

AND
WORLDWIDE
ZIP GRAPHIC SYSTEM



NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

**A SALUTE TO VETERAN AND
MILITARY FAMILIES**



Connect With Us



For information about veteran benefits, services, or claims assistance, for veterans and their family members, please contact our Veterans Advocacy and Support Team (VAST), which has Veterans Service Officers (VSO) throughout Nevada:

- Call the VSO direct line at **702-830-2000**
- Ask a VSO online form: <https://veterans.nv.gov/ask-a-vso>
- Visit the Benefits & Services section of the NDVS website: <https://veterans.nv.gov/benefits-and-services>

LAS VEGAS

(702) 224-6025 or 791-9000, Ext. 46025
FAX (702) 224-6927

6900 N. Pecos Rd., Rm. 1C237
North Las Vegas, NV 89086
(Located at the VA Hospital in North Las Vegas)

RENO

(775) 321-4880
FAX (775) 321-4884

5460 Reno Corporate Dr., Suite 131
Reno, NV 89511
(Located in the VA Regional Benefits Office)

CARSON CITY

(775) 300-6796
FAX (775) 321-4884

106 E. Adams Street, Suite 203
Carson City, NV 89706
(Located inside the Veterans Resource Center)

FALLON

(775) 428-1177
FAX (775) 423-9371

485 W. B Street, Suite 103
Fallon, NV 89406
(Located in the Churchill County Offices)

ELKO

(775) 777-1000
FAX (775) 777-1055

1500 College Parkway, McMullen Hall, Room #114
Elko, NV 89801
(Inside the Veteran Resource Center on the Great Basin College Campus)

PAHRUMP

(775) 751-6372
FAX (775) 751-6371

1981 E Calvada Blvd., #110
Pahrump, NV 89048
(Located in the Nye County Offices)

SOUTHERN NEVADA VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY (SNVMC)

1900 Veterans Memorial Drive
Boulder City, Nevada 89005

Phone: (702) 486-5920 **Office Hours:** Monday – Friday 8AM – 5PM

NORTHERN NEVADA VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY (NNVMC)

14 Veterans Way
Fernley, Nevada 89408

Phone: (775) 575-4441 **Office Hours:** Monday – Friday 8AM – 5PM

SOUTHERN NEVADA STATE VETERANS HOME (SNSVH)

100 Veterans Memorial Dr.
Boulder City, NV 89005

Phone: (702) 332-6784 **Fax:** (702) 332-6762

NORTHERN NEVADA STATE VETERANS HOME (NNSVH)

36 Battle Born Way
Sparks, NV 89431

Phone: (775) 827-2955 **Fax:** (775) 327-4892



Connect with NDVS on social media: <https://veterans.nv.gov/community/connect-with-ndvs-on-social-media>

Table of Contents



Top Cover Photo by Alex Ramirez, U.S. Navy Veteran;
Left Cover Photo and Inside Cover Photo by Brad Horn,
Nevada State Photographer

Message from the Director	5
Message from Nevada Veterans Services Commission	6
NDVS Overview	7
Who We Are	7
Department Organizational Chart	8
The Heroes We Serve	9
National Comparisons	9
State and Counties	10
Key Partnerships	11
NDVS Accomplishments	12, 13, 14
Honoring Nevada's Veterans Overview	15
Gold Star Families are Never Forgotten	15
Every Veteran — Every Generation	16
Buffalo Soldiers	16
Honoring Our Heroes and Their Families	16
Honoring Every Generation of Nevada Veterans	17, 18
Memorial Day 2020	17
Veterans Day 2020	17
Other Recognition	18
State Veterans Memorials	19
Veteran of the Month	20
Veteran Supporter of the Month	21
Caregivers and Survivors	22
Programs and Services Overview	23
State Veterans Cemeteries	24
COVID Impacts	24
Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery	25
Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery	26
Veterans Advocacy and Support Team	27
Incarcerated Veterans Support	27
VSO Claims Video Teleconferencing	27
VSO Training	27
Community Outreach	28
NDVS Website	28
Outreach Initiatives and Programs	29
Nevada Veterans Advocate Program	29
VA Benefits for Families	29
Patriot Employer Program	30
Welcome Home Campaign	30
VIS Scanning Project	30
Unique Veteran Populations Outreach	31
Veteran Justice Reintegration	31
Housing	31
LGBTQ Veterans	31
Women Veterans	32
Native American Outreach	33
Rural Veterans	33
Education	34
NV Transition Assistance Program	34
2020 NDVS Education Highlights	34
Employment	35
Suicide Prevention Program	36
Governor's and Mayor's Challenge Programs	36
Nevada's Challenge Teams	36
Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide	37
Governor's Community Expansion	37

Table of Contents



Free, Online Trainings for Everyone: safeTALK, A.S.I.S.T., Nevada Gatekeeper and PsychArmor's S.A.V.E.	37
Las Vegas Mayor's Challenge Partner List.	38
Truckee Meadow's Mayor's Challenge Partner List	38
Outreach Initiatives and Programs	39
Statewide Veterans Community Councils	39
Outreach Examples	40
Healthcare Services Overview	41
Veterans and Their Families	42
Family Connections Task Force	42
Heroes for Heroes	42
Send a Smile Campaign	42
Telehealth	43
Partition Visitation for Families	43
Caregiver Program	43
Homebound Outreach Program	43
Southern Nevada State Veterans Home	44
Who We Serve	45
Northern Nevada State Veterans Home	46
Who We Serve	47
Special Wellness Initiatives and Programs	48
Veterans Healthcare Champions Program	48
Exposure Risk Questionnaire	48
Veterans in Care Program	48
Bravo-Zulu Military Culture Training for Healthcare Providers	48
Support for Disabled Veterans	49
Adaptive Sports Programs	49
Administrative Support Services	50
2020 Financial Review Expenditures	50
2020 Financial Review Revenues	51
Grant Awards Helping Veterans	52
Adaptive Sports Program	52
Rural Transportation Grants	52
Grant Awards 2021 and Beyond	53
Southern Nevada State Veterans Home Renovation	53
Northern Nevada State Veterans Memorial Cemetery	53
Adult Day Health Care	53
IT Operations	54
Veterans Information System (VIS)	54
DD214 (Discharge Document) Scanning Project	54
GPS/GIS Mapping Project	54
Battle Born Fallen Hero Kiosk Project	54
Donations	55
COVID-19 Donations of PPE	55
Organization Donations	55
Veterans Care Package Caravan Donors	55
Veterans and the 81 st Session of the NV Legislature	56
2020 Veterans Legislative Symposium	56
2020 Veterans Legislative Symposium	57
NDVS "Mind Map" of Our Way Ahead	58
A Look Ahead	59

Message From The Director



KAT MILLER
DIRECTOR

It is often said that our veterans served—and their families sacrificed. We usually think of the word “sacrifice” in connection with the men and women who serve in the military. While it is absolutely true that our service members make significant sacrifices, the word “sacrifice” also applies to their families.

In a recent Pew Research Center study, 71 percent of civilians said they have little to no understanding of the military experience despite a strong appreciation for the military. I would argue that even fewer civilians understand the contributions of military and veteran families, much less appreciate their contributions.

You know who does understand and appreciate the sacrifice and service of our families? Those who have served in the uniform of our nation. These warriors absolutely understand their success is often directly connected to the support of their families. Some of their many significant, and often unseen, family sacrifices and contributions include:

- Many military spouses put their lives on hold until their loved one leaves military service and they can finally pursue their employment, educational, and personal goals.
- Many military children do not have the opportunity to develop strong friendships or fully participate in scholastic and youth athletic programs due to frequent moves.
- Many family members serve as caregivers for wounded warriors, a mentally, physically, and financially draining labor of love.
- When the service member deploys, the family is left to pick up the pieces and keep the household running as a single parent.
- Years after their military spouse's service, many family members serve as the cornerstone of support and recovery for those veterans suffering from mental health issues associated with combat service.
- And the list goes on . . .

NDVS has always supported military and veteran families, but this past year we decided to see what actions were needed to strengthen this support. To this end, I am proud to report that we improved communication with family members, published important literature for survivors and caregivers, changed the way we collect data to better understand the needs of our families, and focused on remembering the sacrifice of our Gold Star Families.

Frankly, we had hoped to accomplish more; with the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic, some of our initiatives were put on hold.

Because of the pandemic, changes occurred with blinding speed. New medical standards for our veterans homes, new telework arrangements for our headquarters staff, veterans services officers, and veterans programs staff, new public gathering standards affecting our cemeteries and outreach events, etc. Throughout the year, our team superbly supported and advocated for veterans and their families in a continually evolving landscape. That we were able to focus on families to the degree we did is a direct reflection on the dedication, flexibility, and incredible innovations of the men and women of our Department. In reading this report, I hope you gain a better understanding of our Department and of our continuing commitment to “Serve Nevada’s Heroes—and their families.”

Respectfully,
Kat Miller

Message From Nevada Veterans Services Commission



BILL BAUMANN

CHAIRMAN, VETERANS SERVICES COMMISSION

Our bond begins with our commitment. We have all served our nation in uniform. We have all taken the oath. "I do solemnly swear that I will support, protect and defend the constitution and government of the United States of America against all enemies, whether foreign or domestic, and I will bear true faith, allegiance and loyalty to the same." We all signed a blank check, committing to defending this nation at all costs; even if it cost us our lives. Some paid that ultimate price, others bear the scars of war. And many still serve today on the front lines on foreign shores.

I would like to take this opportunity to share some things about those I consider as my family!

My family consists of women and men from all walks of life wearing the uniforms of our nation's armed services: Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines and now the new Space Force. We are all proud, honored and privileged to serve this great nation.

We need to remember that many members of our military family not only made multiple sacrifices during their service but were also faced with difficult adjustments returning home. Unfortunately, those struggles have led some in our family to suicide, which has reached epidemic proportions in some areas of our great country. In addition, many other aging members of this great family now rely on caregivers for survival.

The Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) provides many programs to many veterans. I see the programs offered supporting caregiving and suicide prevention as among some of the most valuable.

The NDVS mission is to serve Nevada Veterans and their families by honoring their remarkable legacy and by connecting them to earned federal and state benefits and services. They provide quality skilled nursing care at our State Veterans Homes. They provide dignified burial support at our State Memorial Veterans Cemeteries. They manage effective programs specifically focused on at-risk veterans. They successfully integrate returning service members and their veterans into Nevada communities. They honor the service and sacrifice of all Nevadans and their families through ceremonies and information campaigns. And they assist and coordinate the efforts of service organizations insofar as they benefit Nevada's veterans, service members and their families.

As Chairman of the Nevada Veterans Services Commission (VSC), I am proud to serve the veterans of the State of Nevada, and to be working alongside NDVS.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about NDVS and what it has to offer Nevada's veterans and their families. I'm proud to support and advise an organization with such a dedicated staff, executing the mission every day and serving those who have served this country.

Respectfully,
Bill Baumann

Chairman, Veterans Services Commission

NDVS OVERVIEW

Who We Are

Our Vision

All Nevada Veterans and their families understand, and can connect to, benefits and services they have earned.

Our Mission

Serve Nevada Veterans by honoring their remarkable legacy and by connecting them to earned benefits and services. Through our seven major lines of effort we:

- Professionally assist Veterans and their families to obtain Federal and State Veterans benefits.
- Provide quality skilled nursing care at our State Veterans Homes.
- Provide dignified burial support at our State Veterans Memorial Cemeteries.
- Manage effective programs addressing the needs of at-risk Veterans.
- Successfully integrate returning Service Members and Veterans into Nevada communities.
- Honor the service and sacrifice of all Nevada's Veterans and their families through ceremonies and information campaigns.
- Assist, and coordinate the efforts of, service organizations and individuals insofar as their activities benefit Nevada Veterans, Service Members, and their families.

Who We Serve

Veterans, Active Service Members, National Guard and Reserve, their Families, and their Survivors



Our Motto

Serving Nevada's Heroes

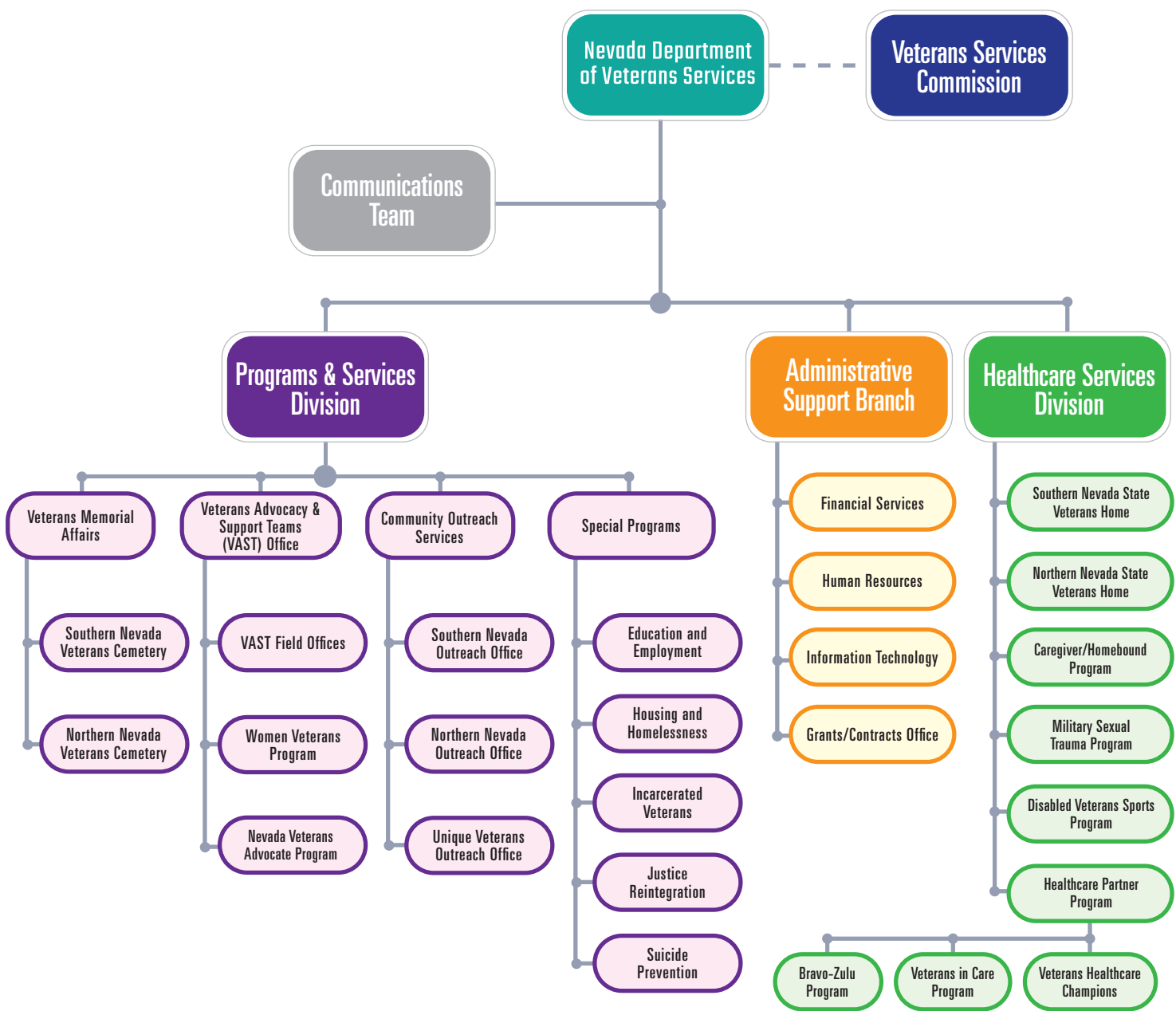


NDVS OVERVIEW

Organizational Chart

NEVADA

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES



NDVS OVERVIEW

The Heroes We Serve

How Nevada Compares Nationally

Number of Veterans^{1, 2}

NEVADA:
242,380

NATIONALLY:
19,119,131

Percentages:

NEVADA: 10.35%
NATION: 6.60%

Number of Women Veterans³

NEVADA:
27,526

NATIONALLY:
2,014,727

Percentages:

NEVADA: 11.36%
NATION: 10.54%

Number of Military Retirees²

NEVADA:
33,972

NATIONALLY:
2,156,647

Percentages:

NEVADA: 14.02%
NATION: 11.28%

Veterans Age 65 and Over³

NEVADA:
118,755

NATIONALLY:
9,180,714

Percentages:

NEVADA: 49.00%
NATION: 48.02%

1) Veteran population estimates, as of Sept. 30, 2019 from the VA Geographic Distribution of Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2019 (<https://www.va.gov/vetdata/Expenditures.asp>), What's New (scroll down) to Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX), the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, Department of Veterans Affairs (https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/GDX/GDX_FY19.xlsx).

2) Veteran population percentages and military retiree estimates from VA State/Territory Summaries (<https://www.va.gov/vetdata/stateSummaries.asp>), Nevada, the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, Department of Veterans Affairs (https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/State_Summaries_Nevada.pdf).

3) Veteran population estimates, as of Sept. 30, 2019 from the VA Population Tables (https://www.va.gov/vetdata/Veteran_Population.asp), The States and Age/Gender, National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, Department of Veterans Affairs (https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/Demographics/New_Vetpop_Model/6L_VetPop2018_State.xlsx).

(Department of Veterans Affairs "VetPop" data: This data was derived from the 2010 Census. Therefore, Nevada numbers were adjusted upward by 15% to reflect veteran population growth. Once the 2020 Census numbers are published this data will more accurately reflect the Nevada veteran population.)

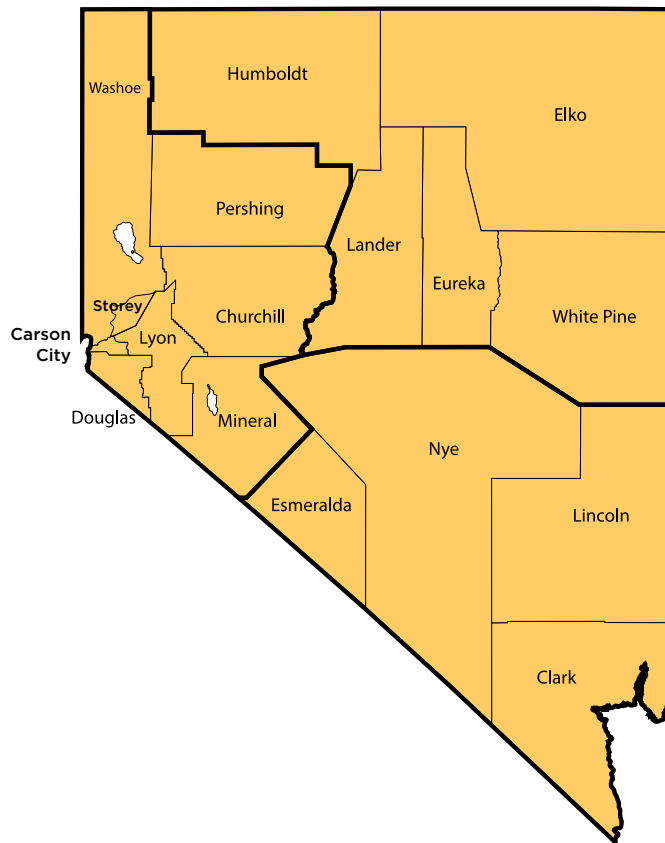


The Heroes We Serve

STATE AND COUNTIES

VETERANS BY COUNTY*

Clark	164,976
Washoe	38,769
Lyon	7,460
Nye	7,043
Carson City	5,584
Douglas	5,333
Churchill	4,158
Elko	3,675
Humboldt	1,413
White Pine	881
Mineral	657
Pershing	538
Storey	529
Lander	478
Lincoln	467
Eureka	317
Esmeralda	102



CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT*

District 1	44,888
District 2	67,055
District 3	63,080
District 4	67,357

STATEWIDE

- Veterans - 242,380
- Active Duty - 10,874
- Nevada National Guard - 4,387
- U.S. Armed Forces Reserves - 3,357
- Total Veteran and Military - 260,998
- Family Members of Above - 782,994

(Estimate based on three family members per veteran)

*Veteran population estimates, as of Sept. 30, 2019 from the VA Geographic Distribution of Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2019 (<https://www.va.gov/vetdata/Expenditures.asp>), What's New (scroll down) to Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX), the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, Department of Veterans Affairs (https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/GDX/GDX_FY19.xlsx).

This data was derived from the 2010 Census. Therefore, Nevada numbers were adjusted upward by 15% to reflect veteran population growth. Once the 2020 Census numbers are published this data will more accurately reflect the Nevada veteran population.

NDVS OVERVIEW

Key Partnerships

It takes collaboration and teamwork to support Nevada's veterans and their families. Nevada is fortunate to have many key stakeholders committed to this challenge.

One of the most valuable things NDVS offers to its partners is assistance in publicizing or spreading the word about the resources, programs and services available. This ensures greater access and understanding of the resources available to veterans and their families.

Our partners include federal and state agencies, private industries, nonprofit organizations, businesses and many more community partners, too numerous to list. The partnerships can be seen throughout this report.



Highlights from 2020

- Partnered with the Department of Defense Families Liaison to identify best practices to support military children.
- Partnered with numerous local and state agencies, and nonprofits to form the NDVS Family Connections Task Force.
- Partnered with local, state, federal, nonprofits to support the Governor's Challenge Team, plus Elko, Las Vegas, Truckee Meadows and Winnemucca Mayor's Challenge teams to Prevent Suicide Among Service members, Veterans and Their Families.
- Partnered with Nevada Veterans Coalition "Missing in Nevada" program which identifies unclaimed remains for proper military burial in both of our state-run veteran cemeteries.
- Partnered with assisted and skilled nursing facilities across Nevada to ensure our Veterans in Care program reached thousands of veterans living in these facilities.
- Partnered with federal, state, nonprofits and community groups to extend outreach to veterans with unique needs, including Native American, women, LGBTQ and incarcerated veterans.
- Partnered with the Nevada Geriatric Education Center to provide training opportunities to healthcare professionals to give providers a better understanding of military culture and its impact on the quality of care.
- Partnered with the cities of Las Vegas and Reno to provide grants for Adaptive Sports Programs that benefit disabled veterans.
- Partnered with Nevada's businesses and institutions of higher learning in support of veteran hiring and education through our Patriot Employer Program.
- Partnered with local, state, federal and nonprofits who are helping eliminate veteran homelessness.
- Partnered with Veteran Service Organizations and veteran supporters to ensure every veteran is honored and remembered.
- Partnered with 16 separate state agencies to improve service to military, veterans and their families.
- Partnered with Veterans Services Organizations and rural Nevada counties in funding grants for transportation to healthcare appointments and developing telehealth outreach for Nevada's veterans during the pandemic.



NDVS OVERVIEW

Accomplishments

The NDVS Team is proud of our efforts to improve our support to Nevada's veterans and their families—especially given the enormous challenges associated with operating for much of the past year during a global pandemic. Here are some of our noteworthy accomplishments:



- Published the first State of Nevada Veterans Caregivers & Survivors Guide. This guide provides critical information to families of veterans across the state.
- Hosted the Caregiving on the Homefront virtual conference in August 2020 with more than 90 attendees from across the state.
- Responded quickly and effectively in response to the global pandemic. Our veterans homes were the first skilled nursing facilities in Nevada to test all residents and staff for COVID-19.
- Implemented telehealth appointments and family connection video calls at both of our veterans homes.
- Worked with federal and state partners to create and support five Veterans and Veteran Family Suicide Prevention Challenge Teams. With the most challenge teams of any state, Nevada has implemented important programs that are making a difference in addressing the tragedy of suicide.
- Hosted three Military Sexual Trauma Virtual Workshops for veterans and their healthcare providers, educating hundreds of people across the state.
- Created the Family Connections Task Force to combat the isolation many older veterans may be experiencing during the coronavirus pandemic.
- Conducted Student Veterans Resource Center meetings with representatives from Nevada universities and colleges to share information, including G.I. Bill changes associated with the pandemic.
- Created, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the PsychArmor Institute, a video designed to reduce veteran suicide.
- Conducted a virtual 2020 Las Vegas and Reno Veterans Legislative Symposium to coordinate a Veterans Service Organization priority list in advance of the 81st Legislative Session.

Accomplishments



- Installed a new secondary water purification chlorine dioxide system at the Southern Nevada State Veterans Home (SNSVH) to ensure the best water quality possible.
- The SNSVH won the 2020 Eli Pick Facility Leadership Award for the fourth year in a row. This national recognition identifies top performing leadership of skilled nursing care facilities from across the country; only two of over 60 nursing homes in Nevada received the award.
- Entered into an agreement with Nellis Air Force Base allowing military medical residents to work at the SNSVH.
- With the help of volunteers, scanned over 25,000 of 80,000 archived military discharge documents into the Veterans Information System (VIS), helping us locate and support Nevada veterans and their families.
- Trained and supported 700 Nevada Veterans Advocates to help guide veterans and their families to earned benefits.
- Located and documented over 90 veteran and military memorials as part of the Nevada Veterans Memorial Project.
- Shared our nationally recognized Bravo-Zulu Dementia training program for caregivers of veterans with the Sanford Center for Aging who implemented the program through a statewide grant.
- Successfully passed Federal Certification for the Northern Nevada State Veterans Home and began accepting veterans and their spouses for residency.
- Created a new Justice Reintegration Program to ensure we are working with partners to focus on the needs of incarcerated veterans and those participating in Veterans Courts.
- Redesigned our NDVS Website to make it easier for users to locate information on needed benefits and services.
- Implemented a system to review Medicaid and Medicare errors, and underpayments resulting in \$3.4 million in reimbursements to NDVS.

NDVS OVERVIEW

Accomplishments

Special Recognition

Every day, our teams go above and beyond to support veterans and their families. Their work continues to be recognized at both the state and federal levels.

Veterans Advocacy and Support Team

The NDVS Veterans Advocacy and Support Team (VAST) was acknowledged by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for rapidly transitioning to a virtual veterans claims management system ensuring continuity of support for Nevada's veterans during the pandemic.

Several states adopted the NDVS "Ask a VSO" initiative based on the success of this online query system that helps connect veterans to earned benefits. The recognition of this program's success was attributable to the hard work of VAST.

Veterans Memorial Cemetery Operations

The Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemeteries received several certificates of recognition from members of Nevada's Congressional delegation acknowledging superior service and support by our cemetery teams.

The Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (NNVMC) met or exceeded standards in several areas during their Triennial U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs inspection. Areas of excellence included well-maintained cemetery equipment and machinery, sound safety protocols, and a well-run program to provide services for unaccompanied veterans. Additionally, inscription orders were rated 100 percent, ensuring that veterans are memorialized in a timely manner. Finally, staff was commended for carefully handling headstones and niche covers which helped to maintain low replacement costs. During the past year, the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (SNMVC) was not due for inspection.

Veterans Suicide Prevention Programs

Because of the success of Nevada's Las Vegas and Truckee Meadows Mayor's Challenges to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and their Families, Nevada was selected by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) for additional programs and funding for the Governor's Challenge Community Expansion Project, and suicide prevention initiatives in Elko, Pahrump and Winnemucca.

STATE VETERANS HOMES RECOGNITION

Southern Nevada State Veterans Home

The Southern Nevada State Veterans Home (SNSVH) continued its winning streak with the following awards and recognitions:

- Five-stars from the Centers of Medicaid and Medicare (CMS)
- "Best in Class" Pinnacle Customer Experience Awards
- Eli Pick Facility Leadership Award for top-performing skilled nursing facilities nationwide
- Ranked in the top 95th percentile of the Pinnacle Customer Experience Program

Northern Nevada State Veterans Home

The Northern Nevada State Veterans Home (NNSVH) is brand new, accepting their first resident in June 2019.

While they will not be eligible for awards until their third anniversary, the following data was collected from their customer satisfaction report, called Pinnacle, in which the NNSVH ranked 4.90 out of 5 for the last 12 months.

NNSVH ranked #1 in:

- Nursing Care
- Dining Service
- Quality of Food
- Cleanliness
- Laundry Service
- Safety and Security

NNSVH ranked in the top four or better for:

- Individual needs
- Activities
- Overall Satisfaction
- Recommend to others
- Communication
- Response to problems

HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Overview

Gold Star Families are Never Forgotten

In spite of the worldwide pandemic, NDVS along with veterans organizations across Nevada, came together to honor and remember the sacrifices of Nevada's Gold Star Families. These events included those listed below.

First Anniversary of Nevada's Gold Star Monument

On June 28, 2020, Gold Star Families from around Nevada gathered in Sparks for the first anniversary of the dedication of the Gold Star Families Memorial. It was a way for the community to rally around mothers, fathers, spouses, siblings and the children of those who gave their lives for our freedom.

NDVS was proud to help support this important event along with veteran dignitaries from each branch of the military. The monument serves as a testament to loved ones lost and to the ultimate sacrifice made by the family members left behind.

Gold Star Luminary Events

On Sept. 25, 2019 and Sept. 29, 2020, NDVS was honored to support the Nevada Gold Star Family Memorial Foundation by hosting the first and second Luminary Events at the Northern Nevada Gold Star Family Memorial on the campus of the Northern Nevada State Veterans Home (NNSVH).

These luminary events brought families together to remember their fallen loved ones and to support one another. During the ceremonies, attendees recognized the sacrifices of the fallen and their families, after which participants each lit a candle in remembrance.



HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Every Veteran—Every Generation

Buffalo Soldiers

African Americans have proudly served in every American war. In the late 1800s, African American soldiers were referred to as Buffalo Soldiers for their rugged grit, their reputation for bravery in battle, and the distinct coats they wore which were made of buffalo fur. These brave soldiers also played a significant role in the expansion of the west; escorting settlers, livestock, and railroad crews to the frontier.

In 2019, the Nevada State Legislature unanimously passed Senate Bill 336 (SB 336) proclaiming July 28th as Buffalo Soldiers Day. On July 28, 2020, NDVS celebrated the Second Annual Buffalo Soldiers Day with a ceremony in Las Vegas, where attendees wore face coverings and social distancing was required.

African American veterans in attendance were recognized and honored with a proclamation and special video message from Governor Sisolak, and a calendar commemorating their service called *A Salute to Nevada's African American Veterans*, Sept. 2020-Dec. 2021.

Several dignitaries were in attendance along with members of the Southern Nevada Buffalo Soldiers Horse Cavalry Association. The event was live streamed on the NDVS Facebook page, with more than 1,100 views. A special page on the NDVS website was created with links to event videos, photos, press releases, a PDF version of the calendar and media clips: <https://veterans.nv.gov/buffalo-soldiers-day-in-nevada>



Honoring Our Heroes and Their Families

Since its inception, the Nevada Department of Veteran Services (NDVS) has focused on honoring every veteran and generation in the state for their contributions to our freedom. Whether they served in times of conflict or times of peace, they are all a part of the contribution made to our nation's defense. Throughout the years Peacekeeping Operations dating back to 1864 have been recognized and celebrated annually by the NDVS.

In 2020, the *Veterans Voice* newsletter highlighted conflicts and operations in which Nevada veterans participated, including the 75th Anniversary of the end of WWII and the beginning of both the Korean and Gulf Wars. The *Veterans Voice* also covered important operations such as Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada, Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, as well as peacekeeping operations in Bosnia and Somalia.

While COVID-19 halted in-person ceremonies for safety reasons, NDVS continued to use other outlets such as our newsletter, website, press releases, virtual events, videos and social media to honor our heroes and tell their stories.

HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Honoring Every Generation of Nevada Veterans



Memorial Day 2020

Memorial Day ceremonies were cancelled in May due to COVID-19. NDVS held a virtual event honoring and recognizing veterans with two videos, one filmed in Southern Nevada and one filmed in Northern Nevada, with the following eras: Revolutionary War to World War I; World War II; the Korean War; the Vietnam War; the Cold War; the Gulf War; and the Global War on Terror. Families and relatives of veterans were also honored in the video with footage of Gold Star Mothers at the Gold Star Families Memorial Monument and the Nevada State Veterans Memorial Family Statue. In both versions of the video, Governor Sisolak placed a wreath at the Battle Born Veterans Memorial in Carson City, Nevada. The Memorial Day videos have a combined total of 1,690 views on the NDVS YouTube Channel at: <https://veterans.nv.gov/nevada-to-honor-military-in-virtual-memorial-day-ceremony>.

How We Recognized and Remembered our Heroes in 2020

Era by era, Veterans proudly served through time to keep America safe. NDVS remained dedicated to honoring Nevada's heroes, through in-person and virtual events, and through press releases, newsletters, and social media.



Veterans Day 2020

Veterans Day parades and other celebrations were cancelled in November due to the COVID-19. NDVS produced a video with Nevada veterans and community leaders highlighting what Veterans Day means to them. It also acknowledged the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII; the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of Korean War; the 67th anniversary of the alliance between U.S.A. and the Republic of Korea; and the 30th Anniversary of the outbreak of the first Gulf War. NDVS collaborated and shared footage with the City of Reno and the VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System, as they also released a Veterans Day video. Within the first week, the 45-minute NDVS Veterans Day Ceremony video had more than 650 views.

Honoring Every Generation of Nevada Veterans

Other Recognition



AMERICAN CIVIL WAR (1861-1865)

The August 2020 issue of the *Veterans Voice* highlighted the accomplishments of Harriet Tubman, a scout, spy, guerrilla soldier, and nurse for the Union Army during the Civil War.

WORLD WAR I (1914-1918)

We proudly recognized and remembered our WWI veterans this year in our Memorial Day video.

WORLD WAR II (1939-1945)

Veterans of WWII were honored in a number of ways in 2020. We both organized, and, assisted the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs (VA) with birthday celebrations for WWII vets across the State of Nevada. Both the NDVS Memorial Day and Veterans Day videos featured WWII veterans. In the February *Veterans Voice*, the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Iwo Jima was remembered. And, along with Governor Steve Sisolak, the NDVS Director participated in a ceremony during which WWII veterans received the highest decoration bestowed in France, the French Legion of Honor.

COLD WAR (1947-1989)

Nevada Cold War veterans were profiled in our NDVS newsletter, in our Memorial and Veterans Day videos, and on social media.

KOREAN WAR (1950-1953)

NDVS continued to distribute the book *Korea Reborn: A Grateful Nation Honors War Veterans and The Remembered War* and a DVD documentary free-of-charge from the South Korean government to Korean War Veterans as a thank you for their service. Additionally, the Korean Consul General Honorable Kyung Jae Park participated in our Veterans Day video thanking Korean War Veterans for their service and sacrifice.

VIETNAM WAR (1965-1973)

We highlighted the Tet Offensive in the February *Veterans Voice* newsletter and posted important dates on social media. We also featured Vietnam veterans in both the NDVS Memorial Day videos for northern and southern Nevada, and in the Veterans Day Ceremony video.

GULF WAR (1990-1991)

This year we were able to provide our Gulf War veterans with free book and DVD sets, titled *The Liberation of Kuwait*, paid for by the government of Kuwait as a thank you to America's military men and women for their protection and bravery. The history of the Gulf War was featured in the January *Veterans Voice* newsletter, as well as important dates posted on social media.

GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM (2001-present)

Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) veterans were included in our Memorial and Veterans Day videos and important GWOT dates were posted on social media. We also featured GWOT veterans in both the NDVS Memorial Day videos for northern and southern Nevada.

WOMEN VETERANS (ALL ERAS)

NDVS held a Women Veterans Celebration for women veterans across the state, including a formal presentation to dozens of women veterans during the 2020 Making Connections Women Veterans Conference.

HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

State Veterans Memorials

Nevada has four State Veterans Memorials dedicated to remembering and honoring those who have served. There are many more Veterans Memorials throughout the state including the State Veterans Memorial Cemeteries in Fernley and Boulder City.

Carson City

Battle Born Memorial, Nevada State Capitol Grounds, Carson City

Dedicated in 2018 on the grounds of the Capitol Complex in Carson City, this memorial serves as a place of reflection and honor to Nevadans killed in combat. There are 895 names of Nevadans on the memorial, dating back to the Civil War.

Carson City

Nevada Veterans Memorial Wall, Nevada State Capitol Grounds, Carson City

The Nevada Veterans Memorial Wall is carved in cream-colored stone and is dedicated to Nevada Veterans of all eras. It is situated in a plaza located directly behind the State Capitol Building.

Las Vegas

Nevada State Veterans Memorial, Grant Sawyer Grounds, Las Vegas

The Nevada State Veterans Memorial in Las Vegas is located on the grounds of the Grant Sawyer State Building in Las Vegas. It features 18 larger-than-life statues depicting soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines and it commemorates veterans from every generation and every conflict. In partnership with the Department of Administration, an online Memorial Buy-A-Brick program was created to support future maintenance.

Reno Stead Airport

Mustang 22 Memorial, Reno Stead Airport, Stead

The Mustang 22 Memorial is located at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Reno and is dedicated to Mustang 22, a CH-47 Chinook Helicopter that was shot down in Afghanistan on September 25, 2005.

NDVS supports the maintenance of these memorials. There are many other veterans memorials throughout Nevada that were created by local governments and private organizations, attesting to the respect and appreciation the people of Nevada have for our veterans.

Memorial Project Updates

1

In 2019, NDVS launched the Nevada Veteran Memorial Location Project to identify and catalog Nevada's military, veteran, and war memorials placed across the state for the purpose of honoring U.S. military services. The project includes using Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates to pinpoint the location of these memorials. Additional information is being collected for each memorial, such as a brief description, the history, the cost, the organization that funded the memorial, and maintenance details.

2

Currently, the memorials are being researched and catalogued in a database that will eventually be linked to the NDVS website for easy searches and access from mobile phones and tablets. This will give families easy access to information about their loved ones. So far, more than 90 memorials have been added to the database with an estimated 125 more to go.

3

Once complete, the Memorial Project will help determine which memorial sites need maintenance or repair. This inventory will enable NDVS and its partners to assist in repairing or maintaining these sites, meant to forever remember and honor those who have served in the U.S. military.

HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Veteran of the Month Program



2020

Veteran of the Month Recipients



The Veteran of the Month Award (VOM) is given to veterans across Nevada who have gone above and beyond the call of duty, specifically with respect to volunteer work in support of veterans and military personnel. If you would like to nominate a veteran for the VOM award, please visit <https://veterans.nv.gov/benefits-and-services/veteran-of-the-month-program>.

In January 2020, Governor Steve Sisolak presented Andy LePeilbet U.S. Army Veteran (December 2019 Veteran of the Month) with a second Silver Star in a special ceremony. LePeilbet was awarded the Silver Star decades ago, but the award was classified and never officially presented to him until Governor Sisolak took action to correct this oversight.

JANUARY:

Dixie Thompson - U.S. Army Veteran

FEBRUARY:

Richard Dickerson - U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force Veteran

MARCH:

Marion (Monk) Mann - U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

APRIL:

David Sousa - U.S. Army Veteran

MAY:

Carlton R. Fogg Jr. - U.S. Air Force Veteran

JUNE:

Morton Friedlander - U.S. Air Force Veteran

JULY:

William "Danny" McGinley - U.S. Air Force Veteran

AUGUST:

Danny Alexander - U.S. Navy Veteran

SEPTEMBER:

John Warden - U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

OCTOBER:

Norm Allen - U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

NOVEMBER:

Donna Lee - U.S. Navy Veteran

DECEMBER:

Robert Gibbs - U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Veteran Supporter of the Month Program

2020 Veteran Supporters of the Month

This monthly award recognizes groups, organizations, and non-military individuals who support and serve our veterans, active military members, and their families throughout the year. The Nevada Veterans Services Commission (VSC) considers and reviews the nominations and makes recommendations to the Governor for selection. Those named are honored in our newsletter and through social media. For VSM nominations, visit <https://veterans.nv.gov/benefits-and-services/veteran-supporter-of-the-month/>.

2020

Veteran Supporter of the Month Recipients

Robert “Bob” Reed works with the French government securing Legion of Honor awards for American Veterans of WWII.

**University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Military Service Center** assists veterans in finding employment and helping transition into the University.

Alison Pratte supports Nevada’s veterans statewide with psychological counseling with a focus on suicide prevention.

Sharon Oren is a decorated veteran of the Israeli Military and a supporter of American Veterans.

Richard S. Kiern is a historian and fundraiser helping veterans.

The Kline Veterans Fund provides emergency housing and other support to at-risk and indigent veterans and their families in Southern Nevada.

**The Associated General Contractors,
Nevada Chapter** renovated Northern Nevada’s Grand Army of the Republic Cemetery.

The Wild Whimsical Women (WWW) hosted Veteran recognition events, collected donations and provided assistance to veterans.

Wendy Simons supported the establishment of the Northern Nevada State Veterans Home.

Forgotten Not Gone is a veteran peer support program whose mission is ending the tragedy of veteran suicide.

Las Vegas Rotary Club supports and honors enlisted service members from Nellis and Creech Air Force Bases.



**To nominate a Veteran of the Month
or Veteran Supporter of the Month,
visit www.veterans.nv.gov**

HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Caregivers and Survivors

An integral part of our 2020 goal of supporting veterans and their families was supporting caregivers and survivors. NDVS published the Nevada Veterans Caregivers and Survivors Guide as a printed brochure, along with corresponding webpages available with resource links on the NDVS website. You can find them at:

Caregivers Guide:

<https://veterans.nv.gov/benefits-and-services/caregivers-guide>

Survivors Guide:

<https://veterans.nv.gov/benefits-and-services/survivor-guide>



Helping Caregivers Help our Vets

In August, NDVS supported caregivers with a virtual conference called “Caregiving on the Homefront.” Ninety people attended the three-hour, free virtual conference. Featured speakers covered topics from taking care of a veteran spouse or parent with dementia, to challenges associated with caring for others during the pandemic.

Author Rosalys Peel presented her story about caring for a spouse with Alzheimer’s and NDVS presented participants with a free copy of her book *Mike and Me*. There was also a presentation by an AARP caregiving expert who took care of her veteran grandfather and father. VA representatives from both Las Vegas and Reno spoke about benefits available through their offices, and the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services Aging and Disability Services Division gave a presentation about navigating state benefits and services.

All the resources shared during the presentations, including a recording of the conference and materials used by the presenters, are posted on the NDVS website at: <https://veterans.nv.gov/virtual-conference-caregiving-on-the-homefront/>

These resources contain important instructions for accessing all kinds of information to support those taking care of a loved one while also taking care of themselves.

Serving Survivors

Losing someone you love is one of the most stressful and painful events you can experience, and survivors find themselves navigating grief while simultaneously trying to handle the details associated with their veteran’s death. During the past year, as they have done for decades, NDVS Veteran Service Officers have helped survivors answer questions regarding needed benefits, including burial benefits, financial compensation, healthcare, and emotional support.

As a result of the pandemic, Veteran Service Officers worked from their homes, conducting video teleconferences to help veterans and their families through tough times.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Overview



FRED WAGAR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

The Deputy Director of Operations manages the NDVS Programs and Services Division, including the Veterans Advocacy and Support Team (VAST); two state veterans cemeteries; and an Outreach team that helps connect veterans and their family members to earned benefits and services.

The VAST team is made up of Veteran Service Officers (VSOs) who assist active-duty service members separating from service, veterans, and their families in many ways. VSOs answer questions, advise and educate veterans and their families on benefits available from federal, state, county, and local resources. They also assist in submitting claims for VA disability benefits and navigate the system at no cost to the veteran or their families. VSOs also offer family members assistance with death benefits after the passing of a veteran. We are proud of what we do and of how many lives we are able to impact in a year.

We have two Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemeteries, one in Boulder City and the other in Fernley. Our staff offers dignified services in these places of solitude and beauty to eligible veterans, spouses, dependents and Gold Star parents who choose our cemeteries as their final resting place.

Members of our outreach team are also members of the veteran community themselves. They reach out to veterans, military personnel and family members to ensure all are aware of benefits earned through military service.

Supporting Families

NDVS offers a number of programs to support veterans and their families.

Suicide Prevention Mayor's Challenges now reach across Nevada and include Las Vegas, Truckee Meadows (Reno/Sparks), Elko and Winnemucca. Additionally, Governor Sisolak recognized the importance of focusing on the state as a whole and was responsible for creating the Nevada Governor's Challenge suicide prevention team.

Veteran Service Officers (VSOs) support veterans and their families in many ways. VSOs helping veterans file claims has resulted in retroactive payments to a number of our veterans this year by linking their health problems to their exposure to Agent Orange. Several Vietnam Veterans were awarded as much as \$210,000 each through Blue Navy retro payments. And another veteran was awarded \$90,000 that allowed him to purchase a house, and to receive ongoing healthcare for his diabetes.

NDVS teams managing the two Veteran Memorial Cemeteries support families of veterans each day to ensure a final resting place that honors each veteran's selfless service to our nation.

The NDVS Veterans Service Officer is helping me navigate through the Survivors Pension application process, which is very confusing and I had become very frustrated. I am so grateful for this assistance!

- Spouse of a Nevada Veteran

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

State Veterans Cemeteries



Volunteers - Thank You!

Thank you to all the volunteers who provide services to our cemeteries! Veteran Service Organizations arrange events and provide honors during interment services throughout the year. Even with COVID-19 restrictions in place, volunteers continued to safely support our cemeteries and the families of the veterans at rest in our cemeteries. Veterans Services Organizations and individuals donated their time to help keep the cemetery grounds looking beautiful, and many donated funds and equipment this year to provide cemetery staff with additional resources and tools to support their hard work. For these services and more, we thank you!

ONLINE CEMETERY PRE-REGISTRATION FOR VETERANS AND FAMILY MEMBERS

The services offered at both the Northern and Southern Veterans Memorial Cemeteries are for eligible veterans, their spouses, dependents and Gold Star Parents. Veterans and eligible family members can pre-register through the NDVS Online Cemetery Registration Form or in person at the cemetery. This form allows veterans and their family members to determine their eligibility. There are no fees for pre-registration. Required for pre-registration is a copy of the veteran's discharge document, and to pre-register for a spouse a copy of the marriage certificate. To register, go to: <https://veterans.nv.gov/online-cemetery-registration-form>

Helping Families Locate Their Loved Ones

NDVS continues to work on a project that will enable families and others to find the location of anyone interred at one of our Veteran Memorial Cemeteries through a mobile phone or computer. The GPS Interment Mapping Locator Project will be an interactive program. Using GPS technology, families will be able to locate their veteran or family member or read about their loved one's accomplishments. They will also be able to add a profile of that loved one where it will live on for generations to come. This program will be especially significant in connecting families and honoring veterans into the future for all to see.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

COVID Impacts

June, July and August setting monthly records on the number of services and interments of ashes to ensure all were appropriately honored.

Ceremonies traditionally held at our cemeteries designed to honor our veterans and their families were also impacted by the pandemic. Unserviceable Flag Retirement Ceremonies were cancelled at both cemeteries, as were public Memorial Day Ceremonies. To ensure that Nevada's fallen were honored, small ceremonies were held and videotaped at both cemeteries, and distributed throughout the state. In addition, two Memorial Day videos, one featuring Southern Nevada Veterans and one featuring Northern Nevada veterans, were released by NDVS to observe the sacrifices of the men and women who have served our country. To see these videos, go to: <https://veterans.nv.gov/nevada-to-honor-military-in-virtual-memorial-day-ceremony>.

Scatter Gardens

In an effort to serve our veteran families who choose cremation, we are working on Scatter Garden plans for both Veterans Memorial Cemeteries. Specific areas will be set aside to spread cremains in a dignified and honorable way.



MAKE A DONATION

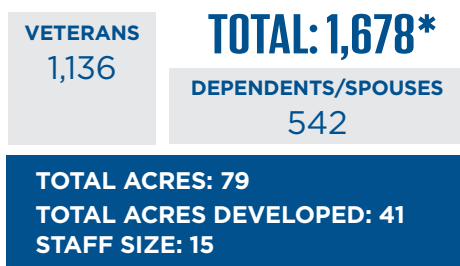
Visit <https://veterans.nv.gov/donate>
Select from donation options. Thank you!

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

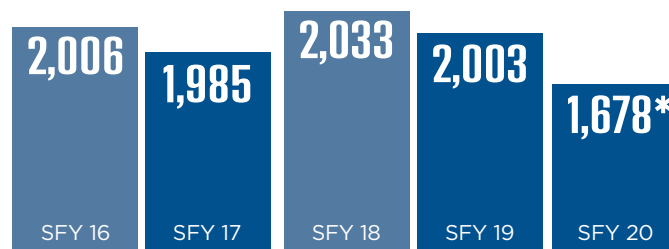
Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery



SNVMC INTERMENT SERVICES SFY20



SNVMC INTERMENT SERVICES



*The SFY 2020 reduction in interments resulted from the temporary hold of cremains and casket burials from March 19, 2020 to June 23, 2020 as a result of the pandemic. We anticipate that interments will return to historical patterns in SFY 2021.

Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery

The Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (SNVMC) remains the second busiest state veterans cemetery in the nation with 1,678 interments in SFY 2020. Since opening in 1990, SNVMC has performed 45,370 interments of eligible veterans and family members.

Burial is a benefit that veterans earn through military service. Eligible veterans are interred at no charge. This includes the cemetery plot, opening and closing of the grave, casket liner, grave markers, and perpetual care.

While many in-person ceremonies were cancelled due to the pandemic, on Memorial Day Governor Steve Sisolak and Boulder City Mayor Kieran McManus held a small and private wreath laying ceremony at the SNVMC. During the ceremony, the Boulder City Pilots Group conducted an aerial flyover honoring the veterans and their families interred at the cemetery.

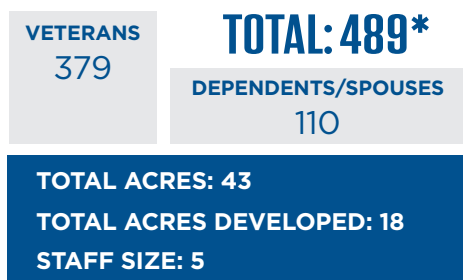
While services were limited for a few months this spring and summer, the SNVMC is back on schedule with interments of both caskets and cremated remains.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

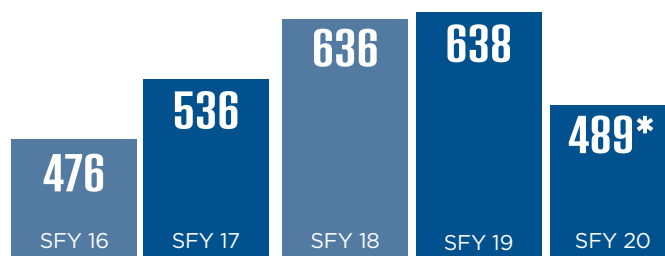
Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery



NNVMC INTERMENT SERVICES SFY20



NNVMC INTERMENT SERVICES



*The SFY 2020 reduction in interments resulted from the temporary hold of cremains and casket burials from March 19, 2020 to June 23, 2020 as a result of the pandemic. We anticipate that interments will return to historical patterns in SFY 2021.

Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery

Veterans and their families are always welcome at the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (NNVMC) located in Fernley, about 40 miles east from downtown Reno. This 18-acre cemetery is a place of peace, solitude and comfort for families to gather and honor those they have lost. While COVID-19 forced changes to the timing of some services and interments this year, we have been able to attend to all who needed our services.

This year alone 489 families were assisted with laying their loved ones to rest. Since its opening, the NNVMC has interred a total of 11,304 veterans and spouses. The services offered for eligible veterans, spouses, dependents and Gold Star Parents are earned through military service. There is no cost for veterans. The cost for eligible dependents and Gold Star parents is \$450.

On Memorial Day 2020, the Nevada Veterans Coalition organized a small, private wreath-laying ceremony.

A War Hero Brought Home

Second Lt. Lowell Twedt was only 27-years-old when he was shot down over Bolzano, Italy during a bombing mission in 1944. After 75 years, in December 2019, his remains were discovered, recovered and reunited with his family in northern Nevada. In August 2020, he was honored for his service with a Nevada State Proclamation, and a Military Honors Funeral Service complete with a flyover salute by the 71st Fighter Squadron, as he was finally laid to rest at the NNVMC. Second Lt. Twedt was one of 16 million Americans who served in WWII and 400,000 who died.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Veterans Advocacy and Support Team

VAST Programs and Services Data SFY July 2019-June 2020

The NDVS Veterans Advocacy and Support Team (VAST) typically receives 75 to 80 “Ask a VSO” (Veterans Service Officer) online inquiries a quarter. However, during the first quarter of SFY20 this number tripled to 248! COVID-19 caused us to support customers virtually rather than in person. As both veterans and VSOs adjusted to using new technology, the number of claims increased as did the amount of benefits awarded, with a 4.6% increase from last year. In addition, NDVS invested in software to allow for larger file sharing at a reduced cost.

VA Monetary Awards: \$205,210,682

Records or Forms Submitted: 13,463

Claims Filed: 2,918

New Claims: 2,455

Forms Filed Electronically: 8,768

Phone Calls: 6,848

Office Visits: 7,292

Email Inquiries: 3,048

Nevada Veterans Advocates Certified:
701 as of Dec. 31, 2020

Incarcerated Veterans Support

NDVS works with the Nevada Department of Corrections (DOC), the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and Nevada Veterans Specialty Courts to assist veterans in the correctional system preparing them for reintegration into Nevada's communities upon their release.

VETERAN INMATE POPULATION 2020 - 806

Air Force - 103

Coast Guard - 9

Navy - 170

Army - 365

Marine Corps - 125

National Guard - 34

Nevada's veteran inmate population decreased by 58 this year from last year.



VSO Claims Video Teleconferencing

Teleconferencing has opened up a new world for reaching veterans and is increasing the ability of NDVS to reach rural and incarcerated veterans across the state. We have been able to reduce the time and expense associated with travel, while keeping everyone safe during the pandemic. And we have been able to help our veterans access earned benefits to enhance their lives.



VSO Training

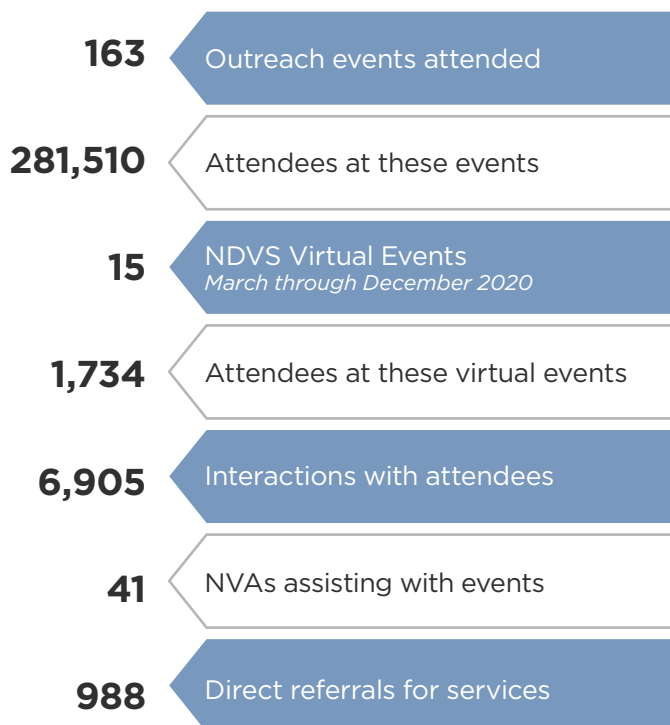
The mission of the Veterans Advocacy and Support Team (VAST) is to assist veterans, service members and their families obtain needed information about, and access to, their earned benefits and services. From answering questions and filing claims, to securing information and services, NDVS Veteran Service Officers (VSOs) guide veterans through what can otherwise prove to be a confusing process. VSOs go through a state-developed curriculum augmented by training provided by the National Veterans Legal Services Program.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Community Outreach

NDVS has outreach staff in Reno and Las Vegas who work together to ensure that every Nevada veteran and family member, no matter where they live, has information and access to benefits and services to enrich their lives.

Veterans who live in rural areas do not always have immediate access to benefits and services they have earned, and some are unaware of programs that can enrich their lives. Members of the NDVS Outreach Team make it their mission to attend gatherings, meetings and community events to reach every veteran possible in Nevada. During COVID-19 restrictions, the Outreach Team organized virtual events, while still attending what in-person events they could, while wearing face coverings and social distancing, to make an important impact across Nevada. The NDVS Outreach Team made over 1,000 welfare calls to Nevada veteran organizations and assisted with the development of key partnerships with the Raiders Foundation, Golden Knights and CenturyLink Nevada Veterans Employee Resource Group.



NDVS Website

The NDVS website went through several updates this year in order to make the site more user-friendly for veterans, their families, and their supporters.

The home page is now updated more frequently with NDVS programs and virtual events. The Benefits and Services page was redesigned with icons for easy navigation. Some of the topics included on this page are: education, employment, finances, housing, and health and wellness.

In addition, both a Caregivers Guide and a Survivors Guide were added to the website to assist veterans and their families searching for resources and information. A COVID-19 Resource page was created along with new Suicide Prevention pages, links to NDVS social media and an expanded archive of the *Veterans Voice* newsletter. Special event pages highlighted Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Buffalo Soldiers Day, the Caregiving on the Homefront conference, the Military Sexual Trauma (MST) training series, and other virtual events.

Please sign-up for the NDVS free, monthly newsletter, *Veterans Voice* (<https://veterans.nv.gov/newsroom/ndvs-enewsletter/>) and connect with NDVS on social media (<https://veterans.nv.gov/community/connect-with-ndvs-on-social-media>).

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Outreach Initiatives and Programs



Nevada Veterans Advocate Program

Nevada Veterans Advocates (NVAs) are volunteers who are educated and certified through the NVA Program, which has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs as a national best practice that effectively connects veterans and their families to earned benefits and services. Some NVA volunteers also assist in outreach at community and other events across Nevada. During the past year, the NVA program has reached more than 700 NVAs total.

The NVA course provides training in state and federal VA benefits and services available to Nevada's active-duty military, veterans and their families. NVAs help support the work of Nevada's VSOs, who are challenged to support the many thousands of veterans who call Nevada home.

Nevada Veterans Advocates are volunteers who serve as a lifeline connecting veterans and family members with benefits and services they have earned.



**Take a Seat!
Become an NVA!**

Start the journey here:

<https://veterans.nv.gov/community/veterans-advocacy>



The NDVS Veterans Service Officer was very thorough in reviewing my records. He found several medical entries that I had forgotten about, which supported my disability claim. Extremely helpful!

– Nevada Veteran

VA Benefits for Families

NDVS is proud of our work connecting veterans and their families to the benefits they have earned through their service. While the focus of benefits is often on the veteran, many benefits are also available for their families, such as Aid and Attendance, Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Survivor's Pension and burial benefits. The VA Caregiver Program is another example of benefits and compensation for family members of veterans. For instance, caregivers are offered two programs. The General Caregiver Support Services Program provides referrals to support services, support groups, and other resources, while the Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers Program provides stipends, training, respite care, and more.

VSOs help with many Nevada state benefits including Home is Possible, which is a program to provide more buying power and the opportunity for homeownership for veterans who have been honorably discharged and their surviving spouses.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Outreach Initiatives and Programs



The Patriot Employer Program (PeP) is designed to protect and promote veteran employment by providing Nevada businesses with information and resources on hiring veterans. The PeP program is a free, online training program that can be accessed from the NDVS website. PeP training includes:

- The benefits of hiring a veteran
- How to find and recruit qualified veterans
- How to help veterans succeed in the workplace
- Federal and state financial incentives for hiring veterans

PEP COMPANIES - 34 NEW PARTICIPANTS ENROLLED IN 2020

- 22 Warriors Foundation
- A2zdeals, Inc.
- AH4R (American Homes 4 Rent)
- Armed Forces Chamber
- Armored Empire Security
- At Peace Homecare
- AT&T
- Battlespace Flight Services, LLC
- Boomtown Casino, Reno
- Capital West Construction
- Carson Valley Medical Center
- Cosmopolitan

- Criterion Systems
- Draken International
- Dyno Nobel
- FedEx
- Henderson Aikido
- Legacy Home Care
- Lisa Bond Real Estate
- MGM Resorts
- Nevada Energy
- NV Dept. Business and Industry, Insurance Div.
- NV Dept. of Corrections
- NV Dept. of Public Safety

- Panasonic
- Perception Industries
- Premiere Audio/Video Integration
- Proto Fab Inc.
- Sherwin-Williams
- Smoke on Water BBQ
- Southern Nevada Executive Search, LLC
- Stark Homes
- UPS
- Valkyre Powder Coating
- Wynn Las Vegas

For a full list of PeP companies, please visit: <https://veterans.nv.gov/patriot-employers>



Welcome Home Campaign

Few things are more exciting to a family than welcoming home their veteran. And we feel the same way about every veteran who returns to Nevada or chooses Nevada as their home once they are discharged from service.

Veterans who give a Nevada address to the Department of Defense when discharged are sent a Welcome Home letter from NDVS explaining our services, state benefits, and other helpful information. In 2020, 2,159 letters were mailed.



VIS Scanning Project

To help locate veterans and connect them to earned benefits and services, NDVS staff and volunteers are in the process of scanning more than 80,000 military discharge documents, known as DD214s, turning these paper copies into an electronic archive. Once the project is complete, we will be able to better advise veterans and families about new or changed benefits.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Unique Veteran Populations Outreach

Veteran Justice Reintegration

2020 marked the birth of the NDVS Veteran Justice Reintegration Program. The goal of this new program is to help veterans involved in the criminal justice system gain access to services, programs and resources that will support their successful return to society as productive citizens with promising futures. NDVS works with a collaborative network of government agencies, non-profit organizations, and concerned community stakeholders who provide wrap-around services to veterans in this special population. Those services include housing, employment, healthcare, counseling, mentoring, VA benefit claims and education. Important partners include the VA, the Department of Corrections, the Office of the Attorney General, and State and Federal Court justices and court representatives.

Late in 2020 the Veteran Justice Reintegration Program collaborated with the Nevada Department of Corrections (NDOC) Veterans Services Coordinator to create a new “Veterans Reintegration Checklist.” This checklist begins the process of matching incarcerated veterans with benefits, services, and resources before their release. As a part of the Veteran Justice Reintegration Program, NDVS has applied for a federal training program offering training sessions about how collaborative approaches improve criminal justice outcomes.

Housing

In the year that brought us the COVID pandemic, the NDVS Veteran Housing Program was perhaps more crucial than ever. There is perhaps no human need more closely associated with family than the idea of a safe, permanent home. Scores of service members, veterans, and their families found themselves unable to pay their rent. The NDVS Veteran Housing Program Manager collaborated with the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health and the Office of Suicide Prevention to have suicide risk screenings incorporated into the COVID-19 landlord/tenant mediation court program, as well as suicide awareness training for program mediators.

The NDVS Housing Program Manager collaborated with the Nevada Attorney General’s Office of Military Legal Assistance (OMLA) as well as pro bono providers of legal services to ensure that veterans have access to the most accurate and up-to-date information possible to help them successfully navigate this temporary housing crisis.



LGBTQ Veterans

Since 2011, “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” and preceding policies regarding sexual orientation of members of the U.S. Armed Forces have been repealed. Today, any veteran with a less-than-honorable discharge based on sexual orientation may request a discharge upgrade, provided there are no other aggravating factors including misconduct.

In addition, eligible veterans may request a characterization upgrade, change of narrative in reason for discharge, change of separation and reentry/reenlistment code to reflect an honorable discharge. Discharge upgrades can connect previously

ineligible veterans to important benefits, such as the GI Bill, the VA Home Loan Program, VA medical care and burial benefits. NDVS outreach to LGBTQ veterans helps build awareness of the possibility of discharge upgrades and support filing for an upgrade.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Unique Veteran Populations Outreach



Women Veterans

Since the early days of our nation, women have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. Today, women are eligible to compete for assignments in all military occupational specialties and positions. While significant progress has been made in meeting the unique needs of women serving in the military, as well as those transitioning into civilian life, service gaps remain. NDVS, with advice from the Nevada Women Veterans Advisory Committee, identifies and seeks solutions for these gaps.

In addition, 2,159 separating military personnel indicated they were moving to Nevada in 2020. Of those, 23% or 494 individuals were women. In response NDVS created a special letter to send to women who plan to make Nevada their home upon discharge, directing them to services and providing information about Nevada's Women Veterans organizations.

To further connect with the community, on February 29, 2020 NDVS hosted a Women's Veterans Conference in Las Vegas attended by 140 attendees and dignitaries, including Secretary of State Barbara Cegavske. The event included video welcomes by U.S. Representative Susie Lee and U.S. Senator Catherine Cortez Masto. Thirty-six exhibitors showcased services and resources for women veterans. As a result of tremendously positive feedback, NDVS is planning to make the Women Veterans Conference an annual event.

Accomplishments - Meetings, Events and Partnerships

- Planned the NDVS February 2020 Women Veterans Conference.
- Facilitated virtual board meetings for the David J. Drakulich Foundation.
- Attended CAMP-RNO Veteran Court Graduation.
- Supported the VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System Drive-thru Baby Shower.
- Partnered with the Perry Foundation and VHA to host a Virtual Military Sexual Trauma (MST) Educational Series for survivors and healthcare providers.
- Collaborated with the VA Center for Women Veterans and the National Association of State Women Veterans Coordinators to host a Virtual Roundtable for Women Veterans in Nevada in December 2020.
- Attended VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System Women Veterans Health Committee Meetings.
- Assisted the Reno Lady Vets, a local women veterans organization, conduct meetings online by offering use of our virtual online platform and providing technical hosting assistance in May, July, September and November. With our technical support, The Lady Vets were able to expand participation in their meetings and involve more rural women veterans.

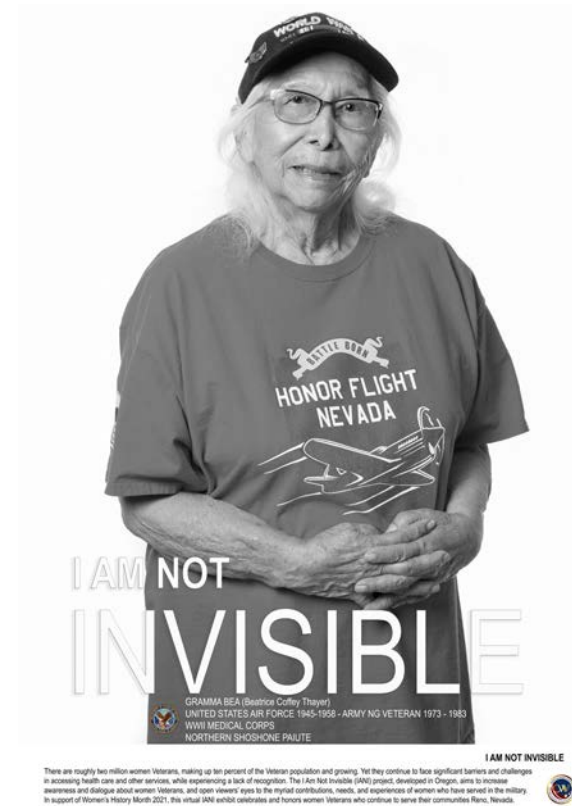
Outreach

- Revised the Women Veterans Brochure to include updated and new information regarding women veterans benefits and support.
- Updated the Women Veterans section of the NDVS website.
- Regularly posted relevant information for women veterans on the NDVS social media pages.
- Created, launched, and analyzed responses to an online Nevada Women Veterans Survey.
- Developed, researched, and wrote content pertaining to women veterans for the monthly NDVS eNewsletter, such as "Stories from Nevada Women Veterans."



PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Unique Veteran Populations



Native American Outreach

Statistics from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs consistently show that, as an ethnic group, Native Americans have the highest rates of enlistment, per capita; however, when it comes to requesting earned benefits, services and resources, Native Americans consistently rank near the bottom. Therefore, outreach to Native American veterans in Nevada continues to be a priority for NDVS. While many planned events were cancelled due to COVID-19 this year, the NDVS Outreach Team has continued its efforts to virtually connect these veterans and their families to earned benefits and resources.

In 2020, NDVS promoted the VA's "I Am Not Invisible" campaign that featured women veterans, including many Nevada Native Americans. Pictured in this photo is Nevada veteran Beatrice Thayer, a WWII and Korean War veteran and citizen of the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony.

NDVS is working with the Nevada Indian Commission to develop a plan to improve efforts to inform Nevada's Native American Veteran community of their earned benefits, and to assist in connecting them with those benefits.

Rural Veterans

The "Rural Outreach for Veteran Enrichment and Resource Program", also known as ROVER, has proven effective in reaching veterans in rural areas of Nevada. During the past year before COVID-19, 134 ROVER events occurred throughout Nevada at places such as Ely, Mesquite, Laughlin, Tonopah, Beatty, Gardnerville, Hawthorne, University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) and Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC).

Due to COVID-19, in-person Rover events were cancelled in March through December 2020. However, the pandemic drove us to greater and more effective use of virtual technologies in order to support Nevada's rural veterans. As just one example, in early 2020 a VSO located in Las Vegas was virtually able to assist veterans in the Pioche area. Since then, NDVS has expanded our virtual claims program to Mesquite, Laughlin, Lyon County, and the Nevada Department of Corrections. The NDVS goal is to have any VSO assist any veteran from anywhere in Nevada.

The ROVER program also partners with the Nevada Attorney General's Office's (AG) Office of Military Legal Assistance (OMLA) Program, which offers veterans free legal advice in an array of non-criminal and civil matters. In 2020, NDVS VSOs attended 11 OMLA events to provide information about earned benefits available to veterans and their families.

ROVER outreach is conducted at periodic intervals, depending on demand. The communities include:

- Hawthorne
- Beatty
- Laughlin
- Mesquite
- Tonopah
- High Desert State Prison

- Gardnerville
- Reno VA Medical Center
- University of Nevada, Reno
- Truckee Meadows Community College
- Warm Springs
- Warm Springs Correctional Facility

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Education

NDVS continues to strengthen its partnership with both Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) institutions and non-NSHE institutions to help share best student veteran practices among Nevada’s post-secondary educational institutions. There are many superb student veteran programs offered by NSHE and other schools; by supporting cross-institutional collaboration, NDVS seeks to strengthen support for veterans and their family members who seek advanced degrees and certifications.

NV Transition Assistance Program

This year NDVS, in collaboration with other state agencies, began developing a Nevada Transition Assistance Program (NVTAP). NVTAP has been introduced as a Department bill, and if approved, will ensure that transitioning service members, veterans, and their families obtain information regarding benefits and services offered by state, county and local organizations.

NVTAP Goals and Objectives

- To inform and connect separating service members, veterans of all eras, and their families to Nevada’s benefits and services.
- To coordinate the delivery of NVTAP with other state partners to ensure separating service members, veterans, and their family’s needs are met.
- To continually assess the need for changes in information presented.

NVTAP curriculum will include both online and regional in-person training for active duty, National Guard, and veterans through needs assessments. The initial task will be to create an online curriculum that is available to service members, veterans, and dependents.

2020 NDVS EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS

- This year, officials from NDVS met with representatives of NSHE to ensure continued academic success for student veterans. As a result of that meeting, NDVS has added additional VSOs to the campus presence to help address student veteran questions and concerns.
- NDVS and NSHE representatives also met to identify any gaps in services for non-college, OJT, Apprenticeship and Flight students who don’t fall under NSHE. While no significant gaps were identified, NDVS is developing a plan for VSO outreach to non-NSHE student veterans.

SFY 2020

For a veteran, reservist or dependent to use VA Education benefits at a place of postsecondary education, training, license or certification, the program must be approved by the State Approving Agency of Veterans Education Programs. The Nevada State Approving Agency falls under the Commission on Postsecondary Education. Postsecondary refers to education of training above a high school level. Examples include associate level and above degrees; technical schools; non-college degree programs, on-the-job training, apprenticeships and flight training.

6,428

Nevada Veterans/Eligible family members using VA Education Benefits

96

Number of approved educational facilities

TOTAL NEVADA EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING PROGRAMS

NSHE Programs	8
Non-NSHE Programs	170
OJT/Apprenticeships	65
Licensed Flight School	21

APPROVED PROGRAMS UNDER THE STATE APPROVAL PROGRAM AUTHORITY

NSHE Programs	7
Non-NSHE Programs	59
OJT/Apprenticeships	28
Licensed Flight School	2

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Employment

Securing gainful employment is a key to success for veterans transitioning from military life back into Nevada’s communities. Not only is employment crucial to creating financial stability, but it also has secondary social benefits for the veteran and the community.

Employment gives veterans a sense of purpose and meaning, provides income, allows participation in their community and gives a sense of belonging. NDVS is keenly aware of the obstacles that persist in preparing veterans for careers outside the military, and of the need to educate civilian employers about the strengths and challenges facing veteran workers. One of our important programs designed to tackle these obstacles is the Patriot Employer Program (PeP). PeP provides businesses with education and support to recruit and retain veterans as employees. The program shows businesses where to find veterans, how to retain them, the tax credits available and other benefits to hiring men and women who have served our country. Veterans possess outstanding leadership and technical skills that make them an asset to any organization. Engaging this key talent pool benefits a company in measurable ways.

In addition to PeP, NDVS is working with partners across the state to increase the employment rate among veterans. Our strong partnerships with the Nevada Department of Business and Industry and the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation allow NDVS to serve as a conduit connecting veterans to businesses, jobs and educational opportunities.



VETERAN UNEMPLOYMENT - ANNUAL AVERAGE

	Nevada	National
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR VETERANS	5%	4%
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE	77%	77%
MEDIAN INCOME	\$41,860	\$41,555
PERCENT WITH DISABILITY	29%	29%
POVERTY STATUS	8%	7%

Source: American Community Survey, released December 2019

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Suicide Prevention Program

Suicide Prevention Program

NDVS is proud to be a partner in Nevada's Mayor's and Governor's Challenge Programs, helping bring together leaders from government agencies, active guard and reserve military organizations, healthcare organizations, businesses, nonprofits, veterans organizations, members of the clergy, and others, to end the tragedy of veteran suicide.

Governor's and Mayor's Challenge Programs

The Mayor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and their Families is a partnership between the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to help local leaders in community and state governments work together to prevent suicide. This is an interagency military and civilian leadership group that seeks to better understand the issue and work together to develop and implement strategic plans to reduce suicidal behavior at the local level.

Federal Partners:

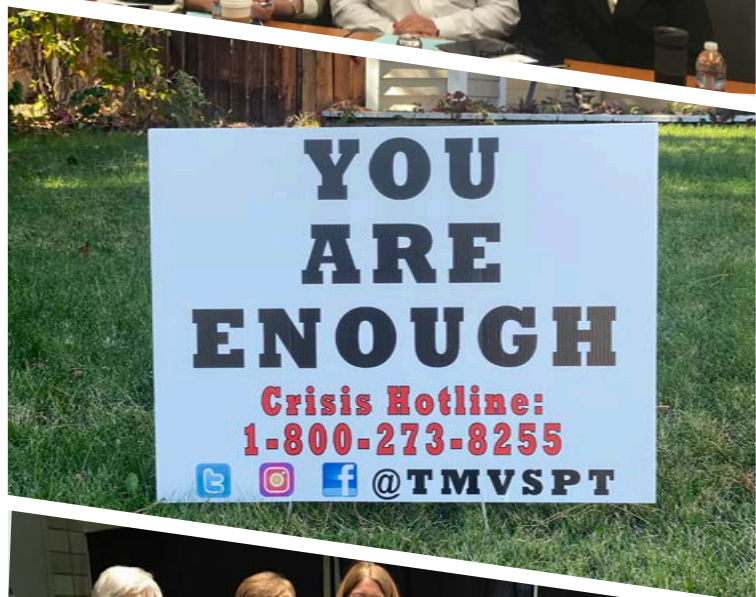
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)

Nevada's Challenge Teams

The NDVS Suicide Prevention Team has recruited more Mayor's Challenge Teams than any state in the nation – Truckee Meadows, Las Vegas, Elko and Winnemucca, along with the Governor's Challenge Team – all working to eliminate suicide by using a comprehensive public health approach to suicide prevention.

- **Las Vegas** Mayor's Challenge team - 2018
- **Truckee Meadows** Mayor's Challenge team - 2019
- **State of Nevada** Governor's Challenge team - 2019
- **Elko** Mayor's Challenge team - 2020
- **Winnemucca** Mayor's Challenge team - 2020

In addition to the Challenge Programs, on Aug 31, 2020 the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) selected the City of Pahrump to house the first "Together with Veterans (TWV)" Program in Nevada. TWV is funded by the VA's Office of Rural Health (\$40,000 grant) and carried out in partnership with Rocky Mountain Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center for Suicide Prevention, the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education Behavioral Health Program, local veterans, and community stakeholders. NDVS is supporting city and community leaders as they begin to implement this community-based veteran suicide prevention program.



PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Suicide Prevention

Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide

Building on the success of both the Las Vegas and the Truckee Meadows Mayor's Challenges, the Nevada Governor's Challenge Team traveled to Washington, D.C. in February 2020 for a two-and-a-half-day Policy Academy to develop statewide strategic action plans that local governments can implement within communities across Nevada.

Technical assistance offered through this SAMHSA/VA initiative is designed to provide a platform for states to consider how existing policies, practices, infrastructure, and resources influence the effectiveness of the systems that support service members, veterans, and their families (SMVF) where they work, live and thrive.

Want to Join a Suicide Prevention Team?

Contact: Kim Donohue at donohuek@veterans.nv.gov

Governor's Community Expansion

Through the Governor's Challenge, the SMVF Technical Assistance Center, with the support from the VA and SAMHSA, gave Nevada the opportunity to expand our Mayor's Challenge Teams and participate in a two-day virtual training and technical assistance event. This training allowed the Governor's Challenge Team to engage community leaders to bridge local suicide prevention activities with state-level efforts. The goal is to build capacity through local partnerships and implement sustainable suicide prevention strategies and evidence-based best practices, empowering action at the national, regional and local levels. NDVS is excited to welcome the Cities of Elko and Winnemucca to the list of Mayor's Challenge Teams. These communities join Nevada's efforts to help address the critical loss of SMVF lives across Nevada. These expansions mean Nevada has the most SAMHSA/VA Mayor's Challenge Teams in the nation! To join a Suicide Prevention Team, contact NDVS Suicide Prevention Coordinator Kim Donohue at Donohuek@veterans.nv.gov.

Free, Online Trainings for Everyone: safeTALK, A.S.I.S.T., Nevada Gatekeeper and PsychArmor's S.A.V.E.

These trainings provide knowledge to recognize warning signs, identify risks and understand intervention strategies. Training enables an individual to connect a person in crisis to the right resources to keep them safe. If you are a veteran or family member who wants to take suicide prevention training, visit <https://veterans.nv.gov/benefits-and-services/suicide-prevention/suicide-prevention-resources/>



PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Suicide Prevention

Las Vegas Mayor's Challenge Partner List

- City of Las Vegas, Mayor's Office
- City of Las Vegas, Office of Community Services
- City of Las Vegas, Human Resources Department
- City of Las Vegas, Fire & Rescue
- City of Las Vegas, Municipal Court/ Veterans Treatment Court
- City of Las Vegas, Department of Public Safety
- Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- Clark County Social Services
- Southern Nevada VA Healthcare Center
- Nevada National Guard
- Las Vegas Vet Center
- Henderson Vet Center
- Veterans Village
- Goodwill Southern Nevada
- America's Warrior Partnership
- U.S. Vets
- Nevada Veterans Foundation
- Desert Parkway Behavioral Healthcare Hospital
- Kline Veterans Fund
- Restored Faith Ministries
- Nevada Job Connect
- Nevada Health and Human Services
- Nevada Office of Suicide Prevention
- Nevada Department of Veterans Services
- Office of Senator Cortez Masto
- Office of Senator Rosen
- Nevada Council on Problem Gambling
- ANCHM
- Center for the Application of Substance Abuse Technologies, University of Nevada, Reno/Zero Suicide
- Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, Inc. (T.A.P.S.)
- Nevada Women in Trades
- Brain Health Warriors
- Las Vegas Elks
- Vegas Veterans Hockey Foundation
- Walk the Talk America
- Zephyr Wellness
- AARP
- No Vet Alone
- Spirit Therapies
- Vets365
- 22 Warriors Suicide Prevention Foundation
- Prevention, Advocacy, Choices, Teamwork (PACT) Coalition
- College of Southern Nevada
- It's Where I Am
- Chaplaincy Nevada
- And many other key organizations and individuals

Truckee Meadows's Mayor's Challenge Partner List

- City of Sparks, Mayor's Office
- City of Reno, Mayor's Office
- Reno-Sparks Indian Colony
- City of Reno Police Department, Mobile Outreach Safety Team (M.O.S.T.)
- Washoe County Sheriff's Office, Detention Division
- Washoe County Division of Public and Behavioral Health
- Washoe County Human Services Agency
- Center for the Application of Substance Abuse Technologies, University of Nevada, Reno
- Truckee Meadows Community College Veterans Services
- Reno Behavioral Health Hospital
- Nevada Rural Hospital Partners
- Rural Regional Behavioral Health Coordinator
- The Family Support Center
- Northern Nevada National Alliance for Mental Illness
- Suicide Prevention Network
- Nation's Finest
- Reno Vet Center
- Veterans Association of Real Estate Professionals
- Maccabee Arms Ltd.
- Keystone Quality Printing
- Veteran Development Group Inc./Operation EMPLOY
- Vietnam Veterans of America
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Nevada Air National Guard
- Nevada Army National Guard
- Nevada Air National Guard, Substance Abuse, Suicide Prevention, and Resilience Support Program
- Truckee Meadows Veterans Community Council
- VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System
- Nevada Office of Suicide Prevention
- Nevada Department of Health and Human Services
- Nevada Department of Veterans Services
- AARP
- Battle Born Yoga
- Speedy Foundation
- Truckee Meadows Fire Department
- Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, Inc. (T.A.P.S.)
- Walk the Talk America
- Zephyr Wellness
- Office of Senator Rosen
- CAMO-RNO Veterans Court, Department Two
- Crisis Support Services of Nevada
- VA Mental Health Council
- And many other key organizations and individuals

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Outreach Initiatives and Programs

Statewide Veterans Community Councils (VCCs)

The purpose of the VCCs is to prioritize local objectives and formalize coordination between service organizations at the community level. NDVS helps VCCs, and other councils, commissions and organizations, identify and address the needs of veterans and their families, as well as transmit VCC policy recommendations to the Nevada Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs (ICVA).

Statewide Veterans Community Councils

CARSON CITY VETERANS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Meets in Carson City; times, dates, locations vary

Contact: Frank Reynolds | fwatonka@aol.com

PACE COALITION (Elko)

Meets monthly on the first Tuesday of the month

Contact: Laura Oslund, Director of PACE
laura@pacecoalition.org

CHURCHILL COMMUNITY COALITION

Meets quarterly, second Tuesday at 11 a.m.
Fallon Convention Center

Contact: Holly Meador | 775-423-6695, ext. 2
sscoordinator@churchillcounty.org

SOUTHERN NEVADA VETERANS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BOARD

Meets quarterly, times/locations vary

Contact: Nina Ridgeway | 702-281-3717
ninar@sngoodwill.org

FAMILY STABILITY COUNCIL (Winnemucca)

Meets monthly, fourth Tuesday at 1 p.m.
National Guard Armory

Contact: Alaine Kliever-Nye | 775-623-9003
fcaahumboldt@gmail.com

TRUCKEE MEADOWS COMMUNITY COLLEGE (TMCC) UPWARD BOUND (Reno, Sparks)

For student veterans.

Contact: 775-829-9007
www.tmcc.edu/veterans-upward-bound

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COALITION

(Lyon and Storey Counties)

Meets monthly, second Thursday at 9:00 AM,
Silver Springs Community Center

Contact: Quest Lakes | 775-246-7550
Quest@theodata.com | www.healthycomm.org

TRUCKEE MEADOWS VETERANS

COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE (Reno, Sparks)

Meets every other month, second Wednesday
at 3:00 PM, locations vary

Contact: Chaplain Hal Woomer | 775-384-5800

NORTH LAS VEGAS VETERANS COMMUNITY COMMISSION

Meets monthly, second Thursday at 5:30 PM
North Las Vegas Council Chambers

Contact: Amanda M. Dillard, (702) 633-1016,
DillardA@cityofnorthlasvegas.com

WELCOME ALL VETS EVERYWHERE (WAVE) (Minden)

Meets monthly, second Monday at 1:00 PM,
Douglas County Community Center

Contact: Carl Schnock | mcthree68@gmail.com

Other Communities Targeted for VCCs:

Ely | Laughlin | Mesquite | Tonopah | Pahump | Hawthorne | Henderson

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Outreach Examples

01 JANUARY

- **Henderson** - Veterans Treatment Court, City of Henderson Municipal Court system

02 FEBRUARY

- **Gardnerville** - Welcome All Veterans Everywhere
- **Incline Village** - Incline Village Veterans Club
- **Reno** - Air National Guard Training Stand Down

03 MARCH

- **Mesquite** - Community Interagency Meeting
- **Pahrump** - Quilts of Valor Awards Ceremony
- **Reno** - Veterans Barracks Housing Unit Event

04 APRIL

- **Virtual** - Veteran Organization Commanders and Presidents Convening (conducted monthly beginning in March 2020 to share important information during the Pandemic)

05 MAY

- **Virtual** - Town Hall Meeting for Caregivers of Veterans in Partnership with AARP
- **Virtual** - Healthy Family Coalition of Lyon County Meeting
- **Virtual** - Family Stability Council Meeting of Humboldt County Meeting

06 JUNE

- **Reno** - Gold Star Memorial Dedication First Anniversary Event

07 JULY

- **Virtual** - Lady Vets of Nevada Meeting
- **Las Vegas** - Buffalo Soldiers Day Ceremony

08 AUGUST

- **Virtual** - Caregiving on the Homefront Conference

09 SEPTEMBER

- **Reno** - Veterans Stand down
- **Sparks** - Gold Star Luminary Event

10 OCTOBER

- **Virtual** - Military Sexual Trauma (MST) Survivors Conference
- **Virtual** - Nevada Veterans Advocate (NVA) Townhall

11 NOVEMBER

- **Las Vegas** - Veterans Expo
- **Virtual** - Heroes for Heroes Program Launch

12 DECEMBER

- **Virtual** - VA Center for Women Veterans Roundtable

Overview



AMY GARLAND

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF HEALTHCARE SERVICES

The Department of Veterans Services operates two Nevada State Veterans Homes. The Southern Nevada State Veterans Home (SNSVH) is in Boulder City and the Northern Nevada State Veterans Home (NNSVH) is in Sparks. This division also oversees a wide array of training and recognition programs and healthcare initiatives focused on the well-being of veterans, their families and their caregivers.

Our award-winning State Veterans Homes set a high standard of excellence in skilled nursing care for veterans, their spouses and to Gold Star parents. Do you know what makes our Veterans Homes special? The sense of community between the staff, residents, and community supporters. Our facilities are designed and operated to feel like home, not like a hospital or nursing facility. One thing that sets us above all others is our understanding of the importance of military culture to our residents, and how that understanding leads to better healthcare outcomes for the veterans we serve.

Our training programs include courses for healthcare professionals, veterans, their families, and their caregivers. They are made possible through partnerships with nonprofits such as the Perry Foundation, the Sanford Center for Aging, and the Nevada System of Higher Education, among others. They focus on a wide range of topics ranging from caregivers' resources to military culture training.

State Veterans Homes

Quotes from family members of residents living in our State Veterans Homes:

- "I loved the appreciation for the veterans themselves. The staff goes far and above just being an employee. They truly care about their residents."
- "The staff at the Veterans home are great! You would be lucky to have a family member there."
- "The Veterans Home is a very caring facility and the quality of life is outstanding. It's the quality of the people and their attention to detail that make this facility exceptional."
- "It's a wonderful facility! I couldn't think of a better place for anybody, especially for veterans."
- "The Veterans Home is a marvelous place that values and treats veterans with respect."
- "I wish that all other long-term facilities throughout the nation would be able to operate to the standard of the Nevada State Veterans Homes."
- "All the staff members are very friendly and cordial. They treat my dad as if he is a member of the family."



HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Veterans and Their Families Connections and Support During COVID-19

Family Connections Task Force

The Family Connections Task Force (FCTF) was created by NDVS in August 2020 to collaboratively support veterans isolated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The FCTF's goal is to foster healthy and positive relationships between veterans living in community settings or confined to their home with family members. While many consider family as those related by blood, this program considers family as those who offer love, support, dependability, and compassion. Families are made up of old friends, community members, and for many veterans living in care facilities, it is the staff that offer selfless service, support and help around the clock. The FCTF serves as a resource for veterans and their families looking for ways to stay involved in each other's lives during this time of isolation. All members of the task force continuously pour their hearts into this important work to enrich the lives of Nevada's heroes living in care facilities or who feel isolated at home.

Heroes for Heroes

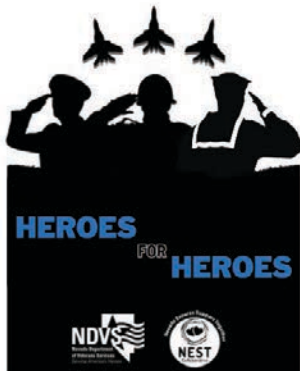
What better way to help our heroes than to be heroes for them! Heroes for Heroes is a program in partnership with the NEST Collaborative (Nevada Ensures Support Together) that provides internet and phone-based social support during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. This program connects veterans with volunteers in the community who are interested in giving back to those who have given so much by offering social support. Whether it is an old-fashioned phone call or a video chat, Nevada's Heroes can now connect with one of our highly trained volunteers. For more information on getting involved or participating, contact Rachel Jelenic, NDVS Healthcare Initiative Program Manager at 775-825-9849 or at jelenic@veterans.nv.gov.

Send a Smile Campaign

Teachers, students, family members, service organizations and community members have participated in the NDVS "Send a Smile" campaign to express appreciation for residents and staff members at our State Veterans Homes. Through uploaded photos and videos, these community members send heartfelt well-wishes to residents and staff. These messages are compiled and played on loops at both the Northern Nevada Veterans Home and Southern Nevada Veterans Home on important occasions (such as Veterans Day and Thanksgiving) for all veterans, spouses and staff to enjoy. More than 200 people have uploaded files to communicate their appreciation and love.

Members of the Family Connections Task Force

- University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) Nevada Caregiver Support Center
- Avalon Healthcare Group
- Strategic Progress
- Nevada AARP
- Dementia Friendly Nevada
- UNR Dementia Engagement, Education and Research Program
- Helping Hands of Vegas Valley
- Nevada Department of Health and Human Services
- Lady Vets
- The Nevada Ensures Support Together (NEST) Collaborative
- Several individual community members
- Northern and Southern State Veterans Homes



HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Veterans and Their Families Connections and Support During COVID-19

Telehealth

Beginning in 2020, residents at both State Veterans Homes were able to participate in telehealth appointments. Telehealth appointments are vitally important as they have allowed residents to access critical healthcare services without risking exposure to COVID-19 and other stressors associated with travel outside the home. Residents are able to connect with care providers at the Southern Nevada VA Hospital, and with other local medical and mental healthcare providers.

Communication tablets that were generously donated by local businesses and by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), helped ensure the success of our telehealth program, a program that will undoubtedly continue to prove valuable in future years.

Technology needs were also supported by “Seniors in Service,” a nonprofit organization working to improve the quality of life of homebound older adults in Nevada during the COVID19 pandemic. “Seniors in Service” delivered tablets to eligible residents and other older Nevadans who need access to smart technology for medical appointments, socialization and other unmet virtual supportive needs. This program was made possible through funding from the State of Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division.

Partition Visitation for Families

To support visitation early in the pandemic, NDVS set up plexiglass screens at both State Veterans Homes to allow for safe visitation with friends and family. In addition, the State of Nevada Long-Term Care Ombudsman’s Office ordered additional booths for each skilled nursing facility in the state; increasing visitation opportunities. Masked residents visit with family and friends from behind the safety of the screens while their visitors, also masked, are seated in chairs on the other side of the screen. Families and friends of residents at either home are welcome to call the front desk to schedule a visit.

Caregiver Program

The Nevada Department of Veterans Services Caregiver Program is designed to develop and to support programs that connect veterans and their care partners with necessary programs, services, and resources. Emails are sent out to interested caregivers weekly and include interesting topics like educational series, community programs, and helpful resources. Those who would like to receive these outreach materials are welcome to reach out to Rachel Jelenic, NDVS Healthcare Initiative Program Manager at jelenicr@veterans.nv.gov.

Homebound Outreach Program

The Homebound Outreach Program identifies and supports Nevada veterans confined to their dwelling, or who find it difficult to access needed services. The program addresses both social and physical isolation. Social isolation is a result of a poorly connected social sphere where friends and family are not currently in touch with their loved one. Physical isolation is experienced when a veteran is not close to friends, family, or resources in a geographical sense, causing feelings of loneliness. The goal of the Homebound Outreach Program is to eliminate the obstacles to receiving care in any way veterans need. Community organizations are asked to refer homebound veterans or their caregivers to NDVS so we can inform them of beneficial resources.



HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Southern Nevada State Veterans Home

The Southern Nevada State Veterans Home (SNSVH) is an award-winning skilled nursing care facility with a long track record of demonstrated excellence in quality care for veterans and their families.

SNSVH is located in Boulder City, Nevada. The 180-bed facility was established in 2001 and provides 24-hour skilled nursing care, seven days a week. The SNSVH is state owned and operated, and accepts Medicare/Medicaid, VA, and private pay residents for a significantly lower cost than other comparable nursing homes.

Southern Nevada State Veterans Home Anniversary Celebration

On Saturday, Aug. 22, 2020, family and community members showed their support for both residents and staff by participating in a drive-thru celebration. Community supporters decorated their vehicles, played music and blew noisemakers, or just kept it simple with a wave and a smile. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, participants remained in their vehicles.

FACILITY DETAILS

Type of Facility – Licensed Skilled Care

Type of Care Provided – Short-term rehabilitation, long-term care, memory care

Long Term Care – Assistance with daily living, showering, dressing, meals, personal care

Short Term Care – Typically follows a hospital stay and may involve physical, occupational and/or speech therapy

Memory Care – Secure community for those with dementia, Alzheimer's, history of wandering

Cost for Long Term Care – VA subsidizes eligible veterans but not spouses. Medicaid is accepted. Medicaid certified beds are available for long term care



Address:
Southern Nevada State Veterans Home
100 Veterans Memorial Drive
Boulder City, Nevada 89005
(702) 332-6784

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Southern Nevada State Veterans Home



WHO WE SERVE

RESIDENTS	Total # Served FY2020
Male	197
Female	13
Non-Vet Spouse	52
Total since 2001	1,783

male & female

MILITARY BRANCH	Total # Served FY2020*
Army	75
Navy	51
Air Force	65
Coast Guard	0
Marines	20

SERVICE ERA	Total # Served FY2020*
WWII	27
Korea	70
Vietnam	123
Gulf War	5
Lebanon	3
Afghanistan	0
Desert Storm	3
Peacetime	28

OCCUPANCY	Total # Served FY2020
2020 Admission Average	7.58 <i>per month</i>
2020 Discharge Average	9.25 <i>per month</i>
Total Beds	180
% Occupancy	91 <i>per day average</i>

**Note: Some residents have served in more than one conflict or branch of service.*

Average Wait Time: VETERAN: 2 weeks to 2 months NON-VETERAN: 2-6 months

In both cases it could be more than six months if there are problems completing the application and associated records.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Northern Nevada State Veterans Home

The new Northern Nevada State Veterans Home (NNSVH) opened in late 2019 and is filling a previously unmet need for quality skilled nursing for veterans and their spouses living in northern Nevada. Until the NNSVH was built, many veterans had to leave Nevada to find quality skilled nursing care, taking them far from loved ones and to unfamiliar surroundings at a vulnerable time in their lives.

The NNSVH is owned by the State of Nevada and operated by Avalon Healthcare Group. Avalon was selected to run the home after a nationwide search for the best qualified management company available. Now, after one year in operation, the facility houses over 80 residents and is on track for full occupancy in 2021. The 102,000 square-foot facility was designed to feel more like a home than a healthcare facility; the principle behind the design was to create a high-end resort that offered superior nursing care services, rather than a skilled nursing facility that offers some quality of life amenities. Those who live there and those who have visited believe we were successful. The NNSVH has 96 beds and offers a host of amenities. Each resident has a private room, bathroom and shower. Residents share a den, living room and kitchen with 15 other residents, and each household of eight residents has its own front door entry.

FACILITY DETAILS

Type of Facility – Licensed Skilled Care

Type of Care Provided – Short-term rehabilitation, long-term care, memory care

Long Term Care – Assistance with daily living, showering, dressing, meals, personal care

Short Term Care – Typically follows a hospital stay and may involve physical, occupational and/or speech therapy

Memory Care – Secure community for those with dementia, Alzheimer's, history of wandering

Cost for Long Term Care – VA subsidizes eligible veterans but not spouses. Medicaid is accepted. Medicaid certified beds are available for long term care



The NNSVH also offers residents a Town Hall that includes a:

- Restaurant
- Coffee Bistro
- Sports Bar
- Therapy Gym
- Beauty/Barber Shop
- General Commissary
- Parade Grounds for patriotic/military ceremonies and events

Address:

Northern Nevada State Veterans Home
36 Battle Born Way
Sparks, Nevada 89431
(775) 827-2955

Northern Nevada State Veterans Home



WHO WE SERVE

RESIDENTS

Total # Served FY2020

Male	126	
Female	17	
Non-Vet Spouse	12	
Total since 2019	143	

male & female

MILITARY BRANCH

Total # Served FY2020*

Army	49	
Navy	35	
Air Force	31	
Coast Guard	2	
Marines	14	

**Note: Some residents have served in more than one conflict or branch of service.*

SERVICE ERA

Total # Served FY2020*

WWII	33	
Korea	18	
Vietnam	59	
Gulf War	2	
Lebanon	0	
Afghanistan	0	
Desert Storm	0	
Peacetime	19	

OCCUPANCY

Total # Served FY2020

2020 Admission Average	10.1	
	<i>per month</i>	
2020 Discharge Average	7.1	
	<i>per month</i>	
Total Beds	96	
% Occupancy	53	
	<i>per day average</i>	

Average Wait Time: **VETERAN: 1 week to 1 month** **NON-VETERAN: 1 week to 1 month**

In both cases it could be more than six months if there are problems completing the application and associated records.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Special Wellness Initiatives and Programs

Veterans Healthcare Champions Program

The Veterans Healthcare Champions Program is an initiative dedicated to educating Nevada's healthcare providers, veterans and their families, about how exposures during one's military career may put that veteran at risk for certain illnesses or diseases, known as presumptive conditions. Understanding presumptive conditions and exposure risk is important as it can lead to access to healthcare, and in some cases monetary compensation for injuries and diseases suffered as a result of military service.

Exposure Risk Questionnaire

Military service – wartime service in particular – comes with the heightened threat of severe injury and possible death. What is sometimes overlooked, is that men and women who serve often carry an elevated risk of illness as a result of toxic exposures from their everyday work environments, living conditions or other hazardous circumstances. These illnesses may cause symptoms immediately or may cause long-term effects that go unnoticed for many years until they pose major health concerns. Some veterans who have suffered toxic exposures are granted “presumption of exposure” by the VA. This means that, by virtue of the time and place of service, as verified by military records, a veteran is presumed to have been exposed to a specific known toxin. These presumptive conditions are approved for additional services and disability compensation. This can help a veteran pay for care and prescription drugs, while remaining with their community-based healthcare provider as they are not required to access the VA for care. NDVS has posted an Exposure Risk questionnaire on our website to assist veterans with submitting VA claims. Visit <https://veterans.nv.gov/exposure-risk-information-and-resources/> for more information.



Download VA Health Exposure Ed Today!
Just go to your app store, search “VA Health Exposure Ed,” and download!

Veterans in Care Program

The Veterans in Care Program (VIC) was launched in the Spring of 2016 to improve the quality of care and quality of life for all of Nevada's veterans living in community-based care settings, not just those living in Nevada's two State Veterans Homes. VIC has three specific elements:

- Benefits and Services - offers veterans benefit counseling and claims services from a Veterans Service Officer (VSO), which can result in financial benefits that improve a veteran's quality of life.
- Quality of Life Recognition Ceremonies - honor and recognize veterans living in skilled nursing, assisted living or who are homebound for their service while also connecting them to earned benefits, programs, and services.
- Military Culture Education Training - training for facility staff to enhance understanding of how military experience affects aging veterans, especially those with cognitive impairments.

Bravo-Zulu Military Culture Training for Healthcare Providers

NDVS created and currently supports a special training course for healthcare professionals called “Bravo-Zulu: Achieving Excellence in Relationship Centered Care.” It offers continuing education units (CEUs) to Nevada's healthcare providers that help them learn how a veteran's military service may play a role in his or her mental and physical health as they age. Bravo-Zulu helps care facility staff understand how the aging process, both physical and mental, is affected by earlier military service.

NDVS sponsored three in-person Bravo-Zulu trainings in the fall of 2019 and spring of 2020, one in Pahrump and two in Winnemucca. In addition, two virtual Bravo-Zulu trainings were held in the fall of 2020. In total, 111 attendees received certificates of completion, satisfying NRS 449.094 for dementia education. Certificates for CEUs were also awarded to Licensed Administrators, Licensed Nurses and Social Workers by their respective governing boards.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Support for Disabled Veterans

Adaptive Sports Programs

Thousands of disabled veterans participate in adaptive sports in communities across Nevada. Their participation allows them to redefine themselves and live an active, healthy, fun lifestyle that supports overall wellness. Adaptive sports put the focus on abilities, not disabilities. By successfully applying for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) grants, NDVS supports adaptive sports programs offered by the Cities of Las Vegas and Reno at no cost to hundreds of disabled veterans and their families.

The City of Las Vegas provides the following programs:

- **Paralympic Sports Club Las Vegas** offers programs for children and adults with physical disabilities, including sports training and competitions throughout southern Nevada.
- **Vegas Vision** provides a wide variety of activities for the visually impaired, ranging from tandem bike rides, goal ball, swimming, rock climbing, fishing and special outings.
- **Arthritis Exercise Program** is a low impact program designed to reduce pain and stiffness. Routines include gentle range-of-motion exercises suitable for every fitness level.
- **F.L.O.A.T.** is an adaptive aquatic program for those with and without disabilities.
- **One-on-One Swim Lessons** offer private instruction designed to meet the needs of people of all abilities.
- **Aquatic Therapy** is a program designed to provide greater strength, mobility, coordination, balance, endurance and flexibility, in private and group settings.

For more information about City of Las Vegas adaptive recreation programs, at no cost to veterans, visit: <https://www.lasvegasnevada.gov/Government/Departments/Parks-Recreation/Adaptive-Recreation>

The City of Reno also provides a wide variety of adaptive sports programs including:

- **Project HERO** is a cycling program that includes bike rentals for up to six months at no cost to veterans for use at sanctioned Project HERO events and rides. Through Project HERO, Veterans Helping Veterans for Bikes provides bicycles, helmets, bike locks, saddle bags and lights, in addition to training sessions about maintenance, safety and more.
- **Military Sports Camp** is an annual multi-day camp that welcomes all skill levels. The program is not just about sports but is also about attitude, camaraderie and a healthy, active lifestyle.
- **Fit but Not Forgotten** is a weekly community-based fitness class for veterans taught by a VA exercise physiologist or certified fitness instructor. New sessions begin each month.
- **Military to the Mountains**, hosted by the City of Reno and the High Fives Foundation in Truckee, Calif., trains more than 20 injured veterans for nine weeks preparing them for a week of skiing in March.

For more information on the City of Reno adaptive recreation programs for veterans, visit <https://www.reno.gov/government/departments/parks-recreation-community-services/adaptive-recreation/veteran-programs>

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

Overview



KURT GREEN
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Administrative Services play a key role in the operation of NDVS. It supports the following functions:

- Financial Services
- Human Resources
- Grants and Contracts
- Information Technology (IT)

The following pages are the financial summary for SFY 2020.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

2020 Financial Review Expenditures

TOTAL HEALTHCARE EXPENDITURES \$36,129,776

Southern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$20,843,956
Northern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$15,277,234
Veterans-in-Care Program	\$8,586

TOTAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES EXPENDITURES \$4,458,978

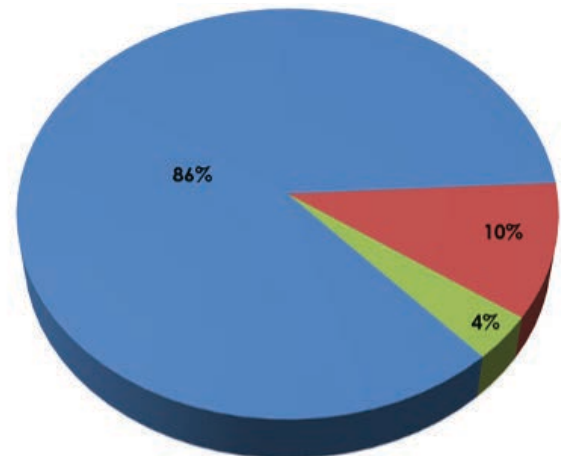
Veteran Advocacy	\$1,515,747
Cemeteries	\$1,625,971
Special Programs and Services	\$1,317,260

TOTAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH EXPENDITURES \$120,357

Nevada Advocate Program	\$69,746
Veterans Information System	\$50,611

TOTAL ADMINISTRATION \$1,512,545

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES FY20 EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM



- Healthcare
- Programs and Services
- Administration

EXPENDITURES

Healthcare	\$36,129,776
Programs and Services	\$4,458,978
Community Outreach	\$120,357
Administration	\$1,512,545
Total Expenditures	\$42,221,656

Majority of NDVS expenditures are for Healthcare (86%).

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

2020 Financial Review Revenues

GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS \$4,075,630

Healthcare	\$1,720,231
Northern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$1,720,231
Programs and Services	\$2,355,399
Veterans Advocacy	\$2,293,907
Cemeteries	\$61,492

FEDERAL FUNDS \$31,059,944

Healthcare	\$29,424,754
Northern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$13,467,623
Southern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$15,957,131
Programs and Services	\$1,635,190
Cemeteries	\$1,564,479
Special Programs and Services	\$70,711

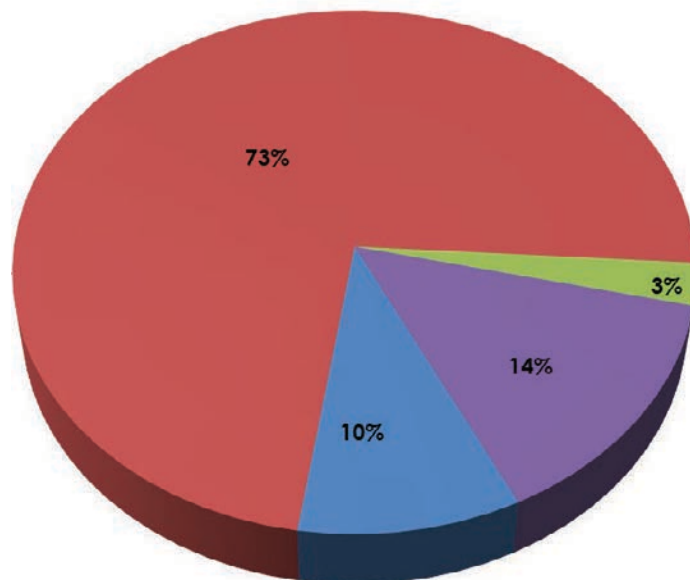
DONATIONS \$1,097,677

Healthcare	\$108,314
Southern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$25,710
Northern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$82,604
Programs and Services	\$989,363
Cemeteries	\$87,009
Special Programs and Services	\$902,354

OTHER REVENUE \$5,988,408

Healthcare	\$5,963,586
Southern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$5,962,299
Northern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$1,287
Programs and Services	\$24,822
Cemeteries	\$3,438
Special Programs and Services	\$21,384

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES FY20 REVENUE SOURCES



- General Fund
- Federal Funds
- Donations
- Other

REVENUES

General Fund	\$4,075,630
Federal Funds	\$31,059,944
Donations	\$1,097,677
Other	\$5,988,408

Total Revenues \$42,221,659

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

Grant Awards Helping Veterans

Since 2013, NDVS has applied for and received 26 grants totaling more than \$58 million dollars. These grants built and modernized facilities, created disabled veteran sports programs, funded transportation needs for rural veterans to access VA healthcare, and more!

Adaptive Sports Program for Disabled Veterans and Disabled Members of the U.S. Armed Forces

NDVS applied for and was awarded \$25,730 in SFY20 from the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs, Adaptive Sports Program for grants used by the cities of Las Vegas and Reno for their veterans adaptive sports programs. We are proud to support their important work on behalf of Nevada's wounded warriors. In 2020, these grants provided:

- Instruction, participation and competition in adaptive sports
- Training, technical assistance to program administrators, coaches, recreation therapists, and instructors
- Athlete assessment, sport-specific training techniques, sports equipment, and supplies

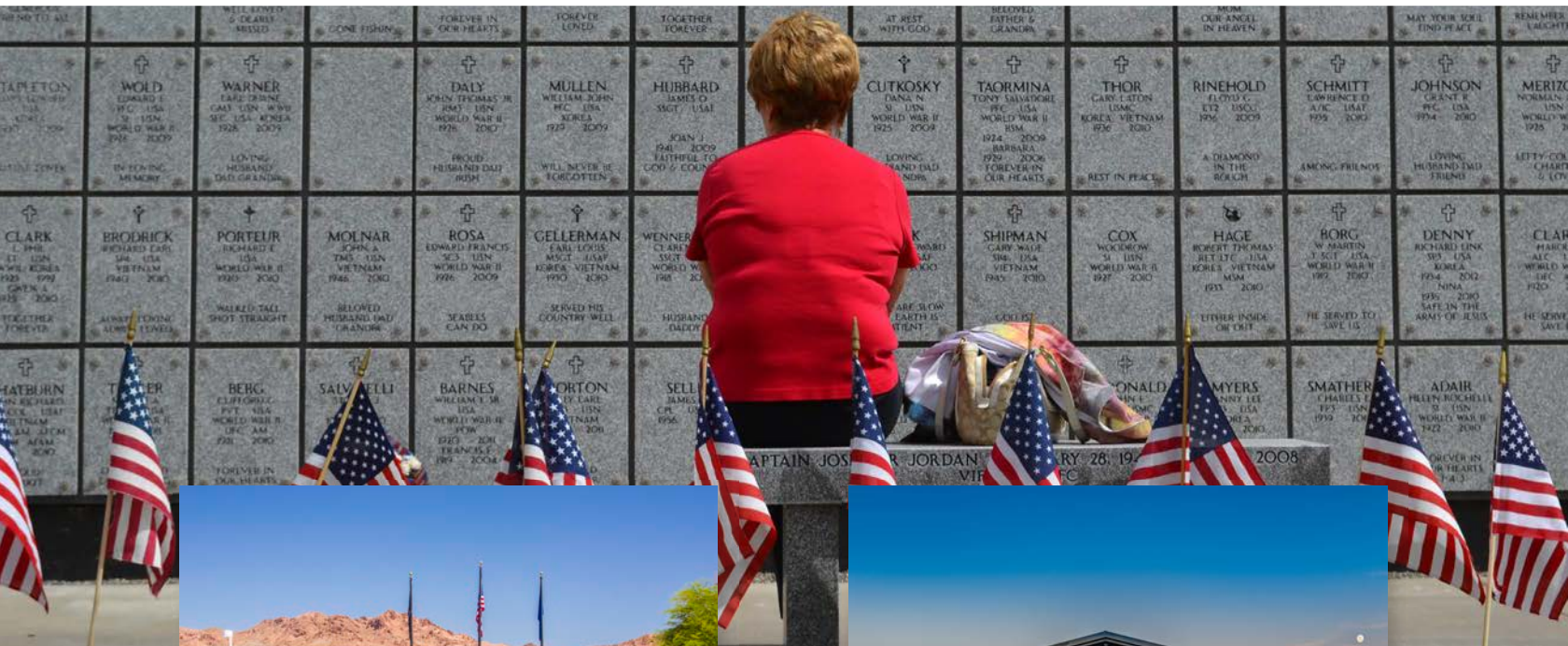


Grant Awards Helping Veterans under Rural Transportation Grants

Rural Transportation Grants offered through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration, the Highly Rural Transportation Grants (HRTG) program helps rural veterans gain access to travel to visit VA or VA-authorized healthcare facilities. By providing grants to eligible organizations, the HRTG program enhances the exceptional Disabled Veterans of America statewide transportation program, expanding the availability of critical veterans transportation resources. This enables these veterans to obtain transportation they might not otherwise be able to access because of where they live. There is no cost to participate in the program for veterans who live in an area where this grant program is available. NDVS applied for and was awarded \$100,000 in SFY20. The funds were divided equally between the Elko County Transit District and the Nye Communities Coalition.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

Grant Awards 2021 and Beyond



Southern Nevada State Veterans Home Renovation

NDVS has applied for federal grant funding from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to begin a major renovation/modernization of the Southern Nevada State Veterans Home in Boulder City, built in 2001. This renovation would upgrade both the design of, and technology within, the building to put it on par with the new, state-of-the-art, Northern Nevada State Veterans Home in Sparks. The renovation will improve water and air quality, access control for memory care residents, resident privacy and create a more home-like environment. It will also enlarge the kitchen, dining room, physical therapy room and bathing areas. Additionally, it will create staff break areas and offices providing work environments that our incredible team members deserve.

Northern Nevada State Veterans Memorial Cemetery

NDVS has applied for federal grant funding from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to expand the Northern Nevada State Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Fernley, opened in 1990. This expansion would provide 5 additional columbarium walls for a total of 3,548 new cremation niches, 2 additional acres for 802 cremation plots and 825 double depth vaults, 6,900 square feet of sidewalk, 420 linear feet of landscape curb and two pedestrian ramps, and 37,000 square feet of landscaping and irrigation. This will ensure that the highest standards of providing honor and dignity to our Northern Nevada veterans and family members are maintained.

Adult Day Health Care

NDVS is pursuing the legislative authority to establish and operate adult day health care programs, a necessary step before seeking federal grant funding from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. This type of care can meet two important needs. First, it provides adults with medical, health, or functional needs the ability to receive certain services or opportunities for social interaction. Second, it provides caregivers respite care, while their loved one continues to receive the care and support they need.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

IT Operations

The NDVS Information Technology (IT) operations team plays an important role in overseeing and supporting the wide-ranging technological needs within the agency. In 2020, the IT team researched and implemented technologies across the agency to create greater efficiencies and better serve Nevada's veterans and their families.

Veterans Information System (VIS)

To assist veterans, NDVS must first identify them. NDVS developed VIS to collect information about the location and demographics of Nevada veterans to "push" important benefit and services information to them. In 2020, NDVS entered into agreements with the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles and the Office of Vital Statistics to improve the accuracy of the VIS database. NDVS is initiating work on the technical aspects of data sharing with other state agencies to confirm veteran status for benefit delivery.

DD214 (Discharge Document) Scanning Project

NDVS, in collaboration with the Nevada State Library and Archives (NSLA), has been scanning Nevada's DD214 paper records stored by NSLA. While these documents remain under the stewardship of Library and Archives, NDVS has trained and certified individuals to perform the tedious scanning of documents dating back to 1945. There are approximately 87,000 of these military documents in need of scanning. In 2020, NDVS passed the 25,000-milestone mark of documents scanned. Due to COVID, the project has been on hold since March of 2020.

GPS/GIS Mapping Project

NDVS, working with State Lands, has created orthorectified, high resolution imagery of both the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery and the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery. NDVS is working to match the Veterans Administration interment data with the GPS maps to enable visitors to search for and be guided to graves using their smart phones or similar devices. The GPS database will also provide the ability to add biographical information and photos to individual interments. This will allow a veteran's life story to be shared with current cemetery visitors and future generations to come.

Battle Born Fallen Hero Kiosk Project

Visitors to Carson City's Capitol Grounds Complex, where the Battle Born Memorial to Nevada's Fallen Military is located, will be able to learn more about Nevada's fallen heroes by visiting a new kiosk procured and installed by NDVS. Housed in the lobby of the Nevada Library and Archives Building near the memorial, this kiosk will provide the names of the fallen and their biographical information. NDVS is finalizing the web linked application to display known data on Nevada's fallen and provide a framework to solicit and add more information as it becomes available.



ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

Donations

COVID-19 Donations of PPE

Thank you to many businesses and organizations, including:

- American Red Cross
- Alpen Mortgage
- Guardians of the Fuzz
- Honeywell Industrial Safety
- IATSE Local 720
(The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees)
- Knights of Columbus, Council #8078, St Andrews Council
- Maccabee Arms Ltd.
- Polar Shades
- PNX Botanicals
- Sierra Nevada Corporation
- SINO-American Aviation Heritage Foundation
- The Flag Store
- Truckee Craft Ventures
- Veterans Service Organizations that assisted with PPE donations

Thank you to local government agencies, such as various fire departments, the Boulder City Fire Department, the State Emergency Operations Center and Department of Corrections, and the Boulder City Manager, City Council and Community!

Thank you to all who made masks, and who purchased masks, gloves and gowns!



Organization Donations

- Advantasure
- American Legion Post 1
- American Legion Auxiliary, Post 60
- American Legion Auxiliary, Spirit of Freedom - Post 76
- Battle Mountain Quilt Guild
- Bishop Manogue High School
- Blue Star Mothers of Henderson and Boulder City
- Boulder City Elks Lodge 1682
- Carson Country Bowlers (USBC)
- Centennial Rotary of Sparks
- Charlie-Mike Foundation.org
- Chick-fil-A
- Clark County School District
- Clark J. Guild Jr. Family Foundation
- Core Construction, Las Vegas
- DAR, Old Spanish Trail Chapter
- Delta Kappa Gamma Society
- Gary Cole Post 9165 Auxiliary (VFW)
- Gasper J. Salaz Post 2350
- Guardian Elite Medical Services, LLC
- Home Depot
- Infinity Hospice Care
- Leather Headquarters
- Mendive Middle School – Leadership Class
- Mi Linda Guatemala
- Mission Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
- Nathan Adelson Hospice
- Nevada Fine Arts
- Nevada Woodchucks
- Paralyzed Vets of America
- Raiders Foundation
- Richard C. Priest Elementary School PTA
- Rotary Club of Reno Central
- Rotary Club of Sparks
- Sparks Elks Lodge 2397
- St. Simons Parrish School
- Southwest Gas Company
- The Gentleman's League
- The Grant Ann Birmingham Family Trust
- Toscana Music Group
- True Value, Boulder City
- Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Chapter 989
- VFW Post 3396
- VFW Post 10053
- VFW 11014 & Auxiliary
- Washoe County Sheriff Department
- Wild Whimsical Women

Southern Nevada - Veterans Care Package Caravan Donors

- Honor Flight Southern Nevada (HFSN)
- The KLINE Vet Fund
- KTNV Channel 13
- America First Credit Union
- Subaru of Las Vegas
- Spread the Word Nevada
- Girl Scouts of Southern Nevada
- Golden Knights Foundation
- Raiders Foundation

To all the individuals, families and organizations who supported the State Veterans Homes in 2020, the list is too long to include everyone on this page, we truly appreciate everyone's generosity and compassion during the COVID-19 pandemic!

Overview



Photo By: Brad Horn, Nevada State Photographer

81st Nevada Legislative Session - February 1, 2021

The Nevada Legislature meets biennially, every other year. NDVS prepared for the legislative session by meeting with leaders of the veterans community and gathering their ideas for presentations to the Governor and State Legislators.

2020 Veterans Legislative Symposium

As part of the NDVS mission to coordinate the activities of Veterans Services Organizations, we partner with the United Veterans Legislative Council (UVLC) to host a Legislative Symposium every other year when the Nevada Legislature is not in session. In the past, the Legislative Symposium has been split in to two symposia events – one held in northern Nevada and one in southern Nevada. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we held a virtual statewide Legislative Symposium on May 26, 2020.

The purpose of Nevada's Veterans Legislative Symposium is to bring together representatives from the Nevada veteran's community to develop and prioritize legislative recommendations for the upcoming legislative session. The results of these symposia are compiled into a report and presented to the Governor and to members of the Nevada Legislature. While the purpose of the symposium is to identify issues that might be addressed by the State of Nevada Legislature, issues are often raised that can be addressed by the Governor or by State of Nevada agencies. These issues are referred to the appropriate state authority. Additionally, any federal issues raised by participants are presented to members of Nevada's Congressional delegation for their review and consideration.

VETERANS AND THE 81ST SESSION OF THE NV LEGISLATURE

2020 Veterans Legislative Symposium

Identified Themes from 2020 Symposium in Priority Order

THEME 1: Improve outreach and information programs to increase awareness of, and connection to, veterans benefits and services.

THEME 2: Honor and recognize veteran's service by reducing certain state fees, tuition, and taxes.

THEME 3: Support and expand mental and medical healthcare programs for veterans, especially those associated with suicide prevention.

THEME 4: Provide needed support to families and caregivers.

Issues Considered Most Critical by Participants of the 2020 Symposium

1. The State of Nevada should continue to pursue activities in support of reducing suicide among Nevada's veterans.
2. The State of Nevada should pursue options to improve support to caregivers of Nevada's veterans.
3. The State of Nevada should fund and modernize the Southern Nevada State Veterans Home.
4. The State of Nevada should reduce or eliminate business license fees for veteran-owned businesses.
5. The Office of the Attorney General should continue to Implement the Office of Military Legal Assistance Program for Veterans.
6. The State of Nevada should construct and operate veteran adult day healthcare facilities.
7. The State of Nevada should reduce or eliminate Nevada State Park Fees for all veterans.
8. The Nevada Department of Veterans Services should create an outreach officer position in northern Nevada.
9. The State of Nevada should create and support Military Spouse Employment and Reciprocity Programs.
10. The State of Nevada should create a State Transition Assistance Program.
11. The State of Nevada should allow students at universities and colleges not associated with the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) to use veteran services at NSHE schools.



NEVADA - THE MOST VETERAN AND MILITARY FRIENDLY STATE IN THE NATION

NDVS “Mind Map” of Our Way Ahead

STRENGTHENING, INTEGRATING, AND HONORING NEVADA’S VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES



Honor

- Vietnam Veteran Commemorative Book
- Operation Recognition Program Expansion
- Every Generation Program
- Veterans in Care Initiative
- Cemetery Locator Initiative
- Veteran/Veteran Supporter of the Month Program
- Cemetery Scatter Garden Initiative
- Cemetery Expansion
- Weekend Burial Options
- Establish a Veterans Rural Burial Ground in Elko
- Youth Veteran Support Award



Integrate

- Statewide VSO Support - Wherever a Veteran Lives!
- Patriot Employer Program
- VSO and Veterans Advocate Training Programs
- Veterans Information System
- NDVS Website Redesign - Benefits by Location
- State Transition Assistance Program
- Veteran and Military Monument Location Project
- Non-NSHE Student Veteran Support Initiative
- Licensure Reciprocity Expansion
- Veterans Court and Incarcerated Veteran Reintegration



Strengthen

- “Beyond the VA” Community Care Initiative
- Governor/Mayors Challenge to Prevent Veteran and Family Member Suicide
- Bravo-Zulu Military Culture Training for Care Providers
- Healthcare Champions Initiative
- Reach Full Census at the New Northern Nevada State Veterans Home
- Veterans Adult Day Healthcare Initiative
- Southern Nevada State Veterans Home Redesign - “Home Again” Project
- Disabled Veteran Sports Program Expansion
- Veteran Homelessness Program Support



IKIGAI is a Japanese word whose meaning translates roughly to a reason for being, a sense of purpose, joy, and a feeling of well-being. The NDVS Team is committed to ensuring every Nevada Veteran, Service Member living in Nevada, and their families achieve **IKIGAI**.

FINAL WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

A Look Ahead...



KAT MILLER
DIRECTOR

Often as I begin a new year, I look back on the old one with great nostalgia. This past year? Not so much nostalgia as astonishment at what our team was able to accomplish under very, very difficult conditions. Many of the goals we set for 2020 had to be modified or put on hold as we responded to challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact it had on Nevada veterans and their families.

We faced new and unanticipated missions such as completely switching to virtual claims systems, developing aggressive nursing home testing and infection control protocols, and responding to an avalanche of housing, employment, and mental health requests for assistance. And while we were able to achieve many of the important projects originally planned (such as opening our new Northern Nevada State Veterans Home, upgrading the water purification system in our Southern Nevada State Veterans Home, and expanding Caregiver and Justice Reintegration Programs), we have some ground to make up in the coming year.

During our annual leadership conference, our team came together and rewrote our strategic plan based on our department “Mind Map” which is shown on page 58. I am proud of the work we have done to chart our course over the next few years. Here are the goals addressed in our plan; a complete list of supporting strategic objectives can be found on the NDVS website.

- **Goal #1** - Reintegrate Current Era Veterans into Nevada Communities.
- **Goal #2** - Support Healthcare Needs of Aging and Disabled Veterans.
- **Goal #3** - Support Nevada’s Military and Veteran Families.
- **Goal #4** - Honor Every Generation of Veteran - Every Year.
- **Goal #5** - Improve NDVS Structure, Policy, and Operations.
- **Goal #6** - Ensure All Nevadans Have Access to Information Regarding Benefits and Services They Have Earned.
- **Goal #7** - Develop Programs Supporting Unique and At-Risk Veterans Populations.
- **Goal #8** - Improve Infrastructure and Equipment to Better Support Operations.
- **Goal #9** - Educate Nevadans about the Legacy, Contributions, and Needs of Nevada Veterans and Their Families, and of the Activities of NDVS
- **Goal #10** - Respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Ensuring Continuity of Operations and the Safety of Residents, Staff, Customers, and Visitors.

In closing, the men and women of NDVS remain grateful for the support of Governor Sisolak and the Nevada State Legislature, and for the support of Nevada’s Veterans Service Organizations as we work together to honor and enrich the lives of Nevada’s veterans and their families.

Respectfully,
Kat Miller

Director

Serving Nevada's Heroes Since 1943

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES



www.veterans.nv.gov

NDVS Annual Report SFY 2020 overseen by NDVS Communications Director, Julie Dudley. Designed by The Factory | thefactoryreno.com. For more information contact: dudleyj@veterans.nv.gov