



Veterans-**For**-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, October 11, 2015

Volume 6, Issue 41

This-N-That

Suicide among military and Veterans is increasing which I'm sure most know or have had gut feelings on. Compared to the civilian population suicide is at 13% where Military and Veteran suicide is at 21% and rising fast.

We've seen and heard 22 suicides per day in the Military/Veteran community and that is a concept average, and we all understand the concept of average.

So what it amounts to is that Veterans are 50% more likely to commit suicide than those of the civilian population!

It's actually worse than that because the general population numbers include all the veterans.

I wonder what would be going on recruitment wise if the military were to put that on recruiting posters!

"You volunteer to fight for your country, and we will force you to fight for your benefits!"

No matter how Congress and the Veterans Affairs, or anyone else for that matter spins the numbers, they're not good, and totally not acceptable!

So what can we do besides whine and cry about it, and say how sorry we are they made the ultimate of decisions?

WE can all get on the phones and call all our Reps in DC and demand they take swift and immediate action, then go to their individual websites and send the same message, then send an E-Mail and BCC all your contacts and ask that they too make the calls, get on their websites and send the same message, then for them to please forward on to all their E-Mail contacts asking them to do the same thing!

If we're able to make something like this go viral, flood their phone lines, swamp their e-mail boxes and actually prevent them from doing any other business, imagine what we could do together!

No one organization can or will address all the issues Veterans and their families face when it comes to getting their benefits and medical care, and those who do always fall short of accomplishing those tasks, so it's up to the Veteran community to speak as one and begin to demand those issues be resolved immediately.

No more delays, no more denials, and no more ignoring the Veteran and Military community!

Veterans make up 8-9% of the Voting population, and that very same 8-9% can make or break any election or bid for re-election campaign, isn't it time we show them what you can do? And when you're calling and E-Mailing them, remind them, THEY work for WE THE PEOPLE, and we do NOT work for them!

Yes there are hundreds if not thousands of issues within the VA Healthcare system, and there isn't one that is more or less important than another, but if we strike at one issue at a time and strike hard, then continue on, just imagine the change we can make happen!

We're still trying to further the cause of investigation into chemical contamination at Fort Ord, California.

We're looking for more information, documentation, photo's, anything we can get our hands on to distribute to all those who lived and served on that base along with their families.

As we mentioned in last weeks newsletter we have 160 document we're preparing to upload to the website, we anticipate this to occur this coming week as we try to get mass uploads of 800-1,000 new documents at a time completed..

In addition we're pushing hard on Congressman Farr's office to assist and we're asking all Veterans from that base and/or their families to please call the Congressman's office at (831)-424-2229 and ask to speak to Nancy.

Tell her all you can, and ask that they please investigate and help all those who have filed claims to be addressed and processed for approval.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Volunteers nationwide, we wish you and your family good health!

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder & CEO

Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org

Senate Hearings on Agent Orange

At a recent oversight hearing held to examine the impact of exposure to toxic chemicals, particularly veterans exposed to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War and water contamination at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, stressed the importance of having a standardized, scientific approach at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to determine which veterans should receive disability benefits based on their exposure to toxic chemicals. Also, the hearing examined efforts to expand disability benefits for veterans who served in ships offshore Vietnam, also known as the "Blue Water Navy Veterans." A video and testimonies from the hearing are available on the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs website at www.veterans.senate.gov/hearings/exposures09292015.

TRICARE Co-Pays and Cost Shares Adding Up?

Doctor and hospital bills are expensive even when you're covered by TRICARE. Help minimize or even eliminate out-of-pocket expenses with the MBA-sponsored [TRICARE Insurance Supplement Plan](#).

LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN WASHINGTON

Two significant legislative events occurred in Washington this week that affect DAV members and our supporters. The national legislative staff wants to be sure you are made aware of them.

VA Programs Reauthorized by Congress

On September 30, 2015, the House passed S. 2082, the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act. This bill, which cleared the Senate last week, extends VA authority to continue certain VA programs, including its Caregiver Support Program, assistance for child care, and the pilot program on counseling in retreat settings for women veterans. This bill has been submitted to the President and is expected to be approved.

While this measure did not eliminate the sunset date and funding cap for the Caregiver Support Program, DAV worked closely with appropriators and authorizers, strongly recommending an additional \$74 million above the President's request for this program for fiscal year 2016. Congress agreed. DAV can take pride in effecting this accomplishment for

thousands of families of the severely wounded. DAV also called on Congress during hearings held in April concerning the needs of women veterans, to highlight DAV's 2014 report *Women Veterans: The Long Journey Home*, to make permanent the pilot program on counseling in retreat settings for women veterans, to improve access to child care, and provide better responses to the needs of women veterans as they transition to civilian life.

Continuing Resolution Approved

Congress and the President have approved a 10-week continuing resolution to fund the federal government. This legislation continues VA spending at the fiscal year 2015 rate, but then reduces it by 0.2108 percent. However, the VA's General Operating Expenses appropriation was increased to almost \$2.7 billion, to aid the Veterans Benefits Administration in working down the disability claims backlog.

DAV will remain vigilant to ensure all VA programs receive adequate full-year funding from Congress when this continuing resolution expires on December 11.

Click the link below to log in and send your message:

<https://www.votervoice.net/BroadcastLinks/pDBzI4TZNkCpoCXS0RwM5Q>

VFC's OPERATION MAIL CALL



Operation Mail Call needs your help! We need cards and letters to send to our troops currently serving on foreign soil.

Doesn't have to be anything special, just words of support and thanking them for their service!

For more information visit: <http://veterans-for-change.org/4727-operation-mail-call>

Government Accountability Office (GAO) Reports

U.S. Postal Service: Actions Needed to Make Delivery Performance Information More Complete, Useful, and Transparent. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-756>

Water and Sanitation Assistance: USAID Has Increased Strategic Focus but Should Improve Monitoring. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-81>

Space Situational Awareness: Status of Efforts and Planned Budgets <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-6R>

Maritime Critical Infrastructure Protection: DHS Needs to Enhance Efforts to Address Port Cybersecurity <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-116T>

Diplomatic Security: Options for Locating a Consolidated Training Facility, by Michael J. Courts, director, international affairs and trade, before the Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.
<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-139T>

National Protection and Programs Directorate: Factors to Consider when Reorganizing
<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-140T>

Chemicals Management: Observations on Human Health Risk Assessment and Management by Selected Foreign Programs
<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-111R>

Do You Need a TRICARE Case Manager?

TRICARE case managers can help beneficiaries navigate sticky or complicated medical issues. Instead of constantly calling your regional TRICARE helpline and speaking to a different person every time, a case manager is one person devoted to helping you get through the system. Sometimes that really can make all the difference. For more on this, see Military.com's latest [Questions and Benefits column](#).

Written Testimony for the Toxic Exposure

Here is Military-Veterans Advocacy written testimony for the toxic exposure hearing before the Senate vets committee last Tues.

This is the link to that hearing. <http://www.veterans.senate.gov/hearings/exposures09292015>

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Veteran Faces Never to be Forgotten

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) needs your help to put a face with each of the 58,307 names listed on The Wall. Pictures collected so far are online on The Wall of Faces where family and friends can leave remembrances, and will be displayed permanently in the future Education Center at The Wall. If you have a picture of a loved one or fellow veteran whose name is on The Wall, please [search the Wall of Faces by name](#) to see if a photograph is already posted. Regardless of whether or not VVMF has a photo of the individual already, multiple photos are encouraged. For information on how to submit a photo, visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund website at www.vvmf.org/how-to-submit. For more information, visit VA's [VAntage Point Blog](#).

Veterans fought for us; we continue to fight for our veterans!

VFC Website Update

If you've not visited our website, maybe you should visit today! Since going on-line on 10/28/12 we have been averaging between 2,800 and 5,000 visitors per day and have had **2,397,187** visitors to date.

Visit today and subscribe, it's 100% **FREE** of charge to all! Just be sure to use a valid E-Mail address so the system can send you an authentication E-Mail. Becoming a subscriber will show you all the various forum's, added libraries, and more.

We have the largest One-Stop-Shop Veterans website available that is user friendly, offers a host of information on many topics, Several forums, Frequently Asked Questions and Answers, a massive Documents Library with more than 12,900 documents, various VA and DoD forms.

www.veterans-for-change.org

- Documents Library with over **140** different libraries and over **13,451+** documents (**498** total New Docs)
- FAQ's (**1,567** on-line now)
- Forums (with Licensed Mental Health Worker Moderator)
- Job Postings and Job Fairs (Updated 10/05/15 **84** New Jobs)
- Memorial Pages (**Updated 04/19/14**)
- News (Updated almost daily, **5,247** articles on-line)
- Web Links (**1,586** Active Links)(**Updated 08/16/15**)

The documents library has many different categories and contains more than 55 million pages of information and forms.

There are forums for all Eras of service and one just for Women Veterans, which is locked to use by women only. Another for Men Veterans which is also locked to men only.

In the documents and forums we provide information pertaining to women and the ability speak freely in the forums to other women about the same issues and problems you face.

The Memorial Pages are open, and if you have a loved one or a buddy you've lost and would like for them to be added to our Memorial Pages, please send a photo, First and Last Name, Rank, Branch of Service, DOB and DOD, and allow us 2-3 days to install on the proper page. (Send to: Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org)

You also have the ability to comment and rate all NEWS articles which would be very helpful for us so we know the types of information you'd like to see on our website.

Follow Veterans-For-Change on Twitter



<https://twitter.com/Veterans4Change>

TRICARE Webinar

TRICARE and Military OneSource are co-hosting a webinar to educate the military health community about the programs and resources available to support women in the armed services. The webinar will take place on Wednesday, October 7, 2015 at Noon EST. [Go to this site](#) to sign up. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis and is limited due to system capacity. A question and answer period will take place directly after the live event. Participants must avoid sharing personal health information when asking a question.

Dogs Helping Heroes

Dogs Helping Heroes is a Southern Indiana-based organization devoted to training service dogs for wounded warriors and first responders suffering from permanent injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The organization

services the Kentuckiana area. Service training for the dogs includes at least three tasks required by a disabled hero. Obedience training includes manners, composure, and formal commands. Matched dogs comply with the American Disabilities Act of 1990. For more information, visit the Dogs Helping Heroes website at dogshelpingheroes.org/index.html or follow Dog Helping Heroes in Facebook at www.facebook.com/DogsHelpingHeroes.

Veterans Day Concert in Chicago

CBS Radio's acoustic Stars and Strings concert is set for Nov. 11 at the Chicago Theatre in Chicago, Ill., with a portion of the proceeds going to benefit [Folds of Honor](#), which provides educational support to the spouses and children of soldiers who have been injured or killed in service to the United States. [Dierks Bentley](#), [Jake Owen](#), [Gary Allan](#), [Hunter Hayes](#), [Justin Moore](#), [Kip Moore](#), [Lee Brice](#), [Little Big Town](#) and [The Band Perry](#) are among the acts announced for the concert. Tickets are available via Ticketmaster. A limited number of tickets will also be available to win by listening to CBS Radio country music and news/talk stations. For more information about Stars and Strings, visit the event's [website](#).



Are you seeking employment? Been looking forever and not found the right job?

Well Veterans-For-Change is working very hard to bring you more information on Job Fairs and Job Postings available across the country.

Click on the link below, and find all the jobs available, Job Fairs coming up, locations, details, etc.

<http://veterans-for-change.org/documents-library/category/167-job-fairs-job-postings>

If you have a job position open, and are willing to hire a Veteran, please send an E-Mail to: JIM.DAVIS@VETERANS-FOR-CHANGE.ORG there is never any fee involved, this is a 100% free service in order to help thousands of Veterans nationwide to gain full time employment.

To be Updated 10/09/15 by 8pm PST

Free Training for Vets in San Diego

Workshop for Warriors, a local nonprofit in San Diego, Calif. that trains veterans for jobs in manufacturing, has received the 2015 Excellence in Welding Award from the American Welding Society and WEMCO, an Association of Welding Manufacturers. The program provides free classes for U.S. Military veterans in welding, fabrication, machining, computer-aided design and manufacture, and machinery repair. Since 2011, the program has had nearly 200 graduates. Graduates earn certifications from the American Welding Society and the National Institute of Metalworking Skills along with certifications from Mastercam and SolidWorks for CAD/CAM programming. The next 16-week program starts Jan. 4, 2016. For more information, visit the Workshop for Warriors website at workshopsforwarriors.org or call (619) 550-1620.

Links to other Stories

- 1) A buys land in Oneida Co. for National Cemetery
- 2) A promise of the future as DHA achieves full operating capability
- 3) Citing suicides, VA sets outreach to female Vets
- 4) Crisis line specialist helps fellow Veterans
- 5) Defense Health Agency leader recognized for Health IT accomplishments
- 6) Homeless Vets get nearly \$400K in federal aid
- 7) Housing program offers shelter for homeless female veterans and their children
- 8) Important Health Screenings for Women in the Military
- 9) Legal expert nominated as VA inspector general
- 10) Long Beach officials say they can end Veteran homelessness
- 11) Louisiana Veterans Affairs Secretary Resigns amid Investigation
- 12) New Autism Care Demonstration Updates
- 13) October is Women's Health Month
- 14) The Number 22: Is There A 'False Narrative' For Vet Suicide?
- 15) VA art budget comes under fire in Congress
- 16) VA Unaware of Prudential Tactic to Profit by Denying Veteran Payouts
- 17) Veterans deserve better health care system

You can help Veterans-For-Change by reading the articles posted, and comment at the bottom and rank the article. If you don't have an account, sign-up today, it's **FREE**. Your comments and rankings help us to better determine the type of information you'd like most to see.

Check us out today: www.veterans-for-change.org

Taking Control of Your Claim

Last month, VA reached a historic low in the disability claims backlog by dipping below 100,000 to 98,535. This milestone means that VA is processing disability claims faster. By participating in the Fully Developed Claims program, veterans and survivors can take charge of their claims by submitting all relevant records with their claims at once. The fastest way to receive a decision on your disability claim is by filing an FDC electronically through eBenefits.va.gov. For more information about filing an electronic Fully Developed Claim and what you can do to get started, visit VA's Fully Developed Claims webpage at www.benefits.va.gov/fdc/.

To Contact your Members of Congress

To Call your Representative:	202-225-2305
To call your Senator:	202-224-3841 or 202-224-3553
To call different members of Congress:	202-224-3121
Toll FREE Number:	866-272-6622

Conferees Shape Leaner Budget for Military Pay

The House and Senate conferees have reached some compromises on key personnel provisions in the fiscal 2016 defense authorization bill. For starters, the potential lifetime value of the new retirement plan, which many current members will be allowed to opt into, suffered a significant cut. Conferees agreed to Senate language that lowers maximum government matching of member contributions to the Thrift Savings Plan feature to four percent of basic pay rather than five percent called for by the Military Compensation and Retirement Reform Commission. For a full rundown of other personnel initiatives that slow growth in pay and allowances, see [this Military Advantage blog post](#).

~ We Proudly Support Our Military Personnel & Families ~

Updated for 2016: GI Bill Rates

Every year GI Bill rates increase based on the Consumer Price Index as calculated by the government. Based on these calculations, the VA has released the Fiscal Year 2016 GI Bill rates. These rates are effective from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016. For more details, see [this article](#).

Savings at the Commissary

October represents the unofficial start of the holiday season for commissary customers who want to see store promotions, giveaways and more opportunities for discounts beyond their usual 30 percent or more savings. Customers should check their local commissary for details on exact dates and times for the following promotions: "Drink To Pink," Halloween treats, Oktoberfest, Kraft Foods Group Tailgate Savings, Italian & American Festival of Savings Oct. 7-21 worldwide, "We Honor and Thank You for All That You Do" Oct. 7-21, Believe in Heroes beginning Oct. 22, and the free Turkey Coupon Booklet around the last week of October. Commissary patrons should also visit their stores' fresh produce section for coupon bundles offering even more savings. For more information, contact your local commissary.

March in Veterans Day Parade

Every year New York City hosts the nation's largest Veterans Day parade, and local American Legion posts want as many Legion family members as possible to participate. The 2015 "America's Parade" will start at approximately 11:15 a.m. on Nov. 11 at Fifth Avenue and 26th Street, and will proceed up Fifth Avenue to 52nd Street. The total distance is about 1.3 miles. For more information on how Legion family groups can get involved, email parade@americanlegion.com. For more information on the event, visit the America's Parade website at americasparade.org.

This month please remember these women who died during October while serving our country in or during war times:

- 1 Oct 1918: ANC Ethel Leach, died at Edgewood Arsenal, MD
- 1 Oct 1943: CIVILIAN Nurse Martha Thurmond, possibly N Africa
- 1 Oct 1943: CIVILIAN Nurse Virginia Link, N Africa
- 1 Oct 2003: USA PFC Analaura Esparza Gutierrez, 21, IRAQ
- 1 Oct 2003: USA SPC Tamarra Joharidelonda Ramos, 24, IRAQ
- 1 Oct 2006: NYARNG SGT Denise A Lannaman, 46, non-combat gunshot, KUWAIT
- 1 Oct 2007: USN MASA Apprentice Shayna Ann Schnell, 19, non-combat vehicle accident, Dubai
- 1 Oct 2012: USA SGT Donna R Johnson, 29, suicide bomber, AFGHANISTAN
- 2 Oct 1918: ANC Flora Ruth, died at Camp Pike, AR
- 2 Oct 1944: WASP Marie Michell Robinson, WW II
- 2 Oct 1969: CIVILIAN Hannah E. Crews, American Red Cross, VIETNAM
- 2 Oct 1969: CIVILIAN Dr. Breen Ratterman, USAID, VIETNAM
- 3 Oct 1944: WASP Peggy Wilson Martin, WW II
- 3 Oct 2004: USA SSG Gina R Sparks, 35, non-combat incident, died at Fort Polk, LA
- 3 Oct 2012: USA SGT Camella M Steedley, 31, died in AFGHANISTAN
- 4 Oct 1918: ANC Rose Rapp, died during WWI
- 5 Oct 1943: WASP Virginia C. Moffatt, WW II
- 5 Oct 2007: USAR SPC Rachael L Hugo, 24, IRAQ
- 6 Oct 2004: ILARNG SPC Jessica Lynn Cawvey, 21, IRAQ
- 6 Oct 2011: USA SGT Catalina M Ruiz, 27, murdered at Fort Bragg
- 6 Oct 2013: USA 1LT Jennifer Moreno, 25, IED, AFGHANISTAN
- 7 Oct 2010: USA SGT Amanda A Sheldon, 24, suicide, Cape Fear, NC
- 8 Oct 1918: ANC Florence Leclare, pneumonia, Camp Devens, MA
- 8 Oct 1918: ANC Grace Buell, WWI
- 10 Oct 2007: USAR SSG Lillian (Cobbin) Clamens, 35, IRAQ

11 Oct 2004: USA SGT Pamela G. Osbourne, 38, IRAQ
 11 Oct 2008: USMC SGT Denise M Quintero SanFillipo, 25, died 2 weeks after giving birth to daughter in Camp Pendleton
 12 Oct 2000: USN CSSN Lakeina Monique Francis, 19, USS *Cole*, ADEN, YEMEN
 12 Oct 2000: USN SN Lakiba Nicole Palmer, 22, USS *Cole*, ADEN, YEMEN
 12 Oct 2014: USA SGM Jody A George, 48, died from Agent Orange complications, Temple, TX
 13 Oct 2012: USA SPC Brittany B Gordon, 24, IED, AFGHANISTAN
 14 Oct 2006: USA SPC Latosha B. Vines, 22, struck by train, Germany
 14 Oct 2006: USA PFC Lena Karungi, 21, struck by train, Germany
 15 Oct 1898: Army Contract Nurse Carolina Wolfe (Nun—Sister Caroline), Typhoid Fever, SPANISH AMERICAN WAR
 15 Oct 2005: USAF SSG Elizabeth M Johnson, 22, buried in FL
 16 Oct 1944: WASP Marjorie "Margie" Laverne Davis, WW II
 16 Oct 1944: WASP Jeanne Lewellen Norbeck, WW II
 17 Oct 1898: Army Contract Nurse Margaret Greenfield, Typhoid Fever, SPANISH AMERICAN WAR
 18 Oct 2006: USN Jeanne "Linda" Michel, 33, suicide in her home, Clifton Park, NY
 19 Oct 2008: USMC L/CPL Stacy Dryden, 22, IRAQ
 19 Oct 2009: USAF A1C Lauren Lagudi, 20, struck by train in Italy
 20 Oct 1970: CIVILIAN Gloria Redlin, Catholic Relief Services, VIETNAM
 21 Oct 1918: ANC Flossie E Brownlee, died in NYC
 21 Oct 1944: USA ANC LT Frances Slanger, WW II
 22 Oct 1915: ANC Margaret Hamilton, WWI
 22 Oct 1944: USA ANC 2LT Sara Vance, Italy, WW II
 22 Oct 2007: USN MASN Anamarie Sannicolas Camacho, 20, murdered by US sailor, Bahrain
 22 Oct 2007: USN MASN Genesia Mattril Gresham, 19, murdered by US sailor, Bahrain
 22 Oct 2010: USA SSG Aracely Gonzalez O'Malley, 31, non-combat incident, AFGHANISTAN
 22 Oct 2011: NCARNG 1LT Ashley I (White) Stumpf, 24, IED, AFGHANISTAN
 23 Oct 1898: Army Contract Nurse Mary Sweeney (Nun—Sister Mary Agnes), Typhoid Fever, SPANISH AMERICAN WAR
 23 Oct 2004: CIVILIAN Jamie Michalsky, 23, interpreter, AFGHANISTAN
 25 Oct 1994: USN LT Kara Hultgreen, 26, plane crash aboard USS *Abraham Lincoln*
 25 Oct 2003: USN FN Jakia Sheree Cannon, 20, IRAQ
 25 Oct 2008: USA PFC Cori Feltner, 22, died in St Louis hotel enroute to her first assignment in Korea
 25 Oct 2009: USA Eduviges G Wolf, 24, AFGHANISTAN
 26 Oct 1918: ANC Hannah L Burden, pneumonia, Camp Sherman, OH
 26 Oct 1944: WASP Gertrude V. Tompkins-Silver, WW II
 26 Oct 1968: CIVILIAN Rosalyn Muskat, Army Special Services, VIETNAM
 26 Oct 2003: USA PFC Rachel K. Bosveld, 19, IRAQ
 28 Oct 1898: Army Contract Nurse Clara Ward, Typhoid Fever, SPANISH AMERICAN WAR
 28 Oct 2005: MOARNG 1LT Debra (Butler) Banaszak, 35, non-combat incident, KUWAIT
 29 Oct 2009: USCG AET2 Monica L Beacham, 29, plane/chopper crash in Pacific
 31 Oct 1918: ANC Grace Copland, WWI

If you received this Newsletter as a forward or as a Courtesy Copy and would like to continue to receive this FREE weekly newsletter, click on link below:

<https://app.expressemailmarketing.com/survey.aspx?sfid=121170>

Complete all information, and select the appropriate box at the bottom of the form. You will then receive an automated authentication E-Mail, follow the instructions and you will then be added to the weekly distribution list.

Or if you prefer you can sign up to the Yahoo Groups VFC-News page and receive our weekly newsletter by sending an E-Mail to: VFC-News-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Our mailing list is never sold, traded or shared with anyone ever, and is held in the strictest of confidence.

The Department of Defense announced today the deaths of six airmen who were supporting Operation Freedom's Sentinel. They died Oct. 2 in the crash of a C-130J Super Hercules aircraft at Jalalabad Airfield, Afghanistan. The cause of the accident is currently under investigation.

Killed were:

Capt. Jonathan J. Golden, 33, of Camarillo, California.

Capt. Jordan B. Pierson, 28, of Abilene, Texas.

Staff Sgt. Ryan D. Hammond, 26, of Moundsville, West Virginia.

Senior Airman Quinn L. Johnson-Harris, 21, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

All four were assigned to the 39th Airlift Squadron, Dyess Air Force Base, Texas. For more information, media may contact the 7th Bomb Wing Public Affairs Office at 325-696-2863.

Also killed were:

Senior Airman Nathan C. Sartain, 29, of Pensacola, Florida.

Airman 1st Class Kcey E. Ruiz, 21, of McDonough, Georgia.

Both were assigned to the 66th Security Forces Squadron, Hanscom Air Force Base, Massachusetts.

Military Critical to San Diego Economy

According to the recently released San Diego Military Advisory Council's (SDMAC) Economic Impact Study, the military is a critical economic driver for the San Diego, Calif. region, creating 22 percent of all jobs and \$45 billion of gross regional product. The military accounts for one-fifth of San Diego County's economy. Copies of the Economic Impact Study are available at the San Diego Military Advisory Council website at www.sdmac.org.

VA's Million Veteran Program hits 400K Milestone *Program Expected to be Among World's Largest Databases*

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) [Million Veteran Program \(MVP\)](#) has enrolled its 400,000th Veteran volunteer, squarely putting it on track to become one of the world's largest medical databases, linking genetic, clinical, lifestyle and military-exposure information, with the goal of learning more about the role of genes in health and disease.

"We are proud to see the progress being made in MVP, and we are confident the knowledge gained through this research will have a very tangible and positive impact on the health care that Veterans and all Americans receive," said VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald. "We applaud our Veterans participating in the program. The selfless sacrifice they are making will allow researchers to gain valuable, important information."

Veterans who volunteer for the program donate blood, from which DNA is extracted, and periodically fill out surveys about their health, health-related behaviors and military experiences. They also consent to having authorized researchers access the information in their VA electronic health record, and to being re-contacted for future research opportunities. All information, genetic and otherwise, is kept secure and de-identified. Samples and data are coded; no names, birthdates or social security numbers are shared.

MVP, in operation at more than 50 VA medical centers nationwide, is already the largest database of its type in the United States. Data collected through MVP are available to researchers for use in approved studies, to include posttraumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, substance use disorders and heart and kidney disease.

MVP is a part of the [Precision Medicine Initiative](#) announced by President Obama earlier this year. The initiative aims to move health care forward into an era in which disease prevention and treatment will be tailored to individual patients on the basis of their genes and other factors.

“VA is thrilled to be working closely with the White House and other federal partners on the president’s Precision Medicine Initiative,” said VA Chief Research and Development Officer Timothy O’Leary, M.D., Ph.D. “We are committed to making precision medicine a reality for Veterans and the nation.”

VA Expands Economic Communities Initiative

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced the expansion of a program aimed at increasing education and employment opportunities to America’s veterans to an additional 25 new communities. The Veterans Economic Communities Initiative (VECI) brings together local and national partners to coordinate services for veterans, servicemembers and military families. The full list of VECI communities is available on the VA website at www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2732. New communities being launched in early 2016 are denoted with an asterisk on the list, and do not yet have an economic liaison assigned to their location.

Tax Exemptions for Disabled & Benefits by State

Tax Exemptions for Disabled Veterans by State 2015

<http://veterans-for-change.org/documents-library/send/223-benefits-book/37219-tax-exemptions-for-disabled-veterans-by-state>

Veterans Benefits By State

<http://veterans-for-change.org/documents-library/category/223-benefits-book>

VA Disability Rating Calculator

<http://veterans-for-change.org/documents-library/summary/255-credit-finance/38060-va-disability-rating-calculator>



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter is a once weekly publication deadline for submission is 5:00 PM PST on Thursday!



We need an America with the wisdom of experience. But we must not let America grow old in spirit.

~Hubert H. Humphrey~

Veterans-For-Change, Inc.

Riverside County, CA

Visit our website today
www.veterans-for-change.org

Serving those who served!

Please pass to all your Veteran friends and family!

Distribution	
Express Mail:	14,437
Face Book Pages:	2,987
Yahoo:	109
Twitter:	27
US Army	31,545
US Navy	6,873
US Marines	5,782
Dept of VA	10,843
Washington DC	114,377
New York	104,012
Los Angeles	87,621
Boston	47,992
Veterans	18,996,547
Other Social Media:	11,988
Courtesy Copies:	3,500
	19,438,640