

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Participants Selected for Pilot Program in Rural Communities**

*Rural Veterans Coordination Pilot (RVCP) Grant Program Awards up to $2 million for 2 Years*

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today announced selection of five organizations and State and local governments to participate in a new pilot program to assist Veterans and their families who are transitioning from military service to civilian life in rural or underserved communities.

The Rural Veterans Coordination Pilot (RVCP) is two-year program that awards up to $2 million to the five participating governments and organizations. Grantees are expected to use the funds designed to aid in the adjustment to civilian life in one or more of the following areas: (1) Increasing coordination of health care and benefits for Veterans; (2) Increasing availability of high quality medical and mental health services; (3) Providing assistance to families of transitioning Veterans, and; (4) Outreach to Veterans and families.

“We want to do everything that we can do to support our Veterans and their families,” said VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald. “We are looking forward to working with these organizations. This two-year pilot will not only be beneficial to those Veterans we currently serve, but to future Veterans as we learn best practices to replicate it in other rural communities throughout the country.”

Dr. Carolyn Clancy, Interim Under Secretary for Health, echoed Mr. McDonald’s sentiments.

“With such a large percentage of enrolled Veterans residing in rural and highly rural areas, we welcome the opportunity to focus on this unique population and the great strides VA has made to improve their access to care,” said Dr. Clancy.VA will use information obtained through the pilot program to evaluate the effectiveness of using community-based organizations and local and State government entities to improve the provision of services to transitioning Veterans and their families.”

The five selectees are:

* Maine Department of Labor – State Entity;
* Westcare Washington, Inc. – (Washington State to include Oregon) - Non-Profit Organization;
* Volunteers of America North Louisiana (includes Arkansas and Texas) – Non-Profit Organization;
* New Mexico Department of Veterans’ Services – State Entity; and
* Nebraska Association of Local Health Directors – Non-Profit Organization.