Commemorate
VA Pride Month 2022

VA continues to celebrate the diversity and inclusiveness of its unique workforce during Pride Month, commemorating the numerous contributions and significant achievements of VA’s LGBTQ+ community in the further promotion of welcomeness in VA’s work environment.

Each June, the Nation celebrates the strengths and inspiration found within the LGBTQ+ community, honoring those who worked to create a more equitable and consciously inclusive environment. Pride Month continues to be a beacon of hope for employees, Veterans and allies at VA as well as for those across the Nation and throughout the world.

Over the past year, VA’s Office of Resolution Management, Diversity and Inclusion (ORMDI) led the Department in supporting various initiatives promoting inclusion, diversity, equity and access (I-DEA) including the implementation of Executive Order 14035 on June 25, 2021. This effort included ORMDI’s prominent participation in the White House Domestic Policy Council Gender Marker Interagency Task Force as well as support of the LGBTQ+ Integrated Product Team’s personal pronoun pilot project. To date, more than 30,000 employees have added personal pronouns to their Microsoft profiles. ORMDI is also pleased to acknowledge the steady and rapid growth of the PrideVA employee resource group (ERG) established in June 2021. Fifteen local chapters are currently under development at various VA facilities throughout the United States.

Through the efforts of the VA LGBTQ+ Workgroup and its internal VA National Virtual PRIDE sub-group, the Department remains committed to creatively and innovatively connecting communities across VA via a virtual platform allowing for convenient access to VA Pride Month information, resources and events. This trailblazing group successfully hosted 27 events for VA’s first enterprise-wide virtual Pride Month in 2021. Over 40 diverse events are planned for 2022 including a June 1 kick-off with Secretary Denis McDonough and ORMDI Deputy Assistant Secretary Harvey Johnson. For more information on VA Pride Month events including how to receive CEUs for some events, the PrideVA ERG or VA’s LGBTQ+ Special Emphasis Program, contact Mr. Sterling Akins, VA’s Departmental LGBTQ+ Program Manager, ORMDI. SEPMs should seek local management approval and consult the Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs and/or the District Counsel Office as deemed necessary by local management to ensure that use of VA resources in support of a SEP activity is authorized.

Be sure to review the VA National Pride Month calendar of virtual events included at the end of this issue!

Upcoming Events
June 2022

VA Pride Month

National Caribbean-American Heritage Month

PTSD Awareness Month

D-Day
June 6

Women Veterans Recognition Day
June 12

Flag Day
June 14

Juneteenth
June 19 (federal holiday observed June 20)

ORMDI Steps Toward Conflict Resolution

You can contact ORMDI toll-free at 1-888-566-3982 (TDD/TTY, dial 711 before providing this number) and speak with a specialist regarding equal employment opportunity (EEO) complaint processing, Alternative Dispute Resolution, or harassment prevention. You must initiate contact with an EEO counselor within 45 days of the date of the alleged act of discrimination by calling 1-888-566-3982 or visiting your local ORMDI Field Office. The harassment prevention procedures do not affect rights under the EEO complaint process. Harassment should be reported immediately to a manager or supervisor, Harassment Prevention Coordinator, or the Harassment Prevention Program.
Congratulations to the four VA employees who were recognized last month with a Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) Civilian Award including ORMDI’s own Ms. Laura Wood! These awards recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the advancement of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) communities and promote diversity and inclusion among the Federal and District of Columbia government workforces. The awards were presented during the FAPAC National Leadership Training Program held in May to coincide with AANHPI Heritage Month.

Please also join the Nation in observing Women Veterans Recognition Day on June 12. Women Veterans Recognition Day, also referred to as Women Veterans Appreciation Day, is the anniversary of the day the Women’s Armed Services Integration Act (pub.L. 80–625, 62 Stat. 356) was signed into law by President Harry S. Truman on June 12, 1948. Prior to then, only women nurses could serve in the regular and reserve forces during peacetime (Vantage Point). This observance provides the opportunity to recognize women’s military service throughout American history. For more information on VA services for women Veterans, visit the Center for Women Veterans website.

The second class of the Office of Resolution Management, Diversity and Inclusion (ORMDI) Instructor Development Course (IDC) for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Trainers graduated on April 15, 2022! Congratulations to the following graduates:

- Ms. Tami Press – Director, Western Region; ORMDI - Washington, DC
- Ms. Aurelia Waters – Diversity & Inclusion Specialist; VBA - Office of Human Capital Svc
- Ms. Elizabeth Walther – Diversity & Inclusion Specialist; VBA - Office of Human Capital Svc
- Ms. Erin Diehl – EEO Program Manager; VHA - Member Services
- Ms. Georgianna Bady – Health Systems Specialist; VHA - 14 HAP
- Ms. Kelly Carter – Program Analyst, Talent Management; VHA - HLTI
- Mr. Kenneth Heyward – Management Analyst; VHA Office of Integrated Veteran (OIVC) Care – Washington, DC
- Mr. Kevin Murphy – Social Worker; VHA - VAMC Columbia, SC
- Mr. Larry Holman – Program Analyst; ORMDI - Washington, DC
- Ms. Monica Molnar – Staff Attorney; OGC, PLG - Washington, DC
- Ms. Perdita Johnson-Abercrombie – Director, Eastern Region; ORMDI - Washington, DC
- Ms. Toshia Walters – EEO Program Manager; VHA - VAMC Des Moines, IA

Thanks to Mr. Lewis “Lew” Henson and the Employee Development and Education team, these graduates are now equipped with the instructor skills and tools essential for the delivery of the DEI Train-the-Trainer (T3) five-course curriculum. They will advance to the DEI T3 program to be held in July 12-14, 2022. Graduates of the DEI T3 program will be qualified to deliver the five following courses:

- Valuing Workforce Diversity and Workplace Inclusion
- Managing Implicit Bias in VA
- Managing Gender Diversity in VA
- Managing Generational Diversity in VA
- Applying Cultural Competence in A Multicultural VA

For more information, contact Mr. Lester Stephens, ORMDI DEI Training Program coordinator.
VA Careers
Recruitment Campaign Targets Diverse Audiences

VA Careers recruits qualified, talented candidates for a wide variety of positions that help VA fulfill its mission of serving Veterans. A program within the Veterans Health Administration’s (VHA) Workforce Management and Consulting (WMC) Office, the VA Careers team creates national campaigns to promote the many career opportunities and benefits that await those who choose VA as an employer. VA Careers campaigns include paid and unpaid advertising, recruiting events, blogs, social media posts, website content development, LinkedIn Live broadcasts, internal and external partnerships, and targeted emails.

Driving all recruitment efforts is VA’s commitment to providing a diverse and inclusive work environment that celebrates, honors, and supports employees from all backgrounds.

Today, about 27% of Veterans are members of a racial or ethnic minority group. By 2045, this number is predicted to increase to 39%. Women are the most diverse group of Veterans—about 41% of women who used VA health services in 2021 belonged to a racial or ethnic minority group. Because VA now serves the most diverse group of Veterans in our Nation’s history, it is vital that Veterans see themselves reflected in the providers who care for them.

Marketing to diverse audiences

To foster a fair and inclusive workplace, the VA Careers team developed and is executing a recruitment marketing plan to increase workforce diversity at VA. In addition to creating audience-specific key messages for recruiters to use, the team is working with internal and external partners and stakeholders to spread the word that VA is a great place to work for jobseekers from diverse backgrounds looking for a meaningful career.

External partners with whom the VA Careers team shares their blogs and social media posts include Historically Black Colleges and Universities or HBCU (they are also creating an article about careers at VA for HBCU’s newsletter), Disabled American Veterans, DiversityComm, the National Rehabilitation Information Center and Minority Nurse. As the team continues to nurture these partnerships, they are also cultivating new external partners to expand our outreach to diverse job applicants.

Some of the diversity blogs the team has published and promoted recently include:

- Veterans find support in minority programs coordinators at VA
- Enhance care for women Veterans with your VA career
- Leader profile: Lelia Jackson excels in service to VA
- Get paid work experience through VA’s National Diversity Internship Program
- New program aims to improve care for Native American Veterans
- Dr. Preston Igwe discusses diversity in medicine, care of Veterans

“We can’t do this work alone,” said Mr. Darren Sherrard, Associate Director for Recruitment Marketing. “We need our external and internal partners to share our resources and help spread the word among diverse candidates about the rewards and benefits of a VA career.”

Support VA’s recruiting efforts and help VA bring more diverse employees to the Department by sharing the VA Careers blogs, VA Careers website, HBCU brochure and inclusion brochure.

For questions or comments, please contact the VA Careers team at VHARecruitmentMarketing@va.gov.
External Affinity Conferences

VA employees who plan to attend any of the following external affinity conferences/events are responsible for obtaining supervisory approvals. Please note that centralized funding is not available for attendance. Funding for registration must come from the employee’s benefitting program office:

**Society of American Indian Government Employees 18th National Training Program**
The Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) will host its 18th National Training Program virtually June 21-23, 2022. SAIGE is a non-profit organization representing American Indian and Alaska Native Federal, Tribal, State and local government employees. SAIGE focuses on professional development, leadership and Federal Trust Responsibility. Following supervisory and budget approval, attendees must also register on the SAIGE website. For more information, contact Ms. Tynnetta Lee, VA’s National American Indian/Alaska Native Program Manager, ORMDI.

**Federally Employed Women’s Third Virtual Leadership Summit**
Federally Employed Women (FEW) will hold its third Virtual Leadership Summit July 18-22, 2022. The theme for this summit is “Leadership, Next Level: People, Person Passion.” FEW is a private membership organization working as an advocacy group to improve the status of women employed by the Federal Government, with a focus on four major program areas: compliance, diversity, legislative and training. The summit will offer workshops on equal employment opportunity, human resources, information technology, management and leadership, and courses that address the Executive Core Qualifications required for the Senior Executive Service. Following supervisory and budget approval, attendees must also register on the FEW website. For more information, contact Ms. Tynnetta Lee, VA’s National Federal Women’s Program Manager, ORMDI.

**League of United Latin American Citizens National Convention and Exposition**
The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) National Convention and Exposition will be held on July 25-30, 2022, at the Puerto Rico Convention Center in San Juan, Puerto Rico. LULAC’s mission is to advance the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, housing, health, and civil rights of the Hispanic population of the United States. The LULAC Federal Training Institute will provide attendees with workshops, plenary sessions, and other activities that are geared towards enhancing one’s career and leadership development skills, with much emphasis on the Executive Core Qualifications required for entry to the Senior Executive Service. Following supervisory and budget approval, attendees must also register on the LULAC website. For more information, contact Ms. Karen M. Basnight, VA’s Acting Departmental Hispanic Employment Program Manager, ORMDI.

**Blacks In Government 43rd Annual National Training Institute**
The Blacks In Government (BIG) 43rd Annual National Training Institute (NTI) will take place August 15-18, 2022, at the Huntington Convention Center in Cleveland, Ohio. This year’s theme is “Training in a Transformed Workplace – Providing Innovative Professional Development.” BIG has four scheduled days filled with government leaders as guest speakers and workshops covering leadership development, career advancement, networking, and mental/health resilience. Following supervisory and budget approval, attendees must also register on the BIG website. For more information, contact Ms. Tynnetta Lee, VA’s Departmental Black/African American Program Manager, ORMDI.

**Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities 36th Annual Conference**
The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) will host its 36th Annual Conference on October 8-10, 2022, at the Manchester Grand Hyatt in San Diego, California. The conference will include plenaries, luncheons, and networking opportunities, and it will provide a unique forum to share information and ideas for the most promising practices in the education of Hispanics. Following supervisory and budget approval, attendees must also register on the HACU website. For more information, contact Ms. Karen M. Basnight, VA’s Acting Departmental Hispanic Employment Program Manager, ORMDI.
Training
The Audacity to Fail Podcast
The Audacity to Fail Podcast: #misStepping Into Success focuses on discovering leadership wisdom through experiences with failures and missteps. The podcast features conversations and stories from VA leaders as they share how failure activates a growth mindset, is an important part of learning and provides motivation for improvement. On the May episode, Dr. Shari Dade spends time with Mr. James Douglas, the Associate Director for the VA West Texas Health Care System. In his role, Mr. Douglas is responsible for the administrative operations of the Health Care System to include Fiscal and Engineering oversight. Listen in for a discussion on how to still achieve success when you feel limited by failures, situations and circumstances. The series is also available on the Talent Management System.

Commemorate

Juneteenth
VA joins the Nation in observing Juneteenth on June 19, 2022 (the federal holiday will be observed on June 20). Juneteenth celebrates the end of slavery in the United States. It is also known as Emancipation Day, Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, Juneteenth Independence Day and Black Independence Day.

On “Freedom’s Eve,” or the eve of January 1, 1863, the first Watch Night services took place. On that night, enslaved and free African Americans gathered in churches and private homes across the country awaiting news that the Emancipation Proclamation had taken effect. At the stroke of midnight, prayers were answered as all enslaved people in Confederate States were declared legally free. Union soldiers, many of whom were black, marched onto plantations and across cities in the south reading small copies of the Emancipation Proclamation spreading the news of freedom in Confederate States (Smithsonian).

Although the Emancipation Proclamation issued by President Abraham Lincoln came two-and-a-half years earlier on January 1, 1863, many slave owners continued to hold their enslaved people captive after the announcement, so Juneteenth became a symbolic date representing African American freedom. On June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, and announced the end of the Civil War and the end of slavery.

Major General Granger’s announcement, General Order Number 3, reads: The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property, between former masters and slaves and the connection heretofore existing between them, becomes that between employer and hired labor. The Freedmen are advised to remain at their present homes and work for wages. They are informed that they will not be allowed to collect at military posts; and they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere.

Even after the general order, some slave masters withheld the information from their enslaved people, holding them enslaved through one more harvest season. Texans celebrated Juneteenth beginning in 1866 with community-centric events, such as parades, cookouts, prayer gatherings, historical and cultural readings, and musical performances. Over time, communities have developed their own traditions. Some communities purchased land for Juneteenth celebrations, such as Emancipation Park in Houston, Texas. As families emigrated from Texas to other parts of the United States, they carried Juneteenth celebrations with them. Juneteenth officially became a Texas state holiday on January 1, 1980 (Congressional Research Service).

For more information on VA’s Black/African American Special Emphasis Program, contact Ms. Tynnetta Lee, VA’s Departmental Black/African American Program Manager, ORMDI.
Ramond Curtis is an Iraq war Army veteran.

Panel Discussion With Minority Veterans of America

11:00am - 1:00pm

Strict rules don't apply. These attractions can be expressed in various cultural, racial, and ethnic groups. Learning about ourselves is needed with regards to the LGBTQ+ community; finally, that as one full-time position at the Orlando VA. An introduction to Consensual Non-Monogamy & Bisexuality is not binary: Non-monosexual identities and women and those who are non-binary do not have to label comfortable.

This webinar will provide an overview of VA Handbook 5975.4, disciplined practices to help address these disparities which will be explored in interactions with Veteran customers, both internal and external. This training will prepare providers to assess veterans' sexual challenges of CNM relationships, and stigma and stressors related to achieving sexual health among the LGBTQ population. There are tangible ways to incorporate LGBTQ inclusive clinical skills and recommendations for prescribing PrEP.

An overview of the transgender military experience over the past ten years, what providers should know about transgender service experience, and a forward-looking consideration of the rewards and deep emotional and spiritual wounds from choice. As a result, LGBTQ+ people often carry working with Veteran customers, both internal and external. This training is to increase cultural competency when it comes to LGBTQ military and veteran community.

The last few years have seen an increase in stories of trans youth, specifically mortality data collection methods across the country, Suicide Prevention Efforts nationally around LGBTQ+ community, Taking a look at policy changes over the last year and upcoming bipartisan legislation. In the military, the lasting effects of these exclusionary policies and inclusion in our Armed Forces is a relatively new policy. In modern society, LGBTQ people have been serving in our nation's military dating back to World War II, and is Accredited in Public Relations by the Public Relations Society of America.

Chaplain Lea Brown

VCC Dr. Traci Stewart Mike Broady

All times

CEU's

JUN2022

June 1 2022: Strength in Diversity = Stronger Together

June 3 2022: 35th Annual Conference on Geriatric Psychiatry

June 3 2022: An Introduction to Value-Based Health Care Delivery

June 4 2022: Using the VA's Mother to Baby Program to Support Postpartum Women Veterans and Their Families

June 4 2022: Using the VA's Mother to Baby Program to Support Postpartum Women Veterans and Their Families

June 5 2022: Getting the Most from Your VA Benefits

June 6 2022: An Introduction to Consensual Non-Monogamy & Bisexuality

June 7 2022: Providers Helping Veterans Navigate Opioid Use Disorder

June 8 2022: The Impact of Pathology on Our Cognitive Aging

June 9 2022: Mental Health and Suicide Prevention in Veterans

June 10 2022: LGBTQ+ veteran and family support

June 11 2022: LGBTQ+ veteran and family support

June 12 2022: LGBTQ+ veteran and family support

June 13 2022: LGBTQ+ veteran and family support

June 14 2022: LGBTQ+ veteran and family support

June 15 2022: LGBTQ+ veteran and family support

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