Upcoming Events
November 2022

National American Indian Heritage Month
Family Caregivers Month
Military Family Month

Veterans Day
National Veterans Day Ceremony
Arlington National Cemetery; November 11

Transgender Day of Remembrance
November 20

Thanksgiving
November 24

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 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. For Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) services, email the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer ADR team at workplaceadr@va.gov.

Commemorate
National American Indian Heritage Month

VA joins the Nation in commemorating National American Indian Heritage Month this November. The 2022 theme is: “Celebrating Respect, Culture, and Education.”

The observance recognizes American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) for their immeasurable contributions to the United States including their courageous service in our Nation’s armed forces such as that of U.S. Army Technician 5th Grade, and the last Crow War Chief, Joseph Medicine Crow who served in the 103rd Infantry Division during World War II and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2009.

Specialist Five Dwight W. Birdwell, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation, entered the U.S. Army in 1966 and served with Troop C, 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry, 25th Infantry Division. The father of Director Stephanie Birdwell, VA Office of Tribal Government Relations, Specialist Five Birdwell recently received the Medal of Honor at the White House on July 5, 2022, for, “acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty...in the Republic of Vietnam on Jan. 31, 1968” (U.S. Department of Army).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Nation’s AI/AN population (alone or in combination with other race groups) is projected to grow to 10.1 million by July 2060. At the end of the fiscal year 2022, AI/ANs represented 1.01% of the Relevant Civilian Labor Force and 1.55% of VA’s permanent and temporary workforce. This is an increase of 0.03 percentage points from the previous fiscal year. Of the 122,900 Veterans employed by VA, 1,938 are AI/AN (1.58%). For more information, visit VA’s AI/AN Special Emphasis Program (SEP) webpage.
Message from the DAS
Harvey Johnson, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Resolution Management, Diversity and Inclusion

The Department of Veterans Affairs Special Observances for Calendar Year 2023 schedule is now available as VA joins the Nation in observing certain days, weeks and months designated by joint congressional resolution or presidential proclamation. This document lists observances that are related to the Special Emphasis Programs or other programs managed by ORMDI. VA leaders are encouraged to support the commemoration of these observances, including new ones that may be established throughout the year. Valuing the diversity of all our employees is integral to VA delivering outstanding services to our Nation’s Veterans, their families and beneficiaries. Thank you for your support.

In alignment with VA’s commitment to ensuring that every employee can bring their authentic self to work and feels a sense of belonging throughout their journey with the Department, Phase II of the Identity Insights project is now underway. The Veterans Experience Office’s Employee Experience & Organizational Management Directorate, in partnership with ORMDI, launched this project to identify tangible opportunities for VA to focus in order to improve employee experience within and across identity groups. To participate, sign up for an Identity Insights interview or focus group. As a reminder, the Identity Insights Phase I Final Report is available on the ORMDI website.

Improving the Health of American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans
VHA and IHS Sign New MOU

Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and the Indian Health Service (IHS) signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to help the country’s nearly 145,000 American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Veterans overcome health care access barriers. Built on nearly two decades of experience, the MOU establishes a framework for coordination and partnership between VHA and IHS to leverage and share resources and investments in support of each organization’s mutual goals. To read the MOU, visit the VHA Office of Rural Health. For more information about the VHA-IHS partnership and AI/AN Veterans, contact the VHA Office of Rural Health at ORHcomms@va.gov.

Advisory Committee on Tribal and Indian Affairs
Public Meetings to be Held in November

The Advisory Committee on Tribal and Indian Affairs will meet at the VA Central Office, 810 Vermont Avenue NW, Sonny Montgomery Room 230, Washington, DC on November 8, 9, and 10, 2022. The purpose of the Committee is to advise the Secretary on all matters relating to Indian tribes, tribal organizations, Native Hawaiian organizations, and Native American Veterans. This includes advising the Secretary on the administration of healthcare services and benefits to American Indians/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Veterans; thereby assessing those needs and whether VA is meeting them.

On November 8, 2022, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. EST, the agenda will include opening remarks from the Committee Chair, Executive Sponsor, and other VA officials. There will be updates and proposed recommendations from the health subcommittee.

On November 9, 2022, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. EST, the agenda will include updates from the benefits and administrative subcommittees for proposed recommendations from each of the subcommittees. From 2:45 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. there will be Public Comment from those public members who have provided a written summary.

On November 10, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 12 p.m. EST, the Committee will receive updates from the VA Office of Tribal Health. The committee will hold open discussion on topics relevant to the Committee and address follow-up and action items including dates for next meeting.

The meetings are open to the public (virtually) and will be recorded. Members of the public interested in attending can register for the VA Advisory Committee on Tribal and Indian Affairs meeting.
VA WORKFORCE DIVERSITY: FY 2022

Since FY 2021, the representation of Hispanic males, White males, and Two or More Races (TOMR) males and females declined. The population of TOMR decreased by 43% which had significant impact on the Diversity Index.

Diversity Index (RCLF)¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY2022</th>
<th>FY2021</th>
<th>FY2020</th>
<th>FY2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino Male</td>
<td>32.93%</td>
<td>32.96%</td>
<td>32.91%</td>
<td>32.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino Female</td>
<td>33.19%</td>
<td>33.15%</td>
<td>33.20%</td>
<td>33.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American Male</td>
<td>5.39%</td>
<td>5.42%</td>
<td>5.38%</td>
<td>5.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American Female</td>
<td>6.68%</td>
<td>6.66%</td>
<td>6.69%</td>
<td>6.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Male</td>
<td>2.49%</td>
<td>2.54%</td>
<td>2.50%</td>
<td>2.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Female</td>
<td>2.67%</td>
<td>2.71%</td>
<td>2.68%</td>
<td>2.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Male</td>
<td>0.08%</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
<td>0.09%</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Female</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
<td>0.09%</td>
<td>0.08%</td>
<td>0.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native Male</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
<td>0.51%</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
<td>0.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native Female</td>
<td>0.51%</td>
<td>0.52%</td>
<td>0.51%</td>
<td>0.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races Male</td>
<td>0.29%</td>
<td>0.30%</td>
<td>0.29%</td>
<td>0.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races Female</td>
<td>0.30%</td>
<td>0.30%</td>
<td>0.29%</td>
<td>0.30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Veterans Serving Veterans²

OF VA’S WORKFORCE; THAT MEANS NEARLY 2 IN 7 VA EMPLOYEES ARE VETERANS!

Veterans Onboard

DOWN SINCE LAST FISCAL YEAR

FY21 29.37% 28.23%
FY22

Veterans Hiring

UP SINCE LAST FISCAL YEAR

FY21 25.48% 25.88%
FY22

People with Disabilities⁴

11.72% of the VA permanent workforce have a disability which is 0.28% lower than the 12% goal!

2.31% of the VA permanent workforce have a targeted disability; higher than the 2% goal!

Veterans Hiring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12% PWD Goal</th>
<th>FY21</th>
<th>FY22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GS-1 through GS-10</td>
<td>15.61%</td>
<td>14.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS-11 through SES</td>
<td>9.47%</td>
<td>9.51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2% PWTD Goal</th>
<th>FY21</th>
<th>FY22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GS-1 through GS-10</td>
<td>3.40%</td>
<td>3.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS-11 through SES</td>
<td>1.45%</td>
<td>1.54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12% PWD hiring goal</th>
<th>FY21</th>
<th>FY22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.94%</td>
<td>8.89%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2% PWTD hiring goal</th>
<th>FY21</th>
<th>FY22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.97%</td>
<td>2.03%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹The Diversity Index measures the convergence of VA’s aggregate workforce representation by race, ethnicity, and gender to the Relevant Civilian Labor Force (RCLF). It represents the mean ratio of VA’s incumbent workforce to the corresponding groups in the RCLF. Furthermore, the RCLF consists of all U.S. citizens 16 years of age and over, excluding those in the Armed Forces, who are employed in or unemployed and seeking employment in VA occupations. RCLF data provided by the Census Bureau; based on 2010 Census. ² Data provided by VESO; includes Manila residents. ³ National Center for Organization Development. ⁴ Includes permanent full-time workforce only.

Source: VSSC MD-715. Includes permanent and temporary employees in pay status and excludes Manila and medical residents. Grade cluster groupings are determined by salary; Title-38 equivalents are included.
Veterans are the very heart of what we do at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). It is our mission to advance an inclusive environment that values and supports the diverse communities we serve and cultivates equitable access to care, benefits, and services for all. That’s I*DEA.

**INCLUSION**
Every individual who enters a VA facility must feel safe, included, and valued.

**DIVERSITY**
VA strives to leverage the strength and uniqueness that defines our Veteran population, our VA workforce, and our country.

**EQUITY**
VA seeks to reduce systemic barriers to opportunity with a goal of providing everyone with fair access to health care and benefits.

**ACCESS**
VA increases access by proactively embedding opportunities and creating institutional pathways for all by reducing and eliminating inequities.

Join the Cultural Transformation!
Learn More @ va.gov/ORMDI
Commemorate

Transgender Day of Remembrance and Transgender Awareness Month
November 20 marks Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR). This annual observance honors the memory of the transgender people whose lives were lost in acts of anti-transgender violence. Over the years, this observance expanded to “Transgender Awareness Week” and then later evolved into “Transgender Awareness Month” which is now commemorated each year in November as a time to recognize and uplift the voices and experiences of the transgender and gender non-conforming (GNC) community through education and action.

The best way to show support of transgender or GNC Veterans and co-workers is through validation and education. VA employees can begin by respecting an individual’s name and pronouns. In meetings and trainings, share your pronouns and invite others to do the same. You can also share your pronouns on your business cards and in your signature block. In support, VA has implemented the best practice of including personal pronouns in employees’ email profiles. To date, over 25,000 VA employees have updated their profiles to reflect their preferred pronouns. VA employees can visit the yourIT Service Portal and complete the personal pronouns request form to add their personal pronouns.

Another example of showing support is to call out “Veteran Smith” instead of “Mr.” or “Ms.” Visit Patient Care Services for VA LGBTQ+ Policies relating to Veterans, including VHA Directive 1341: Providing Health Care for Transgender and Intersex Veterans or to locate your facility’s LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinator for questions pertaining to transgender or GNC Veterans. Visit the ORMDI LGBTQ+ Program webpage for VA policies and resources for employees, including VA Handbook 5975.4, Transgender Employee Transition Guidance. For questions pertaining to transgender or GNC employees, contact your facility’s LGBTQ+ Special Emphasis Program Manager or EEO Manager.

Family Caregivers Month
November is National Family Caregivers Month. During National Family Caregivers Month, the VA recognizes the 5.5 million caregivers who make Veteran’s lives better. Visit the VA Caregiver Support Program website for more information about services, peer networks, and educational materials or call 1-855-260-3274 to learn more about the support that is available to you and for assistance connecting with the Caregiver Support Coordinator at your local VA Medical Center.

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 podcasts dives into conversations and stories from leaders as they share that failure activates a growth mindset, is an important part of learning, and motivation for improvement! On this season’s closer, Dr. Shari Dade is joined by Dr. Charlotte McCloskey, the Local Recovery Coordinator and staff Psychologist of the Kansas City VA Medical Center. Dr. McCloskey is the Co-Chair for the Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion SharePoint. Listen in for a discussion of how to increase and sustain employee engagement. The series is also available on the Talent Management System.

TEDxVeteransAffairs
Beginning November 1-3, VA will host its annual series of TED Talks—TEDxVeteransAffairs. The talks will air from 12 pm to 1:30 pm eastern time, each day. The theme for this year’s event, Changemakers, will highlight individuals that have shown tremendous resolve and an amazing ability to foster positive change throughout their lives. VA lined up a host of excellent speakers who will speak on a variety of topics, including how to overcome tremendous obstacles and inspire those around you. From VA field employees and VA Central Office staff, to Veterans, celebrated authors, artists and volunteers, this year’s TEDx event promises to continue VA’s trend of featuring engaging and exciting talks on a variety of subjects relevant to providing the best benefits and service to all Veterans. For comments or questions regarding TEDx Week, please contact the TEDxVeteransAffairs Chairperson, Mr. Prince Taylor.