



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

News Release

Office of Public Affairs
Media Relations

Washington, DC 20420
(202) 461-7600
www.va.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Jan. 3, 2017

New Members Appointed to VA Advisory Committee on Women Veterans

WASHINGTON – Four new members have been appointed to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Advisory Committee on Women Veterans, an expert panel that advises VA's Secretary on issues and programs impacting women Veterans. Established in 1983, the committee makes recommendations to the Secretary for policy and legislative changes.

"VA values the transformational guidance the Committee has provided over the past 33 years, and relies on to the members to utilize their diverse perspectives in anticipating the emerging needs of women Veterans," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald. "The new appointees will provide unique insight, as VA strives to gauge the evolving needs of women Veterans."

New Members VA Advisory Committee on Women Veterans

- **Lisa Kirk Brown, Bellingham, WA.** A retired Maryland Air National Guard Lieutenant Colonel; currently serves as a member of the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs' Women Veterans Advisory Committee, a member of the Whatcom County Veterans Advisory Board, and a Disabled American Veterans service officer.
- **Kate Germano, Upper Marlboro, MD.** A retired U.S. Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel; currently serves as chief operating officer for Service Women's Action Network (SWAN), a non-profit organization solely focused on supporting the needs of service women and women Veterans.
- **Karen O'Brien, University Place, WA.** A retired U.S. Army Colonel, with deployments in support of Operation Enduring Freedom; currently serves as a compensation and pension physician for the Veterans Benefits Administration in American Lake, WA.
- **Betty Yarbrough, Springfield, VA.** A retired U. S. Army Colonel, with deployments in support of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom; immediate past military director of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, where she served as the primary advisor to the Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness on all matters pertaining to women in the armed forces.

Committee members Octavia Harris (Retired Command Master Chief Petty Officer) San Antonio, and Shannon McLaughlin, Esq. (Major, Massachusetts National Guard) Sharon, Mass. have been reappointed for an additional term.

For information about VA's benefits and services for women Veterans, visit www.va.gov/womenvet, or contact the Women Veterans Call Center at 1-855-829-6636. The Women Veterans Call Center is available to address concerns of women Veterans, their families and caregivers, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., EST, and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., EST.

###