



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration  
Martinsburg VA Medical Center

## News Release

Martinsburg VAMC Office of Public Affairs  
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### **Martinsburg VAMC Coffee Socials bring together local Veterans, offer resiliency and community**

Martinsburg, W. Va. – The Martinsburg VA Medical Center is fostering community-led suicide prevention efforts with the addition of new coffee social groups beginning this month in Martinsburg, Hagerstown and the surrounding area.

According to Martinsburg VAMC Community Engagement and Partnership Coordinator, Jennifer Kelley, these informal meetings promote connectedness, which in turn can open the door to more resources for Veterans in need.

“Veterans have the opportunity to socialize with one another and build contacts,” said Kelley, who is also a licensed clinical social worker. “They meet new people, find resources and enjoy the company of other Veterans and their family members.”

Kelley added that these events are important because having a healthy social network can be a protective factor against self-harm.

The socials will be led by community hosts like Navy Veteran, RJ Garcia, who’s social will be in Hagerstown, Md.

“[This] creates conversations among Vets to let them know they are not alone,” said Garcia.

The coffee social groups meet Veterans where they are, which aligns with the VA’s goal to engage with Veterans that do not routinely receive VA services.

For more information and to find a social in their area, Veterans can contact [Jennifer.Kelley3@va.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Kelley3@va.gov).

*CUTLINE: US Army Veteran, Michelle Bupp (left) and US Marine Veteran, RJ Garcia, will host future coffee socials for Veterans in Hagerstown, Md. Bupp said the event is a “free space to connect with other women Veterans.”*

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*The Martinsburg VA Medical Center is a Joint Commission accredited, complexity level 1C facility serving over 70,000 Veterans across the four states of West Virginia, Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania. Located in Martinsburg, West Virginia, the medical center operates seven Community Based Outpatient Clinics. The clinics are VA-staffed and located in Cumberland, Hagerstown and Fort Detrick, Maryland, Petersburg and Franklin, West Virginia and Harrisonburg and Winchester, Virginia. The Martinsburg VA Medical Center also supports the Vet Center in Martinsburg and the Culpeper and Winchester national cemeteries in Virginia.*