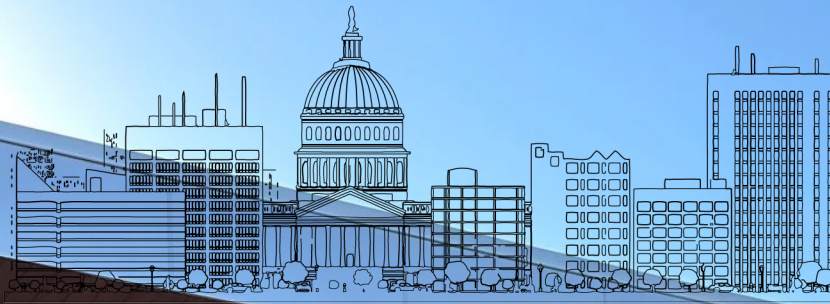


THE  
**BOISE**



JANUARY 2024

**FRONT**

*The official newsletter of the Boise VA Medical Center*

**VA** | U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs  
713

*You are invited to an open house!*

***The Caldwell CBOC has moved to a new location!***

***Join us on February 2, 2024 from 1PM to 3PM at the new Caldwell CBOC located at 713 Haystack Way Caldwell, ID 83605.***





**VA** | Boise VA  
Medical Center

**The Boise VA Medical Center is now accepting applications for Idaho's only CCNE accredited Registered Nurse Residency Program.**

**New graduate nurses are highly encouraged to apply for this fantastic, paid opportunity.**

**For more information visit our website. *<https://www.va.gov/boise-health-care/work-with-us/internships-and-fellowships/nursing-residency-program/>***

**Apply before February 23rd!**



# Clarence Garrett

I am a Veteran and I served from 1989-93. I am a Navy Veteran. I was a Yeoman, serving on two different Submarines, the USS Ulysses S. Grant and the USS Florida. I served during the Gulf War but was mainly at sea or stationed Stateside.

After the Navy I returned back to Boise. I went to BSU briefly, but after figuring out college wasn't for me I began a career as a cook/chef. I started at BSU and worked for several restaurants in the Boise area. In 2000 I became homeless due to an opioid addiction. The Boise Rescue Mission ministries helped me get clean and sober and helped me get back to work. In 2010 I left the culinary industry and eventually moved out to Emmett to raise a couple horses. I eventually returned to Boise and entered the medical service industry working with adults with mental disabilities. Providing them living assistance and helping enrich their lives through community activities. Then I had my first heart failure and the medical bills piled up. For the second time in my life I became homeless.

While at the Boise Rescue mission River of Life Shelter I met Brian Baumgartner and many others over at the HUD/VASH program. They helped me get signed up for VA medical services as well as getting me on a VA pension as well as getting me an apartment. After they did this for me, I decided to give my time back to the VA as a volunteer. I have been working with Mandi Anderson at Valor Pointe and the Veterans housed there ever since. I really love working with the formerly homeless veterans and helping them adjust into society.



**VA** | Boise VA  
Medical Center

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



## Compliance Corner

### Summary of Hatch Act Provisions

Federal employees MAY:	Federal employees may NOT:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be candidates in non-partisan elections.</li> <li>• May register and vote as they choose.</li> <li>• May assist in voter registration drives.</li> <li>• May contribute money to political campaigns, political parties, or partisan political groups.</li> <li>• May attend political rallies, meetings, and fundraisers.</li> <li>• May join and hold office in political clubs, parties, or partisan groups.</li> <li>• May sign and circulate nominating petitions.</li> <li>• May campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, or municipal ordinances.</li> <li>• May campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections.</li> <li>• May make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections.</li> <li>• May volunteer to work on partisan political campaigns.</li> <li>• May express opinions about candidates and issues. If the expression is political activity, however – i.e., activity directed at the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group – then the expression is not permitted while the employee is on duty, in any federal room or building, while wearing a uniform or official insignia, or using any federally owned or leased vehicle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May not be candidates in partisan elections.</li> <li>• May not use official authority to interfere with an election. This includes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of official title or position while engaged in political activity.</li> <li>- Inviting subordinate employees to political events or suggesting they engage in political activity.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• May not knowingly solicit or discourage the political activity of any person with business pending before their employing office.</li> <li>• May not solicit, accept or receive a donation or contribution for a partisan political party, candidate for partisan political officer, or partisan group. For example, employees:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May not host a political fundraiser.</li> <li>- May not invite others to a political fundraiser.</li> <li>- May not collect contributions or sell tickets.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• May not engage in political activity – i.e., activity directed at the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group – while the employee is on duty, in any federal room or building, while wearing a uniform or official insignia, or using any federally owned or leased vehicle. For example:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May not distribute campaign materials or items.</li> <li>- May not display campaign materials or items.</li> <li>- May not perform campaign related chores.</li> <li>- May not wear or display partisan political buttons, T-shirts, signs, or other items.</li> <li>- May not make political contributions to a partisan political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group.</li> <li>- May not post a comment to a blog or a social media site that advocates for or against a partisan political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group.</li> <li>- May not use any e-mail account or social media to distribute, send, or forward content that advocates for or against a partisan political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>If you have questions about the Hatch Act, or other government ethics issues, contact the Boise VAMC Integrity and Compliance Officer at 208-422-1267. You may also contact your ICO by email at <a href="mailto:Steven.Waltari@va.gov">Steven.Waltari@va.gov</a></b></p> </div>	

# COMPLIANCE CORNER



**VA** | Boise VA Medical Center





# BOISE is HIGHLY RELIABLE

## HRO PRINCIPLES & VALUES

THEME OF THE MONTH  
**Sensitivity to Operations**

January 2024 | National Safety Poster

### Representing Diversity in Dermatology Handouts

C

#### CONTEXT

While sharing an educational pamphlet with a Veteran about their diagnosis, Robert Acevedo, Dermatology Nurse at Charlotte Health Care Center (HCC) (Charlotte, NC), recognized that the patient's skin color was not represented in the images. Lack of diverse representation could result in delayed or underreported skin issues in the Veteran population.

A

#### ACTION

Mr. Acevedo; Katie Belchere, Dermatology Nurse; and Melissa Coale, Dermatologist, reviewed all dermatology handouts and added new photos to accurately represent the diverse range of skin colors and genders of the HCC's patient population. By expanding the examples of skin tones in the materials, the team increased the potential for early detection of potential skin problems.

R

#### RESULTS

As a result, multiple Veterans stated that the forms are more modern, relatable, and easier to read. Erin Coulter, High Reliability Specialist for Salisbury VA Health Care System and Charlotte HCC, reflects on the team's Sensitivity to Operations by prioritizing the people and processes that impact patient care. This initiative's impact goes hand-in-hand with having Respect for People by building on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.



Erin Coulter,  
High Reliability Specialist



Katie Belchere, RN,  
Dermatology Nurse  
Melissa Coale, MD,  
Dermatologist  
Robert Acevedo, LPN,  
Dermatology Nurse

**"A critical aspect of our patient care is for every Veteran to know that we acknowledge them and recognize their skin conditions."**

*Robert Acevedo, LPN  
Dermatology Nurse  
Charlotte Health Care Center  
Charlotte, NC*





# STAY OFF THE TRAILS DURING WET WEATHER

**Idaho Parks and Recreation reminds us to stay off hiking trails during wet/thawed out conditions like we are experiencing now. This includes bike riding, walking, and walking dogs. Using trail systems during wet weather causes damage and soil erosion on the trails that requires reconstruction in the summer.**





Kevan  
**Engman**

Employee of  
the Month  
**DECEMBER**



**VA** | Boise VA  
Medical Center

Kevan's dedication and performance have been acknowledged and appreciated by both his colleagues and supervisor. Over the past few weeks, Kevan has consistently taken on multiple overtime shifts to support our unit and meet the increasing demand for sitters and nursing care. His unwavering reliability demonstrates his commitment to our team and the veterans we serve. During a recent nursing model change, Kevan was recognized by a peer for going above and beyond and being a true team player. His contributions during this transition further exemplify his commitment and excellence among his peers. Additionally, Kevan's commitment to veteran safety was evident when at 630 in the morning he was voluntarily shoveling snow off the stairwell to TRC, a unit he was floated to, during heavy snowfall, ensuring the safety of our veterans. Based on these numerous reasons and examples, Kevan is truly deserving of the employee of the month recognition.



## Boise VAMC Office of Systems Redesign & Improvement

### ***Congratulations!***

In an effort to shed more light onto the HRO pillar of Continuous Process Improvement, the Systems Redesign and Improvement program will be showcasing projects and work from around our Boise VAMC.

We would like to congratulate **Lisa Goodsell, RN** for earning her **Lean Yellow Belt certification!**

**Problem Statement:** *Coronary Computed Tomography Angiogram (CCTA) procedures are scheduled in radiology but need a Cath Lab Observation Unit (COU) appointment for prep and recovery. Because the scheduling process is so complex, the Interventional Cardiology PA must review each case for proper scheduling. 100% of patients scheduled for a CCTA are not educated about the procedure and 41% of them show up to Computed Tomography (CT) instead of COU for their appointment, leading to patient dissatisfaction and complaints.*

Lisa and her team created an improved process flow from patient scheduling to arrival at the Coronary Observation Unit. By improving process flow from scheduling, to patient and staff reminders, to procedure education, to patient arrival she was able to increase patient education prior to procedure from 0% to a sustained 100%; ensure patients arrive in the correct department for their procedure from 41% to 100 percent (sustained); and decrease PA time from 97% down to 0% regarding contact reminders for CT and COU. These are remarkable metrics and outcomes! To note, efficiency was increased by 144% and an annual return of \$1,200 was realized. Phenomenal!

Lisa's LEAN project, "BVAMC CCTA Ordering Process" provided an outstanding example of LEAN education and the LEAN process in eliminating waste and increasing positive outcomes. This process improvement initiative created a pathway for staff to become involved in providing solutions and input. By including front-line staff, a spirit of camaraderie and shared success was evident. **Congratulations, Lisa, earning your certification. Well earned!**

[05122023\\_Ancillary-FY23-BVAMC CCTA-LGoodsell-1.2.24.pptx](#) (click link)

If you would like to see more information on this project, please click on the presentation link above. We are proud to showcase Lisa's work. If you are interested in Lean training or would like more information about how you can participate in process improvement, please email [BOISystemsRedesign@va.gov](mailto:BOISystemsRedesign@va.gov). We'd love to hear from you!

Lean  
Yellow  
Belt  
Project  
Spotlight:  
Lisa  
Goodsell



Renee  
Wells

Employee of  
the Month  
**DECEMBER**



**VA** | Boise VA  
Medical Center

HAS would like to nominate Renee Wells for Employee of the Month. Renee just started her employment with the Boise VA Medical Center this year, but already her contributions are making a large impact. Renee is a versatile who while still inside her 90 days probationary period, took it upon herself not just to become the subject matter expert in her area, the Cath lab, but also to assist another team, green team. Unwilling to be satisfied with her workload, she began branching out to other teams when she had time to spare. Due to her initiative, she became an effective MSA to help cover the Copper team, when staffing shortages be-came apparent. Despite a complicated and detailed scheduling system, she easily managed to gain the trust and compliments of the patents, her coworkers and the various clinical teams she supports. After assisting for a few weeks started helping others learn the ropes. While the first few months of training in the Copper Team can be difficult, Renee is going out of her way to assist in the development of her new team members to help ensure better service.

Renee customer service is unparalleled. She is an amazing contributor to the team, the VA and our veterans who served this country. That is why I'd like to nominate her for Employee of the Month.



# Lactation Space Awareness - Supporting new moms!

## *New lactation space available!*

**\*NEW\* Building 85, Room 126A (Main Building- 1st Floor)**

Building 67, Room G-05 (Main Building - Basement)

Building 85, Room 327 (Main Building – By ICU)

Building 124, Room 108 (Women's Wellness Center)

Building 88, Room 162A (Orange Team)

Caldwell & Twin Falls CBOC sites

For Lactating employees who need access to the rooms, email Police Service at [boipolicesvc@va.gov](mailto:boipolicesvc@va.gov) for PIV access. Then you can access any of the spaces listed above.

Veterans or visitors who need the lactation space, please check in at Purple Team clerk, ICU clerk, or Orange Team clerk. AOD staff can help after-hours (evenings/weekends).

A huge thank you to the team for all their work to make these spaces possible: Executive leadership; Doug Lamb; Police Service: Jeff Middlemas, FMS installation team, interior design and paint crew; housekeeping, HAS and nursing services, and of course our multi-disciplinary work group! This project was funded through Boise VA funds and VA WHISE grant funding.

Sincerely from the Project Team Leads:  
Jeanette Berry and Sharon Cardona







Josh  
**Lawrence**

Employee of  
the Month  
**DECEMBER**



**VA** | Boise VA  
Medical Center

Josh Lawrence is a highly valued neurology PA. He provides Veterans with exemplary neurology care with a focus on headaches and Botox injections for migraines. His mastery of headache care has allowed Dr. Han to see many more patients with other neurologic conditions. He is also highly capable as a general neurology provider. Mr. Lawrence consistently goes above and beyond, and his care is frequently praised by Veterans, caregivers, colleagues and staff. He approaches work with a can-do, positive attitude that has been profoundly helpful in our busy neurology clinic. His demeanor contributes to a Veteran-focused, productive and constructive environment on the Sage Team. He has also mentored new neurology providers. This mentoring is especially important as we have two part-time neurology physicians who would be excellent full-time neurology physicians. Josh does as much as anyone to ensure that the VA is a positive work environment.

As an employee, Mr. Lawrence is one of the best. He is quick to address issues that come up and is willing to go above and beyond to meet the mission of VA. Aside from his exemplary work in patient care, he has been extremely helpful when called upon to assist with administrative tasks like OPPE and FPPE. His approach to being called to jury duty was especially impressive. He pro actively came in on his day off to see patients and is working with the other members of the neurology clinic to minimize the impact of his potential absence on Veterans. He has consistently improved his mastery of neurology via mentoring from Dr's. Han and Whitesell and also through self-study.

His colleagues sent multiple recommendations as well.





**VA**

Boise VA  
Medical Center

## HELLO'S & GOODBYE'S



**Dana O'Connor, Connected Care**  
**Angelica Lopez, Specialty Care**  
**Anna Montanez, Nursing**  
**Anna Prudnikov, Nursing**  
**Christina Murray, Physical Med. & Rehab**  
**Dana Powers, Nursing**  
**Irma Martin, Primary Care**  
**Michael Kline, Nursing**  
**Michelle Stafford, Dental**  
**Tabitha Graham, Specialty Care**  
**Jane Williams, Connected Care**

**The Boise VAMC would  
like to welcome our new  
employees who joined  
the team from  
January 1 to 13, 2024:**



**VA**

Boise VA  
Medical Center

## HELLO'S & GOODBYE'S



**William McEachern, Nursing**  
**Lisa Anshutz, Pharmacy**  
**Renee Jones, Nursing**

**The Boise VAMC would  
like to say farewell to the  
employees who left the  
team from  
January 1 to 13, 2024:**





**VA** | Boise VA  
Medical Center

## Police Service

Unit of the  
Quarter  
FY24 Q2

**Integrity, advocacy, Excellence:** On 2M/S we frequently have dementia patients, and occasionally have aggressive patients. The police staff have always been available to help us when needed. Currently we have a dementia patient that frequently elopes the unit. The police have frequently come up prior to this happening, as the staff know when the patient is getting antsy. Officers have spent time talking with the patient about life, jobs, cars, anything to get him to change his mind-set. This has helped on many occasions but when the patient does leave, the police have frequently had to convince the patient to return. To try to prevent this from happening so often the police were agreeable to take the patient on walks daily so that the patient would wait/look forward to this appointment and was much more content on the unit. During the veteran/employee barbecue management took the patient to eat and when the patient saw the police services eating, he requested to stay out a bit longer and sit with them. They welcomed him with open arms and then brought him back to the unit after they were done with lunch.

**Commitment:** Currently, we also have an aggressive patient and police services has had to stand by 24/7 to keep staff safe. Many have been doing this on extra time and many have had to be flexible to cover shifts they don't usually work. It has helped to assure nursing staff have felt supported and safe. We owe so much to our police services and are so appreciative of their hard work.

## Congratulations BVAMC HRO HeROs!



### Registered Nurses: Todd Brown, Lisa Goodsell & John Ross

Prior to scheduled outpatient cardiac/vascular catheterization procedures, patients on anticoagulation medications are given instructions on when to stop this medication prior to their procedure. Patients were contacted by the COU team the day before the procedure with reminders, but it was often too late if the patient hadn't stopped their medication. This resulted in delays in care and rescheduling.

Recognizing that the current process relied on the patient to remember instructions, the COU Team created a pre-procedure call sheet. This allows the RNs to make a reminder phone call to the patient to stop their anticoagulants on the correct day.

Being Preoccupied with Failure and focusing on Sensitivity to Operations has allowed the COU team to improve care. Creating a call sheet and placing a reminder phone call has helped with patient compliance, reducing same-day surgery cancellations, ensuring timely care for our Veterans, and improving patient safety by reducing bleeding risks during invasive procedures.

### Becca Kerr, RN

Becca Kerr was caring for a patient that was preparing for discharge when she noticed an order for IV medication and blood, which seemed unusual given the pending discharge.

Becca called the ordering provider to clarify, as she was concerned these orders were entered for the wrong patient, which was confirmed.

Becca displayed Preoccupation with Failure and her actions helped to trap an error before reaching a patient. She was focused on risk and assured the patient only received the care they needed. By speaking up to clarify, she also prevented a potential delay in care for the other patient.





# Workplace Violence Prevention (WVP) Awareness Week is February 26 - March 1, 2024

During the Workplace Violence Prevention Program's (WVPP) annual Workplace Violence Prevention Awareness Week, the WVPP invites you to learn about how you can help ensure the safety of all employees - both within and beyond the workplace - all year.

DBRS can be found on the Boise VAMC SharePoint under Important Links.

Please contact Keri Barbero, LCSW, 208-570-2625, or the VA Police, 208-422-1122, for any questions pertaining to Workplace Violence Prevention including the Disruptive Behavior Committee and the Employee Threat Assessment Team. You may also contact Donna Grant, PMDB Coordinator, for questions related to Prevention and Management of Disruptive Behavior trainings available to all staff.

## Feel Unsafe? We Are Here For You. You Can Help Prevent Workplace Violence.

As part of VA's commitment to maintaining a safe environment for our staff, the Workplace Violence Prevention Program is making sure that you have the training and resources you need.



**Be Proactive**



**Be Aware**



**Report it**

**REMEMBER:** If there is an immediate threat to the safety of patients, staff, or visitors, contact the VA Police.

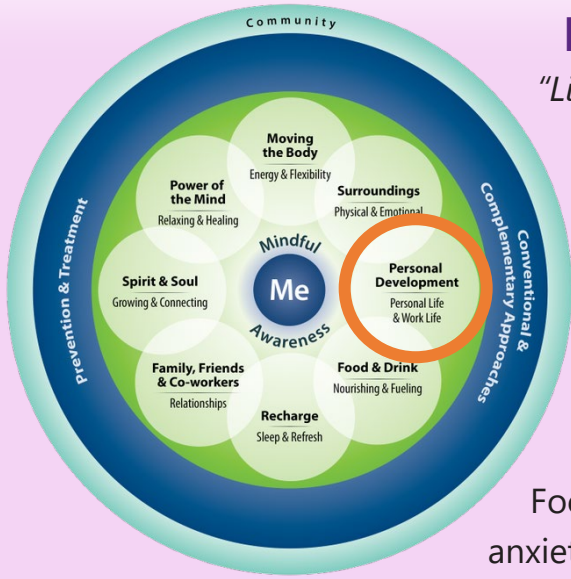


**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**  
Veterans Health Administration  
Workplace Violence Prevention Program



# February's Whole Health Theme: Personal Development

"Life isn't about finding yourself. It is about creating yourself." – George Bernard Shaw



Personal development can help you live more fully, through optimism, gratitude, and resiliency. You can learn new skills, find more balance, and figure out ways to help others. **How might you work on your personal development during February?**

- Focus on a talent or skill to build
- Share your gratitude
- Learn something new
- Volunteering or provide service to others
- Use humor and a healthy mood
- Hope and optimism
- Achieve your dreams and goals
- Build resilience.

Focusing on your personal development improves your health, prevents burnout, decreases anxiety, and supports your overall wellness. Personal development includes both personal and professional parts of your life. **Here are 3 professional development tools from Boise VA:**

## 1.) LinkedIn Learning

Create a **free** account with LinkedIn to access *LinkedIn Learning* with thousands of online courses! To create a new account with your va.gov email, select "join now," and verify account via email. [www.linkedin.com/learning-login/](http://www.linkedin.com/learning-login/)

### Classes include:

- Leadership and communication
- Stress reduction & life balance
- Productivity/Time management
- Interview tips... and more!

### Learn more at:

<https://about.linkedin.com/corona-virus-resource-hub/online-courses>

## 2.) FranklinCovey All Access Pass

Pick your **free** self-paced learning journey with items that interest you! Start by entering your VA.gov email address and click "Forgot your password."

<https://visn20.allaccesspass.com/login/index.php>

After creating your login, you have access to the All Access Pass and Jhana!

- Access **Jhana** for articles, videos, and other tools to support your personal development:

<https://aap.jhana.com/>

## 3.) Boise VA online courses!

Contact Kelly Goodman to sign up.

**Note:** The Excel classes are full!

Course Date	Course Title
1/23/2024	Power BI with Microsoft Excel (3.5 hours)
2/27/2024	Developing Emotional Intelligence starting (one-day seminar)
3/26/2024	Microsoft Excel Basics (one-day workshop)
4/23/2024	Microsoft Excel Beyond the Basics (one-day workshop)
5/1/2024	How to Deliver Presentations with Ease and Confidence (one day)
6/25/2024	Project Management Workshop (6-hour seminar)
7/23/2024	How to Handle Emotionally Changed Situations in the Workplace (one day seminar)
8/27/2024	Leadership, Team-Building, and Coaching Skills for Managers and Supervisors (one day seminar)

Whole Health Program Manager: Mike Parker





JP  
**Osler**

Supervisor of  
the Quarter  
**FY24 Q2**



**VA** | Boise VA  
Medical Center

JP is a true asset to the Boise VAMC, and without him the Neurology team would not be as effective. After the prior EEG tech left, JP has been the sole person doing outpatient and inpatient EEG's. This is in addition to his regular job in sleep lab, and all his supervisor roles and duties. He is doing job of 2-3 people, and his role and assistance to neurology is paramount. He does EEG's for inpatient and outpatient, and without those EEG's we are unable to know if someone's confusion is due to seizures, encephalopathy or what the etiology is. If JP was not here, patient care would be delayed because patients would be shipped to community.

He continues to show his commitment to the veterans though the work burden is so high. He acts with high integrity, and respect for veterans, the nurses and providers that deal with him. He strives and obtains excellence work, and I am so thankful he works so closely with Neurology team. His service, skills is so important and the value he adds the Boise VAMC as a whole can not be stated highly enough. He deserves to be nominated and praised for all of his hard work in the last 6 plus months but definitely the last 3. Well done, JP and thank you for all that you do for Veterans, the neurology team, and the inpatient and outpatient medical teams.



# LEAD Program

## Leadership, Effectiveness, Accountability, Development:

6 month program - Offered once per year

GS-7 and UP (and equivalents)

- The VHA LEAD program is a tiered continuum of leadership development at the local and network levels in VHA.
- LEAD helps develop leadership skills by strengthening the All Employee and Leadership Core Competencies. Strengthening these competencies assists employees in taking on additional levels of responsibility within the organization.
- Participants are considered high potential employees desiring leadership positions within the VA.
- Contact Brian Chris for more information.







# EDGE Program

## Engage, Develop, & Grow through Education:

3 month program - Offered twice per year

All GS (and equivalents)

(\*These are current offerings, we are pending changes later this year to offer more opportunities to our employees\*)

- EDGE helps improve professional skills and increase promotion potential for those looking to grow within our VHA organization, whether it is taking on additional levels of responsibility in their work area or moving up within their career ladder.
- Most participants are our "emerging leaders" but it's valuable information and skills, offered to everyone desiring career growth and development.
- Contact Brian Chris for more information.





**VA** | Boise VA  
Medical Center



# 2024 VETERANS LEGAL CLINICS



FREE TO ATTEND  
FOR VETS & SPOUSES



Legal Clinics are held from 2PM to 4PM in Bldg. 54 at the Boise VA Medical Center 500 W. Fort St. Boise, ID 83702.

Assistance with Estate Planning & Wills are not included at these Legal Clinics.

Please contact Amanda Pentland, LCSW at (208) 422-1064 for additional information.

**January 18, 2024**  
**February 15, 2024**  
**March 21, 2024**  
**April 18, 2024**  
**May 16, 2024**  
**June 20, 2024**

**PLEASE HELP US SHARE THIS OPPORTUNITY WITH VETS**