
VA ~ Office of Tribal Government Relations Newsletter ~ September/October 2017

Greetings and welcome to the combined September/October edition of the VA Office of Tribal Government Relations newsletter. It's hard to believe that autumn is here, but November is a special month for us all as Veterans Day is coming up on the 11th and we are also celebrating National Native American Heritage Month. I'll discuss some of our engagements and commemorative events later in my note but something I would like to share right away is the release of the **VA 2016 Tribal Consultation Report**, on October 1, 2017. You can review the report on the link: https://files.kauffmaninc.com/projects/va/VA-2016-Consultation-Report_508.pdf. This report includes responses from VA on important topics of concern ranging from purchased care to identifying priorities for Veterans living in Indian Country. We worked hard to ensure the final document is both readable and informative. We're very interested in hearing your feedback so don't hesitate to email us with your questions and comments: tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov.

I also wanted to mention activities occurring in Congress that our readers should be aware of and may be advised to follow closely in the days ahead. On October 24, 2017, the House Veterans Affairs Committee held a hearing on two draft legislative proposals focused on revising the expiring Veterans Choice Program (Choice). Then, on November 6, 2017, the House passed HR 3657 which would authorize the VA to provide headstones and markers for the spouses and children of veterans who are interred in tribal Veterans cemeteries.

Now, transitioning to the topic of tribal engagements and outreach (I'll jump around a bit mentioning some activities that are on the horizon, and looking back to others that occurred in the couple of months since my last note), the Southwest is particularly busy right now, with leadership from two tribal governments located in New Mexico, the Pueblo of Zia and the Pueblo of Santa Clara, participating in Native American Direct Loan Memorandum of Understanding (NADL MOU) signing ceremonies with VA officials within the next few days. The MOU between Santa Clara Pueblo and VA will be the 100th MOU VA has signed with tribal governments. The NADL MOUs create a path for Veterans living on tribal trust lands to achieve the dream of home ownership by utilizing the VA home loan mortgage product. Since we're on the topic of NADL, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians will be doing a formal NADL MOU signing ceremony on November 30, 2017, a very exciting development for the tribe and VA. Also, during this same week into Veterans Day time frame, our tribal government relations specialist for the Southwest, Ms. Homana Pawiki will be traveling to Hopi to participate in the November 7, 2017 Veterans Outreach Day, "Community Celebrating and Honoring Veterans Military Service" from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Hopi Veterans Memorial Center. Later in the week, she'll be headed to New Mexico to attend the Taos Pueblo Veterans Recognition Day to be held on November 11.

Looking further east, the Oklahoma City VA Health Care System and the Muskogee VA Medical Center Directors are hosting a November 13, 2017 roundtable discussion with Oklahoma tribal health representatives. The roundtable topics will range from combatting opioid addictions to suicide prevention, mental health, resource sharing, increased access to care, direct consults and telehealth (just to name a few). For more information on the roundtable, contact Mary.Culley@va.gov. I should also take a moment to recognize Mary Culley and the generous support of the Otoe-Missouria Tribe for hosting another successful Veterans Intertribal Stand Down in Red Rock, OK on October 5-6th. Seven tribes participated in the event, which involved staff from the tribes, VA, the state of Oklahoma, the Department of Defense and other partners who worked to reach and serve Veterans living in the more rural parts of the state.

Over in the Northwest Pacific region, Terry Bentley worked with the Suquamish Tribe and the Washington State

Department of Veterans Affairs to sponsor the 16th Veterans Training Summit at the Suquamish Clearwater Resort on September 26-27, 2017. The objectives of the summit were to invite tribal leaders, tribal Veterans, tribal Veterans representatives, as well as other federal and state partners who work with American Indians and Alaska Natives for services and benefits to collaborate, educate and network to better serve this population. She also attended the Veteran Service Officer Training in Driftwood Shores, Florence, Oregon on October 16-20, 2017. This five-day event covered a detailed variety of Veterans compensation and pension benefits. It also included training on suicide awareness and prevention.

In the meantime, in the upper Midwest, our tribal government relations specialist Peter Vicaire was in Cherokee, NC for Veteran Committee meetings of the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET). There, he procured a resolution of support regarding the improper state taxation of reservation-domiciled servicemembers. Earlier this year, Arizona passed legislation which would return \$2 million to Native Veterans who were wrongly taxed and Kansas is now considering doing the same. Also, in Cherokee, Peter (and Mary Culley) implemented a Veteran event with Eastern Band Cherokee. He was then in Milwaukee, WI where he helped line up speakers for and presented to the Veterans Committee of the National Congress of American Indians.

Last but certainly not least, the White House will be hosting a Veterans Conference on November 29, 2017. State Directors of Veterans Affairs, County Veteran leadership, and Tribal leaders will be invited. For more information about the conference, please email David.Ward@va.gov. It is a White House event, but David (Clay) can certainly point you to the right place to help with obtaining additional details about the event.

In closing, I would be remiss if I neglected to mention that we would like to respectfully dedicate this newsletter in honor of Army Sgt. Philip Iyotte, a Lakota POW warrior who went missing in Korea 66 years ago and was finally laid to rest in South Dakota this past month. Sgt. Iyotte's service and sacrifice serve as a powerful reminder of the cost others pay for our freedoms. We also recognize and thank our brave men and women who have served or are currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. During this month, and every month, may we reflect on a way to honor those who have sacrificed so much in service to each one of us.

As always, if you have suggestions, requests, recommendations or submissions to the OTGR newsletter, please don't hesitate to email us at tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov, Peter.Vicaire@va.gov, or check out our website: www.va.gov/tribalgovernment. We look forward to hearing from you.

Warm Regards and happy reading,



Links to non-Federal services are provided solely as a service to our readers. These links do not constitute an endorsement of these organizations or their programs by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and none should be inferred. VA is not responsible for the content of the individual organization web pages found at these links nor the information provided on these events by organizations or individuals.

Indian Country Outreach Campaign for Pension and Presumptive Conditions



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
810 VERMONT AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON DC 20420

October 30, 2017

Dear Tribal Leader:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is writing to ask tribal governments, interested in participating in a nationwide outreach campaign, to reply to this letter within 30 days receipt. The focus of the outreach campaign will be identifying and assisting Veterans across Indian Country with presumptive disabilities and Veterans who may have non-compensable disabilities (VA pension claims). Reaching these Veterans could have a direct, tangible impact on the lives of thousands of previously unreached Veterans and their spouses.

Presumptive Conditions and VA Pension Benefits are defined as:

- A. Veterans with **presumptive disabilities**. Veterans may not realize that VA presumes that certain medical conditions are related to military service, although these conditions may first appear after discharge from the military. These conditions may qualify for compensation payments. See the enclosed fact sheet for more information, or visit <http://www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/serviceconnected/presumption.pdf>. In addition, surviving spouses may be eligible for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC), when Veterans die as a result of these presumptive disabilities. See the enclosed fact sheet or visit <http://www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/survivors/dic.pdf> for additional DIC eligibility.

VA can pay special monthly compensation additional allowances, to a Veteran who, as a result of military service, incurred the loss or loss of use of specific organs or extremities, and to a Veteran or Survivors who need regular assistance with activities of daily living, or when they are confined to their immediate premises because of disabilities i.e., an Aid and Attendance or Housebound allowance. See the enclosed fact sheets for more information, or visit <http://benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/serviceconnected/smc.pdf>

Veterans who may be eligible to receive **VA pension benefits**. VA pension is a needs-based benefit paid to wartime Veterans who meet certain age or non-service connected disability requirements. See the

Page 2.

Tribal Leader

enclosed fact sheet for more information, or visit

<http://benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/limitedincome/livepension.pdf>

VA can pay special monthly pension additional allowances, when a Veteran or surviving spouse need regular assistance with activities of daily living, or when they are confined to their immediate premises because of disabilities i.e., an Aid and Attendance or Housebound allowance. See the enclosed fact sheet for more information, or visit <http://benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/limitedincome/EnhancedorSpecialPension.pdf>

VA will work with local service providers to ensure interested tribes receive the information listed above, and more general information, via:

1. **Claims and health fairs** -- These on-site events may include: accepting claims; checking the status of claims; processing specific types of claims (identified beforehand); health eligibility screening; health benefits enrollment; blood pressure checks; and other medical screenings.
2. **Teleconferences** -- The services offered on site during claims fairs may be available through such technologies as video teleconferences, conference calls, Telehealth, etc. While access to such technology may be limited, where available it can still greatly assist with access to benefits for Veterans and their Survivors living in Indian Country.

If your tribe is interested in participating in this focused outreach campaign, please reply to tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov no later than 30 days from the date of this letter. VA will consider all tribes that express interest, and it will consult tribal leadership as it plans and coordinates all outreach events.



Mike Frueh
Chief of Staff
Veterans Benefits Administration



Thayer Verschoor
Executive Director
Intergovernmental Affairs

Enclosures

VA 2016 Tribal Consultation Report Released

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has released its 2016 Tribal Consultation Report, which provides a comprehensive summary of VA's tribal consultation activities during 2016. This report, prepared by VA's Office of Tribal Government Relations (OTGR), highlights tribes' top priorities for serving American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans, identified through consultation, and can be viewed and downloaded from our [website](#) or here: https://files.kauffmaninc.com/projects/va/VA-2016-Consultation-Report_508.pdf



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Honoring Our Heroes:
Building Partnerships to Connect
Native Veterans to Care and Benefits

Tribal Consultation Report | 2016



Indian Affairs Committee Advances Bipartisan Bill to Combat Native American Veteran Homelessness

Here is some information from the United States Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, which was released on September 13, 2017

WASHINGTON – Senators John Hoeven (R-ND) and Tom Udall (D-NM), chairman and vice chairman of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, and Senators Johnny Isakson (R-GA) and Jon Tester (D-MT), chairman and ranking member of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, welcomed the passage of their bipartisan legislation to address Native American veteran homelessness.

The Tribal HUD-VASH Act, introduced by Senator Tester, will renew a joint tribal housing initiative between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program, which provides rental and housing assistance to homeless and at-risk homeless veterans in Indian Country.

“Today, the committee took an important step forward to help improve the quality of life for Native Americans who courageously served our country,” Hoeven said. “American Indians have served in our armed forces in higher numbers than any other ethnic group. This bill extends vital resources to our Native American veterans and increases their access to safe, quality housing. I am glad to work with my colleagues in the Senate to quickly pass this bipartisan bill.”

“Native Americans serve our nation in the military in greater numbers per capita than any other ethnic group and it is critical that this country live up to the promise it made to Native veterans,” Tester said. “Without roofs over our heads, it is hard to live productive and healthy lives. This bipartisan bill is important because it provides tribes with resources to ensure that every Native American veteran has access to affordable housing.”

“Homelessness among Native American veterans is simply unacceptable,” Udall said. “We owe a solemn debt to these men and women who have given so much in service to our country. I’m proud to join in this bipartisan effort to ensure Native veterans in Indian Country have access to safe and affordable housing, and I’ll keep fighting to see this crucial legislation become law.”

“We must always take care of our service members who sacrificed so much for us,” Isakson said. “I am pleased this bipartisan effort to continue access to housing and support for Native American veterans is moving forward.”

HUD-VASH has supported homeless veterans since 2008. Prior to Congressional authorization of a tribal HUD-VASH pilot in 2015, Native American tribes and tribal housing authorities had been unable to access HUD-VASH funds.



The Tribal HUD-VASH Act will formally authorize the program for current recipients and ensure that at least five percent of all HUD-VASH funding is set aside for additional Native American tribes and tribal housing authorities to address veteran homelessness. The bill will also ensure that HUD and the VA modify the initiative through tribal consultation to better guide available resources to homeless Native American veterans.

The legislation also directs the Indian Health Service to provide any assistance requested by HUD or the VA to implement the initiative and directs HUD, the VA, and the Indian Health Service to conduct an initial review of the initiative after one year and subsequent reporting every five years thereafter.

The bill, as amended, unanimously passed the committee. The amendment incorporates technical corrections developed in consultation with HUD, including authorizing the HUD Secretary to renew grants awarded to current program recipients and requiring additional reporting by HUD to identify the impact of the program's implementation on home building under the Indian Housing Block Grant.

The Senate Indian Affairs Committee held a legislative hearing on the Tribal HUD-VASH Act on June 13, 2017. The National Congress of American Indians, National American Indian Housing Council, and the Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority testified in support of the legislation.



Eight Tribal Veteran Representatives attend Oregon Veteran Service Officer Training

This five-day event covered a detailed variety of Veterans compensation and pension benefits as well as training on suicide awareness and prevention. There were 118 Veteran Service Officers in attendance from counties all over Oregon and eight TVRs from three tribes: Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation; Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Indian Reservation.



Veterans Housing and Mortgages Continue to Rise for Tribes



Here's an [article written by Mark Fogarty](#) which ran in Indian Country Today on August 31, 2017

“One hundred tribes have signed MOUs, passing 1,000 loans from the VA’s Trust Land Mortgage Program to assist with veteran housing. The [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) has passed the 1,000 mark in the number of direct mortgages it has made to American Indian veterans of some 100 tribes.

As of May of last year the number of loans stood at 1,010, with total financing of \$120 million, according to a VA presentation. That is an average of \$120,000 per loan. The program mandates that veterans’ tribes sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the VA before veterans can receive financing. As of last May 97 MOUs had been signed with tribes.

Tribes have continued to sign up for the program in 2017, with the Morongo tribe recently becoming the first in southern California to sign an MOU. “Historically, securing a home loan has always been an extremely difficult process for Native Americans, and it’s exponentially harder if the property is located on reservation land,” said Morongo chairman Robert Martin. “This agreement will help ensure that our tribal veterans who have honorably served in the U.S. military will be able to purchase, construct, or improve a home for their families, and that the terms of that loan will be fair.”

“The VA Native American Direct Loan is an excellent option when a mortgage lender is unwilling or unable to make a loan on trust land,” VA director of loan guaranty services Jeffrey London said at a ceremony to mark the agreement on the Morongo reservation, which is near San Diego. The tribe noted that VA’s Native American Direct Loans are offered with no down payment, no private mortgage insurance and competitive interest rates, which are now four percent.

The tribe has adopted foreclosure, eviction, priority of lien and other procedures called for in the NADL program. Native veterans are also eligible for the regular [VA home](#) loan program that is open to all veterans, but there are significant differences. The general VA loan is made by a private lender and guaranteed by the VA. In the NADL, VA itself lends directly to the veteran. This eliminates the private lenders, who have been reluctant to lend on reservation trust land.

The NADL program is dwarfed by the other main mortgage lending program



specifically for Indians. The Department of Housing and Urban Development's Section 184 guaranteed [Indian mortgage](#) has guaranteed nearly 40,000 mortgages for a total of \$6.4 billion. However, the bulk of the HUD 184 money has gone to Indians living off reservation. Around 4,000 mortgages have been made on reservations. The loan can be used to purchase, construct or improve a home on trust land. It can also be used to simultaneously purchase and improve a home and also to refinance an NADL mortgage.

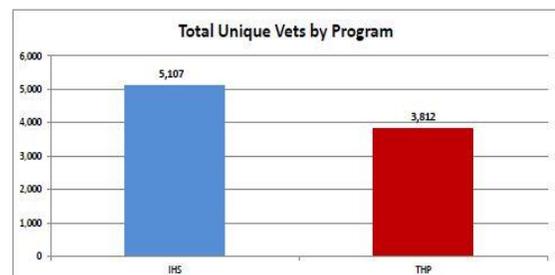
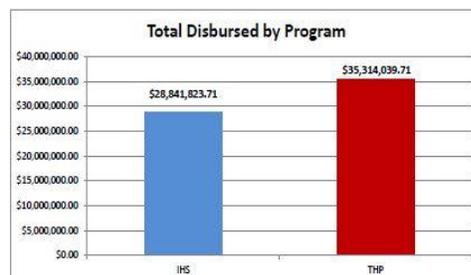
The veteran must use the home as his or her principal residence. Rentals and investment properties are not allowed. The funding fee, 1.25 percent for active duty members and two percent for Guard/Reserve members, can be financed along with the loan, and waived if the veteran is receiving service-related disability pay. Additional fees can include the VA appraisal, title review fees, state and/or local transfer taxes, recording fees, survey fee, and hazard insurance premium. New Mexico tribes have been active users of the program, with 15 tribes with MOUs with the VA. Washington state has 10 tribes in the program. Besides the Morongo, just three other California tribes have signed MOUs."

VA Reimburses over \$64 Million to IHS and Tribal Health Programs

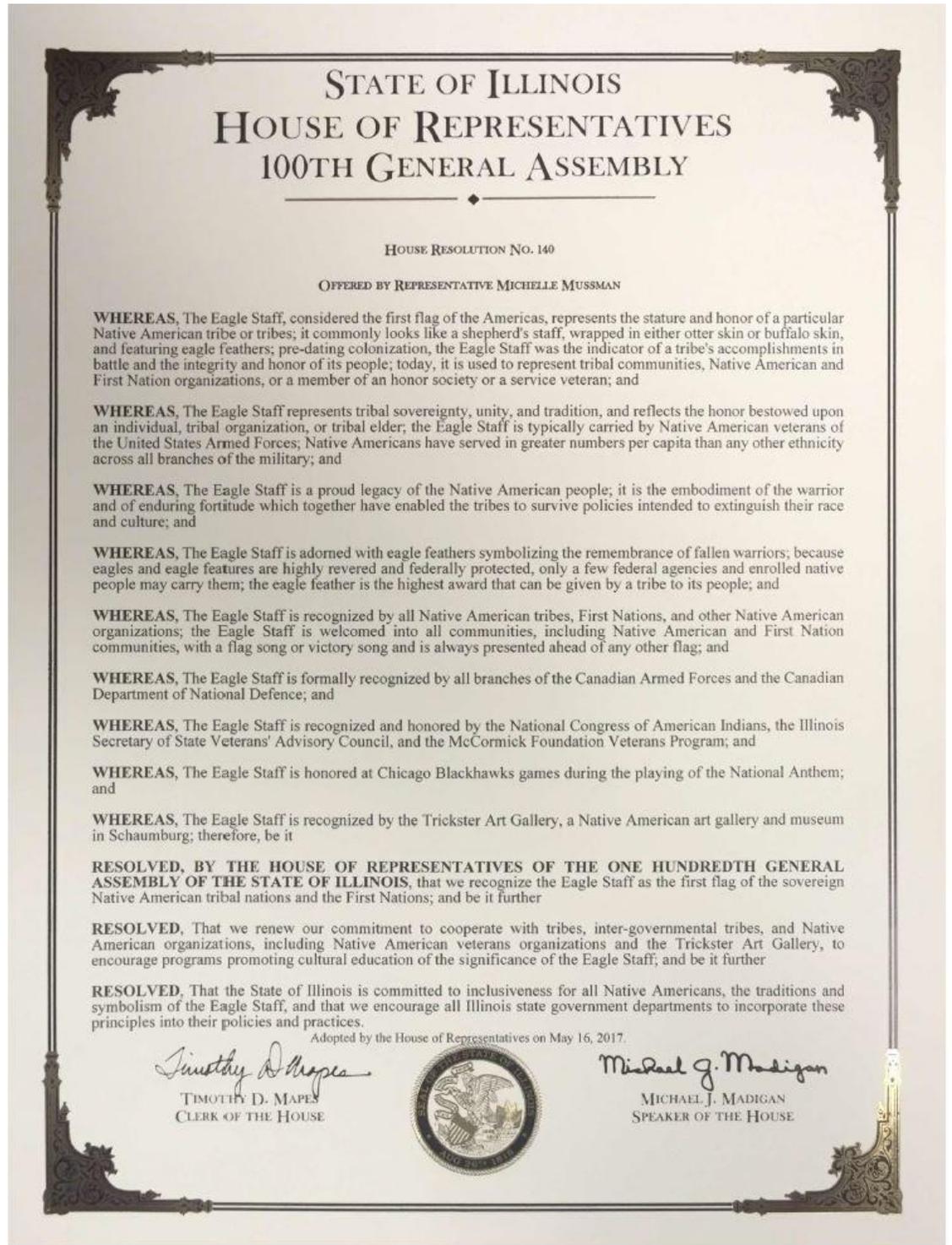


Tribal health clinics interested in entering a reimbursement agreement with VA for serving veterans should send an initial note of interest to:
tribal.agreements@va.gov

National Data				
Total Disbursement for entire IHS/THP Program - Agmt Date to FYTD	Total Disbursement by Program - Agmt Date to FYTD			Total Unique Veterans for entire IHS/THP Program - Agmt Date to FYTD
\$64,159,940.42	Program	Total Disbursed	Total Unique Vets	8,726
	IHS	\$28,841,823.71	5,107	
	THP	\$35,314,039.71	3,812	
Total Disbursement - Out of System Ret repayments (only)	Total Disbursement of Out of System Ret repayments (only) - <i>payments are included in above totals</i>			Total Unique Veterans - Out of System Ret repayments (only)
\$19,565.23	Program	Total Disbursed	Total Unique Vets	721
	IHS	\$15,488.23	638	
	THP	\$0.00	0	



State of Illinois Recognizes Eagle Staff





Trickster Art Gallery Nominated for Midwest Emmy Award for Native Veterans Documentary



*Trickster Art Gallery/Native Veteran of Illinois
Are in the final four for a Midwest Emmy Award!!*

2016-2017 Chicago/Midwest Regional Emmy® Awards NOMINATION LIST



Chicago/Midwest Chapter
National Academy of
Television Arts & Sciences
NATTA CHICAGO/MIDWEST CHAPTER
22 E. Congress, Suite 431
Chicago, IL 60604
312-364-8688 / chicagomemmy@gmail.com
chicagomemmy.org
facebook.com/emmychicago
Twitter: @ch_mesa

Category #8-a Outstanding Achievement for Documentary Programs - Cultural (Award to Producer)

- Architect Robert Adam: A Place at the Table: Daniel Andries, Producer; Dan Soles, Executive Producer; Elizabeth Reeves, Associate Producer. WTTW
- Death Denied: Sword of Damocles: Alisha Azlan, Reporter; Alec Klein, Producer. The Medill Justice Project
- Wisconsin Winter from the Air: Laurie Gorman, Executive Producer. Wisconsin Public Television
- *The Untold Story: Tom Orland, Joe Podlasek, Producers. Trickster Art Gallery*

Free Viewing of Native American Veterans Films ~ Vision Maker Media



NATIVE STORIES
FOR PUBLIC
BROADCASTING

The links to the full films listed below will be open for viewing from November 9-12 on Vision Maker Media's YouTube channel: <http://bit.ly/VMMYouTube>

[The Aleut Story - 87 minutes](#)

In the turbulence of war, in a place where survival was just short of miraculous, the Aleuts of Alaska would redefine themselves and America. From indentured servitude and isolated internment camps, to Congress and the White House, this is the incredible story of the Aleut's decades-long struggle for our nation's ideals.

[Choctaw Code Talkers - 57 minutes](#)

In 1918, not yet citizens of the United States, Choctaw members of the American Expeditionary Forces were asked to use their Native language as a powerful tool against the German Forces in World War I--setting a precedent for code talking as an effective military weapon and establishing them as America's original code talkers. [Viewer Discussion Guide](#)

[Way of the Warrior - 57 minutes](#)

Exploring the warrior ethic among Native Americans, this documentary reveals how Native communities have traditionally viewed their warriors and why, during the 20th century, Native men and women have signed up for military service at a rate three times higher than non-Indians. *Way of the Warrior* also examines the visceral nature of war and the bravery of Native American veterans.

[Navajo Code Talkers - 27 minutes](#)

A documentary film using interviews and archival footage to show the vital role a small group of Navajo Marines played in the Pacific during World War II. Includes 1940s archival footage of Navajo life as well as scenes of World War II. Featured are interviews with Navajo Chairman Peter MacDonald, artist and scholar Carl Gorman, and Taos artist R.C. Gorman. The film received a special Presidential commendation by Ronald Reagan.

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Navajo Nation Code Talker David Patterson dies, 94



Here's an [ABC article written by Max Walker](#) and which ran on October 9, 2017.

One of a remaining few heroes from World War II died Sunday in New Mexico. The Navajo Nation announced Code Talker David Patterson, Sr. died of pneumonia and complications from a subdural hematoma.



David Patterson Sr.

Patterson served in the Marine Corps from 1943 to 1945 and was the recipient of the Congressional Silver Medal, which was given to those who qualified as code talkers but were not part of the original 29. Patterson was part of the U.S. military's program during World War II to use the Navajo language in communications between units fighting the Japanese in the Pacific.

"It's a sad day on the Navajo Nation when we lose a national treasure like we did in losing Navajo Nation Code Talker David Patterson, Sr.," Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye said in a statement announcing Patterson's death. "Beyond his service in protecting our freedom, he was a beloved husband, father and grandfather."

Patterson died in Rio Rancho, New Mexico, northeast of Albuquerque. The Navajo Nation salutes the service of our great warrior, Code Talker David Patterson, Sr., for his courage in protecting our lands," said Vice President Jonathan Nez. "Whenever the Nation loses an elder, we lose a perspective of history that provides insight into our own lives. Our elders hold great wisdom and traditional perspectives. We need to continue to embrace intergenerational teaching and connections."

Funeral services have not been determined, but will take place at Christ the King Catholic Church in Shiprock, New Mexico. Patterson will be buried on the military side of the Shiprock Cemetery. An online fundraising page has been set up by Patterson's son to help pay for funeral expenses. Those who wish to donate can do so [here](#).



Native American Veteran Exhibit

The following pages are part of a 2010 exhibit on Native American Veterans which was displayed at various VA facilities, including Central Office in Washington D.C.



**DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS**



NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE



Ever since Native Americans first encountered European explorers, they have been invaluable liaisons to the strangers that "discovered" their land.

European efforts to colonize the "New World" for economic gain and political power brought empty promises and broken treaties into the lives of Native Americans. A deadly clash of cultures ensued as natives fought to defend their land and heritage. The United States came into existence through the great loss of lives from many cultures.



Throughout the Colonial period, Native Americans provided services as guides, scouts, and interpreters to European colonists. They were often paid in food or supplies, instead of money. Sacagawea, a Shoshone woman originally from around today's Idaho, helped guide the Lewis & Clark "Corps of Discovery" expedition team to the Pacific Coast in 1805.

SCOUTS

Native Americans were keenly attuned to nature and could easily "read" and interpret its subtle signs. Their scouting skills were of great use to the U.S. military, which enlisted Native scouts from the colonial period until after World War I.





WARRIOR TRADITION-AMERICAN SOLDIERS

Building on the success of African American "Buffalo Soldier" units established after the Civil War, the U.S. Army attempted to raise several Indian regiments in 1891. By December 1894 the experiment was deemed a failure and the men were discharged.

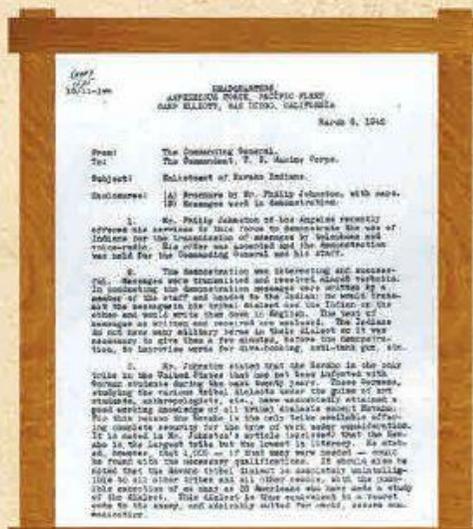


When the war with Spain began four years later, a dozen Oneida men from New York were among the earliest to volunteer for military service. Hundreds of Native Americans later enlisted in the U.S. armed forces during World War I and their innate skills as warriors were proven many times over.

Native American code talkers were first used during World War I to confound U.S. communications intercepted by the Germans. The Army first experimented by using the Cherokee language,

then decided on Choctaw and established a special unit of roughly 18 Choctaw native code talkers.

Over 400 Navajo code talkers served in six Marine Divisions during World War II. The Army recruited code talkers from 18 different tribes for the European theatre where they served in the D-Day invasion, Battle of the Bulge, and other battles. The military used code talkers through the Vietnam War era.





Ira Hayes, of the Pima tribe, was one of six Marines that raised the American flag atop Mount Suribachi after winning the Battle of Iwo Jima during World War II. Roughly 12,000 Native Americans enlisted for service in World War I. Out of a native population of 350,000, about 44,000 men and women served in World War II. ↓



Although Native Americans were born in this country, the issue of their legal citizenship arose frequently in dealings with the government. On November 6, 1919, Congress granted official citizenship to all Native Americans who served in the military forces during World War I. A 1924 law extended citizenship to all Native Americans born in the U.S. and its territories.

In 2001, the Navajo Code Talkers received the Congressional Gold Medal for their service and in 2007 all former Code Talkers were recognized in the same way.



CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR

Thirty distinguished Native American soldiers and scouts had received the Congressional Medal of Honor as of 2010.

Of the 14 known Native American Medal of Honor recipients from the 20th century, the following VA medical facilities are named after three of them:



****MUSKOGEE, OK** ASHEVILLE, NC****TULSA, OK*******

(VAMC)
Jack C. Montgomery
(Cherokee) WWII

(VAMC)
Charles George
(Cherokee) Korean War

(Clinic)
Ernest Childers
(Creek) WWII



19th century Medal of Honor recipients (all Scouts): Alchesay ; Blanquet; Chiquito; Co-Rux-Te-Chod-Ish aka Mad Bear (Pawnee); Elsatsoo ; Pompey Factor ; Jim; Kelsay ; Kosoha; Machol; Nannasaddie; Nantaje/Nantahe; Adam Paine; Isaac Payne; Rowdy; and John Ward.

20th century Medal of Honor recipients: Jack C. Montgomery (Cherokee); Ernest Childers (Creek); Van Barfoot (Choctaw); Mitchell Red Cloud, Jr. (Winnebago); Ernest E. Evans (Cherokee & Creek); Charles George (Cherokee); John N. Reese, Jr. (Cherokee); Raymond Harvey (Chickasaw); Tony K. Burris (Choctaw); James E. Williams (Cherokee); Michael Thornton (Cherokee); John R. Crews (Choctaw); Woodrow W. Keeble (Sioux); and Gregory "Pappy" Boyington (Sioux).



NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN IN THE MILITARY

The first recognized Native American women veterans were four Lakota Catholic Sisters originally from the Dakotas. They worked at a small order in Fort Berthold, North Dakota, under Reverend Francis Craft and later served as nurses for the War Department during the Spanish American War.

Their names were:
*Susie Bordeaux (Reverend Mother Mary Anthony),
Ella Clark (Reverend Sister Mary Gertrude),
Anna B. Pleets (Reverend Mother Mary Bridget),
and Josephine Two Bears (Reverend Sister Mary Joseph).*



<<<<<<Charlotte Edith Anderson Monture, Mohawk of the Iroquois Nation in New York and Canada, served in the Army Nurse Corps during World War I.

Marcella Lebeau, >>>>>>>>>>
a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux, served as an Army nurse during World War II. After Allies invaded Europe on June 6, 1944, she and her colleagues treated the first battle casualties from the beaches of Normandy. She also treated wounded soldiers from the Battle of the Bulge and worked in hospitals in Belgium and France. For her work during the battles in Northern Europe, Ardennes, and Rhineland, she received three service stars. She also received France's highest civilian honor, the Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur on June 5, 2004 for her service as an Army nurse during World War II.





«««««««« Ola Mildred "Millie" Rexroat , member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, was the only known Native American pilot to serve in the Women's Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) during World War II. 1,074 women pilots served as WASPs between September 1942 and December 1944.

Private Lori Piestewa >>>>> served in the 507th Army Maintenance Company in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Born and raised a Hopi on the Navajo reservation in Arizona, Piestewa was a brave, kind, and courageous woman. On March 23, 2003, she became the first American woman to die in the Iraq war and the first Native American woman, ever, to die in combat on foreign soil.



NOTE: Mary Jo May of the Lakota Sioux tribe, and a student at Black Hills State University, conducted research and wrote this panel on women Native American veterans during her internship with the VA Historic Preservation Office (CFM) in the summer of 2010.



American Citizenship for Native American Veterans

Here's an article written by VA's Darlene Richardson and which ran in [VA's Pulse](#) blog on November 3, 2017.

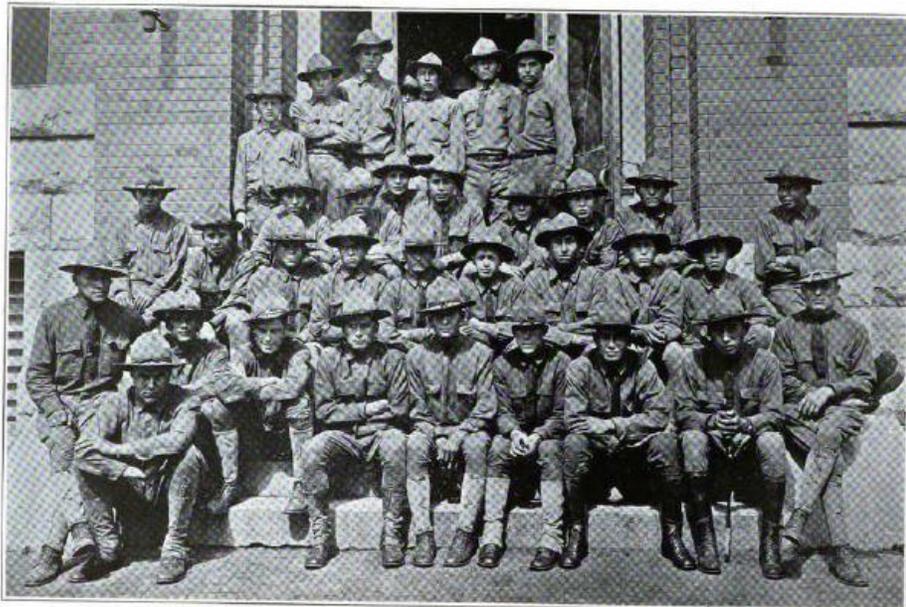
VA History: Thomas Blackbird - Native American Veterans - eligible for citizenship 98 years ago

Posted by *Darlene Richardson* Nov 3, 2017

Thomas Blackbird - Native American Veterans - eligible for citizenship 98 years ago

by Darlene Richardson, Historian, Veterans Health Administration, November 3, 2017

Ninety-eight years ago, on November 6, 1919, Congress authorized citizenship for all honorably discharged Native Americans who served with U.S. military forces during World War I in Public law 66-75. It was the first time in American history that an entire group of Native Americans had been extended access to U.S. citizenship. The law extended citizenship to Native American war veterans five years before citizenship was extended to all Native Americans. Out of 33,000 Native Americans eligible for military service during World War I over 10,000 served.



HASKELL BOYS IN UNCLE SAM'S UNIFORM SEE PAGE 23.



VA History: Thomas Blackbird - Native American Veterans - eligible for citizenship 98 years ago

Roughly eighteen months after the law was enacted, in April 1921, Thomas Blackbird of the Lakota Sioux tribe became the first Native American veteran to obtain U.S. citizenship under the 1919 law. Thomas Blackbird, son of Frank Blackbird, was born in 1897 and grew up on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota with his four siblings. As a youth, he was sent to the Haskell Indian School in Lawrence, Kansas, which was then part of a large-scale U.S. assimilation program that uprooted Native American children from their families to be "Americanized." He, along with thousands of other Native American children, was taught to read and write the English language, was schooled in social behavior and taught a trade. He excelled in music and performed at a number of venues while in Kansas.



Kavalls for the First World War de carnis en brig at Camp Funston, 1918.

After the U.S. entered World War I in April 1917, Thomas Blackbird and many of his classmates enlisted for military service. He trained at Camp Funston, in Kansas, alongside William Fire Thunder, Benjamin Prettyboy, Frank Two Two, Oliver Leftheron, and Edward Lessert from Haskell and the Pine Ridge Reservation. He served as bugler for the 130th Field Artillery during the war and returned safely. He was honorably discharged on May 10, 1919.



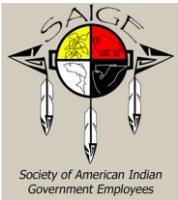
VA History: Thomas Blackbird - Native American Veterans - eligible for citizenship 98 years ago

The following year Thomas Blackbird applied for U.S. citizenship per the 1919 law. On April 21, 1921, Judge John Riner of the Federal District Court in Cheyenne, Wyoming, naturalized Thomas Blackbird as a U.S. citizen. He was the first Native American World War I veteran to obtain citizenship under the new law.



Thomas Blackbird went on to enlist in the Regular Army and was honorably discharged in 1933 at the rank of Corporal. He later married and moved to the Niagara Falls area where he became a farmer and family man. He died under suspicious circumstances in 1957 and was buried in Riverdale Cemetery in Lewiston, New York.

Photo credits - top - 1917 photo of Haskell men war enlistees. Thomas Blackbird is on the front row, fourth from the left. *The Indian Leader*, Volume 21, No. 4, p. 2. middle - 1917, Native American enlistees training at Camp Funston, Kansas, KSHS.org. bottom - 1910 c., Judge John Riner (1850-1923), the judge who approved Thomas Blackbird's naturalization, University of Michigan Law archives.



Join the
Society of American Indian Government Employees

15th Annual National Training Program

GREEN BAY, WI

JUNE 11- 14, 2018



SAVE THE DATE!

NATIONALLY KNOWN SPEAKERS
FOUR TRACKS OF WORKSHOPS
VETERANS' TRACK
YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Radisson

www.radisson.com/greenbaywi

Watch www.saige.org for updates



NOVEMBER 10TH
50TH ANNIVERSARY
VIETNAM WAR
COMMEMORATION

Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi is honoring Vietnam Veterans by hosting a pinning ceremony at the Trickster Art Gallery in Schaumburg, IL to thank them for their service and sacrifice to the nation.

November 10, 2017

Light Breakfast
9:00am-9:45am

Pinning Ceremony
9:45am-10:45am

Trickster Art
Gallery

190 S Roselle Rd
Schaumburg, IL
60193

Vietnam Veterans
can register to
receive a Vietnam
Veteran Lapel Pin
at this event at
Krishnamoorthi.house.gov

Family member of
fallen Vietnam
Veteran can receive
pin on behalf of
Veteran

Family members
are welcome



OTGR Central Region

(IA; MI; MN; MT; ND; NE; SD; WI; WY)

Here's an article from Debahjimon: Newspaper of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe



Veterans Cemetery Groundbreaking

By Michael Chosa

CASS LAKE, MN- Earlier this month, Tribal, State and Federal Officials along with Tribal Veterans and their families, gathered at the future site of the Tribal Veterans Cemetery for a groundbreaking and blessing event.

The ground blessing ceremony was performed by Leech Lake Elder Mike Smith and his son, Michael Smith Jr. The Leech Lake Honor Guard and the Cass Lake American Legion posted colors for the event.

The public ceremony continued at the Vets Building in Cass Lake with remarks delivered by George D. Eisenbach Jr., Director, Veterans Cemetery Grants program; Leroy Staples Fairbanks III, District III Representative; Rich Robinson, on behalf of the Robinson Family; Andrew Martin for Senator Amy Klobuchar; Pete Makowski for Senator Al Franken; Tom Whiteside for Congressman Rick Nolan and MN State Representative (5A) Matt Bliss. MN State Senator Justin Eichorn was also scheduled to speak but did not attend.

"All of us associated with the Veterans Cemetery Grants Program and your project, take genuine concern and pride in the establishment of the Tribal Veterans cemetery on Tribal Government lands. They offer a focal point for remembering those who have worn the cloth of the nation. Moreover, they provide a record for future generations to learn from. This land is where your warriors were born and where their stories begin to take shape and this cemetery is where they will return when life's battles are done," said George D. Eisenbach Jr, Veterans Cemetery Grants program Director in his remarks. He continued "Each one of the headstones and markers is going to tell a story. That's history for your youth, history to keep your culture alive. So make sure you bring your children and grandchildren, your sons and daughters, to teach them that freedom isn't free".

Attendees enjoyed lunch and refreshments immediately following the program.

The Tribal Veterans Cemetery will be constructed at the Veterans Memorial Grounds

in Cass Lake, MN. In 2012 the Rosebud Sioux tribe was the first sovereign tribal nation to receive grant funding from this program. In addition to Leech Lake, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe was also awarded a grant to fund a veterans cemetery in North Dakota during this years funding cycle.

A \$3.3 million federal grant received last month from the Veteran's Administration Veterans Cemetery Grants Program will fund a main entrance, a combined administration and maintenance facility, roads, an assembly area, a committal shelter, 419 casketed sites, 32 cremains gravesites, 64 columbarium niches, a memorial wall, a memorial walk, landscaping, and supporting infrastructure. The project will develop nearly three acres of land and is expected to serve approximately 3,000 tribal veterans and their families.

More Pictures from the
Groundbreaking Ceremony on
Page 7.



October 2017 | Debahjimon

Binaakwe-gizis • Falling Leaves Moon

7



Veterans Cemetery Groundbreaking

Special Thanks to Members of
the Veteran's Committee and
others involved in this project:

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| Sue Robinson | Art Chase |
| John Robinson | Clyde Morgan |
| Al Robinson | Jeff Harper |
| Frank Reese | Keith Karnes |
| Val Pacheco | Frank Schaaf |
| Bob Whipple | Lee Giffen |



George D. Eisenbach Jr.
Director National Cemeteries



Rich Robinson



Honoring all Veterans

November 10 & 11, 2017

Mohican Veterans, Stockbridge-Munsee Community

North Star Mohican Resort & Casino: **W12180, Co. A, Bowler, WI**

Open **Friday, November 10 & Saturday Nov 11**, 10 am to 7 pm Event Center for the



public, Jr., High School and families to tour and hear the story of the wall by Ron Smith, US Marine veteran and creator.

Patricia Sexton and Ron Smith member of American Legion Post 83 in Ohio are co-creators of the Wall and will be presenters.

The Spirit of America's Story, The Wall is a Traveling Exhibit Commemorating Our Country's Fight for Freedom from 1775 to Present Day



Wisconsin Veterans Museum Traveling Exhibit "Wisconsin Remembers: A Face for Every Name" 1,161 Wisconsinites listed on Vietnam Wall

Veterans Day, Saturday Nov. 11th at 11am in the Event Center.

Ceremony to Honor those who served.

Featuring: America's Band, Navy Band Great Lakes





BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER

November 18th, 2017

**ONEIDA NATION VETERANS BUILDING
134 RIVERDALE DR**

7 AM – 11 AM OR UNTIL GONE

“YES IT IS” ALL YOU CAN EAT

**\$8.00 12 YRS AND UP
\$4.00 11 YRS TO 5 YRS**

OTGR Eastern Region

(AL; CT; FL; LA; MA; ME; NC; NY; RI; SC)



Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians Dedicates Veteran Cemetery

Here's an [article](#) which ran in The County on June 21, 2017.

“HOULTON, Maine — On June 14, the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians gathered to dedicate a veterans monument and veterans section of their tribal cemetery Metahksonikqewi Puskonihkukm, which translates to Meduxnekeag Overlook Tribal Cemetery.

“The tribal cemetery officially opened with its first burial in the fall of 2016,” said Susan Young, resources/real estate director for the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians. “The cemetery project began many years ago under the tenure of former Tribal Chief Brenda Commander. The dream of a tribal cemetery was an important goal for the community.”

Without an existing tribal church to help guide the way, members of the original cemetery committee and others in the community worked many hours picking a suitable site, and developing ordinances that would guide the governance of the tribal cemetery into the future, Young stated. Located on the Skijin Road, a veterans section was always part of the cemetery plan, but it was a grant from the U.S. Veterans Administration’s National Cemetery Program that helped make the veterans monument a reality, Young said.

“The beautiful granite monument, located in the northern section of the cemetery, honors tribal veterans of the five branches of the United States Armed Forces — Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps and Navy,” Young said. “Construction on the monument was completed just days before the dedication ceremony and the monument was kept covered until the morning of the dedication. Seeing the uncovered monument for the first time the morning of the dedication, added an extra level of excitement to the ceremony.”

The ceremony began with the presentation of colors by the Maliseet Honor Guard consisting of Anthony Tomah (Air Force), Barbara Treadwell (Army), David Lindsay (Army/National Guard), Henry J. Bear and John Joseph, Jr. (Coast Guard), Jeffrey Boyce, Joseph Tompkins and Valentino Polchies (Marine Corps), and Patrick Kelley

and David Slagger (Navy).



Elder Imelda Perley offered an opening prayer and song, while accompanied by tribal member Amy Joseph on drum. Elder Dolores Crofton-MacDonald blessed the monument and all in attendance. Tribal Chief Clarissa Sabattis spoke of the importance of the cemetery to the tribal community and of the monument to all the veterans, who served and continue to serve, and their families.

Honor guard members John Joseph Jr., Henry Bear and David Slagger stepped forward to raise the United States, Maliseet and POW/MIA flags on the flagpoles that guard the monument. They were then joined by the remaining members of the honor guard to place cedar wreaths made by elders and cemetery commission members, Rose Tomah, Brenda Commander and Dolores Crofton-MacDonald.

Following the placement of the wreaths, Chief Sabattis read aloud the Maliseet Honor Roll honoring tribal veterans from both the U.S. and Canada. Veterans and family members of deceased veterans were presented with hand-made leather pouches containing the four sacred medicines as a thank you from the community. George Eisenbach, director of the National Cemetery Administration and Veterans Cemetery Grants program, spoke about the importance of tribal veterans' cemeteries throughout the country.

Eisenbach told the audience that the dedication of the Maliseet cemetery brings the total number of tribal veterans cemeteries to 10. He also announced that the Maliseet tribal veterans cemetery is the first one located east of the Mississippi River. The tribal cemetery and veterans monument was designed by Coplon Associates of Bar Harbor. Atlantic Landscape Construction of Ellsworth did the groundwork and monument installation. Brown Development of Houlton completed the roadwork for the cemetery.

The cemetery commission is made up of Houlton Band of Maliseet Elders Bill Tomah, chairman; Dolores Crofton-MacDonald, Brenda Commander, Margaret Sabattis, Doug Sabattis and Rose Tomah. Susannah Wright, the social services director for the Houlton tribe serves as the cemetery superintendent and Heidi Kelley, the band's enrollment clerk, maintains the cemetery records. Young served as project manager and liaison for tribe to the Veterans Administration."



Left to right: Unknown USDA Rep; George Eisenbach, Director Veteran Cemetery Grants Program (VCGP); Debra Commander, former Chief Houlton Band of Maliseet (HBM); Sue Young, Natural Resources Director/Grants Coordinator HBM; Tom Paquelet, Project Manager/Landscape Architect VCGP; Clarissa Sabattis, Chief Houlton Band of Maliseet

The cemetery was dedicated on June 14, 2017 and was well attended with over 100 people. A 1-acre section allowing for at least 36 standard burial grave sites for Veterans was reserved within the existing Maliseet Tribal cemetery – which opened the year before. There is also a flag assembly area and granite wall with entry signage. It is the first tribal Veteran cemetery east of Mississippi through this grant, which was in the amount of \$250,000.

For those tribes that are interested in pursuing their own Tribal Veteran cemetery, please contact George Eisenbach, Director, NCA Veterans Cemetery Grant Program at george.eisenbach@va.gov

OTGR Southern Plains Region

(KS; OK; TX)

A Concert in Honor of American Veterans Veterans Day 2017 | November 11, 2017

Presented by Tulsa Oratorio Chorus

Two Performances: 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m

Tulsa Air & Space Museum

"To Honor" is presented by Tulsa Oratorio Chorus in collaboration with Tulsa Air & Space Museum in appreciation for our military service veterans for their service and sacrifice. This one-hour choral concert features songs that pay tribute to our veterans, our country, and songs that celebrate our region and the American experience.

Ian Gill, an incredible singer/songwriter/guitarist living in Dallas and an OU graduate, will be our guest star for the November 11 concert. Ian will sing songs

from the great American songbook such as "American Pie", "This Land is Your Land", Simon & Garfunkle's "America" with the chorus as backup.

In addition, the 100 voice Tulsa Oratorio Chorus, accompanied by players from the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra, will present patriotic works including Randall Thompson's "Testament of Freedom", John Williams' "Hymn for the Fallen", "Battle Hymn of the Republic", and, of course, "Armed Forces Medley".

A limited number of complimentary tickets for each performance are available for Veterans and serving military personnel and a guest. These may be obtained:

- Vet Tix members may reserve tickets online at [Vet Tix](#)
- Contacting Dennis Calkins at dcalcins6@gmail.com

Tickets may also be obtained as follows:

- Purchase at the Tulsa PAC Box Office (918) 596-7111 or online through [MyTicketOffice.com](#)
- Discounted Group tickets (6 or more @ \$15 each) may be purchased by leaving a message at [TOC: Contact Us](#) or calling (539) 664-7530.

Those who wish to contribute tickets (tax deductible donations) to be given to veterans may [donate online](#). To assist us in distributing free or discounted tickets to Veterans' Groups, please contact: Dennis Calkins dcalcins6@gmail.com or Jim Finley jfinley486@att.net.



TULSA ORATORIO CHORUS
PO Box 2915
Tulsa, OK 74101
<http://tulsachorus.com/>



Tulsa Air & Space Museum & Planetarium
3624 N 74th E Ave, Tulsa, OK 74115
<http://www.tulsaairandspacemuseum.com/>



VET TIX
Give something to those who gave.
<https://www.vettix.org/>



VETERANS

Appreciation Day

Thursday, Nov. 9 at 9 a.m.

Event will include continental breakfast, program and wreath laying ceremony at the Cherokee Warrior Memorial and Veterans Center.

The program will dismiss to the Joe Thornton Archery Range for activities including archery, resource fair (under a tent), games and cultural activities including a hog fry at 12 p.m.

There is NO CHARGE to attend.

For more information, please call 918-772-4166 or 800-256-0671, ext 4166.

Most of the event will be outdoors at the Joe Thornton Archery Range; please bring lawn chairs and dress for the weather.



SPONSORED BY

Cherokee Nation Fish and Wildlife Association
Joe Thornton Archery Range
Cherokee Nation Education Services
Cherokee Nation Health Services
Cherokee Nation Office of Veteran Affairs



"The Warrior Circle"
by Dan HorseChief

WALKING GROUP

Volunteers needed to participate in a research study looking at the impact of walking on symptom severity of PTSD.

Participants need to be a military veteran over the age of 18 years old who have experienced symptoms of PTSD.

IF INTERESTED, CONTACT MICHELLE MILLER,

PH.D. CANDIDATE:

PHONE: 254-405-1040

EMAIL: MICHELLE.MILLER10@OKSTATE.EDU





VETERAN'S DAY POWWOW November 11, 2017



Alabama-Coushatta
Veterans Pavilion
Livingston, Texas



Gourd Dance 12:00 pm & 6:00 pm

Grand Entry 1:00 pm & 7:00 pm

Dinner Break 5:00 pm

Demonstration Stick Ball Game 5:00 pm @ Ball Field

Tribal Veterans Historical Photo Display

HEAD STAFF:

Masters of Ceremonies: Herbert Johnson Jr.
Arena Director: Stewart Poncho, US Army Veteran
Head Lady: Teresa McKinney, War Mother
Head Man: Lloyd Thompson, US Army Vietnam Era Veteran

Head Gourd Dancer: Garrett Battise
Head Southern Singer: Calvin Wilson
Head Northern Singer: James Stephenson
Head Judge: Tobine Alec



HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

For more Powwow & Vendor Information Contact:
Cecilia Flores (936) 239-8848, Floyd Poncho @ (936) 425-0774 or Roland Poncho @ (936) 707-7592



While many realize that **Veterans Day**, which always falls on November 11, is a day to honor our Veterans, few realize the historical significance behind the day. Veterans Day originated as Armistice Day and marked the end of hostilities of World War I that occurred at the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month. Therefore, the day is always recognized on November 11th, regardless of the day of the week the 11th falls on.

SAC AND FOX VETERAN'S / ALL GOURD DANCE

NOVEMBER 11th, 2017

SAC AND FOX NATION COMMUNITY BUILDING

5.5 MILES S. OF STROUD OK, ON HWY. 99

HEAD STAFF

MC: ROBERT WILLIAMSON
HEAD SINGER: FORREST "KESKO" WALKER
HEAD GOURD DANCER: WILLIAM PENNOCK
ARENA DIRECTOR: JAMIE CERVANTES/U.S. NAVY

SCHEDULE

2PM- 6PM GOURD DANCE

SUPPER TO FOLLOW

SAC AND FOX NATION VETERANS HONOR GUARD

AND OR THE SAC AND FOX NATION

IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY ACCIDENTS, THEFT OR LOSS...

OTGR Southwest Region

(AZ; CO; NM; UT)

When living alone becomes difficult...

let our Medical Foster Home
Angels provide an alternative.



For Veterans needing long-term placement

- 24-hour supervised care in the private home of a caregiver
- Small family home environment with private rooms
- Personalized case management by a VA Home Care Team

For more information, contact the
Medical Foster Home Program at 480-369-3116

Shuttle Service

Now serving the Show Low VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic

The VA has started a shuttle service for Veterans that need to travel to the Show Low VA Clinic but do not have transportation. This service is available for Veterans that are currently enrolled in VA health care. The shuttle will serve different locations in the White Mountains from Monday through Thursday. There is no need to call to schedule a ride; Veterans need to just be at the designated location at the pick-up time.

Monday: St. Johns / Concho – The shuttle will pick up Veterans in St. Johns near the American Legion Post 31 at the Fiesta Park Parking lot at Hwy 180 & Hwy 191. The shuttle will be in St. Johns from 7:15-7:30 a.m. then departs to Concho. The shuttle will be at the Screaming Chicken Restaurant at 36998 Hwy 61 in Concho from 8-8:15 a.m. and will arrive at the Show Low VA clinic by 9 a.m.

Tuesday: Springerville / Eager – The shuttle will pick up Veterans at the American Legion Post 30 parking lot, at 825 E Main St. The shuttle be at the pickup location from 7-7:15 a.m. and will arrive at the Show Low VA clinic by 8:30 a.m.

Wednesday: Whiteriver – The shuttle will pick up at the American Legion Post 60 at 312 N Chief Ave. The shuttle will be at the Legion from 7-7:15 a.m. **(8-8:15 a.m. every 4th Wednesday)**
The shuttle will arrive at the Show Low VA by 8:15 a.m. **(9:15 a.m. every 4th Wednesday)**

Thursday: Heber / Overgaard / Snowflake / Taylor – The shuttle will pick up Veterans at the American Legion Post 86 at 2068 Lumber Valley Rd. from 6:30–6:45 a.m. The shuttle will then go to the Snowflake/Taylor Walmart at 715 N Main St. and will be there from 7:15-7:30 a.m. The shuttle will arrive at the Show Low VA clinic by 8:30 a.m.

*****All appointments should be scheduled between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m.*****

***** The shuttle will return to the pick-up location after the VA Provider has seen all Veterans who rode the shuttle that day. *****



Mobile Flu Shot Clinic

The Phoenix VA Mobile Medical Unit is hitting the road and providing FLU SHOTS to Veterans!

There is no charge.

Additional vaccinations for TDAP and pneumococcal prevention available while supplies last.

See the schedule below.

*****Veterans must be currently enrolled with the Phoenix VA. ****

Not enrolled? Go to <https://www.phoenix.va.gov/patients/eligibility.asp> for more information

Hours	Date	Location
7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Thursday, Sept 28	SE CBOC - 3285 Val Vista Dr., Gilbert, AZ 85297
7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Thursday, Oct 5	First Christian Church - 6242 N 59th Ave, Glendale, AZ 85301
7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Thursday, Oct 12	Compass Church - 16060 W Van Buren St, Goodyear, AZ 85338
7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Thursday, Oct 19	American Legion - 206 N Gilbert Rd, Gilbert, AZ 85234
7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Thursday, Oct 26	NW CBOC - 13985 W Grand Ave #101, Surprise, AZ 85374
7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Thursday, Nov 2	Our Savior's Lutheran Church - 612 Ellsworth Rd., Mesa, AZ 85208
7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Thursday, Nov 16	SW CBOC - 9250 W Thomas Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85037
7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Thursday, Nov 30	Glendale Nazarene - 5902 W. Cactus Rd., Glendale AZ 85304
7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Thursday, Dec 14	Raceway Lodge (Elks Lodge) - 215 W. Van Buren St, Avondale, AZ

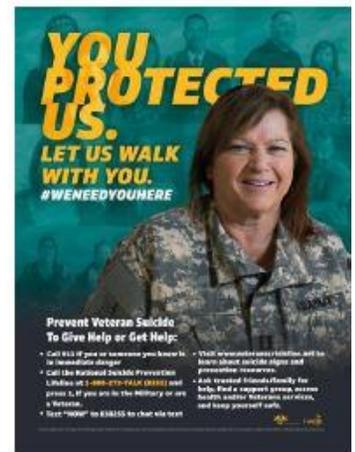
OTGR Western Region

(AK; CA; ID; NV; OR; WA)

Preventing AI/AN Veteran Suicide through Social Marketing

By: Celena McCray, THRIVE Suicide Prevention Project Coordinator

With funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Garrett Lee Smith youth suicide prevention grant, the THRIVE (Tribal Health: Reaching out InVolves Everyone) Project at the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB) is pleased to announce the availability of AI/AN Veteran Suicide Prevention media materials. The campaign materials for -- *You Protected Us. Let Us Walk with You* -- can be downloaded, printed, or passed along. The campaign hopes to ignite hope and help-seeking from those Veterans in need.



You can pass along, download, and print materials from our website at: <http://www.npaihb.org/social-marketing-campaigns/>. Materials available are:

- 5 Posters
- Rack cards
- Tip cards
- Post cards
- A Radio PSA
- Lived experience videos

All materials were originally disseminated on World Suicide Prevention Day, September 10 and is being re-launched for Veterans Day, November 11! The hopeful tagline, #WeNeedYouHere, can connect Veterans to hundreds of messages online from others who love and support them in a time when this connection is needed. Other resources lists on the materials where Veterans can reach out to if they are in crisis or know someone in crisis include:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) and press 1, if in the Military or are a Veteran.
- Crisis Textline – Text “NOW” to 838255 to chat via text message.
- Website: www.veteranscrisisline.net to learn about suicide signs and prevention resources.
- Ask trusted friends or family for help, find a support group, access health or Veterans services, and keep yourself safe.

The numbers on the campaign materials (listed above) are both available 24/7 and all volunteers have extensive training in suicide interventions. The rack card has additional information about firearm safety for veterans and their families. Safe storage of firearms and the use of gun locks, gun safes, and knowledge of where keys are located or what the combination is to a safe can help decrease access to a firearm for someone contemplating suicide. The Veteran Administration (VA) can assist with receiving free or low-cost firearm locks and safes, check out this website to find a contact, <https://www.va.gov/directory/guide>.

Along with the post cards that were developed, THRIVE staff felt it would be beneficial to include some important information on *how to write a caring message* on the Veteran Suicide Prevention post cards. Caring messages are actually suicide prevention interventions that involve sending a brief caring message to Veterans who may be at risk of suicide. This brief connection can help save lives. Reminding Veterans that someone is thinking of them and cares about them can be a powerful message during a difficult time. Caring messages have been shown to reduce rates of suicide and can communicate empathy and concern without demanding anything in return.

The post cards described in the campaign materials above are meant to do just this, to allow you to send a caring message to a Veteran that you care about. If you request copies of or print your own post cards from the campaign you can send these caring messages around Veterans Day! Caring messages should be sent monthly, and then less frequently over time. For more information about caring messages please go to: http://t2health.dcoe.mil/sites/default/files/CareLetters_Brochure.pdf

If you plan to print or request copies of the post card and then customize it (i.e. by adding text in your tribal language or other caring messages), please review the *Safe and Effective Messaging for Suicide Prevention guidelines*, to make sure your message is helpful: <http://www.sprc.org/sites/sprc.org/files/library/SafeMessagingrevised.pdf>. After reviewing the guidelines you will find that these messages are easy to write, just write something from the heart, write something that is pure positivity, something positive that you remember about the person, such as “I wanted you to know that I am thinking of you and how we used to laugh about everything together. Let’s get together soon.” Or you could write a powerful quote such as “What inspires a poem for me is usually a moment.” – Sherman Alexie, Spokane and Coeur d’Alene and then write “I hope you are finding those moments in your day. I’m thinking of you - and am always happy to see you.”

For more information about this campaign or to **request materials**, please contact the THRIVE staff at the NPAIHB. Please include your name, address, and the size of the community you serve:



Northwest Portland Area
Indian Health Board
503-228-4185 ; cmccray@npaihb.org

