

VAU.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

News Release

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VA announces additional leadership appointments

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) released the names of the latest key appointees in the department.

James Anderson, special assistant, Office of the Secretary: James Anderson served as a prior-enlisted Air Force intelligence officer at U.S. Air Forces Central Command. He founded the University of South Carolina's Veterans Alumni Council, a 200 plus membership-based organization with an endowed scholarship for military members and their families. Anderson held fellowships with the Center for a New American Security, Truman National Security Project, Veterans in Global Leadership and was a Fulbright scholar in Canada. He continues to serve in the U.S. Air Force Reserve assigned to headquarters Department of the Air Force's Intelligence Directorate.

John Boerstler, chief Veterans experience officer, Veterans Experience Office: John Boerstler served as the chief executive officer of Veteran-focused nonprofit Combined Arms. A native of Texas, he served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1999-2007 including deployments to Iraq, Kuwait, Syria, Jordan, Djibouti, and Kenya. Boerstler helped found the Lone Star Veterans Association to serve Houston Post-9/11 Veterans and their families.

Melissa Bryant, senior advisor, Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs: Melissa Bryant's public service includes roles in both the military and civil service as a senior intelligence officer. As a plans, policy and operations expert for the Department of Defense and intelligence community, she served in key leadership positions with the Defense Intelligence Agency, Joint Staff, United States Military Academy and Army intelligence. She also served as the national legislative director for The American Legion and as chief policy officer for Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America. Bryant is widely recognized for championing causes impacting women and minority service members and Veterans.

Michael Frueh, principal deputy undersecretary for benefits, Veterans Benefits Administration: A career employee with more than 19 years of service in various VA positions, Michael Frueh has held the positions of deputy assistant secretary for planning and performance management in the Office of Enterprise Integration; assistant deputy undersecretary in field operations for the Benefits Assistance Service and Transition Assistance Program; Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) chief of staff to the undersecretary for benefits and executive director for VBA's Loan Guaranty Service.

Joshua Jacobs, senior advisor, Office of the Secretary: Prior to rejoining VA, Joshua Jacobs was a senior associate at Booz Allen Hamilton. He previously served as a VA senior advisor for the Office of the Secretary and a special assistant in VA's Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs. He also served nine years in the U.S. Senate, including two years as deputy staff director for the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Kimberly McClain, Ph.D., deputy assistant secretary, Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs: Kimberly McClain holds a doctorate in philosophy in International Studies. Prior to joining VA, she served as director for congressional strategy with the Department of the Air Force Legislative Affairs. She has also served in a variety of roles with the Department of Defense to include senior international advisor for Latin America with U.S. Cyber Command and director of the Defense Senior Leadership Development Program. McClain is an Air Force Reservist with more than 29 years of leadership experience in international and legislative affairs and as a senior air battle manager. As an Air Force Reserve officer, she currently serves as a senior international cooperation advisor to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff within Strategic Plans and Policy.

Aaron Scheinberg, special assistant to the secretary, Congressional and Legislative Affairs: Aaron Scheinberg served as a legislative assistant to Senator Joe Manchin, leading the West Virginia senator's team on Veterans and broadband internet policy. Before working in the Senate, Aaron was a candidate for Congress in West Virginia's 2nd Congressional District and received bi-partisan endorsements from Veterans and advocates across the country. Scheinberg helped build and lead, The Mission Continues, a national Veterans nonprofit, where he helped thousands of Veterans reintegrate to civilian life by leading community development projects in 40 cities across the U.S.

Christopher Villatoro, COVID-19 response coordinator, Office of the Secretary: Christopher Villatoro has more than 14 years of combined federal service in both the U.S. Marine Corps and Department of Veteran Affairs. While in the Marine Corps he served in different capacities around the world. He later continued to serve at VA in multiple roles in support of Veteran health care.

More announcements to come.

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