

2023

# ANNUAL REPORT



**VA**



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**  
Veterans Health Administration  
West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System

# Contents



## 3

A MESSAGE FROM  
THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## 4

GET THE FACTS

## 5

SETTING US APART FROM THE REST

- 5 Access
- 6 Impact
- 6 Engagement
- 7 Distinction
- 8 Innovation

## 10

WHAT'S NEW

- 9 Whole Health
- 10 Your Team: Ready to Serve
- 10 Our Team in the Community
- 10 South Florida Federal Employee of the Year

## 11

VETERAN QUOTES





# A Message from the Executive Director

As we reflect on 2023, our commitment and innovation have been the driving force behind every success we've achieved. As you will see as you flip page by page, it is truly inspiring to see how our collective efforts have made a difference in the lives of the South Florida Veterans we serve.

Our pursuit to ensuring a High Reliability Organization (HRO) across the West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System (WPBVAHCS) has undeniably improved the systematic efficiency and consistent safety of operations — this is a testament to the care we promise for our community.

Coupled with HRO, is our strategic priorities that have guided actions and engaged us with progression like never before. We've expanded **Access** to care, ensuring Veterans receive unparalleled services when and where they need it most. The expansion of robotic surgery initiatives and broadening of specialty care services to new dentures in a couple of weeks to proactive breast health screenings, we demonstrate our commitment to advancing state-of-the-art care.

It does not stop there, the laser focus on **Impact** has set a new standard for environmental stewardship and **Engagement** with Veterans, caregivers, and community partners. The groundbreaking advancements in healthcare delivery and research, driven by our focus on **Distinction** and **Innovation**, have set us apart from our peers and cemented our reputation for excellence. From leading the way in Nursing education to nationally recognized employees, we will not settle for anything less than excellence.

The engagement among team members, has supported the journey to becoming a Best Place to Work. The satisfaction expressed by employees ranks above the national VA averages, resulting in an Organizational Health Index (OHI) standing of 20 out of 139 healthcare systems.

This reaffirms our commitment to the well-being and growth of our team members to best support the care to America's heroes. As we enter 2024, we continue to build on our spirit of innovation, dedication, and excellence.

*Together, we can achieve anything!*



**Cory Price**  
FACHE  
Executive Director



**Julia Spence**  
MBA, MHA, FACHE  
Deputy Executive Director



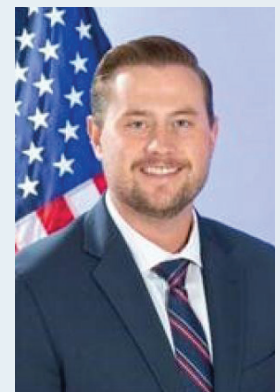
**Ronald Williams**  
DO  
Chief of Staff



**Jennifer Gerrib**  
LCSW  
Acting Associate Director  
for Operations



**Lyumma Archeval**  
MSN, RN  
Associate Director for  
Patient Care Services



**Thomas (Zach) Orr**  
Acting Assistant Director



# Get the Facts

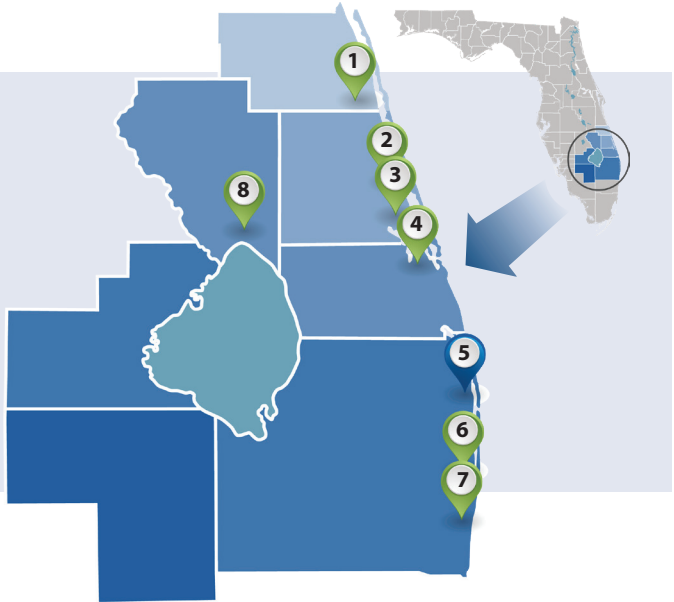


## WEST PALM BEACH VA HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

### Our Care Network



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Vero Beach CBOC<br>772-299-4623       | 5. West Palm Beach<br>VA Medical Center<br>561-422-8262 |
| 2. Fort Pierce CBOC<br>772-595-5150      | 6. Delray Beach CBOC<br>561-422-6510                    |
| 3. Port St. Lucie Clinic<br>772-878-7876 | 7. Boca Raton CBOC<br>561-416-8995                      |
| 4. Stuart CBOC<br>772-288-0304           | 8. Okeechobee CBOC<br>863-824-3232                      |



**2,316**



TOTAL  
Employees

**26%**



% of VETERAN  
Employees

TOTAL  
Veterans Served



**55,260**



**4,395**

Women Veterans  
Served

TOTAL  
Operating Beds

**333**



TOTAL  
Volunteers Hours

**18,481**



TOTAL Outpatient Visits

**686,633**

Average  
DAILY  
Outpatient  
Visits

**1,825**



TOTAL Admissions

**4,419**



# Setting Us Apart from the Rest

Over 9 out of 10 Veterans trust West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System with their care...find out why.

Our Journey Towards High Reliability serves as the foundation for our future and our strategic path forward to provide the safest, most efficient and effective care to Veterans. With commitment to zero harm, we are committed to providing exceptional healthcare in a safe environment. WPBVAHCS Strategic Priorities include **Access, Impact, Engagement, Distinction, and Innovation.**

## ACCESS



Committed to providing the soonest and best care to all Veterans.

### DaVinci Robotic Surgery Program Soars



The DaVinci Robotic Surgery team

Within a year of launch of the DaVinci Robotic Surgery program, WPBVAHCS is a leader amongst the top 25% of VA facilities across the country. The team of general surgeons and urologists has advanced care provided from inguinal hernia repair to treatment of prostate cancer and renal cancer.



Women's Imaging Center at the WPBVAHCS. Inset: Ms. Penny Bates, Lead Mammographer

### Womens Imaging Center

With Women Veterans representing our fastest growing population, WPBVAHCS is proud to announce a new milestone for Women Veteran care with the opening of a designated Women's Imaging Center in July 2023. The Center is equipped with state-of-the-art technology and allows for advanced care in one convenient location.



Meet Boca Raton Clinic Psychiatrist Dr. Dian Picou.

### Mental Health as Our Top Clinical Priority

In 2023, over 25 mental health providers were recruited for West Palm Beach and over 23 mental health providers were recruited to staff our Community Based Outpatient Clinics, ensuring timely services at all sites of care across the healthcare system.

### VOICE OF THE VETERAN

“The West Palm Beach offers easy access, quality service and all around great treatment.”



## IMPACT



Making a difference for Veterans and our community.



### Clinics Can Help Partnership

We have officially partnered with Clinics Can Help to recycle Durable Medical Equipment (DME) back into the community. Clinics Can Help is a not-for-profit agency that accepts the donation of Durable Medical Equipment and supplies, such as canes, walkers, and wheelchairs, then redistributes those items to those who need them but may not be able to afford them.

### Greenhealth

As we leverage and invest in ways to improve environmental awareness, the new title we earned as winners of the GreenHealth Partner for Change Award proves just that! Celebrating this honorable award alongside Green Environmental Management System Manager Yolanda Stewart, is a significant achievement in creating a greener, more sustainable healthcare organization that sets the standard across the community we serve. These efforts include enhanced recycling initiatives, optimized utility consumption, and adoption of sustainable practices that result in improved efficiency and cost savings.



Yolanda Stewart, Green Environmental Management System Manager



Our home building team

### Habitat for Humanity

Recognized beyond the walls of healthcare, the saying, "We are here because of the brave," was proudly acted out during the volunteer engagement in partnership with Habitat for Humanity home building for local U.S. Army Reserves Veteran Melissa Royal and her children. This new home is a foundation where Melissa and her children will set their roots and grow. To be a part of something that will impact Veterans and their families for decades to come, is one of the missions VA continues to pursue to go beyond healthcare to support Veterans right down the road.

## ENGAGEMENT



Building relationships and partnerships designed to improve Veteran well-being.



Andrew Barriclow, Veteran Persian Gulf, OEF; Kenneth Dempsey, Veteran VN, OEF/OIF, and Charlie Black, Veteran

### 2023 National Community Partnership Challenge Winner

Distinguished for its impactful partnership across the Delray Beach Community, including Greenacres Palm Beach, Jupiter Vet Center, and the West Palm Beach Sheriff's Office, focusing on Veteran and police crisis intervention. This initiative aims to enhance understanding and positive interactions between police and Veterans through specialized training on Veteran-related issues. This dynamic partnership has proven effective as evidence shows an increase in positive encounters between police and Veterans and a decrease in the number of adverse incidents in interactions between the local Veteran community and the participating police departments.

### Waves of Wellness Social Media Segment

Bringing health care education and tips virtually to Veterans, loved ones, and the community! The video Facebook series is a talk show segment that offers expert advice to the topic at hand. From Women's Health to eye care, the series offers something for everyone!

Scan the QR code to watch *Waves of Wellness* Episode.







# DISTINCTION

Setting a new benchmark for excellence.

## Leading Tomorrow's Healthcare Professionals

The Post Baccalaureate Nurse Residency (PBNR) program is part of a Nationwide network of federally funded nurse residency programs accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. This program sets the bar to be the leader in education and access to the best care for Veterans. The WPBVAHCS Office of Professional Development Team developed a comprehensive learning experience, inclusive of the curriculum and training required to deliver safe, high-quality care to all Veterans.



Graduates of the Post Baccalaureate Nurse Residency program.



## Highest Star Rating in Community

WPBVAHCS is proud to be a top performer in the community for customer satisfaction, possessing the 3-Star Patient Survey rating. There are ten parameters that make up the Patient Experience Survey, among those is how safe the environment is and hospital cleanliness. This measure reflects the percentage of Veterans surveyed who responded that their hospital room and bathroom were always clean.

## 5 Star Service at the CLC

5-star overall Community Living Center (CLC) Compare rating was achieved at the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center campus, reflecting the highest level of performance possible. The rating is determined based upon the outcomes within three domains: Unannounced Survey Performance; Staffing, and Quality Measures.



Staff and resident at the Community Living Center.

## Accreditations of Fiscal Year 2023





Designing new solutions to provide cutting edge care.



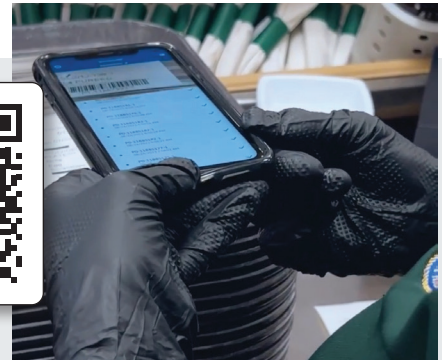
The PAWS Program provides Veterans with PTSD the opportunity to train service dogs.

**PAWS**

Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers (PAWS) allows Veterans with PTSD the opportunity to train service dogs for their fellow comrades. WPBVAHCS is leading the way as one of five sites nationwide chosen to participate in the PAWS Pilot. In partnership with Dogs for Life of Vero Beach, Florida, Veterans participate in weekly training for a period of eight weeks, at which time the Veteran graduates from the program and the certified service dog is paired with a fellow Veteran.

**Hot Meals, At Your Order**

Mealtime is now a highly personalized, safe, and efficient experience for Veterans, thanks to Tray in Motion. This system ensures that every meal aligns with individual dietary needs and healthcare provider recommendations, enhancing safety and peace of mind for all Veterans on their healing journey.



Scan the QR code to see the video.

**BIOVIGIL**



**Your Recovery is Our Priority**

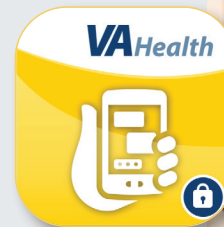
We are putting our foot on the pedal as we accelerate in line with VHA's top priority of our journey as a High Reliability Organization! New to our clinical areas is BioVigil, an electronic hand hygiene monitoring solution that reminds and coaches at every opportunity while enhancing the patient experience to ensure all hands are clean at all times.



Watch this BioVigil education video!

**Scheduling with Ease by Texting**

Check out MyHealthVet for secure messaging with all providers and for scheduling appointments; WPBVAHCS is the first VA facility in Florida to launch VA Health Chat to allow direct interaction with a team member via text to quickly schedule appointments for care.



Katerina Lambrinos, Clinical Pharmacist Practitioner and COD Champion

**Solutions for Women's Health**

Contraception on Demand (COD) is an initiative that provides high quality, accessible contraceptive services through implementation of two promising strategies: pharmacist prescribing and 12-month dispensing.

This seamless partnership among Pharmacy and Providers encompasses an initial robust discussion on the recommended contraceptive method based on the personal needs and medical history, followed by the prescription pick-up.





**AROMATHERAPY/ESSENTIAL OILS:** The art and science of utilizing naturally extracted aromatic essences from plants to balance, harmonize and promote the health of body, mind, and spirit. It seeks to unify physiological, psychological, and spiritual processes to enhance an individual's innate healing process.



**REIKI:** A form of Japanese energy healing that facilitates comfort, relaxation and balance. "For the novice, all that is needed is an open-mind and a willingness to try something new."



From Yoga, Tai Chi and Acupuncture, the wellness approach to moving the body and connecting your mind and soul as one has changed countless lives.

Tune into the Waves of Wellness Whole Health edition that breaks down all the options the program offers to Veterans to achieve what matters most to them.



### Whole Health Offerings

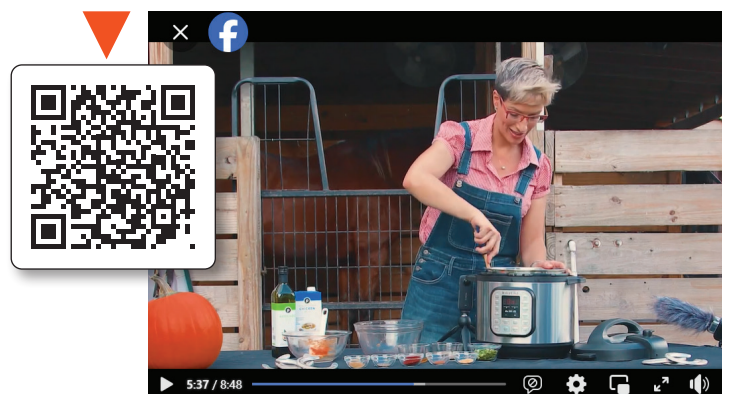
**TAKING CHARGE OF MY LIFE & HEALTH (TCMLH):**

An 8-week course with specific curriculum to help break down each component in the circle of health, that impacts your health. We explore if one component is overwhelming the others, or if another component needs attention. We learn how to recognize our values and set our goals to match our values. Learn how to: Hold space, listen and reflect, self-manage, and use different types of meditation.

### Health Teaching Kitchen

Learn cooking skills, seasonal treats and so much more as the program highlights new recipes each week with expert Dietitians. You can join in person with your loved one or tune into the video recordings and join in the comfort of your home.

Join us for a culinary adventure with our trusted Registered Dietitian, Billie Smith! This episode, we're whipping up a Healthy Hearty Pumpkin Chili. Tune in and treat your taste buds this fall!



## YOUR TEAM: READY TO SERVE

### Veterans Serving Veterans

26% of our employees served this great nation! We would like to salute a piece of this percent, Environmental Management Supervisor and U.S. Army Veteran Bruce Mackey. Bruce, a proud Gulf War Veteran Sergeant, served eight years in the military and continues on his service today. His 12-year journey at the Medical Center in West Palm Beach is fueled by respect and the pursuit of success, despite challenges.

Said best by the hero himself - "I extend all I do as a part of what was given to me as a Veteran and I live in success regardless of my disabilities."



U.S. Army Veteran  
Bruce Mackey

## OUR TEAM IN THE COMMUNITY



WPBVAHCS executive leaders partner with Coral Shores Behavioral Health

### COMPACT Act

Together, it takes a strong community to save the lives of Veterans. In partnership with Coral Shores Behavioral Health, our executive leaders, joined forces with the organization to ensure awareness and action under the new COMPACT Act. Under the Veterans Comprehensive Prevention, Access to Care, and Treatment (COMPACT) Act, Veterans with acute suicidal crisis can immediately visit any VA or non-VA health care facility for emergency health care at no cost. No matter where or when, and regardless of enrollment status, Veterans in suicidal crisis now have access to free, emergency health care that they have rightfully earned and deserve.

## SOUTH FLORIDA FEDERAL EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

For Jose Torres Andujar, the military motto of 'service before self' continues even twenty years post discharge from the U.S. Army. In a recent heroic response to save a life, he represented the sacrifice and selflessness so common among our nation's Veterans and is why the local First Responders recognized him for his bravery. As a U.S. Army Veteran, an employee at the West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System, and a citizen, Jose truly exemplifies 'service before self'.

Read about the rescue:



Jose Torres Andujar: South Florida Federal Employee of the Year





# Veteran Quotes

“

*Through the years in dealing with private doctors and doctors' offices, The VAMC is a refreshing change. I usually get to my appointments at the VAMC earlier than my appointment time and They take care of me in a timely fashion. VAMC personnel treats me with respect and dignity. I would go nowhere else for treatment but the WPB VAMC. Makes me proud to be a veteran.*

”

“

*I am totally impressed with the VA healthcare system. I am a retired Director of Medical Imaging Informatics, and your systems are better than most for profit hospitals!*

”



“

*I recently had a bone density exam. The check in process was flawless and the tech was professional, well educated, and caring. What really made me surprised was the equipment, it was spotless, new, and state of the art. Whenever I get a chance to speak to a fellow female VET, I always make a point to encourage her to utilize our benefits. WPBVAHCS is beautiful, clean, and amazing.*

”

“

*The pharmacist at the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center was helpful, informative, and fulfilled my request to have my refill sent urgently as I was running very low on my current medication. I received it in one day from UPS delivery to my home. I am extremely satisfied.*

”

“

*The professional staff always listens and explains anything I have concerns about. I am comfortable talking to the nurse/pharmacist when the need arises.*

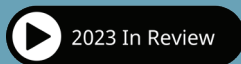
”





## STAY CONNECTED

Website: [www.va.gov/west-palm-beach-health-care](http://www.va.gov/west-palm-beach-health-care)



## WANT TO KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON?

The latest news, stories, events, etc., can be found on our social media channels:

 [facebook.com/WPBVAHCS](https://facebook.com/WPBVAHCS)

 [twitter.com/WPBVAHCS](https://twitter.com/WPBVAHCS)

 [instagram.com/WPBVAHCS](https://instagram.com/WPBVAHCS)

 [www.youtube.com/user/VeteransHealthAdmin](https://www.youtube.com/user/VeteransHealthAdmin)

 [www.va.gov/west-palm-beach-health-care/stories](http://www.va.gov/west-palm-beach-health-care/stories)

