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VA Leaders and Team Named as Finalists for Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals

WASHINGTON — Two employees and a team from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) were recently honored as finalists for [Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals](#), or **Sammies**, by the nonprofit [Partnership for Public Service](#), which recognizes the accomplishments of federal civil servants.

Announced last month by the Partnership, [Marcella “Marcy” Jacobs](#), executive director of VA’s Digital Service, and her team were named as 2018 Management Excellence Finalists for Sammies; while [Jordan Manos](#), director of Operations for VA’s Acquisition Academy, was honored as a finalist in the Promising Innovations category.

Jacobs and VA’s Digital Service team are being honored for their efforts to rebuild and modernize numerous Veteran-facing digital tools, making it easier for Veterans to discover, apply for, track and manage the care and benefits they have earned. Since its launch, more than 1.6 million Veterans have logged onto www.vets.gov. That number is expected to grow substantially in the months ahead as the platform merges with the agency’s main information resource, www.va.gov, which serves about 5 million visitors a month.

Manos is being lauded for his work as an engineer while on temporary assignment to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 2017 in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. Manos is credited for bringing innovative ideas to improve the system used to assess flood damage. His contributions helped make it possible for residents to get financial assistance and start repairs much more quickly when compared with previous major storms, and he helped save the government an estimated \$20 million in assessment costs.

More than 300 nominations were submitted for consideration to the Partnership for Public Service this year. Jacobs and Manos are among 27 finalists being honored for their work addressing many of the country’s greatest challenges. A Sammies selection committee will select seven winners from the 27 finalists, who will be honored Oct. 2 during a gala at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium in Washington, D.C.

The finalists also will be eligible for the Sammies [People’s Choice Award](#), which will be chosen by a public online vote and announced July 19.

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