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All veterans are reminded that the fastest way to inquire and secure the benefits they have earned is by visiting their local County Veterans Service Office. A listing of these offices is available at www.cacvso.org or at www.calvet.ca.gov/resources/database.aspx.

DECEMBER 2012

HONORING VETERANS YEAR ROUND

Veterans Day has passed, but there is a way to acknowledge the incredible service and sacrifice of California's nearly 2 million veterans all year long: purchase an "Honoring Veterans" license plate.

"Honoring Veterans" license plates are available to all California motorists and are customized with the distinctive military branch or veterans service organization logo of choice," said Peter Gravett, CalVet Secretary. "Proceeds from the sale of these plates help support efforts of the California Department of Veterans Affairs and the 56 county veteran service offices to connect



veterans and their families with the benefits they've earned through military service."

Those veteran benefits do many things including:

- Help veterans and their families successfully transition from military life to civilian life;
- Bring hundreds of millions of dollars into California every year;
- Lower the local cost of veteran health care;

- Reduce veteran homelessness and unemployment numbers; and
- Increase veteran enrollment in California colleges and universities.

Show your pride; show your support; give a gift with real meaning. Purchase a veteran license plate today! Sequential veteran license plates are \$30* a year (in addition to

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*CalVet Receives
Small Business Advocate
Innovation Award*

See page 7 for complete story >>

**2012
Small Business Advocate's
Innovation Award**

**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

for
Outstanding Achievements
in a Program

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Secretary's Message

MY HOLIDAY SEASON WISH LIST

The cold weather outside brings with it what seems an unending amount of dead leaves to rake, gutters to clean, but most importantly, it marks the beginning of the Holiday Season. December is a very festive time for many of us. We gather with family and friends and enjoy hot toddies, delicious dinners, and decadent desserts. The prospect of so much cheer to be enjoyed this month got me thinking about what I truly want for Christmas this year. After much reflection, I came up with the following wish list:

- My first wish is that many more of our troops come home from their military service to the warm embrace of their families and friends.

- I also wish that our businesses and employers see the value in hiring veterans, because they are loyal team-builders, follow orders well, and have tons of experience that can easily be transferred to a civilian setting.
- I wish that homelessness was no longer an issue because every person living in this great country, especially veterans, deserves a roof over their head and a warm bed at night.
- I wish that all Americans, especially veterans, had access to affordable healthcare.
- I wish that veterans who feel like there is nothing to live for, reach out to loved ones, friends, or the many suicide prevention hotlines and ask for the help they need and is readily available.

- But most of all, I wish every one of you, all CalVet employees, the veterans in our care, all our stakeholders, and all Californians a very glorious, peaceful and happy Holiday Season.

Sincerely,



Peter J. Gravett, Major General (Ret)
Secretary, California Department of
Veterans Affairs

<< HONORING

regular DMV fees) if purchased by the end of the year. The price for these plates goes up to \$50 after January 1. For an additional one-time \$10 fee, personalized "vanity" plates can be ordered.

To purchase your veteran license plate, go to www.cacvso.org. Click on "Veteran License Plates" to view available logos. Then, go to www.dmv.ca.gov. Click on "Vehicle

Registration," click on "License Plates," then click on "California Special Interest License Plates."

The veteran license plate program is a partnership between the California Department of Veterans Affairs, the California Department of Motor Vehicles, and the California Association of County Veterans Services Officers, Inc.

FOLLOW US!



WILLOWS POLICE DEPT. RECRUITING VETERANS

The City of Willows is recruiting patrol officers. One of those hired will be a military veteran. That's a given because applications for one of the positions the City is trying to fill are being accepted from only military veterans. The other positions are open to any qualified candidate, but veterans preference will be given.

The veterans-only position was made possible by a grant from Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), an office of the U.S. Department of Justice. COPS is charged with advancing the practice of community policing in America's state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies.

For anyone interested in a career in law enforcement, the COPS Office offers publications, resources, podcasts, and trainings that can help you understand police issues and the systematic problem-solving tools to solve them. Taking time to research the challenges facing police officers will help your future in law enforcement.

For more information on law enforcement topics and resources, visit the COPS Resource Information Center at www.cops.usdoj.gov.

STUDYING VETERAN PTSD AND DRIVING

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) Palo Alto Health Care System is collaborating with Fujitsu Laboratories of America on research to improve treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in war veterans. The research focuses on the problems many veterans have in driving cars, leading to a higher-than-average accident rate for this group of people.

As part of a "treatment study," the USDVA investigators gather data on veterans' reactions in particular situations during their drives while administering treatments that include cognitive appraisal and breathing re-training. This is part of "driving rehab" therapy that veterans are offered at about a third of USDVA hospitals. The Palo Alto USDVA researchers attach sensors to the steering wheel, brake pedal, and gas pedal in the veteran's car, record his/her heart rate and respiration, and combine that data with the car's location at points in time, as well as factors on the road that might trigger PTSD symptoms.

In an earlier phase of this study, the researchers found it was very difficult to correlate the different data streams so that they could understand what happened and

when. Now, they employ Fujitsu's remote monitoring technology to time-synchronize the data. In addition, they use Fujitsu's platform to analyze and transmit the EKG data into a mobile app that is used for in-field physiological monitoring and biofeedback. Also, they now can integrate GPS (global positioning system) data from an iPhone to determine location at every instant.

"The advantage of this very precise measurement is that we can be more sure that our treatment is working or not working," said Steve Woodward, staff psychologist at the USDVA's National Center for PTSD, in an interview with InformationWeek Healthcare. The Fujitsu system, he added, has made the research "a ton easier and has provided a platform for adding devices."

So far, Woodward said, about 25 veterans--all of them survivors of improvised explosive device blasts--have gone through the treatment study, which lasts a month for each patient. "Anecdotally, they've done pretty well," Woodward noted.

When a veteran enrolls in the study, he has a session with a psychologist, discussing his driving experience in Afghanistan or Iraq and the stress he has experienced while driving in the U.S. Then he has three in-car treatment sessions. In the car with the veteran are a rehab specialist who administers the treatment and a staff member who sits in the back seat recording on-road incidents on an iPhone 4S that includes the GPS.



16-inch gun #386 that was on the battleship Missouri at Fort Cronkhite Missouri before it was shipped to the Battery Townsley fortification in San Francisco

WWII BATTLESHIP GUN TO BE INSTALLED IN SF RECREATION AREA

A massive gun that was on the battleship Missouri when the Japanese surrendered at the end of World War II will soon be installed on a cliff at the entrance to San Francisco Bay. The 68-foot-long, 236,000-pound gun will be painted and displayed at the Battery Townsley fortification in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in the coming months, the San Francisco Chronicle recently reported. The gun will simulate one of two guns that protected the battery during World War II but have since been removed.

"A gun battery without a gun would be like a railroad museum without a locomotive," said John Martini, a retired park ranger who helped refurbish Battery Townsley.

The original guns were each capable of firing a 2,100-pound projectile 25 miles out to sea, according to the National Park Service. The battery itself—and another like it at Fort Funston—became a model for gun batteries

planned elsewhere on the East and West coasts.

When Battery Townsley was tested for the first time in the summer of 1940, its projectile went even farther than expected, according to the park service. The guns continued to fire practice salvos after that, but the location of the battery was kept secret. The gun that will be displayed was one of nine aboard the battleship Missouri.

Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) chronicles two hundred years of history. It hugs the California coastline for nearly 60 miles in and around San Francisco and is one of the world's largest urban national parks, Golden Gate National Recreation Area. A total of 17 million visitors annually are drawn there by the unparalleled recreational opportunities, natural beauty, and riveting stories.

For more information about the many GGNRA sites, go to www.nps.gov/goga/planyourvisit/index.htm. [Source: Associated Press article, Oct 1 2012 & www.nps.gov]

A large, white, two-story house with a dark roof and several dormer windows. The house is set against a clear blue sky. The advertisement text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

VETERANS!

You may be eligible for a home loan!

CALVET
HOME LOANS

For more information contact CalVet at www.calvet.ca.gov/homeloans or call (866) 653-2510



SECRET OPERATIONS DISABILITY CLAIMS ASSISTANCE

For veterans claiming they can't prove a service connection for their disability because it resulted from a secret operation, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) has assigned a liaison officer to the U.S. Special Operations Command with direct access to classified files.

The little-known program has a USDVA employee work closely with the command historian at the command's headquarters at MacDill Air Force Base, FL, to review files on classified missions for special operations units in all services. Befitting the nature of the missions involved the program, quietly launched a year ago, has received scant attention. Joe Davis, spokesman for Veterans of Foreign Wars, was unaware of the initiative. "But it does make perfect sense, given the clandestine nature of their business," he said.

The liaison was established in December 2009 under an agreement between the Pentagon and USDVA. The current USDVA liaison to the

Special Operations Command is an Army veteran who was not part of a special operations unit but has the appropriate security clearances to review files, according to USDVA sources. "We at CalVet are glad that this USDVA liaison will be on hand to help these Veterans get the services they need," said Peter Gravett, CalVet Secretary.

Lack of records access has been seen by many special operations veterans as a roadblock to filing claims, especially for disabilities such as post-traumatic stress, for which there may be nothing in military health or personnel records to verify any treatment while the veteran was in uniform. If a veteran says his claim is based on involvement in a secret mission, USDVA claims examiners turn files over to the liaison, who can verify the veteran's involvement, USDVA sources said.

If more information is needed, the claims examiner requests that the liaison search for the information by requesting it from either U.S. Special Forces Command or one

of its subordinate commands. The liaison officer then prepares sanitized information for use by the regional USDVA office handling the claim. Veterans have direct contact with the liaison only if more information is needed to track down records, USDVA sources said.

Claims from veterans who say they took part in an intelligence operation run by the Defense Intelligence Agency, Central Intelligence Agency or other government organization also can be researched by the USDVA liaison officer if a classified mission is involved, USDVA sources said. The liaison officer is a full-time employee of the Veterans Benefits Administration and has access to records involving special operations units including Army Rangers, Army Special Forces, the Army's 160th Aviation Regiment, Navy SEALs, Air Force Special Operations and Marine Corps Special Operations and Reconnaissance units.

[Source: www.ptsdspport.net | Rick Maze | 3 Oct 2012]

<< DRIVING

The data from the iPhone, the accelerometers attached to the car, and a monitoring belt on the veteran also goes via Bluetooth to a miniature computer Web server aboard the car. When the researchers return to their office in the hospital, they download the data into their own database.

[Source: Ken Terry InformationWeek | Ken Terry | 28 Sep 2012]

THE MISSION CONTINUES



Graduating from Duke University, being a former Rhodes Scholar, doing humanitarian work in Calcutta with Mother Teresa, in Bosnia and in Rwanda, and serving as a U.S. Navy SEAL wasn't enough for Eric Greitens. When he came home, he realized that many veterans struggle to find the same purpose at home as they found in the mission, camaraderie and structure of the military.

He decided that wounded veterans needed a pathway back into society and believed that public service was the most creative way to provide that pathway. Through service, veterans could find renewed strength and purpose while building stronger communities.

In 2007, Greitens founded The Mission Continues (TMC)—a nonprofit organization that challenges veterans to serve and lead in communities across America. TMC awards community service

fellowships to post-9/11 veterans, empowering them to transform their own lives by serving others and directly impacting their communities.

TMC Fellows serve for six months at a local nonprofit organization addressing key educational, environmental or social issues. Each Fellow works to achieve one of three outcomes at the conclusion of the fellowship: full-time employment, pursuit of higher education, or a permanent role of service.

At the culmination of the fellowship, each Fellow leads a service project in his/her community, bringing veterans and civilians together in days of service. These projects help bridge the military-civilian divide, allowing veterans to feel more connected to their communities and helping civilians gain a better understanding of and appreciation for men and women in uniform.

There have been hundreds of TMC Fellows since the organization began with just three. There will be 500 Fellows in 2012 alone. Some of these veterans have been severely wounded, many have suffered traumatic brain injuries, most have suffered from post-traumatic stress. Yet, they serve other veterans during their fellowships and work in teaching, environmental programs, Habitat for Humanity programs and a host of other forms of public service.

TMC Fellows "hail from both sexes, many different races, thirty one states and five branches of service (there's one fellow from the Coast Guard)," wrote national political columnist Joe Klein who attended the TMC Bravo Class 2012 orientation. "These are unforgettable people." Greitens calls them "citizen leaders."

To learn more about TMC, about applying for a fellowship, or about how you can support the organization's mission, go to www.missioncontinues.org.

FREE & PRIVATE MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Are you a veteran seeking free and confidential mental health counseling? Give an Hour is a

nonprofit 501(c)(3) that develops national networks of volunteers who are capable and committed to responding to chronic issues within our society. Give an Hour is currently dedicated to providing free mental health services to military personnel, their loved ones, and hometown communities affected by the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Give an Hour's volunteer

mental health professionals pledge to give one hour of their time each week, and now number more than 6,400. These licensed providers are located in all 50 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, and Guam. To date, they have donated more than 70,000 hours of free counseling, valued at approximately \$7 million. To learn more, visit www.giveanhour.org.

CALVET GETS SMALL BUSINESS AWARD, RECOGNIZES DVBE'S

Citrus Heights, CA -- California Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Peter J. Gravett recognized two Disabled Veteran Businesses with the John K. Lopez Award for outstanding contributions to California's Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) community at the 13th Annual State Agency Recognition Awards.

Secretary Gravett also accepted the Small Business Advocate Innovation Award which was given to the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) for having significantly increased the number of Small Business/DVBE firms with which the Department contracts. By personally contacting firms and encouraging them to apply for or renew state certification, CalVet increased its non-IT services small business contract participation from 12.42% in 2010-2011 to 20.65% in 2011-12.

The awards were part of the State Agency Recognition Awards (SARA) ceremony during which the Department of General Services honored 41 state agencies and 17 state employees for their outstanding work with California small businesses and disabled veterans' businesses.

Secretary Gravett presented the 2012 John K. Lopez Award for Individual Excellence to Robert Mulz, founder and owner of Video Electronics in San Diego, California—the premier source for hard-to-find, niche and specialty electronics products.

Secretary Gravett presented the 2012 John K. Lopez Award for Business Excellence to The Amerit Companies. Through owner and Chief Executive Officer, Gary Herbold, Amerit Consulting and Amerit Fleet Solutions has formed the largest disabled veteran business enterprise company in California, with 2,800 employees doing business in 47 states.

"It was an honor to recognize outstanding achievement by and on behalf of our service-disabled veterans," said Gravett. "The DVBE program allows disabled veterans to compete more effectively for a share of the State's contracting dollars. It's one of the many benefits they have earned through their service and sacrifice to our country."

The awards are named for John K. Lopez, a Korean War Marine Corps veteran whose efforts are largely responsible for the original DVBE legislation being passed in 1989. Lopez passed away in April of this year at the age of 78.

SSVF GRANT FUNDS AVAILABLE

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) has announced the availability of funds for supportive services grants under the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program. The SSVF Program's purpose is to provide supportive services grants to private nonprofit organizations and consumer cooperatives who will coordinate or provide supportive services to very low-income veteran families who:

- are residing in permanent housing;
- are homeless and scheduled to become residents of permanent housing within a specified time period; or
- after exiting permanent housing within a specified time period, are seeking other housing that is responsive to such very low-income veteran family's needs and preferences.

The top funding priority under this NOFA is for existing SSVF grantees seeking to renew their supportive services grants. Approximately \$140 million of the up to \$300 million available may be awarded depending on funding available under this priority. The second funding priority is for eligible entities applying for initial supportive services grants.

EARN WHILE YOU LEARN

If you are a veteran and a full-time or 3/4-time student in a college degree program or a vocational or professional program, you can “earn while you learn” with a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) work-study allowance. This is available to persons training under the following programs:

- Post-9/11 GI Bill--(38 U.S.C. Chapter 33);
- Montgomery GI Bill--Active Duty (38 U.S.C. Chapter 30);
- REAP Participants;
- Montgomery GI Bill--Selected Reserve (10 U.S.C. Chapter 1606);
- Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Educational Assistance Program (38 U.S.C. Chapter 32);
- Dependents' Educational Assistance Program (38 U.S.C. Chapter 35);
- Eligible dependents under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 35 may use work study only while training in a State;

- National Call to Service Participants;
- Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Program -- (38 U.S.C. Chapter 31).

To receive a formal decision from USDVA on your eligibility, you must file a claim for benefits. VA will select students for the work-study program based on different factors such as:

- Disability of the student;
- Ability of the student to complete the work-study contract before the end of his or her eligibility to education benefits;
- Job availability within normal commuting distance to the student;
- USDVA will give the highest priority to a veteran who has a service-connected;
- Disability or disabilities rated by VA at 30 percent or more;
- The number of applicants selected will depend on the

availability of USDVA-related work at your school or at VA facilities in your area.

Under the program, participating veterans earn an hourly wage equal to the Federal minimum wage or their State minimum wage, whichever is greater. If in a work-study job at their college or university, the school may pay them the difference between the amount USDVA pays and the amount the school normally pays other work-study students doing the same job.

For more information about the program, go to www.gibill.va.gov/documents/pamphlets/work_study_program.pdf. To download a copy of the application, go to www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-22-8691-ARE.pdf. For help completing the application or answers to other veterans benefits questions, contact your County Veterans Services Office. To locate the office nearest you, go to www.cacvso.org. Click on “Contact Us,” and then click on your county of residence.

[Source: USDVA]

<< SSVF

Applications for initial and renewal supportive services grants under the SSVF Program must be received by the SSVF Program Office by 1:00 p.m. PST Time on Feb. 1, 2013. In the interest of fairness to all competing applicants, this deadline is firm as to date and hour, and USDVA will treat

as ineligible for consideration any application that is received after the deadline. Applicants should take this practice into account and make early submission of their materials to avoid any risk of loss of eligibility brought about by unanticipated delays, computer service outages, or other delivery-related problems.

To read the full Notice of Funds Available from the Oct. 26, 2012 Federal Register, go to www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-10-26/html/2012-26376.htm.

For more information about SSVF and to download the application package, go www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp.

VETERAN TRAINING FOR ADVANCED MANUFACTURING JOBS

General Electric (GE) announced recently that it has formed a coalition with the Manufacturing Institute, Alcoa Inc., Boeing and Lockheed Martin to train 100,000 military veterans for jobs in advanced manufacturing, bolster the talent pipeline and enhance American competitiveness. The coalition is seeking additional partners to meet its 100,000 goal by 2015.

The new "Get Skills to Work" program will focus on accelerating skills training for U.S. veterans and helping veterans and employers translate military skills to advanced manufacturing jobs. The program, managed by the Manufacturing Institute, will train 15,000 veterans immediately and work to train 85,000 more over the next three years.

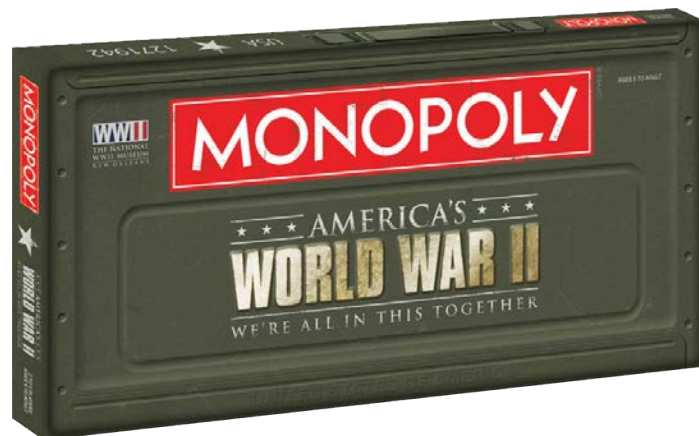
Reportedly 600,000 high-tech manufacturing jobs remain open in the U.S. and more than 82 percent of manufacturers report they cannot find people to fill their skilled production jobs.

The first class of veterans will be enrolled in January 2013 near GE Aviation's manufacturing hub in Cincinnati, Ohio. Additional training sites will open throughout 2013, including one in the Greater Los Angeles area. To provide veterans with opportunities for hands-on experience with the technology found in advanced manufacturing, GE is developing training tracks for veterans in a number of U.S. cities, including San Jose, California.

Companies and veterans interested in joining this effort or learning more can visit www.GetSkillstoWork.org.

MONOPOLY-AMERICA'S WORLD WAR II

The National World War II Museum in New Orleans has created a new edition of a classic board game to educate younger generations about the essential 1940s struggle to halt tyranny and secure cherished freedoms. "Monopoly: America's World War II: We're All in This Together" replaces railroads with supply routes, hotels with camps, and board spaces with World War II events. Up to 6 players can wheel and deal World War II events such as Pearl Harbor, D-Day Normandy and Battle



of the Bulge while building support and/or rallying the troops as they establish camps and headquarters on their way to victory.

The museum was able to create the educational game by teaming up with toy and board game company Hasbro, as well as USAopoly, Inc. Additionally, the museum's

education, curatorial, research and retail departments worked with Hasbro to make the game as engaging and historically accurate as possible.

[Source: AL Online Update 18 Oct 2012 ++]

VETERANS & WW II JAPANESE-AMERICAN INTERNEES ELIGIBLE FOR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS

The Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE) is again awarding high school diplomas to qualifying U.S. veterans and Japanese American citizens through its popular "Operation Recognition" program.

The Operation Recognition program was adopted in October 2001 by the Sacramento County Board of Education to honor the contributions and sacrifices of individuals who missed completing high school to serve in the U.S. military (specifically World War II or the Korean War) or relocate to a World War II internment camp for Japanese American citizens. In 2005, the County Board of Education expanded the program to include veterans of the Vietnam War.

"I hope that Veterans who interrupted their studies to serve in the our military take advantage of this Program," said Peter Gravett, CalVet Secretary.



The Sacramento County Board of Education has provided diplomas to 163 qualifying veterans and Japanese American citizens through Operation Recognition since 2001. Eight of the diplomas have been awarded posthumously.

Residents of Sacramento County are encouraged to request diplomas on behalf of themselves or qualifying family members, including persons who are now deceased. April 29, 2012, is the deadline to submit applications. The Sacramento County Board of Education is scheduled to hold its next Operation Recognition diploma ceremony on Tuesday, May 21, 2013.

Qualifications for an Operation Recognition diploma include:

(1) Applicant or recipient is a Sacramento County resident; (2) Veterans—must show proof of Honorable Discharge from U.S. military service occurring during WW II, the Korean War or the Vietnam War; (3) Japanese American citizens—must show proof of internment in a WW II relocation

camp; and (4) Veterans and Japanese American citizens—must give the name of high school applicant was attending at time of induction into military service or internment.

An application may be submitted by a family member of a qualifying individual, living or deceased. Persons who meet the qualifications, but earned a GED, are eligible. Diploma recipients and/or survivors should be current or former Sacramento County residents. Those living outside Sacramento County may be referred to their local county office of education.

Operation Recognition applications are available online at www.scoe.net or can be requested by calling SCOE at (916) 228-2416. Applications are also available from the Sacramento County Veterans Service Office, located in midtown Sacramento at 2007-19th Street. There is no charge to participate in the program.

PROTECTING VETERANS' FAIR HOUSING RIGHTS

By Marilyn Marchione
Associated Press

The Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended in 1988, (FHA), prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status (presence of children) and physical and mental disability. California also prohibits discrimination on the basis of all of the above and adds age, ancestry, source of income, marital status and arbitrary status.

These general provisions protect all veterans and their families and their right to live in the housing of their choice and for which they are qualified. America's newest veterans are filing for disability benefits at a historic rate. More of the new veterans are women, accounting for 12 percent of those who have sought care through the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The new veterans have different types of injuries than previous veterans did. That's partly because improvised bombs have been the main weapon and because body armor and improved battlefield care allowed many of them to survive wounds that in past wars proved fatal. More than 95 percent of troops

wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan have survived.

Tens of thousands of veterans suffered traumatic brain injury, or TBI—mostly mild concussions from bomb blasts—and doctors don't know what's in store for them long-term. What all of this means in fair housing terms is that veterans need to know the information that follows which is based upon the protections of fair housing laws.

It is unlawful for a housing provider to refuse to sell or rent to a person because of her/his disability. It is also unlawful for a housing provider to refuse to grant a request for a reasonable accommodation (e.g., allowing a service animal where there is a "no pet" rule or providing for a closer parking space,) or a reasonable modification (e.g., physical structural change) at the tenant's/requestor's expense.

Typically, in order to prevail, the tenant must show that he or she is a person with a disability who requested the modification or accommodation preferably, in writing. Prepared forms can be obtained from your local fair housing agency, including forms for treating doctors to complete. It must also be shown that the housing provider denied the reasonable request, delayed or took no action.

Although a written communication from the tenant is highly recommended, the request can also be made orally by others who are aware of the tenant's



disability. It must be shown that the accommodation or modification is reasonably necessary for the tenant to make full use and enjoyment of the dwelling.

Most bona fide complaints of housing discrimination that involve a disability can be resolved through a conciliation process which can be advanced by a fair housing organization. We agree with President Obama who recently stated, "No veteran should have fought for his/her nation and then return home to have to fight for a roof over his/her head". We will fight for your fair housing rights.

If you believe you have experienced housing discrimination, visit the California Department of Fair Housing and Employment (DFEH) web site at www.dfeh.ca.gov/Complaints.htm, e-mail center@dfeh.ca.gov, call (800) 884-1684 or call (800) 700-2320 (TDD) or (916) 226-5285 (Videophone) if you are hearing impaired. A DFEH representative will respond to your e-mail within three business days.



The Veterans Home of California—Barstow is a 400-bed, long-term care facility located on 22 acres with a panoramic view of the Mojave River Valley. The high desert atmosphere offers a climate that is healthful, quiet and safe with very low air pollution. The Veterans Home provides California veterans with a living environment that protects their dignity and contributes to their feeling of self-reliance and self-worth. It offers three levels of care that provide continuity in the lives of residents in an atmosphere of dignity and respect.

1. Domiciliary Care (Independent living) for veterans who are self-sufficient and do not require assistance with activities of daily living. Non-nursing staff provides minimal supervision. Residents at this level of care have access to other levels of care and medical services.
2. Intermediate Nursing Care for veterans requiring some nursing assistance to perform activities of daily living. Licensed nursing staff assist veterans with medications and treatments.
3. Skilled Nursing Care for veterans who require a higher level of nursing care and require assistance with many activities of daily living.

Although this Veterans Home offers three levels of care, space is primarily available in the Independent Living (Domiciliary), and Intermediate Nursing levels of care. Amenities include:

- Room and board – three meals plus snacks
- Medical care and medications
- Optical care, dental care and podiatry services
- Transportation services to all medical appointments and off-campus activities

- Additional professional services include a beauty/barber shop, multi-purpose room and limited banking services
- Opportunities for worship for all denominations through the Chaplaincy Program
- A modern fitness center and exercise classes
- Library, cable television, and wireless Internet
- Housekeeping and laundry services
- Caring and compassionate staff, and
- Variety of community outings and an enhanced activity program

The Veterans Home of California—Barstow enjoys the strong support from the local community as well as camaraderie from the neighboring Marine Corps Logistics Base and the National Training Center at Fort Irwin.

Veterans Homes of California are also located in Chula Vista, Lancaster, Ventura, West Los Angeles, and Yountville. Veterans Homes are currently under construction in Fresno and Redding. Veterans considering assisted living are encouraged to apply to any of the Veterans Homes of California. Spouses are also eligible to apply with the veteran.

For admission information, contact:

Veterans Home of California—Barstow
100 E. Veterans Parkway
Barstow, CA 92311
(800) 746-0606, ext. 1

www.calvet.ca.gov

Updated 10/12

HELP BLUE STAR MOMS CHEER WOUNDED VETERANS

This holiday season, the Blue Star Moms of Sacramento are asking you to show your appreciation and support for our veterans by sponsoring a Santa Boot filled with cookies and cocoa. These holiday treats will be sent to injured veterans at the Naval Medical Center in San Diego and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Hospital in Palo Alto.

"I encourage everyone to pitch in and help bring some injured Veterans some goodies while they undergo treatment," said Peter Gravett, CalVet Secretary.

For information about how you can bring some holiday joy to injured California veterans, contact kelli@kelliscookies.com or call (916) 782-8010.

VETERANS EDUCATION PROGRAM AT CSU, FRESNO

By Tom Uribes, Public Affairs Specialist, CSU, Fresno Communications

A reception, flag ceremony and open house just before Veterans Day introduced a Veterans Education Program at CSU, Fresno. The new program will begin in January 2013 to help returning veterans with educational, vocational and workforce development opportunities.

The program will serve groups of up to 25 students in a six-week transitional and educational curriculum. A support network of more than 40 faculty from 28 Fresno State departments will offer their expertise, and veterans who complete the program will receive six units of transferable academic credit.

The University is providing a dedicated classroom with an adjacent lounge where participants can have access to computers, a printer, job postings and a refrigerator.

The program has three phases:

- An intensive refresher focusing on English, composition and mathematics;

- Life skills that include financial literacy, business acumen, communication skills, interviewing and resume building; and
- Individualized guidance to meet each student's self-identified goals after the completion of the program with introduction to Fresno State resources to facilitate their goals.

"To help veterans achieve their goals, we are working with the existing veteran support network in the Central Valley, including student veteran organizations," said Daniel Bernard, program coordinator."

Bernard said program participants will receive information about the regional and national support available for veterans.

Start-up funding is provided by the California State University Commission of the Extended University. Additional funding is provided by Fresno State's Office of the Provost and the Division of Continuing and Global Education. In-kind support is also provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Community donors are being sought.

For more information about the Veterans Education Program at CSU, Fresno contact Daniel Bernard at (559) 278-1901 or dbernard@csufresno.edu.

To download the program application, go to www.fresnostate.edu/cge/documents/VEP_Application.pdf.

SCHOOLS DEDICATE NEW STUDENT VET CENTERS

By Valerie Orleans, CSU Fullerton

Just before Veterans Day, CSU, Fullerton had a tree-planting ceremony in honor and recognition of veterans and active duty personnel. The tree was donated for the ceremony by the Student Veterans Association. Moments later, the University dedicated its new Student Veteran Center.

The Student Veteran Center, which used to reside in another campus facility, is now located in Room 230 of University Hall. Inside the Center, veterans can use computers, get tutoring, study and hold meetings.

"The center is a great addition to the services that veterans student services offers," said Catherine Ward, coordinator of veterans services on campus. "The student veterans service was established in 2008, and we've longed for a space of our own. Now we finally have it. We have logged more student visits here this past semester than in the previous three."

"Many veterans are older than other students and have families and jobs," said Daniel Akers, an Army veteran and assistant coordinator of veterans



CalVet Secretary Peter J. Gravett (left) is joined by former-Secretary Roger Brautigan at the dedication of the Leo P. Burke Veterans Resource Center at San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton on Saturday 10 November. Burke was a former member of the California Veterans Board and a member of the Board of Trustees for Delta College for many years and was always a strong advocate for veterans and their families. More than 100 community leaders and veteran advocates participated in the dedication of the new resource center at the Stockton-based community college. The center include computer work stations, desks, and resources for veterans who need a place to study, meet with other veterans, find assistance for benefits and many other services.

services. "Because of the types of training and experiences we've had, vets sometimes feel like we don't fit in with the general student population. However, we have pride in our service, and the center is a way to demonstrate that pride to our vets."

Programs offered to student veterans include mentoring and peer-to-peer counseling that connects veterans who have been on campus for several semesters with their newer cohorts. On campus, 82 of the registered veterans are female, and Ward has developed special programs for them, as well.

"We're also here to assist veterans with other challenges they may be facing — whether they are academic, helping with the process for funding, working with them to develop their schedules or figuring out how they can continue their studies, if they are deployed again," said Ward. "We

have about 500 student veterans on campus, and about 30 percent of them are actively involved in veterans programs here."

A survey conducted by the Office of Veterans Student Services found that students who take advantage of the services offered tend to improve their grades and that the persistence rate — the percentage of students that remain in school from one semester to the next — is 95 percent higher than those of non-participants.

"Our goal in veterans student services is to provide our veterans with the assistance and support they need to achieve at Cal State Fullerton," said Ward. "I see the students who come to our center, and they are a tremendous group of young men and women. There's no doubt in my mind that many of them will accomplish amazing things in their lifetimes."

TRANSITIONAL LIVING AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE RECOVERY, OROVILLE, CA

By Eric J. Almquist

Two years ago, the Oroville Economic and Community Development Corporation, (OECD), a 501©3 non-profit organization that operates Northern California Treatment Services, started a transitional living and substance abuse recovery program specifically for Veterans. The program named "Victory Village" envisioned care and treatment for approximately 24 Veterans at its main facility and a women's facility that would accommodate 13 female Veterans at a facility nearby. The main facility consists of a building of approximately 4,600 square feet on a 2.5 acre commercial zoned site. Ultimately, the site can be developed into approximately 30,000 square feet of residential and commercial uses for Veteran programs. The most attractive amenity of the site is that it adjoins the 11,000 acre Feather River Wildlife Recreation Area, offering unlimited opportunity for recreational and therapeutic programs linked to substance abuse recovery.

Plans for residential use of the main facility were delayed when it was discovered that the existing commercial sewer system was not up to code and the connection to city sewer would cost about \$40,000. Faced with this, the decision was made to instead open the building as a discount grocery store called "Value Village" and earn the money needed to pay for the sewer system upgrades. It is planned that the discount grocery store will be expanded to include vintage merchandise resale. In the meantime, plans are to proceed with the women's facility conversion.

The transitional living and Veterans recovery program operated by Northern California Treatment Services (NCTS) presently provides services to eight Veterans. In all of its programs, NCTS presently provides services to approximately 60 persons. NCTS is operated by its Executive Director, Michael Anderson, who oversees a cost effective program of four counselors and staff. Mr. Anderson and his staff work tirelessly to provide services to our clients and manage the uncertainties associated with business growth. Under his direction, the program has grown into the largest program in Butte County. However, "It is the successes with our clients that spur our dedicated staff to devote such time and effort to the program", said Anderson. One such success story is "Pete"

"Pete" was a very bad guy. As an Army Airborne Ranger, he already knew well about being tough.

When he returned home from combat, Pete applied his skills in the wrong direction, being a methamphetamine addict and the leader of a violent motorcycle gang. Pete was convicted of grand theft and fraud for bad check writing. Being already on probation, he was about to be sentenced to a very long time in prison. On the strength of our Executive Director, Michael Anderson, we prevailed upon the court to remand Pete to our program. Mr. Anderson got Pete's recovery program going, addiction detox, counseling and intense discipline, structure that Pete needed from his military experience. Pete responded well and soon became a house manager. With his head now clear of addiction, Pete rediscovered his long dormant skills and interest in graphic arts and decided to apply to our local community college. Here, he received a 3.9 GPA. Fueled by this success, Pete decided to apply to Columbia University and to the surprise of everyone, except for Pete and Mr. Anderson, he was accepted. Our motorcycle gang meth addict is now an Ivy Leaguer. The story of Pete is more than just a personal success story. Pete is a seriously talented person who, after his military service, went in the wrong direction and could not recover without help. He could have just as easily applied his talents to a life of crime, becoming a burden on taxpayers and the criminal justice system. Instead, he is fast becoming a contributing member of society.

<< RECOVERY

While we are making progress, as a fledgling “grass roots” start-up program, it never seems fast enough. Job training, education, and the self-esteem derived from feeling useful is the exit strategy for addiction recovery. It is the black hole in the continuum of addiction recovery. Persons try hard to recover, and then faced with limited employment opportunities become discouraged and regress. The Victory Village program can get Veterans recovered from addiction and associated issues, but employment really holds the key to long term recovery. In development of our program, we have recently become associated with Success Skills and Stay Safe Solutions, a major disabled Veterans

employment program in Sacramento. Through Success Skills, we will have the employment piece of recovery, so desperately needed for a successful program. In return, Success Skills will receive the substance abuse recovery and treatment services that they lack in their program. OECD President, Eric Almquist and Success Skills President, Ken Shoemake, are excited about the association and see a huge potential in this collaboration.

Vietnam Veteran, Richard Judd, Veterans Service Coordinator - Disabled Veterans Program and consultant on Veterans issues, was instrumental in the development of the collaboration with the two organizations. Mr. Judd brought the two organizations together and was responsible for the work of

forming the association. He is active in all sorts of Veterans issues. Both Almquist and Shoemake expressed their thanks for his efforts.

Victory Village has accomplished the ground work for a successful program. There is a lack of services in Northern California and Victory Village is poised to reduce that void in services. Commitment, dedicated staff, strong associations and community support all exist now which will insure our program success. For Victory Village, please visit www.victoryvillagevets.org.

Eric J. Almquist is President of the Oroville Economic and Community Development Corporation

USDVA BRIEFS

VA REGISTERS “GI BILL” AS A TRADEMARK

WASHINGTON - The Department of Veterans Affairs announced that GI Bill is now a registered trademark with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and VA is the sole owner of the mark. <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2408>

NEW MEMBERS APPOINTED TO VA COMMITTEE ON WOMEN VETERANS

WASHINGTON – Five new members have been appointed to the Department of Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee on Women Veterans, an expert panel that advises VA on issues and programs affecting women Veterans. Established in 1983, the committee makes recommendations to the Secretary for administrative and legislative changes. The new committee members, who are appointed to two-year terms, are: Gina Chandler, Bryant, Ark.; Larri Gerson, Dunedin, Fla.; Mary Morin, Raymond, N.H.; Charlotte S. Smith, Farmington, N.M.; and Mary Westmoreland, Bronxville, N.Y.. <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2405>

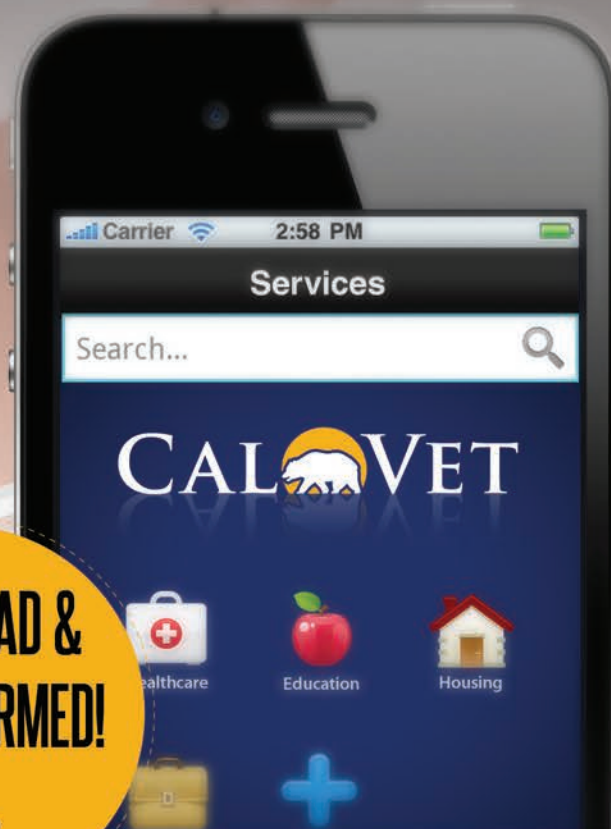
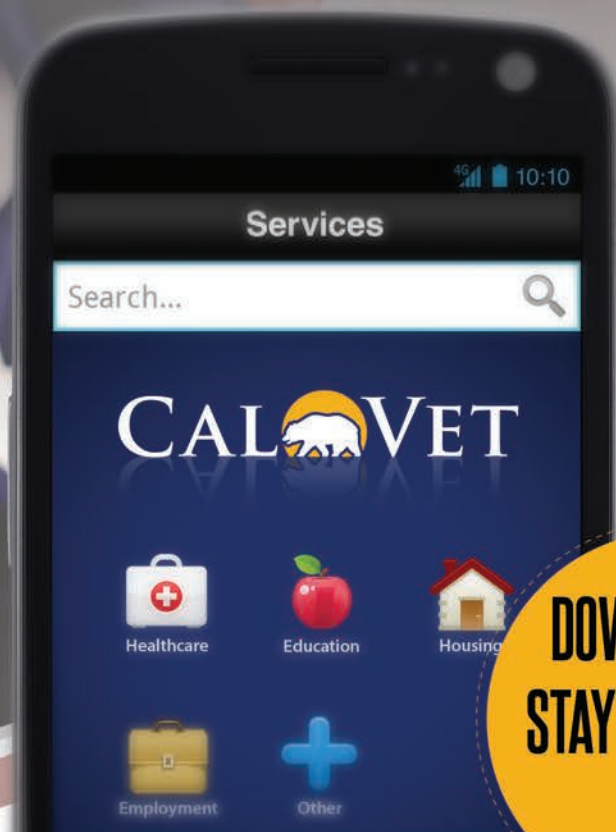
VA RELEASES NEW PSA TARGETING WOMEN VETERANS

“The Right Place” Assures Female Vets of High-Quality VA Care
WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs has developed a new public service announcement (PSA) to let women Veterans know they’ve come to “The Right Place” when seeking VA health care. <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2403>

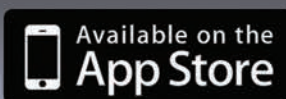
★ Veterans! ★

Getting the benefits you've earned?

Aware of benefit changes? Know where to find services?



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CALVET, STATE LIBRARY PARTNER TO HELP VETS

The California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) and the California State Library announce the opening of a Veterans Resource Center at the Point Loma/Hervey Branch Library in San Diego and at the Beale Memorial Library in Bakersfield on November 20, 2012. A resource center was also opened at the Redding Library on November 28. The Centers will be staffed by volunteers who have been trained by CalVet to help California veterans and their families connect with the

benefits and services they have earned through military service. Some Center volunteers are veterans themselves who can easily relate to the experiences of the veterans and families they will assist.

Volunteer training included information about veterans' benefits and services, veteran reintegration challenges, listening and problem-solving skills, meaningful information gathering and referral techniques. This training prepared volunteers to answer basic benefits-related

questions for veterans and their families, to offer CalVet and other appropriate veterans benefits resources, and to provide a checklist of specific documents and information needed when applying for benefits through County Veterans Service Offices.

"We're always looking for new ways to connect veterans and veteran families with their benefits," said CalVet Secretary Peter J. Gravett. "Opening veteran resource centers in local libraries is a great opportunity for us. We're grateful to the State Library for helping us create this program and are confident the program will be effective. We look forward to taking it statewide."

"California public libraries are committed to helping veterans and their families find information on the resources they need and the benefits they have earned," said Acting State Librarian Gerald Maginnity. "We're very pleased to partner with CalVet and community volunteers to open the resource centers for veterans."

This is a one-year pilot program. If successful, the program could be replicated in public libraries statewide.

This program was supported in whole or in part by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DECEMBER 7

Pearl Harbor Day

DECEMBER 8

National Wreaths Across America Remembrance

DECEMBER 15

Wreaths Across America Program
Northern California
Veterans Cemetery
11800 Gas Point Rd., Igo, CA
Contact: (530) 396-2429

DECEMBER 15

Wreaths Across America Program
Veterans Home of California - Yountville
Yountville, CA
Contact: (707) 944-4539

JANUARY 6

**Vets Cruizin' for a Cause Fundraiser/
Motorcycle Meet**
Custom Graphics
9420 Activity Rd., San Diego, CA

NOTE: TO VIEW FULL CALENDAR, VISIT WWW.CALVET.CA.GOV/FILES/EVENTS_CALENDAR.PDF

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