VA email percentage directly related to COVID-19 Outreach is 180,183,128/362,523,574 or 49.7%. (up from 48.7%) (4/23/2020)
- VA has placed over 3,700 TV spots and 700 radio spots with ads featuring Sec. Wilkie and VHA EIC Stone asking healthcare workers to come help VA during COVID (4/23/2020)
- VA Office of Intergovernmental Affairs has already reached out to 250 State Leaders to discuss topics such as support for states, updates or support on State Veterans homes, etc. (4/23/2020)
- The Secretary signed a Delegation of Authority (April 23) that allows VA Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries and Other Key Officials at equivalent level of authority, the authority to exclude an employee, who is a health care provider or emergency responder, from application of the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act, Division E and the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act Division C of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). Accompanying guidance (that was vetted by OMB) was issued to the field as well via a Chief Human Capital Officer Bulletin. (4/23/2020)
- VA launched a COVID-19 chatbot on VA.gov this week. The chatbot helps answer veterans' questions about COVID-19 and direct them to available VA resources (4/23/2020)
- To date VA has received 6 National Grievances, 30 RFIs, 3 letters demanding policy changes, we are aware of 15 OSHA complaints and have received numerous demands to bargain from our 4 national unions including AFGE, NFEE, NAGE, and NNU. (4/23/2020)
- The Strategic Acquisition Center awarded a purchase order for 5 million, 3-ply disposable medical masks (non-N95) valued at $2.8M. The contract was signed on April 22, 2020. (4/23/2020)
- VA contract vendors reported a cumulative total of 131,905 unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic. (4/24/2020)
- 218,520 disability examinations are pending, including those being held for in-person exams.
- OIT has enabled 29 sites (increase of two new sites since yesterday) with tele-ICU capabilities to move devices from room to room (4/24/2020)
    - OIT will begin work in Pittsburgh today
- VA has 118 virtual hearings scheduled for the week of April 20. To date the Board of Veterans Appeals have successfully completed 620 virtual hearings. The Board has signed 58,738 decisions this year, continuing to keep strong production during the pandemic. (4/24/2020)
- National Cemetery Update: (4/24/2020)
    - As of 4/23/2020 - 766 (+44 from yesterday) COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries (581 completed; 185 pending).
    - **248 internments were completed this week alone at Calverton National Cemetery, which is located outside the New York City epicenter. The average for each week is typically 100. There are already 226 internments scheduled for next week**
    - Since March 5 – 2,696 families have rescheduled services due to COVID-19 concerns.
- Veterans Health Administration and Office of Information and Technology SMEs briefed House and Senate Appropriations staff on the use and expansion of Telehealth capabilities in response to COVID-19 (4/25/2020)
- DOD approved MilAir transport to send nurses from Maine and Washington State to New York City. The mission is underway. (4/26/2020)
- VA is sending is sending at least 1 NP and 1 Nurse to the IHS Shiprock Clinic to assist with the Navajo COVID-19 crisis. (4/26/2020)
- Two union protests occurred in recent days at Atlanta and at VA's Bay Pines VA Medical Centers. Both were in regard to the union's claims of alleged PPE shortage (4/26/2020)
- VA has an increased need for Oxygen concentrators and portable ventilators. FEMA is being prioritized over VA and these are becoming increasingly hard to obtain. Update: VA began

discussions with manufacturers regarding these items today. The issue is that the vendors received 10 months' worth of demand in three weeks and it has depleted current inventory. Vendors have increased product lines and estimate mid-May before supply availability. (4/23/2020)

- VA may now utilize the contract HHS funded through DLA to receive N95 mask decontamination and transportation services from Battelle without reimbursing HHS (no cost to supplemental funding). (4/24/2020)
- VA issued the following press releases (4/27/2020)
    - VA health app now available to Veterans across all mobile and web platforms https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5430
    - VA hiring jumps 37% in response to COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5429
- VHA CFO briefed House and Senate Appropriations staff on the $150 million for State Home Construction Grants and $606 million for Medical Facilities including Non-Recurring Maintenance, as well as, the provision that allows VHA to provide PPE to State Homes in response to COVID-19. (4/27/2020)
- **VA has completed all 30 top priority sites ahead of schedule to allow Tele-ICU Devices Plug-in:** Phoenix, Brooklyn, Manhattan, New Orleans, Fresno, Tampa, San Francisco, West Palm Beach, San Diego, Miami, Puget Sound, Bronx, Denver, Boston, New Jersey, Orlando, Albany, N. California, Palo Alto, Syracuse, Loma Linda, Western NY, Dublin (Ga.), North Florida, Shreveport, Northport, Long Beach, Bay Pines, Houston and Pittsburgh HCS (4/27/2020)
- SECVA signed a delegation of authority VA Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries and Other Key Officials, the authority to waive certain limitations on pay for work done in support of the response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The following pay limits are listed in the guidance as covered: basic pay, nurse executive and pharmacist executive special pay, aggregate pay, annual pay, premium pay, and incentives and awards. (4/27/2020)
- The Indianapolis VA Medical Center has received a notice of OSHA investigation regarding a patient death – this was accompanied by requests of 1,080 pages of documentation and various requests for other information. VA is receiving a growing number of notifications of investigation, most of these are driven by requests to OSHA from various VA affiliated labor unions. (4/28/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie had his weekly call with House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano and Ranking Member Phil Roe (4/28/2020)
- Veterans Health Administration SMEs are briefing House Veterans Affairs Committee staff on VA's support of State Veterans Homes across the country during COVID-19. (4/28/2020)
- VA Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and SMEs from VA's office of mental health held a briefing call with State and Local leaders including State Veterans Affairs Directors, County Veterans Service Officers, etc. on VA's efforts to serve Veterans with mental health issues during COVID-19. (4/28/2020)
- Apple has started producing and donating 1 million face shields per week and will be making an order available to VA. On an ad hoc basis, they have already filled requests from individual VA Medical Centers totaling more than 50,000 face shields. (4/29/2020)
- VA issued the following press releases (4/29/2020)
    - Joint Statement from DHS and VA on Continued Collaboration Throughout COVID-19 Pandemic https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5431
    - VA establishes the department's first history office https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5432
    - VA joins XPRIZE Pandemic Alliance to combat COVID-19 and future outbreaks https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5433

- Secretary Wilkie held a briefing with the Veteran Service Organizations to update them on VA's response to COVID-19. VBA Under Secretary Paul Lawrence and VHA Executive in Charge Richard Stone also joined the call. (4/29/2020)
- VHA SMEs held a call with the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Staff to brief them on VA's support for State Veteran Homes (4/29/2020)
- VA received a question on our authority to release the names and addresses of persons who have or are suspected of having COVID-19 to the Shawnee County Health Department in Kansas for purposes of contact tracing. The information is protected by the Privacy Act and HIPAA. OGC advised that both laws allow for the release. Under HIPAA, 45 C.F.R. § 164.512 allows the release of information to public health authorities both for notification of infectious disease exposure and for tracing purposes (according to the Center for Disease Control interpretation of the statute). Under the Privacy Act, a letter from the Director of the County Public Health Department could be considered a valid (b)(7) law enforcement letter that would allow release under that exception. OGC will work with VHA officials to determine the scope of the release in order to balance privacy interest against the needs of the State. (4/29/2020)
- A variation of the National Surveillance Tool developed by OIT was published on the Access to Care site for state, CDC, and media access (4/29/2020)
    - Surpassed 44,000 accesses with significant media interest and a number of articles that leverage the site
    - Preparing to publish FAQ section for COVID-19
- Plane load of Chinese-made PPE arrived in New Hampshire this afternoon. VA worked an agreement with the State of New Hampshire via Governor Chris Sununu to procure a large amount of the supplies. ADEPSEC Powers traveled to NH to meet the plane with Governor Sununu and provided remarks at the event. (4/30/2020)
- VA issued the following press releases (4/30/2020)
    - VA Trust in Veteran Health Care Rises above 90% for the first time https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5435
- Sec. Wilkie held a phone call with West Virginia Senators Manchin and Shelly Capito Moore (4/30/2020)
- VA has sent **195,929,858** email messages with reference to COVID-19 and/or Coronavirus in either the subject line or body content email messages from January 24, 2020 through April 30, 2020. **VA email percentage directly related to COVID-19 Outreach is 195,929,859/387,033,651 or 50.62%. (4/30/2020)**
- Update on Support for State Veteran Homes (as of 4/30/2020)
    - Bedford: Transferred 25 State Veterans' Home patients (COVID-19 positive unit) total; 9 current, 2 deaths
    - Boston: 12 patients, 2 deaths
    - Brockton: 2 patients
    - Providence: 7 community nursing home patients (COVID-19 positive unit); 6 of the 7 were transferred back to the community nursing home; the remaining patient died.
    - Long Beach: 5 community nursing home patients are being transferred; 2 of the 5 tested positive and placed in the COVID-19 positive unit. Remaining 3 waiting results.
    - New Jersey State Veterans Homes (Paramus & Meno Park) – Nurses, staffing, telehealth, and supplies.
    - Manhattan, New York: 2 patients
    - Brooklyn, New York: 2 patients
    - Birmingham: 9 patients

    - Miami: 2 patients
    - Jackson (MS): 4 patients
    - San Antonio: 9 patients
    - Muskogee: 1 patient
    - Oklahoma City: 3 patients
    - Greater Los Angeles: 1 patient
    - Salem, VA: 1 patient
    - Spokane: 2 patients
    - Minneapolis: 1 patient
    - Fresno, CA: 1 patient
    - Omaha, NE: 1 patient
- VA Issues the following press releases (5/1/2020)
    - VA expands access to virtual hearings https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5436
    - VA names Brooks Tucker Acting Chief of Staff https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5437
    - VA participating in drug, plasma trials in fight against COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5438
- Leaderships from the Office of Logistics and Constructions and VHA Procurement Office briefed House Veterans Affairs minority staff on supply chain efforts (5/1/2020)
- VA sent a text message via VETtext to 8.2M Veterans today. Content is focused on financial hardship, and specifically action certain Veterans must take to claim an additional $500 per dependent in stimulus funds. (5/1/2020)
- There are 79 virtual hearings were completed the week of April 27. To date, the Board of Veterans Appeals has successfully completed 695 virtual hearings. (5/1/2020)
- VBA contract vendors reported a cumulative total of **157,102** unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic. (5/1/2020)
- **245,288** disability examinations are pending, including those being held for in-person exams. 5/1/2020)
- As of 5/1/2020, 1,075 (+64 from Thursday) COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries (874 completed: 201 pending). (5/1/2020)
    - Calverton National Cemetery continues to see extreme numbers of internments due to its proximity to the New York epicenter. 254 internments are scheduled this week, which is more than double the cemeteries weekly average of 100 internments.
- On April 28, 2020, POTUS signed House Bill 6322, or Student Veteran Coronavirus Response Act of 2020, into Public Law 116-140. This new law gives VA additional authorities to continue GI Bill payments for the period beginning on March 1, 2020 and ending on December 21, 2020. VA is currently working to implement the changes: (5/1/2020)
    - continue payments to students participating in the Work Study Program who are furloughed or have to stop working.
    - continue to pay benefits for up to 4 weeks to GI Bill students whose classes are suspended, even if school is still open.
    - restoration of entitlement for GI Bill students who lose credit due to school closure or schools' suspension of training.
    - extend the delimiting date for Montgomery GI Bill and Post-9/11 G Bill students if they are unable to attend training due to COVID-19.
- VA Issues the following press releases (5/4/2020)

    - VA is protecting and Serving All of America https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5439
- Veterans Benefit Administration April Update: In April, VBA completed 124K core rating-related disability decisions, about 7% under the monthly average number of completions, fiscal year to date for FY20. This decrease is primarily due to COVID-19 impact on our evidence supply chain (exams and federal records). (5/5/2020)
- Because in-person examinations to support compensation claims could not be completed, VBA turned to other work areas.
    - VBA doubled output of other rating work, to include burials, claims for accrued benefits at time of death, survivor pension, legacy remands, corrective actions, and adjustments
    - To improve responsiveness in this time of need, VBA is realigning claims processing activities to respond to more claims for adjusted pension benefits based on income changes. April completions in this category were up 75% over the fiscal year monthly average. Adjustments to pension benefits based on changes in dependency were up 22% over the fiscal year monthly average.
- On 5/4/20, the Strategic Acquisition Center awarded a contract to Hanes for 2.4M cloth masks valued at $1.9M. This contract has ten optional Contract Line Item Number (CLINs) with the possibility to supply ten million additional masks. (5/5/2020)
- SECVA held a weekly phone call with House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano and Ranking Member Phil Roe (5/5/2020)
- SECVA held a phone call with Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Ranking Member Jon Tester (5/5/2020)
- VA Issues the following press releases (5/5/2020)
    - VA Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry reaches a major milestone https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5441
    - VA Enhances National COVID-19 Reporting Summary Tool https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5440
- On 5/1/20, the National Acquisition Center's Federal Supply Schedule Service (FSS) awarded a contract for COVID-19 testing to Eurofins Viracor. The vendor offers the following capacity: 10,000 daily COVID-19 testing to VA nationwide. (5/6/2020)
- VA will be accepting a donation of 800,000 face shields from Apple. The shipment should arrive in the next two weeks. (5/6/2020)
- VA Issues the following press releases (5/6/2020)
    - VA Gets Boost from CARES Act to provide emergency assistance to Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness during COVID-19 crisis. https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5442
- SECVA calls to Governors or Members of Congress on COVID-19 related issues: (5/6/2020)
    - SECVA had a phone call with HAC MilCon Subcommittee Chair Debbie Wasserman Schulz to update on COVID and formally decline the Subcommittee's invite for a May hearing with SECVA
- SECVA held his weekly call with VSO stakeholders to update them on the VA's response to COVID-19. (5/6/2020)
- VA Issues the following press releases (5/7/2020)
    - Department of Veterans Affairs Announces Process for Charting the Course - Agency Plan on Returning to Pre-COVID-19 Operations https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5443

- Under Secretary for benefits hosted a Tele-townhall for Veterans in New York focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 59,302 participants.
- VA released our final post-COVID-19 Operations Plan to VA Leaders and Staff. Press release announcing the plan is linked below (5/7/2020)
    - https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5443
- SECVA calls to Governors or Members of Congress on COVID-19 related issues: (5/8/2020)
    - SECVA had phone call with Sen. Jack Reed on PPE request for state of Rhode Island
    - Acting DEPSEC had a call with Sen. Hassan, follow up to event attended last week in New Hampshire where VA partnered with the State on PPE shipment
- VA Issues the following press releases (5/8/2020)
    - VA and Parkinson's Foundation partner to help Veterans Living with Parkinson's disease https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5444
    - VA Kicks off Mental Health Campaign emphasizing mental health support https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5445
- VBA executives briefed staff from SVAC (Majority and Minority) and HVAC (Majority and Minority) on COVID-19 efforts as well as updates on Compensation and Pension contract exams, disability benefits questionnaires, claims processing and appeals. (5/8/2020)
- Assistant Secretary of OIT, Jim Gfrerer briefed Reps. Lee and Levin on technological implications of COVID-19 on the GI Bill (5/8/2020)
- Under Secretary for Benefits hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Kansas focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 18,955 participants. (5/8/2020)
- Leadership from Office of Logistics and Construction leadership briefed the Minority Staff for SVAC on supply chain issues related to VA's 4th Mission (5/8/2020)
- VA continues to expand the use of Tele-ICU carts to allow the Tele-ICU care team members to monitor and assess patients, alerting the bedside team whenever a situation requires their intervention (5/8/2020)
    - OIT is continuing priority network configurations, yesterday in Huntington and Durham and today in Richmond and Reno
- VA OIT continues to stay ahead of equipment demand in response to COVID-19 (5/8/2020)
    - 750 Laptops shipped May 7th, 107 Laptops shipped May 6th
    - Emergency equipment requested on May 5th by Texas Valley Coastal Bend for activation of two nursing wards was delivered on May 6th. Wards scheduled to open Monday, May 11th
- 100 Laptops, 200 Monitors shipped

From: Powers, Pamela
Sent: Sat, 30 May 2020 20:53:26 +0000
To: (b)(6) @gmail.com
Subject: Fwd: VA_5.30.20_COVID 19 Daily Report
Attachments: VA_5.30.20_COVID 19 Daily Report.docx

(b)(6)
Office of the Deputy Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
202-461-(b)(6) (Office)
202-823- (Mobile)
Sent via mobile
From: Tucker, Brooks <(b)(6) @va.gov>
Sent: Saturday, May 30, 2020 4:50:08 PM
To: (b)(6) EOP/OMB (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov>; DL OMB Dir Office OMB_COVID19OPS (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov>
Cc: RLW <(b)(6) @va.gov>; Powers, Pamela <(b)(6) @va.gov>; Mashburn, John K. (b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6) @va.gov>; Hutton, James <(b)(6) @va.gov>; Cashour, Curtis (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov>; Haverstock, Cathy (b)(6) @va.gov>; Johnson, Glenn (b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6) (b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) @va.gov>; Nevins, Kristan K. EOP/WHO (b)(6) @who.eop.gov>; (b)(6) EOP/WHO <(b)(6) @who.eop.gov> (b)(6) EOP/WHO <(b)(6) @who.eop.gov> (b)(6) @who.eop.gov>; (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov <(b)(6) @omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) @who.eop.gov @who.eop.gov> (b)(6) omb.eop.gov <(b)(6) @omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov <(b)(6) @omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) EOP/OMB (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov>
Subject: Fwd: VA_5.30.20_COVID 19 Daily Report

All, Please see attached reports.

- No new Mission Assignments
- No new Veteran or Employee Case data available today.
- Of note: Based upon typical historical case volumes, VA would have performed approximately 85,000 surgical cases March 18th and May 27th. Between March 18th and May 27th, the VA actually performed 19,957 cases in the OR. The projected volume of pending operating room procedures is therefore approximately 65,000 cases which may become an issue as we return to more normal operations.

Brooks D. Tucker
Acting Chief of Staff
202-290-(b)(6)

COVID-19 – Agency Response
5/30/2020
Department of Veterans Affairs

Administrative Actions, Waivers, and Other Programmatic Change that Impact Agency Provision of Service or Mission Delivery (Externally Facing)

- VA has received 45 Mission Assignments during COVID-19, 37 are still active, 8 have been closed
- **Update on FEMA Active VA Mission**
  - VA NY Harbor: 111 patients, 79 discharges, 18 deaths
  - VA New Jersey: 31 patients, 19 discharge, 7 deaths
  - VA San Francisco: 1 discharge, no deaths
  - VA Miami: 1 discharge, no deaths
  - VA Ann Arbor: 36 patients, 21 discharges, 6 deaths
  - Detroit: 22 patients, 15 discharge, 7 death
  - Albuquerque: 6 patients from Navajo Nation, previously in Gallup IHS facility. 4 discharged, 1 death.
  - VA Chicago (Hines, Jesse Brown Marion) – 24 patients, 6 discharges, 1 death
  - Spokane, WA – 2 patients, no discharges, no deaths
  - Hew Haven CT – Homeless Outreach Assistance, 3 clinicians
  - Oregon / Roseburg VAMC - 25 Med/Surg beds. No patients received at this time.
  - New Jersey State Veterans Homes (Paramus & Meno Park) – Nurses, staffing, telehealth, and supplies.
  - Florida Nursing Home Support: Starting today, VA will begin providing staffing and technical support to 12 non-VA nursing homes in Florida, a state that has seen COVID-19 emerge among these vulnerable populations. More than 80 physicians, nurses and nurses aides will begin rotations at these homes to provide direct care and advice about controlling infectious disease.
  - Portland Oregon Beds - 25 short term acute care (med/surg) and 5 intensive care (ICU) beds at the Portland VAMC for non-covid and covid-positive patients.
  - Washington State Veteran Home support and testing support
  - Alabama - Bill Nichols State Veterans Home in Alexander City, AL, provide 4 registered nurses and 5 nursing assistants
  - Pennsylvania - Nursing Home Staff - Spring City, PA Staff RN/LPN (20)
  - Delaware – Department of Public Health Staff Support. VA is sending 10 RN/LPN/NA to cover 3 nursing homes
  - Wisconsin – Provide 2 pharmacists and 2 respiratory therapists to a mission in Milwaukee
  - Nebraska – VA will provide testing support in Omaha
  - Des Moines/Iowa City – 20 med/surg or ICU beds, no patients received to date
  - Iowa – VA to provide staffing to support State Veteran Home at Marshalltown, Iowa. Staffing to include RN (4); LPN (16); NA (27)
  - California - Nursing Home Staff support. Four 6-person teams to provide nursing consultation support to long term care (nursing home) facilities in Los Angeles County region
  - Illinois Nursing Home Support – VA will provide 60 of our Community Living Center beds for Illinois civilian nursing home patients. The beds will be provided at the Edward J. Hines Medical (Chicago), Danville Medical Center (Danville) and/or Lovell Federal Health Care Center (North Chicago).

- New Jersey – VA to provide 4 licensed social workers to support patients in State Veterans homes; specific location TBD
- Texas – VA will provide State Veterans Homes Testing and Support, will also provide staff and support services to assist Texas Veterans Land Board with collection and processing of biological samples for testing and analysis. Services will be provided for patients and staff at state veterans homes in Floresville, TX and Temple, TX.
- VA also extended our liaisons detail to the FEMA National Response Coordination Center until June 3, 2020.
- Support to Indian Health Centers and Navajo Nation: 15 personnel for a 30-day period. (May 5 – June 5). IHS Indian Medical Center in Gallup NM, seven (7) ER nurses and 2 RNs; IHS Crownpoint, Hospital two (2) RN's; IHS Kayenta Health Center, two (2) RNs; IHS Northern Navajo Medical Center, two (2) RNs
- Navajo Nation Nursing Support – Tuba City. VA will provide (6) Med Surge Nurses (RNs), (6) Emergency Room RNs and (4) Intensive Care Unit Nurses (RNs)
- North Carolina – VA will provide testing services in support of vulnerable residents/patients and staff at licensed care facilities.
- North Carolina - Staff Support to nursing home including: 1 van driver, 3 Community Living Center nurses, 2 infection control nurses, 1 social work, 1 public affairs officer, 4 nurse screeners, 1 Administrative lead, 4 RNs, and 4 LPNs.
- New Jersey: VA will provide (5) teams of 10 nursing staff to assist with COVID-19 outbreaks in private nursing homes. We will be providing clinical staffing support, and education and consultation on infection control procedures
- Rhode Island: 12 nursing assistants to provide patient care at State Veterans Home in Bristol
- Oregon: VA will provide long term care support teams to the State of Oregon to conduct assessments and training at long term care facilities at multiple locations throughout the state.
- Minnesota – VA will provide up to 50 RN/LPN personnel to support direct patient care at long term care facilities for up to 30 days.
- Mississippi – VA will provide staff and support services to assist Mississippi State Veterans Homes with fit testing and proper utilization of PPE. VHA will provide two teams of 4 to provide training and education of PPE; an industrial hygienist for fit testing and up to 8 RNs.
- Mississippi – State Veteran Home Staff Support. VA will provide registered nurses, 2 licensed practical nurses and 2 certified nursing assistants or similar
- Maryland - providing two staffing teams of RNs, LPNs, NAs and a nurse manager to the Charlotte Hall State Veterans Home. The SVH has a total of 96 residents that tested positive, with most asymptomatic *New Mission Assignment

CARES ACT IMPLEMENTATION – KEY ACTIVITIES AND MILESTONES
(Please also include activities related to the implementation of other COVID-related supplementary funding legislation, including P.L. 116-127 and P.L. 116-123)

- CARES Act, Section 4022. Foreclosure Moratorium and Consumer Right to Request Forbearance: notified OMB's Veterans Affairs and Defense Health Branch of interpretation concerns to ensure that all federal housing agencies impacted by these sections are consistent in implementing the new law, as requested by OMB.
- OIT will complete circuit installs at all four gateways by April 3rd, doubling network bandwidth to 160GBs
- OIT has approved 31 COVID-19 Memos valued at $371.02M

- Working with VHA, VBA, OIT to prepare spend plans and regular reporting templates for CARES Act funding.
- VBA Received $13M in GOE supplemental funding for COVID-19 related issues such as purchase of equipment and supplies to support telework posture and employee health and safety as well as scheduled deep cleaning of buildings/offices occupied by VBA personnel
- Office of Information Technology CARES Act Supplemental Funding apportionment ($2.15B) approved by OMB. Funds are available for execution.
- VHA to begin initial distribution to the Healthcare Networks of $5.3 billion (from the total $14.4 billion) in Medical Services funding from the CARES Act Supplemental based upon:
    - FY 2020 Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation (VERA) Model
    - VHA's Bed Management System
    - VHA's Managerial Cost Accounting (MCA) system
- As of 6 April 2020, VA reported $768.1 million in total COVID -19 obligations, an increase of $371 million from 2 April 2020.
- OIT has Increased telehealth capacity by 15% and can support 11K concurrent sessions
- As of April 9, VA obligated $768M in total COVID -19 obligations and anticipates surpassing $1B in COVID-19 related obligations by the end of this week.
    - <u>Examples of VA Purchases</u>
        - Centralized Contracting: 60 awards valued at $338,803,651.
        - National Acquisition Center (NAC): $2,499,317 (Pharmacy/Medical Equipment)
        - Technology Acquisition Center (TAC): $308,789,039 (IT Equipment)
        - Strategic Acquisition Center (SAC): $27,515,605 (Medical Surgical Supplies)
        - Veterans Health Administration (VHA) at the regional and local level: 1,633 awards valued at $519,933,615 (Medical Surgical Supplies)
        - Contracts to support national purchases of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and medical equipment (e.g., ventilators) as well as costs associated with level-setting PPE and medical equipment throughout the country
        - Travel, housing, and other support for employees deploying to other medical centers
        - Salary costs incurred to hire and retain staff to support the pandemic
        - Medical facility costs mostly related to reconfiguring space to open additional beds and creating negative pressure rooms
        - Costs associated with Community Care to cover increased demand in the community by Veterans for both COVID-19 related and non-COVID related medical care
- As of April 14, VA obligated $959 million in total COVID -19 obligations.
- As of April 21, VA's COVID-19 total obligations are $1.160 billion:
    - VHA obligations: $841 million
    - OIT obligations: $319 million
    - To date, $49 million has been spent on Telehealth capabilities and enhancements, which include $4 million in bandwidth upgrades and $42 million to purchase 38K mobile devices and 22K laptops.
- VHA spending on State Home Grants, PPE to state homes, etc.
    - **State Homes:** To date, 23 grant packages totaling $23 million have been received for COVID-19 related projects. Statutory and legislative challenges in the current program are impacting VA's ability to provide the funds before 1 October 2020. Legislative relief is necessary.

- **Medical Facilities:** To date, $170 million has been distributed to the Office of Emergency Management in response to operational issues and overtime pay, and $40 million has been distributed to facilities for expansion of inpatient bed capabilities to include HVAC equipment for negative-pressure rooms and engineering staff overtime.
- **PPE to State Homes:** VHA facilities considering a request from a State Veteran Home for PPE must take into account the impact that providing PPE to State Veteran Homes has on VHA facility operational stock.

- As of Apr 28, VA's COVID-19 total obligations are $1.531 billion (+$371 million from Apr 22)
  - VHA obligations: $1.21 billion (+$369 million), including recent obligations for:
    - $192 million in grants for the homelessness programs (Grant and Per Diem and Supportive Services for Veterans Families); $52 million for supplies including protective gear such as masks and gowns; and $66 million for medical equipment
  - OIT obligations: $321 million (+$2 million), including:
    - Expansion of Telehealth to include 38,000 mobile devices and 22,000 laptops; doubled bandwidth at 30 sites; hardware upgrades to increase video teleconferencing systems by 1,200 concurrent calls; and increased cloud capability to increase capacity by 6,000 concurrent calls
- As of May 5, VA's COVID-19 total obligations are $1.688 billion (+$156 million from Apr 28)
  - VHA obligations: $1.326 billion (+$117 million); Significant procurements this week include $6.7 million for PPE and $4 million in testing support for COVID-19.
  - OIT obligations: $357 million (+$36 million)
  - VBA obligations: $3 million (+$3 million)
- As of May 12, VA's COVID-19 **total obligations** are $1.823 billion (+$135 million from May 5)
  - VHA obligations: $1.427 billion (+$101 million)
  - OIT obligations: $391 million (+$34 million)
    - Significant procurements include $30.64 million to increase support/installation of IT equipment in call centers
  - VBA obligations: $3.7 million (+$110 thousand)
    - Significant procurements include $121.5 thousand on supplies and $72.6 thousand on facility deep cleaning
- As of May 12, VA's COVID-19 **total expenditures** are $610 million
- As of May 19, VA's COVID-19 total obligations are $1.951 billion (+$128 million from May 12):
  - VHA obligations: $1.530 billion (+$103 million)
  - OIT obligations: $415 million (+$24 million)
  - Significant procurements include on-boarding 27 temporary civilian hires; hardware to support Activations and Cyber Security; and additional laptops/cell phones to support increases in VHA telehealth/telemedicine.
- As of May 26, VA's COVID-19 total expenditures are $721 million (+$111 million from May 12)
- As of May 26, VA's COVID-19 **total obligations** are $2.194 billion (+$243 million from May 19)
  - VHA obligations: $1.662 billion (+$132 million)
  - OIT obligations: $524 million (+$109 million)
  - VBA obligations: $3.9 million (+$495 thousand)
    - Significant procurements include: $61.9 thousand on travel and per diem for repatriating staff and their families from Manila; $36.4 thousand on supplies (bulk procurements of plexiglass shields, hand sanitizers, masks, gloves, disinfectant wipes, etc.); and $7.7 thousand on facility deep cleanings.
  - Gen Admin (HR&A/OSP) obligations: $188 thousand (+$188 thousand)

        - Significant procurements include: overtime; area disinfecting; barrier installation; disinfecting agents; and PPE.

Major upcoming decisions that require POTUS or Task Force-level decisions (only the biggest, most sensitive items should be included here, many agencies may not have anything to report in this section)

- **NSTR**

Guidance, Communication and Outreach with Stakeholders

- SECVA Media:
    - No media today
- SECVA calls to Governors or Members of Congress on COVID-19 related issues:
    - No Phone calls today
- VA Issues the following press release
    - No media release today

- **Other Notable Responses**

    - Note: No new Veteran Data is available due to a system error, reporting will resume Monday June 1. Below is reflective of May 28.
    - 11,618 Total Positive Veteran COVID-19 Cases (+114 cases from yesterday)
    - 1,599 Positive Veteran Cases (96 cases from yesterday)
    - 8,861 Convalescent Veteran Cases (+9 cases from yesterday due to small reporting error). Convalescent cases are defined as 14 days post positive test results for outpatients and discharged status for inpatients. These are essentially "recovered" cases.
    - Veteran Deaths: 1,158 veterans have died from COVID-19 (+9 from yesterday)
    - 93 Active Veteran cases remain greater New York City Area (Bronx, Hudson Valley, Northport, Brooklyn)
    - Other areas with 50 or more active veteran cases include Washington, DC (64), Chicago (79), Albany (56), New Jersey (50)

    - **1,156 VA Positive Employee cases**

        - No new employee case data available today
        - This is an increase of -7 cases from VA's last available data
        - The largest clusters of employee cases are our New Orleans Medical Center with 188 employees testing positive and our Greater New York City Area Medical Centers (Bronx, Hudson Valley, Northport, Brooklyn) with 265 employees testing positive
        - Other employee hot spots at our Medical Centers include: New Jersey (42) Chicago (39), Washington, DC (32), Shreveport (20), Boston (41), Dallas (64), Baltimore (29), Portland (27)
        - To date there have been 32 employee deaths: 1 in Ann Arbor, 1 in Detroit, 3 in Indianapolis, 3 in Reno, 1 in Shreveport, 1 in Houston, 1 in Los Angeles. 1 in West Palm Beach, 2 in the Bronx (NY), 1 Manhattan (NY), 1 in Denver and 1 in Brockton (Boston), 1 in Washington, DC and 1 in Northport (NY), 1 in Miami and 1 in New Orleans, 1 in Wilkes-Barre (PA), 5 in New

Jersey and 1 in Loma Linda (CA), 1 in Queens (NY) and 1 in Bedford (MA), 1 in Fayetteville NC and 1 in Syracuse, New York.

Historical Input

MEDIA, NEWS RELEASE, OUTREACH TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND GOVERNORS, OUTREACH TO VA STAKEHOLDERS

- **The Secretary of Veterans Affairs had the following interviews with press:**
    - Jeff "Goldy" Goldberg, WFNC Radio
    - NBC 4 w/ Scott MacFarlane
    - Jim Blythe, Alliance 4 the Brave (Dallas)
    - Kirsti Marohn, Minnesota Public Radio
    - Ware Morning Show (Radio), San Antonio
    - Fox News Rundown (Taped)
    - Wake Up Tucson, AZ
    - Fred Thys, WBUR Radio (NPR Boston)
    - Moon Griffon Show (LA radio)
    - Leo Shane of Military Times (print)
    - Pensacola's Morning News (FL radio)
    - WWL Radio (New Orleans, LA radio)
    - The Drive with Lee Matthews (Oklahoma City, OK radio)
    - Kevin Miller in the Morning (Boise, ID radio)
    - The Marc Cox morning Show (St Louis, MO radio)
    - Larry O'Connor, WMAL (DC/CA radio)
    - KOAN Radio (Anchorage, AK)
    - Montana Talks Radio.
    - COX Media w/ Samantha Manning
    - The Ross Kaminsky Show (CO radio)
    - Lisa Rein, The Washington Post
    - The Conservative Circus (Phoenix radio)
    - The Bob Rose Show (FL radio)
    - Charlie James Show (SC radio)
    - Mobile Mornings (AL radio)
    - The Mark Sterling Show (NC radio)
    - Fox Across America (Fox News Radio)
    - Richmond's Morning News (VA radio)
    - Ringside Politics (LA radio/tv)
    - The Erick Erickson Show (GA radio)
    - The Sam Malone Show (Houston, TX Radio)
    - The Dale Jackson Show (Huntsville, AL Radio)
    - AM Tampa Bay Radio
    - The John Fredericks Radio Show
    - The Matt and Aunie Show (AL radio)
    - The Schilling Show (VA radio)
    - The Annie Frey Show (St. Louis radio)
    - The Wilkow Majority on Sirius XM radio

- Bernie and Sid in the Morning (NYC radio)
- Tom Jordan and Roberta Jasina (Detroit radio)
- The Frank Beckmann Show (Detroit radio)
- The Heidi Harris Show (Las Vegas radio)
- The Steve Gruber Show (Lansing/Flint, MI radio)
- Morning Talk with Martha Zoller (Atlanta, GA radio)
- The Brian Kilmeade Show (Fox News Radio)
- The David Webb Show (SiriusXM radio)
- The Todd Starnes Show (Fox News Radio)
- Joe Piscopo in the Morning (NYC Radio)
- South Florida's First News with Jimmy Cefalo (Miami/Ft. Lauderdale Radio)
- The Bill Spadea Show (NJ Radio)
- The Kuhner Report (Boston Radio)
- Mornings with Brian Haldane (Baton Rouge, LA Radio)
- Pat Kime of Military.com.
- Ben Kesling of The Wall Street Journal
- The Joyce Kaufman Show (South Florida radio)
- Quil Lawrence of NPR
- MSNBC Live with Stephanie Ruhle
- WTKR TV Norfolk, VA
- KSWB TV San Diego
- WCAU-TV Philadelphia
- WGN-TV National
- WFAA-TV Dallas
- Midday News with James MacKay (Boston Radio)
- JJ Green of WTOP (DC Radio)
- Liz MacDonald on Fox Business
- Martha MacCallum of Fox News
- AM Tampa Bay radio
- Lars Larson (radio)
- The Fayetteville Observer
- Prairie Public Radio (Fargo, ND)
- KTTH Seattle (radio)
- The Birmingham Fox Affiliate (local Birmingham, AL tv)
- Shannon Bream
- Nebraska Public Radio
- WTOP Radio (DC)
- Think Show, Dallas NPR
- WESA FM Radio (Pittsburgh, PA).
- KBST Radio (Big Spring, TX).
- KOKI-TV Tulsa, OK.
- WCIV-TV Charleston, SC.
- KALB-TV Alexandria, LA.
- KSNV-TV Las Vegas, NV.
- Fox and Friends First this morning.
- WLBT-TV Jackson, MS.
- KPBS-TV San Diego, CA.
- WGN Radio.

- Newsmax.
- Fox News Radio
- America's HQ on Fox News https://video.foxnews.com/v/6158768721001#sp=show-clips
- Ed Henry on Fox News
- ABC News' Martha Raddatz
- CBS Evening News' Jan Crawford

- **VA Has Issued the Following News Releases**

  - VA extends financial, benefits and claims relief to Veterans https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5412
  - Secretary Wilkie thanked Wounded Warrior Project for $10 million commitment to aid Veterans https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5421
  - VA, Facebook and American Red Cross provide Portal video calling devices to Veterans, caregivers, and families https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5422
  - VA Tele-mental health visits on the rise amid COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5418
  - VA Mobilizes 3D Printing Resources nationwide to fight COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5419
  - VA Announces, "Fourth Mission" Actions to Help American Respond to COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5420
  - VA Partners with IRS/Dept. of Treasury to Deliver Economic Impact Payments https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5423
  - VA's telehealth system grows as Veterans have access to unlimited data while using VA Video Connect https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5426
  - VA, DoD implement new capability for bidirectional sharing of health records with community partners https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5425
  - VA acquires Texas community hospital to fight COVID-19 and care for Veterans in the future https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5424
  - Timeline on how VA prepared for COVID-19 outbreak and continues to keep Veterans safe https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5427
  - VA researchers to study COVID-19 in aging Veterans with dementia https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5428
  - VA health app now available to Veterans across all mobile and web platforms https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5430
  - VA hiring jumps 37% in response to COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5429
  - Joint Statement from DHS and VA on Continued Collaboration Throughout COVID-19 Pandemic https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5431
  - VA establishes the department's first history office https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5432
  - VA joins XPRIZE Pandemic Alliance to combat COVID-19 and future outbreaks https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5433
  - VA Trust in Veteran Health Care Rises above 90% for the first time https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5435
  - VA expands access to virtual hearings https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5436

- VA names Brooks Tucker Acting Chief of Staff https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5437
- VA participating in drug, plasma trials in fight against COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5438
- VA is protecting and Serving All of America https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5439
- VA Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry reaches a major milestone https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5441
- VA Enhances National COVID-19 Reporting Summary Tool https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5440
- VA Gets Boost from CARES Act to provide emergency assistance to Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness during COVID-19 crisis. https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5442
- Process for Charting the Course - Agency Plan on Returning to Pre-COVID-19 Operations https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5443
- Post-COVID-19 Operations Plan to VA Leaders and Staff. https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5443
- VA and Parkinson's Foundation partner to help Veterans Living with Parkinson's disease https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5444
- VA Kicks off Mental Health Campaign emphasizing mental health support https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5445
- VA and Parkinson's Foundation partner to help Veterans Living with Parkinson's disease https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5444
- VA Kicks off Mental Health Campaign emphasizing mental health support https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5445
- CARES Act helping VA boost protections for Veterans https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5415
- VA appeals production at all time high https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5414
- VA's Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System provides surge-support to combat COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5417
- VA accepts Mask Donation from South Korea to Assist with COVID-19 efforts, longtime partner and ally sends 500,000 masks https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5447
- VA Releases New COVID Coach Mobile App https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5448
- VA National Cemeteries to Commemorate Memorial Day https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5450
- VA reports rising patient capacity, stable supplies and staffing 8 weeks into COVID Emergency https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5449
- VA, multiple agencies launch joint Mortgage and Housing Assistance Website for Americans Impacted by COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5451
- VA Encourages Donations to help homeless veterans or those at risk of homelessness during COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5453
- VA lead facilities reintroduce health care services while ensuring a safe environment https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5454
- Secretary Wilkie Memorial Day Message 2020

https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5455
  - Gary Sinise Foundation Donates Meals to VA Hospital Staff During COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5456
  - VA Conducts Deep Dive Study into effects of COVID-19 on Veterans https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5457
  - VA Resume Compensation and Pension Exams at select locations https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5458
  - White House Order to End union subsidies expands clinical space for Veterans, nets $1.4 billion for taxpayers https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5459

- **The Secretary of Veterans Affairs made calls to the following Governors to discuss State Veteran Home support and other COVID-19 issues:**
  - Maine – Janet Mills
  - Oregon – Kate Brown
  - Alabama – Kay Ivey
  - New Hampshire – Chris Sununu
  - New Jersey – Phil Murphy
  - South Carolina – Henry McMaster
  - Oklahoma – Kevin Stitt
  - Georgia – Brian Kemp
  - South Dakota – Kristi Noem
  - Tennessee – Bill Lee
  - Arkansas – Asa Hutchinson
  - Ohio – Mike Dewine
  - Iowa – Kim Reynolds
  - Kansas – Laura Kelly
  - Florida Governor Ron DeSantis
  - Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy
  - Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo
  - Idaho Governor Brad Little
  - Maryland Governor Larry Hogan
  - New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy (5/20/2020)
  - Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker (5/21/2020)

- **VA leadership has participated in the following Congressional Engagements**
  - Secretary Wilkie hosted weekly phone calls with Chairman Jerry Moran and Ranking Member Jon Tester of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee.
  - Secretary Wilkie hosted weekly phone calls with Chairman Mark Takano and Ranking Member Phil Roe of the House Veterans Affairs Committee.
  - VA facilitated a briefing to Senate and House Authorizing committee staffers on VA's Emergency Management Disaster Plan for COVID-19.
  - Sent daily detailed updates to both House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees.

- Sent 541 letters to Members of Congress and Committees clarifying the process for requests from states and localities for VA to activate it's 4th MISSION.
- VHA Executive in Charge, and the Assistant Secretary from Management briefed HVAC Chairman Takano on the $19.6 Billion received in the supplemental funding bill (3/30/2020).
- Secretary Wilkie briefed Sen. Boozman on Appropriations related issues. (4/2/2020)
- The VA Chief Acquisition Officer briefed House Veterans Affairs Minority Staff on procurement, supply chain, etc. (4/6/2020)
- VA Chief Financial Officers briefed the House and Senate Appropriations staffers (4 Corners) on VHA's Supplemental Funding distribution plan for the Families First and CARES Acts. (4/7/2020)
- Human Resources and Administration office briefed House Veterans Affairs and Senate Veteran's Affairs Committee staff on workforce challenges during COVID-19. The briefing covered 1) what VA is doing to recruit/hire nurses and staff; 2) how VA is keeping staff safe; 3) how VA is incorporating feedback from union leaders and safety officers during this COVID-19 response. (4/8/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie conducted update calls on VA's response to COVID with House Appropriations MilConVA Subcommittee Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman-Shultz, House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Jerry Moran. (4/9/2020)
- The Executive in Charge, VHA had a phone briefing with HVAC Chairman Mark Takano on VA response to COVID-19. (4/13/2020)
- Acting Deputy Secretary Powers held separate conference calls with Sen Moran (SVAC Chair), Sen Bozeman (SAC-VA), CM Takano (HVAC Chair), and CM Roe (HVAC Ranking); discussed COVID response. (4/15/2020)
- The Chief Information Officer Jim Gferer held a call with House and Senate MilConVA Subcommittee staff. (4/16/2020)
- ADEPSEC Powers had a call with Senator Brian Schatz (Hawaii), Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee MilConVA. (4/20/2020)
- Veteran's Health Administration CFO and VA budget staff briefed House and Senate Appropriations staffers on VHA's CARES Act Supplemental Funding supporting the VA Homelessness Program. (4/22/2020)
- Veterans Health Administration and Office of Information and Technology subject matter experts briefed House and Senate Appropriations staff on the use and expansion of Telehealth capabilities in response to COVID-19. (4/25/2020)
- The VHA Chief Financial Officer briefed House and Senate Appropriations staff on the $150 million for State Home Construction Grants and $606 million for Medical Facilities including Non-Recurring Maintenance, as well as, the provision that allows VHA to provide PPE to State Homes in response to COVID-19. (4/27/2020)
- VHA subject matter experts held a call with the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Staff to brief them on VA's support for State Veteran Homes. (4/29/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie held a phone call with West Virginia Senators Manchin and Shelly Capito Moore. (4/30/2020)
- Leaderships from the Office of Logistics and Constructions and VHA Procurement Office briefed House Veterans Affairs minority staff on supply chain efforts. (5/1/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie had a phone call with HAC MIlConVA Subcommittee Chair Debbie Wasserman Schulz. to update on COVID and formally decline the Subcommittee's invite for a May hearing. (5/6/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie had a phone call with Sen. Jack Reed on PPE request for state of Rhode Island. (5/8/2020)

- Acting Deputy Secretary Powers had a call with Sen. Hassan to discuss the partnership with New Hampshire regarding a PPE shipment. (5/8/2020)
- The Executive in Charge, VHA briefed House Veterans Affairs, Senate Veterans Affairs and Appropriation Committee staff members on COVID-19 response.
- Executive in Charge, VHA held a call with members of the House Appropriations Committee.
- VBA Executives briefed staff from SVAC (Majority and Minority) and HVAC (Majority and Minority) on COVID-19 efforts as well as updates on Compensation and Pension contract exams, disability benefits questionnaires, claims processing and appeals. (5/8/2020)
- Assistant Secretary of OIT, Jim Gfrerer briefed Representatives Lee and Levin on technological implications of COVID-19 on the GI Bill. (5/8/2020)
- Leadership from Office of Logistics and Construction leadership briefed the Minority Staff for SVAC on supply chain issues related to VA's 4th Mission. (5/8/2020)
- SECVA hosted weekly phone call with SVAC Chairman Jerry Moran and Ranking Member Jon Tester (5/13/2020)
- A DEPSEC had a call with Ambassador John Hennessey-Niland, Republic of Palau (5/15/2020)
- Veterans Benefit Administration executives provided a briefing to Four Corners regarding updates on VBA's three-phased approach for returning to pre-COVID operations especially for VA regional offices and pension management centers, and the need for any additional funding around overtime and IT. (5/15/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie hosted a phone call with Alaska Senator Dan Sullivan
- Sec. WIlkie hosted his weekly update call with SVAC Chairman Jerry Moran and Ranking Member Jon Tester
- Veterans Benefit Administration executives provided a briefing to House Veterans Affairs and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Staff regarding updates on VBA's three-phased approach for returning to pre-COVID operations, the need for any additional funding around overtime and IT and pending examinations. (5/22/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie hosted a phone call with HAC MilCon Chair Debbie Wasserman-Schultz (5/27/2020)
- SECVA and VA leaders testified this morning in front of the HAC MilCon VA Subcommittee on VA's response to COVID-19 (5/28/2020)

Other Key Engagements with VA Stakeholders

- Secretary Wilkie joined President Trump on a stakeholder call with leaders of Veterans Service organizations to update them on the government wide response to COVID-19. (3/21/20)
- Under Secretary for Benefits and the Executive in Charge for VHA briefed Rep. Takano, Rep. Roe, Sen. Tester and Sen. Moran on COVID-19 Responses for Health and Benefits. (4/2/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie briefed the FEMA Task Force. Informed them that VA was prepared to open 1500 beds across our system to help relieve the pressure on states and localities. Each Veterans Affairs network has put in place contingency plans to expand the number of beds available, first for veterans and then our fellow citizens. (4/3/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie participated in a conference call on mental health services with the President, First Lady, the Vice President, Second Lady and HHS Sec. Alex Azar. (4/9/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie joined White House Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Doug Hoelscher for a briefing on VA and White House response to COVID-19. Over 200 State and Local Leaders joined the call. (4/14/2020)
- The Secretary hosted weekly phone calls with VSO leaders to provide them with an update on VA's response to the COVID 19 Pandemic.

- Secretary Wilkie and his leadership team hosted a call with State and Local Government Stakeholders to provide them an update on VA's response to COVID-19.
- Secretary visited the Washington DC hospital to thank staff and visit veterans. (4/21/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie hosted a teleconference with the Baltimore Veteran Treatment Court staff to include their Public Defender, District Attorney, veteran mentors and student attorneys. (4/22/2020)
- The Under Secretary for Benefits hosted multiple tele-townhalls for Veterans which, focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates.
- Under Secretary of Memorial Affairs Randy Reeves hosted a phone call with State Leaders to discuss issues regarding our National Cemeteries during COVID-19. (4/21/2020)
- VA Office of Intergovernmental Affairs reached out to 250 State Leaders to discuss topics such as support for states, updates or support on State Veterans homes, etc. (4/23/2020)
- VA Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and SMEs from VA's office of mental health held a briefing call with State and Local leaders including State Veterans Affairs Directors, County Veterans Service Officers, etc. on VA's efforts to serve Veterans with mental health issues during COVID-19. (4/28/2020)
- Plane load of Chinese-made PPE arrived in New Hampshire. ADEPSEC Powers traveled to NH to meet the plane with Governor Sununu and provided remarks at the event. VA worked an agreement with the State of New Hampshire via Governor Chris Sununu to procure a large amount of the supplies. (4/30/2020)
- SECVA hosted a weekly VSO update call to update our VSO stakeholders on our response to COVID-19 (5/13/2020)
- Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Iowa on Tuesday, May 12, focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 34,247 participants. (5/13/2020)
- Acting Deputy Secretary Pamela Powers visited the Richmond VA Medical Center in Virginia to meet with hospital leadership and thank them for their work during the response to COVID-19 (5/19/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie hosted his weekly update call with Veteran Service Organizations to brief them on VA's ongoing efforts regarding COVID-19 (5/20/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie joined the President for the Rolling to Remember Event at the White House (5/22/2020)
- Under Secretary for Benefits hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Virginia focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 59,164 participants. (5/22/2020)
- Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Randy Reeves appeared on Fox News to discuss protocol at VA Cemeteries during Memorial Day https://www.foxnews.com/media/va-undersecretary-addresses-flag-controversy-for-2020-memorial-day
- Sec. Wilkie (Quantico National Cemetery), DEPSEC Powers (Culpepper VA National Cemetery) and USMA (Calverton National Cemetery) gave keynote remarks at small ceremonies for Memorial Day (5/25/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie hosted his weekly tele-conference with Veterans Service Organizations to update them on VA's COVID-19 response and other matters (5/27/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie and USB Paul Lawrence hosted a town hall for North Carolina Veterans (5/27/2020)

Miscellaneous Communications from VA

- VAntage blog published January 31st and continually updated since: https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/70999/cdc-coronavirus-information-and-resources/
- VetResources emails, providing Coronavirus information and prevention guidance, were sent to 10.8 million subscribers. (2/5 and 2/26)
- Implemented VEText outreach to 8,858,481 Veterans to receive COVID-19 information and updates via text. (3/17/2020)
- Partnered with Facebook and the American Red Cross Military Veteran Caregiver Network to support Veterans and their families/caregivers in their homes through use of 7,488 free Facebook Portal devices.
- Conducted a "Lunch and Learn" a virtual online meeting to provide Veteran Service Organizations and community partners access to VA resources including COVID-19 response resources.
- Published VETResources to a total of 10.7M Veterans via email. (3/25/20).
- Secretary Wilkie sent a message to all VA employees expressing appreciation for their support during the COVID-19 pandemic, assuring them that their health and safety and that of VA's patients is critical, and offering resources to promote employee wellness. (3/17/2020)
- Deployed VEText based messages to Veterans that have a mobile phone number registered with VA (3/30/2020);
    - The texts reach approximately 7.1 million Veterans.
    - The message: "Dept of Veterans Affairs COVID-19 update: Stay home, stay safe, stay connected. VA has online tools for appointments, prescriptions, and more. https://go.usa.gov/xdJkp
- Developed a COVID-19 quick start guide (QSG) to be posted as part of the VA welcome kit and broadly distributed to Veterans. This distribution includes:
    - All MOU partners (corporate partners), Veteran Service Organizations (VSO), posted on social media pages (Twitter, Facebook, etc.), VA Program Offices for sharing across their partner networks, National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA). (3/30/2020)
- Published public blog with guidance for Veterans/Caregivers seeking access to DoD facilities.
- Conducted a "Lunch and Learn" virtual online meeting to provide Veteran Service Organizations and community partners information on VA Mental Health resources and highlight the Cohen Veterans Network (CVN) mental health initiatives http://va-eerc-ees.adobeconnect.com/veocvebllcohen/
- The COVID Quick Start Guide (QSG) was posted at https://www.va.gov/welcome-kit/ (4/7/2020)
- Initiated an advertising campaign for VHA recruiting. (4/7/2020)
- #LiveWholeHealth-Self Care Resources campaign for Veterans during Coronavirus crisis launched.
- PREVENTS reached out to Vets during the COVID crisis, releasing informational videos and concrete steps that Veterans and their families can take to care for their emotional well-being under the tag #MoreThanEverBefore and with the help of lead PREVENTS Ambassador Second Lady Karen Pence. (4/8/2020)
- https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/73363/live-whole-health-self-care-episode-1/
- Sent a Mental-health focused VEText message to be distributed to 9 million Veterans (4/10/2020)
- Published *Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Financial Relief Actions and Time Limit Extensions* to VBA's Fact Sheets site. (4/10/2020)
- Published VBA COVID-19 FAQs to help address routine and non-urgent questions. (4/10/2020)
- Delivered VETResources digital newsletter to 10.7 Million Veterans. (4/16/2020)
- VA launched a new website on VA's external blog https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/roll-of-honor/ called the "Roll of Honor". This new webpage page came about as a result of not being able to provide committal services due to the COVID-19 crisis. The site provides an opportunity to

remember those Veterans interred during this crisis and reflects interments in our cemeteries. Each day, NCA will add the names; branch of service and location of burial for each Veteran interred in a national cemetery on the previous day. (4/16/2020)

- VA's My HealtheVet team is hosting a webinar for Veterans about how to access VA telehealth services, in coordination with the Elizabeth Dole Foundation. (4/17/2020)
- VA sent a text message via VETtext to 8.2M Veterans. Content is focused on financial hardship, and specifically action certain Veterans must take to claim an additional $500 per dependent in stimulus funds. (5/1/2020)
- VBA published the Transition Talk series to VBA's Transition and Economic Development website. Several video segments were posted that addressed our response to COVID-19 and VBA Program updates. (5/12/2020)
- Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits, Margarita Devlin, participated in a virtual event sponsored by the Association of Defense Communities and Blue Star Families.
- VA published the following video that discussed TAP procedures during COVID-19, including information on how to access web-based VA Benefits and Services courses and Military Life Cycle: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V3agzM86sBk
- Secretary Wilkie visited the Baltimore, Maryland VA Medical Center to thank employees for their life saving and important work during the Pandemic. (5/18/2020)
- Under Secretary for Benefits, Paul Lawrence hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Oklahoma on focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 27,705 participants. (5/18/2020)
- PDUSB Margarita Devlin was the keynote speaker for Day 1 of VA Healthcare Online Summit. (5/19/2020)
- USB Paul Lawrence hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Kentucky focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 21,434 participants. (5/19/2020)
- VA shared our Transition Talk/Transition Assistance Program video segment through various social media channels and communication platforms. This segment of Military to Civilian Transition Talk discussed the cancellation of TAP events due to COVID-19 and the availability of online courses and where to access them. All Transition Talk episodes are located at https://benefits.va.gov/transition/coronavirus.asp
- Published Circular 26-20-19, *Additional Lender Guidance Concerning COVID-19*, to provide supplemental information regarding current VA policies and to provide further guidance to assist in the processing of VA-guaranteed loans during the National Emergency. The circular is located at https://www.benefits.va.gov/HOMELOANS/documents/circulars/26_20_19.pdf.
- Board of Veterans Appeals Chairman Cheryl Mason participated in an interview with Government Matters to discuss BVA's response to COVID-19 (5/22/2020)
- VBA posted information to its social media platforms concerning VA benefits debts. If a Veteran or beneficiary are financially unable to pay their debt(s) due to the COVID-19 crisis, they can call or submit their request online at https://iris.custhelp.va.gov/app/ask/.
    - Twitter: https://twitter.com/VAVetBenefits/status/1265659176203833345?s=20
    - Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/VeteransBenefits/posts/10158288334263416:0
- Total VA email messages sent from January 24, 2020 with reference to COVID-19 and/or Coronavirus in either the subject line or body content up to today: 288,566,268. VA email percentage directly related to COVID-19 Outreach is 288,566,268/519,433,938 or 54.2%.
- A VEText message describing Veterans Health Administration's re-opening plans was sent today to a total of 8.1M Veterans.

Guidance Documents and Human Capital

- Provided HR Emergency Preparedness Guide to employees and managers to answer questions on a wide range of human capital topics (e.g., travel, leave, telework, employee relations, labor relations, compensation, staffing, reasonable accommodation); continue to update based on new guidance.
- Released system-wide policy released directing curtailment of routine appointments and elective surgeries at all VA facilities (3/17/20)
- Released guidance for Geriatrics & Extended Care Home & Community Based Services Programs to protect Veterans and staff including strict limitations on visitors in geriatric facilities, increasing the use of virtual modalities for clinical care, and screening all essential visitors or residents of a Veterans home prior to initiating contact.
- Released Chaplain guidance related to COVID-19 transmitted to the field (3/17/20) that continues to provide spiritual support to Veterans while using appropriate PPE or and utilizing virtual modalities for worship services. Any large-scale chaplain events have been cancelled. (3/17/20)
- Implementation of an Episodic Special Patient Icon in Bed Management Solution sent to the field
    - VA recently launched an Episodic Patient Icon to identify inpatient Veterans who are presumptive or confirmed positive cases during epidemics. These icons can also be used to identify negative pressure rooms which allows for real-time bed capacity across the enterprise.
- Issuing proposed COVID-19 Interim Suitability & Fingerprint Guidance to comply with social distancing recommendations; guidance includes temporarily suspension of an initial fingerprint check (SAC) prior to new employees and contractor's entry-on-duty (EOD); VA continuing other investigatory measures such as initiation of e-Quip.
- Finalized a response to various union demands to bargain implementation of measures and precautions being put in place by the Department to protect people and property during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The general response denies immediate negotiations while advising any impact and implementation bargaining will occur post-implementation when the pandemic ceases. The Department is willing to meet all its legal obligations, including negotiating with unions representing VA employees, but must also focus on providing care to our Veterans while protecting the safety and security of our facilities and the health of all in them.
- Issued guidance memorandum authorizing waiver of the biweekly pay limitation on premium pay for workers performing duties in response to COVID-19, permitting overtime and premium pay for eligible workers up to the annual limitation.
- OPM signed dual-compensation waiver to allow hiring of reemployed annuitants (i.e. retired employees) during COVID-19 by streamlining current delegations of authority for waiver of salary offset
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP): Prepared to increase scope of the EAP contract with FOH for COVID-19 counselling if needed.
- VA announced the policy change that allows for a dual compensation waiver for retired annuitants (retired VA employees) to be hired back to VA to meet the increased need of healthcare workers during COVID-19
- VA working with OPM to expedite blanket requests from VA to exceed the limits on recruitment, relocation, and retention incentives for Title 5 employees to help provide necessary staff
- Coordinated with DOD to identify approximately 8581 employees who are reserve/guard members and 669 are currently activated – 122 nurses and 24 doctors included in this number.

- Internal bulletin being drafted to implement new OPM guidance on flexible on-boarding this coming pay period and as needed during COVID to minimize physical proximity (such as the oath of office, the form I-9, fingerprinting, orientation, physical examinations, drug testing).
- Submitted to OPM: (1) request for dual comp waiver to cover 2210 (IT Specialists) series occupations, and (2) direct hire authority for VBA positions-- Veteran Service Representative, Rating Veterans Service Representative, and Legal Administrative Specialist.
- Guidance sent to HR offices of a temporary postponement of pre-employment applicant drug testing for testing designated positions (TDP) for up to 180 days.
- Authority to Approve Weather & Safety Leave for Employees
- Guidance for Elective Gastroenterology and Hepatology Procedures – COVID-19
- Guidance for VHA Eye Care Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- OCHCO Bulletin – Temporary Authorization to Delay Pre-Placement and Recurring Physical Exams
- Guidance for VHA Emergency Child Care Center Operations
- Dual Compensation Waiver Guidance for VHA
- Guidance on Safeguards for Military Environmental Registry Exams to Protect Veterans
- Guidance on Patient Specimen Shipments - UPS shipping
- Guidance on Preparedness for Mechanical Ventilation of COVID-19 patients during Pandemic
- Examining with OPM on a waiver or use of existing interchange agreements to detail excepted to competitive positions
- Collaborating with DOL and DHS/USCIS on a waiver of labor market review for non-citizens.
- Collaborating with the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association to let that community participate in helping VA fill its openings.
- VA send new (coordinated) guidance to the field on MISSION Act considerations (3/27/20).
- VA released the VHA COVID-19 Response Plan which provides guidance to the field. The operations plan includes strategies to address many COVID-19 cases to include alternative sites of care for Veterans with COVID-19. (3/27/20)
- VA Veterans Health Administration sent the following guidance to the field (3/27/2020)
    - Delegation of Authority – Group Recruitment and Retention Incentives for Title 38 Employees
    - Recruitment, Hiring and Organizational Changes During COVID-19
    - COVID-19 VHACO Clinician Request
    - Postponement of Long-Term Care Surveys
    - Establishment of New Hire Processing Timeline
    - Office of Nursing Services Recruitment – Retired Annuitants and Travel Nurse Corps
- Recommending OMP delay Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) by 3 months. VA is considering delay of VA's annual All Employee Survey (AES) to September.
- OPM approved direct hire authority for the following VBA positions: Veterans Service Representative; Rating Veterans Service Representative; Legal Administrative Specialist.
- Modifying Bulletin on waiving physical examinations during COVID-19 to address stress on Employee Occupational Health (EOH) offices who are focused on COVID-19 screening.
- Working modifications to HRSmart to support mass hiring to support deployable medical personnel. 3/29/2020)
- Submitting request to OPM for broad authority to approve Special Contribution Awards (SCA) above the $10K agency limit; drafting changes to current policy (VAH 5017) to delegate from SECVA to EIC authority to approve SCAs up to $10K.
- Notified HR offices on COVID-19 Excepted Service Hiring Authority for Schedule A approved by OPM. this allows us to quickly hire any Title 5 positions that are in direct response COVID-19. VA may use

this to fill positions on a temporary basis for up to one year as needed in response to, or as a result of COVID-19. (3/30/2020)

- OPM sending VA job opportunities to over 1M retirees.
- VA All Employee Survey postponed until September 2020.
- Notified Human Resources (HR) offices of the Federal employee leave provisions under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the requirement to post the Families First Coronavirus Response Act Notice at VA facilities.
- In accordance with OMB and VA COVID-19 guidance, National Diversity Internship Program (NDIP) FY 20 summer session has been cancelled.
- VHA New Guidance to the field (3/31/2020):
    - Leveraging Capacity to Support Surges in Demand for COVID-19
    - Credentialing and Privileging COVID-19 (Reduced credentialing process for providers in order to expedite onboarding of critical medical staff)
    - Resilience Rehabilitation Treatment Programs (RRTP) Hardening Guidance (Details guidance on efforts to protect staff and patients in our Domiciliary Units)
    - Supplemental Information - Radiology and Nuclear Scheduling and Orders Management During the COVID-19 Pandemic
    - Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Guidance for Urgent and Emergent Surgical Procedures
    - Guidance on Access Standards in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updated (coordinated with OMB)
- VA OGC advised that the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has the authority during the COVID-19 global pandemic emergency to procure lodging for employees working at their local worksite (e.g., if staff have a need to stay away from their homes/family members and continue to work (e.g. Emergency Department physicians), or a need to stay close by for faster response time, if VHA documents in writing why it has concluded that this event at all or some facilities involves imminent danger to human life and why paying for employee meals and lodging is necessary to combat that imminent danger.
- Assistant Secretary HRA/OSP and Assistant Secretary OIT co-signed a memorandum dated March 31 outlining temporary procedures for personnel security vetting and appointment of new employees and alternative PIV credentials for eligible users during Coronavirus 2019 National Emergency; this guidance implements direction issued to executive departments and agencies from the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Personnel Management.
- Provided guidance on March 26 to field claims processors and the public on good cause for extending claims filing deadlines based on COVID-19. (4/1/2020)
- VHA Guidance Issued to the Field: (4/1/2020)
    - COVID-19 Definitions of Bed Categories
    - Suspension of Registered Nurse Transition to Practice Residency Program
    - COVID - Clinical Resource Hub Guidance
    - Guidance for the Hiring Compensation and Utilization of Alternate Nurse and Unlicensed Assistive Personnel
    - COVID-19 - Process for Cancellation of Non-urgent Operating Room Procedures.
    - Specifically, under existing VA regulations, if the time limits within which claimants or beneficiaries are required to act in order to perfect a claim, file an appeal, or challenge an adverse VA decision expired, the time may be extended for "good cause" shown.
    - Accordingly, claimants impacted by COVID-19 may request an extension for filing based on good cause. VBA regional office claims processors will grant the extension request, provided the time limit in question expired on or after March 13, 2020.

- Notified HR offices of the Federal employee leave provisions under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the requirement to post the Families First Coronavirus Response Act notice at VA facilities. This provides up to two weeks (up to 80 hours) of emergency paid sick leave to all federal civil service employees if they are unable to work (or telework) under specified circumstances related to COVID-19 – unless they are in an exempted category.
- Direct Hire Authority allowed by OPM for certain additional positions in NCA and VHA.
- OPM has authorized VA Direct Hire Authority for one year for the following positions at all grade levels nationwide for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency: Industrial Hygienist, GS-0690 Plumber, WG-4206 Maintenance Worker, WG-4749 Supervisory Engineer, GS-0801 Specialty Engineer, GS-0800 Laborer, WG-3502 Cook, WG-7404 Cemetery Caretaker, WG-4754. OPM has also authorized DHA for the following occupation and at this specific grade level: Human Resources Specialist, GS-0201-12.
- **VHA Guidance to the field:**
    - Changes to In-Person Identity Verification for the My HealtheVet Website
    - COVID-19 Bed Expansion Planning Signed
    - Move! Weight Management Program Guidance for COVID-19 Pandemic Response
    - EIC Memorandum Authorization to pay for Lodging and Meals
    - Contracted Outpatient Sites of Care COVID-19 Virtual Care Information and Updates
- Developing policy on the ability of VA law enforcement personnel, with proper notice, to inspect the personal effects of employees exiting VA healthcare facilities in order to prevent the theft of personal protective equipment needed to protect health care workers during the on-going public health emergency. This is becoming an issue during the Pandemic. (4/4/2020)
- VA signed a memorandum regarding the Child Care Subsidy Program that has temporarily expanded the total family income ceiling from $89,999 to the maximum limit of $144,000 for support during the COVID-19 crisis; allows eligible employees to seek reimbursement on some child-care costs. (4/6/2020)
- Veterans Health Administration guidance sent to field: (4/6/2020)
    - Grade and Pay Determinations for Nurses/Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA) During COVID-19
    - Homeless Program Office (HPO) Guidance on Face to Face Visits
    - On-Hand Inventory Reporting Requirements for Critical Care and Coronavirus Drugs
    - Update: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Facemask and N95 Respirator Use
    - Tip Sheet for Caregivers During COVID-19
    - VHA COVID 19 Priorities During Transition to VA's New EHRM
    - COVID-19 Employee Deployment - Special Contribution Award Guidance
- VA Public Health, Coronavirus website to provide Veterans & Staff guidance and information now active. Website visited 191,348 times with 172,253 unique visits (4/6/2020)
- Published policy revision updates to VA Handbook 5005 to remove the requirement for Professional Standards Boards for the following occupations listed in 38 U.S.C. § 7401 (3), which will reduce the time to hire for these positions by streamlining the process: physical therapy assistant; occupational therapy assistant; marriage family therapist; therapeutic radiologic technologist; kinesiotherapist; orthotist and prosthetist; medical records administration; blind rehabilitation specialist; blind rehabilitation outpatient specialist; licensed professional mental health counselor, prosthetic representative; nuclear medicine technologist; occupational therapist; physical therapist; dietitian and nutritionist; medical records technician; and therapeutic medical physicist. (4/7/2020)

- VA has decided to defer the Leadership VA (LVA) FY20 Class until FY21 and increase the size from 80 to 100 to make up for some of the leadership development throughput lost from postponing the current cohort. (4/7/2020)
- Veterans Health Administration Guidance to the Field: (4/7/2020)

COVID-19 VHA Guidance for Tuberculosis Testing of New Employees

  - Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) Compliance Inspection During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Accreditation Contract Delayed
  - 2020 US Census Participation for Veterans in VA Residential Settings
  - Continuity in Mental Health Services and Suicide Prevention Activities During COVID-19
  - COVID-19 Temporary/Expedited Appointment Credentialing Process
  - Release of Updated Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 and New FY 2021 Basic and Prevailing State Home Per Diem Rates for State Veteran Homes
  - Focused Professional Practice Evaluation and Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation Process during Presidential Declared State of Emergency – COVID-19
  - Guidance on Anticoagulation Use and Monitoring for Veterans Health Administration Anticoagulation Programs During VHA's COVID-19 Emergency Response
  - Contact Center Script and Screening (COVID-19) Updated
- VA received approval from OPM to waive the salary off-set for 2210 (Grades 07-15) and 340 series (Grades 12-14) positions. (4/11/2020)
- VA has issued guidance that starting immediately all CLC Staff and Veterans will be tested for COVID-19. CLCs are VA's nursing homes and care for particularly vulnerable Veterans. (4/11/2020)
- OPM approved VA's request for direct hire authority for the following additional 11 positions at all grade levels on a nationwide basis to support COVID-19. The approval begins today and is for one year: personnel security specialist; program support assistant; cemetery representative; health systems specialist; construction control representative; electronics industrial control mechanic; painter; equipment servicer; air conditioning equipment operator; equipment operator; laundry worker. (4/13/2020)
- Notified HR offices of flexibilities to defer random drug testing in certain conditions due to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. Establishes limited conditions in which a facility director may approve a deferral of a random drug test for an employee occupying a testing designated position. (4/13/2020)
- Revised Guidance on new hire applicant drug testing: April 17 revised bulletin issued updating prior guidance regarding how long an applicant drug test may be postponed; prior bulletin issued on March 25, 2020 advised that due to COVID-19, applicant testing could be postponed for up to 180 days after the applicant's entrance on duty in order for VA to meet emergency hiring needs. The revised bulletin includes the following statement: "It is the responsibility of the HR office to schedule the drug test as soon as practicable, but <u>no later than 90 calendar</u> days from the date of appointment." (4/19/2020)
- VA received approval from OPM on its request to waive the 25 percent limit on recruitment, relocation, and individual retention incentives, and the 10 percent limit on group retention incentives for certain occupations that are responding to workload surges due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). (4/20/2020)
- Provided notices to the field to remind all employees of the services that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers to them and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic (guidance was pre-cleared through OMB/OPM). (4/22/2020)

- Provided guidance of required steps for expediting onboarding for new VA hires. Steps have been streamlined to meet urgent staffing needs created by COVID-19 (guidance was pre-cleared through OMB/OPM). (4/22/2020)
- The Secretary signed a Delegation of Authority (April 23) that allows VA Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries and Other Key Officials at equivalent level of authority, the authority to exclude an employee, who is a health care provider or emergency responder, from application of the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act, Division E and the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act Division C of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). Accompanying guidance (that was vetted by OMB) was issued to the field as well via a Chief Human Capital Officer Bulletin. (4/23/2020)
- VA launched a COVID-19 chatbot on VA.gov this week. The chatbot helps answer veterans' questions about COVID-19 and direct them to available VA resources (4/23/2020)
- SECVA signed a delegation of authority VA Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries and Other Key Officials, the authority to waive certain limitations on pay for work done in support of the response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The following pay limits are listed in the guidance as covered: basic pay, nurse executive and pharmacist executive special pay, aggregate pay, annual pay, premium pay, and incentives and awards. (4/27/2020)
- On May 12, 2020, VA issued a bulletin (cleared through OMB) that notified HR offices of a temporary authorization to extend the grace period to obtain licenses for currently unlicensed or uncertified GS-9/11 Social Workers (SW) and GS-9 Marriage and Family Therapists (MFT). Due to COVID-19, many state licensing boards, and professional testing centers, have limited operational capacity or have closed entirely. This exception will remain 90 days after the COVID-19 national emergency has been lifted or 90 days after a testing center or resumption of normal operations, whichever is first. (5/13/2020)
- OPM approved additional direct hire authority for the following position at all grade levels on a nationwide basis to support COVID-19: Personnel Security Assistant (GS-0086). The authority is effective immediately and is for one year. (5/20/2020)
- VA Notified HR offices of updated information on various leave options that may be utilized by employees during COVID-19. The bulletin clarifies the conditions in which telework, weather and safety leave, emergency paid sick leave under the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA), paid leave under the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (EFMLEA), and leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA leave) may be authorized. (5/20/2020)
- VA sent version 6 of COVID-19 FAQs adding several new HR topics. The table of changes also provides a quick reference to other updates made throughout the document on the following topics including: Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), Pre-Placement Examinations, Onboarding, PIV and Background Investigations, Employee Relations, Telework and Reasonable Accommodation, Return to Work. (5/20/2020)

COVID Response (VHA)

- Within a day of the first confirmed US case, VA began planning for COVID-19 by establishing screening and triage, isolation and quarantine, and infection control strategy and plans.
- Activated Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Emergency Management Coordination Cell (EMCC) to Level 1 on January 20, 2020 and it remains activated.
- Daily crisis action team meetings at 3pm to discuss updates and remain in sync internally and with other federal guidance. (3/9/2020)

- Screening points established at every major VHA Healthcare Facility (170 hospitals that serve nearly 9 million veterans across the country. (3/10/20)
- Limited admissions to Spinal Cord Injury Units - 24 major centers; 24,000 Veterans. (3/10/20)
- Restricted admission to VA Community Living Centers (CLC) (134 nationwide nursing homes supporting 41,000 Veterans. (3/10/20)
- Submitted Task Order to HHS to receive an additional 250K masks in Martinsburg; 1.5M masks at the SDC in Hines, IL
- VA is experiencing a reduction in surgical case load due to delaying non-emergent care; down from 1,900 per day to 1,300 per day. Additionally, there has been a 5% drop in ER visits; increased bed capacity by 1/3 across the VA. (3/16/20)
- VA will receive 20,000 testing swabs. (3/23/20)
- Packaged 50,000 masks today for shipment to Denver and Brooklyn. (3/23/2020)
- Future deployment of the Mobile Vet Center to New Orleans, LA will start week of 23 Mar 2020. VA reviewing locations for additional deployments. VA to set up Vet Center Community Access Point to provide direct counseling to Veterans receiving treatment through the HHS location.
- Working to purchase facepiece elastomeric respirators based on CDC Guidance for managing COVID-19 patients; It is recommended that elastomeric respirators be used in order to conserve Surgical 95 and N95 filtering facepieces for high risk procedures that require a sterile field. (3/24/2020)
- Converting all ICU beds to negative airflow beds with a goal of reengineering by 3/30/20
- VA experiencing a high reduction (20%) in urgent care utilization showing Veterans are heeding advice to stay home. (3/24/2020
- 20k hand sanitizer bottles have been received and will be deployed to the facilities. (3/24/2020)
- Davita and Fresenius Dialysis companies establishing joint cohorting sites for individual markets where COVID 19 dialysis patients can be treated in isolation.
- VA is no longer considering issuing a temporary waiver of the >90% bed hold requirement and the 75% Veteran bed requirement for State Veterans Homes to help ensure they remain solvent during this crisis. After further review, OGC advised that VA has no authority to waive the regulatory requirement. In addition, we were asked to review draft legislative language that would waive the above requirement. The State Homes have a hotline to Congress so we assume this is something they asked for and we will support.
- VA met with OIRA and OMB on MISSION Act considerations. VA is not pausing the MISSION Act. The department is ensuring the best medical interests of Veterans are met by adhering to the law in a manner that takes into account whether referrals for community care are clinically appropriate during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Manilla, Philippines Embassy will close in the next two weeks, in which case our VA clinic will close. Eight employees will be returned to the US (1 VHA and 7 VBA) and this will impact 6,000 veterans who receive care from that clinic.
- Activating enhanced Tele-ICU hub
- To support volunteerism, VHA is authorizing Special Contribution Awards up to the limit and asking OPM for authority to go above $10,000 but under $25,000 where needed and also making an exception to policy (VA Directive 5007) to allow per regulation recruitment, relocation and retention bonuses for any appointment at least 6 months in duration.
- Received shipment of N-95 masks, swabs and test kits for distribution (3/27/2020)
- Currently supporting approximately 2,500 concurrent telehealth appointments, with a goal of 10,000 concurrent appointments. (3/27/2020)
- With support from our Center for Strategic Partnerships, Office of Research and Development is establishing agreements with two commercial Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) that has allowed

four of our medical centers to join in ongoing COVID-19 clinical trials and positions us to be ready for any future trials using these IRBs. VA opened trials in Palo Alto, Atlanta, New Orleans and Denver, where VA is seeing a surge of COVID patients.

- Partnering with Amazon, to purchase 500 tablets to enable access for Veterans, families and caregivers via VHA Telehealth Service to help ensure medical access and reduce possible exposure estimated launch. (3/30/2020)
- Assisting Homeless Program on development of Assessment and Recovery Center.
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), approximately 1,626 families have postponed scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns.
- VA working an Agreement with Reliance for the use of Advarra as the commercial IRB of record for a COVID-19 study using Gilead's Remdesvir at the Palo Alto VA Medical Center.
- VA has increased telehealth capacity by 15% to 11,000 max concurrent user call capacity.
- Medical Centers are experiencing serious PPE shortage. Several sites doing 3D printing, but it is not enough. Soon, PPE will be rationed; one surgical mask issued per week, one N95 per day. VISN 6 began mask sterilization with Berrett – 2400 mask in a 24-hour period. (4/4/2020)
- 2 Medical Centers have a greater than 70% occupancy of Med/Surg beds with COVID patients: Bronx, NY (86% occupancy) and Boston, MA (72%). (4/11/2020)
- On April 10th President Trump signed the "VA Tele-Hearing Modernization Act"
- Massachusetts Chelsea Soldiers' Home (Non-VA Facility) (4/12/2020)
    - 7 veteran resident deaths
    - 22 veteran residents who have tested positive
    - 29 staff tested positive
    - VA Boston has accepted patients for care- total count pending
- VHA is in the process of testing all Community Living Center veterans and staff and should have this complete next week. Approximately 7000 veterans live in our CLCs across the nation. (4/16/2020)
- VA is continuing an aggressive expansion of our Tele-ICU capabilities. Yesterday, VA completed the Fayetteville and Salisbury VA Medical Centers. Today we are working on Hampton and San Juan. 51 total sites for network configuration have been completed to date. (5/13/2020)
- VA recorded a peak number of minutes for telehealth visits in a single day at over 2 million; pre-COVID averages were 300,000 minutes per day (5/13/2020)
- VA kicked off its new COVID-19 Joint Data and Analytic Fusion Cell Integrated Project Team (IPT), which will conduct analytics to fill current gaps in COVID-19 understanding. (5/14/2020)
- DoD is supporting VA via MilAir use to transport medical personnel from Reno, Nevada to Newark, New Jersey due to lack of availability of commercial flights (5/17/2020)
- VA expanded network capacity for telehealth by launching Care2 Cloud. Supported 1,652 calls on May 27, the highest peak concurrent calls for Care2 Cloud to date. This is an increase of 71% in one week.
- This month, May 1 through May 25, VA Video Connect has supported record 221,427 unique Veterans (entire month total for February: 29,683; March 102,667; April 218,905)

COVID Response (BVA/VBA)

- All VA Regional Benefit Offices (ROs) are closed to the public. Benefits are still being processed virtually.
- Insurance services extended premium payment grace periods; reinstatement deadlines; and Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI) application deadlines. (3/17/20)

- Board of Veterans Appeals suspended all travel board, video, and central office hearings and is prepared to provide virtual hearings where possible if Veterans and the Representative are willing and have the necessary equipment. (3/17/20)
- VA's Loan Guaranty Service issued program guidance for VA's Real Estate Owned and Portfolio Servicing Contract (RPSC) contractor, placing a moratorium on evictions for VA-owned properties for 60 days due to COVID-19.
- VA's Debt Management Center, through coordination with the Veterans Benefits Administration and Veterans Service Organizations, implemented a 60-day COVID-19 debt relief plan to provide temporary financial relief in accordance with Veterans' request.
- Notified GI Bill Beneficiaries and school officials through email and social media. If schools change modality of training to online classes for the current term, VA will continue to pay benefit payments.
- On Saturday, March 21, 2020, the President signed into law S. 3503, which clarifies how the Department of Veterans Affairs should treat in-person courses of study that convert to distance learning formats due to health-related situations and other emergencies. https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/bill-announcement-89/
- Effective immediately, the Board of Veterans Appeals will advance on docket (AOD) appeals for Veterans diagnosed with COVID-19. (3/24/2020)
- The Board of Veterans Appeals will accept AMA Notices of Disagreement (NOD) with a typed signature in lieu of a wet signature. (3/24/2020)
- Effective COB March 24, 2020 the National Personnel Records Center will be closing its facility in accordance with local St. Louis municipal guidance. Critical VA personnel will remain behind to continue to process priority records requests.
- A total of 631 Transition Assistance events have been cancelled to date due to installation restrictions. VBA is offering these transition related courses virtually (via eLearning) to all Servicemembers and their families.
- Issued joint guidance with Pension & Fiduciary Service and Appeals Management Office that the COVID-19 pandemic qualifies as "good cause" for granting extension requests. Specifically, if a claimant requests an extension to file forms or documents because the COVID-19 pandemic affected their ability to meet such deadlines, VBA will grant the requested extension, provided the time period expired on or after March 13, 2020 (the date the President issued a national emergency).
- Coordinated with Department of Treasury to suspend the collection of all debt owed to VA until May 31, 2020 for any Veterans seeking debt assistance due to COVID-19. This includes suspending referrals to the Treasury Offset (TOP) and Cross Servicing (CS) processes.
- VA announced today a number of actions to provide Veterans with financial, benefits and claims help amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The financial relief actions include the following until further notice: (4/3/2020)
- As of April 3, VBA has temporarily suspended all in-person appointments provided by VBA's contract examination vendors, where the Veteran physically reports to the medical provider's office. The contract exam vendors will continue to complete as many examinations as possible using virtual means that do not involve an in-person examination, including tele-exams and ACE. For some disabilities, in-person examinations are required and cannot be completed through an alternate method. (4/6/2020)
    - Suspending all actions on Veteran debts under the jurisdiction of the Treasury Department.
    - Suspending collection action or extending repayment terms on preexisting VA debts, as the Veteran prefers.
    - For Veterans who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and need immediate action on their appeals, as opposed to a filing extension, the Board of Veterans' Appeals will Advance their

appeal on Docket (AOD). Click here to find out how to file for AOD and what documentation is required.

- Veterans Group Life Insurance: Prudential has extended grace periods by 90-days for premium payments and reinstatements, including the time allowed to submit the Attending Physician Statement (APS) required for some medical underwriting applications.
- Boston Regional Benefits Office – Implemented two-week suspension of local mail processing effective April 7, 2020, ending April 21, 2020 during the anticipated peak in COVID-19 infections in the Boston community. Employees will not be authorized to access any of the three Boston, Manchester, White River Junction (BMW) facilities without prior approval as determined by the Director or Assistant Director on a case-by-case basis. (4/7/2020)
- VA published a circular on Loan Guaranty Service to inform the public of changes due to CARES Act which requires a moratorium on foreclosures of Federally backed mortgage loans and a forbearance period for payments on such loans for borrowers who are experiencing a financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to the COVID–19 emergency. (4/9/2020)
- Since the CARES act passed VA has worked with Dept. of Treasury on a solution to ensure that Veterans and Survivors who do not file tax returns and rely solely on VA benefits for income still receive stimulus checks via the CARES Act. (4/16/2020)
    - VA is securely providing beneficiary data to the IRS to ensure that no action will be required of Compensation and Pension benefit payment recipients or surviving family members receiving survivors benefits to receive their 'Economic Impact Payment' (EIP) if they do not file an annual tax return.
    - The IRS has also set up a website portal for Economic Impact Payments (EIP) if veterans, survivors or other non-filers wish to submit their information that way.
    - VA will notify press, stakeholders and Congress of these actions over the coming days.
    - This effort is complete
- On April 20, 2020, published a notice in the Federal Register which provides that, for the purpose of determining entitlement to benefits, any correspondence that is received by VA from any claimant during the period March 1, 2020 through 60 calendar days from the date the President ends the national state of emergency, that contains claims, information, or evidence, will be considered received on the date of postmark. (4/20/2020)
- On April 28, 2020, POTUS signed House Bill 6322, or Student Veteran Coronavirus Response Act of 2020, into Public Law 116-140. This new law gives VA additional authorities to continue GI Bill payments for the period beginning on March 1, 2020 and ending on December 21, 2020. VA is currently working to implement the changes: (5/1/2020)
    - continue payments to students participating in the Work Study Program who are furloughed or have to stop working.
    - continue to pay benefits for up to 4 weeks to GI Bill students whose classes are suspended, even if school is still open.
    - restoration of entitlement for GI Bill students who lose credit due to school closure or schools' suspension of training.
    - extend the delimiting date for Montgomery GI Bill and Post-9/11 G Bill students if they are unable to attend training due to COVID-19.
- Based on VA's collaboration with IRS and Treasury, approximately 396K Veterans and survivors will receive nearly $475 million in economic impact payments this week. VA is still working to enact solutions to ensure that Veterans who live in a U.S. Territory, have a fiduciary or have a foreign address are able to receive an Economic Impact Payment. (5/12/2020)

- VBA will resume in-person medical disability examinations for its compensation and pension programs within the areas covered by the 20 Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Lead Sites identified in its phased reopening plan. VBA examination vendors will implement operation plans using current CDC guidelines for clinical sanitation and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) use. In-person examinations will only be scheduled with the consent of the Veteran, and VBA will hold a Veteran's benefit claim for later exam scheduling and a decision if consent is withheld out of concern for exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

COVID Response NCA

- Effective Monday, March 23, 2020, committal services and the rendering of military funeral honors will not be conducted until further notice at VA national cemeteries. Immediate family members (limited to no more than 10 individuals) of the deceased may witness the interment if requested. Currently, approximately 1174 families have postponed scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns.
- In consultation with DoD, NCA has discontinued disinterment efforts with the Defense POW/MIA Accountability Agency (DoD) at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) effective immediately and until further notice in order to focus NCA resources on essential burial operations.
- Certain VA national cemeteries, located on active military installations, are being impacted by changes in base access (Fort Richardson, AK; Leavenworth, KS). Due to a change in base operating status, the general public is restricted from accessing the cemetery located on the base. NCA has coordinated with base authorities to ensure funeral homes are able to access the cemetery so direct casket/cremation interment operations are still available (without the option to "witness". (3/27/2020)
- Starting Thursday, April 9, 2020, NCA will no longer provide the option for families to witness interments at Calverton National Cemetery to help improve workload efficiency and increase the capacity of interment operations at this cemetery, which is located in the NYC epicenter. This change is being communicated to funeral homes in NY and families with interments scheduled on this date and beyond.
- National Cemetery Administration: Effective, Wednesday, April 15, 2020, witnessing family members will now be asked to view the interment from their cars or the road very near their cars. This change will further promote social distancing at national cemeteries and will be communicated to the funeral home community via Gov Delivery; online and to the Hill via OCLA. Families may continue to visit the gravesite in the days following the interment consistent with CDC guidelines and local travel restrictions. (4/13/2020)

Emergency Management/Fourth Mission

- CAO and VA's Director of Operations and Emergency Management communicated with HHS to ensure VA's Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needs are prioritized. HHS has agreed to release a stop gap quantity of N95 protective masks to VA this week. (March 16, 2020)
- Deployed 16 Nursing Assistants to assist with screening of AMCITs repatriated (all have been demobilized)
- Deployed a Liaison Officer to the HHS Secretary's Operations Center (SOC) to assist with response coordination.

- Conducted analysis of VA Medical facilities contingency data to identify locations for potential COVID-19 dedicated facilities.
- VHA has detailed four personnel to FEMA HQ to support the operations: Dr. John Areno, VISN16 Chief Medical Officer & Pulmonary/Critical Care physician; Mary Mather, IPEC/National Program Manager for LTC; Andrew Centineo, PL&O; Michael Forgy, OEM.
- All Area Emergency Managers are in place at each FEMA region.
- VA is concerned with the national ventilator shortage and is working with FEMA Task Force (TF) to find other sources of supply. VA will receive 25 ventilators this week and an additional 25 next week.
- VA activating DEMPS for New Orleans (160 Clinical Staff) and New York (50 Nurses). We will begin moving people there starting today.
- Collaborating with Peace Corps who has 7,000 volunteers ready to work (due to evacuations); working with them on open position advertising and employment opportunities to support VA's mission during this national emergency and beyond.
- VA identified a potential shortage of 1K nurses in certain hotspots of the nation and is working a combination of solutions to include:
    - Rehire of retired nurses
    - Hire of new employees through special hiring authorities and waivers
    - DEMPS moves from other non-stressed areas in VA
- Acting PDUSH met with NYC Emergency Management Commissioner to discuss need for HHS tasking, sharing of data, and the process for referral of COVID positive and negative patients, preferably Veterans, to be admitted at VA facilities.
- Area Emergency Managers supporting repatriation centers:
    - Travis and Lackland demobilizing today (3/26/2020)
    - Dobbins and Miramar will demobilize tomorrow (3/27/2020)
- Growing the roster for Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System (DEMPS) volunteers for deployment to New York City and New Orleans.
- NY Harbor VA Hospital received four civilian patients from Elmhurst Hospital. One was in respiratory failure and admitted to the ICU. Information about the other three is pending. (3/29/2020)
    - Four to five additional patients are expected overnight from Elmhurst Hospital.
    - The five patients that were to be transferred from Lincoln Hospital have not arrived yet.
- Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System Deployments (Various Specialties) (4/1/2020)
    - (27) Personnel being processed for deployment.
    - (14) Personnel deployed/on the ground at various locations.
    - (2) VISNS requested personnel deployed through DEMPS
- JAVITS NY Medical Station and USNS Comfort Transfer guidance received
- Mobile Vet Center Deployment Update (4/4/2020)
    - <u>New York, NY (Deployment Started)</u>
      Operation Gotham at the Javits Center in New York City began to receive patients on the afternoon of 31 March 2020. Vet Center staff connected with 64 Service members over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 2 civilians.
    - <u>Pasadena, CA (Deployment Started)</u>
      Operation started on 1 April 2020 and ended April 3. Minimal contact will seek a better location.
    - <u>Portland, OR (Deployment Started)</u>
      Operation started on 31 March 2020 and staff are located in a shopping center in Portland, OR. Vet Center staff connected with 40 Veterans, Service members and families over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 12 civilians

- Altoona, PA (Deployment Started)
  MVC stationed at VAMC to assist with screening. Veteran Outreach Program Specialist on site.
- Dayton, OH (Under Development)
  Request Mobile Vet Center at Dayton Medical Center to assist with COVID screening, will begin Monday April 6

- Developing requirements for Morgue Expansion Capabilities. (4/4/20)
- Working to identify medical consumables/equipment for recently purchased Field ICU Unit. Location for deployment of Unit still under consideration. (4/4/20)
- VA sent a list of critical PPE supplies with requested quantities to RADM Polowczyk, Supply Chain Sub-Task Force Director for consideration and prioritization. (4/5/20)
- Developing language for HHS sub-task on FEMA Mission Assignment to VHA for $1.5M in pharmaceutical support to Javits shelter in NYC.
- Mobile Vet Center (MVC) Update: (4/7/20)
  - Altoona, PA (Deployment Started). MVC stationed at VAMC to assist with COVID-19 screening. Veteran Outreach Program Specialist on site.
  - Dayton, OH (Deployment Under Development). Request for MVC stationed at VAMC to assist with COVID-19 screening.
  - New York, NY (Deployment Paused). Vet Center staff have connected with 99 service members over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 2 civilians
  - Pasadena, CA and Portland, OR deployments ended
- Identified a total of 20 tribal governments that have Emergency Declarations
- VA developing "live" map journal to model next VA "hot spots" for our healthcare system. (4/8/20)
- Continued development of plan on how VA might assist IHS and other tribal nations health systems. (4/10/20)
- Determining the need of resourcing second order of trailers for fatality management. (4/10/2020)
- Update on Mask sterilization efforts with Battelle: (4/10/20)
  - Sites either currently running or will be running within two weeks: Stoneybrook, NY; Brooklyn, NY; Plain City, OH; Boston, MA; Chicago, IL; Washington, DC
  - Planned future states: Connecticut, New Jersey, Indiana, Florida, Texas, Michigan
- DOD approved MilAir transport to send nurses from Maine and Washington State to New York City. The mission is underway. (4/26/20)
- VA is sending is sending at least 1 NP and 1 Nurse to the IHS Shiprock Clinic to assist with the Navajo COVID-19 crisis. (4/26/20)
- VA has an increased need for Oxygen concentrators and portable ventilators. FEMA is being prioritized over VA and these are becoming increasingly hard to obtain. Update: VA began discussions with manufacturers regarding these items today. The issue is that the vendors received 10 months' worth of demand in three weeks and it has depleted current inventory. Vendors have increased product lines and estimate mid-May before supply availability. (4/23/20)

Construction, Contracting and Supply Chain

- VA's Financial Services Center established an Emergency Buyers sub-group of 13,000 Government Purchase Cardholders within VA's Amazon Business Account providing special access to select vendors for critically needed supplies in accordance with the Chief Acquisition Officer's COVID-19 supply chain efforts

- During the COVID-19 emergency, private sector entities have offered to donate equipment and supplies needed to protect personnel from contracting COVID-19. VA OGC worked a delegation of approval to VISN Directors to ensure efficient approval of donated gifts.
- Construction projects in Massachusetts, California, New York, Pennsylvania and Puerto Rico have been ether stopped completely or activities severely curtailed by this national emergency and shelter in place orders.
- US Army Corps of Engineers will visit the former Denver medical facility to assess the building's viability for FEMA/HHS use.
- On March 24th, CAO reported to VA OIG a vendor in Louisiana who is offering medical supplies and equipment up to 1000% above average cost and likely does not meet FDA guidelines.
- VA working with various vendors for purchase of Chloroquine Phosphate and ventilators.
    - Use of the new Open Opportunities, a governmentwide platform offering professional development opportunities to current federal employees, as a central location for federal agencies to post details, microdetails, and/or temporary assignments.
- VA OGC partnered with the VA Voluntary Service to create a universal gift form for distribution within VA listing general departmental needs during the COVID-19 emergency. Each VAMC Director can solicit and accept the listed donations pursuant to VHA Directive 4721, VHA General Post Fund – Gifts and Donations. (3/27/20)
- On March 30th, the Denver Logistics Center (DLC) will receive a shipment of 500 iPads for the VA Video Connect (VVC) Community. These iPads are designed to allow "skype" type appointments between the Veteran patient and the Care Provider. The DLC will prepare the iPads for immediate shipment to fulfill backorders.
- Invocation of the Defense Production Act (DPA) resulted in confusion in the commercial sector as to how to prioritize orders, resulting in delays and cancellations on orders and deliveries to VA. Under the DPA, the FEMA Task Force, used its authority to divert materiel originally offered to VA for delivery to the SNS.
    - VA orders for masks, gowns, gloves, and PARP have been cancelled by our vendors. This is high risk for not only our enterprise, but for the Administration as our hospitals will be without supplies starting late this week.
    - FEMA and HHS have been made aware; VA is awaiting resolution from them.

    *Issue has since been resolved
- VA Acquisition Office is working with the VHA's Care in the Community Program Office to establish a Global Nurse Advice Line contract to support increased phone consults for Veteran care in support of Coronavirus.
- VA contracted with Battelle for use of their Critical Care Decontamination Systems (CCDS) to sanitize N95 masks for Brooklyn, Manhattan, and East Orange, NY medical centers. Great partnership with HHS and FDA led to the approval to reuse masks 20x after sanitization. (4/3/20)
- VA has administered more than 18,900 tests and has more than 3,000 additional tests on hand. (4/3/20)
- Contract awarded for Alternate Care Sites-Four (4) 125 bed, soft-sided, portable medical structure. Awaiting delivery and selection of sites. (4/3/20)
- Contract awarded for Mobile Field Hospital. Awaiting delivery and selection of site. (4/3/20)
- National Acquisition Center's (NAC) Service & Distribution Center is providing additional warehouse space for VHA ordered and FEMA provided PPE products; VHA to identify space required and delivery schedules. (4/6/20)
- VA was prepared to accept a donation of 1 million N-95 masks and other PPE from Salesforce. However, FEMA General Counsel determined that the donation was too large for VA to accept.

Secretary Wilkie sent a formal letter to FEMA Administrator asking for authority to accept the donation OR purchase the materials directly. (4/9/20)

- VA awarded an $8M urgent sole source contract to SDV Office Systems for 97 Tablo® Helodialysis Systems for treating patients with COVID-19 infection. The contractor will deliver as many units as possible before July 31, 2020. The need is particularly pressing for patients with end-stage kidney disease being treated with intermittent hemodialysis (HD). (4/10/20)
- VA request to POTUS for Advanced Payment Authority was approve and signed by POTUS. (4/11/20)
- VA completed a temporary delegation which will apply to the Federal Supply Schedule for Healthcare Staffing Services' ceiling price determination for field contracting officers to use. This delegation, which is available for use until July 1, 2020, will provide immediate nursing staff augmentation for our medical centers. (4/11/20)
- VA reported to OIG regarding a potential case of price gouging. DOJ issued a press release on April 10th concerning the arrest of Christopher Parris, who attempted to sell VA $750 million of nonexistent masks and other PPE: https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/georgia-man-arrested-attempting-defraud-department-veterans-affairs-multimillion-dollar-covid
- VA has partnered with Facebook to provide more than 7,400 Facebook portal devices. The American Red Cross Military Veteran Caregiver Network will store and ship the devices to qualifying Veterans in pairs. Devices are available today (4/15/2020), for Veterans and their caregivers and families to reduce isolation, improve mental health, wellness, and social connectedness at home. (4/15/20)
- VA acquired the former Garland-Baylor, Scott & White hospital, April 3, to increase its capacity to care for Veterans and support the department's response to COVID-19. The 470,000 square foot facility was donated by Baylor, Scott & White and will eventually serve as an outpatient and specialty care clinic within the VA North Texas Health Care System. The hospital will be able to open Monday April 20. (4/17/20)
- VA National Acquisition Center FSS coordinated with National Association of State Procurement Officials (NAPSO) authorizing State and Local governments to procure Covid-19 support using FSS vendors/contracts. (4/17/20)
- The Strategic Acquisition Center awarded a purchase order for 5 million, 3-ply disposable medical masks (non-N95) valued at $2.8M. The contract was signed on April 22, 2020. (4/23/2020)
- VA may now utilize the contract HHS funded through DLA to receive N95 mask decontamination and transportation services from Battelle without reimbursing HHS (no cost to supplemental funding). (4/24/20)
- On 5/4/20, the Strategic Acquisition Center awarded a contract to Hanes for 2.4M cloth masks valued at $1.9M. This contract has ten optional Contract Line Item Number (CLINs) with the possibility to supply ten million additional masks. (5/5/20)
- On 5/1/20, the National Acquisition Center's Federal Supply Schedule Service (FSS) awarded a contract for COVID-19 testing to Eurofins Viracor. The vendor offers the following capacity: 10,000 daily COVID-19 testing to VA nationwide. (5/6/20)
- VA will be accepting a donation of 800,000 face shields from Apple. The shipment should arrive in the next two weeks. (5/6/20)
- VA successfully accepted 500,000 masks from the Republic of Korea (ROK) on 5/12/2020. This donation will help support our efforts to ensure Veterans and Employee safety as we continue to combat COVID-19. (5/12/2020)
- Strategic Acquisition Center (SAC) awarded a contract to M. Hidary and Company for 1M Level II Gowns valued at $7.12M.
- VA's National Acquisition Center's (NAC) Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) Service awarded a new COVID-19 antibody test (SARS-CoV-2-SEROLOGY (COVID19) Antibody (IGG), Immunoassay) contract

to Quest Diagnostics. This contract became effective May 13, 2020 and it has the capacity to perform 150,000 tests per night. (5/18/2020)

From: Powers, Pamela
Sent: Thu, 23 Apr 2020 15:57:08 +0000
To: (b)(6) EOP/NSC
Subject: FW: Agency Report - VA
Attachments: VA_4.22.20_COVID19 Daily Report (002) (002).docx, VA Veteran COVID Cases 4-22-2020.docx

(b)(6)

SECVA asked me to send you our latest report. I would like to highlight yesterday's note, as it's a great news story of how VA is supporting not just veterans, but all Americans:

- Responding to numerous requests for help from various states, VA has deployed more than 150 nurses and nursing aides to nearly 20 non-VA nursing homes in nine state,s while accepting more than 40 non-Veteran residents in department-run nursing homes.

- Florida Nursing Home Support: Starting today, VA will begin providing staffing and technical support to 12 non-VA nursing homes in Florida, a state that has seen COVID-19 emerge among these vulnerable populations. More than 80 physicians, nurses and nursing aides will begin rotations at these homes to provide direct care and advice about controlling infectious disease.

From: Powers, Pamela (b)(6) va.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2020 6:16 PM
To: (b)(6) EOP/OMB (b)(6) omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov
C (b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6) EOP/OMB (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov>; Hutton, James (b)(6) va.gov>; (b)(6) EOP/OMB (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) . EOP/OMB (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov> (b)(6) EOP/OMB < (b)(6) @omb.eop.gov>; (b)(6) (b)(6) EOP/OVP (b)(6) @ovp.eop.gov>; Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris) (b)(6) @va.gov> (b)(6) . EOP/WHO (b)(6) @who.eop.gov> (b)(6) (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) EOP/WHO < @who.eop.gov>; (b)(6) (b)(6) @va.gov>; Tucker, Brooks < (b)(6) @va.gov>; Nevins, Kristan K. EOP/WHO (b)(6) @who.eop.gov>; (b)(6) @who.eop.gov>; (b)(6) EOP/WHO (b)(6) @who.eop.gov>; Mashburn, John K. (b)(6) @va.gov>; (b)(6) (b)(6) @va.gov>; Connell, Lawrence B (b)(6) @va.gov>; RLW < (b)(6) @va.gov>
Subject: RE: Agency Report - VA

Attached is the daily report for the Department of Veterans Affairs on our response to COVID-19. Of note:

- VA received two new FEMA Mission Assignments:
  - Rhode Island Group Home Support - Initial request is for 6 registered nurses and 9 certified nursing assistants or similar for a total of 15 personnel to provide direct care and advice about controlling infectious disease.

- Portland Oregon Beds - 25 short term acute care (med/surg) and 5 intensive care (ICU) beds at the Portland VAMC for non-veteran patients.

COVID-19 Cases:

- 5393 Positive Veteran COVID-19 Cases/380 deaths (+124/+19 from yesterday)
- 1,960 VA Positive Employee cases/20 deaths (+23/+0 from yesterday).

Pam

Pamela Powers
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(b)(6)@VA.gov

COVID-19 – Agency Response
4/22/2020
Department of Veterans Affairs

Administrative Actions, Waivers, and Other Programmatic Changes that Impact Agency Provision of Service or Mission Delivery (Externally Facing)

- Supply Chain:
  - **Plane load of Chinese-made PPE bound for New Hampshire on Sunday 4/26/20. VA will send two staff members to New Hampshire to verify the PPE meets our specs once the New Hampshire National Guard takes possession of the shipment. VA is entering into a contract with New Hampshire Governor to procure a large amount of the supplies**
  - **VA has an increased need for Oxygen concentrators and portable ventilators. FEMA is being prioritized over VA and these are becoming increasingly hard to obtain**
  - The 5 million masks that VA requested through FEMA have not yet been procured for our hospitals. This is still the case as of 4/22/2020
  - VA has had significant difficulty procuring dialysis consumables and supplies are running low. Working a way forward with our two supply companies
  - VA estimates we have 7-10 days of PPE supplies on hand, with more shipments being worked
- Update on FEMA Active VA Mission Assignments:
  - VA NY Harbor: 91 patients, 64 discharges, 8 deaths
  - VA New Jersey: 31 patients, 14 discharge, 5 deaths
  - VA San Francisco: 1 patient, 1 discharge, no deaths
  - VA Miami: 1 patient, 1 discharge, no deaths
  - VA Ann Arbor: 37 patients, 15 discharges, 4 death
  - Detroit: 21 patients, 12 discharge, 3 death
  - Albuquerque: 6 patients from Navajo Nation, previously in Gallup IHS facility. 4 discharged, 1 death.
  - VA Chicago (Hines, Jesse Brown Marion) – 8 patients (All in ICU), no discharges, no deaths
  - Hew Haven CT – Homeless Outreach Assistance, 3 clinicians
  - Louisiana (Shreveport) – 16 Med/Surg, 2 ICU. No patients received at this time.
  - Oregon / Roseburg VAMC - 25 Med/Surg beds. No patients received at this time.
  - New Jersey State Veterans Homes (Paramus & Meno Park) – Nurses, staffing, telehealth, and supplies.
  - Massachusetts Soldiers Home Support (Chelsea and Holyoke) - Acute care, intensive care, and skilled nursing (nursing home) care for residents/patients.
  - Florida Nursing Home Support: Starting today, VA will begin providing staffing and technical support to 12 non-VA nursing homes in Florida, a state that has seen COVID-19 emerge among these vulnerable populations. More than 80 physicians, nurses and nurses aides will begin rotations at these homes to provide direct care and advice about controlling infectious disease.
  - **Rhode Island Group Home Support - Initial request is for 6 registered nurses and 9 certified nursing assistants or similar for a total of 15 personnel. *New Mission Assignment, was previously pending**
  - **Portland Oregon Beds - 25 short term acute care (med/surg) and 5 intensive care (ICU) beds at the Portland VAMC for non-covid and covid-positive patients. *New Mission Assignment, not previously listed**

    - **Washington State Veteran Home support and testing support *New Mission Assignment, was previously pending**
- Pending Mission Assignments:
    - Albuquerque - HHS Indian Health Services ventilators
    - Spokane Washington State Support - ICU (3) Med/Surg 5
    - North Dakota/Minnesota – delivery of meals to elderly and infirm Veterans and civilians
    - **Alabama - Bill Nichols State Veterans Home in Alexander City, AL, provide 4 registered nurses and 5 nursing assistants**
    - **North Carolina - Kinston State Veterans Home, 21 staff and COVID-19 testing to be provided**
- Update on Support for State Veteran Homes:
    - Bedford: Transferred 25 State Veterans' Home patients (COVID-19 positive unit) total; 9 current, 2 deaths
    - Boston: 12 patients, 2 deaths
    - **Brockton: 2 patients**
    - Providence: 7 community nursing home patients (COVID-19 positive unit); 6 of the 7 were transferred back to the community nursing home; the remaining patient died.
    - Long Beach: 5 community nursing home patients are being transferred; 2 of the 5 tested positive and placed in the COVID-19 positive unit. Remaining 3 waiting results.
    - New Jersey State Veterans Homes (Paramus & Meno Park) – Nurses, staffing, telehealth, and supplies.
    - Manhattan, New York: 2 patients
    - Brooklyn, New York: 2 patients
    - **Birmingham: 9 patients**
    - Miami: 2 patients
    - Jackson (MS): 4 patients
    - San Antonio: 9 patients
    - Muskogee: 1 patient
    - **Oklahoma City: 3 patients**
    - Greater Los Angeles: 1 patient
    - Salem, VA: 1 patient
    - Spokane: 2 patients
    - Minneapolis: 1 patient
    - **Fresno, CA: 1 patient**
    - **Omaha, NE: 1 patient**
- National Cemetery Update:
    - As of 4/21/2020 - 648 (+49 from yesterday) COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries (411 completed; 168 pending).
    - 248 internments are scheduled this week alone at Calverton National Cemetery, which is located outside the New York City epicenter. The average for each week is typically 100.
    - Since March 5 – 2,696 families have rescheduled services due to COVID-19 concerns.
    - 2,696 internments have been rescheduled due to COVID 19.
- VA began discussions on April 17 to develop a plan to implement White House guidelines on Opening Up America with regard to VA Central and Field offices; representation from all key VA program offices was present. A draft plan is expected to be ready the week of April 20. (Ongoing)
- As of close of business on April 21, 2020, VBA contract vendors had reported a cumulative total of **122,036** unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic.

- OIT has enabled 25 sites (increase of two new sites since yesterday) with tele-ICU capabilities to move devices from room to room
    - OIT will begin two sites new sites tomorrow in Shreveport and Northpoint, Louisiana
- VA has 115 virtual hearings scheduled for the week of April 20. To date the Board of Veterans Appeals have successfully completed 581 virtual hearings. The Board has signed 58,738 decisions this year, continuing to keep strong production during the pandemic.

CARES ACT IMPLEMENTATION – KEY ACTIVITIES AND MILESTONES
(Please also include activities related to the implementation of other COVID-related supplementary funding legislation, including P.L. 116-127 and P.L. 116-123)

- Finalizing internal controls including reporting requirements for obligations, expenditures, and planned activities) for CARES Act Supplemental funding.
- OMB approved CARES Act Supplemental funding apportionments for VHA, VBA, Gen Ad, OIG, and Grants for Construction of State Extended Care Facilities.
- CARES Act, Section 4022. Foreclosure Moratorium and Consumer Right to Request Forbearance: notified OMB's Veterans Affairs and Defense Health Branch of interpretation concerns to ensure that all federal housing agencies impacted by these sections are consistent in implementing the new law, as requested by OMB.
- OIT will complete circuit installs at all four gateways by April 3rd, doubling network bandwidth to 160GBs
- OIT has approved 31 COVID-19 Memos valued at $371.02M
- Working with VHA, VBA, OIT to prepare spend plans and regular reporting templates for CARES Act funding.
- VBA Received $13M in GOE supplemental funding for COVID-19 related issues such as purchase of equipment and supplies to support telework posture and employee health and safety as well as scheduled deep cleaning of buildings/offices occupied by VBA personnel
- Office of Information Technology CARES Act Supplemental Funding apportionment ($2.15B) approved by OMB. Funds are available for execution.
- VHA to begin initial distribution to the Healthcare Networks of $5.3 billion (from the total $14.4 billion) in Medical Services funding from the CARES Act Supplemental based upon:
    - FY 2020 Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation (VERA) Model
    - VHA's Bed Management System
    - VHA's Managerial Cost Accounting (MCA) system
- Office of Information Technology has used funding to double network bandwidth across all gateways to improve telehealth and telework capabilities. Also placing equipment orders for our Veterans Health Administration
- As of 6 April 2020, VA reported $768.1 million in total COVID -19 obligations, an increase of $371 million from 2 April 2020.
- OIT has Increased telehealth capacity by 15% and can support 11K concurrent sessions
- As of April 9, VA obligated $768M in total COVID -19 obligations and anticipates surpassing $1B in COVID-19 related obligations by the end of this week.
    - <u>Examples of VA Purchases</u>
        - Centralized Contracting: 60 awards valued at $338,803,651.
        - National Acquisition Center (NAC): $2,499,317 (Pharmacy/Medical Equipment)
        - Technology Acquisition Center (TAC): $308,789,039 (IT Equipment)

    - Strategic Acquisition Center (SAC): $27,515,605 (Medical Surgical Supplies)
    - Veterans Health Administration (VHA) at the regional and local level: 1,633 awards valued at $519,933,615 (Medical Surgical Supplies)
    - Contracts to support national purchases of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and medical equipment (e.g., ventilators) as well as costs associated with level-setting PPE and medical equipment throughout the country
    - Travel, housing, and other support for employees deploying to other medical centers
    - Salary costs incurred to hire and retain staff to support the pandemic
    - Medical facility costs mostly related to reconfiguring space to open additional beds and creating negative pressure rooms
    - Costs associated with Community Care to cover increased demand in the community by Veterans for both COVID-19 related and non-COVID related medical care
- As of April 14, VA obligated $959 million in total COVID -19 obligations.
- OIT continues to stay ahead of equipment demand in response to COVID-19
    - OIT shipped a total of 3,045 laptops last week to priority sites
    - 4,750 iPhones ordered last week

Major upcoming decisions that require POTUS or Task Force-level decisions (only the biggest, most sensitive items should be included here, many agencies may not have anything to report in this section)

- **NSTR**

Guidance, Communication and Outreach with Stakeholders

- SECVA Media:
    - MSNBC Live with Stephanie Ruhle
    - WTKR TV Norfolk, VA
    - KSWB TV San Diego
    - WCAU-TV Philadelphia
    - WGN-TV National
    - WFAA-TV Dallas
- SECVA hosted a teleconference with the Veteran Service Organizations along with VBA Under Secretary Paul Lawrence and VHA Executive in Charge Richard Stone
- SECVA hosted a teleconference with the Baltimore Veteran Treatment Court staff to include their Public Defender, District Attorney, veteran mentors and student attorneys.
- SECVA calls to Governors on COVID-19 related issues:
    - No governor calls today
- Provided notices to the field to remind all employees of the services that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers to them and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic (guidance was pre-cleared through OMB/OPM).
- Provided guidance of required steps for expediting onboarding for new VA hires. Steps have been streamlined to meet urgent staffing needs created by COVID-19 (guidance was pre-cleared through OMB/OPM).

- Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence hosted a Tele-townhall for Veterans in Colorado on Tuesday, April 21, focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 15,400 participants.
- Veteran's Health Administration CFO and VA budget staff briefed House and Senate Appropriations staffers on VHA's CARES Act Supplemental Funding supporting the VA Homelessness Program.
    - Discussed efforts to date for allocating, executing, and tracking $300 million for homeless Veteran and family member support services.
    - VHA shared COVID-19 related challenges impacting the VA Homelessness Program, including reductions in voucher issuance and move-ins, discontinuing outreach to prisons, etc., and the unknowns related to potential COVID-19 demand/response changes (e.g. shifting hotspots).

- **Other Notable Responses**

    - **5,393 Positive Veteran COVID-19 Cases**

        - This is an increase of 124 cases since VA's last report
        - 923 Veterans are in inpatient care (190 in ICU, 470 in Acute Care, 263 in VA Nursing Home – Community Living Center)
        - 4,090 are in outpatient care and are quarantined at home
        - 482 of these veterans are in New Orleans, which remains a hot spot for VA
        - 1,051 cases are in greater New York City Area (Bronx, Hudson Valley, Northport, Brooklyn)
        - **Two other areas that have seen consistent growth is Chicago with 361 cases at our 3 Chicago area Medical Centers and our East Orange New Jersey Medical Center with 338 cases**
        - Other areas with 50 or more cases include Connecticut (143), Indianapolis (144), Aurora/Denver (140), Atlanta (108), Detroit (162), Washington, DC (164), Miami (70), Columbia, SC (76), Philadelphia (131), Kansas City (63), Richmond (62), San Juan (51), Ann Arbor (59), Boston (132), Los Angeles (59), Milwaukee (58), Albany (82), Cleveland (70), Saint Louis (56), Bedford, MA (67), Orlando (53)
        - **Veteran Deaths: 380 veterans have died from COVID-19. This is an increase of 19 deaths since VA's last report**
          ***Note**: A detailed breakdown is attached (VA Veteran COVID Cases 4-22-2020)

    - **1,960 VA Positive Employee cases**

        - Increase of 23 cases since yesterday
        - Similar to the Veteran data above, there is a large cluster of employee cases at our New Orleans Medical Center with 150 employees testing positive
        - Similar to the Veteran data above there is a large cluster of employees at our Greater New York City Area Medical Centers (Bronx, Hudson Valley, Northport, Brooklyn) with 345 employees testing positive
        - New Jersey now has 104 employee cases
        - Other employee hot spots at our Medical Centers include: Chicago (40), Houston (24), Indianapolis (74), Miami (37), Washington, DC (42), Shreveport (36), Boston (77), Orlando (27), Columbia, SC (23), Detroit (25), Dallas (41), Philadelphia (48), Ann Arbor (37), Bedford

Massachusetts (41), Reno (27), Greater Los Angeles (23), Cleveland (22), Las Vegas (21), St. Louis (23), Jackson, MS (21), Connecticut (30), Richmond (20), San Juan (22)

- To date there have been 20 employee deaths: in Ann Arbor, 1 in Detroit, 3 in Indianapolis, 3 in Reno, 1 in Shreveport, 1 in Houston, 1 in Los Angeles. 1 in West Palm Beach, 2 in the Bronx (NY), 1 Manhattan (NY), 1 in Denver and 1 in Brockton (Boston), 1 in Washington, DC and 1 in Northport (NY). **There was 1 additional employee death today in Miami. However, our number of 20 employee deaths remains the same due to a previous reporting error. There have only been 2 employee deaths in the Bronx, not the 3 that have previously been reported.**

Historical Inputs:

- Within a day of the first confirmed US case, VA began planning for COVID-19 by establishing screening and triage, isolation and quarantine, and infection control strategy and plans.
- Activated Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Emergency Management Coordination Cell (EMCC) to Level 1 on January 20, 2020 and it remains activated.
- Screening points established at every major VHA Healthcare Facility (170 hospitals that serve nearly 9 million veterans across the country) (March 10, 2020)
- Limited admissions to Spinal Cord Injury Units - 24 major centers; 24,000 Veterans (March 10, 2020)
- Restricted admission to VA Community Living Centers (CLC) (134 nationwide nursing homes supporting 41,000 Veterans) (March 10, 2020)
- Daily crisis action team meetings at 3pm to discuss updates and remain in sync internally and with other federal guidance. (3/9/2020)
- All VA Regional Benefit Offices (ROs) are closed to the public. Benefits are still being processed virtually.
- Provided HR Emergency Preparedness Guide to employees and managers to answer questions on a wide-range of human capital topics (e.g., travel, leave, telework, employee relations, labor relations, compensation, staffing, reasonable accommodation); continue to update based on new guidance.
- Released system-wide policy released directing curtailment of routine appointments and elective surgeries at all VA facilities (3/17/20)
- Released guidance for Geriatrics & Extended Care Home & Community Based Services Programs to protect Veterans and staff including strict limitations on visitors in geriatric facilities, increasing the use of virtual modalities for clinical care, and screening all essential visitors or residents of a Veterans home prior to initiating contact.
- Released Chaplain guidance related to COVID-19 transmitted to the field (3/17/20) that continues to provide spiritual support to Veterans while using appropriate PPE or and utilizing virtual modalities for worship services. Any large-scale chaplain events have been cancelled.
- Implementation of an Episodic Special Patient Icon in Bed Management Solution sent to the field
    - VA recently launched an Episodic Patient Icon to identify inpatient Veterans who are presumptive or confirmed positive cases during epidemics. These icons can also be used to identify negative pressure rooms which allows for real-time bed capacity across the enterprise.
- Insurance services extended premium payment grace periods; reinstatement deadlines; and Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI) application deadlines. (3/17/20)

- Board of Veterans Appeals suspended all travel board, video, and central office hearings and is prepared to provide virtual hearings where possible if Veterans and the Representative are willing and have the necessary equipment. (3/17/20)
- Submitted Task Order to HHS to receive an additional 250K masks in Martinsburg; 1.5M masks at the SDC in Hines, IL
- VA is experiencing a reduction in surgical case load due to delaying non-emergent care; down from 1,900 per day to 1,300 per day. Additionally, there has been a 5% drop in ER visits; increased bed capacity by 1/3 across the VA. (3/16/20)
- Converting all ICU beds to negative airflow beds with a goal of reengineering by 3/30.
- VA's Loan Guaranty Service issued program guidance for VA's Real Estate Owned and Portfolio Servicing Contract (RPSC) contractor, placing a moratorium on evictions for VA-owned properties for 60 days due to COVID-19.
- VA's Debt Management Center, through coordination with the Veterans Benefits Administration and Veterans Service Organizations, implemented a 60-day COVID-19 debt relief plan to provide temporary financial relief in accordance with Veterans' request.
- Issuing proposed COVID-19 Interim Suitability & Fingerprint Guidance to comply with social distancing recommendations; guidance includes temporarily suspension of an initial fingerprint check (SAC) prior to new employees and contractor's entry-on-duty (EOD); VA continuing other investigatory measures such as initiation of e-Quip.
- Finalized a response to various union demands to bargain implementation of measures and precautions being put in place by the Department to protect people and property during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The general response denies immediate negotiations while advising any impact and implementation bargaining will occur post-implementation when the pandemic ceases. The Department is willing to meet all of its legal obligations, including negotiating with unions representing VA employees, but must also focus on providing care to our Veterans while protecting the safety and security of our facilities and the health of all in them.
- VetResources emails, providing Coronavirus information and prevention guidance, were sent to 10.8 million subscribers. (February 5 and February 26)
- A VA Acquisition Insider alert is being distributed to the VA Acquisition community concerning possible fraudulent vendor/merchant activity. Some of this activity might include instances of price gouging.
- VAntage blog published January 31 and continually updated since: https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/70999/cdc-coronavirus-information-and-resources/
- Sent letter to governors regarding VA's Fourth Mission to improve the nation's preparedness and be a "safety net" for response to war, terrorism, national emergencies, and natural disasters. (March 17, 2020)
- CAO and VA's Director of Operations and Emergency Management communicated with HHS to ensure VA's Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needs are prioritized. HHS has agreed to release a stop gap quantity of N95 protective masks to VA this week. (March 16, 2020)
- Notified GI Bill Beneficiaries and school officials through email and social media. If schools change modality of training to online classes for the current term, VA will continue to pay benefit payments.
- VA is pausing attendance at hearings involving the Secretary and his Undersecretaries for the remainder of March, at the guidance of OMB. One Senate hearing on the 2021 VA Budget proposal and a House hearing on Sexual Assault Prevention will not be attended by senior leaders. Subcommittee attendance from VA witnesses will continue on a case by case basis.

- Secretary Wilkie sent a message to all VA employees expressing appreciation for their support during the COVID-19 pandemic, assuring them that their health and safety and that of our patients is critical, and offering resources to promote employee wellness during this time. (March 16, 2020)
- Implemented VEText outreach to 8,858,481 Veterans to receive COVID-19 information and updates via text. Texts began at 1200EST on 3/17/2020.
- Facilitated a briefing to Senate and House Authorizing committee staffers on VA's Emergency Management Disaster Plan for COVID-19.
- Partnering with Facebook and the American Red Cross Military Veteran Caregiver Network to support Veterans and their families/caregivers in their homes through use of 7,488 free Facebook Portal devices.
- Partnering with Amazon, to purchase 500 tablets to enable access for Veterans, families and caregivers via VHA Telehealth Service to help ensure medical access and reduce possible exposure estimated launch (3/30/2020).
- Deployed 16 Nursing Assistants to assist with screening of AMCITs repatriated (all have been demobilized)
- Deployed 5 Area Emergency Managers to assist Health and Human Services (HHS) Incident Management Teams at each repatriation site
- Deployed a Liaison Officer to the HHS Secretary's Operations Center (SOC) to assist with response coordination
- Conducted analysis of VA Medical facilities contingency data to identify locations for potential COVID-19 dedicated facilities
- Manilla, Philippines Embassy will close in the next two weeks, in which case our VA clinic will close. Eight employees will be returned to the US (1 VHA and 7 VBA) and this will impact 6,000 veterans who receive care from that clinic.
- OIT created a new Veteran-facing FAQ page, which is with OPIA to obtain final (i.e. White House) clearance.
- Issued guidance memorandum authorizing waiver of the biweekly pay limitation on premium pay for workers performing duties in response to COVID-19, permitting overtime and premium pay for eligible workers up to the annual limitation.
- OPM signed dual-compensation waiver to allow hiring of reemployed annuitants (i.e. retired employees) during COVID-19 by streamlining current delegations of authority for waiver of salary offset; VA Comms team is working with WH Comms on a Press Release.
- Coordinating with OM on procedures for authorizing Hazard Pay if regulatory criteria met
- **Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** Prepared to increase scope of the EAP contract with FOH for COVID-19 counselling if needed.
- Now sending daily detailed updates to both House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees
- VHA has detailed four personnel to FEMA HQ to support the operations: Dr. John Areno, VISN16 Chief Medical Officer & Pulmonary/Critical Care physician; Mary Mather, IPEC/National Program Manager for LTC; Andrew Centineo, PL&O; Michael Forgy, OEM
- Secretary Wilkie joined President Trump on a stakeholder call with leaders of Veterans Service organizations to update them on the government wide response to COVID-19 (3/21/20)
- VA's Financial Services Center established an Emergency Buyers sub-group of 13,000 Government Purchase Cardholders within VA's Amazon Business Account providing special access to select vendors for critically needed supplies in accordance with the Chief Acquisition Officer's COVID-19 supply chain efforts

- VA Office of Information and Technology (OIT) has concluded testing of its network. Based on stress testing this week, OIT believes we can support 175,000-200,000 CAG connections, in addition to 300,000 RESCUE connections (3/21/2020)
- Future deployment of the Mobile Vet Center to New Orleans, LA will start week of 23 Mar 2020. VA reviewing locations for additional deployments. VA to set up Vet Center Community Access Point to provide direct counseling to Veterans receiving treatment through the HHS location.
- Effective Monday, March 23, 2020, committal services and the rendering of military funeral honors will not be conducted until further notice at VA national cemeteries. Immediate family members (limited to no more than 10 individuals) of the deceased may witness the interment if requested. Currently, approximately 1174 families have postponed scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns. This is up significantly from yesterday.
- VA will receive 20,000 testing swabs tomorrow 3/23
- Davita and Fresenius Dialysis companies establishing joint cohorting sites for individual markets where COVID 19 dialysis patients can be treated in isolation.
- On Saturday, March 21, 2020, the President signed into law S. 3503, which clarifies how the Department of Veterans Affairs should treat in-person courses of study that convert to distance learning formats due to health-related situations and other emergencies. https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/bill-announcement-89/
- VA announced the policy change that allows for a dual compensation waiver for retired annuitants (retired VA employees) to be hired back to VA to meet the increased need of healthcare workers during COVID-19
- Packaged 50,000 masks today for shipment tomorrow to Denver and Brooklyn (3/23/2020)
- All Area Emergency Managers are in place at each FEMA region.
- VA working with OPM to expedite blanket requests from VA to exceed the limits on recruitment, relocation, and retention incentives for Title 5 employees to help provide necessary staff
- VA is concerned with the national ventilator shortage and is working with FEMA Task Force (TF) to find other sources of supply. VA will receive 25 ventilators this week and an additional 25 next week.
- Working to purchase facepiece elastomeric respirators based on CDC Guidance for managing COVID-19 patients; It is recommended that elastomeric respirators be used in order to conserve Surgical 95 and N95 filtering facepieces for high risk procedures that require a sterile field. (3/24/2020)
- VA experiencing a high reduction (20%) in urgent care utilization showing Veterans are heeding advice to stay home (3/24/2020)
- 20k hand sanitizer bottles have been received and will be deployed to the facilities starting tomorrow. (3/24/2020)
- Coordinated with DOD to identify approximately 8581 employees who are reserve/guard members and 669 are currently activated – 122 nurses and 24 doctors included in this number.
- During the COVID-19 emergency, private sector entities have offered to donate equipment and supplies needed to protect personnel from contracting COVID-19. VA OGC worked a delegation of approval to VISN Directors to ensure efficient approval of donated gifts.
- Effective immediately, the Board of Veterans Appeals will advance on docket (AOD) appeals for Veterans diagnosed with COVID-19. (3/24/2020)
- The Board of Veterans Appeals will accept AMA Notices of Disagreement (NOD) with a typed signature in lieu of a wet signature. (3/24/2020)
- Construction projects in Massachusetts, California, New York, Pennsylvania and Puerto Rico have been ether stopped completely or activities severly curtailed by this national emergency and shelter in place orders.

- Effective COB March 24, 2020 the National Personnel Records Center will be closing its facility in accordance with local St. Louis municipal guidance. Critical VA personnel will remain behind to continue to process priority records requests.
- MyVA311 call center (located in Salt Lake City) successfully started handling VISN 22 general COVID calls last night and VISN20 is scheduled for tonight; this effort was to free up hospital call centers for local issues.
- In consultation with DoD, NCA has discontinued disinterment efforts with the Defense POW/MIA Accountability Agency (DoD) at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) effective immediately and until further notice in order to focus NCA resources on essential burial operations.
- Sent 541 letters to Members of Congress and Committees clarifying the process for requests from states and localities for VA to activate it's 4th MISSION (3/24/2020)
- Internal bulletin being drafted to implement new OPM guidance on flexible on-boarding this coming pay period and as needed during COVID to minimize physical proximity (such as the oath of office, the form I-9, fingerprinting, orientation, physical examinations, drug testing).
- Secretary Wilkie hosted a call with State and Local Government Stakeholders to provide them an update on VA's response to COVID-19.
- US Army Corps of Engineers will visit the former Denver medical facility to assess the building's viability for FEMA/HHS use.
- Penn Medicine submitted a request for a Mission Assignment for the transfer of COVID-19 non-Veteran patients to the Philadelphia VAMC.
- VA activating DEMPS for New Orleans (160 Clinical Staff) and New York (50 Nurses). We will begin moving people there starting today.
- Preparing to create a Federal Medical Shelter (FMS) in the Pacific NW (Location to be determined) with 160 personnel. Waiting for official FEMA tasking.
- Five Eyes Conference Ministerial Veterans Summit (scheduled for May 2020) has been postponed due to COVID-19.
- Submitted to OPM: (1) request for dual comp waiver to cover 2210 (IT Specialists) series occupations, and (2) direct hire authority for VBA positions-- Veteran Service Representative, Rating Veterans Service Representative, and Legal Administrative Specialist.
- On March 24th, CAO reported to VA OIG a vendor in Louisiana who is offering medical supplies and equipment up to 1000% above average cost and likely does not meet FDA guidelines.
- SECVA had the following phone interviews with press:
  - Jeff "Goldy" Goldberg, WFNC Radio (3/24/20)
  - NBC 4 w/ Scott MacFarlane (3/24/20)
  - Jim Blythe, Alliance 4 the Brave (Dallas) (3/24/20)
  - Kirsti Marohn, Minnesota Public Radio (3/24/20)
  - Ware Morning Show (Radio), San Antonio (3/25/20)
  - Fox News Rundown (Taped) (3/25/20)
  - Wake Up Tucson, AZ (3/25/20)
  - Fred Thys, WBUR Radio (NPR Boston) (3/25/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by the Moon Griffon Show (LA radio). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Leo Shane of Military Times (print). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Pensacola's Morning News (FL radio). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by WWL Radio (New Orleans, LA radio). (3/26/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Drive with Lee Matthews (Oklahoma City, OK radio). (3/27/20)
  - Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Kevin Miller in the Morning (Boise, ID radio). (3/27/20)

- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Marc Cox morning Show (St Louis, MO radio). (3/27/20)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Larry O'Connor, WMAL (DC/CA radio). (3/27/20)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by KOAN Radio (Anchorage, AK). (3/27/20)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Montana Talks Radio. (3/30/20)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by the Ross Kaminsky Show (CO radio). (3/30/20)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Lisa Rein, The Washington Post. (3/30/20)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Conservative Circus (Phoenix radio). (3/31/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Bob Rose Show (FL radio). (3/31/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by the Charlie James Show (SC radio). (3/31/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Mobile Mornings (AL radio). (3/31/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Mark Sterling Show (NC radio). (4/1/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Fox Across America (Fox News Radio). (4/1/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie interviewed by Richmond's Morning News (VA radio). (4/2/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie interviewed by Ringside Politics (LA radio/tv). (4/2/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie interviewed by The Erick Erickson Show (GA radio). (4/2/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie interviewed on The Sam Malone Show (Houston, TX Radio) (4/3/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie interviewed on The Dale Jackson Show (Huntsville, AL Radio) (4/3/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by AM Tampa Bay Radio (4/6/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The John Fredericks Radio Show. (4/6/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Matt and Aunie Show (AL radio). (4/6/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Schilling Show (VA radio). (4/7/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Annie Frey Show (St. Louis radio). (4/7/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Wilkow Majority on Sirius XM radio. (4/7/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Bernie and Sid in the Morning (NYC radio). (4/8/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Tom Jordan and Roberta Jasina (Detroit radio). (4/8/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Frank Beckmann Show (Detroit radio). (4/9/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Heidi Harris Show (Las Vegas radio). (4/9/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Steve Gruber Show (Lansing/Flint, MI radio). (4/13/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Morning Talk with Martha Zoller (Atlanta, GA radio). (4/13/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Brian Kilmeade Show (Fox News Radio). (4/14/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The David Webb Show (SiriusXM radio). (4/14/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Todd Starnes Show (Fox News Radio, Scheduled last minute this morning). (4/14/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Joe Piscopo in the Morning (NYC Radio). (4/15/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by South Florida's First News with Jimmy Cefalo (Miami/Ft. Lauderdale Radio). (4/15/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Bill Spadea Show (NJ Radio). (4/15/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie will be interviewed by The Kuhner Report (Boston Radio). (4/16/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Mornings with Brian Haldane (Baton Rouge, LA Radio). (4/16/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie will be interviewed by Pat Kime of Military.com. (4/16/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Ben Kesling of The Wall Street Journal. (4/17/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by The Joyce Kaufman Show (South Florida radio). (4/17/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie was interviewed by Quil Lawrence of NPR (4/20/2020)

- SECVA had the following studio interviews:
  - COX Media w/ Samantha Manning; held in VACO Broadcast Studio (3/25/20)
- SECVA made calls to the following Governors over the last several days to discuss nursing home/State Veteran Home support and other COVID-19 issues:

    - Maine – Janet Mills (4/20/2020)
    - Oregon – Governor Kate Brown Janet Mills (4/20/2020)
    - Alabama – Kay Ivey (4/17/2020)
    - New Hampshire – Chris Sununu (4/20/2020)
    - New Jersey – Phil Murphy (4/13/2020)
    - South Carolina – Henry McMaster (4/20/2020)
    - Oklahoma – Kevin Stitt (4/17/2020)
    - Georgia – Brian Kemp (4/20/2020)
    - South Dakota – Kristi Noem (4/20/2020)
    - Tennessee – Bill Lee (4/20/2020)
    - Arkansas – Asa Hutchinson (4/20/2020)
    - Ohio – Mike Dewine (4/20/2020)
    - Iowa – Kim Reynolds (4/20/2020)
    - Kansas – Laura Kelly (4/20/2020)
    - Florida Governor Ron DeSantis (4/21/2020)
    - Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy (4/21/2020)
- Guidance sent to HR offices of a temporary postponement of pre-employment applicant drug testing for testing designated positions (TDP) for up to 180 days.
- Authority to Approve Weather & Safety Leave for Employees
- Guidance for Elective Gastroenterology and Hepatology Procedures – COVID-19
- Guidance for VHA Eye Care Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- OCHCO Bulletin – Temporary Authorization to Delay Pre-Placement and Recurring Physical Exams
- Guidance for VHA Emergency Child Care Center Operations
- Changes to In-Person Identity Verification for the My HealtheVet Website
- Dual Compensation Waiver Guidance for VHA
- Guidance on Safeguards for Military Environmental Registry Exams to Protect Veterans
- Guidance on Patient Specimen Shipments - UPS shipping
- Guidance on Preparedness for Mechanical Ventilation of COVID-19 patients during Pandemic
- VA met with OIRA and OMB on MISSION Act considerations. VA is not pausing the MISSION Act. The department is ensuring the best medical interests of Veterans are met by adhering to the law in a manner that takes into account whether referrals for community care are clinically appropriate during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- VA is no longer considering issuing a temporary waiver of the >90% bed hold requirement and the 75% Veteran bed requirement for State Veterans Homes to help ensure they remain solvent during this crisis. After further review, OGC advised that VA has no authority to waive the regulatory requirement. In addition, we were asked to review draft legislative language that would waive the above requirement. The State Homes have a hotline to Congress so we assume this is something they asked for and we will support.
- A total of 631 Transition Assistance events have been cancelled to date due to installation restrictions. We are offering these transition related courses virtually (via eLearning) to all Servicemembers and their families.
- VBA continues to exceed output targets for some benefits during the pandemic
    - Last week, Veterans filing claims for Education benefits continued to receive decisions on original claims in 15 days and on supplemental claims in under seven days, well below target levels of 28 days for original claims and 14 days for supplemental claims.

- Nearly 100 percent of Veterans seeking a loan guaranty certificate of eligibility received it within the goal of 5 days, and approximately 90 percent were delivered within one day.
- Call Centers are exceeding targets for service delivery—last week, Veterans needing to discuss their claims or benefits with a call center agent waited an average of one minute to speak to an agent, with 88 percent of callers reaching an agent within our target of two minutes.
- VBA is maximizing its use of alternatives to in-person appointments including the use of phone and video capabilities.

- Conducted a "Lunch and Learn" a virtual online meeting to provide Veteran Service Organizations and community partners access to VA resources including COVID-19 response resources.
- Published VETResources to a total of 10.7M Veterans via email (25 March 2020).
- Acting PDUSH met with NYC Emergency Management Commissioner to discuss need for HHS tasking, sharing of data, and the process for referral of COVID positive and negative patients, preferably Veterans, to be admitted at VA facilities.
- Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System (DEMPS) activation memo issued and recruitment initiated for New Orleans and Manhattan
- Area Emergency Managers supporting repatriation centers:
    - Travis and Lackland demobilizing today (3/26/2020)
    - Dobbins and Miramar will demobilize tomorrow (3/27/2020)
- VA working with various vendors for purchase of Chloroquine Phosphate and ventilators.
- Collaborating with Peace Corps who has 7,000 volunteers ready to work (due to evacuations); working with them on open position advertising and employment opportunities to support VA's mission during this national emergency and beyond.
- VA identified a potential shortage of 1K nurses in certain hotspots of the nation and is working a combination of solutions to include:
    - Rehire of retired nurses
    - Hire of new employees through special hiring authorities and waivers
    - DEMPS moves from other non-stressed areas in VA
    - Use of the new Open Opportunities, a governmentwide platform offering professional development opportunities to current federal employees, as a central location for federal agencies to post details, microdetails, and/or temporary assignments.
- Collaborating with DOL and DHS/USCIS on a waiver of labor market review for non-citizens.
- Examining with OPM on a waiver or use of existing interchange agreements to detail excepted to competitive positions
- Activating enhanced Tele-ICU hub
- Growing the roster for Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System (DEMPS) volunteers for deployment to New York City and New Orleans.
- To support volunteerism, VHA is authorizing Special Contribution Awards up to the limit and asking OPM for authority to go above $10,000 but under $25,000 where needed and also making an exception to policy (VA Directive 5007) to allow per regulation recruitment, relocation and retention bonuses for any appointment at least 6 months in duration.
- Received shipment of N-95 masks, swabs and test kits for distribution (3/27/2020)
- With support from our Center for Strategic Partnerships, Office of Research and Development is establishing agreements with two commercial Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) that has allowed four of our medical centers to join in ongoing COVID-19 clinical trials and positions us to be ready for any future trials using these IRBs. VA opened trials in Palo Alto, Atlanta, New Orleans and Denver, where VA is seeing a surge of COVID patients.

- Issued joint guidance with Pension & Fiduciary Service and Appeals Management Office that the COVID-19 pandemic qualifies as "good cause" for granting extension requests. Specifically, if a claimant requests an extension to file forms or documents because the COVID-19 pandemic affected their ability to meet such deadlines, VBA will grant the requested extension, provided the time period expired on or after March 13, 2020 (the date the President issued a national emergency).
- Collaborating with the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association to let that community participate in helping VA fill its openings.
- Certain VA national cemeteries, located on active military installations, are being impacted by changes in base access (Fort Richardson, AK; Leavenworth, KS). Due to a change in base operating status, the general public is restricted from accessing the cemetery located on the base. NCA has coordinated with base authorities to ensure funeral homes are able to access the cemetery so direct casket/cremation interment operations are still available (without the option to "witness"). (3/27/2020)
- Currently supporting approximately 2,500 concurrent telehealth appointments, with a goal of 10,000 concurrent appointments (3/27/2020)
- VA OGC partnered with the VA Voluntary Service to create a universal gift form for distribution within VA listing general departmental needs during the COVID-19 emergency. Each VAMC Director can solicit and accept the listed donations pursuant to VHA Directive 4721, VHA General Post Fund – Gifts and Donations. (3/27/2020)
- VA send new (coordinated) guidance to the field on MISSION Act considerations (3/27/20).
- VA released the VHA COVID-19 Response Plan which provides guidance to the field. The operations plan includes strategies to address a large number of COVID-19 cases to include alternative sites of care for Veterans with COVID-19. (3/27/20)
- VA Veterans Health Administration sent the following guidance to the field (3/27/2020)
  - Delegation of Authority – Group Recruitment and Retention Incentives for Title 38 Employees
  - Recruitment, Hiring and Organizational Changes During COVID-19
  - COVID-19 VHACO Clinician Request
  - Postponement of Long-Term Care Surveys
  - Establishment of New Hire Processing Timeline
  - Office of Nursing Services Recruitment – Retired Annuitants and Travel Nurse Corps
- Developing language for HHS sub-task on FEMA Mission Assignment to VHA for $1.5M in pharmaceutical support to Javits shelter in NYC.
- Assisting Homeless Program on development of Assessment and Recovery Center.
- Executing Mission Assignment as directed by and in coordination with FEMA in support of the New York State request. VHA will provide 15 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and 35 Acute Care beds at the Manhattan/Brooklyn VAMC for immediate and short-term medical treatment of civilian (non-veteran) patients from city hospitals as required. (3/28/2020)
- Recommending OMP delay Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) by 3 months. VA is considering delay of VA's annual All Employee Survey (AES) to September.
- OPM approved direct hire authority for the following VBA positions: Veterans Service Representative; Rating Veterans Service Representative; Legal Administrative Specialist.
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), approximately 1,626 families have postponed scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns.
- For the past week, overall interments/inurnments are down in national cemeteries compared to last year by nearly 40% (2020: 1,219 interments/inurnments vs. 2019: 1,970 interments)
- Modifying Bulletin on waiving physical examinations during COVID-19 to address stress on Employee Occupational Health (EOH) offices who are focused on COVID-19 screening.

- NY Harbor VA Hospital received four civilian patients from Elmhurst Hospital. One was in respiratory failure and admitted to the ICU. Information about the other three is pending. (3/29/2020)
  - Four to five additional patients are expected overnight from Elmhurst Hospital.
  - The five patients that were to be transferred from Lincoln Hospital have not arrived yet.
- VA Office of Information and Technology (OIT) will complete circuit installs at all four gateways by April 3rd doubling bandwidth to 160GBs. We have also upgraded the number of concurrent Skype sessions in Gateway East, North and South, with Gateway West pending. The number of sessions increasing to 5000 at each gateway. These upgrades will allow for greater bandwidth, increased telework and increased telehealth to aid in our COVID-19 response. (3/29/2020)
- Working modifications to HRSmart to support mass hiring to support deployable medical personnel. 3/29/2020)
- Submitting request to OPM for broad authority to approve Special Contribution Awards (SCA) above the $10K agency limit; drafting changes to current policy (VAH 5017) to delegate from SECVA to EIC authority to approve SCAs up to $10K.
- VA OGC provided legal support for several important research projects in furtherance of efforts to develop a therapy for the COVID-19 infection. OGC is negotiating on an expedited basis a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) between Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc. and the Atlanta VA Health Care System to assess the efficacy and safety of a drug approved by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) for another use on Veterans hospitalized with COVID-19.
- VA working an Agreement with Reliance for the use of Advarra as the commercial IRB of record for a COVID-19 study using Gilead's Remdesvir at the Palo Alto VA Medical Center.
- VA OGC negotiated to allow the VA James J. Peters Medical Center, Bronx, New York to partner with Genentech/Roche and participate in study to evaluate the safety and efficacy of Tocilizumab (Actemra) in patients with severe COVID-19 pneumonia in the hope that that drug can interrupt a serious inflammatory response that can occur as a complication of some infections. The drug has been cleared by the FDA as a treatment for several forms of arthritis and also as a cancer therapy.
- On March 30th, the Denver Logistics Center (DLC) will receive a shipment of 500 iPads for the VA Video Connect (VVC) Community. These iPads are designed to allow "skype" type appointments between the Veteran patient and the Care Provider. The DLC will prepare the iPads for immediate shipment to fulfill backorders.
- VA received a new Mission Assignment to provide 20 (5 ICU and 15 Med Surge) beds for non-veteran patients in East Orange, NJ.
- Coordinated with FEMA/HHS Region IX, Arizona State officials, and Navajo Nation officials regarding cluster of cases in Tuba City, AZ and potential impacts to Veterans and VA facility.
- As of close of business on Sunday, March 29, 2020, VBA contract vendors had reported a cumulative total of **33,379** unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic.
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S., families have postponed **1,940** scheduled funeral services citing COVID-19 concerns. (3/30
- Notified HR offices on COVID-19 Excepted Service Hiring Authority for Schedule A approved by OPM. this allows us to quickly hire any Title 5 positions that are in direct response COVID-19. VA may use this to fill positions on a temporary basis for up to one year as needed in response to, or as a result of COVID-19. (3/30/2020)
- Deployed a second VEText based message to our Veterans that have a mobile phone number registered with VA at 1200 EST today (3/30/2020);
  - The text will reach approximately 7.1 million Veterans and take 8 hours to send to all recipients.
  - The message: "Dept of Veterans Affairs COVID-19 update: Stay home, stay safe, stay connected. VA has online tools for your appointments, prescriptions, and more. https://go.usa.gov/xdJkp

- Developed a COVID-19 quick start guide (QSG) to be posted as part of the VA welcome kit and broadly distributed to Veterans. This distribution includes:
  - All MOU partners (corporate partners), Veteran Service Organizations (VSO), posted on social media pages (Twitter, Facebook, etc.), VA Program Offices for sharing across their partner networks, National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA). (3/30/2020)
- VHA Executive In Charge, Richard Stone and Assistant Secretary from Management Jon Rychalski briefed HVAC Chairman Takano on the $19.6 Billion received in the supplemental funding bill (3/30/2020)
- VA conducted 3,094 concurrent telehealth appointments yesterday, a new high-water mark (3/31/2020)
- Coordinated with Department of Treasury to suspend the collection of all debt owed to VA until May 31, 2020 for any Veterans seeking debt assistance due to COVID-19. This includes suspending referrals to the Treasury Offset (TOP) and Cross Servicing (CS) processes.
- OPM sending VA job opportunities to over 1M retirees.
- VA All Employee Survey postponed until September 2020.
- Notified Human Resources (HR) offices of the Federal employee leave provisions under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the requirement to post the Families First Coronavirus Response Act Notice at VA facilities.
- In accordance with OMB and VA COVID-19 guidance, National Diversity Internship Program (NDIP) FY 20 summer session has been cancelled.
- VHA New Guidance to the field (3/31/2020):
  - Leveraging Capacity to Support Surges in Demand for COVID-19
  - Credentialing and Privileging COVID-19 (Reduced credentialing process for providers in order to expedite onboarding of critical medical staff)
  - Resilience Rehabilitation Treatment Programs (RRTP) Hardening Guidance (Details guidance on efforts to protect staff and patients in our Domiciliary Units)
  - Supplemental Information - Radiology and Nuclear Scheduling and Orders Management During the COVID-19 Pandemic
  - Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Guidance for Urgent and Emergent Surgical Procedures
  - Guidance on Access Standards in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updated (coordinated with OMB)
- Invocation of the Defense Production Act (DPA) resulted in confusion in the commercial sector as to how to prioritize orders, resulting in delays and cancellations on orders and deliveries to VA. Under the DPA, the FEMA Task Force, used its authority to divert materiel originally offered to VA for delivery to the SNS.
  - VA orders for masks, gowns, gloves, and PARP have been cancelled by our vendors. This is high risk for not only our enterprise, but for the Administration as our hospitals will be without supplies starting late this week.
  - FEMA and HHS have been made aware; VA is awaiting resolution from them.
    *Issue has since been resolved
- Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System Deployments (Various Specialties) (4/1/2020)
  - (27) Personnel being processed for deployment.
  - (14) Personnel deployed/on the ground at various locations.
  - (2) VISNS requested personnel deployed through DEMPS
- Mobile Vet Center Update as of 4/1/2020:
  - New Orleans, LA Mobile Vet Center Deployment Ended. Vet Center staff connected with 100 Veterans, Servicemembers and families over the course of the deployment. Contact has been

made with 71 civilians. Deployment ended 30 Mar 2020. One deployed employee is currently under investigation with symptoms and awaiting test results. As a precaution, all deployed staff (4 total individuals) will telework for 14 days monitoring for symptoms before returning to work at their respective Vet Centers.
    - Pasadena, CA operations started on 31 Mar 2020.
    - Portland, OR operations started on 31 Mar 2020.
    - New York, NY operations started on March 31, 2020. There will be no physical Mobile Vet Center but counselors and outreach staff will be at the Javits Center to provide direct counseling to Veterans, Servicemembers, and their families.
- VA OGC advised that the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has the authority during the COVID-19 global pandemic emergency to procure lodging for employees working at their local worksite (e.g., if staff have a need to stay away from their homes/family members and continue to work (e.g. Emergency Department physicians), or a need to stay close by for faster response time, if VHA documents in writing why it has concluded that this event at all or some facilities involves imminent danger to human life and why paying for employee meals and lodging is necessary to combat that imminent danger.
- VA Acquisition Office is working with the VHA's Care in the Community Program Office to establish a Global Nurse Advice Line contract to support increased phone consults for Veteran care in support of Coronavirus.
- VA Acquisition Office is working with VHA to contract with Battelle for use of their Critical Care Decontamination Systems (CCDS) that can sanitize 80K N95 masks per day. There are two units in operation – New York and Camp Murray, WA.
- Assistant Secretary HRA/OSP and Assistant Secretary OIT co-signed a memorandum dated March 31 outlining temporary procedures for personnel security vetting and appointment of new employees and alternative PIV credentials for eligible users during Coronavirus 2019 National Emergency; this guidance implements direction issued to executive departments and agencies from the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Personnel Management.
- VHA Guidance Issued to the Field: (4/1/2020)
    - COVID-19 Definitions of Bed Categories
    - Suspension of Registered Nurse Transition to Practice Residency Program
    - COVID - Clinical Resource Hub Guidance
    - Guidance for the Hiring Compensation and Utilization of Alternate Nurse and Unlicensed Assistive Personnel
    - COVID-19 - Process for Cancellation of Non-urgent Operating Room Procedures
- SECVA hosted a phone call with VSO leaders to provide them with an update on VA's response to the COVID 19 Pandemic. This will be a weekly call going forward. (4/1/2020)
- Published public blog with guidance for Veterans/Caregivers seeking access to DoD facilities. (4/1/2020)
- Provided guidance on March 26 to field claims processors and the public on good cause for extending claims filing deadlines based on COVID-19. (4/1/2020)
    - Specifically, under existing VA regulations, if the time limits within which claimants or beneficiaries are required to act in order to perfect a claim, file an appeal, or challenge an adverse VA decision expired, the time may be extended for "good cause" shown.
    - Accordingly, claimants impacted by COVID-19 may request an extension for filing based on good cause. VBA regional office claims processors will grant the extension request, provided the time limit in question expired on or after March 13, 2020.
- **FEMA Mission Assignments Update:** 4 signed (4/2/2020)

1. Resource Request: National Level Activation – Activate VA to locations identified by FEMA.
   - Status: Complete. 10 VHA Office of Emergency Management Liaisons deployed to each FEMA Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC)
2. Resource Request: VHA Pharmaceutical and medication supply to support ESF8 response operations
   - Status: In progress. Validating actual requirements. VA will meet Veteran needs first.
3. Resource Request: NYS requests VHA provide 15 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and 35 Acute Care beds at the Manhattan/Brooklyn VAMC for immediate and short-term medical treatment for non-veteran patients.
   - Status: In progress; 22 of the 50 beds are filled by non-veterans and many of the patients arrive in critical condition. One civilian death at the Brooklyn VAMC.
4. Resource Request: VHA will provide 5 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and 15 Acute Care beds at the East Orange VAMC for non-veteran patients.
   - Status: In progress; status of beds unknown

- VA resolved the issue with FEMA and HHS regarding contracts under the DPA; working with FEMA to ensure VA is included in the National Supply Chain Priorities List. (4/2/2020)
- Regional response coordination center liaison officers receiving multiple inquiries regarding the pharmaceutical MA and PPE and medical supplies for state VA nursing homes under the supplemental appropriation
- JAVITS NY Medical Station and USNS Comfort Transfer guidance received
- VA processed 156,438 disability compensation and pension rating claims in March 2020, besting the prior record of 135,324, set in March 2014 (16% increase over prior best March output). This is significant evidence that VA is still providing world class service to Veterans during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
  - VBA is maintaining all phases of full business operations as we are maximizing telework (96% of employees) and continuing to reach veterans via phone and video appointments.
  - Veterans seeking assistance with claims may reach us via phone or email and may file claims through va.gov or via mail.
  - If a Veteran or claimant requests an extension for filing based on the COVID-19 pandemic, VBA will grant the extension under the good cause provision.

- Per HHS guidance, Office of Information Technology (OIT) has suspended privacy restrictions and will allow doctors to use technologies such as FaceTime and Google Hangouts for telehealth appointments. (4/2/2020)
- Notified HR offices of the Federal employee leave provisions under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the requirement to post the Families First Coronavirus Response Act notice at VA facilities. This provides up to two weeks (up to 80 hours) of emergency paid sick leave to all federal civil service employees if they are unable to work (or telework) under specified circumstances related to COVID-19 – unless they are in an exempted category.
- Direct Hire Authority allowed by OPM for certain additional positions in NCA and VHA.
- The Board of Veterans Appeals has scheduled 61 virtual hearings the week on March 30. To date, the Board has successfully completed 361 virtual hearings.
- Conducted a "Lunch and Learn" virtual online meeting to provide Veteran Service Organizations and community partners information on VA Mental Health resources and highlight the Cohen Veterans Network (CVN) mental health initiatives.
  - The recorded session is here: http://va-eerc-ees.adobeconnect.com/veocvebllcohen/
- White House VA Hotline and MyVA311 Call centers remain fully operational.
  - 3035 Total Covid-19 calls have been answered by the MyVA311 call center.

- Under Secretary for VBA Paul Lawrence and Executive in Charge for VHA Richard Stone briefed Rep. Takano, Rep. Roe, Sen. Tester and Sen. Moran on COVID-19 Responses for Health and Benefits. (4/2/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie briefed Sen. Boozman on Appropriations related issues. (4/2/2020)
- VA announced today a number of actions to provide Veterans with financial, benefits and claims help amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The financial relief actions include the following until further notice: (4/3/2020)
    - Suspending all actions on Veteran debts under the jurisdiction of the Treasury Department.
    - Suspending collection action or extending repayment terms on preexisting VA debts, as the Veteran prefers.
    - For Veterans who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and need immediate action on their appeals, as opposed to a filing extension, the Board of Veterans' Appeals will Advance their appeal on Docket (AOD). Click here to find out how to file for AOD and what documentation is required.
- Secretary briefed the FEMA Task Force today. VA is prepared to open 1500 beds across our system to help relieve the pressure on states and localities. Each Veterans Affairs network has put in place contingency plans to expand the number of beds available, first for veterans and then our fellow citizens. (4/3/2020)
- VA contracted with Battelle for use of their Critical Care Decontamination Systems (CCDS) to sanitize N95 masks for Brooklyn, Manhattan, and East Orange, NY medical centers. Great partnership with HHS and FDA led to the approval to reuse masks 20x after sanitization. (4/3/2020)
- VA has administered more than 18,900 tests and has more than 3,000 additional tests on hand. (4/3/2020)
- Contract awarded for Alternate Care Sites-Four (4) 125 bed, soft-sided, portable medical structure. Awaiting delivery and selection of sites. (4/3/2020)
- Contract awarded for Mobile Field Hospital. Awaiting delivery and selection of site. (4/3/2020)
- Starting Thursday, April 9, 2020, NCA will no longer provide the option for families to witness interments at Calverton National Cemetery to help improve workload efficiency and increase the capacity of interment operations at this cemetery, which is located in the NYC epicenter. This change is being communicated to funeral homes in NY and families with interments scheduled on this date and beyond.
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), families have postponed 2,077 scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns. 8 COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries
- Increased enrollment and turnover of patients into the Home Telehealth (HT) program is overloading the ability of logistics to acquire the HT items. Primary shortages are thermometers and pulse-oximeters. Home Telehealth's new COVID-19 requirements to monitor COVID-19 higher risk patients have increased the burden on the supply chain. Program Offices are notifying the HT Care Coordinators to return these shortage items to the Denver Logistics Center for refurbishment and re-issue.
- OPM has authorized VA Direct Hire Authority for one year for the following positions at all grade levels nationwide for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency: Industrial Hygienist, GS-0690 Plumber, WG-4206 Maintenance Worker, WG-4749 Supervisory Engineer, GS-0801 Specialty Engineer, GS-0800 Laborer, WG-3502 Cook, WG-7404 Cemetery Caretaker, WG-4754. OPM has also authorized DHA for the following occupation and at this specific grade level: Human Resources Specialist, GS-0201-12.

- Veterans Group Life Insurance: Prudential has extended grace periods by 90-days for premium payments and reinstatements, including the time allowed to submit the Attending Physician Statement (APS) required for some medical underwriting applications.
- VHA Executive in Charge Richard Stone briefed House Veterans Affairs, Senate Veterans Affairs and Appropriation Committee staff members on COVID-19 response.
- Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Michigan on Thursday, April 2 focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 31,582 participants.
- **VHA Guidance to the field:**
  - Changes to In-Person Identity Verification for the My HealtheVet Website
  - COVID-19 Bed Expansion Planning Signed
  - Move! Weight Management Program Guidance for COVID-19 Pandemic Response
  - EIC Memorandum Authorization to pay for Lodging and Meals
  - Contracted Outpatient Sites of Care COVID-19 Virtual Care Information and Updates
- VA has increased telehealth capacity by 15% to 11,000 max concurrent user call capacity
- VA OIT has implemented a plan for mid-April to have 15 high priority sites enabled for tele-ICU
- Mobile Vet Center Deployment Update (4/4/2020)
  - New York, NY (Deployment Started)
    Operation Gotham at the Javits Center in New York City began to receive patients on the afternoon of 31 March 2020. Vet Center staff connected with 64 Service members over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 2 civilians.
  - Pasadena, CA (Deployment Started)
    Operation started on 1 April 2020 and ended April 3. Minimal contact, will seek a better location.
  - Portland, OR (Deployment Started)
    Operation started on 31 March 2020 and staff are located in a shopping center in Portland, OR. Vet Center staff connected with 40 Veterans, Service members and families over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 12 civilians
  - Altoona, PA (Deployment Started)
    MVC stationed at VAMC to assist with screening. Veteran Outreach Program Specialist on site.
  - Dayton, OH (Under Development)
    Request Mobile Vet Center at Dayton Medical Center to assist with COVID screening, will begin Monday April 6
- Medical Centers are experiencing serious PPE shortage. Several sites doing 3D printing, but it is not enough. Soon, PPE will be rationed; one surgical mask issued per week, one N95 per day. VISN 6 began mask sterilization with Berrett – 2400 mask in a 24-hour period. (4/4/2020)
- Developing requirements for Morgue Expansion Capabilities. (4/4/2020)
- Working to identify medical consumables/equipment for recently purchased Field ICU Unit. Location for deployment of Unit still under consideration. (4/4/2020)
- Developing policy on the ability of VA law enforcement personnel, with proper notice, to inspect the personal effects of employees exiting VA healthcare facilities in order to prevent the theft of personal protective equipment needed to protect health care workers during the on-going public health emergency. This is becoming an issue during the Pandemic. (4/4/2020)
- VA released a press statement extending financial, benefits and claims relief to veterans. The financial relief actions include suspending all actions on Veteran debts under the jurisdiction of the Treasury Department and suspending collection action or extending repayment terms on preexisting VA debts, as the Veteran prefers.
- **Update on Additional Mission Assignments (4/5/2020)**

- The VA Medical Center in Boise, Idaho is providing assistance and support for diagnostic testing for the Idaho Dept. of Health and Welfare
- VA is providing a 53-foot pharmacy trailer and one technical specialist to Detroit, Michigan for a 30 day deployment to help the city.
- The Manchester, NH VA Medical Center is providing 20 nursing staff to assist with two Massachusetts State run Veterans Nursing homes who have been hard hit by COVID-19.

- VA sent a list of critical PPE supplies with requested quantities to RADM Polowczyk, Supply Chain Sub-Task Force Director for consideration and prioritization. (4/5/2020)
- Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), families have postponed 2,244 scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns. 55 COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries (4/5/2020)
- Mobile Pharmacy Mission Assignment is set up at the Convention Center in Detroit. Patients have yet to be admitted to the hospital. (4/6/2020)
- VA Supply Chain Update:
  - Order for 20M Masks (sitting at a warehouse in Chicago) was sold out from under us today from a broker in Norway. (4/6/2020)
- National Acquisition Center's (NAC) Service & Distribution Center is providing additional warehouse space for VHA ordered and FEMA provided PPE products; VHA to identify space required and delivery schedules. (4/6/2020)
- As of April 3, VBA has temporarily suspended all in-person appointments provided by VBA's contract examination vendors, where the Veteran physically reports to the medical provider's office. The contract exam vendors will continue to complete as many examinations as possible using virtual means that do not involve an in-person examination, including tele-exams and ACE. For some disabilities, in-person examinations are required and cannot be completed through an alternate method. (4/6/2020)
- VA signed a memorandum regarding the Child Care Subsidy Program that has temporarily expanded the total family income ceiling from $89,999 to the maximum limit of $144,000 for support during the COVID-19 crisis; allows eligible employees to seek reimbursement on some child-care costs. (4/6/2020)
- Veterans Health Administration guidance sent to field: (4/6/2020)
  - Grade and Pay Determinations for Nurses/Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA) During COVID-19
  - Homeless Program Office (HPO) Guidance on Face to Face Visits
  - On-Hand Inventory Reporting Requirements for Critical Care and Coronavirus Drugs
  - Update: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Facemask and N95 Respirator Use
  - Tip Sheet for Caregivers During COVID-19
  - VHA COVID 19 Priorities During Transition to VA's New EHRM
  - COVID-19 Employee Deployment - Special Contribution Award Guidance
- VA Public Health, Coronavirus website to provide Veterans & Staff guidance and information now active. Website visited 191,348 times with 172,253 unique visits (4/6/2020)
- VA Chief Acquisition Officer briefed House Veterans Affairs Minority Staff on procurement, supply chain, etc. (4/6/2020)
- New Mission Assignment: Deployment of a 53-foot mobile pharmacy truck to Chicago, IL will be completed today (4/7/2020)
- Mobile Vet Center (MVC) Update: (4/7/2020)

- Altoona, PA (Deployment Started). MVC stationed at VAMC to assist with COVID-19 screening. Veteran Outreach Program Specialist on site.
- Dayton, OH (Deployment Under Development). Request for MVC stationed at VAMC to assist with COVID-19 screening.
- New York, NY (Deployment Paused). Vet Center staff have connected with 99 service members over the course of the deployment. Contact has been made with 2 civilians
- Pasadena, CA and Portland, OR deployments ended

- Identified a total of 20 tribal governments that have Emergency Declarations
- Continuing to roster DEMPS volunteers for deployments (Various Specialties) (4/8/2020)
  - Total Volunteers: 1406
  - (199) Personnel in process
  - (45) Personnel deployed on the ground
- The Board of Veterans Appeals has 67 virtual hearings scheduled for the week on April 6th. To date, the Board has successfully completed 376 virtual hearings. Through April 5th, the Board has signed 54,298 decisions. (4/7/2020)
- Boston Regional Benefits Office – Implemented two-week suspension of local mail processing effective April 7, 2020, ending April 21, 2020 during the anticipated peak in COVID-19 infections in the Boston community. Employees will not be authorized to access any of the three Boston, Manchester, White River Junction (BMW) facilities without prior approval as determined by the Director or Assistant Director on a case-by-case basis. (4/7/2020)
- Calverton National Cemetery (closest to NYC Epicenter) is seeing an increase in internment rates. On average, Calverton performs 20 interments daily. Yesterday, the cemetery performed 31 interments – 9 were COVID related. For the remainder of the week, the cemetery has over 30 interments scheduled each day. NCA is building capacity (personnel and contract support) to handle 40 per day by next week. (4/7/2020)
- Published policy revision updates to VA Handbook 5005 to remove the requirement for Professional Standards Boards for the following occupations listed in 38 U.S.C. § 7401 (3), which will reduce the time to hire for these positions by streamlining the process: physical therapy assistant; occupational therapy assistant; marriage family therapist; therapeutic radiologic technologist; kinesiotherapist; orthotist and prosthetist; medical records administration; blind rehabilitation specialist; blind rehabilitation outpatient specialist; licensed professional mental health counselor, prosthetic representative; nuclear medicine technologist; occupational therapist; physical therapist; dietitian and nutritionist; medical records technician; and therapeutic medical physicist. (4/7/2020)
- VA has decided to defer the Leadership VA (LVA) FY20 Class until FY21 and increase the size from 80 to 100 to make up for some of the leadership development throughput lost from postponing the current cohort. (4/7/2020)
- Veterans Health Administration Guidance to the Field: (4/7/2020)
  - COVID-19 VHA Guidance for Tuberculosis Testing of New Employees
  - Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) Compliance Inspection During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Accreditation Contract Delayed
  - 2020 US Census Participation for Veterans in VA Residential Settings
  - Continuity in Mental Health Services and Suicide Prevention Activities During COVID-19
  - COVID-19 Temporary/Expedited Appointment Credentialing Process
  - Release of Updated Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 and New FY 2021 Basic and Prevailing State Home Per Diem Rates for State Veteran Homes
  - Focused Professional Practice Evaluation and Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation Process during Presidential Declared State of Emergency – COVID-19

- Guidance on Anticoagulation Use and Monitoring for Veterans Health Administration Anticoagulation Programs During VHA's COVID-19 Emergency Response
- Contact Center Script and Screening (COVID-19) Updated

- The COVID Quick Start Guide (QSG) is now posted on https://www.va.gov/welcome-kit/ (4/7/2020)
- Advertising Campaign for VHA recruiting begins broadcasting this week in select markets and outlets. (4/7/2020)
- VA/VHA CFOs briefed HAC and SAC staffers (4 Corners) on VHA's Supplemental Funding distribution plan for the Families First and CARES Acts. (4/7/2020)
- VA developing "live" map journal to model next VA "hot spots" for our healthcare system (4/8/2020)
- PREVENTS is reaching out to Vets during the COVID crisis, releasing informational videos and concrete steps that Veterans and their families can take to care for their emotional well-being under the tag #MoreThanEverBefore and with the help of lead PREVENTS Ambassador Second Lady Karen Pence. (4/8/2020)
- Telemental health services being provided during COVID-19:
  - VA mental health providers have doubled telephone outreach calls from normal rate (over 76,000 calls in March)
  - VA mental health providers have tripled video connect appointments (over 63,000 appointments in March).
- #LiveWholeHealth-Self Care Resources campaign for Veterans during Coronavirus crisis just launched. (4/8/2020)
  - The first Vantage and first Facebook post of a self-care resource blog went out. A blog post will be going out every day with an associated Facebook post.
  - https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/73363/live-whole-health-self-care-episode-1/
- Human Resources and Administration office briefed House Veterans Affairs and Senate Veteran's Affairs Committee staff on workforce challenges during COVID-19. The briefing covered 1) what VA is doing to recruit/hire nurses and staff; 2) how VA is keeping staff safe; 3) how VA is incorporating feedback from union leaders and safety officers during this COVID-19 response. (4/8/2020)
- USB hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Pennsylvania on Tuesday, April 7, focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates. The event reached over 30,000 participants. (4/8/2020)
- VA released the following press statements: (4/8/2020)
  - CARES Act helping VA boost protections for Veterans - The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has begun implementing the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act or CARES Act, signed into law March 27, to protect America's Veterans. (Approved by TF) (4/8/20)
  - VA appeals production at all time high - The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) VA Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) hit a production milestone, April 1, at the fiscal year (FY) 2020 halfway point issuing more than 52,000 decisions which is approximately 15% more than the previous year. (4/8/20)
- VA received one new Mission Assignment for 35 beds in Michigan. 10 of those will be ICU beds. (4/9/2020)
- VA was prepared to accept a donation of 1 million N-95 masks and other PPE from Salesforce. However, FEMA General Counsel determined that the donation was too large for VA to accept. Secretary Wilkie sent a formal letter to FEMA Administrator asking for authority to accept the donation OR purchase the materials directly. (4/9/2020)
- Received approval from DOD to use MilAir, when aircraft and pilots are available, to deploy medical staff due to challenges with booking commercial flights (Awaiting first assignment) (4/10/2020)

- Our contracting office has drafted and disseminated an updated policy letter from the Senior Procurement Executive to all VA Heads of Contracting Activities, providing information on acquisition flexibilities in response to this National Emergency. This policy allows for more flexibilities in the procurement of supplies and services in response to the National Emergency. (4/9/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie conducted update calls on VA's response to COVID with House Appropriations MilConVA Subcommittee Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman-Shultz, House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Jerry Moran (4/9/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie participated in a conference call on mental health services with the President, First Lady, the Vice President, Second Lady and HHS Sec. Alex Azar. (4/9/2020)
- USB hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Ohio on Wednesday, April 8, focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates. The event reached over 33,000 participants. (4/9/2020)
- VA published a circular on Loan Guaranty Service to inform the public of changes due to CARES Act which requires a moratorium on foreclosures of Federally backed mortgage loans and a forbearance period for payments on such loans for borrowers who are experiencing a financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to the COVID–19 emergency. (4/9/2020)
- VA Public Health, Coronavirus website has been visited 213,360 (+4,320) times with 191,405 (+3,642) unique visits. (4/9/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie sent a memo to the President requesting Advanced Payment Authority to add increased flexibility in procurement of critical medical supplies to aid in VA's response to COVID-19. While other agencies already have this flexibility, the Department of Veterans Affairs is NOT covered. Awaiting POTUS signature (4/10/20)

- Continued development of plan on how VA might assist IHS and other tribal nations health systems (4/10/2020)
- Determining the need of resourcing second order of trailers for fatality management (4/10/2020)
- VA awarded an $8M urgent sole source contract to SDV Office Systems for 97 Tablo® Helodialysis Systems for treating patients with COVID-19 infection. The contractor will deliver as many units as possible before July 31, 2020. The need is particularly pressing for patients with end-stage kidney disease being treated with intermittent hemodialysis (HD). (4/10/2020)
- Update on Mask sterilization efforts with Battelle: (4/10/2020)
    - Sites either currently running or will be running within two weeks: Stoneybrook, NY; Brooklyn, NY; Plain City, OH; Boston, MA; Chicago, IL; Washington, DC
    - Planned future states: Connecticut, New Jersey, Indiana, Florida, Texas, Michigan
- VA received approval from OPM to waive the salary off-set for 2210 (Grades 07-15) and 340 series (Grades 12-14) positions. (4/11/2020)
- VA received notice of investigation from GAO in regard to implementation of the CARES Act. GAO insinuated this would start immediately. This provides significant challenges due to our response to COVID and that our offices, especially our Health Administration cannot take time away from caring for Veterans to provide information and interview to GAO (4/11/2020)
- Sent a Mental-health focused VEText message today, Friday 4/10 to be distributed to ~9 million Veterans (4/10/2020)
- Published *Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Financial Relief Actions and Time Limit Extensions* to VBA's Fact Sheets site. (4/10/2020)
- Published VBA COVID-19 FAQs on April 09, 2020 to help address routine and non-urgent questions. (4/10/2020)

- COVID-19 Messaging Update: Since the issuance of the Presidential Order of the National Emergency (31 Jan 2020), there has been a total of 307,731,582 e-mail messages sent. Of that total, 146,046,389 were COVID-19 related e-mails. This is a percentage of 47.5% demonstrating VA's active approach to information sharing to our Veterans and the Public (4/10/2020)
- To Date, there are 96 virtual hearings scheduled for the week of April 6. **To date, the board has successfully completed 447 virtual hearings**. (4/11/2020)
- VA distributed the following Press Release (4/11/2020)
    - VA's Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System provides surge-support to combat COVID-19 https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5417
- Supply Chain Update (4/11/2020)
    - VA request to POTUS for Advanced Payment Authority was approve and signed by POTUS (4/11/2020)
    - VA completed a temporary delegation which will apply to the Federal Supply Schedule for Healthcare Staffing Services' ceiling price determination for field contracting officers to use. This delegation, which is available for use until July 1, 2020, will provide immediate nursing staff augmentation for our medical centers. (4/11/2020)
    - VA reported to OIG regarding a potential case of price gouging. DOJ issued a press release on April 10th concerning the arrest of Christopher Parris, who attempted to sell VA $750 million of nonexistent masks and other PPE: https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/georgia-man-arrested-attempting-defraud-department-veterans-affairs-multimillion-dollar-covid
    - GSA has approved VA Health IT DPA Authority
- 2 Medical Centers have a greater than 70% occupancy of Med/Surg beds with COVID patients: Bronx, NY (86% occupancy) and Boston, MA (72%) (4/11/2020)
- VA has issued guidance that starting immediately all CLC Staff and Veterans will be tested for COVID-19. CLCs are VA's nursing homes and care for particularly vulnerable Veterans. (4/11/2020)
- National Cemetery Update: **246 (+55 from yesterday)** COVID-19 Interments have taken place or are scheduled at VA National Cemeteries (143 completed, 103 pending). Since the pandemic first started impacting the U.S (as of 3/5), families have postponed **2,482 (+238 from last week)** scheduled services citing COVID-19 concerns. (4/11/2020)
- As of close of business on April 10, 2020, VBA contract vendors had reported a cumulative total of **88,002** unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic. (4/11/2020)
- American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and the National Nurses United (NNU) unions have begun campaigns amongst their membership to attack VA healthcare facilities over alleged PPE issues. (4/12/2020)
    - AFGE organized a tele-town hall and encouraged members to file OSHA complaints, grievances and contact the press
    - NNU distributed flyers asking their members to call Congress
- Dayton VAMC initiating conversation of capability to support community as Ohio situation continues to worsen (4/12/2020)
- Massachusetts Chelsea Soldiers' Home (Non-VA Facility) (4/12/2020)
    - 7 veteran resident deaths
    - 22 veteran residents who have tested positive
    - 29 staff tested positive
    - VA Boston has accepted patients for care- total count pending
- On April 10th President Trump signed the "VA Tele-Hearing Modernization Act". (4/13/2020)

- OPM approved VA's request for direct hire authority for the following additional 11 positions at all grade levels on a nationwide basis to support COVID-19. The approval begins today and is for one year: personnel security specialist; program support assistant; cemetery representative; health systems specialist; construction control representative; electronics industrial control mechanic; painter; equipment servicer; air conditioning equipment operator; equipment operator; laundry worker. (4/13/2020)
- Notified HR offices of flexibilities to defer random drug testing in certain conditions due to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. Establishes limited conditions in which a facility director may approve a deferral of a random drug test for an employee occupying a testing designated position. (4/13/2020)
- National Cemetery Administration: Effective, Wednesday, April 15, 2020, witnessing family members will now be asked to view the interment from their cars or the road very near their cars. This change will further promote social distancing at national cemeteries and will be communicated to the funeral home community via Gov Delivery; online and to the Hill via OCLA. Families may continue to visit the gravesite in the days following the interment consistent with CDC guidelines and local travel restrictions. (4/13/2020)
- VA issued the following press release: VA Tele-mental health visits on the rise amid COVID-19
    - https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5418 (4/13/2020)
- Veterans Health Administration Executive in Charge Richard Stone had a phone briefing with HVAC Chairman Mark Takano on VA response to COVID-19 (4/13/2020)
- Secretary Wilkie joined White House Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Doug Hoelscher for a briefing on VA and White House response to COVID-19. Over 200 State and Local Leaders joined the call. Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence and Executive in Charge for the Veterans Health Administration Richard Stone were also on the call. (4/14/2020)
- VA Issued the following press releases: (4/14/2020)
    - VA Mobilizes 3D Printing Resources nationwide to fight COVID-19
    - https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5419
    - VA Announces "Fourth Mission" Actions to Help American Respond to COVID-19
    - https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5420
- Notified HR offices of the required annual notification of VA's United States Flag Recognition Benefit for Deceased Federal Civilian Employees. The Civilian Service Recognition Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-73) authorized a U.S. flag to be furnished to a beneficiary on behalf of an employee who died of injuries incurred in connection with his/her federal employment under specific circumstances. An eligible employee is an individual who: was an employee of the Department (as defined in 5 U.S.C. 2105); and who died on or after December 20, 2011, of injuries incurred in connection with such individual's employment with the Federal Government, suffered as a result of a criminal act, act of terrorism, a natural disaster, or other circumstances as determined by the President. (4/14/2020)
- Based on consultation with the General Services Administration Building Manager and the Federal Protective Service (FPS), Assistant Secretary HRA/OSP signed April 13th letter to FPS to restrict access to VACO facilities by requesting FPS to apply March 18th DHS guidance on entry into VACO buildings, by asking a series of questions to persons entering the building about travel and exposure to COVID. (4/14/2020)
- VA Office of Information Technology has completed 15 sites for Tele-ICU devices plug-in. Completed sites (Phoenix, Brooklyn, Manhattan, New Orleans, Fresno, Tampa, San Francisco, West Palm Beach, San Diego, Miami, Puget Sound, Bronx, Denver, Boston, New Jersey) have the capability to move devices from room to room. (4/14/2020)

- VA Issues the following press release: (4/15/2020)
    - Secretary Wilkie thanks Wounded Warrior Project for $10 million commitment to aid Veterans https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5421
    - VA, Facebook and American Red Cross provide Portal video calling devices to Veterans, caregivers, and families https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5422
- Sec. Wilkie, VHA Executive In Charge Dr. Stone, and Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence held a briefing with over 80 representatives from the Veterans Service Organizations to update our stakeholders on VA's response to COVID-19 (4/15/2020)
- DepSec (PTDO) Powers held separate conference calls with Sen Moran (SVAC Chair), Sen Bozeman (SAC-VA), CM Takano (HVAC Chair), and CM Roe (HVAC Ranking); discussed COVID response (4/15/2020)
- VA's public affairs office has now received over 1,100 COVID related media inquiries as of 4/15/2020
- Under Sec Lawrence hosted a Tele-Townhall for Veterans in Wisconsin focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 32,800 participants. (4/15/2020)
- Pennsylvania Governor Wolf signed EO that allows the state to commandeer PPE and ventilators from in-state health care providers and manufacturers and transfer the supplies to other facilities in need in PA. This would have impacting VA's prime vendor. **This issue has since been resolved, the Governor's EO was not intended to stop the flow of supplies to the Federal Government. VA will monitor closely and ensure supplies move as planned. (4/15/2020)**
- VA has submitted requests to Inspector General to investigate two more potentially fraudulent companies offering to sell VA masks (4/16/2020)
- VA has partnered with Facebook to provide more than 7,400 Facebook portal devices. The American Red Cross Military Veteran Caregiver Network will store and ship the devices to qualifying Veterans in pairs. Devices are available today (4/15/2020), for Veterans and their caregivers and families to reduce isolation, improve mental health, wellness, and social connectedness at home. (4/15/2020)
- VA received multiple COVID related grievances from labor unions (4/15/2020)
    - AFGE alleging VA is failing to properly compensate bargaining unit employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. They specifically allege several VA facilities, e.g., Palo Alto VAHCS and Salem VAMC, implemented policies and procedures requiring AFGE bargaining unit employees to report for screenings and questioning during uncompensated periods such as before their shifts and during lunch breaks.
    - NNU alleging VA has failed to: (1) provide appropriate PPE; (2) implement safe policies to ensure nurses are quarantined when exposed to COVID 19 positive patients and staff; (3) provide training and retraining to nurses on best safety practices; and (4) adequately communicate with the union changes in working conditions.
    - NFFE alleging VA has failed to properly pay Hazardous Duty Pay and/or Environmental Differential Pay.
- VHA is in the process of testing all Community Living Center veterans and staff and should have this complete next week. Approximately 7000 veterans live in our CLCs across the nation. (4/16/2020)
- Since the CARES act passed VA has worked with Dept. of Treasury on a solution to ensure that Veterans and Survivors who do not file tax returns and rely solely on VA benefits for income still receive stimulus checks via the CARES Act. (4/16/2020)
    - VA is securely providing beneficiary data to the IRS to ensure that no action will be required of Compensation and Pension benefit payment recipients or surviving family members receiving survivors benefits to receive their 'Economic Impact Payment' (EIP) if they do not file an annual tax return.

    - The IRS has also set up a website portal for Economic Impact Payments (EIP) if veterans, survivors or other non-filers wish to submit their information that way.
    - VA will notify press, stakeholders and Congress of these actions over the coming days.
    - This effort is complete
- Sec. Wilkie had the scheduled weekly call with Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Jerry Moran and Ranking Member Jon Tester. (4/16/2020)
- Sec. Wilkie had the scheduled weekly call with House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano and Ranking Member Phil Roe. (4/16/2020)
- VHA Executive in Charge Dr. Stone held a call with members of the House Appropriations Committee
- Chief Information Officer Jim Gferer held a call with House and Senate MilConVA Subcommittee staff. (4/16/2020)
- Delivered VETResources digital newsletter to 10.7 Million Veterans. Topics included: (4/16/2020)
    - VFW unmet needs program grant funds which provides up to $1,500 to eligible Veterans, service members and military families who face an unexpected financial hardship related to their military service.
    - Facebook portals for Veterans announcement.
    - A call to action for Veterans who have recovered from COVID-19 to donate plasma for other Veterans for COVID-19 treatment.
- VA launched a new website on VA's external blog (4/16/2020) (https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/roll-of-honor/), called the "Roll of Honor". This new webpage page came about as a result of not being able to provide committal services due to the COVID-19 crisis. The site provides an opportunity to remember those Veterans interred during this crisis and reflects interments in our cemeteries starting on April 13. Each day, NCA will add the names; branch of service and location of burial for each Veteran interred in a national cemetery on the previous day. This new website was promoted on Gov Delivery and with our VSO and congressional partners.
- VA acquired the former Garland-Baylor, Scott & White hospital, April 3, to increase its capacity to care for Veterans and support the department's response to COVID-19. The 470,000 square foot facility was donated by Baylor, Scott & White and will eventually serve as an outpatient and specialty care clinic within the VA North Texas Health Care System. The hospital will be able to open Monday April 20. (4/17/2020)
- VSignals is a real-time survey that goes out to veterans when they have contact with VA. Trust score for VHA reported by my VEO Data and PX teams, has maintained a steady increase over the past 4 years with the overall Trust improving from 85% in FY17, to 87% in FY18, to 88% in FY19 and **most recent data from April, 2020 puts Trust at 90%. The excellence of VA's Customer Service and the resulting positive Patient Experience has led to Trust scores improving during this pandemic. (4/17/2020)**
- There are 67 virtual hearings scheduled for the week on April 13th. To date, the Board has successfully completed 516 virtual hearings. Through April 12th, the Board has signed 56,522 decisions, continuing strong output even through COVID-19 Pandemic. (4/17/2020)
- OIT has completed 19 sites Tele-ICU Devices Plug-in - All completed sites (Phoenix, Brooklyn, Manhattan, New Orleans, Fresno, Tampa, San Francisco, West Palm Beach, San Diego, Miami, Puget Sound, Bronx, Denver, Boston, New Jersey, Orlando, Albany, N. California, and Palo Alto for Tele-ICU Expansion and have the capability to move devices from room to room (4/18/2020)
    - OIT will begin Syracuse and Loma Linda today
- VA's My HealtheVet team is hosting a webinar for Veterans about how to access VA telehealth services, in coordination with the Elizabeth Dole Foundation (4/17/2020)

    - My HealtheVet team will focus communications and marketing outreach on enrolling new patients in the coming week
- VA sent out the following press release: VA Partners with IRS/Dept. of Treasury to Deliver Economic Impact Payments. (4/17/2020)
    - https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5423
- As of close of business on April 17, 2020, VBA contract vendors had reported a cumulative total of **107,770** unique Veterans whose contract examinations have been impacted by the pandemic. (4/19/2020)
- Mobile Vet Center (MVC) Update (4/20/2020)
    - MVC providing screening assistance at Altoona, PA; Dayton, OH; El Paso, TX; Ft. Collins, CO
    - MVC providing space for blood draw/services at Sioux Falls, SD
- Revised Guidance on new hire applicant drug testing: April 17 revised bulletin issued updating prior guidance regarding how long an applicant drug test may be postponed; prior bulletin issued on March 25, 2020 advised that due to COVID-19, applicant testing could be postponed for up to 180 days after the applicant's entrance on duty in order for VA to meet emergency hiring needs. The revised bulletin includes the following statement: "It is the responsibility of the HR office to schedule the drug test as soon as practicable, but no later than 90 calendar days from the date of appointment." (4/19/2020)
- VA hosting a Red Cross blood drive in the main building (810 Vermont), next Thursday, April 23, 2020; SECVA to be first donor; Donors will be scheduled every 15 minutes, to stagger the flow and allow for preparation for next donor and there will be no "walk-ins" for this event; Masks will be provided by the Red Cross upon registration; Social distancing (6 feet) will be enforced. (4/19/2020)
- VHA has submitted a request for 10 portable x-rays units and 8 portable ultrasound units in support of COVID-19 response. We expect to award the orders within two workdays. (4/17/2020)
- VA National Acquisition Center FSS coordinated with National Association of State Procurement Officials (NAPSO) authorizing State and Local governments to procure Covid-19 support using FSS vendors/contracts. (4/17/2020)
- OIT has enabled 21 (increase of 4 since last report) sites with tele-ICU capabilities to move devices from room to room (4/19/2020)
    - OIT will begin Western New York and Dublin VAMC Monday
- VA received approval from OPM on its request to waive the 25 percent limit on recruitment, relocation, and individual retention incentives, and the 10 percent limit on group retention incentives for certain occupations that are responding to workload surges due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). (4/20/2020)
- On April 20, 2020, published a notice in the Federal Register which provides that, for the purpose of determining entitlement to benefits, any correspondence that is received by VA from any claimant during the period March 1, 2020 through 60 calendar days from the date the President ends the national state of emergency, that contains claims, information, or evidence, will be considered received on the date of postmark. (4/20/2020)
- ADEPSEC Powers had a call with Senator Brian Schatz (Hawaii), Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee MilConVA (4/20/2020)
- VA sent out the following press releases (4/20/2020)
    - VA's telehealth system grows as Veterans have access to unlimited data while using VA Video Connect https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5426
    - VA, DoD implement new capability for bidirectional sharing of health records with community partners https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5425

    - VA acquires Texas community hospital to fight COVID-19 and care for Veterans in the future https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5424
- Secretary called Comptroller Gene Dodaro and requested that an entrance conference scheduled for Thursday and a subsequent GAO review of VA's COVID-19 Response be postponed until mid/late May due to VA's unique role in responding to the pandemic via our healthcare system and caring for Veterans. Comptroller Dodaro agreed to this request. (4/21/2020)
- Secretary visited the Washington DC hospital today to thank staff and visit veterans. (4/21/2020)
- Responding to numerous requests for help from various states, VA has deployed more than 150 nurses and nursing aides to nearly 20 non-VA nursing homes in nine states while accepting more than 40 non-Veteran residents in department-run nursing homes. (4/21/2020)
- Under Secretary of Memorial Affairs Randy Reeves hosted a phone call with State Leaders to discuss issues regarding our National Cemeteries during COVID-19 (4/21/2020)
- VA Issued the following press releases today: (4/21/2020)
    - Timeline on how VA prepared for COVID-19 outbreak and continues to keep Veterans safe https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5427
    - VA researchers to study COVID-19 in aging Veterans with dementia https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5428
- Under Secretary for Benefits, Paul Lawrence, hosted a Tele-townhall for Veterans in Florida, focused on COVID-19 response and VBA Program updates, reaching 33,990 participants. (4/21/2020)
- VA has seen significant Call Traffic from 3/23/2020 – 4/20/2020 to MyVA 311 on COVID related matters (4/21/2020)
    - Total COVID-19 Calls: 6,333
    - Total COVID-19 calls Resolved: 4,556 (72% resolution rate)
    - Total Covid-19 calls escalated to Clinical Center for Action: 1,777

April 22, 2020

Veteran Cases

Veteran Status by Location	Total	VA Outpatient	VA Inpatient, ICU	VA Inpatient, CLC	VA Inpatient, Acute	Deceased
Total	**5393**	**4090**	**190**	**263**	**470**	**380**
(402) Togus ME	4	4				
(405) White River Junction VT	4	3				1
(436) Montana HCS (Fort Harrison MT)	1	1				
(437) Fargo, ND	3	2				1
(438) Sioux Falls SD	4	4				
(442) Cheyenne WY	7	7				
(459) VA Pacific Islands HCS (Honolulu HI)	2	2				
(460) Wilmington DE	19	16	1		1	1
(463) Alaska VAHSRO (Anchorage AK)	4	4				
(501) New Mexico HCS (Albuquerque NM)	9	6	1		2	
(502) Alexandria, LA	7	4			3	
(504) Amarillo HCS (Amarillo TX)	2	1	1			
(506) Ann Arbor, MI	59	49	2		4	4
(508) Atlanta, GA	108	90	4		8	6
(509) Augusta, GA	18	16			1	1
(512) Maryland HCS (Baltimore MD)	14	11	1		2	
(515) Battle Creek, MI	4	4				
(516) Bay Pines,FL	14	11	2		1	
(518) Bedford,MA	67	22		42		3
(520) Biloxi, MS	3	2				1
(521) Birmingham, AL	12	5	2		4	1
(523) Boston HCS (Boston)	132	81	5	5	32	9
(526) Bronx, NY	391	301	10	14	22	44
(528) Upstate New York HCS	82	54	6	2	14	6
(529) Butler, PA	4	4				
(531) Boise,ID	5	4	1			
(534) Charleston, SC	1		1			
(537) Chicago (Westside), IL	189	157	8		12	12
(538) Chillicothe, OH	3	3				

(539) Cincinnati, OH	32	31				1
(540) Clarksburg, WV	1	1				
(541) Cleveland, OH	70	49	4	1	14	2
(542) Coatesville, PA	3	3				
(544) Columbia, SC	76	69	2		2	3
(546) Miami, FL	70	56	5		4	5
(548) West Palm Beach, FL	32	24	2		4	2
(549) North Texas HCS (Dallas TX)	29	20			6	3
(550) Illiana HCS (Danville IL)	1				1	
(552) Dayton, OH	9	9				
(553) Detroit, MI	162	119	5	6	12	20
(554) Eastern Colorado HCS (Denver CO)	140	123	4		10	3
(556) North Chicago, IL	115	109			5	1
(557) Dublin, GA	5	4		1		
(558) Durham, NC	25	24		1		
(561) New Jersey HCS (East Orange)	338	215	11	56	18	38
(562) Erie, PA	1	1				
(564) Fayetteville, AR	2	1				1
(565) Fayetteville, NC	16	16				
(568) Black Hills HCS (Fort Meade SD)	1	1				
(570) Central California HCS (Fresno CA)	5	4	1			
(573) N. Florida/S. Georgia HCS (Gainesville FL)	19	16	2	1		
(575) Grand Junction, CO	1	1				
(578) Hines, IL	57	40	5		7	5
(580) Houston, TX	28	20	1		3	4
(581) Huntington, WV	4	1			2	1
(583) Indianapolis, IN	144	110	4		17	13
(586) Jackson, MS	5	4	1			
(589) VA Heartland West (Kansas City MO)	63	54	2		4	3
(590) Hampton, VA	45	29			15	1
(593) Southern Nevada HCS (Las Vegas NV)	30	29			1	
(595) Lebanon, PA	29	17	2	8	1	1
(596) Lexington, KY	6	5	1			
(598) Central Arkansas HCS (Little Rock AR)	21	16	4			1
(600) Long Beach HCS (Long Beach CA)	44	27	2		14	1
(603) Louisville, KY	34	29	1		1	3
(605) Loma Linda, CA	22	19	3			
(607) Madison, WI	11	6			3	2
(610) Northern Indiana HCS (Marion, IN)	10	8			1	1

(612) Northern California HCS (Martinez CA)	23	19			1	3
(613) Martinsburg, WV	11	7	1	1	2	
(614) Memphis, TN	15	11			4	
(618) Minneapolis, MN	35	26	1		2	6
(619) Central Alabama HCS (Montgomery AL)	9	8			1	
(620) Hudson Valley HCS (Castle Point, Montrose)	120	76		34	5	5
(621) Mountain Home, TN	8	8				
(623) Muskogee, OK	8	6	2			
(626) Tennessee Valley HCS (Nashville TN)	34	30	2			2
(629) New Orleans, LA	482	423	5		21	33
(630) New York HHS (Brooklyn)	406	262	16	36	45	47
(631) Northampton, MA	21	21				
(632) Northport, NY	134	89	4	15	13	13
(635) Oklahoma City, OK	7	5	2			
(636) Central Plains HCS (Omaha NE)	33	23	2		6	2
(637) Asheville, NC	4	3				1
(640) Palo Alto HCS (Palo Alto CA)	28	19	1		5	3
(642) Philadelphia, PA	131	88	13	18	6	6
(644) Phoenix, AZ	15	10	2		1	2
(646) Pittsburgh HCS (Pittsburgh PA)	26	19			5	2
(648) Portland, OR	8	4	2		1	1
(649) Northern Arizona HCS (Prescott AZ)	8	8				
(650) Providence, RI	16	11	1		2	2
(652) Richmond, VA	62	52	4		3	3
(653) Roseburg HCS (Roseburg OR)	3	3				
(654) Sierra Nevada HCS (Reno NV)	13	11				2
(656) St. Cloud, MN	1	1				
(657) VA Heartland East (Saint Louis MO)	56	39			14	3
(658) Salem, VA	3	3				
(659) Salisbury, NC	20	19				1
(660) Salt Lake City HCS (Salt Lake City UT)	11	11				
(662) San Francisco, CA	11	9				2
(663) Puget Sound HCS (Seattle WA)	47	42	2	1	2	
(664) San Diego HCS (San Diego CA)	33	29	2		2	
(667) Shreveport, LA	40	31			5	4
(668) Spokane, WA	8	7	1			
(671) South Texas HCS (San Antonio TX)	23	14	5		2	2
(672) San Juan, PR	51	48	3			

(673) Tampa, FL	14	11				3
(674) Central Texas HCS (Temple TX)	12	12				
(675) Orlando, FL	53	47			5	1
(676) Tomah, WI	4	4				
(678) Southern Arizona HCS (Tucson AZ)	20	15			4	1
(679) Tuscaloosa, AL	2	2				
(688) Washington DC	164	126	4		19	15
(689) Connecticut HCS (Westhaven)	143	119	6	1	15	2
(691) Greater Los Angeles HCS (Los Angeles CA)	59	23		19	13	4
(693) Wilkes-Barre, PA	16	11	2		2	1
(695) Milwaukee, WI	59	42		1	13	3
(740) Texas Valley Coastal Bend HCS (Harlingen TX)	1	1				
(757) Columbus, OH	4	4				

From: Powers, Pamela
Sent: Fri, 5 Jun 2020 18:48:54 +0000
To: Stone, Richard A., MD;Lieberman, Steven (b)(6)
Cc: Tucker, Brooks;Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris)
Subject: Fwd: HHS Protect Overview and Instructions
Attachments: HHS Protect Access Instructions.docx

FYI. Good info to know for your plans to return to normal.

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From: (b)(6) EOP/OMB (b)(6) omb.eop.gov>
Sent: Friday, June 5, 2020 2:44 PM
To: (b)(6) EOP/OMB
Cc: (b)(6) EOP/OMB; (b)(6) EOP/OMB; (b)(6) OP/OMB; (b)(6) EOP/OMB; (b)(6) EOP/OMB (b)(6) EOP/OMB (b)(6) (b)(6) EOP/OMB; (b)(6) EOP/OMB; (b)(6) EOP/OMB; (b)(6) @hhs.gov (b)(6) @hhs.gov (b)(6) @hhs.gov; @hhs.gov; (b)(6) @hhs.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HHS Protect Overview and Instructions

Good Afternoon All (bcc'd):

If you're receiving this email, you have access to the OMB COVID MAX site, and we wanted to send you instructions to access HHS Protect.

The Department of Health and Human Services developed HHS Protect to provide health insights to the White House Coronavirus Task Force. In collaboration with OMB and OPM, HHS is now making the platform available as a resource to the President's Management Council (PMC) and the federal Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) Council, as they plan for their return to normal operations, in line with guidance from the Office of Personnel Management and the Office of Management and Budget regarding Aligning Federal Agency Operations with the National Guidelines for Opening Up America Again.

Data available within HHS Protect include multiple COVID-19 case count sources for comprehensive visibility; hospital capacity and utilization; policy action information at the state and county level; and COVID-19 and flu-like emergency department data. HHS Protect is not a decision-making or predictive tool; the platform is one of the resources that agencies can utilize to obtain consolidated information to assist them with their planning.

All of the CHCOs and PMC members who have access to the OMB Max COVID-19 Coordination page will now have access to HHS Protect. Note, users who have not already done so will need to first complete enrollment to (b)(6) gov. Please use the brief instructions below to quickly access the platform. Attached are additional materials to support platform use.

1. Login to HHS Protect using Google Chrome. This will establish an active, authenticated user session in HHS Protect.

2. Open a new tab or window in Google Chrome, and navigate to the COVID-19 OneMap. This map is the best place for at a glance information related to the Opening Up Criteria.

If any members of the PMC or Federal CHCO Council have difficulty accessing the platform or would like to add additional people to access the platform, please email (b)(6) at (b)(6) hhs.gov and/or Kevin Duvall, HHS OCIO Senior Technical Advisor, at hhs.gov

Thank you and have a great weekend.

(b)(6)

OFFICE OF THE
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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

HHS Protect Access Instructions

Using COVID-19 OneMap to explore county and location trends of communities around government offices for safe operations:

1. Read over the attached HHS Rules of Behavior – By using HHS Protect, you are agreeing to be bound by those terms.
2. Open the link to the **HHS Protect** platform in your web browser (Chrome and Firefox are preferred) and follow the log-in instructions.
3. You may land in your **Account** page, instead of the landing page. If so, please click **Home** in the upper left hand corner.

4. On the HHS Protect landing page, find and open the **COVID-19 OneMap** application.

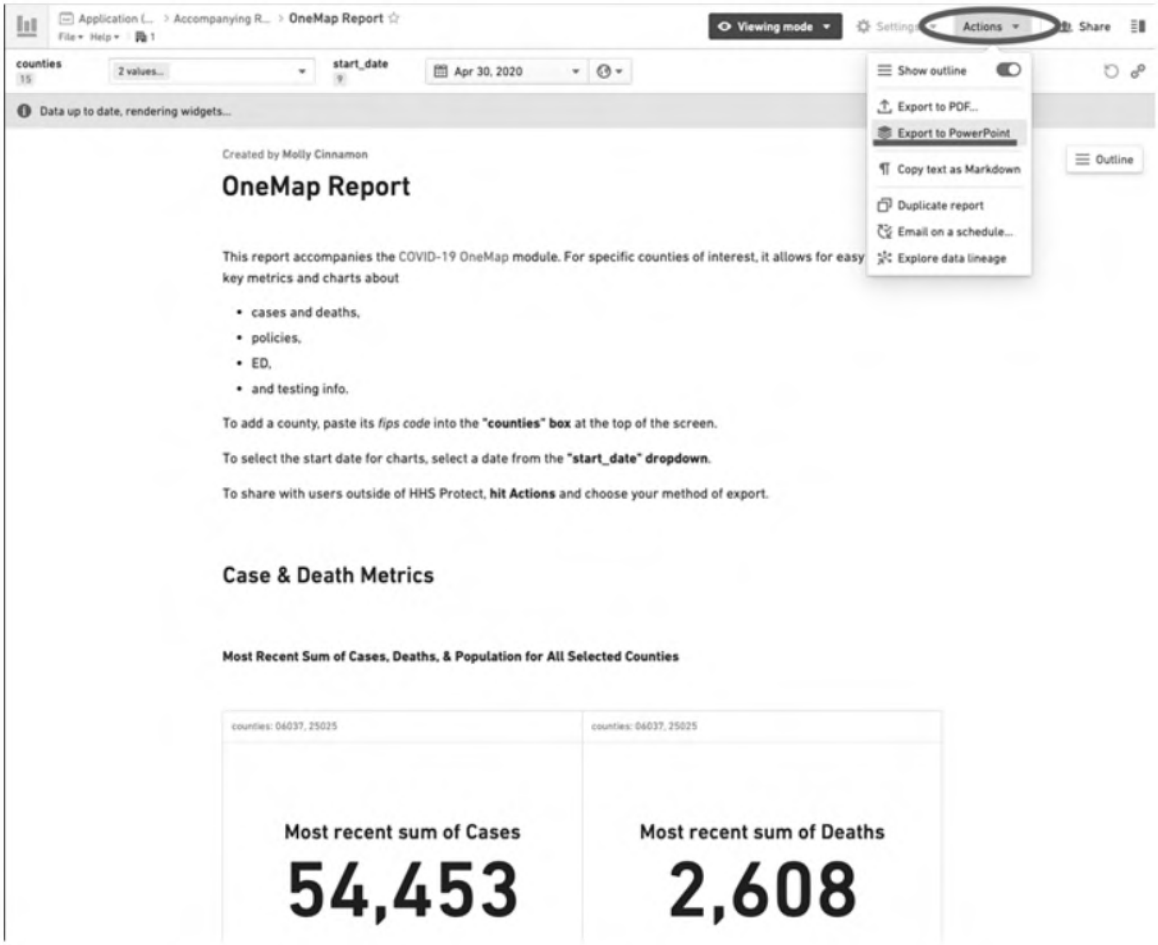
5. The app will load as pictured below, showing the **Map** open at center, expandable **Metrics** and **How-To** panes at top, **County, Demographic, and Office Filters** open at left, expandable **Counties Table** at bottom, and expandable **Timeseries Charts** at right. (TIP: when you open the app, it may take a few moments for the colored map layers to load.)

6. You can use the filters in OneMap to drill down to specific Counties, States, or Offices. (TIP: filtering down to a specific County or State will also speed loading time of the colored map layers.) Start by using the **County and Demographics Filters** to narrow the view to a county you're interested in. Let's start by typing "District of Columbia" into the County filter, selecting it when it appears in the dropdown menu. Click anywhere in the light gray space of the app to close the selection dropdown menu.

7. You can **zoom** into a location of interest by hovering over it with your mouse and scrolling. Click and drag the map to bring your county into the center.

8. For easy export of key charts and metrics about the selected counties, click **How to Use & Export this View**, then follow the link displayed in the center of your page to open **OneMap Report**.

9. You can use the **Actions** drop-down menu at the top right-hand corner of the Report to export it to PowerPoint.



For more information, contact the HHS Protect Service Desk [Protect-ServiceDesk@hhs.gov].

From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Tue, 7 Jul 2020 10:55:48 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Who really accepted PPP loans?

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Tuesday, July 7, 2020 6:55:02 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Who really accepted PPP loans?

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The Daily Pitch: VC, PE and M&A

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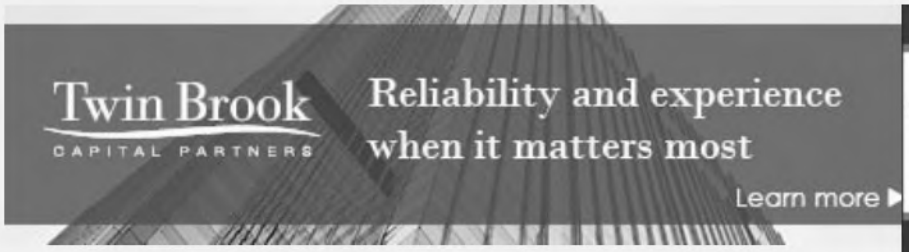

Surveying sustainable investing practices

PitchBook is taking the pulse of investors and other private market participants on their incorporation of impact strategies and ESG risk factors. Please share your firm's approach to sustainable investing and what drives it. The survey will take about 10 minutes.

All who complete the survey will be entered in a prize drawing, and for each respondent, PitchBook will make a donation to World Central Kitchen.

Take the survey now

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TODAY'S TOP STORIES

Shifting VC landscape marked by layoffs, dip in deals

Since March 11, nearly 45,000 employees have been laid off across more than 370 venture-backed companies. That's just one of many startling statistics from the past several months. But it may be the starkest indication of the widespread changes the pandemic has wrought across the startup scene.

In the new edition of PitchBook's **Quantitative Perspectives**, our analysts turn their attention to the past, present and future of how US venture capital fares during times of economic turmoil, with data on everything from current macroeconomic trends to the exit environment during the global financial crisis. A few key takeaways:

- A pull-back from nontraditional VC investors could help drive down deal flow
- The IPO market has so far proven resilient, but that may change as the pandemic unfolds
- More startups may turn to debt financing as a way to avoid down-rounds and dilution

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Who's in the newsletter today?

People

Girish Satya

Shailendra Singh

Investors

Ace & Company

Andreessen Horowitz

Apollo Global Management

Authentic Brands Group

B Capital Group

Bri Ventures

Cox Enterprises

DST Global

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Fidelity Investments

Foundation Capital

Fox Corporation

General Catalyst

Greylock Partners

Index Ventures

Insight Partners

Insignia Venture Partners

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Who really accepted PPP loans?

Confusion reigned after the US government's list of Payment Protection Program loan recipients named various high-profile startups and venture capital firms, including some who denied even applying for the $669 billion pandemic relief program.

- In the spring, a fierce debate erupted across the business world over whether companies with wealthy investors should accept emergency relief funds.
- Among the VC firms that said they had been listed in error were Andreessen Horowitz, Index Ventures and Foundation Capital. Bird, the venture-backed scooter rental startup, also cried foul for being named in the list published Monday by the Small Business Administration.
- The SBA didn't immediately comment on the claims of erroneous data.
- In a statement earlier in the day, the agency said the list reflects 4.9 million approved loans totaling more than $521 million through June 30. The average loan size was about $107,000, with the vast majority under $50,000 and more than 4,800 loans ranging from $5 million to $10 million.

More coronavirus news: Continuing coverage from PitchBook

Intel Capital
Leonard Green & Partners
Malin Life Sciences
Novartis
Quiet Capital
Salesforce Ventures
Sanabil Investments
Sequoia India
Silver Lake
SoftBank
T. Rowe Price
TSG Consumer Partners
Tiger Global
Wellington Management
Y Combinator

Companies

AT&T
Activision Blizzard
Backcountry
Bird
Caffeine
Canyon Bicycles
Chemical Guys
Electronic Arts
Grubhub
Instacart
Jio Platforms
Just Eat Takeaway.com
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Oyo
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Payfazz
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Talking about tech's response to COVID-19 on 'In Visible Capital'

In the latest episode of "In Visible Capital," emerging tech analyst Ryan Vaswani dives deeper into his analyst note "Accelerating History: Pandemic-Driven Tech Opportunities."

Topics discussed in the episode include:

- How the healthcare industry and others have accelerated their tech capabilities in response to COVID-19 and how companies have focused resources to improve the accuracy of tests.
- Where investors have directed their capital to help the pandemic response, what's next for edtech companies and why the move toward digitization is inevitable.

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CVC Capital brings in $24.1B for record European buyout fund

CVC Capital Partners co-founder and co-chair Donald Mackenzie (Bryn Lennon/Getty Images)

CVC Capital Partners has reportedly closed its eighth flagship fund on roughly €21.3 billion (about $24.1 billion), surpassing a €17.5 billion target to become Europe's largest buyout fund ever raised.

That puts the firm in elite company, with the vehicle trailing only Blackstone's $26 billion buyout fund raised in 2019 and Apollo Global Management's $24.6 billion fund from 2017 as the largest private equity fund to date.

Here's what it means for European PE fundraising

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Sequoia secures $1.35B for new India, Southeast Asia funds

(ronniechua/Getty Images)

Sequoia India has raised $1.35 billion for two new funds as the venture capital firm looks to continue focusing on investments in India and Southeast Asia.

The two vehicles—a $525 million venture fund and a $825 million growth fund—are the firm's latest since it closed a seed fund in late 2019, according to PitchBook data. So far this year, the firm has made 31 investments, PitchBook data shows.

Startups in India have struggled to grow rapidly with "good unit economics", Shailendra Singh, managing director at Sequoia India, said in a LinkedIn post. This has prevented many large, profitable technology businesses from emerging onto the global stage, he said.

But Sequoia hopes the two new funds will help change that tide.

"In short, our ecosystem needs exemplary, enduring, lighthouse companies of the future, that can prosper

for decades and be resilient across market cycles," Singh said.

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Uber confirms $2.65B deal for Postmates

Uber is doubling down on food delivery with its Postmates purchase. Sullivan/Getty Images)

After around a week of speculation, Uber announced Monday it has acquired food delivery company Postmates for $2.65 billion in an all-stock deal.

Postmates will continue to operate as its own app following the deal, though operations will merge. Uber estimates it will issue about 84 million shares of stock for 100% of the fully diluted equity of Postmates.

The union arrives on the heels of Uber's failed pursuit of Grubhub, another rival in the delivery app space. Instead, Grubhub ended up springing for a $7.3 billion takeover offer from Europe's Just Eat

Takeaway.com last month.

Postmates is "highly complementary" to Uber Eats and will bolster the ridehailing giant's "growing efforts in the delivery of groceries, essentials, and other goods," Uber wrote in its announcement.

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Recommended Reads

Video streaming startup Quibi raised $1.75 billion before its launch in April. But so far, it hasn't garnered the attention that investors had hoped for. [Vulture]

Suddenly, the roller skate industry is seeing demand increase like never before. [Vogue]

California's coronavirus cases have surged in recent weeks, reversing the state's early success in containing the outbreak. What happened? [Vox]

Since yesterday, the PitchBook Platform added:

217	1194	338	23
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2006 Vintage Global Secondaries Funds

People

TSG elevates Girish Satya to new role

VC Deals

Palantir files confidentially for stock market listing

Investors pump $113M into Caffeine

Instacart raises an additional $100M

Indonesian fintech startup secures $53M

Intel Capital buys stake in Jio

PE Deals

PE-backed Lucky Brand files for Chapter 11

Portfolio Companies

Oyo plans to downsize in Japan

Exits

Poseida sets terms for public debut

Fintech startup NCino eyes $183M IPO

Fundraising

Apollo launches $12B direct lending platform

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Innisfree PFI Secondary Fund 2006
Coller International Partners V

**IRR: net of fees*

11 Funds in Benchmark »

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PEOPLE

TSG elevates Girish Satya to new role

San Francisco-based TSG Consumer Partners has promoted Girish Satya to a principal focused on portfolio company operations. Satya joined TSG in 2016 and has worked with a range of portfolio companies including Backcountry, Canyon Bicycles and Chemical Guys.

View details

VC DEALS

Palantir files confidentially for stock market listing

Data analysis startup Palantir Technologies has confidentially filed paperwork with the SEC to go public. The business did not disclose the size of the offering and stated that the public listing is expected to take place after the SEC completes its review process. Palantir was valued at about $20.3 billion in its most recent round in 2016 and last week **filed to raise $961 million in funding**.

View round

View 67 competitors »

Investors pump $113M into Caffeine

Live broadcasting company Caffeine has raised a $113 million Series D co-led by Cox Enterprises, Sanabil Investments and Fox Corporation, with participation from Greylock Partners and Andreessen

Horowitz. The funding comes a few months after Caffeine teamed with Drake to host hip-hop content on its entertainment platform, which also offers sports, gaming and more. The Bay Area-based company was valued at $509 million in 2018, according to PitchBook data.

View round

View 9 competitors »

Instacart raises an additional $100M

Instacart has raised $100 million from T. Rowe Price, resulting in a valuation of about $13.8 billion for the business, according to Axios. The news comes after the grocery delivery company announced a $225 million fundraise led by DST Global and General Catalyst last month, as demand for its services continues to boom during the pandemic.

View round

View 12 competitors »

Indonesian fintech startup secures $53M

Payfazz, the Jakarta-based developer of a financial services platform, has raised a $53 million Series B co-led by B Capital Group and Insignia Venture Partners, with support from Tiger Global, Y Combinator and others, according to reports. Payfazz, which raised a $21.4 million round in November 2019, is said to have earmarked the capital for expansion across Southeast Asia.

Additional Investors:

Ace & Company, Bri Ventures, Quiet Capital

View round

View 3 competitors »

Intel Capital buys stake in Jio

Jio Platforms has attracted more than $15 billion in recent months from big names like Silver Lake and Facebook. Now, Intel Capital has purchased a 0.39% stake in the Indian telecom giant for the price of 18.9 billion rupees (around $253.2 million).

View round

View 57 competitors »

PE DEALS

PE-backed Lucky Brand files for Chapter 11

Lucky Brand, a Los Angeles-based seller of denim and other apparel, has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection and intends to close 13 stores, citing the pandemic. As part of the agreement, SPARC Group, the operator of brands including Nautica and Aeropostale that's backed by Authentic Brands Group, has agreed to purchase the company's operating assets as a stalking-horse bidder. Lucky was originally acquired by Leonard Green & Partners for around $225 million in 2014.

View details

View 7 competitors »

PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

Oyo plans to downsize in Japan

SoftBank-backed Oyo plans to scale back its operations and reduce headcount in Japan, according to Bloomberg. With fewer bookings as a result of travel restrictions, the Indian hotel startup is said to have closed several provincial offices and is looking to scale back its Tokyo headquarters. Oyo is also reportedly urging employees to quit and offering up to four months of severance. The downsizing follows reports earlier this year that Oyo had laid off thousands of employees across China and India.

View details

View 28 competitors »

EXITS

Poseida sets terms for public debut

Poseida Therapeutics has filed with the SEC to sell 10 million shares at between $14 and $16 apiece on the Nasdaq. A midpoint pricing would raise $150 million and establish an initial market cap of about $867 million for the San Diego-based biotech startup. Backed by Malin Life Sciences (19.2% pre-IPO stake), Fidelity Investments (12.6%) and Novartis (12.4%), the company is a developer of gene engineering technologies intended to cure cancer and other diseases.

View details

View 47 competitors »

Fintech startup NCino eyes $183M IPO

NCino, which operates a cloud-based banking platform, has filed with the SEC to offer around 7.6 million shares on the Nasdaq at $22 to $24 each. At the top end of this range, the Wilmington, N.C.-based company would have an initial market cap of $2.14 billion and raise some $183 million. NCino has brought in private funding from investors including Insight Partners (46.6% pre-IPO stake), Salesforce Ventures (13.2%) and Wellington Management (9.5%).

View details

View 28 competitors »

FUNDRAISING

Apollo launches $12B direct lending platform

Apollo Global Management has unveiled a new direct lending platform, dubbed Apollo Strategic Origination Partners, that will lend about $12 billion over three years. It will target investments of around $1 billion.

View details

View 559 investments »

CORPORATE M&A

Microsoft joins list of potential bidders for

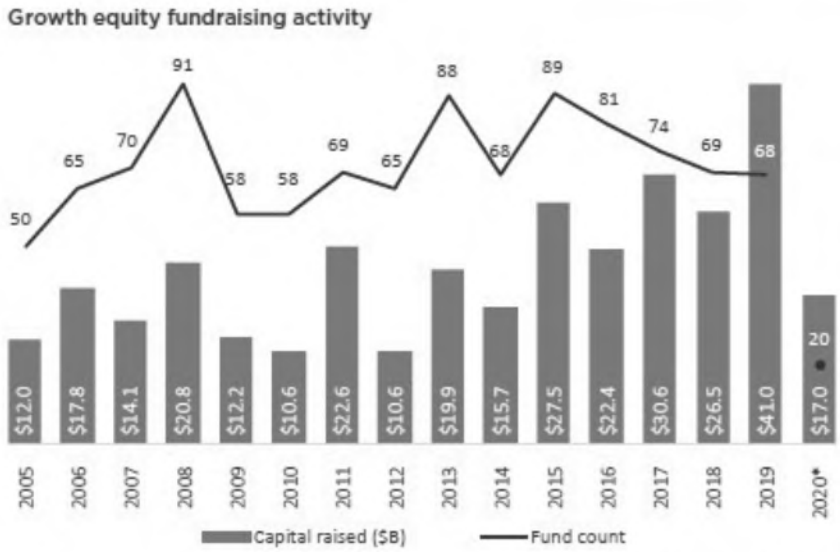
AT&T gaming unit

Microsoft has shown interest in acquiring AT&T's gaming unit, according to The Information. Take-Two, Electronic Arts and Activision Blizzard have all reportedly expressed interest in buying the unit, which could be valued at $4 billion, according to CNBC. The gaming division's more notable titles are tied to Warner Bros.-owned brands like "Harry Potter," "Game of Thrones" and "The Lego Movie."

View details

View 407 investments »

CHART OF THE DAY



Source: PitchBook | **Geography:** North America & Europe
*As of April 29, 2020

"Given the attractiveness of the strategy for LPs, a wave of growth equity-focused funds emerged to invest in this space. In 2019 alone, growth equity fundraising totaled $41.0 billion across 68 funds.

What's more, between 2005 and 2019, PE growth equity fundraising grew at an 8.5% CAGR, compared to a 6.2% CAGR for all PE strategies, indicative of positive LP sentiment toward growth equity."

Source: **PitchBook's Q2 2020 Growth Equity Overview analyst note**

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Venture capital, private equity and M&A financial information technology provider.

From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Fri, 10 Jul 2020 09:39:40 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] PE deal value is down 20% in the US

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Friday, July 10, 2020 5:38:50 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PE deal value is down 20% in the US

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PitchBook

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The Daily Pitch: VC, PE and M&A

July 10, 2020
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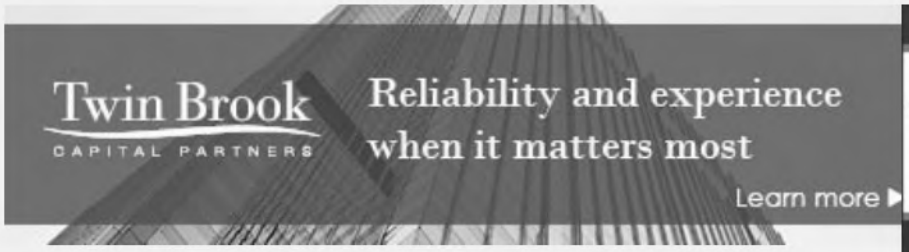
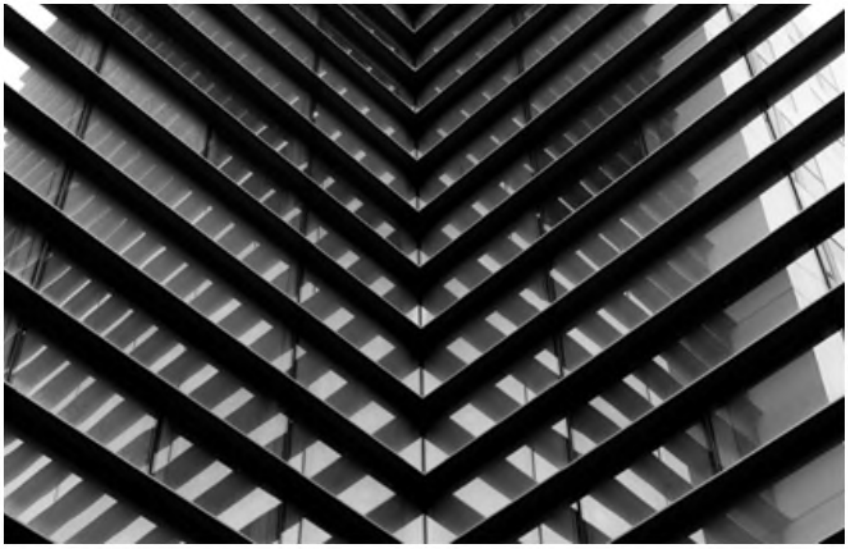
the PitchBook Platform — our data software for VC, PE and M&A



TODAY'S TOP STORIES

PE strategies shift in Q2 as the pandemic persists



During the first six months of 2020, private equity deal value in the US was down nearly 20% from the first half of last year, a stark sign of how the pandemic has transformed the industry landscape. Firms have sought to back out of some deals and passed on others, shifting their focus away from traditional buyouts and toward add-ons, PIPE deals and other strategies.

The changes extend into every nook and cranny of the PE industry, including exits and fundraising. PitchBook's **Q2 US PE Breakdown**, sponsored by Twin Brook Capital Partners and West Monroe, has the data behind all the developments, with other key takeaways including:

- Median buyout size has declined in 2020 for the first time in five years
- Exit activity collapsed in Q2, with firms opting to hold marked-down assets rather than sell at a discount
- A few mega-funds buoyed fundraising activity,

Who's in the newsletter today?

People

Chelsea Clinton
Chris Nguyen
Rob MacGoey
Tucker Callaway

Investors

AI Fire
Alibaba
Andreessen Horowitz
Apollo Global Management
Audax Group
Bain Capital
Blackstone
Centerbridge Partners
Clarus Ventures
Clinton Foundation
Eldridge
Emergence Capital
Facebook
GP Bullhound
General Catalyst
Greenbriar Equity Group
HarbourVest Partners
IVP
Initialized Capital Management
Intel Capital
KKR
Khosla Ventures
Kleiner Perkins

although last year's record amount of capital raised will likely remain out of reach

read it now

More coronavirus news: Continuing coverage from PitchBook

Share:

Coinbase said to explore direct listing

Coinbase co-founder and CEO Brian Armstrong (Matt Winkelmeyer/Getty Images)

Cryptocurrency exchange Coinbase is setting up for a public market debut that could happen this year or early next, according to Reuters.

The company is reportedly considering a direct listing rather than a traditional IPO. It is in talks with investment banks and lawyers but has yet to formally register with the SEC, again according to Reuters.

Lightspeed
Lovell Minnick Partners
Manta Ray Ventures
NYSE
Providence Equity Partners
Quentin Clark
Renovo Capital
Rethink Impact
Rosewood Private Investments
SmartFin Capital
SoftBank
Third Rock Ventures
iger Global
ny Blue Dot
op Tier Capital artners
end Forward apital

ompanies

ttom Data olutions
yteDance
oinbase
pic Games
B Auto Service
oHealth
Home Junction
Kennebec Fire Equipment
Kernel
LogDNA
MariaDB
Nichiigakkan
Relay Therapeutics
Sony
Sun Devil Auto
TikTok

Service Providers
PwC

Coinbase recently hired Paul Grewal, Facebook's former deputy general, as its chief legal officer.

The startup was valued at $8 billion in 2018 after raising $300 million in a round led by Tiger Global, according to PitchBook data. Other investors include IVP, Andreessen Horowitz and the NYSE.

Share:

Controversial facial recognition startup Clearview AI faces international probe

As privacy concerns mount, facial recognition technology has come u increasing scrutiny. (Dan Kitwood/Getty Images)

Clearview AI is being investigated by regulators in the UK and Australia over its data scraping practices, which the controversial facial recognition technology company has used to build a database of more than 3 billion photos taken from around the web.

It's the latest challenge for the New York startup, which is already facing legal action in several US

states and Canada:

read more

Share:

Weekly Recap

In case you missed it:

• Data from the Small Business Administration shows that **more than 8,000 privately backed companies** received federal loans during the pandemic. We broke down the numbers.

• The VC industry as a whole may have pumped the brakes on dealmaking, but a handful of investors, like Greycroft and Insight Partners, have viewed the coronavirus era as **a window of opportunity**.

• As the pandemic forced the closure of many restaurants and food supply channels, some farmers found they had **nowhere to send their produce**. So they turned to startups for help.

The pandemic has resulted in a lot of produce with nowhere to g
(graphixchon/Getty Images)

• Palantir Technologies recently filed confidentially for a public debut while also **seeking nearly $1 billion** in new funding.

• CVC Capital Partners **brought in around $24.1 billion** for its eighth flagship fund, representing Europe's largest buyout vehicle to date.

• Magic Leap has hired a Microsoft executive **as its new CEO**.

Share:

Ask PitchBook

Wondering how the economy reopening will affect your segment of the private markets? Looking for insight into which industries are likely to bounce back faster than others? Curious about what's driving a new trend you've noticed?

Email us at **ask@pitchbook.com**, and the news team will choose a question and track down the answer.

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Recommended Reads

For city planners and other urbanists, the pandemic could be an opportunity to transition away from our longstanding love affair with cars. [The New York Times]

The blog Slate Star Codex is foundational to what might be called the modern rationalist movement. Now, it's at the center of a battle between Silicon Valley and The New York Times. [The New Yorker]

A Seattle-area startup made the shift to permanently working from home. The downside: no more foosball. The upside: a new record in quarterly sales. [GeekWire]

Since yesterday, the PitchBook Platform added:

272	1338	373	15
Deals	People	Companies	Funds

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QUICK TAKES

The Daily Benchmark

2015 Vintage Global Funds-of-Funds

People

HarbourVest management company names CFO

Chelsea Clinton weighs starting VC firm

VC Deals

Kernel picks up $53M Series C

LogDNA banks $25M, names new CEO

MariaDB secures another $25M for Series C

PE Deals

Bain Capital changes timeline for $1B bid

Lovell Minnick's Attom takes over Home Junction

PE-backed GB Auto completes add-on

Audax backs fire equipment purchase

Portfolio Companies

ByteDance weighs changes at TikTok amid scrutiny

Sony to buy stake in Epic Games for $250M

Exits

PE-backed GoHealth sets IPO range

SoftBank-backed Relay looks to raise $264.6M in IPO

Fundraising

Blackstone brings in $4.6B for life sciences fund

Rethink Impact closes $182M fund focused on female entrepreneurs

THE DAILY BENCHMARK

2015 Vintage Global Funds-of-Funds

Median IRR

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

1.35x
Median TVPI

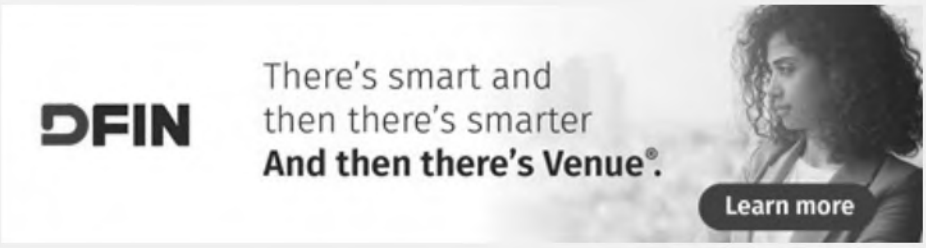
Select top performers

- Adams Street 2015 US Fund
- HarbourVest Partners X-Venture
- HarbourVest Partners X-Combined

**IRR: net of fees*

50 Funds in Benchmark »

Check out the latest version of **PitchBook Benchmarks**



PEOPLE

HarbourVest management company names CFO

Rob MacGoey has joined HarbourVest Partners as CFO of the Boston-based firm's management company. MacGoey was most recently chief accounting officer and controller at Apollo Global Management, and before that he worked at PwC. With some $71 billion in assets under management, HarbourVest pursues co-investments and various types of primary and secondary investments across the private equity landscape.

View details

View 1,030 investments »

Chelsea Clinton weighs starting VC firm

Chelsea Clinton is in the early stages of creating a venture capital firm with a working name of Metrodora Ventures, according to Axios. The firm has reportedly already committed to backing two startups, including Poppy Seed Health, the developer of a pregnancy support app. Clinton currently serves as vice chair of the Clinton Foundation.

View details

VC DEALS

Kernel picks up $53M Series C

Kernel has raised $53 million in a round led by General Catalyst, with participation from investors including Khosla Ventures, Eldridge, Tiny Blue Dot and Manta Ray Ventures. Based near Los Angeles, the company is a developer of brain-recording technology that enables neuroscience experiments to be performed remotely. Quentin Clark, managing director at General Catalyst, has joined the company's board.

View round

View 1 competitors »

LogDNA banks $25M, names new CEO

Emergence Capital has led a $25 million Series C in LogDNA, which operates a log-management platform to help developers create and debug applications. The startup also announced that Tucker Callaway, LogDNA's president and chief revenue officer, will take over as CEO, while current CEO Chris Nguyen will transition to chief strategy officer.

Additional Investors:
Initialized Capital Management, Providence Equity Partners, TI Platform Management, Radianx Capital, Trend Forward Capital, Top Tier Capital Partners

View round

View 42 competitors »

MariaDB secures another $25M for Series C

MariaDB, the developer of an open-source cloud database, has added $25 million to its Series C via a

new tranche led by SmartFin Capital, with participation from investors including GP Bullhound. With this funding extension, MariaDB has now raised more than $125 million and doubled its valuation. The Redwood City, Calif.-based company is also backed by Alibaba and Intel Capital, among others.

View round

View 44 competitors »

PE DEALS

Bain Capital changes timeline for $1B bid

Bain Capital has extended the deadline for its offer to acquire Japanese nursing home operator Nichiigakkan from this week until Aug. 3, according to Reuters. The buyout firm proposed in May to acquire Nichiigakkan for nearly 110 billion yen (about $1 billion), or 1,500 yen per share. Stock in the company closed Thursday trading at 1,585 yen per share.

View deal

View similar company »

Lovell Minnick's Attom takes over Home Junction

Attom Data Solutions, the creator of an online property database, has acquired Home Junction, a San Diego-based provider of real estate data services focused on boundaries in neighborhoods, schools and more. Lovell Minnick Partners acquired Attom Data from Renovo Capital and Rosewood Private Investments in January 2019.

View deal View similar company »

PE-backed GB Auto completes add-on

GB Auto Service, a provider of vehicle maintenance, repair and tire replacement services, has acquired Sun Devil Auto, a provider of auto repair services that operates in Phoenix, Las Vegas and Austin. Backed by Greenbriar Equity Group, GB Auto has made 12 acquisitions over the past two years.

View deal View similar company »

Audax backs fire equipment purchase

AI Fire, a California-based provider of fire and life safety services in the US, has acquired Kennebec Fire Equipment, a supplier of fire safety equipment based in Maine. Audax Group has owned AI Fire since 2017.

View deal View similar company »

PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

ByteDance weighs changes at TikTok amid scrutiny

TikTok owner ByteDance is considering establishing a separate headquarters for the video app outside China or creating a new management board, according to The Wall Street Journal. The potential

changes are reportedly an effort to distance the app from its China ties, which have come under scrutiny in the US and India. Earlier this week, the app was reportedly pulled from online stores in Hong Kong.

View details

View 31 competitors »

Sony to buy stake in Epic Games for $250M

Sony has agreed to buy a 1.4% stake in "Fortnite" maker Epic Games for $250 million, reportedly valuing the video game developer at $17.9 billion. Epic was valued at an estimated $15 billion with a prior funding round in 2018. The company's existing backers include Lightspeed, Kleiner Perkins and KKR.

View details

View 43 competitors »

EXITS

PE-backed GoHealth sets IPO range

GoHealth, a provider of online health insurance services, has filed with the SEC to sell 39.5 million shares for between $18 to $20 apiece in an upcoming IPO on the Nasdaq. The public debut could raise $790 million at the top of its proposed range. Centerbridge Partners acquired a majority stake in GoHealth in August, reportedly valuing the Chicago-based business at around $1.5 billion.

View details

View 14 competitors »

SoftBank-backed Relay looks to raise $264.6M in IPO

Relay Therapeutics, a developer of small-molecule therapeutics intended to treat cancer, has established a range for its upcoming IPO, according to an SEC filing. The Cambridge, Mass.-based company is seeking to raise up to $264.6 million and establish an initial market cap of as much as $1.47 billion by offering 14.7 million shares for between $16 and $18 apiece on the Nasdaq. Relay has received prior funding from investors including SoftBank (40.7% pre-IPO stake) and Third Rock Ventures (20.66%).

View details

View 42 competitors »

FUNDRAISING

Blackstone brings in $4.6B for life sciences fund

Blackstone has closed its fifth life sciences fund on a $4.6 billion hard cap, reaching its target. The vehicle will be used to back life sciences companies with growth investments, late-stage financing deals and other partnerships. The firm launched its life sciences division in late 2018 when it acquired Clarus Ventures, a firm based in the Boston area and San Francisco.

View fund

View 1,367 investments »

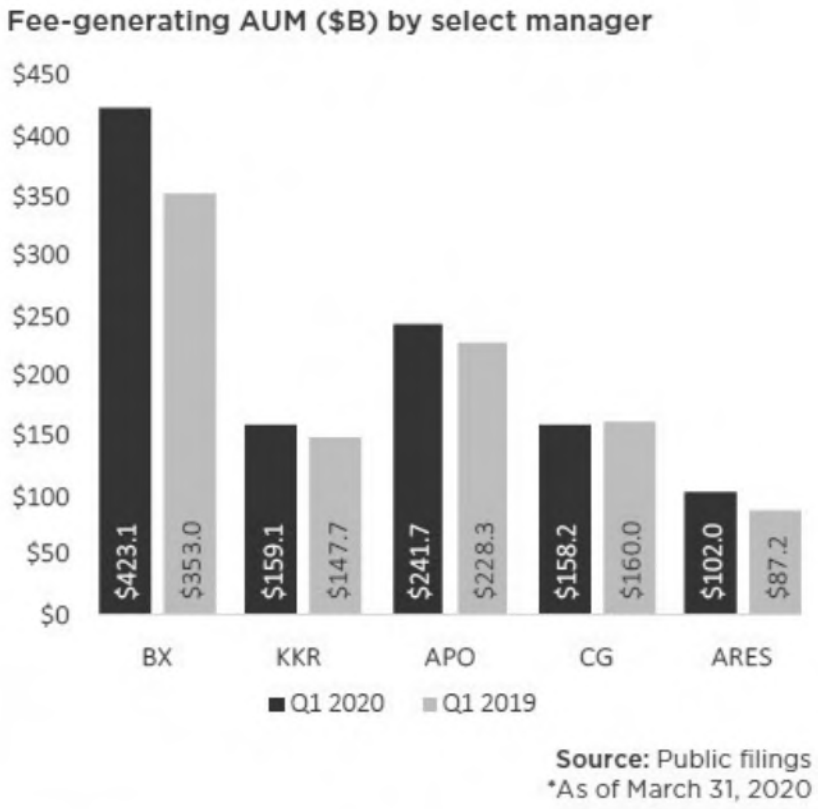
Rethink Impact closes $182M fund focused on female entrepreneurs

Rethink Impact has closed its second flagship fund on $182 million, bringing the VC firm's total assets under management to almost $300 million. The vehicle will focus on backing female tech entrepreneurs. Rethink Impact closed its previous flagship fund on $112 million in 2017, according to The New York Times. Operating out of San Francisco, New York and Washington, DC, the firm has backed more than 25 companies that prioritize gender diverse teams. About 65% of the current fund's backers are female.

View fund

View 97 investments »

CHART OF THE DAY



Source: **PitchBook analyst note on public PE firm earnings in Q1 2020**

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From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Sun, 12 Jul 2020 09:52:31 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] TikTok, on the clock

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Sunday, July 12, 2020 5:50:13 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] TikTok, on the clock

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The Weekend Pitch

July 12, 2020
Presented by Goldman Sachs

In the less than two years since its worldwide release, TikTok has exploded into a social-media supernova. Originally a home for lip-synching and viral dance moves, it has since transformed into something of an everything-app for Generation Z, a place where many young users talk to their friends, meet new people, discuss politics, follow celebrities, create memes, and generally spend a not-insignificant portion of their waking hours.

With more than 2 billion downloads, it's also become the cornerstone of a growing online empire for its Chinese parent company, ByteDance, which has reportedly been valued at some $150 billion in recent secondary share sales. The future, in many ways, seems limitless.

But that wasn't why TikTok and ByteDance were in the headlines this week. Instead, it was because of the political roadblocks suddenly in their path.

Welcome to The Weekend Pitch. I'm Kevin Dowd, and you can reach me at weekend@pitchbook.com. The Chinese government's commitment to the startup scene in recent years has done wonders for many companies. But as those companies go global, their ties to the state come with complications. And that's one of 10 things you need to know from the past week:

Lights, camera, action. (We Are/Getty Images)

1. China challenges

Late last month, India banned TikTok and dozens of other Chinese apps over national security concerns after Indian and Chinese troops clashed along the countries' shared border. This week, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the US might do the same, telling Fox News that Americans should download the

app "only if you want your private information in the hands of the Chinese Communist Party." On Friday, Amazon reportedly told its employees to ban the app from any device that can access company email, then hours later said the directive had been sent in error.

TikTok, for its part, denies that it ever has or ever would hand over user data to the Chinese government. The company has also taken recent steps to emphasize its independence.

In May, the app creator plucked Kevin Mayer away from Disney, where he was head of streaming, to be its new CEO. This week, TikTok announced plans to pull out of Hong Kong after China strengthened its grip on the semi-autonomous region. And shortly thereafter, reports surfaced that ByteDance was considering moving TikTok's headquarters out of China to further distance it from the nation.

Like Huawei, Alibaba and other Chinese business giants that have emerged over the past decade, just what sort of influence the state may have over TikTok is difficult to discern. The intricacies of corporate law in the country seem to be murky to many Westerners, particularly legal laymen like yours truly. But despite TikTok's protestations, allegations of censorship and privacy violations have continued to surface.

China's startup scene has long been marked by an unconventional mix of business and politics. Government programs and government-backed investors helped fuel the country's boom, allowing upstarts to rapidly gain ground on established giants from the US and Europe. Now, as these names begin

to become truly dominant from a global perspective—take Huawei's place as a leader in 5G—the connections between country and company are becoming more controversial, forcing other governments to make uncomfortable choices.

For businesses, the boon of government support can sometimes turn into a burden.

At the same time TikTok reckons with its ties to China, financial markets in the region are going nuts. In Shanghai, the SSE Composite Index is up nearly 19% since late May, and Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index is up more than 12% over the same span. Against that backdrop, another of the country's tech titans may be considering an IPO.

Ant, the fintech affiliate of Alibaba, is planning a listing in Hong Kong that could occur this year and result in a valuation of more than $200 billion, according to Reuters, although the company denied the report. Valued at an estimated $150 billion in 2018, Ant joins ByteDance as arguably one of the two most valuable VC-backed companies in the world, according to PitchBook data.

Ant, which operates Alipay, has traditionally focused its operations in China. But the business has begun expanding rapidly in recent years, and in the process has encountered its own share of hostility. In 2018, for instance, the US blocked Ant from acquiring money-transfer specialist MoneyGram, citing national security concerns. Bloomberg's report last year that the Chinese government was sending officials to Alibaba and other companies in a bid "to exert greater influence" over the private sector likely didn't

assuage such concerns.

I'm not here to determine what degree of influence the Chinese government may or may not have over the country's growing generation of tech giants. In some ways, the reality probably doesn't matter as much as the perception. TikTok can hire as many American executives as it wants. It could move its headquarters to Wyoming. But as long as fears remain that data shared with TikTok or Ant is data shared with the Chinese state, the companies will continue to encounter obstacles on their path to global domination.

2. Uber's expansion

After losing out in its efforts to buy Grubhub, Uber this week found a different way to consolidate its place in the food-delivery space, inking an agreement to buy rival Postmates for $2.65 billion in stock. The deal has reportedly already prompted consternation among restaurants and antitrust watchdogs worried about shrinking competition in the food-delivery sector. For Uber, the takeover could be the basis for an expansion into other kinds of delivery.

3. Microsoft to Magic Leap

Two months ago, co-founder Rony Abovitz announced he would step aside as CEO of Magic Leap. This week, we learned that his successor will be Peggy Johnson, a longtime Qualcomm veteran who was most recently the head of M12, Microsoft's venture capital fund. Her appointment, effective Aug. 1, adds further to a moment of transition for the troubled augmented reality company: Earlier this year, Magic Leap laid off

hundreds of employees because of the pandemic, and shortly after that, it raised a reported $375 million in new funding.

4. IPO prep

Cloud computing powerhouse Rackspace publicly released its IPO paperwork on Friday after a prior confidential filing, readying for a return to the public market about four years after it was taken private by Apollo Global Management for some $4.3 billion. Reports also emerged this week that Coinbase is planning a public listing of its own, although it may opt for a direct listing over a traditional IPO. Valued at just over $8 billion, according to PitchBook data, the company could offer a test of how a cryptocurrency exchange fares on Wall Street.

5. Revving up

Over the past two years, few (if any) companies in the world have been as aggressive in raising new funds as Rivian, a maker of electric trucks and SUVs. The business pulled in another $2.5 billion in financing this week from a host of big-name investors, taking its total funding since the start of 2019 to a staggering $5.35 billion. Rivian plans to launch its first electric vehicles next year.

Rivian CEO RJ Scaringe shows off an early version of the company's e
pickup. (Phillip Faraone/Getty Images)

6. Top dollar

In early July, Bloomberg reported that CVC Capital Partners had closed its latest flagship buyout fund on €21.3 billion (about $24 billion), joining rarefied mega-fund air that was previously occupied only by Apollo and Blackstone. Funnily enough, both those firms revealed new funds this week, with Apollo announcing a new $12 billion direct lending program and Blackstone closing its latest life sciences fund on $4.6 billion.

7. Pig poop

Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway agreed this week to pay nearly $10 billion for a gas pipeline. It is probably not the sort of gas pipeline you are thinking. Instead, the deal with Dominion Energy gives Berkshire control of a pipeline that distributes methane gas produced from the, um, waste of pigs grown on industrial farms, allowing such emissions to

be harnessed for climate-conscious customers instead of dispersed into the atmosphere.

8. Going green

In other climate-minded deal news this week, Sunrun agreed to acquire fellow solar-panel producer Vivint Solar for $3.2 billion. Vertical farming startup Upward Farms, formerly known as Seed & Roe, raised $15 million in new funding. And Karana, a Singaporean startup making alternative meat products out of jackfruit, collected a reported $1.7 million in VC.

9. Listen up

I wrote in May about **consolidation in the podcast space**. The trend continued this week, with The Wall Street Journal reporting that Sirius XM had agreed to hand over some $300 million to acquire Stitcher, a popular podcast service currently owned by EW Scripps. The deal will see ownership of Stitcher shift from a media titan of the 20th century to an online radio pioneer of the 21st.

10. Milk and cookies

Perfect Day, a foodtech company developing animal-free dairy protein, added a new $160 million onto its existing Series C this week, taking the round's total to $300 million. A potentially complementary company also raised new cash of its own: NBA legend Dirk Nowitzki was among the investors in a $15 million round for Tiff's Treats, a delivery startup that specializes in bringing warm, freshly baked cookies straight to your doorstep.

View the full list online

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A MESSAGE FROM GOLDMAN SACHS

Diverse teams drive strong returns

Through *Launch With GS*—a $500 million investment strategy grounded in the belief that diverse teams drive strong returns—Goldman Sachs continues to focus on increasing access to capital, facilitating connections and providing virtual resources for women, Black, Latinx and other diverse entrepreneurs. Learn more.

Share:

Startup scrutiny

(Giordano Trabucchi/Getty Images)

After handing out hundreds of billions of dollars in loans to help combat the disastrous effects of the coronavirus crisis, the US government provided some transparency this week into where all that money went. As James Thorne writes, the list of recipients included more than 8,000 privately backed companies that combined to take out **as much as $13.4 billion in loans**.

Controversial facial recognition startup Clearview AI was not among the PPP's beneficiaries. Instead, as Leah Hodgson writes, the company is under the magnifying glass for a different reason, with regulators in the UK and Australia launching **an investigation into its privacy practices**.

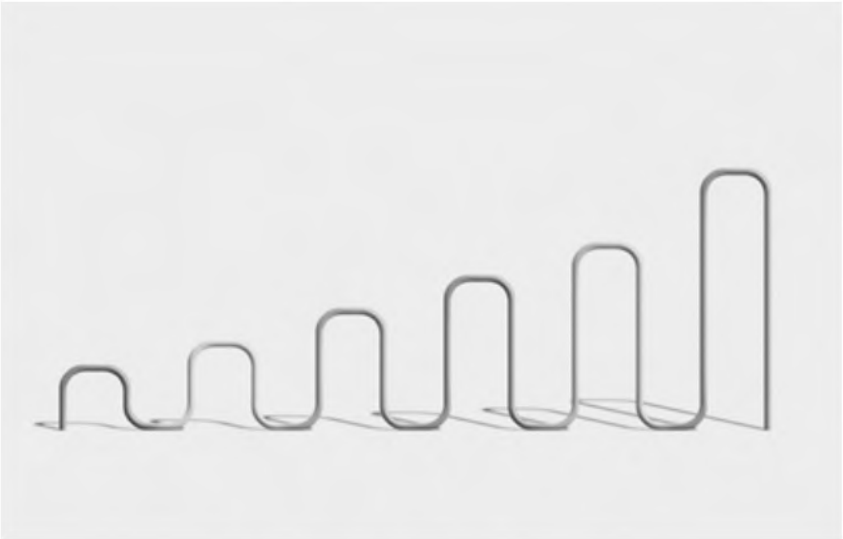
PE in the pandemic

(bob_bosewell/Getty Images)

The coronavirus crisis has caused chaos in financial markets that had grown used to year after year of steady growth. PitchBook's latest US PE Breakdown examines the manifold ways the pandemic has shaken up private equity, including a sharp decline in deal value and a shift away from traditional buyouts **toward different types of deals**.

One such nontraditional deal type is GP stakes investing, where one private equity firm buys a passive, minority stake in another. The frequency of these investments has exploded in recent years, with several new firms emerging as potential buyers. In a new analyst note, Wylie Fernyhough offers up a detailed breakdown of **the biggest names to watch**.

Quant questions



(Francesco Zerilli/Getty Images)

If graphs are your thing, then buckle up. PitchBook's latest Quantitative Perspectives report deploys nearly 15 years of data to offer a visuals-driven look at how the US venture capital industry fares in times of economic distress, with figures dating from before the global financial crisis to our current era of pandemic-driven turmoil.

How do today's unemployment levels compare to the last crisis? What's next for the IPO market? How will trends in VC valuations shift in the coming months? Our analysts have answers to those questions **and many, many more**.

Startup name of the week

The preferred meal of five-year-olds everywhere
(Xvision/Getty Images)

Today's honoree holds an unusual distinction: It might be the first startup name of the week that is no longer the actual name of a startup. That's because this week, a maker of soy-based chicken nuggets called **Nuggs** announced that it will now have a new parent company, Simulate, with plans to develop other food technologies to complement its original Nuggs offerings.

In addition to its new corporate structure, the company announced $4.1 million in funding from a motley list of investors, including Reddit co-founder Alexis Ohanian, former Whole Foods CEO Walter Robb, and Victoria's Secret model Jasmine Tookes. I used the phrase "soy-based chicken nuggets" above, but perhaps those backers were won over by the rather uncanny phrase Nuggs uses to describe its product: "a chicken nugget simulation."

Recommended reads

Why do US Postal Service delivery trucks keep catching on fire? [Vice]

Not even a pandemic could dissuade an outlet-mall mogul named Steven Tanger from his long-held belief that online shopping is overrated. [The Wall Street Journal]

Frequent trades, risky options contracts and a volatile stock market have been very good for Robinhood's business. The same factors have had different results for some of the app's users. [The New York Times]

The primary aim of Bill Ackman's new mega-SPAC is to make a killing. But in a small way, it could also be a vehicle for change on Wall Street. [Vanity Fair]

5G technology was supposed to unite the world. Instead, it's tearing us apart. [Wired]

Zoom Video Communications is what one would perhaps call the breakout startup of the coronavirus pandemic. During the Spanish Flu, we had the Dixie cup. [Fast Company]

During recent weeks, an AI startup valued at more than $1.8 billion has been using its unique access to Twitter to help police track demonstrators protesting

the killing of George Floyd. [The Intercept]

When a car careened onto a baseball field in Maine during a game in 2018, it set in motion a true-crime mystery 50 years in the making. [ESPN]

After several months of frantic work and little sleep, healthcare professionals across the US are confronting a wave of physical and mental burnout. [The Atlantic]

Quote of the week

"Please scream inside your heart."

—A video from Fuji-Q Highland amusement park in Japan, encouraging people riding its roller coasters to avoid the normal kind of screaming in a bid to battle the coronavirus

The Weekend Pitch is produced by editor Kevin Dowd.

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Sent: Fri, 12 Jun 2020 13:02:50 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Instacart valuation soars to $13.7B

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2020 9:01:32 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Instacart valuation soars to $13.7B

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The Daily Pitch: VC, PE and M&A

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TODAY'S TOP STORIES

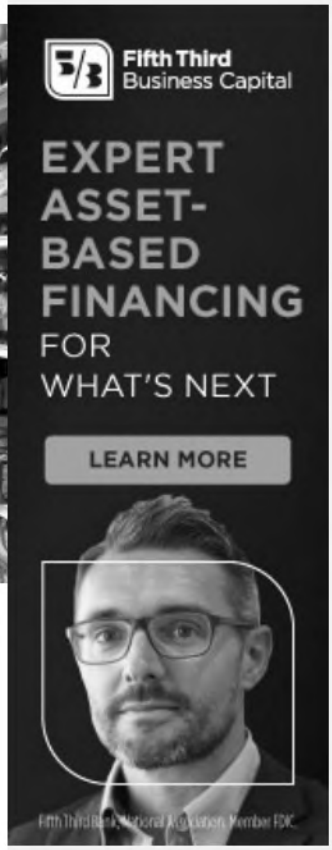
Instacart valuation rockets to $13.7B with new funding

Jen Valencia shops for an Instacart customer in Clark, N.J. The com has doubled its number of freelance workers.
(Michael Loccisano/Getty Images)

Grocery delivery provider Instacart has raised $225 million at a $13.7 billion valuation—a jump from its $7.9 billion value in late 2018. DST Global and General Catalyst led the funding round.

Instacart has experienced "an unprecedented surge in customer demand" during the coronavirus outbreak, the company said in a statement. As a result, it has doubled the number of shoppers—Instacart's term for freelance workers who fulfill customer orders—to more than half a million in North America.

Rival grocery delivery services, such as those offered by Walmart and Amazon, have also hired thousands of workers to meet new demand. But Instacart has surged ahead in recent months, claiming more than half of the US weekly market share of grocery delivery, according to Second Measure data reported by The Information.



The rapid expansion amid a pandemic has led to resistance from gig workers, who have listed demands such as hazard pay and safety gear. Before a strike by workers in late March, the company announced temporary bonuses and extended its sick pay policy for workers diagnosed with COVID-19, among other changes.

More coronavirus news: Continuing coverage from PitchBook

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Pandemic speeds up digital transformation in construction

The construction industry has been slow to adopt digital tools. (Spe Platt/Getty Images)

As lockdowns ease around the US, the construction industry is among those cleared to resume work, yet in an environment fundamentally changed by the coronavirus outbreak.

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Who's in the newsletter today?

People

Abhinav Asthana
Alexis Ohanian
Audrey Gelman
Bill Ackman
Daniel Aronovitz
ilip Lewis
abih Rizvi

vestors

dvancit Capital
dvent International
ollo Global anagement
ch Venture artners
ctos Sports artners
es Capital
ain Capital
Biomatics Capital
Blackstone
Blisce
CRV
CVC Capital Partners
Casdin Capital
Catalyst Investors
DST Global

- "The current pandemic has been an accelerator in moving the construction industry through digital transformation faster than most had planned," said Darren Bechtel of Brick & Mortar Ventures
- For the first time, startups are being approached by construction companies to solve issues arising as work in the industry resumes under new restrictions
- Construction tech startups are responding quickly by modifying existing tools that can help monitor compliance with social distancing and other rules

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88% of wealth managers recommend investing in art

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And it makes sense: Blue-chip art has outperformed the S&P by over 180% since 2000, according to industry benchmarks. Beyond that, a Citibank study concluded that art had the lowest correlation to public equities of any of the 10 major asset classes.

But the doors to the art market won't be open for long—surging demand from the ultra-wealthy and dwindling supply have sent prices for famous works of

F-Prime Capital
Fidelity
First Reserve
Fulcrum Equity Partners
GV
General Catalyst
Gradient Ventures
Initialized Capital
Insight Partners
King River Capital
Kleiner Perkins
Koa Labs
NASA
NFX
Nexus Venture Partners
Novo Nordisk
Pershing Square Capital Management
Peter Thiel
Playground Global
Sofinnova Partners
SoftBank
Space Angels
Spectrum Equity
Summit Partners
T. Rowe Price
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art skyrocketing.

One company has turned the 276-year-old art market on its head by acquiring acclaimed paintings and taking them public. Masterworks lets you invest directly in multimillion-dollar works, similar to trading stocks in a public company. Trade your shares on the secondary market, or hold until the painting sells and receive your portion of the proceeds.

To learn more about how you can invest in art, sign up for an account today.*

**Important disclosures here.*

Share:

Bain Capital joins bidding for Italian soccer league

Juventus forward Cristiano Ronaldo during a Serie A match against

Astrobotic
CoderPad
Corvidia
DoorDash
Facebook
Headspace
Instacart
Palantir Technologies
Postman
Sentropy
Serta Simmons Bedding
Shopify
Snowflake
SpaceX
Spike
Stonepeak Infrastructure Partners
Stripe
The Wing
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Milan in February. (Marco Luzzani/Getty Images)

In the latest sign of private equity pushing into professional sports, Bain Capital has offered to purchase a 25% stake in Italian soccer league Serie A for €3 billion (about $3.4 billion), according to Bloomberg. The news comes after CVC Capital Partners reportedly offered earlier this year to buy a 20% stake in the league for €2 billion and Blackstone discussed providing loans to struggling Serie A clubs affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

The home of global stars including Cristiano Ronaldo and Romelu Lukaku, Serie A is among the most prestigious soccer leagues in Europe. It pulled in some €2.5 billion in revenue during the 2018-19 season. The league plans to resume play on June 20 after suspending its season in early March due to COVID-19.

Stoppages across the world of sports haven't deterred recent private equity interest in sports leagues, many of which have seen franchise valuations soar in recent years. In April, Arctos Sports Partners revealed it had raised $500 million toward a reported $1.5 billion target for a vehicle that will invest in teams across leagues in North America and Europe.

Related read: **Wall Street's sporting chance**

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Postman's valuation soars to $2B with latest round

Postman co-founder and CEO Abhinav Asthana
(Courtesy of Postman)

Postman has raised $150 million in a Series C that values the startup at $2 billion, over five times its previous valuation.

Insight Partners led the round for the San Francisco-based company, which is the creator of a platform that helps application programming interface developers collaborate on projects. Existing investors CRV and Nexus Venture Partners also participated in the financing.

The funding marks the ninth-largest valuation jump for a VC-backed company in the US so far this year, ranking below companies including Stripe, Snowflake and SpaceX, according to PitchBook data. Postman was previously valued at $365 million in June 2019, when CRV led a $50 million Series B for the business,

also according to PitchBook data.

Founded in 2014, Postman has around 500,000 customers, including UiPath, Shopify and Twitter. The global API management market is expected to grow to $5.1 billion by 2023, according to a March 2019 report by market research firm ReportLinker.

"From our view, investors are looking for companies with real business momentum and solid economic fundamentals," Postman co-founder and CEO Abhinav Asthana said in an emailed statement. "Companies that have demonstrated product-market fit and show a clear path to profitability are more likely to be funded."

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Coming soon: The newest issue of our magazine

The latest edition of the quarterly PitchBook Private Market PlayBook will be released in early July, featuring articles on the pandemic's impacts on investment trends, a profile of an NBA star and his approach to VC, an essay on the responsibility of

investors in the fight for social justice, and more.

If you'd like to start receiving the magazine or want your copy mailed to a different address, register here:

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Weekly Recap

In case you missed it:

• Against a backdrop of protests, the venture capital industry has been forced to face **its significant lack of diversity**. Here's a look at what some VCs are doing to take a stand.

• Public anger over injustice has led to questions about what rank-and-file employees, marketers, CEOs and other individuals besides investors can do **to make things right**.

• Meanwhile, amid declarations of solidarity and support for the black community, black investors and founders are **searching for genuine signs** of commitment and follow-through.

Isa Watson, founder of Squad, said she'll consider investors' reactio the current crisis. (Photo by Kwaku Alston)

• As the coronavirus crisis has left 13% of people in the US unemployed, some startups like Headspace are offering their services for free. Could **what began as a sense of moral duty** become brand loyalty as the economy recovers?

• Bankruptcies for private equity-backed companies surged in May, a sign of how many buyout investments are particularly ill-suited **for times of economic upheaval**.

• During the pandemic, IPO roadshows have migrated from board rooms to the virtual world. **Will they ever go back**?

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Wondering how the economy reopening will affect

your segment of the private markets? Looking for insight into which industries are likely to bounce back faster than others? Curious about what's driving a new trend you've noticed?

Email us at **ask@pitchbook.com**, and the news team will choose a question and track down the answer.

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Recommended Reads

First, Wes Edens co-founded Fortress Investment Group. Then, he teamed with another Wall Street tycoon to buy the Milwaukee Bucks. His next act? A $9 billion bet on high-speed rail. [Forbes]

Golf is in the midst of a social distancing-inspired renaissance. And investors are taking note. [Bloomberg]

Even for people with a stunningly impressive autobiographical recall, the gray days of the pandemic lockdown are all running together. [The Wall Street Journal]

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People

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VC Deals

DoorDash closes in on new funds

Verve Therapeutics secures $63M

Headspace adds $47.7M to Series C

Sentropy launches with $13M

Spike scoops up $8M

PE Deals

Stonepeak pays $2B for Xplornet

Summit backs CoderPad

Portfolio Companies

Apollo sues Advent over Serta restructuring

Astrobotic wins $200M NASA contract

PE-backed oil company files for Chapter 11

Exits

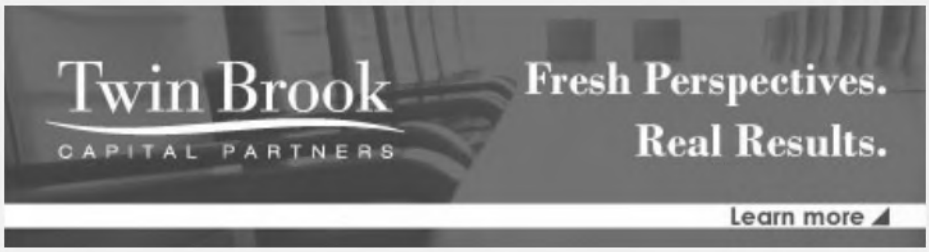
Sofinnova, others exit Corvidia for $2.1B

Palantir eyes confidential filing for IPO

Investors

Pershing Square plans SPAC listing

Facebook set to form VC arm



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14.90%

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

28.60%

1.60x

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Select top performers
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RiverVest Venture Fund III

**IRR: net of fees*

14 Funds in Benchmark »

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PEOPLE

Audrey Gelman steps down at The Wing

Audrey Gelman has reportedly resigned from her position as CEO at The Wing, a co-working and community-building startup for women that has raised well over $100 million in venture funding, according to PitchBook data. The New York Times reported earlier this year on concerns from more than two dozen current and former employees about The Wing's company culture. Workers at The Wing reportedly staged a digital walkout in the wake of Gelman's resignation to push for additional changes.

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Fulcrum Equity names new partner

Fulcrum Equity Partners has promoted Philip Lewis from principal to partner. Lewis has worked at the Atlanta-based growth equity firm since 2007, and he currently represents Fulcrum on five different boards.

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VC DEALS

DoorDash closes in on new funds

DoorDash is close to getting more funding that would value it at over $15 billion before the new capital, according to The Wall Street Journal. The meal delivery company reportedly plans to sell equity to existing backers T. Rowe Price, Fidelity and others. SoftBank's Vision Fund is also reportedly weighing whether to participate. DoorDash filed for an IPO in February before the coronavirus pandemic shook up the financial markets.

View round

View 33 competitors »

Verve Therapeutics secures $63M

Verve Therapeutics has raised a $63 million Series A2 round led by GV, with participation from Arch Venture Partners, F-Prime Capital and Biomatics Capital. Founded in May 2019, Verve is developing therapies to treat patients suffering from cardiovascular diseases. The company plans to use the funding in part to advance Phase 1 clinical trials of its lead program.

Additional Investors:
Casdin Capital, Wellington Management

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View 5 competitors »

Headspace adds $47.7M to Series C

Mental health app maker Headspace has raised $47.7 million, adding to the $53 million in equity it raised in February. Blisce led the extension, with participation from existing investors including Waverly Capital and Spectrum Equity. The Santa Monica, Calif.-based startup, which has seen a surge in demand amid the pandemic, is offering its app to unemployed people and healthcare workers for free during the crisis.

Additional Investors:
Times Bridge, The Chernin Group, Advancit Capital

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Sentropy launches with $13M

Sentropy, which offers a platform to detect online abuse, has officially launched after its creation in 2018. The Palo Alto-based startup has raised about $13 million in venture capital from backers including Alexis Ohanian's Initialized Capital, King River Capital and Playground Global.

View round

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Spike scoops up $8M

Insight Partners has led an $8 million Series A for Spike, a provider of digital collaboration tech for workplaces. Existing backers including Wix, NFX and Koa Labs also participated in the round. Founded in 2014, the Israeli startup helps users combine their emails, chats, notes, calendar items and video calls into one inbox. Insight Partners vice president Daniel Aronovitz will join Spike's board.

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COVID-19 shifts the focus to liquidity.
Read Transaction Trends Q2 for key insights.
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PE DEALS

Stonepeak pays $2B for Xplornet

Stonepeak Infrastructure Partners has completed its acquisition of Xplornet Communications for $2 billion. Based in New Brunswick, Xplornet is a provider of broadband services to users in rural Canada that had received prior backing from investors including Werklund Capital and Catalyst Investors. New York-based Stonepeak typically targets middle-market investments in North American infrastructure businesses.

View deal

View 3 competitors »

Summit backs CoderPad

Summit Partners has closed a growth round in CoderPad, which offers a platform to test job candidates' technical skills. Launched in 2013 and based in California, the company serves about 1,700 business customers.

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View 2 competitors »

PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

Apollo sues Advent over Serta restructuring

Apollo Global Management has filed a lawsuit in New York against Advent International and Serta Simmons Bedding, attempting to block a planned restructuring of the mattress-maker's debt, according to The Wall Street Journal. Advent acquired Serta in 2012, while Apollo owns some of the company's corporate debt. Serta is currently carrying some $2.4 billion in overall debt, according to the New York Post.

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Astrobotic wins $200M NASA contract

Space tech startup Astrobotic has received a $199.5 million contract to deliver NASA's VIPER rover to the south pole of the moon in 2023. The rover will help look for ice deposits that could be used as a resource for future manned missions. The Pittsburgh-based company reportedly raised $2.5 million in seed

funding led by Space Angels in 2016 and was awarded a $10 million grant from NASA in 2018.

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View 2 competitors »

PE-backed oil company files for Chapter 11

Vista Proppants and Logistics, a Texas-based provider of frac sand for oil and gas wells, has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection amid a turbulent oil futures trading market. The company, backed by private equity firms Ares Capital and First Reserve, will receive $11 million in debtor-in-possession credit loans and plans to emerge from reorganization in about 120 days.

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View 2 competitors »

EXITS

Sofinnova, others exit Corvidia for $2.1B

Danish pharmaceutical giant Novo Nordisk has acquired Corvidia, a developer of therapies for cardio-renal diseases, in a $2.1 billion deal that includes an upfront payment of $725 million. Sofinnova Partners is the biggest shareholder of Corvidia, which is a Massachusetts-based spinoff from AstraZeneca. The company raised a $60 million Series B in 2018 that was led by Venrock and included participation from several other firms.

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Palantir eyes confidential filing for IPO

Palantir Technologies intends to confidentially file for an IPO with the SEC in the near future, according to reports. The Palo Alto-based company is also putting together a tender offer for private shareholders, in hopes of tidying up its capital structure, according to Bloomberg. Launched in 2004 by co-founders including Peter Thiel, the company garnered a $20.3 billion valuation in 2016, according to PitchBook data. Palantir could reportedly make its public debut as early as this fall.

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INVESTORS

Pershing Square plans SPAC listing

Activist investor Bill Ackman and his Pershing Square Capital Management have confidentially filed for an IPO for a new special-purpose acquisition company, according to Bloomberg. The offering could reportedly aim to raise as much as $1 billion.

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Facebook set to form VC arm

Facebook has made multiple hires for a new corporate venture unit that will operate a multimillion-dollar fund from within the company's experimental apps team, according to Axios. One of those hires was reportedly Shabih Rizvi, a former Kleiner Perkins investor who most recently worked at Gradient Ventures, an early-stage corporate venture fund under the Alphabet umbrella.

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CHART OF THE DAY

"For nontraditional investment, especially at the late stage, the overall participation levels will rely heavily on the need for these deals to get done. With the IPO market stalled for the foreseeable future, many ultra-late-stage companies that would look toward an IPO exit for their next round now find themselves in trouble. This could become an opportunity for nontraditionals to invest in distressed companies that are still seen as viable businesses on the other side of the pandemic."

Source: **PitchBook's Q1 2020 US VC Valuations Report**

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From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Sun, 14 Jun 2020 09:43:14 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] Airbnb, Palantir lead a glitzy IPO pipeline

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Sunday, June 14, 2020 5:42:48 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] Airbnb, Palantir lead a glitzy IPO pipeline

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The Weekend Pitch

June 14, 2020

I wrote last Sunday about the IPO market beginning **to heat back up** after several months of a coronavirus-induced chill. The temperature only grew hotter in recent days, with a quartet of highly valued unicorns either revealing or hinting at plans to go public in the weeks and months to come.

One of those companies is a longtime Silicon Valley staple that first achieved a $1 billion valuation way back in 2011. Another wasn't even founded until 2015. But soon, it seems, their paths are set to converge on Wall Street.

Welcome to The Weekend Pitch. I'm Kevin Dowd, and you can reach me at weekend@pitchbook.com. This year's IPO slate still has a very long way to go to match 2019's bumper crop. But the potential big-name listings are beginning to pile up, which is one of

eight things you need to know from the past week:

Peter Thiel and Palantir appear to be nearing a long-awaited IPC (Stephanie Keith/Getty Images)

1. Unicorns on parade

The news began last weekend, when Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky told Bloomberg that the company hadn't ruled out an IPO this year. Airbnb announced last September that it would go public in 2020, but many expected a crash in customer demand during the coronavirus crisis to alter those plans. Chesky isn't guaranteeing a public debut, but the fact that he's talking about it may indicate how quickly the company's business has bounced back as lockdowns continue to lift.

Insurance startup Lemonade kept things going on Monday, when it filed a prospectus with the SEC for a public offering on the NYSE. Founded just five years ago on the idea of using tech to reimagine property and casualty insurance, Lemonade has already

banked nearly $500 million in VC, reaching a $2.1 billion valuation last year, according to PitchBook data.

On Tuesday, reports emerged that Snowflake had filed confidentially for an IPO, barely four months after the data warehousing startup ascended to a $12.4 billion valuation. That latest news continued a string of remarkable growth: Snowflake's VC-backed valuation today is nearly 25 times higher than it was just three years ago, according to PitchBook data.

And on Thursday, Bloomberg reported that data-mining pioneer Palantir Technologies is planning to confidentially file for an IPO in the coming weeks and could go public by the fall. Co-founded by Peter Thiel in 2004, Palantir went on to raise huge sums of VC over the ensuing decade-plus, peaking at a $20.3 billion valuation in 2016, according to PitchBook data. In more recent years, though, that fundraising pace has slowed down, and much of the Palantir conversation has centered on when and if the company might go public.

Now, we might finally have an answer.

After Uber, Lyft, Pinterest, Zoom Video Communications and several other unicorns went public during the spring and summer of 2019, leading to a record-breaking year for VC-backed exit activity, there was a thought that those companies who stayed on the sidelines may have missed their chance to debut under friendly conditions. But friendly conditions seem to be back. Airbnb, Palantir and the rest have surely been taking note of a string of successful IPOs in the past two weeks, as well as

several companies opting to increase the size of their listings after encountering healthy amounts of investor demand.

Expecting a repeat of last year's frenzy would be silly. But it looks increasingly likely that the pandemic won't have the depressive effect on the IPO market that many had feared.

2. Delivery deals

Not every well-known unicorn, though, is choosing a public offering as a route to raise cash. Instacart opted instead this week to raise $225 million in new venture funding, taking its valuation up to $13.7 billion, a 74% valuation step-up from its prior round, according to PitchBook data. DoorDash, another food-delivery company whose business has boomed during the pandemic, is in the midst of raising a new equity round that could come at a $15 billion-plus valuation, The Wall Street Journal reported.

3. Grabbing Grubhub

Last month, Uber seemed on the verge of acquiring Grubhub in a bid to achieve dominance in the US food-delivery market. But this week, Grubhub chose a different buyer, announcing plans to sell itself to Europe's Just Eat Takeaway.com in a deal that was initially pegged at $7.3 billion. Speaking to CNBC on Thursday, Grubhub CEO Matt Maloney refuted talk that concerns about antitrust regulators had driven his company and Uber apart.

4. Sports stakes

Private equity investors continued this week to display a growing appetite for pro sports. Josh Harris and David Blitzer—executives at Apollo Global Management and Blackstone, respectively—are reportedly in talks to acquire the New York Mets, the potential next step in building out their pro-sports empire in the US Northeast. Bain Capital, meanwhile, is reportedly negotiating a possible deal to pay €3 billion (about $3.4 billion) for a 25% stake in Serie A, the top professional soccer league in Italy.

The Mets aren't playing games right now, but the franchise itself is much in play. (Mike Stobe/Getty Images)

5. Founder exits

Two high-profile entrepreneurs recently departed the companies they founded in two very different ways. Reddit co-founder Alexis Ohanian stepped down from the company's board late last week, asking to be replaced by a new black director; this week, Reddit named Michael Seibel, the CEO of Y Combinator, as his replacement. Audrey Gelman, meanwhile, reportedly stepped down as CEO of The Wing, a co-working startup for women, amid protests by staff

over the company's treatment of some minority employees.

6. Facebook's ventures

Facebook is no stranger to investing: Acquisitions of Instagram and WhatsApp have been critical in establishing its place as an international social-media power. Now, the company seems to be in the midst of building out a corporate venture unit, with Axios reporting this week that Facebook has begun making hires for a new multimillion-dollar fund that will operate from within its experimental apps division.

7. Pandemic woes

In the latest deal undone by pandemic concerns, shopping-mall operator Simon Property Group walked away this week from a deal to acquire rival Taubman for $3.6 billion. In another branch of retail, Apollo Global Management is reportedly suing mattress-maker Serta Simmons Bedding and fellow private equity firm Advent International over a planned deal to restructure Serta's debt. And the parent company of Chuck E. Cheese, which is owned by Apollo, is said to be in talks to raise new capital from its lenders to avoid filing for bankruptcy.

8. Latest listings

Other significant IPOs were in the works this week in addition to all the unicorns mentioned above. Used-car seller Vroom raised nearly $468 million in its listing on Tuesday and saw its stock more than double in value during its first day trading. That same day, private equity-backed business analytics

specialist Dun & Bradstreet filed for an IPO on the NYSE that Reuters reported could raise $1 billion.

View the full list online

Share:

Shifting gears

(PASIEKA/Getty Images)

Many startups and investors are changing their ways in an effort to adapt to this current moment of societal upheaval.

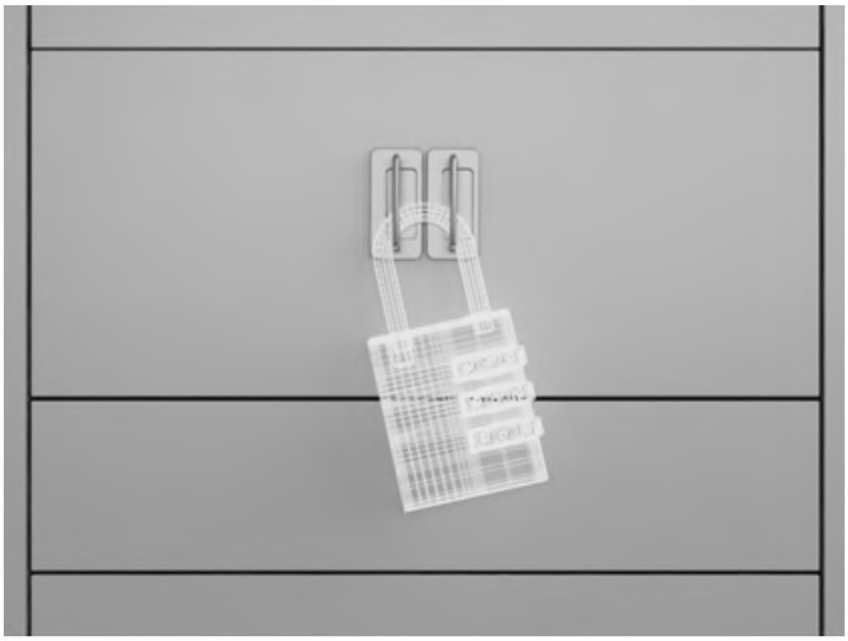
For startups eyeing an exit, the process of pitching themselves to Wall Street has gone from the board room to the Zoom room. Leah Hodgson explored this week whether the virtual IPO roadshow could become **the new industry standard**.

Earlier in the week, James Thorne took a closer look

at two new funds, one headline-grabbing resignation, and ongoing efforts by VC firms to grapple with **their own lack of diversity**.

On top of everything else, the US is also struggling to combat an unprecedented spike in unemployment. Some startups, writes Eliza Haverstock, are trying to do their part by offering services for free **to those currently without work**.

IT & IRR



Lock it down (Westend61/Getty Images)

During the first quarter of the year, startups in the information security sector hauled in a near-record total of venture funding, led by a handful of mega-deals. As a preview version of PitchBook's latest piece of in-depth Emerging Tech Research demonstrates, that's just one sign of the shifts the pandemic is causing **in the infosec industry**.

Our analyst team also turned their attention this week to the latest available returns data from private-market funds. A lag in reporting means the numbers are only current as of the end of September. But even before the coronavirus crisis began to materialize, performance for many private fund strategies **was already beginning to slip**.

Startup name of the week

(WIN-Initiative/Getty Images)

This week, we're not talking about ramen or fettuccine, not chow mein or udon. We're not talking about possible names for Barilla's corporate venture arm. But we are talking about noodles. More specifically, about **Noodle Partners**, a New York-based edtech startup that announced on Tuesday a $16 million Series B led by the ValueAct Spring Fund.

The company's services are focused on helping

universities and other institutions build better online learning programs. Which seems to make it apparent that the noodle in question is not a long string of dough, but rather that metaphorical noodle that resides inside your skull: the brain.

Recommended reads

The collapse of the CDO market helped bring down the global economy in 2008. Now, the CLO market could be on the verge of a similar catastrophe. [The Atlantic]

And, as a response, a case that any such fears of a looming catastrophe are overblown. [Notes on the Crises]

A Q&A with the CEO of Tinder on the pursuit of love during a pandemic. [The Verge]

Workers around the world are wondering when they will return to the office. What if the answer is "never"? [The New York Times]

An in-depth look at the recent uprising in Hong Kong, and what could be next for the once-cautious city as Beijing tightens its grip. [The Guardian]

Meet Bret Arsenault, a race-car driver and information security specialist who might be the most interesting man at Microsoft. [Protocol]

To fight the boredom of a society still largely on pause, more and more individual investors are scratching their gambling itch on the stock market.

[The Wall Street Journal]

At the Apollo Theater, even amid a pandemic, the show must go on. [Vulture]

The coronavirus crisis brought many things to a grinding halt. Thanks in part to a rare degree of foresight, a massive new wind farm in Sweden wasn't one of them. [Bloomberg]

Quote of the week

"There's no way in hell I want to be part of that story."

—An unnamed private equity executive, speaking to Axios about whether firms might reassess their LP relationships with police unions

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Sent: Tue, 30 Jun 2020 11:32:21 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] The confluence of pro sports and VC

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2020 7:30:46 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The confluence of pro sports and VC

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TODAY'S TOP STORIES

Discussing NBA star Spencer Dinwiddie's VC ambition on 'In Visible Capital'

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IN VISIBLE CAPITAL

In the latest episode of PitchBook's "In Visible Capital" podcast, PitchBook editor Kevin Dowd breaks down his recent article, "NBA standout Spencer Dinwiddie has a VC-fueled vision for the future of stardom," which appears in the latest issue of the PitchBook Private Market PlayBook magazine.

Topics discussed in the episode include:

- Dinwiddie's launch of venture firm Eonxi, and his bid to tokenize his $34.4 million NBA contract
- Why Wall Street and Silicon Valley investors continue to pour billions of dollars into professional sports, even as leagues struggle with the financial fallout from COVID-19

listen here

More coronavirus news: Continuing coverage from PitchBook

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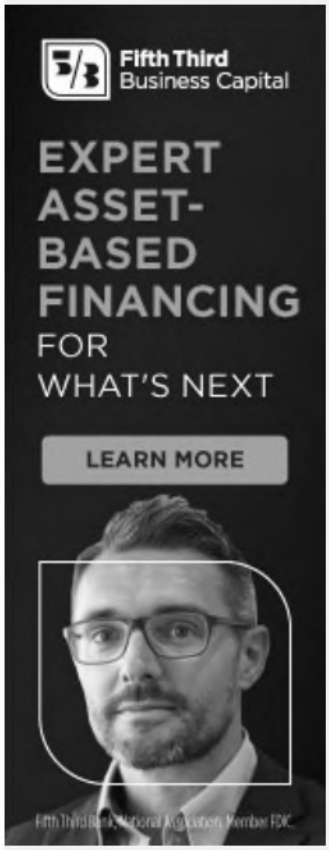

Coty doubles down on Kardashian-Jenner family

Kim Kardashian West's beauty company is now valued at $1 billion. (Livingston/Getty Images)

When it comes to beauty mega-deals, it's getting difficult to keep up with the Kardashians.

Global beauty giant Coty, which owns brands such as CoverGirl and Sally Hansen, has agreed to pay $200 million for a 20% stake in KKW, the eponymous beauty brand of Kim Kardashian West. It's not Coty's first tie-up with reality television's first family. In January, the company bought a 51% stake in Kylie Jenner's makeup brand Kylie Cosmetics for $600 million, valuing the business at about $1.2 billion.

Jenner is Kardashian West's half-sister and a social media mogul in her own right. But the deal has faced scrutiny following a Forbes investigation published in May that found Jenner may have exaggerated her wealth.

In a statement announcing the new deal, Coty

Who's in the newsletter today?

People

ake Richardson
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atrick Sweeney

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7Capital
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Aspen Capital Group
BlackRock
Blackstone
BlueRed Partners
CVC Credit Partners
CenterOak Partners
Correlation Ventures
DCM Ventures
Deutsche Telekom Capital Partners
Ebsco Capital
Elephant Partners
ForgePoint Capital
FountainVest Partners
Great Oaks Ventures
Group Arnault
IVP
Ibex Investors
Icon Ventures
KKR
Karlie Kloss
Kec Ventures

highlighted Kardashian West's unique ability to use social media to market her three-year-old company. Her husband, Kanye West, recently made business headlines, too, with the announcement of a 10-year partnership between his Yeezy brand and Gap that sent the retailer's stock up nearly 19% Friday.

Share:

How startups are making the promise of AI and machine learning a reality

The US and China are in the midst of a global competition for leadership in AI and machine learning. And in any number of applications for these technologies, ranging from semiconductors to autonomous machines, it's a competition that is being contested via venture capital.

Our **latest emerging tech report** on AI and machine learning offers market maps of VC-backed companies in the vertical, technology overviews, and analysis of opportunities and risks. Other key takeaways include:

- VCs devoted $34.3 billion to AI and machine learning deals in 2019, a 23.7% year-over-year

Kleiner Perkins
L Catterton
LVMH
Lerer Hippeau
MBK Partners
Main Post Partners
Mercury Fund
Merlin International
Norwest Venture Partners
Obvious Ventures
Point72
Qatar Investment Authority
RRE Ventures
Red Dot Capital Partners
Royal Street Ventures
Sequoia China
Shasta Ventures
SoftBank
Spark Capital
The Carlyle Group
Tiantu Capital
Tiger Global
Top Tier Capital
Uprising
Warburg Pincus
Xiang He Capital

Companies

Accordia Golf
Accordia Golf Trust
Aclaimant
Area 1 Security
Artlist
BP
Baidu
Change.org
Codefresh

drop due largely to declines in Chinese VC activity

- Deal activity has been driven by vertical applications including healthcare, IT and consumer AI

- Recent acquisition activity has been driven by sales and marketing automation, information security automation and conversational AI

To access, **click here**. If you have any questions or feedback about the research, we'd love to hear from you: analystresearch@pitchbook.com

Share:

Lululemon to buy home fitness startup Mirror for $500M

(Kevork Djansezian/Getty Images)

Lululemon has agreed to acquire Mirror for $500

Coty
Cynet
Dr. Dennis Gross Skincare
Electronic Funds Source
Empower Retirement
Gap
Hudson Pacific Properties
Ineos
Insurance Acquisition
KKW
Kylie Cosmetics
Lululemon
Mirror
Netflix
Personal Capital
Reddit
Seafolly
Shift Technologies
Telegram
Unison
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Wex
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Service Providers

KordaMentha

million, just months after it backed the fitness startup in a funding round led by the venture arm of Steve Cohen's hedge fund, Point72.

New York-based Mirror is the developer of an interactive workout platform that offers live and on-demand classes from a wall-mounted screen. With a price tag of $1,495, the mirror-like device is meant to serve as an at-home gym alternative, giving users access to weekly live classes, thousands of on-demand workouts and one-on-one personal training.

Mirror will operate as a standalone company within Lululemon and be helmed by its current CEO, Brynn Putnam. The deal is expected to close in the second quarter.

Lululemon participated in Mirror's $34 million Series B1 last year, along with backers including supermodel Karlie Kloss, Lerer Hippeau and Spark Capital. The athletic apparel retailer also has a content partnership with the startup, offering classes from its global ambassadors on the Mirror platform. Since its founding in 2018, Mirror has raised a total of $72 million.

Share:

L Catterton-backed swimwear brand goes bankrupt

Early-morning waves lap the shore at Bondi Beach in Sydney. (Brook Mitchell/Getty Images)

Seafolly, an Australian swimwear maker, has gone into voluntary administration, citing plummeting sales and the crippling financial impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Seafolly is owned by L Catterton, the private equity firm co-founded by French luxury brand group LVMH. The company has chosen KordaMentha as its administrator.

The sale process for Seafolly, which operates 44 stores in Australia and 12 overseas, will start immediately. The company was acquired for a reported $70 million in 2014 by L Capital Asia, part of the private equity arm of LVMH, with an eye to expanding the Seafolly brand globally. In 2016, L Capital partnered with US firm Catterton and Group Arnault to form L Catterton.

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Our top 10 articles of June

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Facing crisis, venture capitalists follow a new script

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PE has failed to outperform stocks, research says, but LPs aren't turning away

Private equity-backed bankruptcies surged in May, but future might not be so bleak

Creative capital: How cash-strapped funds bridge liquidity gaps

8 big things: Airbnb, Palantir lead a glitzy IPO pipeline

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A fraud scandal and the ensuing collapse of Luckin Coffee has been one of the year's most fascinating financial stories. And it might not have happened without one anonymous email. [The Wall Street Journal]

The recent rise of ghost kitchens anticipated a future where eating at restaurants was a thing of the past. As it turns out, that future arrived quicker than anyone imagined. [The New Yorker]

The rise of ridehailing sent New York City's taxi industry reeling. The pandemic may prove to be a knockout blow. [The New York Review of Books]

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VC Deals

Chinese edtech startup pulls in $750M

Codefresh collects $27M

ForgePoint leads $25M round for Area 1

Cynet picks up $18M

Aclaimant nabs $10M

PE Deals

Blackstone values studio lot owner at $1.65B

MBK Partners' Accordia makes $577M offer for golf course assets

Warburg Pincus commits $400M to Wex

Carlyle taps latest flagship fund to buy software company

KKR leads $48M media deal

Main Post backs skincare company

Portfolio Companies

Telegram to pay $18.5M in SEC settlement

Change.org to donate $6M to racial justice after criticism

Reddit bans pro-Trump discussion forum

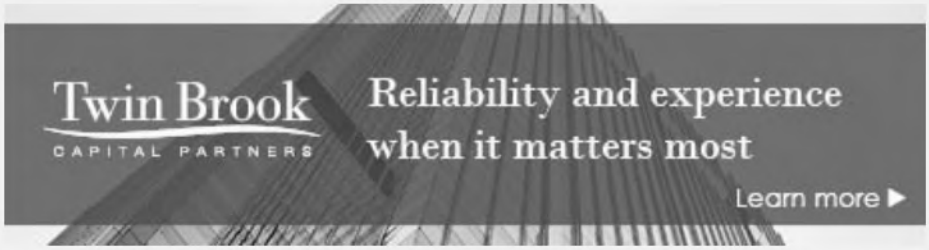
Exits

Shift to go public via reverse merger

Empower to buy wealth management company for up to $1B

Corporate M&A

Ineos to buy BP's petrochemicals unit for $5B



THE DAILY BENCHMARK

2016 Vintage Global Venture Funds with more than $250M

Median IRR

18.34%

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

28.23%

1.28x

Median TVPI

Select top performers

Advantech Capital

Battery Ventures XI Side Fund

Battery Ventures XI

**IRR: net of fees*

29 Funds in Benchmark »

Check out the latest version of **PitchBook Benchmarks**

PEOPLE

CenterOak names new managing partners

CenterOak Partners, a private equity firm based in Dallas, has promoted Lucas Cutler and Jason Sutherland from partner to managing partner. Cutler and Sutherland were both part of a group of senior executives that founded CenterOak in 2014. In other personnel moves, CenterOak has promoted Eric Holter, Blake Richardson and Carrie Hamilton to principal and Mark Izlar to senior associate.

View details

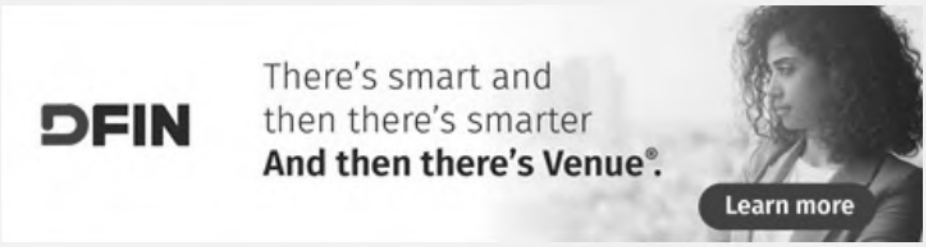
View 41 investments »

17Capital adds director from CVC Credit

17Capital, which makes preferred equity investments in private equity firms and portfolio companies, has hired Martin Munte as a director of investor relations based in London. Munte previously held the same title at CVC Credit Partners, where he worked on fundraising in Austria, Germany, Switzerland and the Nordics.

View details

View 1 investments »



VC DEALS

Chinese edtech startup pulls in $750M

Zuoyebang, a Chinese online tutoring startup for primary and secondary school students, has raised a $750 million Series E led by FountainVest Partners and Tiger Global, according to reports. SoftBank's Vision Fund, Qatar Investment Authority, Sequoia China, Tiantu Capital and Xiang He Capital are also believed to have participated in the round. Zuoyebang was reportedly founded by Chinese search engine giant Baidu in 2014; it spun out as its own business in 2015.

View round

View 20 competitors »

Codefresh collects $27M

DevOps workflow startup Codefresh has raised $27 million in a round led by Red Dot Capital Partners, with Shasta Ventures and existing investors also participating in the funding. The startup is the

developer of a platform that lets users build container-based apps. Founded in 2014 and based in Mountain View, Calif., Codefresh has now raised more than $40 million in total VC financing.

View round

View 18 competitors »

ForgePoint leads $25M round for Area 1

Area 1 Security, a provider of email security services, has raised $25 million in a growth round led by ForgePoint Capital. Existing investors Kleiner Perkins, Icon Ventures and Top Tier Capital also backed the funding. Based in Redwood City, Calif., Area 1 helps companies in a variety of industries prevent malware, ransomware and targeted phishing attacks. The startup has also announced the addition of Patrick Sweeney as CEO.

View round

View 16 competitors »

Cynet picks up $18M

Cynet has raised $18 million in a round led by Deutsche Telekom Capital Partners. Founded in 2015, the company offers a cybersecurity platform to detect and manage data breaches. BlueRed Partners, Merlin International, Norwest Venture Partners and Ibex Investors also participated in the funding.

View round

View 93 competitors »

Aclaimant nabs $10M

Aclaimant, the Chicago-based creator of a safety and risk management platform, has collected a $10 million Series A led by Mercury Fund. Royal Street Ventures, Ebsco Capital, Kec Ventures, RRE Ventures and Aspen Capital Group also participated in the round. Founded in 2013, Aclaimant provides employers in the staffing, construction, real estate and hospitality industries with loss prevention, incident management and analytics.

View round

View similar company »

PE DEALS

Blackstone values studio lot owner at $1.65B

Blackstone has agreed to buy a 49% stake in Hollywood movie lot owner Hudson Pacific Properties, valuing the company—which counts Netflix and Walt Disney among its customers—at $1.65 billion, according to The Wall Street Journal. The deal reportedly signals Blackstone's confidence in content production.

View deal

View similar company »

MBK Partners' Accordia makes $577M offer for golf course assets

Accordia Golf, a portfolio company of MBK Partners, has offered to acquire stakes in more than 80 golf courses in Japan from Accordia Golf Trust for 61.8 billion yen (about $577 million). The proposed deal marks a 5% premium to the net value of AGT's golf course assets.

View details

View similar company »

Warburg Pincus commits $400M to Wex

Warburg Pincus has agreed to invest $400 million in publicly traded payments specialist Wex, comprising $310 million in convertible notes and $90 million in common stock. Warburg Pincus previously acquired a stake in the Maine-based company in a 2015 deal that saw Wex pay a reported $1.1 billion for Electronic Funds Source, one of the firm's portfolio companies. Wex provides payments and other fintech services for companies in the fleet, travel and healthcare sectors, among others.

View details

View 6 competitors »

Carlyle taps latest flagship fund to buy software company

The Carlyle Group has acquired Unison (formerly Compusearch), a provider of procurement, supply-chain and contract management software for government agencies, from Abry Partners, which had backed the business since 2015. Funding for the deal

came from Carlyle's seventh flagship fund, which closed on $18.5 billion in 2018. The firm previously owned the Virginia-based company from 2005 to 2010.

View deal View similar company »

KKR leads $48M media deal

KKR has led a $48 million investment in Artlist, an Israeli company that provides video clips, sound clips and licensed music to filmmakers and other content creators. Existing Artlist investor Elephant Partners also took part in the round.

View deal View similar company »

Main Post backs skincare company

Main Post Partners has made a growth investment in Dr. Dennis Gross Skincare, a New York-based provider of skincare products including serums and moisturizers. Funds will go toward product development, international expansion and marketing opportunities.

View details View 20 competitors »

PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

Telegram to pay $18.5M in SEC settlement

Telegram has agreed to pay an $18.5 million penalty and return more than $1.2 billion to investors in a settlement with the SEC. Last October, the SEC sued the instant messaging platform provider, alleging it had not registered a digital token offering that raised more than $1.7 billion from investors for a blockchain platform and cryptocurrency project. Telegram pulled the plug on that effort in May after a court battle with the SEC.

View details

View 17 competitors »

Change.org to donate $6M to racial justice after criticism

Change.org has announced plans to create a $6 million fund focused on racial justice causes, according to Fast Company. The news comes after allegations that the organization was profiting from petitions related to the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery, with former Change.org employees urging the company in a Medium post to donate the money raised. Change.org is backed by Obvious Ventures, Uprising and others, including a variety of angel investors.

View details

View 3 competitors »

Reddit bans pro-Trump discussion forum

Reddit has banned a pro-President Trump subreddit, or discussion forum, on its social networking platform

for not abiding by the company's content policy. Along with the ban of "r/The_Donald," Reddit blocked 2,000 other subreddits, including left-leaning "r/ChapoTrapHouse." It also introduced a new policy for its platform, stating that users "that promote hate based on identity or vulnerability will be banned."

View details

View 17 competitors »

EXITS

Shift to go public via reverse merger

Online used-car seller Shift Technologies has announced plans to go public in Q3 via a reverse merger with special-purpose acquisition company Insurance Acquisition. The SPAC will pay $380 million in stock, plus an additional 6 million shares contingent upon certain price targets. Shift has raised VC backing from investors including Great Oaks Ventures, DCM Ventures and Alliance Ventures. It reached a valuation of $511 million in April 2019, according to a PitchBook estimate.

View details

View 16 competitors »

Empower to buy wealth management company for up to $1B

Empower Retirement has agreed to acquire online wealth management company Personal Capital for up to $1 billion. The Redwood Shores, Calif.-based

company has raised around $300 million from backers including BlackRock, IVP and Correlation Ventures. Personal Capital was valued at $950 million with a $50 million fundraise in February 2019, according to PitchBook data.

View details

View 47 competitors »

CORPORATE M&A

Ineos to buy BP's petrochemicals unit for $5B

British industrial conglomerate Ineos has agreed to purchase BP's global petrochemicals business in a deal worth about $5 billion. It's not the first time Ineos and BP have linked up on a deal; Ineos bought assets from the oil giant in 1992 and 2005.

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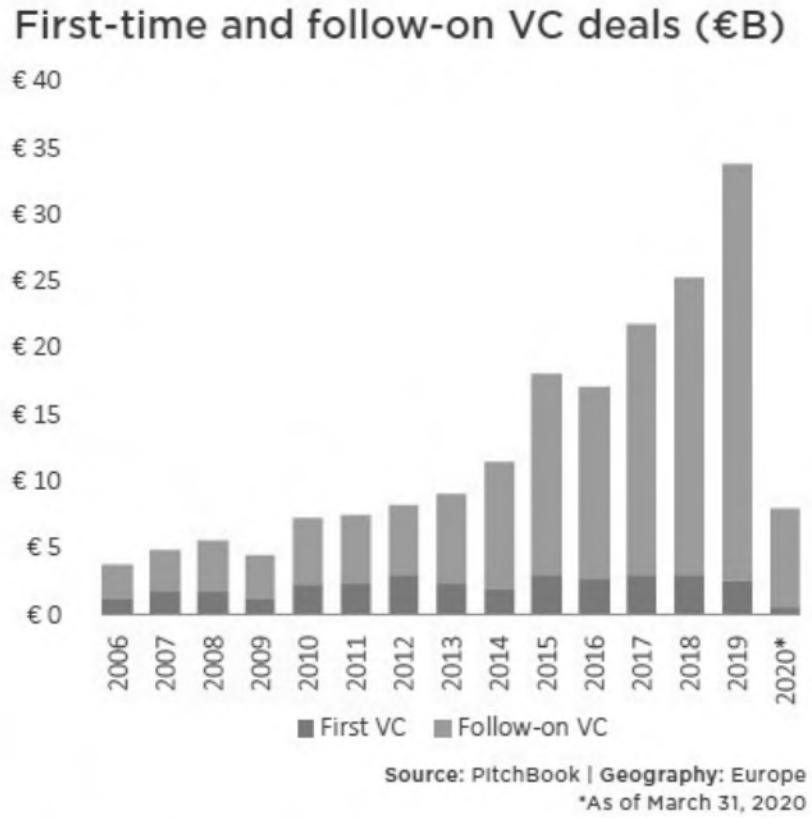
CHART OF THE DAY



"The propensity to use capital in a follow-on rather than a first-time round has filtered through the ecosystem during the last decade. In 2019, 92.4% of venture euros went to follow-on deals. Capital in first-time deals has remained flat in the last five years, while follow-on rounds have doubled in total value. The shift could be compounded as countries undergo lockdowns in Europe."

Source: **PitchBook's Q1 2020 European Venture Report**

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From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Sun, 28 Jun 2020 09:33:01 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] Amazon's $3B embrace of cleantech

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2020 5:32:30 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [MARKETING] [EXTERNAL] Amazon's $3B embrace of cleantech

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The Weekend Pitch

June 28, 2020
Presented by Silicon Valley Bank

On the first day of this summer, temperatures reached 100 degrees in the Arctic Circle. It's an easy thing to forget about these days, what with a pandemic going on, a presidential election looming, and a new civil rights movement emerging across the nation. But climate change isn't going anywhere. And every day, our window for mitigating the catastrophic effects prophesied by scientists gets a little bit smaller.

This won't come as breaking news to venture capitalists. More than a decade ago, the industry embraced a boom in cleantech investing. But the boom promptly went bust. Climate-friendly investing has remained in vogue in some circles, but the promise of a cleantech revolution never quite materialized.

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If such a revolution does materialize in the future, it will help to have some of tech's biggest names leading the charge. And that, dear reader, brings us to the past seven days at Amazon.

Welcome to The Weekend Pitch. I'm Kevin Dowd, and you can reach me at weekend@pitchbook.com. With a new fund, a new arena naming-rights deal and a new acquisition, the world's most valuable company has made loud and clear its intent to be a leading cleantech investor. That's one of 11 things you need to know from the past week:

Amazon and Jeff Bezos this week announced a new $2 billion fund fo on climate-friendly investing. (Paul Morigi/Getty Images)

1. Greenbacks for green deals

Amazon this week launched a new Climate Pledge Fund that will devote $2 billion to investing in sustainable and decarbonizing technologies. Two days later, the company revealed it has acquired the

naming rights to the new NHL arena in its hometown of Seattle, with plans to dub the building Climate Pledge Arena. And on Friday, Amazon unveiled a deal to acquire Zoox, a VC-backed maker of electric self-driving cars, for a reported $1.2 billion.

All that comes about four months after Jeff Bezos, Amazon's founder, committed $10 billion of his own fortune to a climate-friendly effort called the Bezos Earth Fund.

Entrepreneurs tend to follow the money. And $12 billion is a lot of money. It seems reasonable to expect the pair of new funds will motivate some founders to pursue new climate-focused ideas that may have otherwise struggled to find funding.

On the flip side, investors tend to be copycats. And Amazon is a popular role model. It also seems reasonable to expect the company's new initiatives will cause at least a few rivals to think about devoting additional funds to cleantech.

But will it be enough to shift the market in any meaningful way? That's the multibillion-dollar question.

We last saw such a shift late in the 2000s. From 2006 to 2008, the number of VC investments in the US cleantech sector increased by 137%, according to PitchBook data, and deal value more than tripled, as firms pumped billions into startups developing solar panels, smart grids and other capital-intensive forms of climate-friendly tech. But it didn't last. The financial crisis arrived. The rise of fracking made natural gas too cheap to pass up. Government-

subsidized solar panels from China flooded the market, driving well-funded US upstarts such as Solyndra out of business.

Between 2011 and 2017, cleantech venture deal value declined by 44%. As awareness about the risks posed by climate change continued to grow, investment in startups aiming to solve such problems continued to shrink.

More recent years have hinted at a rebound. In 2018, for instance, cleantech startups in the US raised $7.1 billion in VC, the largest annual sum on record.

Looking at the sorts of companies raising large figures this time around shows how the cleantech market has shifted over the past dozen years. Companies building solar panels and other large-scale infrastructure products are no longer the belles of the ball. Instead, it's electric vehicle makers such as Zoox. It's startups such as Rubicon, which is developing a platform to streamline recycling, and Convoy, which is using software to make freight shipping more sustainable and efficient. It's companies like Indigo Agriculture, which this week raised $300 million in VC—at a $3.5 billion valuation, according to Axios—to fund its crop-sustainability technology.

In short, the "tech" part of cleantech seems more important to investors than ever before.

It's entirely possible that Amazon will be an anomaly, and that other investors will continue to be cautious about cleantech, still stinging from their last go-around in the category. But it's also possible that we're on the brink of another boom for investing in

companies trying to do their part to make sure 100-degree days in the Arctic Circle don't become commonplace. Better late than never?

2. Globetrotting

In Asia, in the Middle East and in Europe, private equity firms were busy this week pondering massive funds and deals. KKR has reportedly raised more than $10 billion toward a $12.5 billion target for its latest Asia fund. A group of six investors struck a deal to pay $10.1 billion for a 49% stake in the new pipeline unit of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company. And Allegro, an online-auction site based in Poland that's backed by Cinven, is said to be planning an IPO that could result in an $11 billion valuation.

3. SPAC-tion

Bill Ackman and his Pershing Square Capital Management registered a massive new special-purpose acquisition company this week with the SEC, a vehicle that could raise as much as $6.45 billion for a future acquisition. Another SPAC found its target this week, when Crescent Acquisition agreed to conduct an $845 million reverse merger with F45 Training, a chain of gyms backed in part by Mark Wahlberg.

4. Rules and regulations

On Thursday, US regulators formalized plans to loosen restrictions around the Volcker Rule, a key change that will make it much easier for banks to invest in venture capital. Earlier in the week, the NYSE filed an amendment to a document seeking

regulatory approval to conduct more direct listings, which, along with SPACs, have recently emerged as a buzzy alternative for companies seeking to go public while avoiding the traditional IPO process.

5. Star shopping

LeBron James and business partner Maverick Carter have raised $100 million for a new media and entertainment outfit called SpringHill Entertainment, Bloomberg reported. One of the company's assets? "Space Jam: A New Legacy," a film starring James due out next year. In other celebrity investor news, former soccer star David Beckham was announced as a co-owner of Guild Esports, a new esports team in the UK that's reportedly seeking funding at a valuation of £100 million (about $123 million).

LeBron James is all smiles after pulling in $100 million from investor week. (Ezra Shaw/Getty Images)

6. Palantir's IPO prep

Last week, Bloomberg reported that Palantir Technologies had raised some $500 million from

Sompo Japan Nipponkoa Holdings, less than two weeks after reports emerged that Palantir was getting ready to file for its long-awaited public debut. In what may be a more intriguing bit of IPO prep, the data giant also made an unusual addition to its board this week, reportedly bringing on Alexandra Wolfe Schiff, the daughter of famed novelist Tom Wolfe, who left her position as a reporter at The Wall Street Journal to join Palantir.

7. Private to public

Seven years after Cerberus Capital Management took control of the grocery chain, Albertsons made its return to Wall Street this week, raising $800 million in a downsized IPO that fell below the company's initial expectations. In a much quicker turnaround, business intelligence provider Dun & Bradstreet set terms for an IPO that could raise nearly $1.4 billion, barely a year after being taken private by Thomas H. Lee Partners and others.

8. Say cheese

After weeks of rumors, the parent of Chuck E. Cheese filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection; Apollo Global Management has owned the operator of family-fun centers since 2014. Across the Pacific Ocean, former industry icon Olympus is exiting the camera business, with an agreement to sell its camera division to private equity firm Japan Industrial Partners. Instead, Olympus will now focus on medical imaging and other medical devices.

9. Valuation hikes

Cybersecurity specialist Tanium raised new venture funding this week at a $9 billion valuation, up from a reported $6.7 billion figure logged in 2018. Australian design company Canva brought in $60 million in funding at a $6 billion valuation, nearly double the $3.2 billion valuation it landed just nine months ago, according to PitchBook data. And UK payments startup Checkout.com nearly tripled its valuation this week with a new round, taking its on-paper worth up to $5.5 billion.

10. Hot and cold

Investment in the biotech industry has been red-hot in recent months. So it wasn't a huge surprise to see Sana Biotechnology raise $700 million in funding. The travel industry, on the other hand, has struggled amid the pandemic. But that didn't stop Sonder, a short-term home rental startup, from banking $170 million in VC this week at a $1.3 billion valuation.

11. Pride

A few weeks ago, at the beginning of Pride Month, an Ohio-based venture firm called Loud Capital launched a new $10 million vehicle called Pride Fund 1 that will invest both in companies led by LGBTQ founders and other businesses aiming to serve the LGBTQ community. "Yes, it is about returns," Pride Fund CEO Densil Porteous **told my colleague James Thorne this week**, "but it's also about uplifting and the legacy that we're leaving."

View the full list online

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A MESSAGE FROM SILICON VALLEY BANK

Unprecedented times for innovation to thrive

While the future is uncertain, one constant is that innovation thrives under adversity. The innovation economy has weathered downturns before, with some of the best companies being born out of recessions.

Read Silicon Valley Bank's latest *State of the Markets* report to learn more from their assessments and outlooks.

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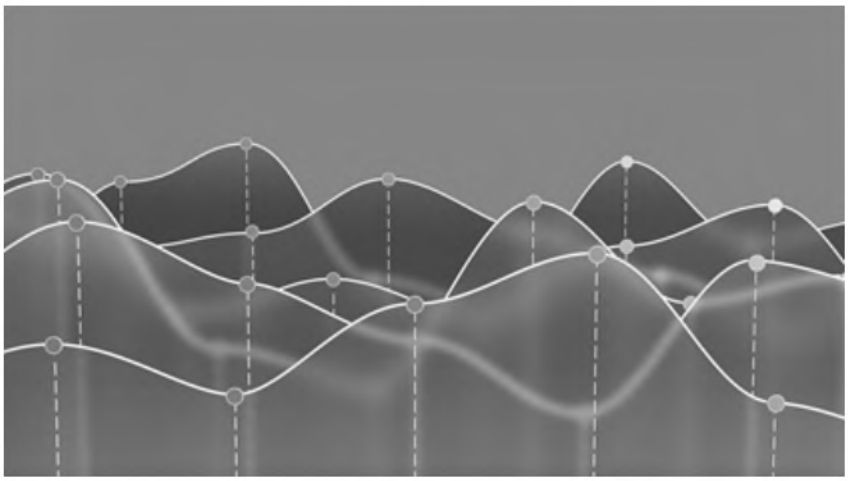

(Christoph Burgstedt/Getty Images)

For investors, it's a multibillion-dollar question: Does private equity provide superior returns compared to

the stock market? Eliza Haverstock writes that a growing group of academics have published research indicating that might not be the case. But don't expect LPs to turn away **from PE any time soon**.

In fact, LPs seem more committed than ever before to the private markets. As a new PitchBook analyst note highlights, that's certainly the case with growth equity funds, which combined to raise $41 billion during 2019, the strategy's **highest annual total on record**.

European realities

(Ralf Hiemisch/Getty Images)

After many months of waiting, private equity-backed restaurants and pubs across the UK are ready to begin opening back up in earnest. But Andrew Woodman writes that experts fear the sector may never be the same after the pandemic, with the rise in food delivery services and very wary customers combining **to create a potential "death knell."**

Our analysts explored other issues stemming from Western Europe's recovery from the crisis this week in their first full-length report focused on the France and Benelux region. One takeaway: While the restaurant industry and other spaces may be in for hard times, changing economic tides could be a boon for startups in **the biotech and ecommerce sectors**.

Startup name of the week

Longtime collaborators Martin Scorsese and Robert De Niro in 2004. Agostini/Getty Images)

What would have happened if, in 1991, Martin Scorsese and Robert De Niro decided to forego their plans to film a psychological thriller about a vengeful convict and focus instead on cybersecurity?

I don't think that's the question a startup called **Cape Privacy** is trying to answer. It is, however, the one I

was asking myself this week, after the company raised about $5 million in seed funding to back its software, which is designed to enable secure data sharing and collaboration. It's probably for the best that Scorsese and De Niro stuck with their guns and made "Cape Fear." But I'll probably never be able to watch the movie again without wondering how it could've been spiced up with a little more data science.

Recommended reads

Instagram used to be an escape from news, politics and other serious subjects of the world. Not anymore. [Recode]

Why developers are fueling the next $1 trillion software wave. [Forbes]

In what may be the first known case of its kind, a faulty facial recognition match led to a Michigan man's arrest for a crime he did not commit. [The New York Times]

How female founders are navigating a pandemic. [Female Founders Fund]

Investors of every sort are battling choppy waters these days. But few have been hit harder than volatility traders. [Institutional Investor]

The US government's decision to suspend H-1B visas could cause a flux in tech workers looking for jobs. Companies in Europe are eager to offer a new home. [Sifted]

The strange, unsettling story of eBay's crusade against a pair of unassuming ecommerce bloggers. [The Wall Street Journal]

Billionaire tycoons Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos are racing into space. In the Middle East, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have similar plans. [Bloomberg]

Quote of the week

"I think VCs are kind of short-term focused, mostly stupid, pretty arrogant, and I don't think I'm their best friend because I kind of speak the truth in a way that makes them uncomfortable."

—Social Capital founder and CEO Chamath Palihapitiya, speaking about SPACs in a wide-ranging interview with Fortune

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Venture capital, private equity and M&A financial information technology provider.

From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Mon, 29 Jun 2020 10:14:18 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Amb. O'Brien: (1) sinister warning about China. Trump: (1) Fincantieri, (re-pledging "355-ship Navy"); (2) border wall; (3) Poland. VP Biden: (1) US Economy cannot re-open yet; (2) VP Biden's "NDS" is emerging. Sen. Sanders demands -10% ...

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 6:13:38 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Amb. O'Brien: (1) sinister warning about China. Trump: (1) Fincantieri, (re-pledging "355-ship Navy"); (2) border wall; (3) Poland. VP Biden: (1) US Economy cannot re-open yet; (2) VP Biden's "NDS" is emerging. Sen. Sanders demands -10% DoD ...

Secretary Wilkie:

Godspeed to Army Spc. Nick Bravo-Regules, (20), (from Largo, FL), who died in Jordan on June 23, 2020.

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1. SASC approves Army Gen. Gus Perna to lead "Operation Warp Speed" COVID-19 vaccine initiative, (~100M initial vaccine doses by ~November + ~200M more vaccine doses by ~January 2021); **plus LTG Dan Hokanson as next National Guard Bureau Chief.** (Politico; Washington Examiner; CQ, June 25, 2020). **[Final Senate vote TBD]**

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2. USAF briefings at AFA Mitchell Institute this week:

- USAFE/Africa Gen. Jeffery Harrigian briefs at 9:00AM today.
- AFMC Gen. Arnie Bunch briefs at 10:00AM on Wednesday.

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3. Army is planning to recruit ~+10,000 new Soldiers this week, during "Army National Hiring Days", (June 30-July 2, 2020). (www.goarmy.com/hiringdays).

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4. Resignation of iron-willed USD(R&E) Dr. Mike Griffin, should let all parties take-a-step-back, and evaluate SDA's future, based upon operational Requirements & technical maturity. Potential compromise may emerge. [Future of SDA has previously been perceived as a "Griffin/Air Force fight". SDA is clearly-optimized for proliferated-LEO hypersonic-defense transport-layer; in conjunction with planned USAF SMC MEO & GEO spacecraft] [Formal resignation of Dr. Griffin & Dr. Porter, (effective July 10, 2020), was announced on June 23, 2020]

- **Dr. Griffin will go down in history as the "father of hypersonic-missile fielding at-scale"; while Dr. Lisa Porter will go down in history as the "mother of 5G & AI".**

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5. Former CJCS Gen. Joe Dunford appears likely to be named as Chairman of "Congressional Oversight Commission" for ~$500B of business loans under $2.2T CARES Act. (Politico; Bloomberg, June 25, 2020).

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6. Sen. Bernie Sanders (D-VT) proposes -10% (-$74B) cut to $741B 2021 national security funding, because of: (a) COVID-19 pandemic; (b) ~46M unemployed; and (c) racial-injustice. [Sen. Sanders would transfer that ~-$74B cut to: (a) "create jobs", (building housing, schools, child care centers, community health centers); (b) "improving education", (hiring more public school teachers, free university tuition); and (c) "making housing more affordable"] (Sen. Sanders; Sen. Markey; Rep. Barbara Lee; Rep. Mark Pocan, June 26, 2020).

7a. National Security Advisor, Amb. Robert O'Brien, (Arizona Commerce Authority, Fox-10 News, Phoenix, AZ, June 24, 2020):

i. Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is a grave strategic threat to US. Allowing China to join WTO, (to liberalize China), has been a disaster. China has only grown richer & stronger. **CCP is totalitarian,** (people exist to serve the state, rather than the state existing to serve the people). **Above all, China must have complete control over people & their thoughts.**

ii. Propaganda is critical to CCP. All communications are censored. CCP annihilates family, religion, culture, and heritage. CCP plans to remake the entire world in CCP's image. **The imprisonment of ~1.5M Muslim Uyghurs, is what CCP eventually-intends for America.** [CCP has purchased, (or controls), almost all Chinese news outlets in the US] **CCP is now targeting & harassing US citizens publicly,** (e.g., GM of NBA Houston Rockets). CCP coerces Hollywood to delete all Taiwan images from all movies, (e.g., Tom Cruise's new Top Gun sequel).

iii. China is now collecting all possible data, on all important Americans, to exert future control, (words, actions, purchases, social media, and mapping-of-contacts). **Huawei & ZTE are the capture-vehicles, for scooping-up all personal information.** ["It is not telecom hardware or software profits that the CCP is after. It's your data. And they use 'back doors' built into their products, to obtain that data..."] **CCP hacked: (A) Anthem Insurance,** (2014; ~80M Americans); **(B) OPM,** (2015; ~20M cleared Americans); **(C) Equifax,** (2017; ~145 Americans); **(D) Marriott,** (2019; ~383M guests, plus passport numbers); **and (E) gay-dating-app Grindr,** (2016; US forced divestiture).

- **Amb. O'Brien:** "This is micro-targeting beyond any advertiser's wildest dreams. China...will not be stopped by government regulations. The Chinese Communist Party simply wants to know everything about you. Just as it likes to know almost everything about every individual living in China."

iv. China coerces other countries through trade. China now heads four of UN's inner-agencies. **China is using international agencies, to force the purchase of Huawei & ZTE 5G telecom equipment.**

v. WHO "dutifully-used Chinese talking points on the Wuhan virus", claiming there was no human-to-human transmission of COVID-19. WHO praised China's internal domestic travel limitations, while opposing US efforts to ban Chinese travel to US.

vi. US actions: (A) blocking Huawei's access to personal private information; (B) restrictions on semiconductor technology sales to Huawei; (C) US State Dept. designated nine Chinese media operations as "foreign missions"; (D) export restrictions on all entities involved in mass-incarceration of Uyghurs; (E) US has left UN Human Rights Council, as act-of-protest; (F) US terminated WHO funding, (will send ~$400M/year directly to needy-countries); (G) US has suspended specific graduate-level student-visas that insert PLA officers into US universities); (H) US has halted Federal Employee Retirement Fund investments into Chinese companies; (I) US is examining "opaque accounting practices" of Chinese companies on US stock exchanges; (J) DoD just released identity of PLA companies, with operations directly in the US.

- **7b. DoD issues list of ~20 Chinese PLA-controlled companies, doing business in US, executing China's "Civil-Military Fusion" Initiative.** (Bloomberg; Real Clear Defense, June 24, 2020).

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8. Competing plans to deter China:

a. VP Joe Biden's "NDS" Strategy is emerging, through former USD(Policy) Michele Flournoy's growing public speeches & Op-Eds. (Foreign Affairs, June 18, 2020): (i) China believes that US has been in-decline since 2009 financial crisis, is withdrawing from world stage under Trump, and is now pre-occupied with both COVID-19 pandemic & racial-injustice; (ii) China is focused on "system-destruction-warfare", targeting US C4ISR & Battle Management, to blind US and delay highly-lethal US power-projection, (by attacking US spacecraft; EW; collapsing US electrical grids; cyber-attacks); (iii) US must demonstrate ability to sink majority of Chinese fleet within ~72 hours, (to protect Taiwan from potential "fait accompli" seizure by China); (iv) expected ~$4T of US COVID-19 stimulus funding, will force significant drop in defense funding; (v) must slash legacy DoD platforms, to invest in "resilient networks" (JADC2); AI; 5G; hypersonics; large-scale fleets of unmanned systems; longer-range precision-strike; plus large network of quick-in/quick-out expeditionary bases, (to complicate Chinese targeting); (vi) must divert savings from US defense funding cuts, into domestic "drivers of US competitiveness", (STEM; higher education; AI; 5G; infrastructure; plus "smart immigration policy"); (vii) must reassure US allies, that "US has their back"; and (viii) must re-open "strategic dialogue" with China on nuclear non-proliferation & Climate Change, ("tactical discussions on trade issues are simply not enough"). (Flournoy Op-Ed, Foreign Affairs, June 18, 2020).

b. SASC Chairman James Inhofe (R-OK) & Ranking Member Jack Reed (D-RI) fully-support INDOPACOM's request for "Pacific Deterrence Initiative" in SASC's 2021 NDAA, ($1.4B in 2021; $5.5B in 2022). [360-degree "Homeland Defense System-Guam"; re-instate cancelled Homeland Defense Radar-Hawaii; Maritime Tomahawk/JASSM-ER/LRASM/PrSM/Naval Strike Missile; hypersonic-defense space-based-sensor-layer; military exercises with allies; dispersed expeditionary bases]

9a. Trump at Fincantieri Marinette Marine, celebrating $5.5B Frigate award, and re-pledging "355-ship Navy". (Wisconsin, June 25, 2020): [FFG(X): ~7, 500 tons; 32 missile VLS; EASR radar; Aegis combat system; MK-57 gun; MQ-8C; MH-60] **Marinette Marine would have closed down after final LCS**

production, if Fincantieri had not won $5.5B Frigate award. [~1,500 current FTE, and will hire ~+1,000 more shipyard workers. Projecting ~+15K FTE total supply chain job growth; with ~+9K job growth in WI]

Trump re-pledged "355-ship Navy". [Tele-graphing Trump personal-involvement in 2022-2026 Navy Shipbuilding plan]

- **9b. Trump,** (Fox News "Town-hall", while Trump was touring Marinette Marine, June 25, 2020): Must lave law & order, to have economic growth. ("Veterans Memorial Preservation Act" has ten-year maximum-imprisonment, for tearing-down statues of George Washington; Abraham Lincoln; Andrew Jackson). Must stop spiking inner-city homicide rates.
- ~30M COVID-19 tested. Adamant that US mortality-rates have dramatically-fallen, despite spike of infected-cases in specific states of TX, FL, AZ.

- **9c. Trump celebrates ~220 miles of southern border wall, (targeting ~450 miles of completed wall "by the end of the year").** (Yuma, AZ, June 23, 2020): [Acting DHS Sec. Chad Wolf; Army CoE LTG Todd Semonite] [~$15B border wall funding for 49 projects. Building ~1 mile/day] Illegal border crossings are down ~-84% in 2020. Border security is homeland security. [Stop drugs from entering US. Stop violent crime from entering US. Stop human-trafficking from entering US] Trump is also restricting immigration, to preserve jobs for ~21M unemployed Americans, who lost their jobs during April, from COVID-19 shutdown.

- **9d. Trump press conference with Polish President Andrzej Duda,** (Rose Garden, June 24, 2020):
- Polish President Duda: **(i) openly-requesting that US transfer all ~-9K potential US Troop-reduction from Germany, into Poland instead; (ii) COVID-19 vaccine research,** (US vaccine will be made available to Poland); **(iii) Poland is expanding infrastructure for import of US liquefied-natural-gas into Poland & central Europe,** (US alternative to Russian natural gas pipeline); **(iv) negotiating US license for nuclear power plants in Poland,** (firms are already selected).
- Trump: (i) will reduce US Troop-strength in Germany, down to ~25K; (ii) Germany must stop buying natural gas from Russia's pipeline; (iii) Germany is at only ~1% of GDP defense spending, (not meeting NATO ~2% GDP target), (plus refusing to support US/EU trade renegotiation); (iv) Poland will pay for any US Troops, being transferred from Germany to Poland.

10a. VP Joe Biden, (Lancaster Recreation Center, PA, June 25, 2020): COVID-19 infection rates are increasing in 29 states. [Biden: "We are going to be dealing with this for a long time to come...There are no miracles coming"] **US Economy cannot be re-opened, until a major increase in both testing-capacity & contact-tracing occurs.** [Biden: "To fix the economy, we have to get control over the virus. Let me say it again, to fix the economy, we have to get control over the virus"]

i. Must have "dramatic expansion of health care coverage". [Biden: "We're going to lower premiums for people buying coverage on their own, by guaranteeing that no American ever has to spend more than 8.5% of their income on health insurance, and that number will be lower for low-income people"]

- Biden: "The Presidency is a duty-to-care. A duty-to-care for everyone...No trust is more sacred...No purpose more fundamental."

- **10b. VP Joe Biden then met with families of ill children,** (C-SPAN, June 25, 2020): [All were suffering from debilitating pre-existing medical conditions] VP Biden stated that there are ~100M cases of pre-existing medical conditions, (e.g., diabetes; cancer; asthma; etc.). **Federal Government needs to step in, to fund all necessary healthcare, for all people.**

- **10c. VP Joe Biden pledges to federally-mandate, that all people must wear masks in public, at all times.** (Lancaster, PA, CBS Pittsburg, June 25, 2020). [Biden: "I would insist that everybody in public be wearing that mask...I would do everything possible, to make it required, that people had to wear masks in public."]

- **10d. VP Joe Biden: "Unnecessarily, now we have over 120 million dead from COVID."** [Current US deaths ~128K] (Lancaster Recreation Center, PA, June 25, 2020). (YouTube; Fox News; New York Post; News Week, June 25, 2020).

- **10e. VP Joe Biden demands that GD Bath Iron Works "make a fair offer" to ~4.3K striking BIW union workers.** [Biden: "A job is about a lot more than a paycheck, it is about dignity."] (Politico; Portland Press Herald, June 25, 2020).

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11. CJCS Gen. Mark Milley, (Naval War College, June 24, 2020): **Must maintain "great-power-peace".** US must modernize for fast-paced battles of long-range-fires, with ubiquitous-sensors everywhere, (allowing China to target US forces as well). Speed of information is critical to targeting, (but can also lead to "information overload").

- **Be open to diversity. Cohesion is a "force-multiplier". Treat all Service Members equally.** ["We must hold dear, the principles of an apolitical military, that is so deeply-rooted in the essence of our Republic."]

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12. Incoming USAF CSAF, Gen. CQ Brown, warns of increasingly-aggressive China PLA, expanding their off-shore power-projection further into South China Sea. (AFA Daily Report; USNI, June 25, 2020).

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13. USAF Air Combat Command Gen. "Mobile" Holmes, (AFA Mitchell Institute, June 22, 2020): [Lt. Gen. Mark Kelly is nominated to be next ACC Commander. Change-of-command is ~August 28, 2020]

a. Given massive COVID-19 stimulus spending, future defense funding will likely fall.

b. Congress is supporting 2021 NDAA mandate for equivalent of ~386 operational squadrons, but the current USAF budget is too small, to sustain both the current fleet & modernize for China fight.

c. Upgrade priorities: (i) F-22 "not enough engines", (P&W is recovering, from extra F-22 flight time in Syria); (ii) F-15C longerons are worn out; (iii) A-10 re-winging; (iv) F-16 "lot of service life left, but need a lot of modernization to be useful against current threats"; (v) F-35 is maturing; (vi) ISR 707-airframe aircraft are driven by "engine availability & depot time". [USAF was previously-buying ~200 new aircraft/year through ~1990; but then fell to ~20 aircraft/year for ~1990-2010; creating an "aging force"]

d. USAF is now in a "battle of long-range fires", trying to find & target mobile Chinese IRBMs; SAMs; anti-satellite kinetic missiles, while China targets fixed US bases. Must have ABMS/JADC2 to push "data-to-shooter". Future fight is "information warfare".

e. Agile Combat Deployment: Must be able to operate out of ~100 airfields, (instead of ~4-5 airfields), to complicate Chinese targeting.

f. Skyborg is intended to increase combat-power, operating without a runway. AFRL Valkyrie is low-cost & attritable. Mixture of sensors & weapons, and unit-cost, is still TBD. [Can also extend reach of both sensors & weapons forward, ahead of manned-aircraft]

g. "Project Reforger": is to create "experienced fighter pilots" faster. Will lease "some airplanes, while waiting for T-7A to arrive", to experiment. [T-50, M346, "plus couple others", will compete. Limited lease of "not many" aircraft]

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14. USAFE/Africa Gen. Jeffery Harrigian, (Defense Writers Group, June 18, 2020): (a) USAFE is back at full-operational-capability after COVID-19; (b) Agile Combat Employment in Europe requires use of multiple air bases, (to refuel & re-arm), because of "tyranny-of-proximity" to Russian forces; (c) Russians are using private contractor, Wagner Group, to fly MiG-29s, MiG-23s, and SU-24s, (less than 20 aircraft), in Libya, (currently-focused on basic "flight-proficiency"); (d) USAFE must have "multi-capable-airmen" to execute multiple flight-line tasks; (e) has received no direction yet, to plan for reduced end-strength in Germany, (US political decision); (f) Turkey remains a critical US Ally, (but US will still not sell F-35 to Turkey, as long as Turkey operates Russian S-400 SAM); (g) F-35s will permanently-arrive in UK in ~2021; (h) Libya will require a negotiated-political-compromise, (not a military outcome); (i) MQ-9 Reaper has strong value in Africa, but trade-offs were required in 2021 USAF budget, (e.g., JADC2), to win future near-peer-fight.

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15. Navy ASNRDA James "Hondo" Geurts priorities: (a) resolve GD Bath Iron Works ~4.3K FTE union strike, ("My expectation is that both sides will work aggressively, and with a sense of urgency, so that we can get out ship production...keep it on track"); **(b) USS Ford aircraft carrier will have two lower-weapon-elevators certified this summer,** (1st aft lower-weapon-elevator was certified in April); **(c) "work-around solution" has been found to USS Ford EMALs malfunction,** (that recently grounded aircraft for ~five-days); **(d) no danger in current Virginia-class submarine construction, from recent $11M criminal settlement for "falsifying-steel-strength-testing", by Bradken, Inc.,** (WA steel foundry). (USNI; Defense One; Politico; Defense Daily; Breaking Defense; Military.Com; Washington Examiner "Daily Defense", June 19, 2020).

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16. Do not under-estimate DoD's "CMMC" cyber-security implementation by Katie Arrington, (who routinely takes on Huawei in public forums). (C4ISRNet, June 26, 2020).

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17. Boeing 737 MAX FAA Flight Certification tests could occur this week; consistent with likely ~3Q 2020 FAA approval of 737 MAX return-to-service, (allowing Boeing to begin deliveries of ~450 stockpiled 737 MAX aircraft). [~$50M 737 MAX unit-price. Boeing is currently-carrying ~$14B, (~60% of unit-price), of cashflow-sapping inventory on its books, until those deliveries are completed over 3Q 2020-3Q 2021] (Reuters, June 26, 2020).

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18. BAE Systems is projecting flat 1H 2020 sales, but ~-15% lower 1H 2020 profit, due to both COVID-19 disruption, plus abrupt drop in US commercial aerospace avionics business. [Primary COVID-19 impact was 2Q, with ~90% of defense employees now working, (including tele-work)] **BAE Systems 1H 2020 Results Call is July 30, 2020.** (BAE Systems, June 25, 2020).

From: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Sent: Thu, 2 Jul 2020 10:08:45 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Data privacy startups are in the spotlight

From: PitchBook News
Sent: Thursday, July 2, 2020 6:07:33 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Wilkie, Robert L., Jr.
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Data privacy startups are in the spotlight

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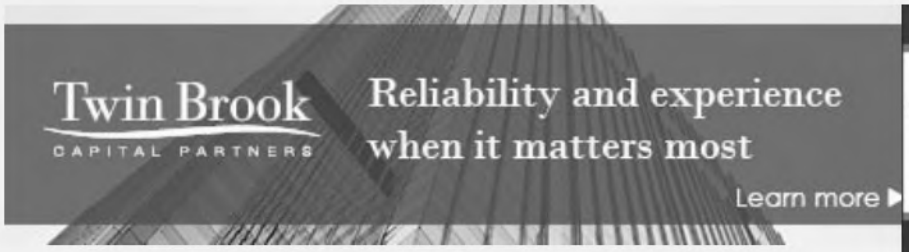

EDITOR'S NOTE

Editor's Note

Our team will be taking a break over the holiday weekend, so no newsletter tomorrow.

In the meantime, you can catch up on our featured content on **News & Analysis**.

TODAY'S TOP STORIES

Data privacy startups see demand spike as California enforces law

(Unsplash)

The California Consumer Privacy Act has been in effect since the beginning of the year. But as of July 1, the state's attorney general, Xavier Becerra, can take direct action against companies that violate the regulations.

- From April to June, data privacy startup Ethyca recorded a 150% month-over-month increase in demand, a sign that many businesses were scrambling to prepare for when the CCPA would be enforced.

- As a growing number of states like Nevada and Maine adopt some form of data privacy laws, startups seeking to raise capital are likely to face additional due diligence from investors.

keep reading

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Who's in the newsletter today?

People

Bob Muglia
Cyril Drabinsky
Eric Berg
Lee Fixel
Sophia Bendz

Investors

7GC
8VC
Addition
American Infrastructure Funds
Andreessen Horowitz
Aspect Ventures
Atomico
B Capital Group
CC Capital
CRV
Cannae
Carrick Capital Partners
Cherry Ventures
Citi Ventures
Coinbase Ventures
CommerzVentures

Share:

Dun & Bradstreet stock jumps after a $1.7B IPO

Foot traffic remains sparse, but IPO activity on Wall Street is heating up. (Spencer Platt/Getty Images)

Stock in Dun & Bradstreet surged more than 15% on its first day of trading on the NYSE, capping a quick and lucrative turnaround for the company's consortium of private backers.

The New Jersey-based business intelligence specialist raised around $1.7 billion in its IPO by offering 78.3 million shares for $22 apiece, up from its initial expected range of $19 to $21 per share. Dun & Bradstreet stock closed Wednesday at $25.35, resulting in a market cap of about $10 billion.

The listing came less than a year and a half after an investor group including Thomas H. Lee Partners, Cannae and CC Capital took Dun & Bradstreet private for $6.9 billion. THL owned a 33.2% pre-IPO stake in

Digital Currency Group
Digital Garage Lab Fund
EQT
Elad Gil
Founders Fund
V
eneral Catalyst
rotech Ventures
ryphon Investors
amilton Lane
uman Capital
itialized Capital
anagement
ndsay Goldberg
ux Capital
anagement
adrona Venture
roup
McKesson Ventures
Morningside Ventures
OCA Ventures
Platinum Equity
Quest Ventures
Rethink Impact
Revelation Partners
SV Health Investors
Section 32
Serena Williams
Silicon Valley Bank
Synchrony Ventures
Team8
Thomas H. Lee Partners
Tiger Global Management
Valor Equity Partners
Vista Equity

the company, according to an SEC filing, while Cannae maintained a 21.5% interest.

The listing is the latest sign of a resurgence in the IPO market after activity came to a standstill in the immediate wake of the coronavirus crisis, as companies and investors alike have begun to adapt to **the realities of going virtual**. Earlier this week, Jamf, a cloud software company backed by Vista Equity Partners, filed with the SEC for an IPO of its own.

Share:

SPECIAL SITUATIONS INVESTMENT BANKING
Preserve flexibility.
Maximize Value.
STOUT
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Recommended Reads

Some thoughts on the Black Lives Matter movement from Raymond McGuire, a vice chairman at Citigroup who may be the longest-serving Black investment banker on Wall Street—and who might also be a candidate for New York City's next mayor. [Vanity Fair]

Nile Niami wants to be the mega-mansion king of Los Angeles. But the plentiful financing that fueled his rise isn't so plentiful anymore. [The Wall Street Journal]

In 2000, Canadian telecom company Nortel was a $250 billion behemoth. Less than a decade later, it was bankrupt. What happened? Two things: a hack, and the rise of Huawei. [Bloomberg]

Partners
WeWork

Companies
Amylyx Pharmaceuticals
Anduril
Apple
CineVizion
Curv
Deluxe Entertainment Services
Dun & Bradstreet
Evidation Health
Fauna
Flatiron School
ap
mf
andmark Dividend
emonade
veXLive Media
Nike
Okta
Palantir
PodcastOne
Refresh Mental Health
Snowflake
Spotify
The Mom Project

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Find out why we are the right choice for sale-leaseback financing.
Sale-Leaseback Financing
Click Here

Since yesterday, the PitchBook Platform added:

208	1302	374	35
Deals	People	Companies	Funds

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QUICK TAKES

The Daily Benchmark

2009 Vintage Global Buyout Funds

People

Cherry Ventures adds Sophia Bendz as partner

VC Deals

Defense startup Anduril hits $1.9B valuation

B Capital leads $45M Series D for Evidation Health

Amylyx Pharmaceuticals secures $30M

Fauna rounds up $27M, adds new CEO

The Mom Project lands $25M Series B

Curv grabs $23M Series A

PE Deals

Gryphon backs 3Cloud

Carrick Capital strikes deal with WeWork

Platinum Equity completes Deluxe Entertainment purchase

Exits

Lemonade brings home $319M in IPO

Lindsay Goldberg eyes $800M exit

American Infrastructure could sell Landmark Dividend for up to $500M

Fundraising

EQT eyes $14.1B for latest infrastructure fund

Lee Fixel collects $1.3B for new VC firm

Hamilton Lane wraps up first impact fund on $95M+

Corporate M&A

LiveXLive picks up PodcastOne

THE DAILY BENCHMARK

2009 Vintage Global Buyout Funds

Median IRR

Top Quartile IRR Hurdle Rate

1.72x

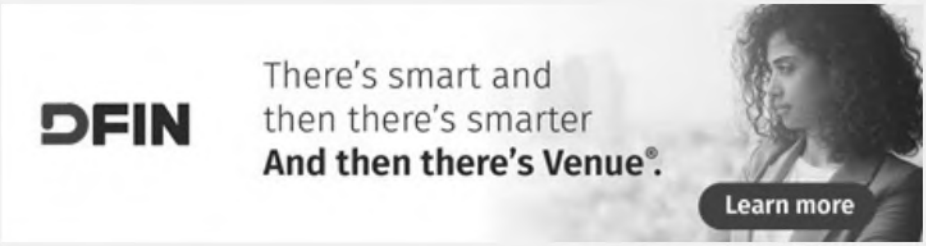
Median TVPI

Select top performers
Sentinel Capital Partners IV
Vista Foundation Fund 1
K3

IRR: net of fees

38 Funds in Benchmark »

Check out the latest version of **PitchBook Benchmarks**



PEOPLE

Cherry Ventures adds Sophia Bendz as partner

Cherry Ventures has hired Sophia Bendz as a partner based in Stockholm, effective Sept. 1, according to a post on Medium. She is currently a partner at Atomico and previously worked at Spotify as global marketing director. Based in Berlin, Cherry Ventures targets pre-seed and seed investments in a variety of sectors.

View details

VC DEALS

Defense startup Anduril hits $1.9B valuation

Andreessen Horowitz has led a $200 million Series C for Anduril, a defense technology startup founded by former Palantir employees. The new funding vaults

the company to a $1.9 billion valuation, up from $1.03 billion last September. Anduril makes surveillance software and hardware, including drones, for the military.

Additional Investors:
General Catalyst, Valor Equity Partners, Lux Capital Management, Founders Fund, 8VC, Human Capital, Elad Gil

View details

View similar company »

B Capital leads $45M Series D for Evidation Health

Evidation Health, the creator of a health data analytics platform, has raised $45 million in a round led by B Capital Group. McKesson Ventures, Section 32, Rethink Impact, Revelation Partners and SV Health Investors also supported the funding, which will help the San Mateo, Calif.-based company develop virtual health programs. Evidation Health was valued at $190 million in 2018, according to PitchBook data.

View round

View 48 competitors »

Amylyx Pharmaceuticals secures $30M

Morningside Ventures has led a $30 million Series B for Amylyx Pharmaceuticals, which is developing treatments for Alzheimer's disease and other neurogenerative disorders. Based in the Boston area, the company plans to use the funding in part to

develop lead product candidates.

View round

View similar company »

Fauna rounds up $27M, adds new CEO

Fauna, a provider of data application programming interface software, has raised $27 million in a round led by Madrona Venture Group, with Addition, CRV, Quest Ventures and GV also participating. The San Francisco-based startup has also added former Okta executive Eric Berg as CEO and former Snowflake CEO Bob Muglia as executive chair and investor. Fauna was valued at around $100 million with a $25 million round in 2018, according to PitchBook data.

View round

View 59 competitors »

The Mom Project lands $25M Series B

The Mom Project, which operates a platform to help moms find work, has raised $25 million in a Series B led by 7GC. The new funding values the Chicago-based company at $85 million, according to PitchBook data. The Mom Project counts Serena Williams as a strategic adviser and its technology is used by companies including Gap, Apple and Nike.

Select Additional Investors:
Synchrony Ventures, Citi Ventures, Initialized Capital Management, Silicon Valley Bank, OCA Ventures, Grotech Ventures, Aspect Ventures

View

View 13 competitors »

round

Curv grabs $23M Series A

Curv, a developer of cloud-based digital asset security technology, has raised $23 million in new funding from CommerzVentures, Coinbase Ventures, Digital Currency Group, Team8 and Digital Garage Lab Fund. Curv landed a $6.5 million seed fund at a valuation of $11.9 million in February 2019, according to PitchBook data. Founded in 2018, the startup is based out of New York, with R&D offices in Tel Aviv.

View round

View similar company »

PE DEALS

Gryphon backs 3Cloud

San Francisco-based middle-market firm Gryphon Investors has invested in 3Cloud, which advises clients who use Microsoft Azure. The CEO and president of the Illinois-based company have retained minority equity stakes following the deal.

View details

View 165 investments »

Carrick Capital strikes deal with WeWork

Carrick Capital Partners has agreed to acquire Flatiron

School, a New York-based operator of software engineering, data science and cybersecurity boot camps, from WeWork, which had acquired the company in 2017. Flatiron CEO Adam Enbar will retain his role, and the business will continue to operate the majority of its programs at WeWork locations.

View deal View 8 competitors »

Platinum Equity completes Deluxe Entertainment purchase

Platinum Equity has acquired the distribution business of Deluxe Entertainment Services, a Los Angeles-based provider of subtitling, sound mastering, encryption and other services to the entertainment industry. As part of the deal, former Deluxe CEO Cyril Drabinsky will return to his role to lead the newly acquired unit. Drabinsky left the company several years ago to found CineVizion, which will now be merged with Deluxe's distribution business.

View deal View 17 competitors »

EXITS

Lemonade brings home $319M in IPO

Insurance tech startup Lemonade has raised $319 million in its IPO after selling 11 million shares at $29 each, above the top of its expected range. The IPO gave the startup an initial market capitalization of about $1.59 billion. Lemonade was valued at $2.1

billion after a Series D in 2019, according to PitchBook data. It begins trading today on the NYSE under the ticker symbol LMND.

View details

View 17 competitors »

Lindsay Goldberg eyes $800M exit

Buyout firm Lindsay Goldberg has begun preparing for a potential sale of Refresh Mental Health, an operator of mental health centers, according to PE Hub. A deal could reportedly value the Florida-based company at more than $800 million. Refresh was founded in 2017 and now operates more than 150 locations across the US.

View details

View similar company »

American Infrastructure could sell Landmark Dividend for up to $500M

California-based American Infrastructure Funds is considering a sale of Landmark Dividend for $400 million to $500 million, according to Bloomberg. Based in El Segundo, Calif., Landmark is an acquirer and developer of real estate in the wireless communication, digital infrastructure, outdoor advertising and renewable power generation industries. American Infrastructure has reportedly backed the company since 2013.

View

View similar company »

details

FUNDRAISING

EQT eyes $14.1B for latest infrastructure fund

Swedish investor EQT has announced a target of €12.5 billion (about $14.1 billion) for its fifth infrastructure fund. The vehicle will follow the same strategy as its predecessor, mainly targeting investments of between €100 million and €600 million in companies across Europe and North America. EQT Infrastructure IV closed on €9 billion last year.

View details

View 790 investments »

Lee Fixel collects $1.3B for new VC firm

Former Tiger Global Management partner Lee Fixel has brought in $1.3 billion for a new VC firm named Addition, according to Forbes. The firm will reportedly invest a third of the capital in early-stage companies, with the remainder going to growth-stage businesses. Addition plans to use the funds, in which Fixel is the largest investor, over the next 18 to 24 months, according to the report.

View details

View 7 investments »

Hamilton Lane wraps up first impact fund on $95M+

Asset manager Hamilton Lane has closed its inaugural impact fund on more than $95 million. The vehicle will target global companies in the health and wellness, energy and environment, community development, and financial empowerment sectors. Based in Pennsylvania, Hamilton Lane had raised more than $1.7 billion for its fifth flagship secondaries fund as of April. The firm has more than $69 billion in assets under management.

View fund

View 79 investments »

CORPORATE M&A

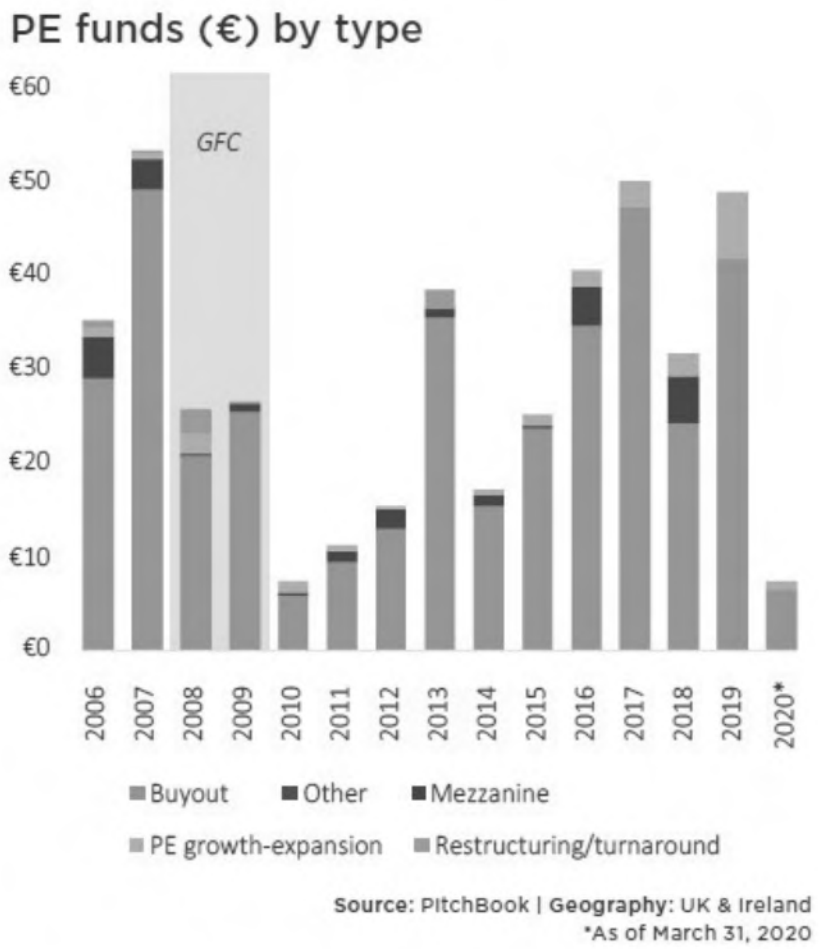
LiveXLive picks up PodcastOne

Los Angeles-based LiveXLive Media, which offers a live-streaming platform, has completed its all-stock acquisition of podcast network PodcastOne. The acquired company, also based in Los Angeles, booked about $27.5 million in revenue in 2019 and reports about 2.1 billion downloads annually.

View details

View 5 competitors »

CHART OF THE DAY



"On the mix of funds, we predict a disproportionate shift from buyout vehicles to growth equity and turnaround vehicles. Prior to the crisis, buyout funds were becoming prohibitively competitive and expensive. Sponsors were looking to expand their portfolio of offerings into areas such as growth equity and distressed to capture LP interest and drive returns as a downturn loomed."

Source: **PitchBook's 2020 UK & Ireland Private Capital Breakdown**

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From: RLW
Sent: Fri, 12 Jun 2020 17:03:15 +0000
To: RLW
Subject: Senior Leader Offsite
Attachments: OSVA Guest Information Veterans Affairs.xlsx, VA Secretary Senior Leader Offsite Attendees July 2020 FINAL.pdf, Attachment 1 - SECVA COVID-19 Lessons Learned Offsite Traveler Instructions July 2020.pdf, Attachment 2 - SECVA COVID In-Action Offsite Agenda July 2020.pdf, Attachment 3 - VA COVID-19 In-Action Consolidated Report July 2020.pdf

SECVA selected 7/10. Will inform WH. This senior leader offsite will clear his calendar for the day I expect. Once I get final WH ok, will inform all concerned.

From: Tucker, Brooks
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2020 1:04 PM
To: Colli, Jacqueline <Jacqueline.Colli@va.gov>; Carrington, Belinda L. <belinda.carrington@va.gov>
Cc: Syrek, Christopher D. (Chris) <Christopher.Syrek@va.gov>; Powers, Pamela <Pamela.Powers@va.gov>
Subject: RE: SECVA Calendar on July 9 and 10

Ok, adding deputy for overall awareness. Will ask SECVA his preference.

Thank you

Brooks D. Tucker
Acting Chief of Staff
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington DC 20420

(b)(6) and (b)(6). The WH is looking to schedule an offsite outside of the city for the SECVA and his senior leaders and the dates WH has available are either 7/9 or 7/10. Please advise soonest whether either one of those days has a major scheduling issue that is unmovable/unchangeable. If we have to "break a tie", SECVA can weigh in.

Brooks D. Tucker
Acting Chief of Staff
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington DC 20420

Camp David Guest Information

	Title or Designation	Guest Name	DATES	Vehicle Make / Model	Car Notes (driver, departing, carpet, security detail)	Food Allergies / Food Concerns
1	Secretary of the Dept. of Veterans Affairs	Robert Wilkie	10-Jul-20	(b)(7)(E)		None
2	Acting Deputy Secretary	Pamela Powers	10-Jul-20			None
14	Chief of Staff	Brooks Tucker	10-Jul-20			None
15	Deputy Chief of Staff	Chris Syrek	10-Jul-20			None
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CABIN ASSIGNMENTS

CABIN/ROOM	BED	
(b)(7)(E)		

(b)(7)(E)

(b)(7)(E)

(b)(7)(E)

ROOM		PHONE

(b)(7)(E)

(b)(7)(E)

ROOM		PHONE

(b)(7)(E)

CAMP DAVID
The Presidential Retreat

Cabin Amenities

Complimentary Roam Bath Products
Plush Bath Towels
Terry Bath Robes and Slippers
Hair Dryer
Iron and Ironing Board
iPhone Charging Dock / Alarm Clock
Cable TV and WiFi
Keurig Machine with K-Cups
Mini Fridge
Assorted Soda and Bottled Water
Winter Jackets
Rain Jacket and Fleece

VA Secretary Senior Leader Offsite
Attendee List

July 10, 2020
Location: Camp David

Current Confirmed Attendees:

	Office	Title	Name
1	OSVA	Secretary	Robert Wilkie
2	OSVA	Acting Deputy Secretary	Pam Powers
3	OSVA	Acting Chief of Staff	Brooks Tucker
4	OSVA	Senior Advisor	John Mashburn
5	OSVA	Strategic Comm. Dir.	(b)(6)
6	VHA	Executive in Charge	Rich Stone
7	VBA	USB	Paul Lawrence
8	NCA	USMA	Randy Reeves
9	BVA	Chairman	Cheryl Mason
10	HRA/OSP	Assistant Secretary	Daniel Sitterly
11	OAWP	Assistant Secretary	Tamara Bonzanto
12	OALC and OEI	Principal Executive Director/Acting Assistant Secretary	Karen Brazell
13	OCLA	Special Assistant, Performing Limited Duties of Assistant Secretary	Cathy Haverstock
14	OM	Assistant Secretary	John Rychalski
15	OIT	Assistant Secretary	Jim Gfrerer
16	OPIA	Assistant Secretary	James Hutton
17	VEO	Chief Veterans Experience Officer	Lynda Davis
18	OGC	Acting General Council	Bill Hudson
19	OEI	Chief of Staff	(b)(6)

SECVA Offsite
July 10, 2020
Instructions to the Traveler (ITT)
(Updated 7-8-2020)

Event Title	SECVA COVID Operational Lessons Learned Offsite
Event Description	Secretary Wilkie has invited VA Senior Leaders for a one day offsite to Camp David on Friday, July 10th. This will be an opportunity to discuss top strategic operational lessons learned from COVID, including any consequential reforms or transformative actions required to adjust to the demands of the pandemic.
Target Audience	VA Assistant Secretaries, Under Secretaries and Key Leadership
Program Date	July 10, 2020
High Level Day Agenda	8:00 - 8:30 AM – Clear security 8:30 AM -12:00 PM – Morning Session 12:00 - 1:00 PM – Lunch 1:30 - 2:30 PM – Afternoon Activities 2:30 Adjourn NOTE: There will be a group photo opportunity mid-morning.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Everyone will be responsible to provide their own PPE, including masks. Measures have been taken to promote advised social distancing practices to the greatest extent possible .
Travel Instructions & Funding	Meals: Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Travel Mileage: Individuals whose POV mileage from their residence is within 50 miles one-way to/from the off-site are limited to reimbursement of POV mileage more than their normal daily commute expense. Individuals whose POV mileage from their residence is greater than 50 miles one-way to/from the offsite location are entitled to be reimbursed the total amount of POV mileage. All travel costs will be the responsibility of your respective offices. You are required to submit your final travel costs in Concur/CGE Solutions within **5 days** of your return to your station.
Location	Camp David (b)(7)(E) (b)(7)(E) MD 2(b)(7)(E) Driving Directions (see below):

	(b)(7)(E) (b)(7)(E)
Transportation	(b)(7)(E)
Dress Code	Dress is "Camp/business" casual – recommend you wear shoes suitable for light hiking. It is also recommended that you dress in layers and bring an umbrella. Due to social distancing restrictions, we not have the opportunity to participate in most of the indoor/outdoor entertainment on site. Weather pending, you will have the opportunity to take a walking tour of the Camp and will have access to the souvenir shop, arcade, pool and ping pong tables.
Access/Contraband	Please note that you will be allowed to bring in your government furnished cell phones, other any electronics (e.g., personal cell phones, laptops, tablets, Apple watches, etc.) will be collected at the security gate upon arriving. In case of an emergency, you will be able to be reached at: 301-271-(b)(6) or 202-814-(b)(6)
Program/Logistical Questions	(b)(6) Office of Enterprise Integration Department of Veterans Affairs 202-632-(b)(7)(E) 202-607- Day of Event)

SECVA Offsite Draft Agenda
July 10, 2020

OFFSITE OBJECTIVE: Conduct an in-action review to identify best practices and lessons learned and apply these insights in a tighter timescale to improve the outcome of our ongoing COVID response

AGENDA	
8:00 am	**Arrival and Clear Security**
8:30 am	**Networking Breakfast**
8:45 am	**Welcome and Overview of the Day** • Commanding Officer Greeting • Acting Chief of Staff's Greeting - Review the agenda, objectives, logistics
9:00 am	**Secretary's Opening Remarks**

9:15 am	**Presentations/Q&A**
	• Conduct in-action review in large group
	  ○ 5-minute principal overview
	  ○ 10-minute Q&A, risk review and mitigation strategies

10:15 am	**Photo and Break**
11:00 am	**Presentations/Q&A Continued**
12:00 pm	**Lunch**
1:00 pm	**Presentations/Q&A Continued/Next Steps/Closing Remarks**
2:00 pm	**Tour and Shangri-La Lounge (Optional)**
2:30 pm	**Adjourn**

COVID-19 In-Action Summary

Department of Veterans Affairs

The enclosed summary contains enterprise-wide sustainment and improvement actions for the Department of Veterans Affairs as a result of pivoting to a new operating environment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

July 2020

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COVID-19 In-Action Summary Report

Department of Veterans Affairs

Introduction

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has implemented an aggressive public health response to COVID-19 to protect and care for Veterans, their families, health care providers, and staff in the face of this emerging health risk. We are working directly with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other federal partners to monitor the outbreak of the virus.

We are also continuing to provide health care for Veterans. We are providing compensation, pension, and other monetary benefits; honoring Veterans in their sacred burial; and we are assisting states and local authorities with their own public health response through our Fourth Mission.

In these extraordinary times, it is important to stop and reflect on what we have done well so far to meet this most recent challenge, and to gain insight on steps we can actively take to improve for the future.

This summary report compiles common themes, best practices, lessons-learned, successes, and opportunities submitted by VA Staff Offices and Administrations as a result of the first several months of rapidly learning from and responding to the demands of operating in the current environment under the constraints of COVID-19. The goal of this "in-action" report is to use information as we know it right now as a framework for a structured discussion on how we can continue to improve benefits and services to our Nation's Veterans.

Common Themes

Looking across the enterprise, there were some common themes that were prevalent. They are categorized into four areas: people, process, technology, and resources.

Our Charge

"VA employees have the noblest mission in the Federal Government. We know what it means to serve our country, and we know what it means to never leave a Servicemember behind. That is what makes our mission to continue to serve and honor our Veterans and to serve each other so important, even during this time of great uncertainty.

This challenging time also presents the opportunity for adaptation and cooperation. As we proactively find ways to solve any logistical, technology, or infrastructure challenges that may arise, we will emerge as a more agile organization."

--Secretary Wilkie

People

- Caring for the workforce continues to be a challenge; burnout risk high in many occupations.
- Increased communication with employees helped increase a sense of connectedness.
- Stakeholders external to VA (ex. co-located Veterans Service Organizations, contractors) should be included in planning and/or communications.
- Increased communications with key external stakeholders should continue during future emergency events.
- Organizations continue to experience hiring challenges.
- Flexible employee schedules help employees continue to perform their duties.

Process

- Continuing opportunity to strengthen internal processes and procedures to allow cross-functional collaboration.
- Continuing opportunity to strengthen and better integrate our communications with Veterans across different modalities.
- Disaster/emergency response preparedness needs to be more cross-cutting across the agency.
- Challenges in onboarding, connecting with new employees virtually.
- Prepare a Continuity of Operations Plan for future emergency situations.
- Cross-training (as applicable) enhances workforce flexibility.
- Reduce/eliminate the requirement for wet signatures on documents; enable e-signature.

Technology

- VA must prioritize, invest in, and modernize its IT infrastructure.
- Continuing opportunity to integrate systems to provide enterprise-wide dashboards and metrics and collaboration spaces.
- Gaps in technology to meet internal and external customer needs.
- Procure a secure IT platform to share large files with external partners (media, contractors, other agencies).
- Increased use of tele-appointments (appeals hearing, health, benefits, exams) improved the customer experience.

Functional Areas Assessed

- Workforce Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition
- Preparedness and Mission Resilience
- VACO Facilities Operations and Maintenance
- Security and Law Enforcement
- Legal advice and guidance to VA staff; litigation
- VA infrastructure and secure network
- Records and Information Resources Management
- Financial stewardship; budget and financial management
- Acquisitions support
- Major construction, leasing, real property management and other capital asset services
- VA Supply chain operations
- Congressional relations GAO liaison
- Internal and external communications
- Enterprise governance; data governance
- Enterprise risk management and strategic planning
- Cemetery Operations
- Memorial Benefits Operations
- Centralized Scheduling and Eligibility
- Appeals and hearings
- Whistleblower disclosures and investigations
- Compensation, pension, fiduciary, vocational rehabilitation, education, home loan, and life insurance benefits programs
- Outreach and Veteran Engagement
- Health Services and
- and supporting functions
- Fourth Mission Readiness & Response
- Research

Resources

- Increased telework may reduce our footprint, leading to cost savings in rent and utilities.
- Competition for scarce resources was/is challenging.
- Stockpiling certain supplies and IT equipment in all facilities should be considered,
- Enterprise-wide governance of policy, requirements, and emergency funding sources can speed decisions.
- Cost savings in reduced travel as more functions can be performed remotely (site visits, etc.).

Sustainment Actions

VA has still been there for Veterans over the past few months, providing essential services. The following are actions that should continue beyond this crisis and either be sustained or integrated into existing protocols (Action/Owner):

- Postured the Department to exercise maximum telework flexibilities. This enabled most back-office services to continue without interruptions. (HRA/OSP)
- Streamlined new employee onboarding and training, allowing for a "one-stop-shop" employee experience. (HRA/OSP)
- Developed alternate personal identity verification (PIV) credentials and online certificate renewal options to mitigate in-person interactions. (HRA/OSP, OIT)
- Increased the number of employees registered for the Employee Alerting and Accountability System (EAAS). (HRA/OSP)
- Implemented a mandatory training reduction effort at every facility. (HRA/OSP)
- Developed the Charting the Course Framework for Resuming Normal Operations that allows for individual risk assessments and cascading guidance by region, and in partnership with University of Maryland, created a decision tool to advise leaders on local conditions for resuming normal operations. (HRA/OSP)
- Increased use of tele-hearings for Veterans. (BVA)
- Established a shared repository and collaborated with VHA to quickly capture and vet commercial business inquiries and possible sources of supply for PPE and other needed supplies and services. (OALC, VHA)
- Created historical pricing listing of PPE to assist VHA and FEMA in quickly determining if PPE offers being received were fair and reasonable. (OALC)
- Developed risk assessments for each construction project concerning potential impacts of COVID; establish a protocol if a "Stop Work" order is required due to unforeseen impacts to facilities. (OALC, VHA)
- Continue to issue clear guidance to contractors to address all contract administration issues with Contracting Officers. (OALC)
- Reduced reliance on paper records/storage. (ALL)

- Received and dispatched correspondence electronically. (ALL)
- Increased communications with key stakeholders during emergency situations helps alleviate problems before they arise. (ALL)
- Continue to allocate funds for and build performance monitoring dashboards (ex. Software-as-a-Service) as early as possible when establishing new environments for systems to proactively solve problems. (OIT)
- Continue to invest in Tele-ICU capabilities to provide increased flexibility contributing to positive health outcomes. (OIT, VHA)
- Continue to invest in and encourage the use of Development Security Operations (DevSecOps) platforms such as Slack, Github, and Microsoft Teams in addition to DevSecOps processes (such as Agile continuous development and continuous integration) to improve and enhance the customer experience by providing real-time, online collaboration tools supporting evolving customer needs and requirements. (OIT)
- Expanded filing time limits to Veterans increased flexibility. (VBA)
- Continue and increase the availability of tele-exams. (VBA)
- Continue automating the claims process. (VBA, OIT)
- Increased virtual opportunities for Veterans to connect for employment. (VBA)
- Increased use of digital platforms for outreach events has been positive. (VBA)
- Developed extensive safety protocols, to include new policy such as the "Safe transfer and Interment of Caskets and Urns during COVID-19" to continue operations. (NCA)
- Provided new ways for loved ones and the public to grieve and honor the lives of Veterans and their families online. (NCA)
- Sustain and continue streamlining of hiring and on-boarding processes for new employees for VHA facilities. (VHA)
- Sustain focus on support to front-line teams and High Reliability across VHA for highest quality care/zero harm. (VHA)

Did you know?

- VHA mounted timely responses to 59 Mission Assignments plus 8 HHS Task Orders, across 47 states including acceptance of 278 community patients for COVID-19 care and response to 35 State Veterans Homes
- 40+ million VEText messages with clear, concise, relevant, timely information on COVID-19 and general medical care and benefits were sent to Veterans.
- COVID-19 feedback through V-Signals surveys rated VA trust at 81.9%.
- All VA national cemeteries remained open during the pandemic and have instituted CDC-

- Focus activities on rapid syntheses of new information for translation into clinical practice as well as partnerships to support HHS in expedited analysis of proposed interventions for emerging infectious disease of high consequence. (VHA)
- Sustain curation and availability of the VA Informatics and Computing Infrastructure longitudinal data as a critical tool for research informing COVID-19 care nationally. (VHA)
- Actively contribute to the national "Warp Speed' strategy via the Accelerate COVID-19 Therapeutic Interventions (ACTIV) initiative. (VHA)

Improvement Actions

During any time of uncertainty, there are learning opportunities to improve the customer experience. The following are actions that should be evaluated for integration into existing protocols (Action/Owner):

- Codify the process for managing Mission Assignments in VA policy. Encourage better integration of preparedness, risk management, and continuity of operations programs across the Department. (HRA/OSP)
- Identify supplies to be stockpiled/on hand for all VA facilities (HRA/OSP).
- Identify opportunities to allow employees to conduct self-screening for building/campus entry. (HRA/OSP, OIT)
- Streamline the process for completing a property passes for IT equipment. (OIT)
- Conduct a regular review of all telework agreements. (ALL)
- Update all emergency contact information for employees. (ALL)
- Develop communications plans to regularly engage with remote employees. (ALL)
- Include partner organizations (Veterans Service Organizations, etc.) in emergency preparedness planning and communications as applicable. (ALL)
- Develop more methods of allowing Veterans to submit applications and forms to VA online. (ALL)
- Increase functionality in Caseflow to allow all types of appeals to be processed. (BVA, OIT)
- Governance can help increase communications, accountability, and better decision-making. (OEI)

Best Practices

Reducing VA's Footprint: OM is transitioning to a distributed workforce in their future state. They are evaluating functional requirements and re-thinking how to fulfill OM's mission. Right now, they are examining a model where staff work from home 50-75% of the time and are in the office 25-50% of the time. This could result in a reduction in required office space and additional savings over time. They are exploring options for reconstitution in a way that is financially and operationally optimal.

- Create a cross-agency task force to review emergency legislation (ex. CARES) to quickly interpret and get guidance out to employees. (OALC, OCLA, OM)
- Prepare a Continuity of Operations Plan for future emergency situations. (ALL)
- Improve the supply chain; have multiple supply sources during national emergency situations. In some instances, it may be worth paying more and limiting benefits of economies of scale to increase breadth of suppliers. (OALC)
- Accelerate DMLSS deployment to get real-time data on supply inventories and space availability across the enterprise. (OALC)
- Reduce reliance on paper records/storage. (ALL)
- Develop and lead a plan to return to normal operations and provide a sunset date for the PIV card contingency solutions. OIT will remain in a supporting role to OSP. (OSP/HRA, OIT)
- Scalable IT service capabilities will allow OIT to quickly reengineer solutions and respond to changes in demand. This solution would include subscription-based options for remote access solutions. (OIT)
- Regularly test the architecture and scalability of IT infrastructure to ensure the seamless expansion (or contracting) of service needs (e.g. remote access, telehealth capabilities, and computing capacities). (OIT)
- Establish a Defense Priorities and Allocations System (DPAS) Rating Authority agreement and have hardware and software requirement priority during emergency situations. (OIT)
- Establish a financial emergency preparedness plan and disaster response council to conduct modified (rapid) requirements gathering and review sessions with all stakeholders across the VA enterprise in advance of and during an emergency. (OIT, OM, ALL)
- Reassess the current web governance process to ensure fiscal and digital modernization actions include coordination of all relevant organizations to look for second and third-order effects of similar decisions. (OPIA)
- Establish a Customer Communications Council with OPIA/VEO to regulate the VA e-mail experience and prevent over-sending inconsistent messaging to VA's customers. (VEO)
- Increase use of chatbots to supplement call centers and provide customers a digital self-serve option as a frequently asked question tool. (VEO)
- KM needs to be considered a critical communications element to provide early and consistent messaging across VA's contact centers and all staff. Formally announce VA KM as the definitive VA KM to increase growth and use. (VEO)
- Change laws and regulations to ease burden of proof for applicants to provide certain information (federal tax information, proof of death, etc.). (VBA)

- Expand range of virtual care tools and increase integration of telehealth into processes of care. (VHA, OIT)
- Leverage networked telehealth across specialty care platforms. (VHA, OIT)
- Establish VHA Readiness Centers focused on sustained readiness of teams, supplies, equipment and response processes. (VHA)
- Advocate for national reform to create an economic model for nursing home care that enables higher quality care. (VHA)
- Advocate for an effective national process for developing, exercising and sustaining response plans for a range of scenarios for public health emergencies. (VHA, HRA/OSP)
- Propose health system representation (federal and private) in national planning and response to public health emergencies. (VHA, HRA/OSP)
- Pursue a federal strategy for greater consolidation of federal health systems (HHS, VHA, MHS, IHS, CDC, NIH, PHS, Bureau of Prisons) to achieve optimal readiness, quality, access and efficiency. (VHA)
- Establish permanent VHA liaisons with FEMA and HHS focused on planning, Fourth Mission and supply chain. (VHA, HRA/OSP)
- Pursue a formal role for VHA in management of the Strategic National Stockpile. (VHA, HRA/OSP)
- Establish a VHA additive manufacturing strategy to sustain capacity to produce critical supplies augmenting response to surges in demand. (VHA)
- Establish 150-180 days of owned inventory of critical supplies and equipment for public health emergencies. (VHA)
- Build a replacement for DEMPS focused on emergency response with streamlined processes focused on agility and including crisis-response processes for expedited sourcing. (VHA, OALC, HRA/OSP)
- Establish alternative processes for covering routine medical staffing shortfalls. (VHA)
- Consider options for a nationwide committed cadre of deployable staff with critical skill sets trained in the use of mobility equipment and knowledgeable of emergency response procedures. (VHA)

Best Practices

NCA implemented the Roll of Honor, a new feature on VA's website, which was updated daily with the names of Veterans interred in VA national cemeteries on the previous day. Ultimately, the names of over 1,500 Veterans were posted on the website.

NCA also launched a new feature on the Veterans Legacy Memorial (VLM), allowing the public to post tributes on individual Veterans' pages. NCA promoted the effort by partnering with the Boy Scouts of America on Memorial Day. Over 5,000 tributes have been posted by the public on the VLM.

Recommendations

The sustainment and improvement actions contained in this summary should be evaluated for their merit and adoption. Adopted actions should be assigned to an organization to further develop and implement through the framework action plan in Appendix 2.

APPENDIX 1: Complete Consolidated Responses

Response Template Instructions/Definitions

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities:
Please list the core functions/capabilities of your organization and rate the performance for each as observed during the last four months (March-June). For your reference, VA's official, approved Mission Essential Function (MEF) and your self-identified Core Functions (functions that include or support the performance of the MEFs are attached for your convenience.

Ratings Definitions:
Performed without Challenges (P): The targets and critical tasks were completed in a manner that achieved the objectives and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for employees, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures and laws.
Performed with Some Challenges (S): The targets and critical tasks were completed in a manner that achieved the objectives and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for employees, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures and laws. However, opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiencies were identified.
Performed with Major Challenges (M): The targets and critical tasks were completed in a manner that achieved the objectives, but some or all of the following were observed: demonstrated performance had a negative impact on the performance of other activities; contributed to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for employees; and/or was not conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures and laws.
Unable to Perform (U): The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were not performed in a manner that achieved the objective(s).

Section II - Summary of Core Functions/Capability Performance:
Use the following section to provide an overview of the performance related to each core function/capability, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.

Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA)

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities

Core Function/Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to Perform (U)
1. Decide Appeals	X			
2. Expedite Certain Appeals (Advanced on Docket, Court Remands)	X			
3. Conduct Hearings				X
4. Provide Hearings at Alternate Locations		X		

Section II – Summary of Core Functions/Capability Performance:

Core Function/Capability:	1. Decide Appeals	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	P

Summary/Status: By statute, the Board of Veterans' Appeals is required to "conduct hearings and dispose of appeals before the Board in a timely manner." 38 U.S. Code §§ 7101 and § 7101A.

The Board continues to set and exceed targets for appeals adjudication. In FY 2020, the Board's target is 91,500 dispatched decisions. Despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in the Board rapidly transitioning to a temporarily remote workforce, the Board rendered nearly 80,000 decisions to Veterans through June 2020 and is on track to issue a historic number of decisions this Fiscal Year. Approximately 30,000 appeals have been decided during all-remote operations.

Lessons Learned:

1. Employee and customer safety/security must be prioritized over any mission-essential activities that are not lifesaving.
   - Robust telework and remote status program at the Board was critical to quick transition.
   - In a pandemic situation, fast transition to remote and shelter-in-place options preserves the opportunity for mission continuity and reassures employees and veterans that we truly care about them.
   - It is easier to send in a select cadre of personnel to help reconstitute activities after fully assessing and mitigating all the threats and risks they may face than to delay in responding to the event while trying to work through all scenarios and contingencies.

2. A rapid process for telework approval and clearance to use government-furnished equipment (GFE) off-site must be developed.
   - Telework agreements must be tailored to address emergency circumstances because current language in most agreements contain provisions and conditions that are not applicable to a pandemic scenario.
   - The Board's telework agreements were set up for voluntary-only procedures during normal operations even though we had to invoke in-voluntary evacuation procedures that allow us to require some employees to work remotely on an involuntary basis
   - Because OIT is the "owner" of all government-furnished IT equipment, the clearance process for employees to take GFE off-site was unduly burdensome and would take days or even weeks to accomplish, so the Board opted to provide its own clearance letter/security pass signed by the Chairman and tracked by Board personnel to authorize employees to take specifically-identified laptops and monitors home with them while executing evacuation procedures.
   - VA procedures need to be formally adjusted to allow for mailing of IT-related GFE to individuals if/when their original equipment becomes inoperable.
3. First-line supervisors must have personal contact info for employees.
   - We are reminded of this every time we respond to a domestic threat situation. Recall-type rosters at local unit levels are essential as we move through any emergency situation.
   - First-line supervisors at the Board developed individual contact rosters in conjunction with gathering information for emergency telework agreements.
   - Relying on HR systems and liaisons with limited availability never adequately addresses a large-scale need to check in with people and disseminate timely/actionable/ information tailored to specific locations, organizations, and units.
   - A regularized communication strategy with employees to let them know what is happening to keep them safe and to check on their well-being was key to taking care of our employees.
4. Put yourself in the customer's shoes when devising interim and work-around procedures.
   - Activities that cannot be accomplished remotely must be addressed in a pandemic plan, especially paper-based procedures or those requiring coordination with other agencies or organizations, including VSOs, courts, and private bar representatives.
   - Paper mail procedures required by statute and regulation must be revised to allow electronic transmissions and communications. There has been progress in this regard.
   - In devising alternative mail plans to send hard-copy decisions to VSOs, the Board learned many valuable lessons.
     - Case Study: The Board didn't realize that alternative procedures developed with VBA would cause a contract vendor to use a different style of envelope and different return address information. This led VSOs to believe they were no longer receiving Board decisions because it did not come in the same color envelope or with Board's return address.
5. Co-located VSO operations must be included as part of the plans.
   - Many co-located VSOs left their offices without taking IT-related GFE and other files/tools needed to continue uninterrupted representation of Veterans.
   - Some co-located VSOs failed to provide forwarding addresses and time-sensitive mail (e.g., Board decisions) was delivered to closed locations they could not access.
   - Some VSOs wanted government employees to return to federal offices before allowed in order to collect and re-distribute mail delivered to the co-located VSO offices.
6. The Board can operate at a much higher capacity than expected in remote-only operations.
   - This significantly influenced the targeted approach we adopted to re-entry procedures.
   - The Board did a mini-AES survey to assess effectiveness of relationships during remote operations.

- The Board is participating in pilot COVID-19 survey to assess employee impacts and feelings to inform need for operational changes and longer-term planning efforts for this and other emergency events.

Risk: None.

Proposed Mitigation: None.

Core Function/Capability:	2. Expedite Certain Appeals	Rating (P, S, M, U):	P

Summary/Status: By statute, the Board of Veterans' Appeals is required to expedite certain appeals which have been advanced on its docket, as well as claims that have been remanded by the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. 38 U.S. Code §§ 7107 and § 7112.

The Board continues to prioritize AOD appeals and CAVC remands, legacy appeals, and AMA appeals in the Direct Docket lane. Appeals from all six Board dockets are assigned to Veterans Law Judges for adjudication using a sophisticated case distribution algorithm, which ensures active appeals are assigned in priority order, while ensuring that appeals are decided across all lanes.

Risk(s): Caseflow, the Board's appeals management system, does not include functionality to process CAVC remands or motions to Advance on Docket.

Proposed Mitigation(s): The Board is working with OIT to develop both functionalities and is managing both processes manually until a Caseflow solution is available.

Core Function/Capability:	3. Conduct Hearings	Rating (P, S, M, U):	U

Summary/Status: By statute, the Board of Veterans' Appeals is required to "conduct hearings and dispose of appeals before the Board in a timely manner." 38 U.S. Code §§ 7101 and § 7101A. Prior to the President's signing of the VA Tele-Hearing Modernization Act on April 10, 2020, the law required hearings to be conducted at the Board's principal location "or by picture and voice transmission at a facility… where the Secretary has provided suitable facilities to conduct such hearings." 38 U.S. Code § 7107.

1) What was supposed to happen? Was there a documented plan to address the challenges presented?

Prior to COVID-19, the Board was on target to reach its goal of conducting a record 24,300 hearings in FY 2020. Through March 2020, the Board held 11,455 hearings, was averaging 448 hearings held per week and was 57 hearings above its goal. Due to COVID-19 closures at VA facilities to include Regional Offices, the Board was forced to temporarily suspend

Travel Board hearings, Central Office hearings at the Board headquarters, and Video hearings with Veterans and reps who rely on Regional Office video hearing rooms.

Before the advent of virtual tele-hearings, a Board hearing required a Veteran, his or her representative, and the Veterans Law Judge to be physically present at a VA facility. In many appeals, a Veteran participates in a hearing via videoconference from a Regional Office with a Veterans Law Judge located in Washington, DC (Video Hearing). In some legacy appeals, hearings are held by a Veterans Law Judge who has travelled to a Regional Office for face to face hearings (Travel Board Hearing). A smaller number of Board hearings are held at the Board's headquarters in Washington, DC (Central Office Hearing). None of these types of hearings can be conducted if the VA facilities in question are closed.

Although no plan could have allowed the Board to continue to conduct hearings at the same levels in the event VA's facilities were shut down to Veterans and their representatives, the Board has developed a plan to increase hearings capacity by offering more virtual tele-hearings.

2) What actually happened? What worked and what naturally evolved during response?

The Board is implementing several measures to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on hearing operations, to include focusing a certain segment of its Judge corps on holding legacy hearings, hiring retired Veterans Law Judges, as possible, to hold AMA hearings, actively managing the use of Acting Veterans Law Judges to hold hearings, fully utilizing all Board hearing space, and expanding available video hearing times in Central and Western time zones.

Video hearings are the Board's largest bucket of hearings. The Board relies on VBA and VHA facilities to host these hearings. The disparate plans between VBA and VHA to allow Veteran and representative access for video hearings will impact the total number of hearings the Board can schedule as we move forward.

Case in point – a VHA CBOC in South Dakota allowed the Board to schedule a full day of video hearings. In contrast, VBA advised the Board that they can only support 50% video hearing scheduling in all ROs as they reopen for public contact.

The Board has been rescheduling hearings to later dates on a rolling basis and has only been able to conduct a few Central Office hearings. Although Veterans Law Judges may now report to the Board's principal location to conduct hearings, Veterans and their representatives are still unable to enter most Regional Offices. In the meantime, the Board shifted its focus to deciding appeals without a hearing request until such time as veterans can be admitted to Regional Offices for hearings. Also, as noted below, the Board was able to conduct some hearings by leveraging virtual tele-hearing technology and processes.

3) Why were there differences?
There was no way to conduct non-virtual hearings while VA facilities were closed to veterans and representatives. This did not change.

As for reopening, there are differences across the regions in the US and in operations between VHA and VBA.

4) What worked? What were the successes? What best practices can be derived from the lessons learned?

The Board was able to conduct virtual tele-hearings despite facility closures. During the pandemic, representatives began to see virtual tele-hearings as a viable, attractive option to in-person hearings and the number of Veterans opting into virtual tele-hearings has steadily increased. The most significant best practice from lessons learned is diversification, meaning developing methods of accomplishing the Board's hearing mission to mitigate the risk from office closures.

5) What didn't work? Why and what would you do differently next time? What opportunities for improvement have or can be divined from how the incident and response progressed?

Despite bringing Veterans Law Judges back to conduct hearings, the Board is still unable to hold in-person hearings due to facility closures across the country. The Board's best option to increase hearing capacity under similar circumstances would be to encourage Veterans to choose virtual tele-hearings, which would not be affected by closures. Ensuring the necessary technology, to include internet access, is working and truly available to all Veterans is a key opportunity for improvement.

6) What consequential reforms or transformative actions you and/or your teams took to adjust to the demands of the pandemic?

With the President's signing of the VA Tele-Hearing Modernization Act on April 10, 2020, the Board fully implemented its roll out of virtual tele-hearings to Veterans. Virtual tele-hearings bring massive positive change to the way the Board accomplishes a crucial part of its statutory mission.

Risk(s): Continued facility closures at VA facilities, to include Regional Offices, will significantly impact the Board's ability to conduct hearings, as Veterans and representatives who choose non-virtual tele-hearings will be unable to participate until VA can reopen these facilities to the public.

Proposed Mitigation(s): Take full advantage of virtual tele-hearings to move as many hearings as possible into virtual settings. For re-entry, suggest more collaboration and consultation between VBA, VHA, and the Board on hearing facility re-entry plans.

Core Function/Capability:	**4. Provide Hearings at Alternate Locations**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**S**

Summary/Status: By statute, the Board of Veterans' Appeals is required to conduct hearings at the Board's principal location "or by picture and voice transmission at a facility . . . where the Secretary has provided suitable facilities or equipment to conduct such hearings." 38 U.S. Code § 7107 (c)

With the President's signing of the VA Tele-Hearing Modernization Act on April 10, 2020, the Board fully implemented a virtual tele-hearing option, allowing Veterans and their representatives to participate in hearings before the Board via voice and video transmission

over the Internet using non-VA cell phones, tablets and computers. This technology also provides greater access and flexibility to Veterans in rural locations.

The Board has expanded virtual tele-hearing capacity and has conducted 1,677 virtual tele-hearings to date. Along with holding more virtual tele-hearings, the Board has taken several other actions, including obtaining information technology solutions, restructuring the Board's hearing operations, and increasing coordination with VSO partners, which are all designed to reduce the number of pending hearing requests by expanding remote access for rural Veterans, broadening Veteran options and accessibility, and improving the overall Veteran experience.

Lessons Learned: VSOs and other representatives must support virtual tele-hearings at more local levels:

- We can no longer rely on video hearings hosted at Regional Offices and other VA facilities as a primary means to hold timely hearings for Veterans.
- The Board was able to decide record numbers of appeals during remote-only operations but was only able to hold virtual tele-hearings at a fraction of current capacity because representatives are not quickly adapting to this new technology.
- More local facilities and representatives available in more local and rural communities (e.g., at VSO facilities) would have allowed more hearings to be held in areas not extensively impacted by the pandemic.

Risk(s): Offering more hearing opportunities is less than half the battle. For virtual tele-hearings to be fully successful and scalable, we must take steps to ensure our Veterans and representatives are ready, willing, and able to participate on their end. They need the necessary technology, to include internet access, available to them and they must be able to use this technology so they can take full advantage of the Department's tele-hearings (and tele-health) platforms.

Proposed Mitigation(s): The Board is exploring ways to encourage and enable Veterans and representatives to increase their capacity to participate in virtual tele-hearings, by adopting a multi-pronged approach to collaborating with political leaders, including the Hill, to assist VSOs with increasing their motivation and capacity to participate in more virtual tele-hearings.

Human Resource Administration/Office of Security and Preparedness (HRA/OSP)

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities

Core Function/Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to Perform (U)
1. Workforce Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition		X		

2. Preparedness and Mission Resilience		X		
3. VACO Facilities Operations and Maintenance		X		
4. Security and Law Enforcement		X		

Section II - Summary of Core Functions/Capability Performance:

Core Function/Capability:	**1. Workforce Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**S**

Summary/Status: At the onset of COVID-19, VA partnered with OPM to ensure the Department could recruit, retain, and recognize personnel to address projected staffing shortages and enable the current workforce. While VA has mitigated many of the risks (see below), there continue to be challenges and opportunities for improvement around employee burnout, childcare, and workforce communications. Moreover, some mitigation efforts to streamline onboarding processes may contribute to future background investigation adjudications and PIV card backlogs.

Risk(s):

- Disruption of work schedules due to childcare, elder care, etc.
- Barriers around recruitment, onboarding, direct hiring authority, retention, etc.
- Difficulties keeping employees engaged in a virtual environment.
- Heavy reliance on paper-based and in-person procedures.
- Employee burnout due to long hours/seven-day work weeks and juggling multiple hot priorities.
- Disjointed communications to workforce.
- Limited time to focus on training due mission-critical tasks around care for Veterans.
- Slow implementation of operational changes due to union obligations.

Mitigation(s):

- Maximized telework (majority of HRA was telework ready before pandemic) and flexible schedules.
- Improved integration between policy and operations components, and adapted processes for issuing policies and delegations.
- Streamlined employee onboarding processes:
  - Developed one-stop-shop that reduced time from final job offer to entry on job duty from approximately 30 days to 7 days.
  - In coordination with OIT, developed alternate PIV credentials and online certificate renewal options to mitigate amount of in-person interactions.
- Leveraged and developed Department-wide virtual events and toolkits, bi-weekly activities to keep staff engaged, mid-month check-ins, virtual breakfasts and lunches, etc.

- Developed paperless processes and leveraged audio/video conferencing capabilities:
  - Reduced Child Care Subsidy Program processing time from 120 minutes per claim to 10 minutes while going completely paperless.
  - Organized Department-wide conferences calls with National Reasonable Accommodation Coordinators and held Skype engagements with Administrations and Staff Offices on harassment prevention.
- Increased networking opportunities, expanded employee assistance programs, and developed virtual activities to celebrate Public Service Recognition Week.
- Surged staff to register 70% of employees across the Department (up from 30%) and expanded use of the Employee Alerting and Accountability System (EAAS).
- Assessed training needs at each facility to implement mandatory training reduction effort, adapt training methods and modes of delivery, and applied advanced TMS 2.0 functionality.
- Applied section of law allowing post impact and implementation bargaining during a public health emergency.

Core Function/Capability:	**2. Preparedness and Mission Resilience**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**S**

Summary/Status: Throughout COVID-19, VA continues to successfully perform its mission essential functions and implement an aggressive public health response to protect and care for Veterans, their families, healthcare providers, and staff. Approximately 75% of the workforce across the country continued to report to worksites throughout the pandemic, while the remaining employees maximized telework and digital processes to provide seamless support services. While VA has mitigated many of the risks (see below), there continue to be challenges and opportunities for improvement around building resiliency into the culture of VA and responding to multiple, concurrent emergencies.

Risk(s):

- Lack of awareness of organizational contingency plans and how to implement those plans at all levels.
- Clear communication channels, with understood roles and responsibilities / clear decision makers.
- Planning for normal operations with an ongoing pandemic response effort and expected spike in the Fall.
- Disjointed process for how VA manages Mission Assignments and other interagency taskings that draw on VA resources as part of the Federal response.
- Unprecedented, concurrent emergencies (e.g., COVID-19, hurricanes, wildfires, protests around VACO, new strain of H1N1, etc.)
- Complexity and sheer volume of local data and conditions from across the country to guide resuming normal operations.
- Outdated and siloed continuity strategy within VA and across the Federal government.

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Ensured contingency documents are available in both hard and electronic formats; held recurring Crisis Action Team meetings to guide implementation of response plans.

- Collecting lessons learned for an after-action report to aid in development of future action plans, incident support efforts, etc.
- Refined process for managing Mission Assignments and working to codify in VA policy.
- Leveraged strategically placed resources and existing programs to ensure Veterans continue to receive care and other support services.
- Developed the Charting the Course Framework for Resuming Normal Operations that allows for individual risk assessments and cascading guidance by region, and in partnership with University of Maryland, created a decision tool to advise leaders on local conditions for resuming normal operations.
- Encourage better integration of preparedness, risk management, and continuity of operations programs across the Department (and assess impact of Federal Mission Resilience Strategy released for review by the interagency preparedness community and expected to be approved by the White House).
- Ensure telework readiness for all employees.
- Leveraged EAAS for notifications with clarity as to what office / function has the lead for types of messages.

Core Function/Capability:	**3. VACO Facilities Operations and Maintenance**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**S**

Summary/Status: COVID-19 brings many unique challenges around facilities operations and maintenance for the VACO campus in the National Capital Region. Working closely with GSA and in accordance with CDC and OSHA guidance, VA adapted and quickly adjusted protocols to operate during response efforts and into the "new normal." While VA has mitigated many of the risks (see below), there continue to be challenges and opportunities for improvement around communications for moving through reopening phases, workforce reliance on public transit, compliance with mask requirement, and evolving standards for office space and design layouts.

Risk(s):

- Current workspace configurations not set up for physical distancing.
- Constantly evolving requirements and guidance from CDC, OSHA, etc.
- Limited supplies of masks, gloves, cleaning materials, hand sanitizer, etc.
- Disjointed communications around returning to VACO campus.
- Concerns around pre-screening employees returning to worksites.
- Limited transportation and parking options at VACO for returning employees.
- Temporary shutdown of core operations due to 14-day self-quarantine requirement after exposure.

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Conducting design work to improve functionality and incorporate physical distancing:
  - Assessing need for design changes to workspaces.
  - Reviewing options for hoteling and other virtual solutions.
  - Continuing to maximize telework and introduce additional schedule flexibilities.
- In accordance with White House and OMB reopening guidance, VA developed an Annex focused on VACO reentry that incorporates the latest requirements from CDC and OSHA.

- Identified sources for critical supplies (e.g., masks, gloves, sanitizers, disinfecting wipes, etc.) and executed agreement to be considered as a priority organization for receipt of supplies.
- Developing marketing campaign with messaging focused on safety measures and new screening protocols for return to VACO.
- Implemented temperature scanning and screening questions upon entry at 810 and 811 Vermont:
    - Working with OIT and GSA to launch screening tool app for VACO facilities.
    - Reviewing ways to use EAAS to pre-screen employees for VACO access (already being used in VISN 8).
- Acquired additional parking spaces at local garages and developing ridesharing tool.
- Looking into temporarily surging or reassigning staff to provide interim support to impacted areas.

Core Function/Capability:	**4. Security and Law Enforcement**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**S**

Summary/Status: Throughout COVID-19, VA continues to provide a safe and secure environment for Veterans, employees, and visitors. To adhere to strict physical distancing protocols and protect against a widespread outbreak amongst the VA police force, VA adjusted in-person law enforcement operations and oversight processes. While VA has mitigated many of the risks (see below), there continue to be challenges and opportunities for improvement around a backlog of police trainees and delayed police unit inspections.

Risk(s):

- COVID-19 exposure from in-person classroom setting at Law Enforcement Training Center (LETC).
- COVID-19 exposure from in-person inspections of VA police units in the field.
- VA police officer shortages.
- Heightened security requirements at VACO due to late hours of employees reporting to the building and protests around the White House.

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Suspended LETC operations and instituted maximum telework for staff due to safety concerns:
    - Expedited last class of graduates in March.
    - Cleaned and repurposed LETC dorms to house COVID-19 positive Veterans under VHA care in Little Rock.
    - In coordination with VHA public health SMEs and in accordance with CDC guidance, developed recovery plan with COVID-19 testing for cadets (targeted reopening date is July 6).
- Suspended police unit inspections due to safety concerns:
    - Developing recovery plan.
    - Digitizing inspections tracking and reports.
- Developed plan with VHA to help surge and temporarily backfill open police chief positions in the field due to COVID-19 exposure.
- Provided additional security guards at VACO, worked directly with Federal and local law enforcement, and continue to perform threat assessments.

National Cemetery Administration (NCA)

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities

Core Function/Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to Perform (U)
1. Cemetery Operations (interment; committal services and provision of funeral honors)		X		
2. Memorial Benefits Operations (Presidential Memorial Certificates; headstones/markers; medallions, etc.)	X			
3. Centralized Scheduling and Eligibility	X			

Section II - Summary of Core Functions/Capability Performance:

Core Function/Capability:	1. Cemetery Operations	Rating (P, S, M, U):	P/S

Summary/Status:

Generally, NCA's core functions include interment; committal services and the provision of Presidential Memorial Certificates; headstones/markers; medallions, and centralized scheduling and eligibility.

Since the pandemic began in early March, NCA was able to complete most mission essential tasks without major challenges (P-level). For example, eligibility and scheduling office; delivery of Presidential Memorial Certificate, headstones, markers, medallions and key administrative tasks continued unchanged during the pandemic.

However, NCA encountered some challenges in safely providing committal services and permitting large gatherings at cemeteries (S-level). For example, in response to concerns over health and safety, NCA adjusted its cemetery operations by suspending committal services and the provision of funeral honors from March 23 – June 6, 2020. NCA also did not permit the customary large gatherings or mass group flag placement on and around Memorial Day.

In response to these challenges, NCA identified the following risks and implemented new opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiencies across the system to mitigate them.

Risk(s):

Risk #1: Existing cemetery staffing models and lack of access to PPE placed employees at risk to virus exposure and possible illness thereby impacting the delivery of services.

Risk #2: Field staff had little knowledge of, or access to, knowledge about the transmission of COVID-19 for purposes of handling caskets, etc.

Risk #3: The suspension of committal services, provision of funeral honors and large Memorial Day gatherings risked negatively impacting the visitor experience of our Veterans and their families to remember their loved one.

Proposed Mitigation(s):

Mitigation #1: The key to continued operations was adapting workforce conditions and implementing alternative work arrangements to protect employee health and safety. NCA instituted staggered shifts among cemetery staff and an unprecedented use of telework of support staff with great success that ensured operational continuity. All staff were provided with PPE consistent with their job duties. As a result, less than 10 (.005 %) of the 2,000 NCA employees were diagnosed as COVID-10 positive. While NCA was able to secure PPE, we suggest a strategic stockpile and a "rainy day" fund might be beneficial for VA for future disaster management.

Mitigation #2: NCA developed extensive protocols, to include new policy such as the "Safe transfer and Interment of Caskets and Urns during COVID-19" to continue operations. NCA leadership implemented frequent channels of communication with staff. Daily calls with NCA field executives/leadership helped to maintain open lines of communication between field and NCACO leadership and enabled faster deliberation and resolution of issues. NCA workforce was kept abreast of Dept-level and NCA-specific changes on a routine basis through USMA email and video messaging, the issuance of COVID-19 guidance, and posting a compendium of guidance on a newly developed COVID-specific intranet site

Mitigation #3: NCA needed to provide new ways for families and the public to grieve and removers due to the suspension of committal services, honor guard ceremonies and the customary large gatherings associated with Memorial Day. NCA implemented the Roll of Honor, a new feature on VA's website, which was updated daily with the names of Veterans interred in VA national cemeteries on the previous day. Ultimately, the names of over 1,500 Veterans were posted on the website. NCA also launched a new feature on the Veterans Legacy Memorial, allowing the public to post tributes on individual Veterans' pages. NCA promoted the effort by partnering with the Boy Scouts of America on Memorial Day. Over 5,000 tributes have been posted by the public on the VLM. These new digital efforts revealed a significant demand for online memorialization that will likely extend beyond the pandemic and is increasingly becoming a part of NCA's commitment to customer service.

Digital Engagement

Challenge: In response to COVID-19, NCA suspended committal services and honor guard ceremonies.
Action taken: NCA implemented the Roll of Honor, a new feature on VA's website, which was updated daily with the names of Veterans interred in VA national cemeteries on the previous day. Ultimately, the names of over 1,500 Veterans were posted on the website. NCA also launched a new feature on the Veterans Legacy Memorial, allowing the public to post tributes on individual Veterans' pages. NCA promoted the effort by partnering with the Boy Scouts of America on Memorial Day. Over 5,000 tributes have been posted by the public on the VLM.
Lesson learned: These new digital efforts revealed a significant demand for online memorialization that will likely extend beyond the pandemic and is increasingly becoming a part of NCA's commitment to customer service. NCA needs to continue to advance plans to roll out the VLM to additional cemeteries and to expand capability on the extent of tributes the public may submit.

Employee Engagement

Challenge: NCA management needed to ensure frequent engagement among field managers and front-line staff and the timely and accurate reporting of all COVID-related data.
Actions Taken: NCA leadership implemented frequent channels of communication with staff. Daily calls with NCA field executives/leadership helped to maintain open lines of communication between field and NCACO leadership and enabled faster deliberation and resolution of issues. NCA workforce was kept abreast of Dept-level and NCA-specific changes on a routine basis through USMA messaging, the issuance of guidance, and posting a compendium of guidance on a newly developed COVID-specific intranet site.
Lesson Learned: NCA needed to adapt VA-wide guidance to make it usable by NCA employees

Workforce Operations

Challenge: To protect the health and safety of the workforce, the pandemic required alternative work arrangements for team members across the country.
Action taken: NCA implemented staggered shifts among cemetery staff and an unprecedented use of telework of office staff with great success that ensured operational continuity. All staff were provided with PPE consistent with their job duties. As a result, less than 10 of the 2,000 NCA employees were diagnosed as COVID-10 positive. NCA developed extensive protocols, to include new policy such as the "*Safe transfer and Interment of Caskets and Urns during COVID-19*" to continue operations.
Lesson learned:

- VA/NCA lacks overall processes to facilitate preparedness for emergencies, such as a strategic stockpile and a "rainy day" fund. For example, NCA experienced some challenges with the federal supply chain impacting the ability to obtain needed PPE supplies for sanitation and safety.

- Given the medical nature of this pandemic crisis, NCA did not have internal subject matter expertise to make medically informed decisions regarding operational procedures and practices. Continuing NCA's strong working relationship with VHA has proven beneficial.

All VA national cemeteries remained open during the pandemic and have instituted CDC-recommended best practices.

During the pandemic, NCA launched new digital efforts to engage the public. The Veterans Legacy Memorial permits the public to post tributes to Veterans interred in a VA national cemetery (Left). The "Roll of Honor" lists the names of all Veterans interred in a VA national cemetery during the pandemic (Right).

Office of Acquisition, Logistics and Construction (OALC)

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities

Core Function/Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to Perform (U)
1. NAC: Warehouse Space (Logistics)		X		
2. NAC: Distribution of iPads for Telehealth Svc		X		
3. SAC: Develops and oversees enterprise-wide, non-IT acquisition operations and provides direct contracting support to SAC's customer organizations, including VBA, VHA, NCA and HR&A. Executes the SAC's Strategic Sourcing Program by overseeing the formulation of plans and acquisition strategies, and accomplishing high-dollar, highly-complex procurements of medical technologies, supplies, equipment, and services identified for strategic sourcing throughout VA.	X			
4. SAC: Provides advice and assistance to SAC's customer organizations to develop market condition analyses and forecasts, product sources, Government cost estimates, and requirements documents to achieve the effective and efficient acquisition of goods and services.	X			
5. SAC: Provides acquisition support to other Government agencies, and is responsible for executing all non-field, non-IT Interagency Acquisitions/Agreements and		X		

Advisory and Assistance contract vehicles.				
6. TAC: Cradle to Grave Acquisition Support		X		
7. CFM: Primary advisor on construction and real property programs	X			
8. CFM: Plan and executing major construction, leasing, real property management and other capital asset services		X		
9. CFM: Supporting policy and quality assurance of VA's capital facilities and real property programs	X			
10. CFM: Overseeing the financial management of Major Construction Appropriations	X			
11. CFM: Contract Administration	X			
12. OALC: Monitors enterprise wide VA Supply chain operations.		X		
13. OALC: Ensures the provision of acquisition services to the Department.		X		
14. OALC: General Administration		X		

Section II - Summary of Core Functions/Capability Performance:

1) What was supposed to happen? Was there a documented plan to address the challenges presented?
   As all SAC employees were TW eligible and used to working partially in a virtual environment, there was a natural and seamless transition and the SAC had no degradation of support to our customers.

2) What actually happened? What worked and what naturally evolved during response? Enhanced communication during the pandemic was key. Daily touchpoint meetings, keeping staff and customers well informed, and being open and flexible to change allowed the SAC to execute as planned.

3) Why were there differences? SAC: N/A

4) What worked? What were the successes? What best practices can be derived from the lessons learned? What didn't work? Why and what would you do differently next time? What opportunities for improvement have or can be divined from how the incident and response progressed?

SAC:

- Early action / decision to shift from physical work environment to virtual work environment helped ease employee apprehension and increased employee safety while ensuring no degradation of support
- Early engagement: Local competition advocate immediately issued a Class J&A for PPE
- Coordination with SPE: Drafted Class J&A for PPE for actions up-to $100M in coordination with the SPE to allow greater response to PPE demands
- Provided "Essential Business Letter" early in order to keep contract suppliers from experiencing unnecessary delays
- Collaboration with VHA and FEMA: Created historical pricing listing of PPE to assist VHA and FEMA in quickly determining if PPE offers being received were fair and reasonable
- MSPV: Established flexibilities within MSPV Distributors to quickly onboard alternate sources of supply for PPE
- Established a shared repository and collaborated with VHA to quickly capture and vet commercial business inquiries and possible sources of supply for PPE and other needed supplies and services
- Established daily senior leadership meetings to ensure constant communication of emerging requirements and potential challenges

SAC: Guidance and processes on emergency legislation (i.e. CARES Act) was slow to promulgate which caused increased confusion for all parties. Recommendation would be a task force or some form of body that is representative of the various HCAs be established that would be able to identify immediate recommendations for regulatory relief and interpretation of legislation in real time.

5) What consequential reforms or transformative actions you and/or your teams took to adjust to the demands of the pandemic? SAC: Captured above.

Core Function/Capability:	**NAC: Warehouse Space**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**S**
Summary/Status: Activated staff and expanded warehouse space to receive, store and distribute VHA's PPE equipment nationwide. **Risk(s)**: Logistics operations extended and activity increased to support our stakeholders and accommodate workload. **Proposed Mitigation(s):**			

Core Function/Capability:	**NAC: Distribution of iPads for Telehealth Svc**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**S**
Summary/Status: Distributed 22,237 iPads to Veterans to allow for telehealth sessions with their physicians to date (from mid-March to July 1, 2020). **Risk(s)**: Support staff/operations extended and activity increased to support our stakeholders and accommodate workload in support of telemedicine services. **Proposed Mitigation(s):**			

Core Function/Capability:	**SAC: Develops and oversees enterprise-wide, non-IT acquisition operations and provides direct contracting support to SAC's customer organizations, including VBA, VHA, NCA and HR&A. Executes the SAC's Strategic Sourcing Program by overseeing the formulation of plans and acquisition strategies, and accomplishing high-dollar, highly-complex procurements of medical technologies, supplies, equipment,**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**P**

	and services identified for strategic sourcing throughout VA.		
Summary/Status: The SAC had no degradation within this Core Function. All COVID response requirements were fulfilled and normal business operations continued. **Risk(s)**: N/A **Proposed Mitigation(s):** N/A			

Core Function/Capability:	**SAC: Provides advice and assistance to SAC's customer organizations to develop market condition analyses and forecasts, product sources, Government cost estimates, and requirements documents to achieve the effective and efficient acquisition of goods and services.**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**P**
Summary/Status: The SAC had no degradation within this Core Function. All COVID response requirements were fulfilled and normal business operations continued. **Risk(s)**: N/A **Proposed Mitigation(s):** N/A			

Core Function/Capability:	**SAC: Provides acquisition support to other Government agencies, and is responsible for executing all non-field, non-IT Interagency Acquisitions/Agreements and Advisory and Assistance contract vehicles.**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**S**
Summary/Status: While overall successful, the SAC found itself hindered as we had to compete for scarce resources with other government agencies and commercial businesses. **Risk(s)**: Longer lead time for acquisitions and higher pricing.			

Proposed Mitigation(s): Continued collaboration. Ideally, the VA would receive Emergency Authority under the National Emergencies Act.			
Core Function/Capability:	**TAC: Cradle to Grave Acquisition Support**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**S**
Summary/Status: TAC seamlessly shifted to a remote work environment in mid-March to ensure the safety of its employees and to ensure we provided necessary support to our customers in their response to COVID-19. The targets and critical tasks were completed in a manner that achieved the objectives and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for employees, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures and laws. However, the TAC identified opportunities where improvements could be made which are highlighted below. **Risk 1: Lack of Continuity of Operations Plan.** The Agency seemed to be caught off guard and, as a result, numerous emergent acquisitions were required to support increased telework capacity. **Proposed Mitigation(s):** • Prepare a Continuity of Operations Plan for future emergency situations. Flexibility with existing contracts such as Enterprise Licensing Agreements (ELAs) for additional software licensing and maintenance support as well as Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQs) to support Agency infrastructure operations. • Having plans in place to quickly transition to remote work and potentially having shift work or after-hours teams in place to ensure round the clock coverage, especially when pandemics or other emergent situations occur. **Risk 2: Funding.** Current funding process is not straightforward with regards to supporting pandemic. There is inconsistency in terms of the responses received from customers on use of COVID funds and required approvals. • Delay in funding could result in an inability to meet urgent requirement in a timely manner. • Once COVID funds were identified, our customers seemed unable to identify requirements for submissions. **Proposed Mitigation(s):** • Proactive approach to acquisition planning to ensure awards can be made as quickly as possible after receipt of funds. **Risk 3: Supply Chain.** Inability to meet urgent requirements of pandemic due to potential supply chain issues. **Proposed Mitigation(s):**			

- Have multiple supply sources during National Emergency/Pandemic. In some instances, it may be worth paying more and limiting benefits of economies of scale to increase breadth of suppliers.
- A reserve supply of certain commodities would be useful until supply chains were at full capacity.
- More communication and coordination between agencies regarding prioritization of orders. Unless an order is "rated", then prioritization seems to be driven by industry or place in line rather than the government.

Risk 4: Increased Communication with Stakeholders.

- It is more important to be flexible and sensitive to the needs of our customers.
- The ARM process held up several jobs. Not waiting on multiple approvals for the same job.
- There was a disconnect between Office of Strategic Sourcing (OSS) who pushed obligations and some of our end user customers who often seemed to not need the items urgently or were unsure if the packages should move forward.

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Streamline approval process and communicate with the contracting activity. If the CIO approves the use of COVID funds for a requirement, the ARM approval should be included.
- Continue to proactively communicate with all stakeholders to ensure COVID requirements are met.

Core Function/Capability:	**CFM: Primary advisor on construction and real property programs**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**P**

Summary/Status: Function promote the development of innovative and best practices for project design, planning, and construction throughout VA. Take a major role in VA's strategic planning and design process to ensure VA's assets are allocated and implemented in the best interests of the VA.

Continuation of work was not impacted by constant access to Microsoft Outlook.

Risk(s):

Proposed Mitigation(s): A success to continuing function is all employees having a telework agreement and being remote work ready.

Core Function/Capability:	**Plan and executing major construction, leasing, real property**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**S**

	management and other capital asset services		

Summary/Status: Oversee the development of plans and designs for all CFM projects; Develop planning, design, and construction standards; oversee strategic planning and research on health care specialties and related space requirements, process engineering and layouts in accordance with Departmental policy; Oversee CFM's regional operations, which implements VHA/NCA major construction and lease projects; Implement facilities construction projects, provide technical assistance to individual project sites, provide contract management services and oversee the selection of A/E firms for VA's construction programs according to Federal and VA requirements and the evaluation of A/E performance in the design and construction of VA projects; Execute facilities lease projects, provide assistance to VA Administrations on individual projects; Manage land acquisition, disposal and management functions for the department including policy, and project execution.

Most elements can be remote.

Risk(s):

- Essential onsite personnel not able access job location due to COVID-19 Federal or State mandate (e.g. travel restriction, shelter-in-place orders)
- State Governor EO for stay-at-home with no exception for construction impacting Contractor's ability to continue work
- Staff not feeling safe going on the job site
- Labor and material shortages

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Need advance procedures for type of PPE and funding source along with logistics on how to get equipment to sites.
- Regional Offices working remotely with telework agreements in place was a success; A challenge Resident Engineers are not conducive to telework due to type of work performed,
- Risk assessments for each project were established early concerning potential impacts of COVID, project teams were able to address and monitor risks and mitigate potential adverse impacts
- Increase communication with medical centers concerning updates to COVID status and requirements
- Establish a protocol if a "Stop Work" order is required due to unforeseen impacts to medical centers
- Maintaining virtual meetings using technology was a success even when participants were local (between RE and Contractor) to ensure safe social distancing

Core Function/Capability:	**Supporting policy and quality assurance of VA's capital facilities and real property programs**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**P**
Summary/Status: Supporting VA's Administrations and Staff Offices in matters pertaining to policy and quality assurance of VA's capital facilities and real property programs. Provide consulting assistance on an as-needed basis to VA Administrations and Staff Offices; Develop policy and requirements for construction cost estimating, budgeting, benchmarking, and projections; Take a major role in VA's Strategic Capital Investment Planning (SCIP) process to ensure VA's assets are allocated and implemented in the best interests of the VA. All functions, with the exception of hands-on consulting support can be done remotely.			

Core Function/Capability:	Overseeing the financial management of Major Construction Appropriations	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	P
Summary/Status: Overseeing the financial management of the Major Construction Appropriation, including all project, program and oversight costs for construction, leasing, land management and support services, allocate funding to the Administrations for Minor Construction and oversee program resources including, staffing, training, IT support and logistics. All financial management functions can be done remotely with consistent daily access to: FMS, IFCAP, IPPS, PMDRI, TDA, FASPAC and CRMBS.			

Core Function/Capability:	Contract Administration	Rating (P, S, M, U):	P
Summary/Status: Oversee CFM leasing contract awards and administration. Compile and track VA construction contracting goals for small and disadvantaged businesses; Manage strategic contracting activities for VA's major construction, leasing and land management programs.; Manages the acquisition aspects of complex construction projects; Manage all CFM requests for contracting certification to obtain FAC-C warrants through the Office of Acquisition and Logistics; Manage all CFM requests for lease contracting certification. All functions can be done remotely with daily access to: eCMS, FMS, IFCAP, FPDS			

Risk(s):

- Contracted onsite personnel not able access job location due to COVID-19 Federal or State mandate (e.g. travel restriction, shelter-in-place orders)
- State Governor EO for stay-at-home with no exception for construction impacting Contractor's ability to continue work
- Staff not feeling safe going on the job site to oversee contract administration
- Labor and material shortages
- Inconsistencies in State, Local, and Public Health Authorities Executive Orders cause confusion for contractors working multiple VA projects in different localities
- Customers in ability to support contract requirements (Manhattan & San Juan) due to overwhelming strain on Medical and other staff resources
- Delays

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Chief Acquisition Officer letter to VA Contractors and OMB Memo 20-18 provided clear guidance for contractors to address all contract administration issues with Contracting Officers
- Coordinated within Project Teams to assess the local risks on a contract by contract basis to address individual concerns
- Increase communication with the contractors to mitigate risks and develop common understanding of the local and strategic conditions and priorities
- Engage customers to improve understanding of their priorities and capabilities to support contract requirements, reprioritize work with contractors in order to mitigate delays
- Utilize the contract clause for default for excusable delays

Core Function/Capability:	**OALC: Monitors VA-wide Supply Chain Operations**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**S**

Summary/Status: After the national emergency was declared and global supply shortages became evident, VA had to quickly develop a short-term solution to determine what real-time supply inventories were at facilities across the country.

Risk(s): Inability to get real-time data on supply inventories and space availability across the enterprise.

Proposed Mitigation(s): Acceleration of DMLSS deployment.

Core Function/Capability:	**OALC: Ensures the provision of acquisition services to the Department.**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**S**

Summary/Status: COOP Plan focused on securing leadership (in the VACO area) and didn't adequately address field employees and the staff executives need to lead during an emergency. It focused on normal duty stations being compromised and securing leadership in an alternate location. It would be a more useful document if it also addresses how to quickly transition staff in a maximum telework environment, onboarding/offboarding staff while in a remote posture, things to consider when planning re-entry, and the possibility of having leadership in various locations versus all together in one. **Risk(s)**: Decreased staff support for leadership, and negative impact to productivity and timeliness. Potential to impact the leadership team whenever they are all in a single location. **Proposed Mitigation(s):** Update COOP Plan.

Core Function/Capability:	**OALC: General Administration.**	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**S**
Summary/Status: Heavy reliance on creation and management of hardcopy documents. **Risk(s)**: Negative impact to productivity and timeliness. Larger than necessary space requirements to store hardcopy documents. Costs for copying, printing, and shredding hardcopy documents. **Proposed Mitigation(s):** Create plan for moving to more digital operations.			

Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection (OAWP)

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities

Core Function/Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to Perform (U)
1. Receive whistleblower disclosures and allegations	X			

2. Refer whistleblower disclosures for investigation within VA	X			
3. Conduct investigations into allegations of whistleblower retaliation and senior leader misconduct and poor performance	X			
4. Advise Secretary on accountability within VA	X			
5. Maintain data systems, including Microsoft Dynamics and SharePoint.	X			

Section II - Summary of Core Functions/Capability Performance:

Core Function/Capability:	Receive whistleblower disclosures and allegations	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	P
Summary/Status: No impact. OAWP has a primarily virtual workforce. **Risk(s)**: Low. We anticipated that some OAWP staff would be unavailable due to COVID-19 or care of a family member due to the pandemic. **Proposed Mitigation(s):** Supervisor regularly communicated with staff about their workload.			

Core Function/Capability:	Refer whistleblower disclosures for investigation within VA	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	P
Summary/Status: Limited impact. Anticipated that cases referred for investigation by OAWP may need more than 90 days due to COVID-19 as witnesses are unavailable and VA offices focus on COVID and other high-priority issues. VHA did ask for more time for certain cases, but we were able to work with them to limit it to instances where an extension was necessary. **Risk(s)**: Low. Directive 0500 requires that VA administrations and staff offices complete investigations of referred matters within 90 calendar days from the date of referral by OAWP. Cases referred for investigation by OAWP may need more time to be completed as witnesses are unavailable and VA offices focus on COVID and other high-priority issues. **Proposed Mitigation(s):** OAWP discussed the delays of referral matters with VHA. This collaborative approach ensured that delays did not impact all cases referred by OAWP for			

investigation. If a delay is due to COVID, VHA notifies OAWP and we will grant an extension request.

Core Function/Capability:	Conduct investigations into allegations of whistleblower retaliation and senior leader misconduct and poor performance	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	P
Summary/Status: No impact. OAWP has a primarily virtual workforce and our interviews are primarily conducted electronically. Consequently, we were able to continue working regardless of closures to VA offices. We anticipated a potential impact on operations due to OAWP staff and witness unavailability due to the pandemic, but that did not materialize. **Risk(s)**: Low. We anticipated that some OAWP staff would be unavailable due to COVID-19 or care of a family member due to the pandemic. We anticipated that witnesses may be unavailable because of the pandemic. **Proposed Mitigation(s):** Supervisors regularly communicated with staff about their workload. If witnesses were unavailable, the investigator focused on other cases. There was no disruption to this function.			

Core Function/Capability:	Advise Secretary on accountability within VA	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	P
Summary/Status: No impact. OAWP continue to issue recommendations and adjudicate cases. We anticipated a potential impact on operations due to OAWP staff and witness unavailability due to the pandemic, but that did not materialize. **Risk(s)**: Low. We anticipated that some OAWP staff would be unavailable due to COVID-19 or care of a family member due to the pandemic. We anticipated that witnesses may be unavailable because of the pandemic. **Proposed Mitigation(s):** Supervisors regularly communicated with staff about their workload. If witnesses were unavailable, the investigator focused on other cases. There was no disruption to this function.			

Core Function/Capability:	Maintain data systems, including Microsoft Dynamics and SharePoint.	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	P
Summary/Status: No impact. OAWP has a primarily virtual workforce.			

Risk(s): Low. We anticipated that some OAWP staff would be unavailable due to COVID-19 or care of a family member due to the pandemic. **Proposed Mitigation(s):** Supervisor regularly communicated with staff about their workload.

Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs (OCLA)

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities

Core Function/Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to Perform (U)
1. Coordinate VA's Relations and Activities with Congress		X		
2. Maintain Responsive Communications with Congress by providing Proactive and Reactive Briefings.		X		
3. Develop Legislative Priorities and Monitor and Champion them before Congress.		X		
4. Prepare the Department's Witnesses for Testimony.		X		
5. Serve as the Department's Liaison with GAO.		X		
6. Provide Liaison Support to Members of Congress and Staff.		X		

Section II - Summary of Core Functions/Capability Performance:

Core Function/Capability:	1. Coordinate VA's Relations and Activities with Congress.	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S
Summary/Status: • SECVA/DEPSEC Phone Calls with Members of the 116th Congress are more challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the beginning of the pandemic, Members were in their States and districts			

exclusively wanting to speak with our Senior Leaders from home. We were having VANTS line issues (Members and staff not being able to get through), timing issues (multiple time zones and activities), identification of who was on the call (so security issues), we were also challenged with providing real time—locale specific—COVID-19 updates. (VHA were our partners in providing data)

- SECVA/DEPSEC Meetings with Members (Washington DC) are more challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this case we found out that the House shut down operations to the point that the Capitol Police's authority was superseded by the Committee chairs even for logistics such as getting senior leaders into rooms, not being able to park, etc. Everything had to run through the Committees. On the Senate side, a bit more common sense was used to be able to get into the building with your staff badge and be able to self-escort to the rooms. Once in the rooms, we adhered to social distancing on both sides.
- SECVA/DEPSEC Meetings with Members in their States and Districts were also more challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic. Once the Secretary began traveling again we have had many requests for Members to meet with him at their local VA facilities. Members are not allowed to bring staff with them into VA facilities, and must maintain proper PPE requirements throughout the time they are visiting.

Risk(s): Acceptable.

Proposed Mitigation(s): Virtual engagements even with all their inconveniences seemed to work best.

Core Function/Capability:	2. Maintain Responsive Communications with Congress by providing Proactive and Reactive Briefings.	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S

Summary/Status:

- Number of Face-to-Face Proactive and Reactive Briefings were limited due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Number of Requests for Information (RFIs) related to the COVID-19 Pandemic increased making it challenging to respond to non-COVID-19 RFIs.
- Amount of Letters/Correspondence and their concurrence actions related to the COVID-19 Pandemic increased making it challenging to respond to non-COVID-19 Correspondence/Concurrence Actions.
- Efforts to ensure Congressionally Mandated Reports (CMRs) are timely may be impacted by competing reports related to the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Amount of OCLA Travel in support of Oversight Visits has been limited due to COVID-19 Pandemic Travel Restrictions.

Risk(s): Acceptable.

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- OCLA created an OCLA COVID-19 email group to streamline the process of fielding inquiries.
- Consequential Reforms or Transformative Actions included the use of skype, webEx, or Microsoft Teams and best practices to conduct virtual briefings.
- All congressional correspondence is being electronically dispatched to the Hill via an Ops/Admin Correspondence Analyst and the responsible CRO. In the past, an Ops/Admin Correspondence Analyst would print the letters and prepare them for delivery via the courier to the Hill.

Core Function/Capability:	3. Develop Legislative Priorities and Monitor and Champion them before Congress.	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S

Summary/Status:

- Number of Technical Assists (TAs) related to the COVID-19 Pandemic have increased making it challenging to respond to non-COVID-19 TAs. An HVAC legislative hearing and an SVAC legislative mark up are set for late July and early August. These will allow Members a chance to get a bill out of committee as Congress pursues achievements in an election year short legislative season.
- The Legislative Review Process (LRP) is being conducted electronically. Legislative CRO is assembling minimal hard copy books in favor of sending the files to the review panel to review electronically when possible. Communication on all proposals has been more challenging.

Risk(s): Acceptable.

Proposed Mitigation(s): Consequential Reforms or Transformative Actions included the use of Remote Access technology and best practices to conduct virtual meetings with VA witnesses and SMEs.

Core Function/Capability:	4. Prepare the Department's Witnesses for Testimony.	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S

Summary/Status:

- Witnesses traveling from different home states and calling in for preps from different time zones was not unfamiliar or unique to COVID and CROs accommodated this prior to COVID.
- Number of Hearings initially declined March and April as Congress tried to decide how to conduct oversight virtually. In June that number jumped to 7 Hearings, associated testimonies, and hearing deliverables, including Questions for the Record, and Transcripts. In July the number is projected at

Risk(s): Acceptable.

Proposed Mitigation(s): Consequential Reforms or Transformative Actions included the use of Remote Access technology and best practices to conduct virtual meetings with VA witnesses and SMEs.

Core Function/Capability:	5. Serve as the Department's Liaison with GAO.	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S

Summary/Status:

- GAO used its May 6 entrance meeting on its first COVID review as the meeting for record for all subsequent COVID reviews (this process is rare for VA but has happened before).
- GAO is requesting shorter turnaround times (3-14 days versus 20-30 days) to respond to draft reports.
- GAO attempted to use an already existing review and add COVID to the objectives. OCLA requested GAO go back to requestor of review to confirm COVID was now to be added.
- GAO issuing multiple reports in a shorter timeframe on same subject.

- Face-to-face entrance and exit conferences declined due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, making it challenging to liaise with GAO.

Risk(s): Acceptable.

Proposed Mitigation(s): GAO has been accommodating with VA when additional time to respond to information requests/draft reports was needed. DCOSVA requested awareness of every incoming COVID review which provided senior level support in keeping VA on track to meet deadlines. Staff Offices and Admins worked well together to get OCLA timely coordinated responses. Finally, we are using Remote Access technology and best practices to conduct virtual meetings with GAO.

Core Function/Capability:	6. Provide Liaison Support to Members of Congress and Staff.	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S

Summary/Status:

- Amount of Constituent Casework related to the COVID-19 Pandemic has increased making it challenging to respond to non-COVID-19 Constituent Casework, however, overall productivity in resolving cases without sending them forward for a formal response has increased by 20%.

Risk(s): Acceptable.

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- CLS took advantage of technology that already exists. Main phone lines from House and Senate are forwarded and then converted to email which goes to the group email box for assignment.
- Developed and implemented procedures for electronic Dispatch of correspondence. Congressional Liaison Service (CLS) has used e-fax for the last 6 years so any incoming faxes come in via email to group email box.
- CLS group email box is monitored daily by every team member to ensure that all cases are acknowledged and routed accordingly.
- All team members of CLS were issued laptops and can access all the VA systems (CAPRI, VBMS, VACOLS, etc.) that they can from their desktops in order to looks up Veterans cases and assist Member offices.

Summary

Responding to the many Congressional requests for COVID-19 data took OCLA into uncharted territory in many layers—trying to get accurate feedback to the Hill, trying to manage telework, trying to accommodate Congress' telework, and trying to respond to OMB and the WH on taskings, testimony, and hearings. OCLA responded and adapted to meet the mission needs, clearing testimony for a dozen+ hearings, as well as completing 100s of RFIs, and 100s of Briefings. Among other efforts, OCLA initiated daily information sharing with the Hill. Emails were dispatched every evening to the four corners and offices with VA Congressional Fellows, containing up to the day numbers on infection and mortality rates for our Veteran patients and our employees. As well as up to the day listings on 4th Mission Assignments around the country. Secretary Wilkie increased communication with the Hill speaking to the Chair and Ranking Members of both Oversight Committees as well as the Chairwoman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee each week., along with many other Senior Leaders on those calls.

Additionally, Dr Stone spoke with the HVAC Chairman for 30 minutes each week, did a Friday 8 corners PSM call, and a 30 min call with the SVAC Staff Director.

Strategic Perspective

Communication was/is the key to success. Senior Leaders increased their Communications with the Hill, OCLA did as well, and finally the SMEs on COVID issues in VHA increased their communications with the Hill as well. Meanwhile, Capitol Hill has experienced difficulties during the pandemic in conducting legislative business virtually. This is further exacerbated by an election year driving a shortened legislative calendar. Functioning during the pandemic has given the department new insights to working virtually with the 116th Congress. This experience has given us insights into the Hill's ever-changing tempo with regard to Session time, State work periods, hearings and deliverables during COVID-19. They had no plan for oversight. Further on the House side, they were undergoing a huge building renovation that started years ago and has years to go. This severely limits their room space and consequently they can't social distance as well. All in all, we have made up for the lack of interpersonal connections and increased information requests by increasing our communication with the Hill at all levels.

The charts below depict how the Hill tried to interact with OCLA during the pandemic.

Fig. 1

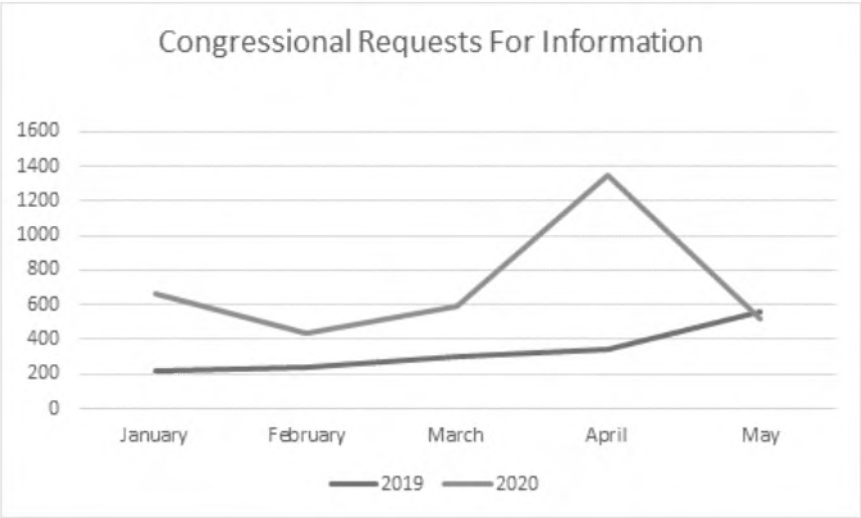

Fig. 1: As you can see, we were already trending higher in RFIs for the calendar year, but there's a clear surge when COVID 19 became the issue of the day. But the interesting barometer is that as of last month our RFIs are slightly below 2019, which may indicate we did such a good job communicating during the crisis we were able to return to normal information request levels within a few months.

Fig. 2

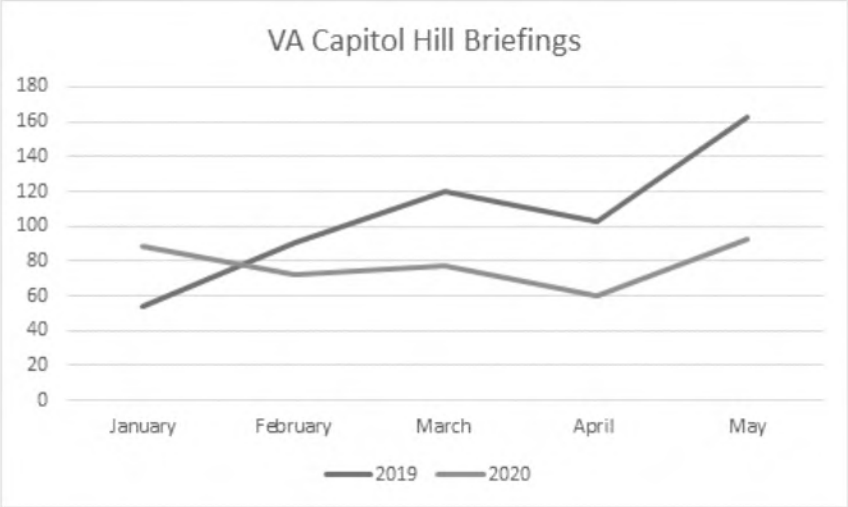

Fig. 2. This briefing chart shows OCLA started the calendar year at elevated briefing levels then tapered off when COVID 19 became more prevalent. However, it's interesting the chart still seems to follow a similar path. And again, it shows briefing numbers continue to trend upwards in the way they did in 2019 which could indicate a trend toward returning to regular order.

Office of General Counsel (OGC)

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities

Core Function/Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to Perform (U)
1. Provide legal guidance to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary and Administrations/Staff Offices during peacetime and emergency response/recovery operations.		X		
2. The General Counsel is responsible to the Secretary for the following: • All litigation arising in, or out of, the activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs or involving any employee thereof in his or her official capacity. • All interpretative legal advice involving construction or application of laws, including statutes, regulations, and decisional as well as common law. • All legal services, advice and assistance required to implement any law		X		

administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs. • All delegations of authority and professional guidance required to meet these responsibilities. • Maintenance of a system of field offices capable of providing legal advice and assistance to all Department of Veterans Affairs field installations and acting for the General Counsel as provided by Department of Veterans Affairs Regulations and instructions, or as directed by the General Counsel in special cases. This includes cooperation with U.S. Attorneys in all civil and criminal cases pertaining to the Department of Veterans Affairs and reporting to the U.S. Attorneys, as authorized, or to the General Counsel, or both, criminal matters coming to the attention of the Regional Counsel. • Other matters assigned.				

Section II - Summary of Core Functions/Capability Performance:

Core Function/Capability:	1. Provide legal guidance to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary and Administrations/Staff Offices during peacetime and emergency response/recovery operations.	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	**S**
Summary/Status: OGC quickly identified the need to effectively receive and triage requests for COVID-related legal support and get them into the hands of appropriate subject matter experts (SME) allowing for timely and accurate responses. We designed and implemented a special COVID-19 email group of OGC leaders and SMEs that received requests for legal support from VA Administrations and staff offices. We ensured these requests were prioritized and that the legal advice provided was appropriately vetted then published in a manner appropriate for the content and audience. When we began receiving a significant number of requests to review Mission Assignments, we implemented a similar procedure for these. Communication and coordination across OGC and with our VA program offices proved essential. For example, OGC Procurement Law Group leadership participated in daily calls with OALC and VHA senior leadership concerning procurement priorities and constantly evolving novel issues. Our Health Care Law Group worked with a centralized VACO R&D Program Office liaison to avoid administrative hurdles and support expedited COVID-19 research studies. Within OGC constant communication and sharing of research and opinions			

allowed attorneys in the field to deliver prompt and consistent guidance to VAMC, NCA and RO directors; and to elevate issues of national impact to VACO-based law groups for consideration. Bottom line, much of the prioritized work we did to support the COVID response was done in a concurrent fashion with all relevant OGC SMEs and VA program offices as opposed to the iterative manner we use for much of our routine work.

OGC's success in this core function was also due in no small part to the fact that the majority of our workforce was already telework ready and had access to most of the electronic tools and resources needed to perform. We struggled with a few individuals who were late adopters of technology and a few others whose job functions simply could not be accomplished away from a VA facility.

Risk(s): Providing legal support in OGC's normal manner would not yield the timely or comprehensive advice needed to support VA operations in an emergency setting. However, prioritizing COVID related support detracted from time spent on routine legal tasks pending in OGC, causing delays in some cases (this is the sole reason for the S rating, otherwise performance would be rated P). Also, stress on the workforce caused by the realities of the virus exacerbated the job-related stress felt by many who felt they were on call 24/7 to ensure VA mission success.

Proposed Mitigation(s): OGC will utilize priority email groups such as described above to respond to future emergencies or other critical priorities. Going forward, we also plan to ensure every employee who has work capable of remote performance have a telework agreement in place and the ability to leverage available technology to perform at home when needed. We will also continue our focus on expanding bench strength so our SMEs can better rotate in and out of duty status during a crisis to provide much needed time to focus on personal matters when necessary. Finally, we will advocate with our program offices for earlier and more direct involvement in their decision-making to support concurrent legal reviews and advice wherever possible as this evolved as a best practice for rapid action.

Core Function/Capability:	2. The General Counsel is responsible to the Secretary for the following: • All litigation arising in, or out of, the activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs or involving any employee thereof in his or her official capacity. • All interpretative legal advice involving construction or application of laws, including statutes, regulations, and decisional as well as common law. • All legal services, advice and assistance required to implement any law administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs. • All delegations of authority and professional guidance required to meet these responsibilities. • Maintenance of a system of field offices capable of providing legal	**Rating (P, S, M, U):** **M** **S** **M** **P** **P**	

	advice and assistance to all Department of Veterans Affairs field installations and acting for the General Counsel as provided by Department of Veterans Affairs Regulations and instructions, or as directed by the General Counsel in special cases. This includes cooperation with U.S. Attorneys in all civil and criminal cases pertaining to the Department of Veterans Affairs and reporting to the U.S. Attorneys, as authorized, or to the General Counsel, or both, criminal matters coming to the attention of the Regional Counsel. • Other matters assigned.	**P**	

Summary/Status: OGC performed most of these core functions without major challenges using a workforce that is largely accustomed to effectively teleworking and a supervisory cadre experienced in managing teams remotely. For the small number of employees who were not telework ready and who had work available to do from home, we were able to work well with OIT to provide CAG access or other support to enable them to contribute. The same is true for the new employees onboarded during this time. Tremendous support from HR and OIT enabled new hires to quickly provide much-needed surge capacity as OGC's workload increased. OGC data demonstrates that during this period of maximum telework, OGC's productivity increased.

Because this core function contains several subparts, we rated overall performance as S – performed with some challenges.

In the field as well as in VACO, many of the program offices we support already request and receive legal support from remote attorneys, and in these cases our operations during this emergency were largely business as usual. In the few areas where OGC performed with major challenges (M), the largest obstacles faced were our ability to access and process physical mail that could impose time-sensitive requirements on VA and the use in certain law groups of hard-copy document processes that required occasional in-office presence. For example, our Accreditation, Discipline & Fees (AD&F) program relies on hard copy documents and U.S. mail to communicate with VA claimants and accredited representatives; and our Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims Law Group receives and mails compact discs for certain legal files that are too large to upload electronically. These challenges were met by dedicated OGC leadership and employees voluntarily returning to the office on a periodic basis to attend to the limited tasks that could not be accomplished remotely.

Risk(s): As noted above, routine work yielded during this time to priority reviews of COVID-related matters. This caused some delays for non-urgent legal reviews and advice. Added COVID related work and missed internal deadlines also caused stress on a dedicated workforce also dealing with the realities of the virus in their personal lives. Having employees return to the office during a pandemic or when active protests occur subjected them to personal risk, but missing litigation deadlines subjects the VA to potential sanctions. OGC leadership assessed the risks of returning to the office and in some cases determined to delay

attending to physical mail when employee risk was especially high. Inability to effectively operate certain public-facing programs such as our AD&F and Torts claims process without access to hard copy mail results in adverse impacts to Veterans. **Proposed Mitigation(s)**: OGC is exploring alternatives to mailing such as MoveIT, a secure portal which allows sharing of large files but may require coordination with OIT to enable effective use from home via VPN. In general, obtaining and using technology to support paperless processes needs to be prioritized; OGC will work with OIT to secure needed software and hardware to enable mission accomplishment without requiring employees to return to physical offices when conditions place them at risk. We will also continue our focus on expanding bench strength to be better positioned to handle surge workload and to ensure our SMEs can better rotate in and out of duty status during a crisis to provide much needed time to focus on personal matters when necessary.

Office of Information Technology (OIT)

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities:

Core Function/Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to Perform (U)
1. Provide VA infrastructure and support for a resilient, secure network	X			
2. Maintain a Records Management Program for the Department	X			
3. Information Resources Management		X		
4. Managing Essential Records for Continuity Operations	X			

Section II - Summary of Core Functions/Capability Performance:

Core Function/Capability:	Provide VA infrastructure and support for a resilient, secure network	**Rating:**	**P**
1. PIV Office Closure and Logical Access Opening: **Summary/Status:** OIT provided VA staff alternate methods to secure or renew PIV capabilities to maintain the security, continuity and access to VA systems thus minimizing disruption to Veteran care and services. Due to COVID-19 and PCIF closures VA required an IT solution to issue logical access to new employees or current			

employees/contractors who have an expiring/expired PIV. OIT provided two contingency solutions so VA staff unable to receive a physical PIV card could securely access VA systems and provide Veteran care and services:

a. My Digital ID Remote Cert Renewal for employees/contractors with Expiring/Expired PIV
b. Temporary Alt Card for new employees. This is temporary until they can get an appointment at the PIV office

Risk(s): If OIT had not provided alternate methods to secure or renew PIV capabilities, then network security and/or access would have been diminished.

Proposed Mitigation(s): The Office of Security Preparedness should develop and lead a plan to return to normal operations and provide a sunset date for the contingency solutions. OIT will remain in a supporting role to OSP.

2. **IT Infrastructure Modernization and Scalability:**

Summary/Status: VA must prioritize, invest in, and modernize IT infrastructure. To be successful amid these circumstances, IT infrastructure and data must be scalable, available and adaptable to evolving VA Business Partner needs and use cases. Contingency requirements necessitated upgrades to VA's Trusted Internet Connection Gateways to double network bandwidth and expand infrastructure to allow the VA to support an additional 500K remote users. Scaling infrastructure isn't just a nice-to-have requirement; it is essential if VA staff is to securely and rapidly access data from any location and approved device. Scalable IT service capabilities will allow OIT to quickly reengineer solutions and respond to changes in demand. This solution would include subscription-based options for remote access solutions.

Risk(s): If VA fails to modernize and pursue scalable architecture to meet computing power, storage, and processing capacity requirements, then VA will not be able to meet the IT demand or expectations of our customers to serve our Veterans.

Proposed Mitigation(s): VA must ensure scalable options exist in IT contracts, establish a standard for the regular use of scalable solutions/platforms in advance of an emergency, and create boiler-plate contract language for scalable IT contracts. Additionally, OIT must regularly test the architecture and scalability of IT infrastructure to ensure the seamless expansion (or contracting) of service needs (e.g. remote access, telehealth capabilities, and computing capacities). This could be completed bi-annually as part of the Department-level EAGLE HORIZON exercise.

3. **Enterprise Performance Monitoring:**

Summary/Status: Customized tools, such as Software-as-a-Service dashboard, allowed leadership to proactively identify and resolve performance, capacity, and call quality issues through real-time business customer insight. OIT leveraged an existing relationship with monitoring/data integration tool vendor (Splunk) to create customized monitoring dashboards and a common operating picture, such as the dashboards in use with the Care 2 Cloud for telehealth expansion monitoring capabilities as the start of the pandemic response. This capability improved access to

real-time data, enabled OIT to quickly identify and resolve performance, capacity, and call quality issues through live "bridge calls" with business customers from a common operating picture (monitoring dashboard) using the same data.

Risk(s): If VA does not allocate funds for and build performance monitoring dashboards, such as those used to monitor the Care2 Cloud Telehealth Expansion, as early as possible then VA will lack data-driven decisional insight into rapidly evolving systems/environmental needs during an emergency.

Proposed Mitigation(s): Continue to allocate funds for and build performance monitoring dashboards as early as possible when establishing new environments for systems. Ensure business and other stakeholders have access to these dashboards to create a common operating picture across VA. Access should include demos and channels for regular stakeholder engagement and feedback.

4. **Tele-ICU Carts:**

Summary/Status: OIT leveraged an internet configuration method to establish a Tele-ICU environment and provide critical care to veterans. This innovation enabled VHA to move Tele-ICU carts from room to room and plug into different internet jacks without IT intervention, saving critical time and resources during the pandemic.

Risk(s): This single solution saved both time and resources, enabling VHA to direct resources where and when needed in critical situations.

Proposed Mitigation(s): Continue to invest in Tele-ICU capabilities to provide increased flexibility contributing to positive health outcomes. The improved tele-ICU capability ensures intensive care specialists can monitor critical patients 24/7 and provide instant expertise to support bedside personnel, who can easily move carts as needed when IT personnel are not present. This new cart mobility will remain essential as regions continue to see virus spread and spikes impacting ICU capacity and conditions at affected VAMCs. Additionally, this solution has implications beyond ICUs and even beyond VHA. The tele-ICU network configuration solution saves end users labor and time and should be considered as a standard operations tool across the VA enterprise.

5. **Enterprise Cloud Expansion:**

Summary/Status: OIT's investment in cloud infrastructure, agile software delivery tools, and application performance monitoring allowed OIT to adapt to evolving requirements and expeditiously deliver new digital tools (Chatbot, COVID-19 Screening Tool, VA.gov communications) throughout the pandemic response.

Risk(s): If VA does not continue to invest in enterprise cloud expansion and agile software delivery tools it will inhibit responsive IT development and eliminate the rapid scaling necessary to respond to emergencies affecting the primary functions of VA. Examples of rapid development and scaling during COVID were Chatbot, the COVID-19 screening application and VA.gov communication and the addition of 500K remote users.

Proposed Mitigation(s): OIT should continue to invest in and encourage the use of Development Security Operations (DevSecOps) platforms such as Slack, Github, and Microsoft Teams in addition to DevSecOps processes (such as Agile continuous

development and continuous integration) to improve and enhance the customer experience by providing real-time, online collaboration tools supporting evolving customer needs and requirements.

Core Function/Capability:	Maintain a Records Management Program for the Department	**Rating:**	**P**
<u>Summary/Status</u>: There was no impact by COVID-19 to this Core Function/Capability.			

Core Function/Capability:	Information Resources Management	**Rating:**	**S**

1. **<u>OIT Manpower and Staffing #1:</u>**

Summary/Status: From 2008 to present VA has increased FTE 65% while OIT has remained relatively flat in growth at 24%. This steady-state gap does not encompass the additional disparity created by the COVID-19 pandemic and requirements for increased IT operations, services, and equipment and compressed timelines.

a. OIT completed their initial staffing model in December 2019 indicating a manpower gap of over 3,700 FTE at the time. This widening gap does not include the further delta created by the over 100,000 additional pieces of IT equipment that require maintenance and support and the expansion of service and infrastructure driven by the COVID-19 pandemic. The widening gap between the FTE allocations of OIT and the Administration has created an untenable support system that will cause unnecessary delays and impact the ability to support requirements during future contingencies.

Risk(s): If VA doesn't address the widening gap between the OIT FTE allocations and the Administration, the customer will experience unnecessary support system delays. Additionally, OIT will be unable to adequately support requirements during future contingencies.

Proposed Mitigation(s): OIT requires additional FTE as substantiated by the December 2019 work breakdown structure analysis performed on all OIT offices. The results of this analysis are consistent with other federal agencies and industry standards.

2. **<u>OIT Manpower and Staffing #2:</u>**

Summary/Status: There was minimal impact on OIT's ability to deliver during this pandemic because existing OIT staff worked beyond normal thresholds. This is not a sustainable working model for future emergencies. Expanding VA's ability to use hiring authorities and partnering with other agencies (e.g. Federal Emergency Management Agency, Small Business Administration, Department of Homeland Security) to leverage temp hires as standard practice allows VA to augment staff levels more efficiently.

Risk(s): If OIT is not permitted to expand its approach to pursuing hiring authorities and partnering with other agencies (e.g. Federal Emergency Management Agency, Small Business Administration, Department of Homeland Security) to leverage temp hires as

part of our normal practice, then VA will not be able to efficiently augment staff levels during an emergency.

Proposed Mitigation(s): VA must pursue expanded hiring authorities and partnering with other agencies to leverage temp hires as part of our normal practices and educate and empower its offices to utilize these authorities to shorten the average time from advertisement to hire.

3. **Emergency Funding and Supply Chain #1:**

Summary/Status: Lack of Defense Priorities and Allocations System (DPAS) Rating Authority agreement restricted OIT's ability to rapidly acquire urgent, critical equipment. Other Departments with DPAS agreements were given priority for hardware and technology requirements. OIT had these same hardware and software requirements, including a requirement to expand IT infrastructure. OIT's lack of DPAS authority and priority delayed projects and deliverables (e.g. Network Devices needed for TIC Gateway).

Risk(s): If VA does not broker a Defense Priorities and Allocations System (DPAS) Rating Authority agreement, then the customer will experience software and hardware delays during the next emergency situation.

Proposed Mitigation(s): VA must establish a DPAS agreement and have hardware and software requirement priority during emergency situations.

4. **Emergency Funding and Supply Chain #2:**

Summary/Status: Establishing a funding dashboard and incorporating spending into the Technology Business Management model helped aid contractual discussions and improved traceability of funding. However, a clearer, more transparent process to obtain relief funds is necessary. Transparent, formalized emergency funding processes and governance are essential to emergency management and business continuity.

Risk(s): If VA does not establish a clear, transparent emergency preparedness plan, emergency funding standard operating procedure, and emergency funding governance body, then emergency funding allocations, traceability, and accountability during and after a contingency will be unnecessarily complicated.

Proposed Mitigation(s): VA must establish a financial emergency preparedness plan and disaster response council to conduct modified (rapid) requirements gathering and review sessions with all stakeholders across the VA enterprise in advance of and during an emergency. During the COVID response there was a disconnect between the business and IT on emergency requirements. VA requires a formalized governance structure that enables Offices and Administrations to identify and prioritize their IT financial requirements while considering impacts to existing systems and infrastructure resulting in a unified response for emergency funding across the VA.

Core Function/Capability:	Managing Essential Records for Continuity Operations	**Rating:**	**P**

Summary/Status: There was no impact by COVID-19 to this Core Function/Capability.

COVID-19 Lessons Learned

Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Information and Technology

Topic: PIV Office Closure and Logical Access Opening

Lesson Learned: Providing staff alternate methods to secure or renew PIV capabilities, maintained continuity and access to VA systems thus minimizing disruption to Veteran care and services.

Topic: OIT Manpower and Staffing

Lesson Learned: From 2008 to present VA has increased FTE 65% while OIT has remained relatively flat in growth at 24%. This steady-state gap does not encompass the additional disparity created by the COVID-19 pandemic and requirements for increased IT operations, services, and equipment and compressed timelines.

Lesson Learned: Expanding VA's approach to pursuing hiring authorities and partnering with other agencies (e.g. Federal Emergency Management Agency, Small Business Administration, Department of Homeland Security) to leverage temp hires as part of our normal practice allows VA to augment staff levels more efficiently.

Topic: IT Infrastructure Modernization and Scalability

Lesson Learned: VA must prioritize, invest in, and modernize IT infrastructure. Contingency requirements necessitated upgrades to VA's Trusted Internet Connection Gateways to double network bandwidth and expand infrastructure to allow the VA to support an additional 500K remote users.

Lesson Learned: Must regularly test the architecture and scalability of IT infrastructure to accommodate expanding (or contracting) service needs (e.g. remote access, telehealth capabilities, and computing capacities).

Topic: Enterprise Performance Monitoring

Lesson Learned: Customized tools such as Software-as-a-Service dashboard, allowed leadership to have access to real-time business customer insights to proactively identify and resolve performance, capacity, and call quality issues. Allocating funds for and building performance monitoring dashboards, such as the Care2 Cloud dashboard, as early as possible provided greater insight to rapidly evolving systems/environmental needs.

Topic: Tele-ICU Carts

Lesson Learned: Leveraged existing capability to establish a Tele-ICU environment providing critical care to veterans and their families. This innovation eliminated the need for IT intervention to move Tele-ICU carts, enabling flexibility and enhanced responsiveness.

Topic: Enterprise Cloud Expansion

Lesson Learned: Investing in capabilities such as cloud infrastructure, agile software delivery tools, and application performance monitoring allowed OIT to adapt and make quick real-time, data-driven decisions and expeditiously deliver new digital tools (Chatbot, COVID-19 Screening Tool, VA.gov communications).

Topic: Emergency Funding and Supply Chain

Lesson Learned: Lack of Defense Priorities and Allocations System (DPAS) Rating Authority made it difficult to acquire urgent, critical equipment.

Lesson Learned: Establishing a funding dashboard and incorporating spending into the Technology Business Management model helped aid contractual discussions and improved traceability of funding. A transparent, clear understanding of emergency funding processes and funds is essential to emergency management and business continuity. VA must establish a disaster response council and hold modified (rapid) requirements gathering and review sessions with all stakeholders across the VA enterprise.

Office of Management (OM)

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities

Core Function/Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to Perform (U)
1. Oversee Departmental budgetary and financial management functions	X			
2. Advise the Secretary on financial stewardship of Department resources	X			

Section II - Summary of Core Functions/Capability Performance:

Core Function/Capability:	1. Oversee Departmental budgetary and financial management functions	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	P

Summary/Status:

Effectively performed Departmental budgetary and financial oversight remotely, including:

- Department-level budget formulation and execution monitoring; and financial management for VA appropriations, revolving funds, and key programs.
- Management of Department accounting and financial management system (new and legacy), including cost and accounting information; Department-wide financial services, such as payroll and other payment processing; debt management and collection from Veterans.
- Department-wide capital asset management and independent business oversight activities (e.g. Agency Financial Audit, Internal Controls, STOP Fraud, Waste, Abuse initiatives), including development of long-range construction plans and implementation of financial and capital investment policies.

Risk(s): **Minimal**

1) What was supposed to happen? Was there a documented plan to address the challenges presented? **Effectively conduct OM's mission essential functions. No documented plan to address challenges necessary.**

2) What actually happened? What worked and what naturally evolved during response? **OM effectively performed its mission essential functions remotely. Performance improved.**
3) Why were there differences? **Miminal differences due to remote operations.**
4) What worked? What were the successes? What best practices can be derived from the lessons learned? Most of OM's functions can be completed remotely with minimal to no impact on operations. There was a "ramp up" period as we transitioned to a mostly distributed workforce, to include how to collaborate 100% remotely as well as working through the mechanics of performing some functions while out of the office.
   a. Financial services, to include vendor payments, payroll administration and accounting support services can be performed with a remote workforce. One exception is the processing of cash/check payments mailed to the Financial Services Center (FSC). A small cadre of staff was required to be on-site to process these payments.

   b. Debt Management Center (DMC) was also able to transition its functions to a nearly 100% remote workforce with no reduction in functionality serving Veterans. DMC handled 535K calls this fiscal year with an Average Speed to Answer of under 3 minutes and processed 32K written requests from Veterans.

   c. Some functions, like budget preparation and execution, required even less effort to transition because they were less dependent on person-to-person

interaction and more reliant on existing systems and processes already largely done remotely.

d. Our Financial Management Business Transformation (FMBT) team realized they did not need leased space because employees were already maximizing telework and we saw no change in project progress after several months with a distributed workforce. Thus, we are letting the leased space contract expire at L'Enfant Plaza which saves ~$1.3M per year.

5) What didn't work? Why and what would you do differently next time? What opportunities for improvement have or can be divined from how the incident and response progressed? In the absence of a vaccine, it's prudent, exercising an abundance of caution, to maximize telework where mission allows. This greatly reduces staff exposure and mission degradation. It particularly applies to OM's Veteran-facing (DMC) and employee-facing (FSC) operations, which include mission essential functions such as processing mail and cash payments. As an example, FSC permitted a few non-mission essential employees who were not required to be onsite, but who preferred to be onsite, to start coming into the open floor plan facility. One of the "optional" workers tested positive and caused the entire facility to shut down for 14 days which disrupted cash payment processing. This could have been avoided, in this case, by only allowing the minimum number of employees absolutely necessary to be onsite.

6) What consequential reforms or transformative actions you and/or your teams took to adjust to the demands of the pandemic? Cross-training and migrating to shiftwork are new tools we are employing to protect employees and still get our work done. OM is deploying cross-training for mission essential functions to ensure continuity of operations. This includes flexibilities for shiftwork to minimize exposure between primary and secondary teams (e.g. managing mail; processing cash payments; digital imaging of paper invoices). This will ensure employee safety as well as operational readiness. If one team gets "taken out" by exposure/potential exposure, we have a backup.

Proposed Mitigation(s): Continue to execute OM's mission.

Core Function/Capability:	2. Advise the Secretary on financial stewardship of Department resources	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	P

Summary/Status:

Effectively advised on the stewardship of Department resources remotely, including:

- Report directly to the Head of the Agency regarding financial management matters.
- Oversee all financial management activities relating to Agency programs and operations.
- Develop and maintain an integrated agency accounting and financial management system, including financial reporting and internal controls.

- Direct, manage, and provide policy guidance and oversight of agency financial management personnel, activities, and operations.
- Prepare and transmit, by not later than 60 days after the submission of the audit report required by section 3521(f) of this title, an annual report to the agency head and Director of OMB including a description and analysis of the status of financial management of the agency.
- Monitor the financial execution of the budget of the agency in relation to actual expenditures and prepare and submit to the head of the agency timely performance reports.

Risk(s): Minimal

1) What was supposed to happen? Was there a documented plan to address the challenges presented? Effectively conduct OM's mission essential functions. No documented plan to address challenges necessary.
2) What actually happened? What worked and what naturally evolved during response? OM effectively performed its mission essential functions remotely. Performance improved.
3) Why were there differences? Miminal differences due to remote operations.
4) What worked? What were the successes? What best practices can be derived from the lessons learned? Flexibility and creativity yield opportunity. Two of our biggest concerns/challenges were related to completing our annual financial statement audit and our annual financial report. Both endeavors have historically required numerous site visits to perform financial transaction testing as well as IT system security testing. We put a small team together with our business partners (VHA, VBA, NCA, OIT and our auditors) to figure out how we could do the site visits virtually. Leveraging the knowledge and experience from key staff we found ways to accomplish each requirement of a site visit remotely. We successfully completed the FSC site visit remotely as our test pilot. However, we also found there are some tasks that must still be done onsite. Specifically, some of the IT security testing must be done onsite because the systems cannot be accessed remotely. In these instances, we worked with the site to allow the testers to gain access during non-duty hours to minimize exposure for staff and auditors.
5) What didn't work? Why and what would you do differently next time? What opportunities for improvement have or can be divined from how the incident and response progressed? This experience will fundamentally change the composition of our workforce and how and where we work. Transitioning to a distributed workforce has resulted in overall higher employee satisfaction and productivity and (so far) no negative impact to operations. Some functions must still be performed onsite, but most have adapted to operating remotely. As a result, we are re-thinking how we staff and organize to accomplish OM's mission. For example, we need more workers skilled in data mining and analysis since we are doing more work centrally. Also, we will likely transition to a modified distributed workforce where staff work from home 50-75% of the time and in the office 25-50% of the time. This could result in a further reduction in required office space and additional savings over the L'Enfant lease cancellation. We have a team of OM staff looking at our lessons learned and exploring options for reconstituting our workforce in a way that is financially and operationally optimal.
6) What consequential reforms or transformative actions you and/or your teams took to adjust to the demands of the pandemic? See above

Proposed Mitigation(s): Continue to execute OM's mission.

COVID-19 Lessons Learned
Office of Management - Top 5 Lessons Learned

2) **Most of OM's functions can be completed remotely with minimal to no impact on operations.** There was a "ramp up" period as we transitioned to a mostly distributed workforce, to include how to collaborate 100% remotely as well as working through the mechanics of performing some functions while out of the office.
   a. Financial services, to include vendor payments, payroll administration and accounting support services can be performed with a remote workforce. One exception is the processing of cash/check payments mailed to the Financial Services Center (FSC). A small cadre of staff was required to be on-site to process these payments.
   b. Debt Management Center (DMC) was also able to transition its functions to a nearly 100% remote workforce with no reduction in functionality serving Veterans. DMC handled 535K calls this fiscal year with an Average Speed to Answer of under 3 minutes and processed 32K written requests from Veterans.
   c. Some functions, like budget preparation and execution, required even less effort to transition because they were less dependent on person-to-person interaction and more reliant on existing systems and processes already largely done remotely.
   d. Our Financial Management Business Transformation (FMBT) team realized they did not need leased space because employees were already maximizing telework and we saw no change in project progress after several months with a distributed workforce. Thus, we are letting the leased space contract expire at L'Enfant Plaza which saves ~$1.3M per year.

3) **In the absence of a vaccine, it's prudent, exercising an abundance of caution, to maximize telework where mission allows.** This greatly reduces staff exposure and mission degradation. It particularly applies to OM's Veteran-facing (DMC) and employee-facing (FSC) operations, which include mission essential functions such as processing mail and cash payments. As an example, FSC permitted a few non-mission essential employees who were not required to be onsite, but who preferred to be onsite, to start coming into the open floor plan facility. One of the "optional" workers tested positive and caused the entire facility to shut down for 14 days which disrupted cash payment processing. This could have been avoided, in this case, by only allowing the minimum number of employees absolutely necessary to be onsite.

4) **Cross-training and migrating to shiftwork are new tools we are employing to protect employees and still get our work done**. OM is deploying cross-training for mission essential functions to ensure continuity of operations. This includes flexibilities for shiftwork to minimize exposure between primary and secondary teams (e.g. managing mail; processing cash payments; digital imaging of paper invoices). This will ensure employee safety as well as

operational readiness. If one team gets "taken out" by exposure/potential exposure, we have a backup.

5) **Flexibility and creativity yield opportunity.** Two of our biggest concerns/challenges were related to completing our annual financial statement audit and our annual financial report. Both endeavors have historically required numerous site visits to perform financial transaction testing as well as IT system security testing. We put a small team together with our business partners (VHA, VBA, NCA, OIT and our auditors) to figure out how we could do the site visits virtually. Leveraging the knowledge and experience from key staff we found ways to accomplish each requirement of a site visit remotely. We successfully completed the FSC site visit remotely as our test pilot. However, we also found there are some tasks that must still be done onsite. Specifically, some of the IT security testing must be done onsite because the systems cannot be accessed remotely. In these instances, we worked with the site to allow the testers to gain access during non-duty hours to minimize exposure for staff and auditors.

6) **This experience will fundamentally change the composition of our workforce and how and where we work.** Transitioning to a distributed workforce has resulted in overall higher employee satisfaction and productivity and (so far) no negative impact to operations. Some functions must still be performed onsite, but most have adapted to operating remotely. As a result, we are re-thinking how we staff and organize to accomplish OM's mission. For example, we need more workers skilled in data mining and analysis since we are doing more work centrally. Also, we will likely transition to a modified distributed workforce where staff work from home 50-75% of the time and in the office 25-50% of the time. This could result in a further reduction in required office space and additional savings over the L'Enfant lease cancellation. We have a team of OM staff looking at our lessons learned and exploring options for reconstituting our workforce in a way that is financially and operationally optimal.

Office of Intergovernmental and Public Affairs (OPIA)

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities

Core Function/Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to Perform (U)
Providing Functions regarding intergovernmental, public, and consumer information and affairs.		x		

Media Relations		x		
Web Governance		X		
Internal Comms		X		
Social Media	x			
Faith and Opportunity Initiative		X		
Field Operations	x			
National Outreach		X		
Homeless Veterans Outreach and Strategic Communications		X		
Intergovernmental Affairs		X		
Tribal Government Relations		X		

Section II - Summary of Core Functions/Capability Performance:

Core Function/Capability:	1. Providing Functions Regarding Intergovernmental, public, consumer, information and affairs	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S
Summary/Status: ***See below for specific functions.*** **Risk(s)**: **Proposed Mitigation(s):**			

Core Function/Capability:	1. Office of Media Relations (OMR)	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S

Summary/Status: OPIA OMR, through cross-training and changing their traditional dedicated 'beat' system to support admins and staff offices was able to achieve a multi-functional approach to its mission of interacting with news media at the departmental level and communicating the Secretary's key messages and information. In addition to hundreds of media query responses, OMR published 115 COVID related products (75 news releases, 30 employee messages, 5 media advisories, and assisted in placing 5 editorials.

Risk(s): Loss of personnel due to illness (team already short a few personnel); one section member contracted COVID.

Proposed Mitigation(s): Continued refinement of remote/telework procedures; cross-training to mitigate illness of personnel.

Core Function/Capability:	2. Web Governance	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S

Summary/Status: Due to standard operating procedures in place before the COVID-19 pandemic, OPIA's normal web governance process and coordination with the administrations was not hampered by the shift to fulltime telework. In fact, the shift improved flexibility, ease of scheduling and logistics of event coverage. OPIA's Digital Media Engagement published 395 Vantage Point Blogs that garnered more than 1 million views and in conjunction with non-COVID content resulted in 7,104, 178 views.

Risk(s):

- Creation of the VHA COVID Communications Task Force (an ad-hoc organization) to respond to the pandemic caused significant confusion in the digital media space between OPIA and VHA by establishing a competing and often inefficient product flow vs. normal and proven lanes of communication for product review and approval.
- Stove-piped decision-making by supporting web governance team members (Digital Modernization, Office of Management) almost caused a serious gap of 6 weeks or more and potential major public relations issue by defunding the IRIS customer comment platform without a replacement platform ready to go.

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Re-Assess need for such an entity, and if needed, place a time limit on its operational lifespan.

• Reassess the current web governance process to ensure fiscal and digital modernization actions include coordination of OPIA and the administrations to look for second and third-order effects of similar decisions.

Core Function/Capability:	3. Internal Communications (IC)	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S
Summary/Status: OPIA Internal communications maintained 100% capacity to perform its functions in a remote work environment to keep the VA workforce informed via its various work streams (VA INSIDER intranet page, All VACO messages, VAOC Daily News, VANGUARD magazine, Webinars). The remote work situation caused some lag in staffing time but did not ultimately hinder the mission. **Risk(s)**: None **Proposed Mitigation(s):** None			

Core Function/Capability:	4. Social Media	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	P
Summary/Status: OPIA social media maintained 100% capacity to perform its functions in a remote work environment to keep Veterans, the American public, and key stakeholders informed of the Secretary's and departments key messages and accomplishments **Risk(s)**: None **Proposed Mitigation(s):** None			

Core Function/Capability:	5. Faith and Opportunity Initiative (FOI)	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S
Summary/Status: OPIA's FOI maintained 100% capacity to perform its functions in a remote work environment to keep Veterans, the American public, and key partners stakeholders engaged and informed of the Secretary's and department's key faith-based initiative, to include the PREVENTS suicide prevention effort. The remote work situation caused some lag in staffing time but did not ultimately hinder the mission. **Risk(s)**: None **Proposed Mitigation(s):** None			

Core Function/Capability:	6. Field Operations Division (FOD)	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	P

Summary/Status: OPIA FOD's six field offices (NY City, Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Los Angeles) were able to accomplish their primary missions despite the transition to 100% telework. They fielded over 1500 media queries and arranged over 100 regional media appearances for the SecVA during the COVID response. The identified risks and proposed mitigations the field team observed are outlined below.

Risk(s):

- Loss of face to face training opportunities
- Lack of clarity on approval levels for release authority for national vs. local release of information can cause confusion and disconnect in messaging.
- Department lacks current capability to transfer digital video to media outlets due to demise of VA Pulse contract.

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Leveraged Skype, MS Teams, WebEx platforms to continue regional remote training for VISN/VHA PAOs as requested.
- More frequent and formal distribution of top-down national guidance to field for increased coordination from VACO to field.
- Explore replacement capability for VA Pulse for video transfer to media.

Core Function/Capability:	7. National Veterans Outreach (NVO)	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S

Summary/Status: OPIA National Veterans Outreach maintained 100% capacity to perform its functions in a remote work environment to keep the Veterans and Veteran Support Organizations (VSOs) educated and informed about their benefits and services via its various work streams. NVO remotely conducted four already scheduled monthly VSO communications leader updates, worked with VA Graphics to finish the 2020 Benefits Handbook by June, and continued all necessary coordination with the Veterans Day National Committee and Military District of Washington to execute a remote Memorial Day ceremony and continue planning for Veterans Day in November 2020. The remote work situation caused some lag in staffing time but did not ultimately hinder the mission.

Risk(s): None

Proposed Mitigation(s): None

Core Function/Capability:	8. Homeless Veterans Outreach (NVO) and Strat. Comms.	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S
Summary/Status: OPIA's NVO effort maintained 100% capacity to perform its functions in a remote work environment to keep Veterans, the American public, and key partners stakeholders engaged and informed of the Secretary's and the Federal interagency' s continuing joint efforts to end Veterans homelessness. The remote work situation caused some lag in staffing time but did not ultimately hinder the mission. **Risk(s)**: None **Proposed Mitigation(s):** None			

Core Function/Capability:	9. Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA)	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S
Summary/Status: OPIA IGA's effort maintained 100% capacity to perform its functions in a what was a challenging remote work environment due to the complexity of state responses to the pandemic as well as maintaining international partnerships. IGA facilitated 40 calls to state governors to keep Veterans, the American public, and key partners stakeholders engaged and informed of the Secretary's and the Federal interagency' s continuing joint efforts to provide state and local assistance. IGA also assisted Veterans Benefits Administration in 20-plus state-specific remote town halls. The remote work situation caused at times significant lag in staffing time due to time zone differences but did not ultimately hinder the mission. **Risk(s)**: None **Proposed Mitigation(s):** None			

Core Function/Capability:	10. Tribal Government Relations (OTGR)	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S
Summary/Status: **O**PIA tribal relations effort maintained 100% capacity to perform its functions in a what was a challenging remote work environment due to the complexity the response in Indian Country, especially in the hard-hit Navajo Nation area in the Southwest. OTGRs four field offices were able to accomplish their primary missions despite the transition to 100% telework. OTGR in VACO continued supporting weekly White House Tribal calls that the tribal nations, and key partners stakeholders engaged and informed of the Secretary's and the Federal interagency' s continuing joint efforts to a coordinated response in Indian Country to 574 recognized tribes. The remote work situation caused some lag in staffing time but did not ultimately hinder the mission.			

Risk(s): None **Proposed Mitigation(s)**: None

Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities

Core Function/Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to Perform (U)
1a. Administer Compensation Programs		X		
1b. Administer Pension and Fiduciary Programs		X		
2a. Administer Vocational rehabilitation programs (see #3)				

2b. Administer education assistance programs		X		
3. Provide training and rehabilitation (readiness) for Veterans with Service-connected disabilities		X		
4. Administer Veterans housing loan program	X			
5. Life insurance program	X			
6. Administer and conduct outreach programs			X	

Section II - Summary of Core Functions/Capability Performance:

Core Function/Capability:	1a. Administer Compensation Programs	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S

Summary/Status:

Policy and Procedures

- The timeliness for claimants to submit documents/records in support of pending claims, or report for C&P exams was impacted by COVID-19 pandemic.

VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities (VASRD)

- The timeliness of the rulemaking process has been impacted by COVID-19. Namely, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is prioritizing their attention to address all federal agencies' needs to address the pandemic so OMB reviews for rulemaking have been impacted as well.

Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) and Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD)

- During COVID-19, two critical pieces of evidence necessary to substantiate a Veteran's claim for disability compensation were unavailable; medical examinations and federal records. The lack of examinations and federal records significantly delay the VA claims process. While there were mitigations in place for the Veteran population, to include telehealth exams, and Acceptable Clinical Evidence (ACE)

processing and partial decisions, the mitigation strategies did not serve the pre-discharge population.

- For IDES, providing a partial decision without a full assessment of the service member's well-being may negatively impact DoD's determination of fitness. The BDD program has also been severely impacted by the lack of in-person examinations.
- As IDES claims are halted until in-person examinations are resumed, VA has accumulated a backlog of IDES cases pending exam. As of June 29, 2020, over 7,672 IDES cases are pending an exam and over 10,490 BDD cases.

Medical Disability Examination (MDE)

- All in-person Compensation and Pension (C&P) examinations were stopped as of April 4, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The MDE contracts had the ability to complete appropriate exams through ACE folder reviews and Tele-C&P exams. This ability had previously been used on a smaller scale due to regional Force Majeure situations but never on a national scale. Because these modalities were already in the contract, we were able to continue to complete some C&P exams without pause. The sole dependence on ACE and TeleC&P has resulted in vendors embracing these modalities and continuing to use them in areas even after in-person examinations can be scheduled. This will help increase the capacity to complete C&P exams after the pandemic resolves. Ideally, the VASRD can continue to be refined with an eye on making disability examinations more appropriate for telehealth. As these changes are made and the Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs) are revised, more disability examination types can be suitable for TeleC&P exams.

Electronic Contract Review

- Prior to COVID-19, there was an established review process that, while partially electronic still had portions which were controlled by movement of paper between offices for review and signature.
- There was not a documented plan in place to address requisition package movement to an 100% virtual environment.
- Compensation Service (CS) staff worked with partners across the approval chain to address the gaps and create electronic solutions.
- Additional areas of opportunity include the creation and use of corporate mailboxes so movement through the process is not dependent upon the presence of an individual.

Quality Staff

- All Quality Assurance (QA) functions and objectives continued with 100% telework and no interruption in ability to meet program goals and performance.
- Site Visits moved to virtual visits due to COVID-19 with good results. CS was able to provide oversight and interact with the regional offices during virtual visits without interruption in service and performance goals.
    - Cost savings benefit for no travel.

Private Medical Records (PMR) Program

- Volume of requests to be processed dropped by 22%.
- Cumulative Average Days to Complete (ADC), a key success indicator improved, 11.95 days pre-COVID vs. 11.09 this past week.
- Success rates have normalized.
- The program implemented its Continuity of Operations (COOP) plan March 20, 2020.

- The plan was executed effectively, determining a course of action against the operational threat of the pandemic.
- The plan called for:
  - Daily action meetings with Program Management Office and contractor leadership.
  - Max telework (rarely used by contractor), virtual phone system implementation.
  - Continued onsite scanning/mail operations with new social distancing standards and enhanced cleaning.
  - Daily production tracking\Increased audits of work completed.
  - Implementation of remote monitoring tools.
  - Daily COOP reporting\meetings addressing risks and identifying mitigation strategies.
- There were no differences from the COOP plan and the actual implementation.
- To mitigate risks, key changes were implemented:
  - Implemented PMR Good Cause Letter to ensure Veterans aren't negatively impacted by COVID-19 related records unavailability on all 30-day non-responses from providers.
  - Deployed secure email feature to submit requests\responses electronically vs. mail or fax.
  - Implemented modified phone scripts to avoid creating backlogs with providers closed due to pandemic.
- To date, not one Veteran complaint received on a PMR.
- Maintained all program metrics, improving overall ADC since pandemic began.
- Maintained 100% program operations, not one hour of lost productivity.
- Final Thought: The PMR program was prepared by having a COOP plan, implemented it effectively and as a result the program improved ADC and maintained program operations effectively.

Risk(s):

- Claimants may not submit (either by mail/fax or visiting local RO) documentation within the permitted time limit for pending claims.
- Claimants may choose not to report to C&P exams due to COVID-19 pandemic. Examiner may list them as "Failed to Report (FTR)" rather than rescheduling C&P exam.
- Policies set forth in Policy Letter 20-02 and other guidance may not be followed by claims processors and there is no tracking mechanism (special issue, etc.) to allow for oversight.
- Publication of CS rules may be delayed due to OMB's prioritization of formal reviews for COVID-19, resulting in missed deadlines for implementation of VBA rules which also impact IT implementation.
- Providing an inaccurate or partial assessment based on incomplete records or outdated medical evidence may yield a DoD determination of severance pay instead of retired pay. VA is impacted as incorrect determinations result in request for reconsideration and appeals which would triple the work.
- Only a limited number of DBQs are appropriate for TeleC&P examinations. In times of Force Majeure incidents, examination completion numbers will drop.

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Eliminating mail, faxes – use electronic means.
- Access to evidence – eliminating waiting time.
- Age of end products – focus on elimination of outliers.

- Eliminate "wet signatures" – replace with electronic.
- Identified replacement evidence in lieu of previous documents.
- Increased use of tele- C&P Exams.
- Eliminating VSO mail – began with suspension, working switch to electronic notification
- Increasing communication with USB/SECVA and OMB for prioritization of rules and utilizing and leveraging the existing Integrated Master Schedule for VASRD rules in order to adjust and mitigate any potential delays in the rulemaking process.
- Policy Letter 20-02 developed with interim guidance for immediate dissemination to field processors regarding the following: Extended the time limits to submit certain documents/responses or if a claimant failed to report for a hearing or scheduled C&P exam and requested to reschedule.
- Prior to release of additional policy guidance related to the COVID-19 pandemic, CS will create a COVID-19 special issue(s) as needed to track impacted cases and also claims for service connection related to COVID-19; this will allow for data analysis and oversight of affected cases.
- Parallel Processing of IDES claims has afforded VBA to complete proposed rating decisions for all pending workload. This affords VA to be better situated for incoming workload as exams resume.
- Changing BDD guidance to allow partial rating decisions.
- Implementation of the Records Research Center affords VA a centralized mechanism to track and monitor unit records research requests, an area which VA previously lacked visibility.
- Consider Telehealth capabilities while revising VASRD.
- Adjust data reporting requirements during next contract re-write.
- Continue increased use of "tele- ": C&P Exams and ACE examinations.

Core Function/Capability:	1b. Administer Pension and Fiduciary Programs	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S

Summary/Status:

- In the Pension program, dependencies on building access were identified as a program risk when building closures were imminent.
  1. Federal Tax Information (FTI): P&F Service issued temporary guidance to suspend the use of FTI due to regional office building closures. This allowed VBA to continue processing claims for Veterans Pension and Survivors Pension despite building closures, while ensuring compliance with IRS requirements.
  2. National Personnel Records Center (NPRC): NPRC reduced operations to an extremely limited capacity. VBA issued interim guidance to accept uncertified discharge documents to ensure that the needs of Veterans and survivor claimants are met in a timely manner while mitigating risk.
- In the Fiduciary program, approximately 70% of all field examinations were conducted through face-to-face meetings. P&F Service deployed the use of VA Video Connect to perform video conference interviews lieu of a personal visit. The program is on track and has exceeded monthly targets, but it would be not be possible without the expanded options for videoconferencing and telephonic field examinations
- Pension and Fiduciary program modernization efforts began prior to the pandemic but will ensure continuity of operations through automated claims processing.

Risk(s):

- Building access dependencies

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Federal Tax Information: Legislative relief regarding federal tax information restrictions.
- Service Verification: Regulatory changes to ease service verification requirements.
- Field Examinations: VA is conducting field examinations via Virtual Video Connect and other approved videoconferencing methods. This process has worked well and is expected to continue moving forward.
- Automation: Partnering with OIT to modernize claims processing through automation and ensure continuity of operations.

Core Function/Capability:	2a. Administer Vocational rehabilitation	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	
Summary/Status: *See response to #3 "Provide training and rehabilitation (readiness) for Veterans with Service-connected disabilities.*			

Core Function/Capability:	2b. Administer education assistance programs	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S

Summary/Status: Currently, two of three Regional Processing Offices (RPOs) are closed to employees and United States Post Office (USPS) deliveries. Employees located in impacted stations are unable to print and mail correspondence to claimants and RPOs are unable to intake any incoming paper mail through normal processing. VBA worked with the USPS to forward any incoming mail to our Centralized Mail Portals (CMP) for scanning and processing and claims adjudicators have been instructed to call and/or email claimants for development or decisional letters.

Beneficiaries and School Certifying Officials were notified all incoming mail must be submitted to VA electronically either through https://www.va.gov/ or through "Ask a Question" https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov/.

Education Service (EDU) has determined employees are successful in serving Veterans, service members, and their family members in the manner that honors their service as well as supporting other internal and external stakeholders in a virtual environment. During the pandemic, original claims have been processed on average in 13 days and supplemental claims have been processed on average in 5 days, which exceeds both timeliness targets of 28 days for original claims and 14 days for supplemental claims.

Risk(s): (Low)

Beneficiaries and School Certifying Officials were notified all incoming mail must be submitted to VA electronically either through https://www.va.gov/ or through "Ask a Question" https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov/.

Education Service (EDU) has determined employees are successful in serving Veterans, service members, and their family members in the manner that honors their service as well as supporting other internal and external stakeholders in a virtual environment. During the pandemic, original claims have been processed on average in 13 days and supplemental claims have been processed on average in 5 days, which exceeds both timeliness targets of 28 days for original claims and 14 days for supplemental claims.

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Eliminating mail, faxes – use electronic means through Congressional legislation.
- Eliminate "wet signatures" – replace with electronic submission system.

Core Function/Capability:	3. Provide training and rehabilitation (readiness) for Veterans with Service-connected disabilities	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	S

Summary/Status:

- The intent was to continue program operations without any interruptions that would impact service delivery to our Veterans.
- Meet positive outcome target; however, expected delay in meeting targets by 60 days due to HR 6322.
- Modified performance as follows:
  - Re-engage 1,464 Veterans that have been interrupted greater than 6 months - by 40% (not counted if case is discontinued).
  - Re-engage 291 Veterans that have been in the program greater than 10 years - by 30%.
  - Re-engage 1,488 Veterans that have been in Rehabilitated to the Point of Employability (RTE) greater than 270 days not receiving.
  - Subsistence allowance - by 40% (not counted if case is discontinued).
  - Enter job placement in CWINRS for Veterans that are in Job Ready Status (JRS) to receive credit.
- Planned to conduct 21 site visits. Canceled 4 QA site visits. Canceled all compliance visits for VetSuccess on Compass (VSOC) and IDES and collaborative site visits.
- Increased use of tele-counseling; expanded to both VSOC and IDES.
- Acceleration Employment Services Modernization via detail assignments.
- Implemented weekly Town hall meetings for Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) field staff.
- Implemented weekly All Hands meeting for VR&E Service.
- Adjusted policy to accept a typed signature.
- Provided full array of VR&E services to Veterans using remote technology.
- Implemented 100 % telework.

Risk(s):

- Limited labor market, directly impacting Veterans ability to find suitable employment.
- Not tracking VA loans impacted by COVID-19 will not allow VA to be able to ensure servicers offer loss mitigations options once the loan exits forbearance.
- Veteran training program have been delayed.
- Unable to ensure policy and procedures are being followed by Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRCs). As a result, service to Veterans has the potential to suffer.
- Inability to provide consistent and timely services to Veterans.
- Making sure there is connectivity on both ends.
- Technology challenges in a virtual job fair environment.
- Veterans having the capability to use remote technology.
- Not being able to provide in person services to Servicemembers and Student Veterans.
- Downturn in labor market impact on being able to get jobs for Veterans when they are in JRS.
- Veterans uncomfortable with the use of technology and chose to delay use of benefits.

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Identified and provided virtual job fairs.
- Connected with business partners to identify virtual employment opportunities.
- VA Video Connect: Increased use of tele-counseling.
- Deployment of Centralized Mail.
- Increased utilization of Centralized Printing.
- Dedicated centralized VR&E fax line.
- Deployment of shipping & scanning of active Counseling/Evaluation/Rehabilitation (CER) folders.
- Increase virtual employment opportunities for Veterans.

Core Function/Capability:	4. Administer Veterans housing loan program	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	P

Summary/Status: Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) Initial Interviews **(S)**: VA instituted a moratorium on face to face engagements with the SAH program for the safety of program participants, stakeholder, and Agents. Regional Loan Centers have been advised to process SAH grant requests and active grant projects as normal. Initial interviews continue to be conducted virtually.

Development of Proposal to Assist VA Borrowers **(P)**: To address concerns related to recent forbearance provisions of the CARES Act on VA borrowers, Loan Guaranty (LGY) proposes to use existing authorities to develop a partial claim program that provides Veterans and servicers an option to finance forborne amounts through a subordinate loan similar to other federal guarantee programs

Temporarily Adjusting VA Home Loan Policies **(P)**: LGY proactively amended VA Home Loan and SAH policies to ensure continuity of program activities with minimal impacts. At the start of the national pandemic, LGY published multiple Circulars notifying Veterans and program stakeholders of policy adjustments to allow ongoing benefit delivery related to VA-guaranteed home loan processing, appraisals, and loan servicing.

Adapting Technology to Implement the CARES Act **(P)**: VA has started to use a reporting code in the loan tracking database that allows VA to track how many Veterans are under CARES Act forbearance and monitor as they come out of forbearance.

Risk(s):

- SAH Agents may need to complete the Property Feasibility and Suitability Study upon conclusion of the moratorium of face-to-face engagements.
- There is the potential of foreclosures among Veteran borrowers who will owe thousands of dollars in missed payments when the forbearance period ends if other loss mitigation options are not possible.
- VA loan originations could be impacted if accommodations are not implemented to ensure VA lender processing operations are able to move forward. VA borrowers unable to pay their mortgages due to COVID-19 could result in more delinquencies, which in turn could impact the market.
- Not tracking VA loans impacted by COVID-19 will not allow VA to be able to ensure servicers offer loss mitigations options once the loan exits forbearance.

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- SAH initial interviews have been ongoing by leveraging technology to encourage face to face grant processing, with no break in service.
- The partial claim proposal offers a viable long-term solution, that reduces negative financial impacts to Veterans, the program, and external mortgage industry stakeholders.
- Loan origination and valuation guidance shared with the industry supports the use of electronic signatures and amended appraisal activities to ensure continuity of VA loan processing. Released servicer guidance regarding forbearance and loss mitigation and moratorium on foreclosure/eviction actions detailing how to adhere to provisions in the CARES Act, as well as extensions of the moratoriums beyond the Cares Act.
- VA created a reporting code that was collected starting June 1, 2020 and will be reportable by July 15, 2020.

Core Function/Capability:	5. Life insurance program	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	P

Summary/Status:

- The COVID-19 pandemic presented unprecedented challenges that required a multi-faceted operational response. Insurance Service did not have a comprehensive pandemic plan prior to the disaster, however, coupling our modernization efforts with updated SOPs we were able to provide an appropriate response that allowed us to continue to offer world class service to our customers.

- The initial response from Insurance Service was an effort to modernize our intake processes. Prior to COVID-19, our mail system was paper-based and located within the Philadelphia Regional Office and Insurance Center. We quickly developed a plan to have our mail forwarded to a centralized scanning center and sent virtually to our intake team. This process naturally evolved to allow us to utilize VBA rescources from VBA Office of Business Process Integration to implement a quick change that positively impacted our program.
- There were changes to policy and procedures to allow our employees and customers greater flexibility during the pandemic. Insurance Service implemented changes to lessen the burden and expedite payment for insurance claims amounting to $100,000 or less.
- Additionally, extending the application period, premium payment grace period, and health reinstatement periods by 90 days for Veteran's Group Life Insurance (VGLI) insureds worked to give separating Servicemembers additional time to submit their application for VGLI, provide those who already have VGLI coverage additional time to submit their premiums without their policy lapsing, and provide those whose policies have lapsed with additional time to reinstate their coverage.
- We also extended the application deadline for Service-Disabled Veterans (S-DVI) Insurance by 31 days and extended reinstatement deadlines for all of our administered programs to provide service-disabled Veterans with additional time to apply for S-DVI before their eligibility expires and enable Veterans whose coverage had lapsed additional time to reinstate it.
- The pandemic caused issues that we were able to mitigate through technology such as modifying our mail operations to allow for a maximum telework enviroment. However, the pandemic also has created financial issues for our customers. Our response to extend deadlines and expedite claims was a direct response to the voice of our customer.
- Aligning our requirements for providing the burden of proof with the public sector was a success for not only our customers but also our employees. Beneficiaries were able to provide claim information in one transaction that allowed employees to provide a positive customer experience that wasn't available prior to the pandemic guidance.
- There were challenges with our transition to a centralized Intake Center that we have had to overcome through building relationships with external partners. As a business line, we had an established relationship with OBPI and VA Central Office resources to assist with the transition. We did not anticipate the need to collaborate with the United States Postal Service (USPS) to the extent that was necessary to successfully route our mail to the vendor. In the future, we would finalize mail forwarding logistics direction with the USPS prior to transitioning to a scanning vendor.
- The above efforts were all consequential of the need to create a 100% virtual environment for not only our employees but also our customers. The demands to switch to a virtual environment were minimized by our established telework program, however, we saw a demand that required us to move quickly and ensure that our service was successful in a total virtual environment.

Risk(s):

- Interruption of service to our customers.
- Loss of relationships with employees.

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Utilize scanning vendor for incoming mail.

- Utilize printing vendor for outgoing mail.
- Created new process to ensure VSO mail was sent.
- Extended VGLI Deadlines.
- Reduced the proof of death burden on death claims under $100,000.
- Extended the application deadlines for S-DVI.

Core Function/Capability:	6. Administer and conduct outreach programs	**Rating (P, S, M, U):**	M

Summary/Status: VBA's outreach activities include traditional outreach events covered by regional offices, claims clinics, Overseas Military Services Coordinator (OMSC) activities and engagement with former prisoners of war through the Advisory Committee for Former Prisoners of War (FPOW).

VBA had a target of 10,000 outreach events for FY 20. As of June 1, 2020, 1,295 VBA outreach events had been cancelled as a result of COVID-19. Additionally, VBA was scheduled to participate in 40 tribal claims clinics that were cancelled. VBA was unable to deploy its OMSCs due to travel restrictions which had an impact on installations where OMSCs perform their work. The target was for OMSCs to make 20,000 contacts through FY 20, which will not be met. Further, VBA was unable to conduct its in person Advisory Committee Meeting for Former Prisoners of War (FPOW).

VBA's regional offices began engaging in virtual outreach activities and between March and May, conducting 454 events. Additionally, VBA's Under Secretary began tele town halls, reaching over one million individuals. OMSCs began virtual operations and while working stateside, began engaging Veterans and service members via telephone and email to address their inquiries. Through virtual technology, VBA's Designated Federal Officer successfully conducted the Advisory Committee for FPOW in May 2020.

COVID-19 events have shown that technology can be used to full numerous outreach gaps, specifically in the areas of engaging stakeholders for training or providing general benefit information. However, there are limitations in addressing specific individual situation where personally identifiable information may need to be exchanged.

VBA's Office of Field Operations, Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement has provided virtual outreach training to field stations to include best practices and available tools for conducting virtual outreach and VBA updated its Outreach Reporting Tool to capture virtual events.

VA Benefits and Services Transition Assistance Program (TAP) briefings – VA Benefits Advisors are contracted to deliver instructor-led Benefits and Services briefings at over 330 military installations to transitioning Service members and their families. In response to COVID-19, VBA made decisions over the past few months to balance the needs of our TAP mission with the health and safety of our staff and their families, as well as the Service members, Veterans, military families, caregivers, and survivors we serve. As of March 30, 3030, VA Benefits and Services courses and Military Life Cycle Modules (MLCs) are only available through Joint Knowledge Online (JKO).

Conduction Virtual Economic Investment Initiatives (EII) Events – In response to COVID-19, VBA made decisions over the past few months to balance the needs of our EII mission to conduct two Virtual EII events which consist of Direct Services, Stakeholder Roundtable, and a Town Hall. The Office of Transition and Economic Development (TED) staff pivoted to an all Virtual EII platform which allowed beneficiaries continuity of benefits and services. TED's staff had to quickly change processes, adapted to a virtual platform and decide what the way forward would be in order to conduct future EIIs. On July 9th, 10th, and 15th, TED will conduct its first-ever all Virtual EII event in Jacksonville, NC.

Risk(s):

- Technology limits, outages
- TAO Briefings – There is a low risk that some Service members may experience lags while using JKO because of the increased number of users.
- EII Events – There is a moderate risk involved as TED is unable to predict attendance, and customer service metrics

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Started Tele town Halls – engaging Veterans directly and aligning VBA activities.
- Built deeper relationships with State Dept of Veterans Affairs.
- Partner with nontraditional VSOs to utilize their digital platforms.
- Special series for VSOs (July-Sept).
- VA's portion of TAP seen virtually through Joint Knowledge Online.
- TAP Benefits Advisor's One-on-One Assistance sessions conducted via phone in the U.S. and Overseas.

TAP Briefings

- Remote One-on-One Sessions with VA Benefits Advisors.
- The new TAP contract requires the vendor to deliver Benefits and Services briefings using a virtual platform as well as brick and mortar.
- TED collaborated with the Office of Talent Management (OTM) on an enterprise acquisition of Adobe Connect.

EII Events

- Create a new EII contract to assist with tracking registration and customer service measurements.
- TED collaborated and partnered with the Office of Chief Human Capital Officer, Recruitment, Policy, Placement Services to strengthen virtual EII engagements with a special emphasis on direct services platform.

Veterans Experience Office (VEO)

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities

Core Function/Capability	Performed without	Performed with Some	Performed with Major	Unable to

	Challenges (P)	Challenges (S)	Challenges (M)	Perform (U)
1. **Data, Tools, Technology, and Virtual Engagement**		X		

Section II - Summary of Core Functions/Capability Performance:

VEO's core function is to be the Secretary's shared service to support his priority mission of customer service for Veterans, and their families, caregivers and survivors and for employees. VEO executes this through the collaborative development and application of the best practices in data, tools, technology and engagement to projects identified by the Administrations, the Board and the OSVA with the goal of improving the customer experience (CX).

VEOs support of data, tools, technology and engagement across the Department to ensure both Veteran (et al.) and employee customers have easy, effective, and emotionally resonant experiences in seeking and receiving care, benefits and service so that they trust and choose VA for both the assistance they have earned and as a place of employment.

The following is a high-level overview of the application of VEO's CX capabilities to specific projects during the first six months of 2020 including a summary of the performance for relevant core function/capability; strengths are highlighted and areas for improvement not only in VEO.

Based on the feedback received from millions of Veteran and employee interactions during this period, VEO reports that the most important functions to fulfill in times like the pandemic are: 1) virtual and remote capability 2) rapid response 3) agile technology.

VEO Core Capabilities: Data, Tools, Technology, and Virtual Engagement	**Rating: S**
<u>Summary/Status of Actions</u>: • 40+ million VEText messages with clear, concise, relevant, timely information on COVID-19 and general medical care and benefits were composed, cleared and delivered to all Veterans, and geographically targeted Veterans, volunteering to receive them. • 6,648 customers provided COVID-19 feedback through V-Signals surveys rated VA trust at 81.9%. • Since March 2020 Veterans have opened #VetResources 70M+ times to access VA and non-VA resources for Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. • 35K+ VA.gov visitors have used the COVID-19 Chatbot. The chatbot was designed to quickly personalize frequently asked questions and triage Veteran crisis concerns.	

- VA311 (& White House VA Hotline) received 34K+ COVID-19 related inquiries and moved to 100% virtual employee operations.
- COVID Quick Start Guide Released April 2020
- Hosted Veterans Experience Live (VetXL) virtual resource events with community partners to address specific Veteran needs such as Employment, Women Veterans, Survivors, and VA accessibility challenges resulting in ~1.2M content views and 2,800 questions, views, and comments.
- Planned Virtual Veterans Experience Action Center (V-VEAC) pilot in Jacksonville, FL to create on-line one-stop access in the community.
- Conducted 43 Veteran HCD virtual interviews from 12 VHA facility catchment areas to gather Veteran thoughts and feedback about delivery of safe care at the request of VHA.
- Centralized COVID-19 specific articles/resources VA's Knowledge Management (KM) eGain system and the White House VA Hotline Salesforce KM system. Customer trust decreases when information provided is inconsistent. VA employees viewed COVID-19 articles 165,813 times (as of 6/24/20).
- Continued building mutually beneficial partnerships to enhance our Veteran-customers experiences and building a portfolio of partners who want to augment the digital capabilities that our mutual customers have at home to receive care, benefits, and services.

Risk(s) Identified: Veteran feedback received via VSignals, social media and community partners indicated that most VA messaging on COVID-19 was too long, not informative, missed or ignored as not relevant.

Mitigation(s) Delivered:

- VEO, OPIA and VHA outreach staff formed a core rapid response team that engaged other Administrations, the Board and OSVA for the approval of VetText content and the coordination of the text message delivery
- Identify and offer information through *all outreach channels* to ensure the delivery of clear, concise, relevant and timely information based on the customers "need to know" to access relevant services
- Provide options based on customer preference and ease of access to information alternative communications at the level closest to the customer and personalize when possible
- Prioritize customer's greatest need to know based on customer experience data, provide clear instructions, avoid over-use.

Recommendations:

- Prioritize customer's greatest need to know based on customer experience data, provide clear instructions, avoid over-use.
- Establish a Customer Communications Council with OPIA/VEO to regulate the VA e-mail experience and prevent over-sending inconsistent messaging to VA's customers.
- Leverage VA partnerships to hear the voice of the Veteran community which supports and augments VA services. Share VA communication channels with partners to build trust and improve access.
- KM needs to be considered a critical communications element to provide early and consistent messaging across VA's contact centers and all staff. Formally announce VA KM as the definitive VA KM to increase growth and use.

- Increase use of chatbots to supplement call centers and provide customers a digital self-serve option as a frequently asked question tool.
- Expand online one-stop access events that serve Veteran needs but also establishes VA's commitment of accessibility during times of uncertainty
- Prioritize OI&T efforts at the enterprise level during a crisis. Increase stockpile of replacement equipment for contact centers (headsets and laptops), and ensure contracts have standard language related to emergency operations.
- Continue building mutually beneficial partnerships to enhance our Veteran-customers experiences and building a portfolio of partners who want to augment the digital capabilities that our mutual customers have at home to receive care, benefits, and services.
- Deploy additional VSignals surveys across VA and add free-text comments on existing surveys. Increase employee exposure to VSignals reporting.
- Increase use of virtual Veteran Human-Centered Design to focus VA programs and services on Veteran feedback and expressed actual need.

Veterans Experience Office COVID-19 Lessons Learned

1. Every Service needs to be capable of going virtual.
2. Every service change request needs to be grounded in a request from a customer and delivered with Ease, Effectiveness, and Emotion.
3. Communicate consistently, clearly, and concisely. Highlight enterprise-wide access points instead of siloed avenues for ease of navigation.

Outreach & Communications

VEText	
Action	Sent 40M+ text messages via VEText to update Veterans on resources and expanding services due to COVID-19.
Voice of the Veteran	Veteran feedback received via VSignals indicated VA messaging on COVID-19 was too long and not direct.
Lessons Learned	• Ensure VEO, OPIA, VHA, and relevant admins are engaged at the initial request • Provide alternative communications at the level closest to the customer when VEText is not appropriate (Personalize content)
Recommendation	**Prioritize customer's greatest need to know based on customer experience data, provide clear instructions, avoid over-use.**

#VetResources Newsletter	
Action	Since March 2020 Veterans have opened #VetResources 70M+ times to access VA and non-VA resources for Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.
Voice of the Veteran	Customers unsubscribe from VA e-mail distribution lists at a higher rate when VA sends multiple e-mails to recipients within 24 hours.
Lessons Learned	• VA lacks governance on e-mail strategy or coordination • VA's brand and messaging tone varies by the VA office sending e-mails creating an inconsistent digital and navigation experience
Recommendation	**Establish a Customer Communications Council with OPIA/VEO to regulate the VA e-mail experience and prevent over-sending inconsistent messaging to VA's customers.**

Veteran Experience Live (VetXL)	
Action	Hosted Veterans Experience Live (VetXL) virtual resource events with community partners to address specific Veteran needs such as Employment, Women Veterans, Survivors, and VA accessibility challenges resulting in ~900K content views and 1,100 questions, views, and comments.
Voice of the Veteran	VA community partners expressed issues with reaching their Veteran customers to provide crisis related resources and improve VA access. Veterans also were experiencing higher than average unemployment rates.
Lessons Learned	• Utilize partner digital platforms to share and host events • "Look-live" prerecorded events paired with live questions reduce risk and focuses content on customer need not VA desire. • OPIA involvement is critical from the beginning on all digital events
Recommendation	**Leverage VA partnerships to hear the voice of the Veteran community which supports and augments VA services. Share VA communication channels with partners to build trust and improve access.**

Knowledge Management (KM)	
Action	Centralized COVID-19 specific articles/resources VA's KM eGain system and the White House VA Hotline Salesforce KM system.
Voice of the Veteran	Customer trust decreases when information provided is inconsistent. VA employees viewed COVID-19 articles 165,813 times (as of 6/24/20).
Lessons Learned	• Source Knowledge Management libraries instead of sharing files to ensure information is the updated version
Recommendation	**KM needs to be considered a critical communications element to provide early and consistent messaging across VA's contact centers and all staff. Formally announce VA KM as the definitive VA KM to increase growth and use.**

Access & Navigation	
COVID-19 Chatbot	
Action	35K+ VA.gov visitors have used the COVID-19 Chatbot. The chatbot was designed to quickly personalize frequently asked questions and triage Veteran crisis concerns.
Voice of the Veteran	As of 6/15/20, more than 60% of the chatbot users indicated they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their chatbot experience.
Lessons Learned	• Only 5% of chatbot sessions ended with the need to speak to a live agent • Chatbot can be used to accompany other communications as the Board of Veterans' Appeals used the tool to compliment virtual hearing notifications.
Recommendation	**Increase use of chatbots to supplement call centers and provide customers a digital self-serve option as a frequently asked question tool.**

Virtual Veterans Experience Action Center (VEAC)	
Action	A virtual one-stop access to all VA services in the Jacksonville, Florida area as a pilot for future events nationwide
Voice of the Veteran	Customers via VSignals indicated their concern rescheduling appointments and accessing VA during facility closure periods.
Lessons Learned	• VBA, VHA, NCA, BVA, VSOs, and community partners are vital for participation as participants are not able to anticipate their full extent of needs • When facilities close, VA must provide alternative access points to maintain trust during crisis
Recommendation	**Expand online one-stop access events that serve Veteran needs but also establishes VA's commitment of accessibility during times of uncertainty**

VA311	
Action	VA311 (& White House VA Hotline) received 34K+ COVID-19 related inquiries and moved to 100% virtual employee operations.
Voice of the Veteran	Veteran calls to VAMCs were not being answered and at some locations were waiting for days to get a call back.
Lessons Learned	• A Tier 1 Contact Center can surge and support the enterprise during a crisis. • A centralized, enterprise approach provides data for routine and crisis decision making.
Recommendation	**Prioritize OI&T efforts at the enterprise level during a crisis. Increase stockpile of replacement equipment for contact centers (headsets and laptops), and ensure contracts have standard language related to emergency operations.**

Community Partnerships	
Action	Developed community and strategic partnerships with Facebook Portals to reduce isolation and improve mental health, LinkedIn subscriptions for networking, training, and employment, accept Operation Gratitude donations to thank VA employees on the front lines in VAMCs, and use the Amazon Prime donation for telehealth tablets to increase access to care.
Voice of the Veteran	Responded to the needs of Veterans, families, caregivers, and survivors during the COVID crisis to improve access and navigation of VA and community resources. Provide no-cost support options at home to address health care, employment, and mental health needs.
Lessons Learned	• Value in maintaining proactive, customer-focused partnerships across the department to augment VA services • Serve in a proactive posture to listen and respond quickly during a crisis where Veterans, families, caregivers, and survivors need services and resources in their communities at home.
Recommendation	**Continue building mutually beneficial partnerships to enhance our Veteran-customers experiences and building a portfolio of partners who want to augment the digital capabilities that our mutual customers have at home to receive care, benefits, and services.**

Customer Experience Feedback Veterans Signals (VSignals)	
Action	VSignals COVID-19 customer feedback was available immediate via existing surveys.
Voice of the Veteran	6,648 customers provided COVID-19 feedback and those surveys rated VA trust at 81.9%.

Lessons Learned	• Having existing surveys with free-text capability in place made COVID-19 real-time feedback possible immediately • VHA field offices requested additional access to their customer feedback during this crisis indicating VSignals access needs to be expanded beyond VISN and facility leads
Recommendation	**Deploy additional VSignals surveys across VA and add free-text comments on existing surveys. Increase employee exposure to VSignals reporting.**

Virtual Human-Centered Design	
Action	Conducted 43 Veteran HCD virtual interviews from 12 VHA facility catchment areas to gather Veteran thoughts and feedback about delivery of safe care at the request of VHA.
Voice of the Veteran	Veterans preferred the virtual interview options based on participation as compared to previous in-person interview efforts.
Lessons Learned	• Virtual interviews are conducted faster and cheaper than in-person • Video interviews yielded more valuable feedback vs phone interviews
Recommendation	**Increase use of virtual Veteran HCD to focus VA programs and services on Veteran feedback and expressed actual need.**

Veterans Health Administration (VHA)

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities

Core Function/Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to Perform (U)
1. Health Services for Veterans		X		
2. Integrated Response		X		
3. Support to Health Services			X	
4. Fourth Mission Readiness & Response		X		
5. Research	X			

Core Function/Capability:	1. Health Services for Veterans	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	S

Summary/Status:

- VHA fully met demand for COVID-19 care to 24,671 Veterans plus 278 Fourth Mission inpatients
- Dramatically expanded telehealth capacity; utilization up 10x reaching 244,000 unique Veterans per month
- Implemented VAMC surge plans creating 4,000 additional beds for COVID-19 care, fully meeting demand and enabling Fourth Mission capacity to accept patients from overwhelmed communities and State Veterans Homes
- Generated a surge in hiring netting a 6,268 gain in staff (above attrition) via new pay authority and HR waivers
- Hired over 23,823 new employees via streamlined 12-day process with on-boarding slashed to 3 days
- Shifted volunteer employees between VAMCs to match staffing to required capacity for demand
- Responded to initial COVID-19 detection in Northeast CLCs with a VHA strategy that prevented spread among 7,634 Veterans in CLCs and SCI units, keeping prevalence of COVID-19 infection well below community rates
- Outcome data strongly suggests better COVID-19 outcomes for infected Veterans residing in CLCs in comparison to infected residents in State Veterans Homes or community nursing homes; VHA launched research to assess potential explanations and generate new knowledge for elder care standards
- PPE inventories have been consistently sufficient at all sites of care but insufficient national access to supplies is keeping reserves low, requiring meticulous management
- Shortfalls in testing capacity due to limited national availability of devices and supplies have required careful evolution of testing policy with prioritization limiting early detection and slowing Moving Forward progress

Risk(s):

- Risk posed by expanding national surges in demand for COVID-19 care:
- Delays in Moving Forward progress imposed by increased demand for beds, testing and PPE
- Expansion of the number of Veterans with pending needs for in-person care or procedures
- Localized staffing shortfalls due to unavailability of staff from COVID-19 illness/exposure and staff fatigue from sustained stress of COVID-19 operations

- Potential for failure to identify the basis for improved COVID-19 outcomes in VHA CLCs and incorporate that knowledge into national elder care standards

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Sustain and resource plans to meet surges in demand for COVID-19 care in all networks prioritizing needs of Veterans with conditions associated with elevated risk for complications
- Sustain and continue streamlining of hiring and on-boarding processes for new employees for VHA facilities
- Sustain focus on support to front line teams and High Reliability across VHA for highest quality care/zero harm
- Continue to refine strategies for most effective use of available testing capacity
- Continue coordination with HHS to gain greater testing capacity with reliable devices and access to supplies
- Expand range of virtual care tools and increase integration of telehealth into processes of care
- Leverage networked telehealth across specialty care platforms

Core Function/Capability:	**2. Integrated Response**	**Performed with Some Challenges (S)**	S

Summary/Status:

- Within VHA, the concept for operations during the response employed a centrally established strategy with authority at the networks for execution
  - Consolidated data into an enterprise system to sustain a common operating picture
  - Employed daily analytics to monitor and forecast demand for Veteran care and Fourth Mission requests
  - Established a daily communications rhythm between VHACO and networks
  - Enabled network-to-network support with key decisions to minimize risk early and swiftly
- VHA recognized the COVID-19 threat and initiated planning and preparations for its response in early January 2020, weeks prior to organization of the federal response
- VHA's embedded liaison in HHS ASPR provided early intelligence about the novel coronavirus in China
- Lack of visibility of the status of the Strategic National Stockpile planning impaired VHA's early assessments of options for meeting PPE and equipment requirements

- Low initial awareness among national leadership of VHA's Fourth Mission led to insufficient allocation to VHA of federally procured supplies and equipment under the Defense Production Act
- This complicated VHA's early response significantly and was resolved via engagement of senior VA staff in FEMA coordinating bodies and several SecVA direct engagements with FEMA leadership
- Coordination of the unprecedented number of VHA Fourth Mission responses was greatly facilitated by direct engagement of the Deputy Under Secretary for Health with FEMA ESF8, HHS and DoD
- VHA mounted timely responses to 59 Mission Assignments plus 8 HHS Task Orders, across 47 states including acceptance of 278 community patients for COVID-19 care and response to 35 State Veterans Homes
- Despite outreach from VHA EIC direct coordination between leaders of federal health agencies during planning and the response was generally ad hoc with the notable exception of the strong VHA support to IHS
- Medical advice to those leading the national response was focused on expertise in public health but deficient in healthcare operations, leading to late recognition of the need for resources and support for health systems

Risk(s):

- Lack of established structure for coordinated planning and execution between federal health agencies carries a sustained risk for ineffective future response to a national health emergency; this risk will be particularly serious for a public health emergency featuring greater case fatality rates and greater critical care requirements
- Absence of permanent VHA liaison positions with FEMA and HHS carries risk of recurring coordination issues in future responses as this response eventually abates
- National planning and execution of future responses to health emergencies could fail to anticipate requirements to generate and sustain healthcare operations across the affected regions
- Decrements in capacity in the MHS, VHA and other federal health systems in the future could pose significant risk to the effectiveness of future responses to health emergencies

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- Establish VHA Readiness Centers focused on sustained readiness of teams, supplies, equipment and response processes
- VA and VHA leadership advocate for an effective national process for developing, exercising and sustaining response plans for a range of scenarios for public health emergencies
- VA and VHA propose health system representation (federal and private) in national planning and response to public health emergencies

- VA pursue a federal strategy for greater consolidation of federal health systems (HHS, VHA, MHS, IHS, CDC, NIH, PHS, Bureau of Prisons) to achieve optimal readiness, quality, access and efficiency
- Establish permanent VHA liaisons with FEMA and HHS focused on planning, Fourth Mission and supply chain
- - Pursue a formal role for VHA in management of the Strategic National Stockpile

Core Function/Capability:	**3. Support to Health Services**	**Performed with Major Challenges (M)**	M

Summary/Status:

- VHA has consistently assured supplies and equipment at all 167 VAMCs and associated facilities fully meeting demand for COVID-19 care and overall healthcare delivery
- VHA successfully equipped and supplied surge plans totaling 4,000 additional beds for COVID-19 care
- Shortfalls in PPE and testing equipment/supplies, have required meticulous coordinated management between the networks and VHACO with movement of supplies and equipment to match demand as well as coordinated procurement with strategic allocation
- Variability in supply chain management practices and absence of an enterprise supply chain information system significantly complicated the initial response
- Contingency inventory of pandemic supplies and equipment was inadequate to compensate for the collapse of the commercial market and low inventory in the Strategic National Stockpile
- Sustained shortfalls in the commercial market for PPE and testing equipment/supplies coupled with current surges in demand impairing progress in Moving Forward and delaying expansion of contingency inventory
- VA's Fourth Mission responsibility did not receive appropriate priority in initial federal allocations under the Defense Production Act, complicating the initial balance between care for Veterans with community response

Risk(s):

- Delays in Moving Forward due to increasing demands for PPE and testing driven by surges in demand for COVID-19 care at multiple sites
- Diminished VHA readiness due to delay in building contingency inventories of pandemic supplies from ongoing surges in national demand for PPE and testing coupled with rebuild of the Strategic National Stockpile
- Response limitations imposed by complex workarounds driven by variable supply chain management processes and absence of an enterprise supply chain information system

- Impaired planning for future responses due to uncertain access to supplies and equipment from the Strategic National Stockpile

Proposed Mitigation(s)

- Secure VHA role in management of the Strategic National Stockpile with sustained visibility of its status
- Sustain permanent VHA supply chain liaisons with FEMA and HHS
- Stood up Assistant Undersecretary for Health for Support Services; responsible for supply chain modernization
- Accelerate modernization of VHA supply chain management processes and systems
- Accelerate Defense Logistics Medical Logistics Supply System/LOGICOLE deployment to completion by 2024
- Accelerate VHA implementation of optimum supply chain management processes
- Implemented transitional supply chain inventory management tool—bridge to enterprise solution
- Establish a VHA additive manufacturing strategy to sustain capacity to produce critical supplies augmenting response to surges in demand
- Establish 150-180 days of owned inventory of critical supplies and equipment for public health emergency

Core Function/Capability:	4. Fourth Mission Readiness & Response	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	S

Summary/Status:

- VHA fulfilled 59 Mission Assignments plus 8 HHS Task Orders, with consistently timely responses across 47 states including acceptance of 278 community patients for COVID-19 care and response to 35 State Veterans' Homes and 87 community nursing homes totaling more than 8,000 community patients served
- Via frequent SecVA interaction with governors, national leaders and federal agencies, VHA proactively offered capacity to many state and local governments in duress as well as the Indian Health Service
- In multiple instances, timely response to urgent requests for VHA support to State Veterans' Homes and entities such as community nursing homes required life-saving response sooner than the FEMA ESF 8 coordination process could accommodate, requiring networks to respond in advance of a task order
- DEMPS processes lacked flexibility and required adaptation to a national pandemic response in order to provide greater agility and adjustments to sourcing; during the period of adaptation, timely response by the networks required instances of deployment outside the DEMPS process or with retroactive use of DEMPS
- Travel Nurse Corps coupled with DEMPS-registered volunteers proved to be effective in providing important skill sets to stabilize outbreaks in State Veterans Homes and community nursing homes
- VHA's successful responses have highlighted a national deficiency in elder care leaving nursing home residents highly vulnerable to infectious disease outbreaks

Risk(s):

- Sustained national deficiency in elder care beyond this pandemic driven by failed economic model for nursing home care
- Rapid response to urgent requests under the Fourth Mission is complicated by the timeline for Mission Assignment or Task Order approval, threatening to interfere with reimbursement and restrict funding options if a response is not ultimately approved
- Legacy processes for sourcing VHA staff for deployment may impair future responses due to inadequate agility to adjust to the scenario
- Reliance on volunteers for deployment may not be sufficient for future scenarios due to limitations on the pool of available deployers and a lengthened sourcing process
- Use of DEMPS to source staff for day-to-day staffing shortfalls diminishes the focus on readiness for emergency response among those registered

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- VA advocate for national reform to create an economic model for nursing home care that enables higher quality care

- Build a replacement for DEMPS focused on emergency response with streamlined processes focused on agility and including crisis-response processes for expedited sourcing
- Establish alternative processes for covering routine staffing shortfalls
- - Consider options for a nation-wide committed cadre of deployable staff with critical skill sets trained in the use of mobility equipment and knowledgeable of emergency response procedures

Core Function/Capability:	**5. Research**	**Performed without Challenges (P)**	P

Summary/Status:

- VHA's COVID-19 response has included engagement of its research capabilities to produce new knowledge pertaining to the care for Veterans with COVID-19 and informing the use of new tools such as telehealth to meet the overall health needs of Veterans during the pandemic
- VHA is an important national resource for research informing response to emerging infectious diseases of high consequence through its research capacity and the unique capability to capture longitudinal data across a very large population of Veterans
- VHA's Office of the Assistant Undersecretary for Health for Discovery, Innovation and Affiliate Networks coordinated synthesis of updated evidence from the high volume of published case studies and research pertaining to COVID-19 with focus on:
  - Review of evidence and updating synthesis regarding proposed interventions
  - Presentation of updated syntheses to busy clinicians across all VHA platforms of care also available on public facing website for clinicians in the community
- Employed the Innovation Ecosystem Group to spearhead initiatives to enhance virtual screening and promote remote monitoring of Veterans with chronic conditions through home medical devices linked wirelessly to virtual care equipment
- Some clinical trials had to be suspended early in the response out of concern for the safety of Veterans but VHA research sites are implementing actions to safely resume clinical trials within the Moving Forward Plans
- Over 90 VHA sites are engaged in research related to COVID-19 including therapeutic trials, validation of telehealth for care of mental health conditions and other chronic medical conditions
- Employed the VA Informatics and Computing Infrastructure to provide a curated longitudinal COVID-19 database enabling researchers to identify correlations important to understanding a multitude of factors pertaining to risk, therapeutics and rehabilitation for Veterans infected with COVID-19

- Collaborated with HHS (FDA) and DoE to use the DoE high speed computing capability to conduct analyses to produce evidence for the FDA pertaining to the safety and effectiveness of proposed interventions
- VHA is conducting research on the effectiveness of 3-D printed personal protective equipment to inform use of additive manufacturing in this response and future responses
- Thirty-eight VHA research sites have responded to the call for participation in the Accelerate COVID-19 Therapeutic Interventions and Vaccines national initiative

Risk(s):

- Diminished resources in the future for VA innovation and research activities would impair VHA's capabilities to bring its unique assets to bear in response to future health emergencies
- Ongoing clinical research requiring in-person interaction with veterans will be delayed by insufficient reserves of PPE and testing equipment during the ongoing response with widespread demand for COVID-19 care

Proposed Mitigation(s):

- The VHA AUSH for Discovery, Innovation and Affiliated Networks will continue to focus activities on rapid syntheses of new information for translation into clinical practice as well as partnerships to support HHS in expedited analysis of proposed interventions for emerging infectious disease of high consequence
- The Office of Research and Development will continue to keep VHA research sites apprised of national calls for research projects related to COVID-19 and coordinate participation by VHA researchers
- VHA will continue to give priority to new projects strongly relevant to care to Veterans during the COVID-19 response
- VHA will sustain curation and availability of the VA Informatics and Computing Infrastructure longitudinal data as a critical tool for research informing COVID-19 care nationally
- - VHA will actively contribute to the national "Warp Speed' strategy via the Accelerate COVID-19 Therapeutic Interventions (ACTIV) initiative

Office of Enterprise Integration (OEI)

Section I - Summary Analysis of Core Functions/Capabilities:

Core Function/Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to Perform (U)

1. Oversees the development and implementation of the enterprise strategic planning, enterprise risk management, performance management, and requirements management for the Department.	X			
2. Manage Department-level governance meetings - involves identifying and coordinating efforts of subject matter experts both internal and external to the VA to provide advice, recommendations, and leadership decision making guidance for VA administrations, staff offices, programs, projects, and initiatives. Includes Enterprise Program Integration and DOD collaboration efforts.	X			
3. Conduct Data Governance and Analytics - includes establishing and managing policies, processes, and standards for the management of VA data and performing business analytics to perform statistical analysis, reporting, and visualizations to provide meaningful information to VA and to external Federal entities. It also includes the identification/designation of VA common data, appointing data stewards for information subject areas, and identification/designation of Authoritative Data Sources for VA data and data architecture.	X			
4. Develop and Codify Functional Policy - includes all activities associated with the development,			X	

approval and formal codification of Department-wide handbooks, directives, delegations by functional domain owners and relevant internal stakeholders.				
5. Manage MISSION Act, Section 152 Care and Payment Innovation Program - includes all activities that focus on developing innovative approaches to testing payment and service delivery models in order to reduce expenditures while preserving or enhancing the quality of care furnished by the Department.				X

Section II - Summary of Core Functions/Capability Performance:

Core Function/Capability:	1. Oversee strategic planning, enterprise risk management, and requirements management.	**Rating:**	P

<u>Summary/Status</u>: There was no impact by COVID-19 to this Core Function/Capability. Strategic Foresight and Risk Management (SFRM) leads the Department's strategic future foresight and risk management process. SFRM is responsible for managing VA's enterprise risk management framework that provides the necessary governance, communications, training, processes, and tools to effectively identify, assess, address, and monitor risks, enabling VA leadership to make informed decisions and focus priorities that make the best use of resources. SFRM also leads the Department's strategic future foresight program to provide forward-leaning, over the horizon analyses which identifies long-range issues that affect Veterans and Department. SFRM enables VA's senior leaders to maintain a consolidated, timely, and robust understanding of both known and emerging risks in the Department, as well as how these risks are being addressed. The Strategic Planning Service conducts forward-thinking planning to address long-range issues and leads the Department's Strategic Planning process to collaboratively develop the VA's Strategic Plan, Strategic Goals, and Strategic Objectives.

OEI continued to conduct both of the above core capabilities, in addition to strengthening requirements capabilities across the enterprise. During this time OEI also

continued the established the Chief Executive Officer (CXO) Council) as a subordinate governance body reporting to the VA Operations Board (VAOB). The purpose of the CXO Council is to provide analyses, develop recommendations, and make decisions on operational and resourcing issues with Department-wide impact. The Council has also continued to effectively manage the fiscal year 2020 IT unfunded requirements process.

Risk(s): None.

Proposed Mitigation(s): None.

Core Function/Capability:	2. Manage Department-level governance meetings	**Rating:**	**P**

Summary/Status: There was no impact by COVID-19 to this Core Function/Capability. OEI serves as the Governance Secretariat for VA senior leadership to provide strategic direction, maintain accountability and oversight to make enterprise decisions in accomplishment of the Department's mission. OEI oversees the day-to-day management and administration of VA's governance process to support and deliver a collaborative, integrated and transparent decision-making process. OEI continues to support Department-level meetings in a virtual environment, including the Secretary's meeting with Under/Assistant Secretaries and the VA Operations Board (VAOB). OEI is also exploring alternative online meeting platforms, digital meeting materials and taking on management of new governance efforts (e.g., the new CXO Council mentioned above).

Risk(s): None.

Proposed Mitigation(s): None.

Core Function/Capability:	3. Conduct Data Governance	**Rating:**	**P**

Summary/Status: OEI is responsible for providing VA statistics and data analytic products and services to support planning; policy analysis; policy development; reporting, and decision-making in the Department. OEI is also responsible for leading VA's enterprise data governance and managing the Department's data stewardship program. Both as a part of developing a sound data analytics strategy for the Department, and in response to COVID-19, OEI partnered with the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) to: (1) procure the Palantir Foundry Software as a Service (SaaS) data integration and analytic platform, and (2) set up a joint Integrated Project Team (IPT) to integrate the SaaS platform as an enterprise capability supporting operational transformation.

This platform will be used to provide immediate insight, indicators, and reporting for VHA. The vision has two components:

- Common Operational Picture (COP) driven by managed and authoritative COVID-19 data, supporting timely and aligned decisions by VHA Field and Central Office leadership; and
- Strengthened VA and VHA data management, human capital, and unity of effort to build and operate the COP.

The team has identified 75 key analytic questions in three use case categories and is working to leverage data sets from across VA and externally.

Risk(s): None.

Proposed Mitigation(s): None.

Core Function/Capability:	4. Develop and Codify Functional Policy	**Rating:**	**M**

Summary/Status: OEI leads and manages the Department's policy management process and provides policy analysis support to the Secretary and VA senior leadership to include the directive management process, organizational change process, and oversight of delegation of authorities. OEI re-prioritized emerging priority policies, designations and delegations of authority to ensure that pay, benefits, and policies did not negatively impact employees during this emergency.

Risk(s): Other Departmental policies have been waiting in queue due to reprioritization of COVID-related policies.

Proposed Mitigation(s): OEI is currently working with key stakeholders, such as HRA, to prioritize their existing work to ensure that we can be more responsive to their needs moving forward. We are also working on a recruitment for one additional FTE to help with capacity.

Core Function/Capability:	5. Manage MISSION Act, Section 152 Innovation Programs	**Rating:**	**U**

Summary/Status: The VA Center for Innovation for Care and Payment established a pilot program to help Veterans who are ineligible for dental services provided by VA. The VA Innovation Center (VIC), Center for Innovation for Care and Payment, is focused on developing innovative approaches to payment and service delivery models aimed at reducing costs while maintaining or improving the quality of care for

Veterans. The Community Provider Collaborations for Veterans (CPCV) Pilot Program is the first pilot idea developed within the VIC portfolio.

Under the CPCV Pilot Program, VA proposes an initial demonstration model that aims to provide care coordination to connect eligible Veterans to community-based, pro bono, or discounted dental care providers who want to provide care to Veterans at no cost to VA. VA is currently in the process of evaluating, interviewing, and selecting a small number of sites across several Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN) for this dental pilot demonstration, but has otherwise paused activities to allow providers to focus on the emerging health care needs of Veterans.

Risk(s): Delays in innovating programs to help improve services to Veterans.

Proposed Mitigation(s): Restart pilot planning once it is deemed safe to do so.

APPENDIX 2: Action Plan (TBD)

Action	Responsible Party	Target Date