



# NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES

2016 ANNUAL REPORT - SFY 2015-2016

Photo by Lucas Carter/The American Legion





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# INTRODUCTION

## Nevada Department of Veterans Services Overview

### Letter From The Director

BRIAN SANDOVAL  
Governor



STATE OF NEVADA  
NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES



This past summer a friend died. Chuck Harton, Chairman of the Northern Nevada Cemetery Advisory Committee, left us—and left us poorer for his passing. A World War II Marine Corps veteran, Chuck fought as a member of the initial landing forces who hit the beaches of Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Chuck was a down-to-earth guy who could be a bit rough around the edges, but always kept his eye on what was important; looking after your veteran buddies and helping the “youngsters” coming home from military duty get on the path to success.

I didn't spend enough time talking to Chuck. As the Director of the Department of Veterans Services (NDVS), my time is largely spent in program and budget development, or on the many tasks associated with leading the agency. I do my best to meet with veterans and their families but the programmatic demands of the job sometimes makes this difficult. In fact, as you read this report you might think our department is only concerned about improving business practices and miss the passion we have for serving Nevada's veterans.

It is true that NDVS can be compared to the best of America's corporations; businesses who excel at their core competencies, constantly seek to improve operations while reducing costs, and implement best practices. For example, in 2015 we received national and state recognition for our veteran advocacy programs, for the appearance of our cemeteries, and for the care of veterans at our nursing home. The secret to our success is easy; we have the most amazing, caring, and talented staff imaginable.

But we never forget that our programs and processes are merely a means to accomplish our mission of giving aid and assistance to Nevada's veterans and their families. Current generation vets like Bruno Moya who served in Iraq, returned home and is giving back by volunteering at the UNLV Vet Center as a peer advisor.... Gulf War veterans like Doreen Owens who after leaving service went to work for the Department of Labor where she has helped many, many veterans gain meaningful employment...Cold War warriors like Sergeant Major (Retired) Allan Callanan who helps Nevada's Gold Star families sort through the challenges of living without their loved ones...Vietnam veterans like Kevin Burns who is dedicated to his student veterans and helping Nevada's incarcerated veterans...Korean War Veterans like Nevada's Veterans Service Commission Chair Bill Bauman who ran the DAV Transportation Program for years, helping tens of thousands of veterans get to medical appointments...and World War II veterans like Chuck Harton who taught us all that in the end it is about living a decent, honorable life of service...and about taking care of your buddies.

I hope you enjoy reading this report and learning why I am so grateful to have the privilege of leading this great agency—and why I am so very proud of the men and women of NDVS who truly embody the agency motto of, “Serving Nevada's Heroes.”

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kat Miller".

Respectfully,  
Director Kat Miller  
November 1, 2016







# The Heroes We Serve

Nevada is ranked as the 31st state in veteran population with over 228,000<sup>1</sup> veterans. Females make up 9% of Nevada's heroes, and 65% of the current veteran population is over the age of 55, with the majority having served during the Vietnam era.

## NEVADA VETERANS BY COUNTY

Churchill	4,154
Clark	153,392
Douglas	4,824
Elko	4,214
Esmeralda	165
Eureka	201
Humboldt	1,560
Lander	602
Lincoln	634
Lyon	7,064
Mineral	923
Nye	6,488
Pershing	798
Storey	637
Washoe	35,245
White Pine	1,277
Carson City	5,848

## NEVADA VETERANS BY CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CD 1	47,231
CD 2	63,600
CD 3	55,662
CD 4	61,535

## NEVADA VETERANS BY AGE

75+	18.6%
65 to 74 years	24.5%
55 to 64 years	21.9%
35 to 54 years	26.2%
18 to 34 years	8.8%

## NEVADA VETERANS BY ERA SERVED

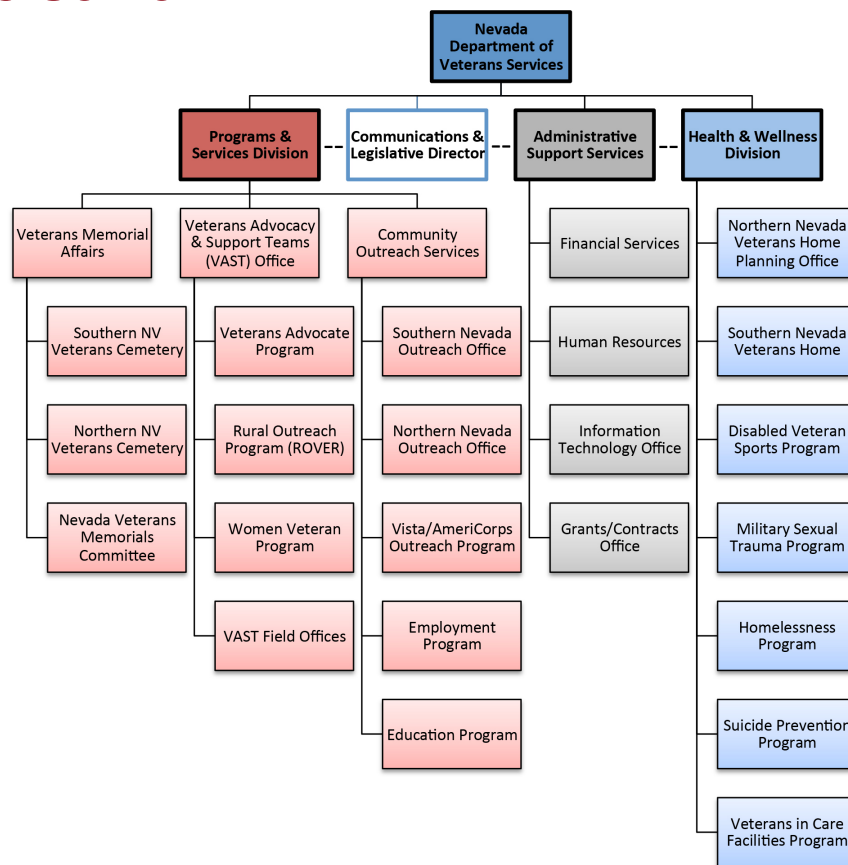
Wartime	168,811
Gulf War	70,702
Vietnam Era	80,432
Korean Conflict	20,429
World War II	7,704
Peacetime	59,217

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<sup>1</sup>This number was reported by the VA, which is based on veterans who access either the VA or the DoD systems for services. We believe the number to be closer to 300,000, but without good data, it is challenging to conduct the analysis necessary to provide the right support in the right places.



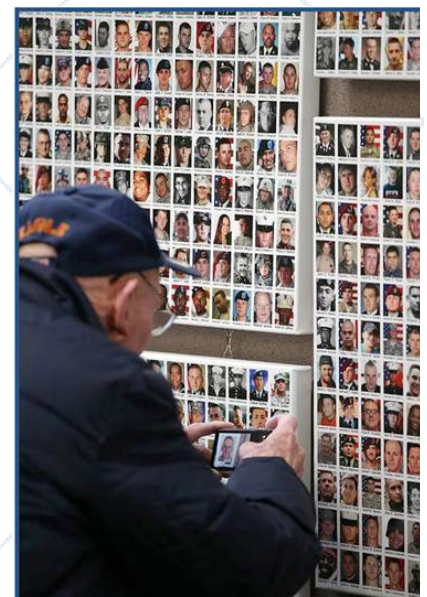
# Staff Who Serve



## History

The Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) was created as the Nevada Veterans Service Commission for Veterans Affairs by the Nevada Legislature in 1943 - with a staff of one in Reno. The commissioner on staff was charged with assisting WWII veterans with filing claims with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). In 1947, a deputy was added in Las Vegas, and since that time, other services have been added. In 1990, with the addition of the state cemeteries, the agency experienced its first significant growth, followed in 2002 with the creation of the Nevada State Veterans Home.

Then, in 2012, with the realization that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were coming to an end and Nevada needed to be better prepared to reintegrate returning veterans; public, private, and non-profit organizations began to mobilize to ensure that we were better prepared to support our returning veterans than we were during and after the Vietnam War. Today, NDVS is made up of 223 staff. We are responsible for giving aid, assistance and counsel to each and every problem, question and situation, individual as well as collective, affecting any veteran, Servicemember or their dependents.





## NDVS Mission Expansion

1943	1947-1960	1961-1989	1990-2001	2002-2011	2012-2015	2016 -2017	2018-2019
NN VSO	NN VSO	NN VSO	NN VSO	NN VSO	NN VSO	NN VSO	NN VSO
	SN VSO	SN VSO	SN VSO	SN VSO	SN VSO	SN VSO	SN VSO
	Scholarships	Scholarships	Scholarships	Guardianship	NNVH Planning	NNVH Planning	NNVH Operation
		Guardianship	Guardianship	NN Cemetery	NN Cemetery	NN Cemetery	NN Cemetery
			NN Cemetery	SN Cemetery	SN Cemetery	SN Cemetery	SN Cemetery
			SN Cemetery	NSVH	NSVH	NSVH	NSVH
					Women Vet Program	Women Vet Program	Women Vet Program
					Suicide Prevention TF	Suicide Prevention TF	Suicide Prevention TF
					Rural VSO Services	Rural VSO Services	Rural VSO Services
					GZI Management	GZI Management	GZI Management
					Community Outreach	Community Outreach	Community Outreach
					Homeless Vets	Homeless Vets	Homeless Vets
					Incarcerated Vets	Incarcerated Vets	Incarcerated Vets
					Grant Program Management	Grant Program Management	Grant Program Management
					IT Outreach	IT Outreach	IT Outreach
						Patriot Employer Program	Patriot Employer Program
						Veterans in Care Program	Veterans in Care Program
						Tribal Vet Program	Tribal Vet Program
						Disabled Vet Program	Disabled Vet Program
						AmeriCorps Outreach	AmeriCorps Outreach
1 Staff	3 Staff	8 Staff	28 Staff	219 Staff	223 Staff	231 Staff	356 Staff



## Key Partnerships

In addition to private industry, local businesses, and non-profit organizations that remain a key element in the care and support of our veterans and their family members, some of NDVS's key federal, state, and community partnerships include:

### Federal:

Corporation for National and Community Service  
US Department of Health and Human Services  
US Department of Labor  
US Department of Defense  
US Department of Veterans Affairs

### State:

Aging and Disability Services Division  
Attorney General's Office  
Department of Administration, Division of Human Resource Management  
Department of Administration  
Department of Corrections  
Department of Education, Training and Rehabilitation  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Department of Public Safety  
Division of Public and Behavioral Health  
Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs  
Nevada Equal Rights Commission  
Nevada System of Higher Education  
Secretary of State's Office  
Veteran Community Councils/Collaboratives





## Community:

Long before the State of Nevada hired staff to assist veterans returning from military service, national and state Veterans Service Organizations were established; most by veterans who wanted to help other veterans. These organizations provided a level of community support that a government organization could never hope to achieve. Recognizing the importance of these organizations, the Nevada Legislature charged the State of Nevada Department of Veterans Services with collaborating and coordinating the activities of Nevada's Veterans service organizations. This mission is critically important and one that NDVS embraces fully. We are honored to work in partnership with the following great organizations and their selfless members:

American Ex Prisoners of War Association  
American Legion (ALG)  
Association of the United States Army (AUSA)  
Blinded Vets Association (BVA)  
Blue Star Mother of America  
The Catholic War Veterans of the USA (CWV)  
Disabled American Veterans (DAV)  
Gold Star Families  
Fleet Reserve Association (FRA)  
The Jewish War Veterans (JWV)  
The Korean War Veterans Association (KWVA)  
The Marine Corps League (MCL)  
The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)  
The Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH)  
The Navy League (NL)  
National League of POW/MIA Families  
The Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA)  
United Veteran Legislative Committee  
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)  
Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA)  
Veterans Service Officer (VSO) representation  
Welcome All Veterans Everywhere (WAVE)  
Women Veterans of Nevada (WVON)

Thousands of veterans and their families are members of these organizations, and the work they do is invaluable. Some of these organizations have accredited Veterans Service Officers (VSOs), some provide specific benefits for their members and families, and many provide support for individual veterans and their families in times of need.

However, these organizations provide more than tangible benefits. They also provide an accepting community, ready to welcome separating Servicemembers into their ranks. Often men and women who leave the service feel they have been "cut adrift" and have difficulty reintegrating into our Nevada communities. Veterans Service Organizations play a critical role, along with communities and service providers, in helping with reintegration and filling a void left when Servicemembers leave their units and comrades behind.



# Administrative Support Services

## Financial Summary

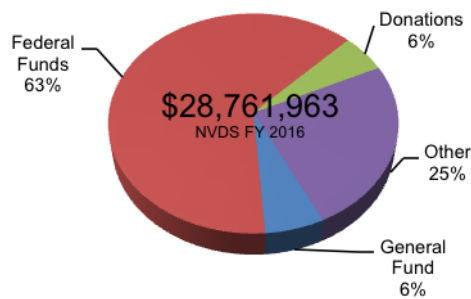
NDVS 2016 Fiscal Year

REVENUES			EXPENDITURES	
General Fund Appropriations		\$1,732,865	Nevada State Veterans Home	\$18,296,119
Health Care		\$-	Northern Nevada Veterans Home	\$32,278
- Nevada State Veterans Home	\$-		Total Health Care Expenditures	\$18,328,397
- Northern Nevada Veterans Home	\$-			
Programs and Services		\$1,732,865	Veterans Advocacy	\$1,227,787
- Veterans Advocacy	\$866,433		Cemeteries	\$1,577,717
- Cemeteries	\$866,432		Special Programs and Services	\$270,110
- Special Programs and Services	\$-		Total Programs and Services Expenditures	\$3,075,614
Community Outreach		\$-		
- NV Vet Corps	\$-		NV Vet Corps	\$-
- Nevada Veterans Advocacy Program	\$-		Nevada Advocate Program	\$114,607
- Veterans Information System	\$-		Veterans Information System	\$22,689
			Total Community Outreach Expenditures	\$137,296
Federal Funds		\$18,279,537		
Health Care			Total Administration	\$1,293,481
- Nevada State Veterans Home	\$16,740,037			
- Northern Nevada Veterans Home	\$-			
Programs and Services		\$1,539,500		
- Veterans Advocacy	\$801,519			
- Cemeteries	\$737,981			
- Special Programs and Services	\$-			
Community Outreach		\$-		
- NV Vet Corps	\$-			
- Nevada Veterans Advocacy Program	\$-			
- Veterans Information System	\$-			
Donations		\$1,611,303		
Health Care		\$161,492		
- Nevada State Veterans Home	\$110,215			
- Northern Nevada Veterans Home	\$51,277			
Programs and Services		\$1,267,811		
- Veterans Advocacy	\$111,000			
- Cemeteries	\$245,716			
- Special Programs and Services	\$911,095			



REVENUES				EXPENDITURES	
Community Outreach		\$182,000			
- NV Vet Corps	\$6,000				
- Nevada Veterans Advocacy Program	\$126,000				
- Veterans Information System	\$50,000				
Other Revenue			\$7,138,257		
Health Care					
- Nevada State Veterans Home	\$6,859,360				
- Northern Nevada Veterans Home	\$-				
Programs and Services		\$278,897			
- Veterans Advocacy	\$139,449				
- Cemeteries	\$139,448				
- Special Programs and Services	\$-				
Community Outreach		\$-			
- NV Vet Corps	\$-				
- Nevada Veterans Advocacy Program	\$-				
- Veterans Information System	\$-				
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>			<b>\$28,761,963</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$22,834,788</b>

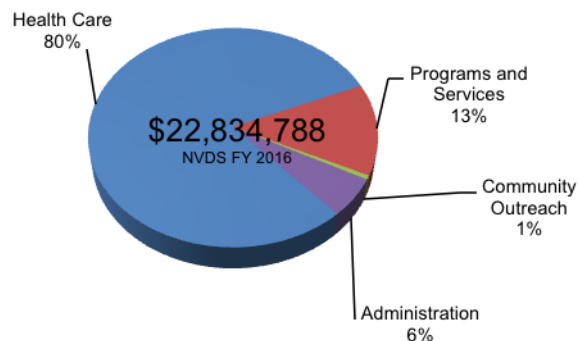
## REVENUES



General Fund	\$1,732,865
Federal Funds	\$18,279,537
Donations	\$1,611,303
Other	\$7,138,257
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$28,761,963</b>

We receive as much funding from donations as we do from State taxpayers (General Fund).

## EXPENDITURES



Health Care	\$18,328,397
Programs and Services	\$3,075,614
Community Outreach	\$137,296
Administration	\$1,293,481
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$22,834,788</b>



The majority of expenditures (80%) were for Health Care. Community Outreach costs (1%) were kept low by our partnership with AmeriCorps (VISTA Volunteer Outreach) and NVA Volunteers. In 2017, we anticipate a 300% increase in Community Outreach, funded by an AmeriCorps grant.

## Grants

In 2016, NDVS hired new staff dedicated to the development and management of grants to assist the Department in its mission. In less than a year, this decision has resulted in an increase in funding from grants, such as the doubling of the Highly Rural Transportation Grant from \$50,000 to \$100,000.

Examples of 2015 grant funds received and distributed:

<i>Veterans Health Administration (VHA) - Highly Rural Transportation Grants (HRTG)</i>	<i>VA – Operations and Maintenance Grants - Veterans Cemetery Grants Program</i>	<i>U.S. Department of Veterans Services (VA)</i>	<i>AT&amp;T</i>	<i>AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Vista</i>
Received a \$100,000 Rural Transportation Grant, which helps Veteran Service Organizations and State Veterans Service Agencies provide transportation services in eligible counties - counties with fewer than seven people per square mile. There is no cost to participate in the program for veterans who live in an area where HRTG is available. Funds were distributed to Elko and Nye Counties (\$50,000 each).	Received \$5 million in grant funding for the required maintenance to raise and align headstones that have begun to shift in the ground at the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery, and \$700,000 for expansion of the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery Columbarium area.	Received \$38,400 in grant funding for the development of a Veteran's Information System (VIS) that collects information from many databases across the state to locate and better serve veterans. Initial phases of development were completed in partnership with the VA, the State of Nevada Department of Administration, and six other states.	Received \$10k in grant funding to support the Nevada Department of Veterans Services' Patriot Employer Program through the development of a tool kit that provides businesses pertinent information and resources on how to hire and retain veterans.	NDVS is coordinating two national service operational grant awards (AmeriCorps State and AmeriCorps Vista) to create the Nevada Vet Corps. These programs work together to build capacity for veterans programs and services and provide direct service to veterans and their families. The total amount of the grant with match was \$752,753.

# Programs & Services

## Veterans Advocacy and Support

The Veterans Advocacy and Support Team (VAST) mission is to assist veterans, Servicemembers, and their families to access all state and federal benefits and opportunities for which they are entitled. VAST is made up of Veterans Service Officers (VSOs) who assist and advocate for all veterans, Servicemembers, their families, and their survivors. Each VSO generates \$16.4 million annually in benefits that improve the lives of Nevada veterans.

### *VAST Accomplishments*

- Publication of first-ever VSO Standard Operating Procedures Manual.
- Development of a State of Nevada Certification Program for VSOs.
- Conduct an annual conference to train not only state employed VSOs but all other VA accredited VSOs in Nevada—at no cost
- Completed training and accreditation of new VSOs recently authorized by the State Legislature, almost doubling the number of state employed VSOs accredited by the VA.
  - Reduced wait times from a high of 16 weeks to an average of 3 weeks;
  - Total 2015 Claims recovery of \$196.4M (2016 data will not be available until 1 Jan 2017).
- Served over 5,100 veterans, including:
  - Over 16,000 phone contacts
  - Over 3,000 emails
  - Over 15,000 correspondences

### Rural Outreach

The mission of the Rural Outreach for Veterans Enrichment and Resources program (ROVER) is to provide veterans and their families living in rural and frontier Nevada access to or information about benefits for which they could be eligible.

### *ROVER*

#### *Accomplishments*

- Served over 950 veterans
- Interacted with over 1,700 rural veterans through numerous events
- Doubled the availability of appointments for veterans in northern and central Nevada by partnering with Great Basin College (GBC) to use the college's Interactive Video (IAV) system to connect VSO with veterans to file claims for federal benefits. We are working with GBC to expand video-teleconferencing appointments to seven other rural Nevada communities.

### Women Veterans Program

The mission of the NDVS Women Veterans Program is to provide women veterans benefits and activity information, resolve women veterans problems or refer women veterans to VSOs and other beneficial service providers for assistance, and to develop programs and activities that ensure Nevada women understand, and are able to obtain, any aid or benefit to which they may be entitled. The primary role of the program is to enroll women veterans into a database where they will be informed on a consistent basis of activities, events, updates in the medical community, and other women veterans-related issues.





The Women Veterans Program Coordinator participates in the State Commander's Committee, the Southern NV Women's Health Committee, and the Women Veterans Advisory Committee to engage partners and work toward solutions.

### ***Women Veterans Program Accomplishments***

- Leveraged social media with a 90% increase in Facebook participation.
- Created a Twitter Page with 474 followers.
- Hosted the 1st #CombatBootSocial on June 17, 2016 with 62 attendees.
- Scheduled the first Military Sexual Trauma Conference to be held on March 25, 2017.
- Connected 97 women veterans to services in one or more of the following areas:
  - Housing referrals to the Community Resource and Referral Center
  - VA claims referrals to NDVS VSOs
  - VA counseling referrals to Mental Health
  - State benefits:
    - ♦ License Plate options for veterans
    - ♦ Burial Services
    - ♦ Veterans Home

### **Military Sexual Trauma Program (MST)**

Men and women can experience MST during their service. According to the VA's national screening program, about 1 in 4 women and 1 in 100 men report when seeking VA care that they have experienced MST.

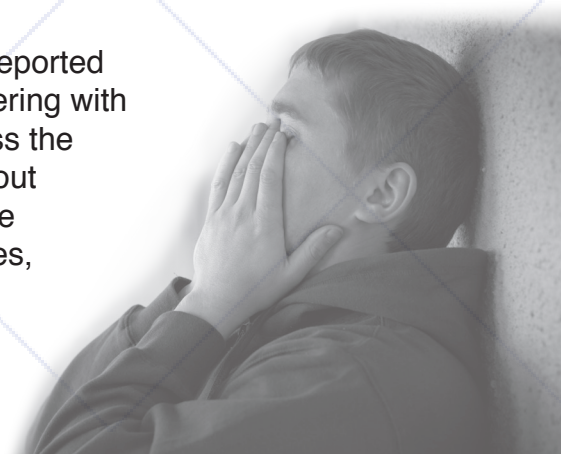
NDVS assists in connecting women veterans to free medical and mental health services and is developing a training program for medical professionals throughout the state to assist them in identifying and treating veterans who suffer from MST.

***“The State of Nevada has a higher percentage of veterans who have experienced MST than the national average, which is 20 percent in women and 2 percent in men. The percentage of female veterans in Nevada is 27.7 percent, and for Nevada's male veterans, it is 1.3 percent.”***

**Joyce Woodhouse**  
NV Senator

### **Incarcerated Veteran Program**

As of March, 2016, the Nevada Department of Corrections reported that there were 1,056 veterans incarcerated. NDVS is partnering with the Nevada Department of Corrections and the VA to address the unique needs of incarcerated veterans. VSOs are reaching out to three facilities located throughout the state via face-to-face visits, as well as pioneering the use of telecounseling facilities, to identify services and benefits available to incarcerated veterans and to focus on transition objectives necessary to re-enter our Nevada communities.



# Cemeteries and Memorials

Nevada is home to the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery and the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery that honor veterans, eligible family members, and Gold Star Parents with dignified burials and final resting places that commemorate their service and sacrifice to our nation. The cemeteries were established in 1990 and have since become the final resting place for over 47,000 veterans and their family members. Veteran burial needs remain strong as the number of burials provided over the past five years has remained above 2,000 per year.

## Services Offered

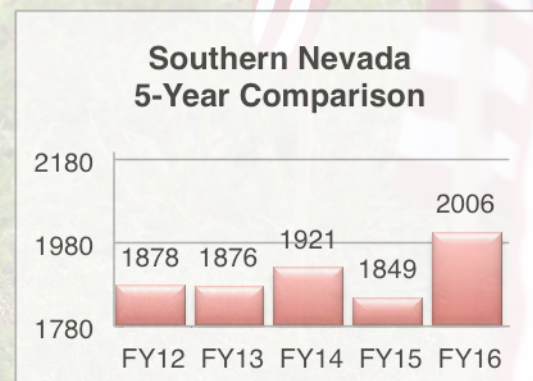
- Grave Sites
- Cremation In-ground
- Cremation Columbarium
- Open / Closed Graves
- Interment Site
- Markers & Headstones
- Assist with Qualifying
- Assist with Arrangements
- Committal Services
- Military Honor Service
- Perpetual Care
- Grave Site Locator Services

OVERVIEW		
CEMETERIES	SOUTHERN NEVADA	NORTHERN NEVADA
Total Acres	79	43
Total Acres Developed	41	18
Established	1990	1990
Staff Size	14	5
Operating Costs	\$307,112	\$146,145
FACILITIES	SOUTHERN NEVADA	NORTHERN NEVADA
Administration Building	•	•
Service Area	•	•
Committal Area	•	•
Outdoor Assembly Area	•	•
Columbarium	•	•
Parking	•	•
Walking Paths	•	•
Maintenance Building	•	•

## Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery

Located in beautiful Boulder City 25 miles southeast of Las Vegas, the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (SNVMC) is the second busiest state veterans cemetery in the nation with about 1,900 burials per year. Since it's opening in 1990, the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery has performed over 37,000 burials. With 41 out of 79 acres developed for gravesites, roads, buildings and places for placement of cremated remains, the other 38 acres will be used for burials until capacity is reached in about 35 years.

BURIAL SERVICES FY2016	
BURIAL SERVICES	
Veterans	1373
Dependents/Spouses	633





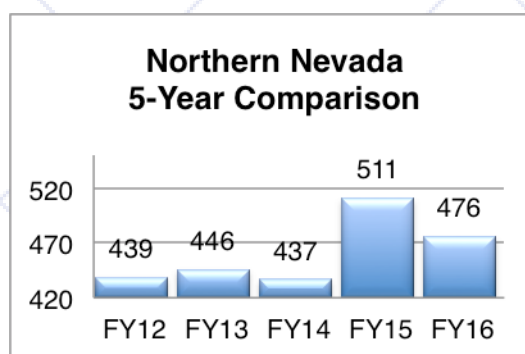


## Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery

The Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (NNVMC) is located in Fernley, Nevada, 40 minutes from downtown Reno. The cemetery is located on over 40 acres (18 developed) owned and maintained by the State of Nevada. Since its dedication in 1990, the cemetery has expanded four times. Over 9,000 veterans and family members of veterans have been placed to rest at the cemetery since its opening.

NNVMC received high marks at the Triennial On-site Review completed by the VA National Cemetery Administration in August of 2016. "Cemetery staff has done an outstanding job of landscaping the cemetery, which is impressive with three grounds staff and the director actively involved with landscaping throughout the cemetery."

BURIAL SERVICES FY2015	
BURIAL SERVICES	
Veterans	367
Dependents/Spouses	109



## State Veterans Memorials

### Nevada State Veterans Memorial, Grant Sawyer Grounds, Las Vegas

NDVS supports the maintenance of our memorials to the fallen. Governor Brian Sandoval and the Las Vegas Veterans Memorial Foundation (LVVMF) dedicated the Nevada State Veterans Memorial on May 27, 2016. LVVMF partnered with NDVS to provide a stunning location for this world-class national memorial and the support necessary for its creation and operation. The two-acre memorial is located on the grounds of the Grant Sawyer State Building and features 18 larger-than-life statues depicting soldiers from the Revolutionary War to the Global War on Terror.

### Memorial to the Fallen, Carson Capital Grounds, Carson City

NDVS supports the maintenance of the Memorial to the Fallen, which is dedicated to Nevada's fallen soldiers on the Capitol Complex.

*"I am proud that the Las Vegas Veterans Memorial Foundation has chosen to partner with the State of Nevada to honor and remember all who have served our nation through the establishment of this world-class memorial."*

Governor Brian Sandoval



### Mustang 22 Memorial, Reno Stead Airport, Stead

The Mustang 22 Memorial is dedicated to Mustang 22, a CH-47 Chinook Helicopter that was shot down in Afghanistan on September 25, 2005. It is located at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Reno and is dedicated to their memories. NDVS supports this memorial's maintenance.

## Education, Employment and Financial Stability

**Education** is one of the keys for the successful transition from active duty to veteran status. Certifying quality programs in the state and encouraging the use of Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits for those programs is emphasized in all NDVS outreach activities. Central to Governor Sandoval's 2016 Strategic Planning Framework is the goal to ensure that every Nevada veteran who obtains a postsecondary credential, certificate, or degree is fully employed with a livable wage six months after graduation.

NDVS **education objective** states that "Servicemembers, veterans, their families, and the families of the fallen have access to high quality higher education programs, and have the financial means to attend Nevada's colleges, universities, and other degree-producing institutions of higher learning."

NDVS works very closely with the State Approving Authority (SAA) within the Commission on Postsecondary Education to provide oversight and approval for those institutions that offer training to veterans. In addition, NDVS has collaborated with the SAA to identify best practices within student veteran support programs currently operating within Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) institutions. Going forward, partnerships between NSHE post-secondary institutions will be promoted with all post-secondary educational providers approved by the SAA throughout the state.

More than 6,000 veterans were enrolled in NSHE institutions during the 2014-15 academic year, with about half receiving benefits. The majority of veteran students were enrolled in the Business,



### ***Nevada Veterans Educational Attainment***

Less than high school	5.6%
High school graduate (includes GED)	26.9%
Some college or associate's degree	43.5%
Bachelor's degree or higher	24.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Management, Marketing and Related Support Services and Health Professions and Related Programs areas of study.

### ***Education Accomplishments***

- *Veterans Offered In-State Tuition Everywhere. Las Vegas Review Journal, November 12, 2015*
- *Funded the program development of the College of Southern Nevada's Military Medic to LPN Program. The first two classes have graduated and initiatives are underway to expand this program to other Nevada colleges. The program expedites the process of completing the licensing requirements for military medical personnel to become licensed nursing practitioners.*

### ***Veteran Enrollment in NSHE Institutions***

Number of Student Veterans	6,098
Number of Student Veterans Receiving Payments from VA	2,937
Percent of Student Veterans by Gender	Male 67.2%
Female 32.8%	24.0%
Average Age of Enrolled Veteran Students	30 years old
Number of Student Veterans who Graduated during 2014-15 Academic Year	586

Source: 2014-15 Veterans Enrollment Report



**Employment** is another crucial element of veteran reintegration. In addition to preference and incentive programs, other initiatives can also assist in improving employment opportunities for job-seeking veterans. For example, Nevada can help ensure employment opportunities for job-seeking veterans through licensure reciprocity. Nevada is currently one of five states that does not have legislation providing for licensure reciprocity for military members and their families. One way to provide access to entry for transitioning Servicemembers and veterans is through internship programs, apprenticeships, and similar opportunities.

### *Nevada Unemployment Rates July 2015*

	Nevada	U.S.
All Veteran Unemployment	5.8%	4.6%
Post-9/11 Veteran Unemployment Rate	7.7%	5.8%
Unemployment Rate	6.7%	5.3%

Source: 2014-15 Veterans Enrollment Report

### **Patriot Employer Program**

The Patriot Employer Program (PEP) began in 2012 with an Executive Order signed by Governor Brian Sandoval, which established the Green Zone Employer Program. After two successful years, the Green Zone Employer Program has been rebranded as the “Patriot Employer Program (PEP)” to align with current NDVS initiatives and efforts.

#### ***Goals of the PEP are to:***

- *Improve veteran employment outcomes*
- *Improve veteran employment retention*
- *Engage employers in developing solutions for veterans*
- *Decrease veteran unemployment and veteran underemployment*
- *Make Nevada the most veteran-friendly state in the nation*

PEP, through its Patriot Employer Information Portal website and programmatic efforts, is providing education and training resources to Nevada employers so they can build robust veteran recruitment and retention programs that benefit their companies and organizations. In addition, the Patriot Employer Information Portal provides Nevada employers with best practices, program models, tax and benefit information, details on the benefits of hiring veterans, and toolkits to stand up veteran employment initiatives.



### **Students Veterans Advisory Council**

In 2013 Governor Sandoval established the Student Veterans Advisory Council (SVAC) to develop a set of recommendations for all higher learning and post-secondary institutions in Nevada to help ensure veteran success in Nevada’s classrooms and training programs. The recommendations they made in their 2014 report to the Governor helped shape legislation and policy that not only guided the development of important legislation but ensured that Nevada’s student veterans have a voice in programs and policies that affect them. NDVS is now working with Nevada System of Higher Education colleges and universities, but with colleges in the private sector to help identify the needs of all student veterans. To help understand the needs of student veterans, NDVS has recommended legislation that would place a student veteran on the Nevada Veterans Service Commission.



# Volunteer and Service Programs

## Nevada Veterans Advocacy Program

The Nevada Veterans Advocacy (NVA) Program educates and certifies Nevada Veterans Advocates (NVAs) so that they may help connect service providers with those veterans seeking support. The program, which is open to any Nevada resident, is creating a network of knowledgeable advocates, ensuring that wherever a veteran lives, there is someone who can help that veteran access needed benefits. NVA volunteers help support the work of Nevada's VSOs, who are challenged to support more than 250,000 veterans who call Nevada home.

### *Nevada Veterans Advocacy Program Accomplishments*

- Developed and implemented a 20 credit hour online course to certify NVAs.
- In 2015, almost 400 people enrolled with 80 who completed and received state certification.
- There are currently 154 certified NVAs and 407 currently enrolled in the course.
- NDVS was honored by the VA as a 2016 national recipient of the Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence Award for best veterans' services practices. Nevada won 'most innovative' state program for the NVA Program. NDVS Director Kat Miller accepted the award during the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs conference in Washington, DC.
- Instructors from NDVS, the VA, Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Health Administration, and the Veterans Home Loan Program conduct two free annual training conferences in Las Vegas and Reno.
- In 2017, we will conduct an additional workshop in Reno that will focus on Native Americans.

## Nevada Vet Corps

NDVS was awarded two national service operational grant awards (AmeriCorps State and AmeriCorps Vista) to create the Nevada Vet Corps. These programs work together to build capacity for veterans programs and services and provide direct service to veterans and their families.

- Thanks to the focus of our Nevada Vet Corps (AmeriCorps Vista) members, there has been an increase in the recruitment and certification of Nevada Veterans Advocates.
- Nevada Vet Corps (AmeriCorps Vista) member accomplishments include building veterans services relationships in rural counties, expanding the Nevada Veterans Advocate Program, and developing a living resource guide to include all organizations and agencies that partner with or provide direct services to veterans and their families.

## Nevada VetNet

With input from veterans across the state, NDVS is taking Nevada VetNet to the next virtual level. After months of reimagining and populating, the website is 'live.' Next-level efforts focus on added functionality, fresh and refreshed content, and a revised 2.0 NV VetNet (formerly GreenZone).

Nevada VetNet encourages veterans, family/friends, service providers, and community supporters to actively post and participate in sharing information and reaching out to the wider community.

Veterans can:

- Access real-time information on health, education, housing, and employment.
- Connect securely and confidentially to VSOs regarding benefits.
- Connect with the community.
- Support and help others in the community.

Service providers can:

- Promote outreach services.
- Promote veteran and military events.

Family/friends can:

- Help a military member or veteran find information about benefits, programs, and support.

Community Advocates can:

- Find out ways to get involved and support the veteran and military communities.

For those individuals or organizations already signed up with the online community, formerly known as GreenZone Network, the data has automatically been transferred.

## Health and Wellness



## Veterans Homes

State veterans homes are facilities with a long-standing tradition that provide quality nursing and residential care for our veterans. The homes honor the tremendous sacrifice our veterans have made, recognize their service to our nation, and fill an important need for veterans who desire to spend their last years with “comrades”.



## Nevada State Veterans Home

Established in 2002, the Nevada State Veterans Home (NSVH) is located approximately 25 miles southeast from Las Vegas, Nevada, in historic Boulder City. NSVH is state-owned and operated, Medicare/Medicaid certified, and licensed by the State of Nevada. NSVH provides personalized services for qualified veterans, veterans' spouses, and Gold Star Parents. Since inception, the facility has served over 14,000 veterans and their spouses. The campus includes a 180-bed, 24-hour skilled nursing facility with three living units called neighborhoods, including one unit with 24 beds providing two levels of secured care living for individuals suffering from advanced cognitive impairment. NSVH is at capacity and could use additional beds as it maintains an average 90% occupancy rate and has required a waitlist for admission since 2013.



### ***NSVH Recognition***

- NSVH has achieved a 5-star rating by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) for 2015 and 2016.
- NSVH has received the Health Insight Nursing Home Quality Award for 2012, 2013, 2015, and 2016.
- For 2016, NSVH received the Health Insight Award for obtaining a national ranking of 75% or higher, quality measures and overall star rating, and ranked top 88%.
- Three NSVH staff members were honored on June 8th for the Southern Nevada “Endeavor Awards” presented by Nevada Health Care Association, Perry Foundation: Poppy Helgren,

Director of Nursing for Outstanding Nurse Leader; Mary Lambert, Rehab Program Manager for the Most Extraordinary Therapist; and DiAnn Lawson, Certified Nursing Assistant for Nursing Assistant of the Year.

- The Federal Veterans Administration Survey was conducted May 24-26, 2016 and the NSVH was recertified as being fully compliant.
- In July of 2016, NSVH received a high passing score for the Nevada Medicaid Case Mix Verification Review for the MDS accuracy for documentation.
- NSVH received 22 Pinnacle Quality Insight 2016 Customer Experience Awards “Best in Class” for Nursing Care, Overall Satisfaction, Cleanliness, Activities Programs, Professional Therapy Services, Safety, Security, Would Recommend to Others and more.

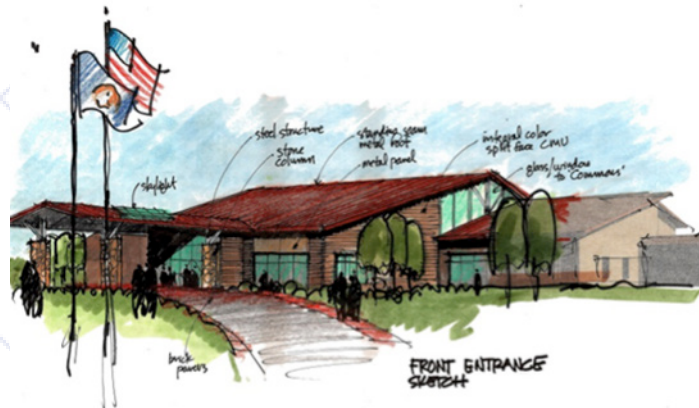
NSVH PROFILE FY 2015-2016			
ESTABLISHED	2002	2015 BUDGET	
RESIDENTS Male Female Non-Vet Spouse	AVERAGE # 129 40 4.5	Operations	\$18,501,531
SERVICE ERA* WWII Korean War Vietnam War Gulf War Peacetime *Many residents have served during one or more wars/peacetimes.	AVERAGE # 82 89 112 2 85	STAFF OVERVIEW Full-Time Employees Payroll	164 \$11,597,219
MILITARY BRANCH Army Air Force Navy Marines Coast Guard	AVERAGE # 103 58 64 28 4	SERVICES Medical Care Dementia Care Unit Occupational Therapy Physical Therapy Speech Therapy Fitness Services Recreational Therapy Vocational & Recovery Support Mental & Behavioral Health Services Dental Care Optometry Care Nutrition Services Pharmaceutical Services Social Services Chaplain/Spiritual Care Spouse Support Group Transportation Barber Beauty Shop Cashier/Banking Volunteer Programs Outings & Events End of Life Care	<b>NEVADA STATE VETERANS HOME</b> <b>100 Veterans Memorial Drive</b> <b>Boulder City, NV 89005</b> <b>(702) 332-6717</b>
PRIMARY DIAGNOSES Diabetes Dementia with Behaviors Alzheimer's Hypertension Coronary Artery Disease Atrial Fibrillation Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Congestive Heart Failure Pneumonia Urinary Tract Infection			
OCCUPANCY 2015 Admissions 2015 Discharges  Total Beds % Occupancy Average Wait Time	AVERAGE # 240 251  180 94% or 169.2 est. 45 days		





## Northern Nevada Veterans Home

During the 77th legislative session, Governor Sandoval recommended, and the Legislature passed AB 505, to begin the design phase and planning for the construction of the Northern Nevada Veterans Home (NNVH). A needs assessment conducted in April 2014 substantiated the importance of its development, as the Federal VA has noted a current 379-bed need in Nevada. According to a January 2015 NDVS study, the NNVH project will positively impact the local economy by supporting 168 jobs, generating \$14,393,057 in revenue annually, and supporting \$135,809 in property, sales, and modified business taxes to the state each year.



***Architect Rendition of the new Northern Nevada Veterans Home***

NNVH will be built on state-owned property near the northern Nevada Mental Health facilities, at the intersection of Kietzke Lane and Galletti Way, Sparks. The construction of this 96-bed Veterans Skilled Nursing Home for veterans, spouses, and Gold Star parents, consisting of 12, eight-bed clustered residential units in three, 32-room neighborhoods is based on the community living center concept embraced by the VA. It will include an exciting town center with: physical therapy, dining hall, beauty and barber shop, store, coffee shop, chapel, activity center, and more.

*"The construction of the Northern Nevada Veterans Home is a key component to my administration's goal of making Nevada the most military- and veteran-friendly state in the nation. This facility is part of our sweeping and comprehensive effort to create new resources and expand existing resources for those who have answered the call to serve and defend our nation."*

**Governor Sandoval**

This important project is moving forward on schedule and its completion will remain a top agency priority. ***Legislative approval was granted June 1, 2015.*** Nevada State matching funds are approved, and when VA appropriation funding is available, the earliest construction could begin is January 2017 after being notified of funding hopefully in December 2016.

**Estimated timeline if the FFY 2018 VA appropriations reach the funding level required to start the project:**



**Future Benefit to the Community**

Approximately 125 + jobs will be created	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nursing and clinical care staff, therapy, food service, clerical, Veterans Services, housekeeping, laundry, maintenance and information technology to name a few</li> </ul>
Approximately 20+ merchants and vendors will be engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire/safety systems monitoring and service, medical equipment and supplies, food vendors, landscaping services, clinical care-physicians and nurse practitioners, pharmacy, laboratory and diagnostic services, beautician/barber, pest control, electrical service, furniture and finish contractors, painting, other maintenance</li> </ul>
Community Center/ Town Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and allow for large community and Veterans groups to hold events as well as expand volunteer participation</li> </ul>
Parade ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow for special ceremonies</li> </ul>





## Veterans in Care (VIC) Program

The Veterans In Care (VIC) initiative was launched in the summer of 2016 with a mission to reach out to all skilled nursing facilities (SNF), residential care/assisted living facilities (RCF/AL) and over 400 providers in the state. The goal is to ensure that all veterans, no matter where they live, receive the support, information, and recognition that they deserve.

### Facility Outreach

A letter was sent to all licensed administrators of SNF and RCF/AL facilities to request information on the location of our veterans in their facilities, how many are receiving benefits, and how many are enrolled in the VA medical care system. NDVS is continuing to reach out to providers to assure we have a broad response. The next step will be to reach out to community-based care (CBC) service facilities and programs to locate our veterans needing and receiving care and services, allowing NDVS to collect data that has never before been collected.

**Table 1. Community Facility Partners**

Type of Facility	Number of Facilities
Skilled Nursing Facilities	45
Residential Facilities for Groups/ Assisted Living Facilities	361
Adult Day Care Facilities	21
Rural Hospital Distinct Part SNF	11
Hospice Facilities	4
Hospice Agencies	61
Personal Care Agencies	189
Home Health Agencies	157

*Preliminary data as of November 1st, 76 facilities and 1054 veterans in community care settings. We anticipate the discovery of up to 5,000 veterans that we may have not reached before.*

The VIC program has a potential for working with 849 community facility partners, each facility type identified in the Division of Public and Behavioral Health licensure database listed in Table 1.

At this time, the VIC program is focused on three components:

1. Benefits and Programs
2. Veteran Culture Education and Training
3. Quality of Life Recognition and Communication

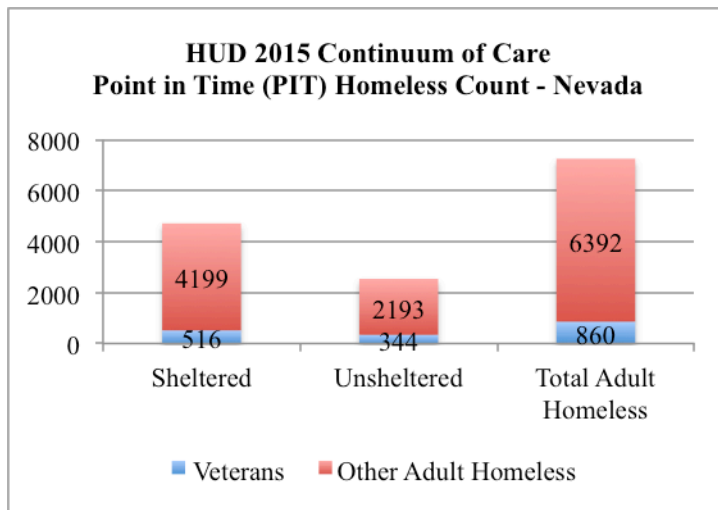


# Veteran Homelessness Prevention & Assistance

In 2015, more than one in every 10 adults experiencing homelessness in the United States was a veteran. In Nevada, 6,392 adults experiencing homelessness and 860, or 13.4%, were veterans.

***NDVS programs provide training, job placement, housing assistance, and information resources to eligible veterans. Our focus is threefold:***

- Conducting coordinated outreach to proactively seek out veterans in need of assistance.
- Connecting homeless and at-risk veterans with housing solutions, health care, community employment services and other required supports.
- Collaborating with federal, state and local agencies; employers; housing providers; faith-based and community nonprofits; and others to expand employment and affordable housing options for veterans exiting homelessness.



Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development



## ***NDVS Veteran Homelessness Prevention Activities FY 2016:***

- Worked with state, county, city, and non-profit partners to develop Nevada's Veteran Homelessness Initiative.
- Conducted a statewide convening of stakeholders and created a Task Force to identify best practices and barriers and create the state's first veteran homelessness action plan.
- Continues to participate with the state Inter-agency Council on Homelessness.

## Special Wellness Programs

As derived from the Governor's strategic priorities, the wellness objective of the NDVS veteran initiative states, "Servicemembers, veterans, their families, and the families of the fallen have access to healthcare, mental health services, prevention services, benefit information, wellness programs, and community support."



## Disabled Veterans Sports Program

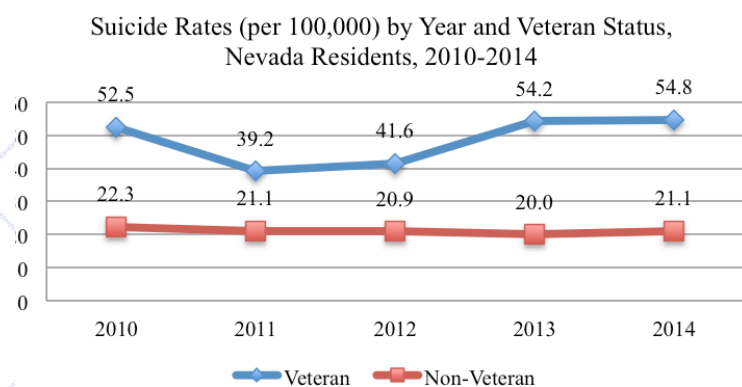
There are thousands of disabled veterans participating in adaptive sports in communities across the country. We know the adjustment from active Servicemember to disabled veteran can be a difficult one. Participating in adaptive sports allows a veteran to redefine him or herself and live an active, healthy and fun lifestyle. NDVS partners with the City of Las Vegas and the City of Reno to provide funding for adaptive sports programs at no cost to hundreds of disabled veterans.



## Suicide Prevention Program

Nevada has one of the highest suicide rates in the country among veterans, both men and women. Nevada's veterans, particularly younger veterans, are dying from suicide at alarming rates above the state's already high rate. Between 2010 and 2014, there were 2,529 deaths due to suicide, and 573 or 22% of those were veterans. During the same period, 97% of the veteran suicides were males (*Special Surveillance Report on Veterans Suicide 2010 -2014*).

NDVS helped to stand up the Veterans Suicide Prevention Task Force, which was established to address this critical problem.



Source: Office of Public Health Informatics and Epidemiology Division of Public and Behavioral Health Department of Health and Human Services, *Special Surveillance Report on Veterans Suicide 2010 -2014*

## Partner Outreach Examples

MONTH	EVENT
July	Nevada Veterans Advocate Conference, Reno
August	Spirit of '45, 70th Anniversary of the End of WWII, Northern Nevada and Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemeteries.
September	Military Sports Camp, City of Reno
October	Women Veterans Town Hall, Las Vegas VAMC, sponsored by NDVS
November	Statewide Veterans Day observances
December	Wreaths Across America Ceremony, Northern Nevada and Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemeteries
January	Veterans Legislative Summit, Las Vegas & Reno
February	Valentine's Day, Mardi Gras celebrations at Nevada State Veterans Home
March	Veterans and Military Day at the Nevada State Legislature, Carson City, Reno and Las Vegas Homeless Veterans Standowns.
April	Sesquicentennial "Always Lost" program display at Nevada Legislative Building, Carson City
May	Memorial Day Special Acknowledgment of 25th Anniversary of Nevada Veterans service, Northern Nevada and Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemeteries
June	Always Lost Exhibit, Tonopah's Jim Butler Days celebration, Tonopah





## Statewide Veterans Community Councils

The Veterans Community Councils (VCCs) were designed to set local objectives, and formalize the coordination between organizations and service providers at the community level. NDVS helps to stand up these Councils, to develop charters, and begin their work. NDVS supports the VCCs by taking their policy recommendations to the Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs. NDVS is in the process of standing up 13 additional VCCs with the support of NDVS AmeriCorps Vet Corps Members working across Nevada. Existing VCCs are listed below:

Community Council	Outreach	Other Targeted Communities for VCCs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Las Vegas Veterans Services Community Group</li> <li>North Las Vegas Veteran Community Council</li> <li>Henderson Veteran Community Collaborative</li> <li>Truckee Meadows Veterans Community Collaborative</li> <li>Carson City Veterans Community Council</li> <li>Welcome All Vets Everywhere/ WAVE</li> <li>Northeastern Nevada Veterans Resource Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outreach to Greater Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Nellis AFB</li> <li>Outreach to North Las Vegas, Las Vegas</li> <li>Standing up in September 2016</li> <li>Outreach to Henderson, Boulder City</li> <li>Outreach to Reno, Sparks and outlying communities</li> <li>Outreach to Carson City community</li> <li>Outreach to Douglas County communities of Gardnerville and Minden</li> <li>Outreach to city/county communities of Elko, Elko County</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Laughlin</li> <li>Mesquite</li> <li>Tonopah</li> <li>Pahrump</li> <li>Winnemucca/Tri-County</li> <li>Ely</li> <li>Mineral</li> <li>Lyon</li> <li>Hawthorne</li> <li>Austin</li> <li>Eureka</li> </ul>

*In January of 2014, Governor Brian Sandoval signed a proclamation making it the "Year of the Veteran" in Nevada, calling for Nevada to become the most military- and veteran-friendly state in the nation.*



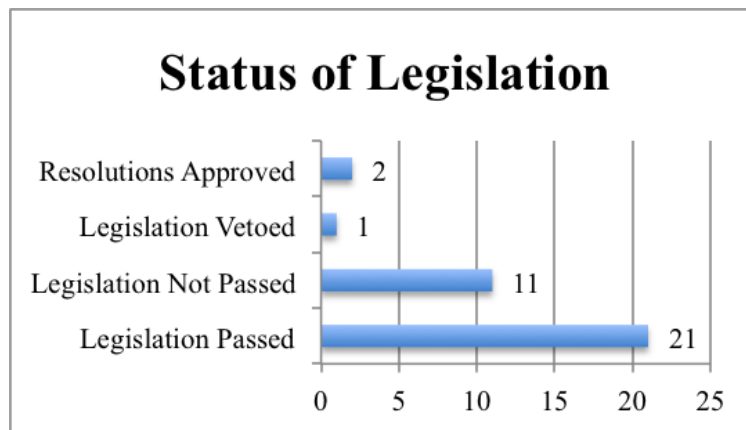
# Veterans Legislative Overview

## 2015 Legislative Summary

For over a decade, NDVS has participated in three events throughout each biennium to convene the veteran community around its legislative issues. These three events are the Veterans Legislative Symposium, the Veterans Legislative Summit, and Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature.

Veterans Legislative Symposium	Veterans Legislative Summit	Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature
Hosted by the Office of the Governor and NDVS in even years and is designed to bring together leaders and members of the veterans community to identify legislative priorities for the upcoming session. The Symposia are held about 10-12 months before each session.	Hosted by the Office of the Governor and NDVS in odd years immediately prior to the Legislative Session and is designed to inform leaders and members of the veterans' community on progress related to the legislative priorities identified during the Symposium. The Summits are held 1-2 months before each session.	NDVS and the Nevada National Guard (NNG) host this event during the Legislative Session to bring together the veteran community, to bring awareness of the NNG's mission, assets, and capabilities.

The **78th Legislative Session** took place on September 1, 2015. The success achieved during this Session was remarkable. Governor Sandoval noted that the veteran-related bills he signed represented “the most comprehensive effort in the nation to support military veterans and their families through enhanced educational, employment and healthcare services.”



Highlights of the significant successes achieved by the veteran community during this Session include:

- Honor Nevadans who have died during the Global War on Terrorism.
- Appropriates \$14,139,883 for the construction of the Northern Nevada Veterans Home.
- Creates a Survivors' Tax Exemption on sales taxes for family members of Nevada National Guard members who are killed in the line of duty for a three-year period.
- Creates a payroll tax deduction for employers who hire unemployed veterans.
- Extends the period veterans using the Post-9/11 GI Bill are eligible for receiving in-state tuition from two years to five years.
- Provides authorization for private sector employers to prefer veterans and their spouses in hiring.



- Requires state licensing boards to develop reciprocity opportunities for Servicemembers, veterans, and their families who hold licenses in other states.
- Authorizes qualified veterans to receive license plates honoring those who have been awarded the Silver Star or the Bronze Star Medal with “V” device, Combat V or Combat Distinguishing Device.
- Limits the distribution of disability benefits as community property in granting a divorce involving at least one veteran.
- Creates the Women Veterans Advisory Committee in statute.
- Extends of benefits for veterans who are authorized to receive special license plates for surviving the attack on Pearl Harbor or who were awarded the Purple Heart or the Congressional Medal of Honor.
- Creates the Office of Military Legal Assistance within the Office of the Attorney General.
- Allows the Employment Security Division of the Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation to pay unemployment insurance to members of the National Guard if terminated from duty.
- Expands the DMV’s authority to determine which paperwork is acceptable for a veteran to receive the “Veteran” designation on a driver’s license.
- Requires the Director of NDVS to develop plans and programs to assist veterans who have suffered military sexual trauma.
- Increases key staff for NDVS.
- Creates a veteran program manager for the Division of Human Resource Management.

For the upcoming **79th Legislative Session**, NDVS partnered with Nevada’s United Veterans Legislative Council (UVLC) to host the **Veterans Legislative Symposia** on March 26, 2016 in Reno and on April 16, 2016 in Las Vegas. Over a hundred veterans were present in Reno and over eighty in Las Vegas.



Three common themes ran through recommendations made at both symposia:

1. Take action to prevent veteran suicide.
2. Take care of family survivors (especially children) and caregivers of veterans.
3. Improve the state's ability to connect veterans to benefits, focusing on rural, student, Native American, women and elderly veterans.

While most items were region-specific, five **statewide** priorities were common to both symposia:

<b>PRIORITY 1</b>	Mandate suicide prevention/awareness training for those who most commonly might come in contact with at-risk veterans (e.g. medical professionals, first responders, and veteran service officers).
<b>PRIORITY 2</b>	Create a Veterans Service Organization Registry to help veterans connect to helpful veterans support organizations providing benefits and services.
<b>PRIORITY 3</b>	Extend the eligibility period for the Fry Scholarship to ensure all children of those killed in combat are able to use these benefits.
<b>PRIORITY 4</b>	Increase the number of VSOs in Rural Nevada.
<b>PRIORITY 5</b>	Increase presence and support of Nevada Veterans Courts.

## Moving Forward

2016 was a banner year for the Nevada Department of Veterans Services. We are very proud of the many new services we have developed while maintaining high standards for our existing programs and services. Much work remains and 2017 is shaping up to be even more dynamic than 2016. A few challenges are looming on the horizon, but inherent in nearly all these challenges are opportunities for improved support to veterans and their families.



While history tells us that after periods of conflict support for our military and veterans wanes, here in Nevada that support remains strong. With the national veteran population declining about 14% in the next decade, it is possible that federal funding for veterans programming could be reduced. This will present challenges for Nevada as our veteran population is projected to be relatively stable as a result of migratory movement of veterans to the South and West. To address future funding challenges, we will be making every effort to ensure that our investments in veteran education, employment, and wellness are those with the highest payoff in terms of positive veteran outcomes.

As we review all of our programs, we will also be transforming them to ensure we are “veteran-centric”



rather than “program-centric.” It has become increasingly clear over the past decade that a “one size fits all” approach to serving Nevada’s veterans is a poor way to do business. In the past three years, with support from the Governor and the Nevada State Legislature, NDVS reorganized and adapted itself to better respond to the needs of a diverse veterans and military population whose service spans from World War II to the current Global War on Terrorism.

In 2017, we will continue to expand and align our services to meet the needs and expectations of all those we serve. The young veteran exiting military service who needs a job and the older veteran living in a care facility who has not applied for benefits he/she is eligible for. We will serve the rural veteran who has difficulty finding local services and the woman veteran who does not fully understand her benefits. We will serve the Vietnam veteran who is coming to grips with the scars of wartime service and the LGBT veteran who is challenging his character of service discharge. There is not one veteran or veteran’s family member who is more important than another -- all are different.

Our main efforts in FY2015-16 were designed to ensure that we can find every veteran in Nevada, identify their needs, and ensure we help connect them with services to meet those needs. This is an immense task, but we are committed to accomplishing this mission. As stated in Governor’s Strategic Planning Framework, our goal of “Becoming the most veteran-friendly state in the nation” has five objectives:

- Ensure that all Nevada veterans, no matter where they live in the state, have knowledge of and access to benefits and opportunities for which they are eligible.
- Reduce veteran homelessness to functional zero by 2020.
- Ensure that every Nevada veteran who obtains a postsecondary credential, certificate, or degree is fully employed with a livable wage six months after graduation.
- Ensure that every generation of veterans is acknowledged in a ceremony, information campaign, or other form of recognition.
- Complete the Northern Nevada Veterans Home by 2018 and implement facility modernization initiatives at the Nevada State Veterans Home by 2019.

With adoption of a new veteran-centric focus and these five ambitious objectives, change is around the corner. However, the NDVS team has reinvented itself over the past few years and has proven that it has the agility, the imagination, and the resolve to make these goals a reality. With the Northern Nevada Veterans Home construction plans 100% complete, we continue to push to make this goal a reality!



*Annual Report authored by Cyndy Ortiz Gustafson and Paula Cassino  
with Strategic Progress, LLC. Creative by Emire Stitt, DP Video Productions.*

