



# THE BOISE FRONT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BOISE VA MEDICAL CENTER



**VA**

Boise VA  
Medical Center

THE BOISE VAMC INVITES YOU TO CELEBRATE

# DIA DE LOS MUERTOS DAY OF THE DEAD!

4 Ofrendas/Altars will be placed on campus  
between October 30th and Nov 3rd.

1. Bldg. 77 outside of the Canteen by the elevator
2. Bldg. 54 waiting room/main entrance
3. Bldg. 116 mental health/sleep lab
4. Bldg. 114 lobby

Please stop by and place a picture or small offering (no monetary value) to celebrate your family and friends who have passed on.

If you are unable to stop by feel free to email a picture to the Hispanic Emphasis Program Manager Maritza at [maritza.lorenzana@va.gov](mailto:maritza.lorenzana@va.gov) and it be added to one of the Ofrendas.





# BOISE is HIGHLY RELIABLE

High Reliability Principles and Values

## Respect for People

November 2024 | National Safety Poster

### Creative Education Builds Respect for Patients Experiencing Dementia

C

#### CONTEXT

The Nursing Education Department at H. John Heinz III VA Medical Center (VAMC) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, identified an opportunity for staff members to better understand and support Veterans with dementia. The educators researched and developed an innovative, two-part educational program, which included theory and video classroom instruction followed by an interactive simulation.

A

#### ACTION

For the simulation, nursing staff members donned a pair of winter gloves to mimic tactile deficiency, eyeglasses with a narrowed visual field, and headphones that played distracting background noise. Staff members were then instructed to complete everyday tasks with which dementia patients may struggle, such as buttoning a shirt and counting 37 cents. With the simulation garb in place, most participants could not hear or remember the commands.

R

#### RESULTS

After struggling to complete the simulation tasks, nursing staff members reported feeling greater empathy for those experiencing dementia and an increased understanding of the difficulties Veterans with dementia face each day. The development and implementation of the course reflect the importance of continually infusing our work with *Respect for People*. The course is now recommended throughout the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System.



Jennifer Foust, RN,  
Nurse Educator

Marieta Wasler, RN,  
Nurse Educator

**“Increasing staff member understanding of what Veterans living with dementia experience is critical to provide exceptional health care.”**

*Jennifer Foust, RN, Nurse Educator  
H. John Heinz III VAMC  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs



For more information on High Reliability Organizations (HROs), visit:  
<https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/vhahrojourny>

VHA'S JOURNEY TO  
**HIGH**  
RELIABILITY

Your Care is Our Mission.

Internal VA Use Only

**CAREGIVERS!**

**VA**  
**Caregiver**  
**Support**

**JOIN US**

**NOV. 19**  
**8AM - 2PM**

**BOISE VAMC**  
**MTN. COVE GYM / BLDG. 54**



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***November is Caregiver Support Month!***  
***This years theme is 'Caregiving - Refresh and Renew'***

*The mission of the Caregiver Support Program is to promote the health and well-being of family caregiver's who care for our nation's Veterans through education, resources, support and services.*

Drop in and join us for a day of fun and relaxation designed with you in mind!

Caregiver Support Staff will be present to answer any questions.

Treats and music will be provided!

**VETERANS AND  
CAREGIVERS  
ARE INVITED!**

For questions please call the Boise VA Caregiver Support Program  
Anita Primrose, AMSA (208) 422-1000 ext. 7364



Hello! My name is Nikole Watkins and I am your new Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program (IPVAP) Coordinator. I have been at the Boise VAMC for the last 16 years working as Social Worker, Substance Use Disorder Rehab Technician and Social Work Service Secretary. In my current role as Senior Social Worker, I have served in the Post-9/11 Military 2VA, Veterans Justice Outreach, and Substance Use Disorder Programs. I have more recently been your Toxic Exposure Screening Navigator.

Before coming to VHA, I served in the U.S. Army as a counselor and later as a Medical Service Corps Officer. Like many Veterans I struggled to find a direction after service and that difficulty impacted my life in many areas. At the time, it didn't occur that my service had such a profound impact on me, and that I could change. I needed a new mindset, and interpersonal skills, that would help improve my quality of life. Through my personal journey, I gained a passion to share those skills with others. This drive is why I work at the VA with other Veterans who are experiencing challenges. Since coming to the BVAMC, I have taken advantage of many leadership training opportunities which, along with my military training and life experience, has given me a mindset of "Put PEOPLE first." It helps me to think about the many challenges and successes that I've experienced myself and have compassion for the Veteran in front of me.

One of the challenges that many Veterans face after service is how to manage the very important life area of relationships. Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) may arise, which can also negatively impact their health. Through the BVAMC IPVAP, we provide many options to help. We have resources, classes, groups, and support. We focus on the behavior, as opposed to judging, using a Person-First, Veteran-Centric, Recovery-Oriented and Trauma-Informed approach.

Recently, I was lucky enough to join the Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Team, as Program Coordinator, to assist Veterans struggling with Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). It is my hope that my personal growth, training, and experience will benefit those I serve.

The VA's Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program (IPVAP) is committed to helping Veterans, their partners, and VA staff who are impacted by IPV. If you, or someone you know, could be experiencing and/or using IPV - help is available.



**NEW** Intimate Partner Violence Assistance  
Program Coordinator

***Nikole Watkins, LCSW, ACADC***



We are thrilled to welcome Ms. Kacee Davies to our leadership team as the new 2M/S Assistant Manager! Kacee began her journey with us as a Nurse Resident, graduating early to provide essential support during COVID-19. She quickly stepped into the role of Charge Nurse, where she has demonstrated outstanding leadership ever since.

Kacee is an active member of the Wound Care and Post-Baccalaureate RN Residency (PBNR) Committees and serves as the lead for two 2M/S Unit Sustainment Teams. She has completed the LEAD program and recently earned her Yellow Belt Certification, further underscoring her commitment to growth and excellence. Please join us in supporting Kacee as she continues to contribute to the Boise VA in impactful ways.



***NEW*** 2MS Assistant Manager

***Kacee Davies***





**Ricardo  
Flores**

Employee of  
the Month  
**SEPTEMBER**



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Medical Center

Ricardo Flores has exemplified the ICARE values in many ways while working as a social worker on 2P. He has worked tirelessly and gone above and beyond to serve our veterans. Ricardo has made a meaningful impact for so many 2P veterans, but specifically two veterans who had been admitted to 2P significantly longer than our typical admissions. Both veterans were facing homelessness or living in terrible living conditions. Ricardo assisted both veterans through the difficult process of obtaining service-connected benefits, Social Security benefits, and other resources to help them obtain housing, which was their primary barrier to discharge. Ricardo was committed to helping these veterans by advocating for them with many government entities and treated them with dignity and respect along the way. Because of Ricardo's efforts, both veterans are now living in long term care facilities where they will be able to live their best lives. Ricardo is a true example of the excellence we strive to be at the Boise VA.





**Leianne  
Percell**

**Employee of  
the Month  
SEPTEMBER**



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HAS would like to nominate Leianne Percell for Employee of the Month for her outstanding dedication and exemplary service as Travel Clerk. Leianne consistently demonstrates integrity in her role. Treating every veteran with the utmost respect, even in challenging situations where veterans may be less than friendly. Her ability to remain calm and compassionate under pressure showcases her deep commitment to serving those who served our country.

In addition to processing a higher than average volume of travel claims, Leianne ensures that benefits are paid promptly, and will advocate tirelessly for the veterans she assists. Her meticulous attention to detail not only streamlines our operation but also directly impacts the satisfaction and wellbeing of our patients.

Leianne is a valuable resource to her coworkers, providing training and support that enhances the team's overall efficiency. During periods of short staffing, she willingly takes on extra responsibilities, demonstrating her strong work ethic and commitment to the VA mission.

Her unwavering dedication, respect for our veterans, and the positive influence she has on her colleagues. She truly embodies the values of our organization and deserves this recognition.





**Dakota  
Bowers**

**Employee of  
the Month  
SEPTEMBER**



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Dakota, a CNA on 2M/S, is always seeking ways to enhance patient care. In addition to her dedication on the unit she is an active member of the US Teams and is pursuing her BSN full-time, all while maintaining her full-time work schedule. Her Commitment to both her education and her role exemplifies her passion for nursing and providing the best possible care.

Dakota took a patient for a procedure. The patient and Dakota were waiting in the lobby and the provider came out to let the patient know the procedure would be postponed due to concerns of the current diagnosis. The patient seemed confused, and the provider reiterated the reason for the change in plans and that the team was concerned about doing the procedure. He went back in to talk to the anesthesiologist again.

Dakota went into clinic to find the provider and overheard him say he was going to go out to the lobby to evaluate the patient again. Dakota advocated for the patient and took the initiative to stop the provider from opening sharing her information with others around in the lobby. Instead, she suggested the provider ask if the patient could come back to a room to discuss their decision regarding the procedure. The patient agreed and was brought back to the into a room for this private conversation.

Dakota used the HRO principles of Sensitivity to Operations and Preoccupation with Failure. She showed how mindful she was of the patients right to privacy and anticipated risk to help secure a solution. She also displayed the HRO values, It's About the Veteran and the Duty to Speak Up for safety and privacy of the veteran.





Rebecca  
**Dahmen-Bosse**

Supervisor of  
the Quarter  
**QTR 4**



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Rebecca Dahmen-Bosse exemplifies the ICARE values in her department each day. Anytime someone calls in sick or an area is in need of assistance, she is right there to help in any way she can. She implemented and assisted in boxing up all paper medical records in the facility to be shipped for storage. When their supervisor moved to a different position, she worked tirelessly side by side with her employees until the project was completed. She showed commitment to not only her organizational responsibilities, but to each employee by helping them to feel valued. She is always doing the job of 2 or 3 people in her desire for excellence.

Working with her each day, I notice how she treats others with the utmost respect. She listens to their ideas and implements them when she sees the benefit it provides. One coworker suggested changing to a different form to complete our audits. Rebecca was willing to try it and it really increased the number of audits we were able to complete daily. She places trust in the talents and abilities of her team, allowing us to work independently. She encourages team work and growth by having us to help each other with various projects. She displays integrity by being accountable for her actions and the actions of her team. She keeps information shared with her in confidentiality. She also advocates for the needs of her employees.

Whether it is for tools needed to complete our jobs or providing support, she is quick to reach out and promote our need or cause.

She displays a commitment to help us to grow professionally and personally. I truly enjoy working with Rebecca and am excited as our team continues to achieve new heights.





## Intensive Care Unit

Unit of the  
Quarter  
**QTR 4**



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ICU is dynamic, evolving and at times incredibly intense. Not only does the ICU take care of the sickest of the sick, but the team in ICU has also accomplished many amazing things this last year alone.

The ICU team wears many hats and is a very high functioning team.

Not only do they uphold our ICARE values at the VA but they also deliver high quality care to our veterans. I couldn't be more proud and grateful to be a part of such an amazing team!





**Kori  
Keyes**

**Safe Patient  
Handling, SLIP of  
the Quarter  
QTR 4**



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Kori Keyes, RN, on the SDU team, has been chosen for the 4th Quarter, FY24 Safe Patient Handling and Mobility, Staff Leader in Injury Prevention (SLIP) of the Quarter.

One of Ms. Keyes most notable achievements this past quarter has been her implementation of the Fall TIPs tool within the Step-Down Unit. A gap analysis was completed, identifying a communication gap regarding the mobility needs of patients. This resulted in a knowledge gap for staff and delays in care while staff attempted to find out the mobility concerns of patients. She utilized evidence and experience to identify the Fall TIPS tool and implemented this on the unit. This tool improves organizational performance and reduces delays in patient care by improving communication with interdisciplinary team members regarding patient mobility. This allows staff to assist patients to the rest room or to the chair safely, reducing patient and staff injuries. Ms. Keyes established metrics to monitor the effectiveness of the tool with all staff wanting to keep utilizing the tool.

Great job Ms. Keyes and congratulations on being the 4th Quarter, FY24, Safe Patient Handling and Mobility SLIP of the Quarter!



**American  
Red Cross**

*Thank you!*

## Boise Veterans Administration Medical Center

Sponsor Group

**FY24**

Date of Drive

**202**

Total Number of Donors

**29**

First Time Donors

**119**

Type O Donors

**225**

Units Collected

**One single blood donation can help save more than one life.  
Thank you for supporting our lifesaving mission!**

*A note  
from the  
Red Cross*

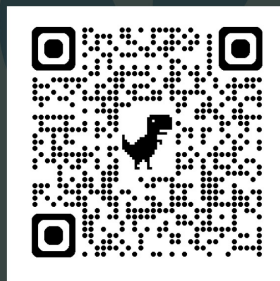




**American  
Red Cross**

**LEND US A  
HAND FOR  
HALLOWEEN  
DONATE BLOOD!**

**REGISTER TO  
DONATE BLOOD AT  
THE BOISE VA ON  
NOV. 12TH**



**KEEP UP  
THE GREAT  
WORK  
BOISE VA!**

# Peter & Annette Tetreault



Peter and Annette are both retired Air Force service members. Peter served 29 years 3 months on active duty 1980 – 2010 retiring as a Chief Master Sergeant. He is a combat veteran of Afghanistan in 2009. While Annette served 26+ years active duty, Guard, Reserves and Individual Mobilization Augmentee 1983 – 2011 retiring as a Technical Sergeant. Both Peter and Annette were in Services Squadron performing in food service, fitness, lodging, MWR, mortuary affairs and contingency planning. Annette also started her career as an administrative specialist prior to cross training into Services. A highlight of their career came as war-planners for Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. When Peter and the HQ's team were heading to Saudi Arabia to conduct operations for Iraqi freedom, CENTAF needed someone to perform HQ duties at Shaw AFB SC. Annette was chosen to fill the void hence becoming the only husband and wife team to plan and execute a war together.

Peter and Annette have been married 24 ½ years and have four boys and 10 grandchildren. Annette was born and raised in Boise Idaho. But from 1966 to 1972 her parents brought her to Vientiane Laos during the Vietnam war where her father worked for USAID. Peter was born and raised in Putnam Connecticut. During their free time, Peter and Annette enjoy camping, gardening, spending time with the grands, attending Boise State football and basketball games and traveling. Annette also spends a lot of free time quilting while Peter also enjoys wood working, golf and fishing.

We volunteer because we feel so blessed in life that we need to share our fortunes. Too many people can use assistance. We decided that veterans are close to our hearts and chose to give our time to the vets. We have been volunteering at the VA since November 2023. We both volunteered as escorts at the front entrance to the VA, assisting CLC patients and have driven both the Caldwell/Nampa/Meridian and Boise routes for the DAV. We pick up veterans and bring them into their appointments. If these vets were not picked up, they would likely would not be able to attend to their medical needs. Annette really enjoys interacting with veterans and their spouses. While Pete's favorite part of working with veterans is making their lives a little easier.



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## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT





# Welcome To COMPLIANCE CORNER

## The Ethics of Selling Girl Scout Cookies and Fundraising at Work

*It's that time of year again, as the secret stash in the freezer has been depleted for months...it's Girl Scout Cookie season. Around this time of year, many federal employees wonder whether they are allowed to sell Girl Scout cookies on behalf of their scouts in the federal workplace and the simple answer is no. Not under any circumstances, with no exceptions.*

*This restriction applies to all fundraising activities i.e., raffles, candy/gift wrap sales, Boy Scout popcorn and yes even those yummy Girl Scout cookies. Under the Code of Federal Regulations 5 C.F.R. Part 950 § 2635.808 Fundraising Activities, the only allowable fundraising activity on federal property is for approved events associated with the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).*

*Below are some commonly asked questions and answers related to fundraising on VA Property:*

**Q: Can I fundraise to VA employees off VA property?**

**A: Yes, but not to subordinate employees.**

**Q: Can I email people letting them know that I have Girl Scout cookies to sell?**

**A: Not via your work computer or phone.**

**Q: What should I do if I see someone fundraising for an organization that is not part of the CFC?**

**A: Ask them to please not do it on VA property and let your supervisor know.**

**Q: Can I have a "I have Girl Scout cookies" sign in my car window?**

**A: It is best to take it down while on campus, so people do not inadvertently break any of the above rules.**

**Q: Can I verbally let people know that I am selling something as part of a fundraiser?**

**A: Not while on the clock – lunch or break is okay but be cautious not to come across as pressuring.**

**Q: Can I leave order forms for cookies, popcorn, or other fundraising in the breakroom?**

**A: No, this is a violation of the fundraising activities rule.**

**Q: Can I use the copier/printer in my section to print order forms?**

**A: No, minimal personal use of government resources does not apply to printing non-Combined Federal Campaign fundraising documents. (VA Directive 6001)**

### Have a question? Need more guidance regarding fundraising?

If you identify a risk or have a compliance concern, **please don't hesitate to reach out to me**, Kaysha Weygandt, Integrity & Compliance Officer at [Kaysha.Weygandt@va.gov](mailto:Kaysha.Weygandt@va.gov) or call 208-422-1267. I am here to help, and your communications to me will be treated with confidentiality. If you would like to make a report anonymously, you may do so by calling the Compliance Helpline at 1-866-842-4357. Additional reporting channels can be found in the [Code of Integrity Section 7, Points of Contact](#). Whistleblower Protections allow that you as a VA employee may disclose a violation of law, rule or regulation; gross

# COMPLIANCE CORNER



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## HELLO'S & GOODBYE'S



**The Boise VAMC would  
like to welcome our new  
employees who joined  
the team in  
October 2024:**

**Samantha Bernier, Surgery**  
**Candelaria Wold, Physical Medicine and Rehab**  
**Heather Haycock, Physical Medicine and Rehab**  
**Jerry Bridges, Nutrition and Food Service**  
**Joseph Kitzhaber, Nutrition and Food Service**  
**Sara French, Pharmacy**  
**Serena Howard, Nursing**  
**Mary Storey, Health Administration**  
**Forest Blessum, Facilities Management**  
**Jennifer Clark-McGarritty, Facilities Management**  
**Jess Smith, Facilities Management**  
**Harli Lugo, Primary Care**





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## HELLO'S & GOODBYE'S



**The Boise VAMC would  
like to say farewell to the  
employees who left the  
team in October 2024:**

**Katherine Nelson, Nursing  
Tiasia Campbell, Pharmacy  
Ricardo Reyes, Finance  
Gail Leininger, Supply  
Katrin Taylor, Nursing  
John Goeddertz, Anesthesiology**

*We pay special tribute to the current and past employees  
who passed during this month.*

**Montie Wynn  
Max Badesheim**

# FREE WILL CLINIC FOR VETERANS!

## VETERANS WILL CLINIC



**VA** | Boise VA  
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Veterans and their spouses can get help with simple wills, living wills, general power of attorney, durable power of attorney for health care, and much more **FOR FREE!**

**Thursday**  
**February 6, 2025**  
**9:00am – 4:00pm**

Boise VA Medical Center  
Bldg. 54, Education Bldg.  
500 W. Fort St, Boise, ID 83702

To attend please register by calling the Boise VA  
Veterans Justice Outreach Program at (208) 422-1064

## VETERANS WILL CLINIC



**VA** | Boise VA  
Medical Center

Veterans and their spouses can get help with simple wills, living wills, general power of attorney, durable power of attorney for health care, and much more **FOR FREE!**

**Thursday**  
**April 3, 2025**  
**9:00am – 4:00pm**

Boise VA Medical Center  
Bldg. 54, Education Bldg.  
500 W. Fort St, Boise, ID 83702

To attend please register by calling the Boise VA  
Veterans Justice Outreach Program at (208) 422-1064



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Medical Center

# Veterans Clean Slate Law Legal Clinic

At this clinic, Veterans who want to shield one criminal record from public view (under the Clean Slate law) can meet with an attorney for assistance. To qualify, eligible veterans will have either a nonviolent misdemeanor conviction or a felony drug conviction, and have had more than 5 years since the sentence was completed. **To register to attend contact (208) 971-7292.**

17 DEC 2024  
1600 - 1900

Boise VA Medical Center, Bldg. 114







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# HOLIDAY SPONSOR PROGRAM

The Veteran Holiday Sponsorship Program is open for sponsors and veteran nominations now through December 6.

Gifts will be available for pickup or delivery the week of Christmas. If you would like to sponsor a veteran or nominate yourself or another veteran please contact Tammy at (208) 422-1175 or Justin at (208) 422-1176.

Completed forms can be dropped off at Voluntary Service or emailed to [boivoluntaryservice@va.gov](mailto:boivoluntaryservice@va.gov)

Application forms can be found at the Boise VA Information Desk and online at:  
[www.va.gov/boise-health-care/work-with-us/volunteer-or-donate/](http://www.va.gov/boise-health-care/work-with-us/volunteer-or-donate/)





Commemorating the 2004 Full Deployment of the  
116th Cavalry Brigade Combat Team to Iraq

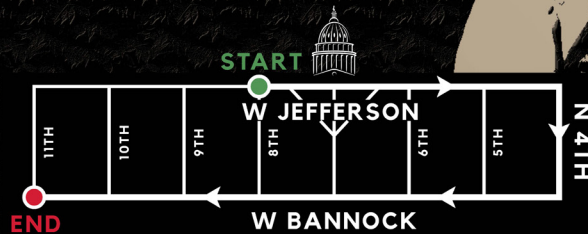
# IDAHO VETERANS PARADE



11.2.2024



SATURDAY @ 10AM  
DOWNTOWN BOISE



[www.idahoveteransparade.org](http://www.idahoveteransparade.org)



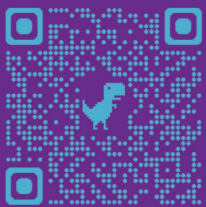


# NURSING ASSISTANT POSITIONS OPEN! APPLY BEFORE NOV. 4

## JOIN OUR TEAM - NURSING ASSISTANTS

We are hiring a Nursing Assistant position in the Restorative Care, Community Living Center department of the Boise VA Medical Center. Restorative Care refers to nursing interventions that promote the Veteran's ability to adapt and adjust to living as independently and safely as is possible. Federal Retirement and Health Benefits! Scholarship opportunities! Receive training in phlebotomy, sterile technique, tele-monitoring and more! Certification not required for employment. Posting closes 11/6/2024.

APPLY HERE



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## JOIN OUR TEAM - NURSING ASSISTANTS

We are hiring a Nursing Assistant position in the Step-down Unit of the Boise VA Medical Center. Federal Retirement and Health Benefits! Scholarship opportunities! Receive training in phlebotomy, sterile technique, tele-monitoring and more! Certification not required for employment. Posting closes 11/4/2024.

APPLY HERE



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