

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



TRANSITIONS
PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

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(For dates, times, appointments)

VSO AT NORTHERN NEVADA STATE VETERANS HOME

(775) 827-2955

(For dates, times, appointments)

For information about veterans benefits, services, or claims assistance, contact our Veterans Advocacy and Support Team:

- “Ask a VSO” online form:
www.veterans.nv.gov/ask-a-vso
- Visit the Benefits & Services section of the NDVS website to locate a VSO near you:
www.veterans.nv.gov/benefits-and-services



CONNECT WITH NDVS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Search: Nevada Department of Veterans Services

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Message From The Director

KAT MILLER
DIRECTOR

Thank you for reading our 2021 Annual Report! I am honored to showcase some of the groundbreaking work accomplished by the great Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) team!

Every year we develop a theme that best defines that year for our department. This year we settled on, “Transitions.” Transitions can be exciting, such as leaving military service and starting a new career; or empowering, such as focusing on physical and mental well-being; or terribly sad, such as bidding a final farewell to a loved one. For us, 2021 was all about helping veterans successfully navigate challenging transitions. With the help of our many partners, NDVS helped more veterans and family members connect to needed benefits and services than in any year since our creation in 1943.

As you read through this report, you will learn more of NDVS’ work in supporting transitions—but let me highlight two of the most noteworthy. First, with the support of Governor Sisolak and the Nevada Legislature, we created the Nevada Transition Assistance Program (NVTAP). NVTAP helps veterans and servicemembers successfully reintegrate into Nevada communities. This program is different from federal transition assistance programs as it provides information specific to Nevada benefits, services, and resources, to include employment, housing, education, and other needs.

Second, we created the PFC Nick Crombie Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Academy. A key transition for many older veterans occurs when healthcare issues require them to seek skilled nursing care. For some, that can mean residing at one of our State Veterans Homes where they receive top-notch skilled nursing care in 5-Star rated facilities. Unfortunately, the national shortage of healthcare personnel made staffing a challenge. The Crombie Academy helps ensure we have needed nursing assistant staff to support our veterans.

I would also like to highlight the continuing work of our team, who with partners across Nevada, are aggressively working to prevent suicide among veterans and their families. Transitioning servicemembers are “disconnected” from the Department of Defense healthcare system when they leave service, just as they enter a period of great financial, housing, employment, and social stress. 2021 saw the expansion of the Mayor’s Challenge teams, adding Elko and Winnemucca to the Cities of Las Vegas, Reno, and Sparks. We are very proud that NDVS, in partnership with the Nevada National Guard and the Reno and Sparks Police Departments, received a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence Award for Suicide Prevention. This award was the fourth national best practice award received by NDVS in the past five years.

Finally, on a personal note, this is my last opportunity to contribute to the NDVS annual report as I am experiencing my own transition. After 47 years of service, first as a Solider and then as the Director of this great department, it is time for me to retire. I have been honored to follow in the footsteps of 14 other directors, who with their teams, created programs that enriched the lives of Nevada veterans. I know, however, that our team’s legacy stands out as unique. Working with my team to support Nevada veterans and their families has not been a “job” but an absolute privilege and I fervently hope that I can keep in touch with the many wonderful people I have worked with over the past decade.

In closing, I hope you enjoy reading about the amazing work accomplished by the dedicated and creative men and women of NDVS, professionals committed to supporting Nevada’s veterans and their families though all of life’s many transitions.

Respectfully,
Kat Miller

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kat Miller'.



Message From Nevada Veterans Services Commission

BILL BAUMANN

CHAIRMAN, VETERANS SERVICES COMMISSION

To the Honorable Governor, Honorable Members of the Nevada Legislature, Fellow Veterans, and the Distinguished Citizens of Nevada,

The Veterans Services Commission (VSC) would have a difficult time operating without the support of the Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) and the professional staff of this department. We function as a team alongside NDVS, recommending actions to Nevada's elected and appointed officials that enrich the lives of Nevada's veterans and their families.

One of the VSC's most important duties is to make recommendations to the Governor, the Legislature and the Director regarding issues relating to veterans; and the members of the VSC take this duty very seriously. Since last reported, the VSC identified and presented to State of Nevada legislators several recommendations for consideration, recommendations that were later signed into law by the Governor. We were careful to ensure the recommendations made did not have significant funding implications, primarily due to budget constraints resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. In the 81st Legislative Session, 23 Bills and one Senate Resolution were presented, 15 Bills were signed into statute, and eight had no further action. As we prepare for the 82nd Legislative Session, the VSC continues to review ideas for potential legislation, to include recommendations not adopted in the last session.

Our State has seen a great deal of hardship over the past two-and-a-half plus years associated with the pandemic, however, despite that, the VSC has been able to press forward with our duties, meeting both by Zoom and when possible, in-person wearing face coverings. The one area that was most negatively impacted was the Veteran of the Month and Veteran Supporter of the Month Programs that the VSC administers on behalf the Governor; hopefully, we will soon get back to being able to present these awards in-person.

In 2021, under the superb leadership of Director Katherine (Kat) Miller, NDVS has been able to continue to administer their excellent core programs (working primarily from remote locations), while at the same time, bringing on new programs to support Nevada's veterans. While continuing the department's full range of activities, Director Miller took on the challenge of hosting the 75th National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs Annual Training Conference. The turnout was tremendous; so much was shared in the various training sessions. Every state director brought something to the training sessions and every director took something from the training sessions. The NDVS staff played a vital role in ensuring a successful outcome of the training conference and they are all to be commended for a superior job, well done. What I found gratifying was to see how Nevada was regarded as a leader in the field of veterans' services, as evidenced from the adoption of so many of NDVS' programs by other states.

In closing, as Chairman of the Nevada Veterans Services Commission (VSC), I am very proud to serve the veterans of the State of Nevada, and work alongside the Nevada Department of Veteran Services. Having served for 17 years on the Veterans Services Commission at the will and pleasure of four Governors, alongside four NOVS/NDVS Directors (all of whom were successful with their programs), I am pleased to report that the Department has continued to improve programming supporting Nevada's veterans and their families, especially veterans transitioning from military service back to life as a civilian. As the State of Nevada's primary advisor on veterans' issues, along with all the members of the VSC, it has been the honor of a lifetime to have been a part of the team effort to improve the lives of Nevada's veterans and their families.

Respectfully,
Bill Baumann

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Baumann". The signature is stylized with a cursive script.

Chairman, Veterans Services Commission

Who We Are



Our Motto

Serving Nevada's Heroes

Our Vision

Helping all Nevada veterans and their families understand and connect to benefits and services they have earned.

Our Mission

To serve Nevada veterans by honoring their remarkable legacy and by connecting them to earned benefits and services. Through our seven major efforts we:

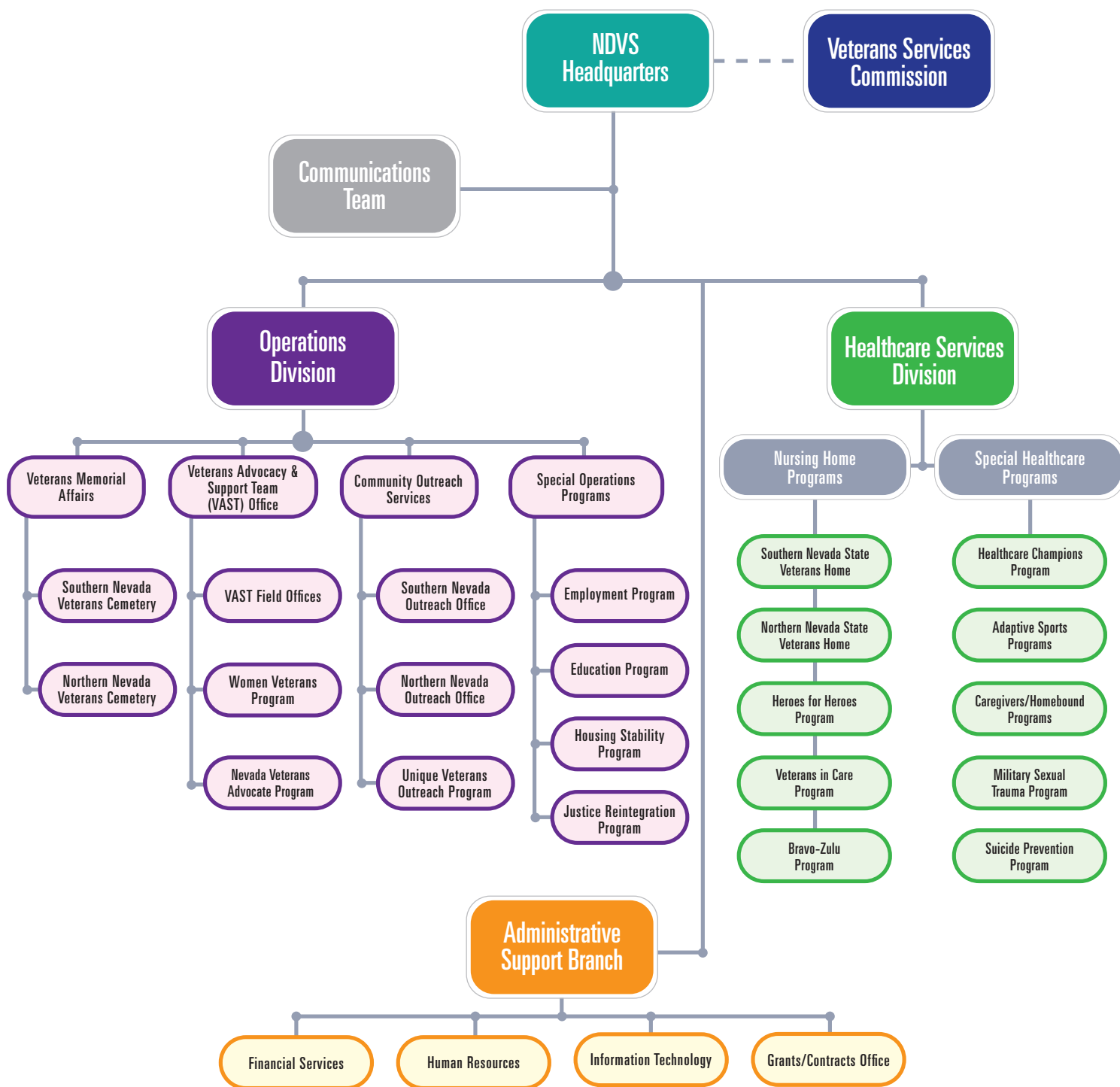
- Professionally assist veterans and their families obtain Federal and State veterans' benefits.
- Provide quality skilled nursing care at our State Veterans Homes.
- Provide dignified burial support at our State Veterans Memorial Cemeteries.
- Effectively manage programs to address the needs of at-risk veterans.
- Successfully integrate returning servicemembers 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 and activities of service organizations and individuals for the benefit of Nevada veterans, servicemembers, and their families.

Who We Serve

Veterans, Active Duty, Guard and Reserve Members who live or work in Nevada, along with their families, caregivers, and survivors.

NDVS OVERVIEW

Organizational Chart



NDVS OVERVIEW

The Heroes We Serve

How Nevada Veterans Compare Nationally

Number of Veterans ¹
NEVADA: 254,851
NATIONALLY: 19,998,799
Percentages:
<div>NEVADA: 10.35%</div> <div>NATION: 6.60%</div>

Number of Women Veterans ¹
NEVADA: 24,566
NATIONALLY: 1,882,848
Percentages:
<div>NEVADA: 9.94%</div> <div>NATION: 9.41%</div>

Number of Military Retirees ¹
NEVADA: 33,972
NATIONALLY: 2,156,647
Percentages:
<div>NEVADA: 13.53%</div> <div>NATION: 10.78%</div>

Veterans Age 65 and Over ¹
NEVADA: 118,640
NATIONALLY: 9,410,179
Percentages:
<div>NEVADA: 47.24%</div> <div>NATION: 47.05%</div>



WARTIME VETERANS ¹ (Some may have served in more than one war)
Gulf War: 81,307
Vietnam Era: 92,497
Korean Conflict: 23,493
World War II: 8,860
Peacetime: 68,099

NEVADA-BASED ACTIVE-DUTY, NATIONAL GUARD, RESERVES ²		
ACTIVE DUTY: 12,375 Air Force: 10,859 Navy: 1,208 Army: 201 Marine Corps: 105 Coast Guard: 2		U.S. ARMED FORCES RESERVES: 3,529 U.S. Army: 1,459 U.S. Air Force: 1,291 U.S. Navy: 602 U.S. Marine Corps: 177
NEVADA NATIONAL GUARD: 4,551 Army: 3,339 Air Force: 1,212		TOTAL: 20,455

¹Population data is derived from the Veteran Population Projection Model 2018 (VetPop2018) https://www.va.gov/vetdata/veteran_population.asp. VetPop estimates were increased by 15 percent as VetPop data is derived, in part, from 2010 Census Numbers that do not reflect Nevada's 15 percent growth since 2010.

²Number of Military and DoD Appropriated Fund (APF) Civilian Personnel Permanently Assigned.
https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/api/download?fileName=DMDC_Website_Location_Report_2109.xlsx&groupName=milRegionCountry

NDVS OVERVIEW

The Heroes We Serve

Snapshot of Veterans Today¹

- Younger
- More racially diverse
- Includes more women than in any other period in history of military service
- Gulf War-Era veterans now account for the largest share of all U.S. veterans
- More likely than non-veterans to:
 - Own a home
 - Own a vehicle
 - Be married
 - Have some college education
 - Have a higher median household income than non-veterans, regardless of gender

Americans continue to see veterans' services as an important priority. In a March 2019 survey, a 72 percent majority of U.S. adults, and identical 72 percent shares of Republicans and Democrats, said that if they were making the federal budget, they would increase spending for veterans' benefits and services – the highest share of all 13 program areas included in the survey, except for education (also 72 percent), and the second-highest level of support for increased spending on veterans services since the Pew Research Center first asked the question in 2001.

Snapshot of Today's Challenges²

- More than two-thirds of today's veterans reported difficulties adjusting to civilian life and said that they do not know where to go or who to contact to get help.
- Nearly 8-in-10 servicemembers leave the military without a job, expecting to quickly find meaningful employment that provides adequate remuneration.
- More than 40 percent of servicemembers leave the military without having identified permanent housing.
- Suicide remains a significantly higher threat for veterans than the rest of the U.S. public.

Snapshot of Changing Demographic Profile

- VA projections suggest the number of living veterans will continue to decline over the next 25 years.
- By the year 2046, the number of female veterans is expected to increase to about 18 percent. Currently, about 9 out of 10 veterans (89 percent) are men while about 1 out of 10 (11 percent) are women.



¹Source for Snapshot of Today's Veteran and Changing Demographic Profile: www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/04/05/the-changing-face-of-americas-veteran-population

²Source for Snapshot of Today's Challenges: www.benefits.va.gov/TRANSITION/docs/mct-report-2018.pdf

NDVS OVERVIEW

Key Partnerships

Throughout our nation, and most certainly in Nevada, there are countless organizations and individuals willing to serve Nevada's veterans and military members. The challenge has been in connecting these willing partners to those in need.

Our NDVS team has worked hard to build strong relationships with many of these supporters over the years, and our combined efforts continue to grow.

Our partners include federal and State agencies, social services, private industries, nonprofit organizations, businesses, individuals and so many more, too numerous to list. We cannot thank them enough for all they do every day to enhance the lives of those we serve.

2021 Partnerships Highlights

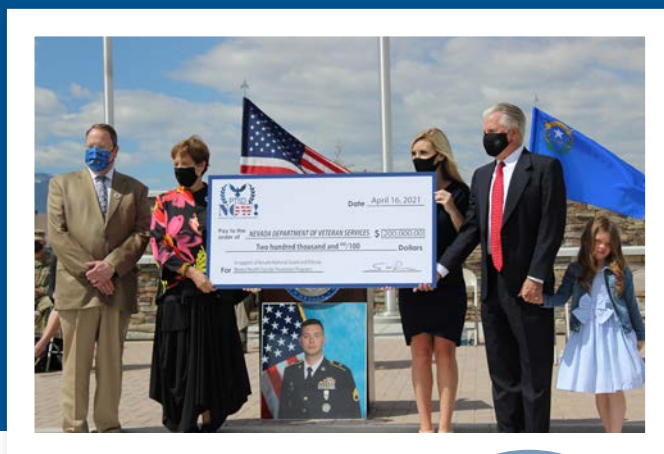


- **Nevada Transition Assistance Program:** Partnered with multiple State of Nevada departments (too numerous to list) but included Department of Motor Vehicles, Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation, Department of Wildlife, Business and Industry. Our county partners included County Assessors as well as local organizations such as Work for Warriors and others who have programs supporting veterans.
- **Justice Reintegration:** Partnered with Veterans Treatment Courts in Clark and Washoe Counties, along with other local, State, and regional agencies to successfully align and support veterans transitioning from the justice system or in need of free legal services.
- **Housing:** Partnered with State, regional and local agencies, and community partners to develop methods to mitigate issues associated with evictions of veterans.
- **COVID-19 Vaccine and Booster Shots:** Supported by the Boulder City Fire Department who helped us ensure residents and team members at the Southern Nevada State Veterans Home received timely COVID-19 vaccinations and booster shots.
- **Employment/Work Development:** Partnered with the Nevada State Board of Nursing and others to create and implement the new PFC David "Nick" Crombie Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Training Academy at the Southern Nevada State Veterans Home to ease CNA staffing shortages at the home and to provide CNA job opportunities to qualified applicants.
- **Healthcare Services Support:** Partnered with the NEST Collaborative to officially launch then expand the "Heroes for Heroes" program to connect volunteers and State Veterans Home residents to offer human connection and ease isolation due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- **Military Families Support:** Helped publicize the Nevada Department of Education's designation of Nevada's first Purple Star Schools to support children of military families.
- **Suicide Prevention Outreach:** Partnered with faith-based organizations across Nevada, along with our Challenge Team partners, to support a virtual suicide prevention educational presentation.
- **Suicide Prevention Resources:** Partnered with the nonprofit "Chase Rauchle PTSD NOW!" to hire two mental health professionals who provide counseling, needs assessment, intake evaluations, and diagnostic assessments to active-duty National Guard members.
- **Suicide Prevention Mayor's and Governor's Challenge Teams:** Partnered with local, State, federal and nonprofits to continue to support the Governor's Challenge Teams. The Mayor's Challenge Teams expanded to include Elko and Winnemucca.
- **Suicide Prevention Training:** Partnered with Crisis Support Services of Nevada, VA Sierra Healthcare System, and the Reno Vet Center to provide tools and training on the importance of understanding military culture in suicide prevention training.
- **Healthcare Provider Military Culture Training:** 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 through the Bravo Zulu program.

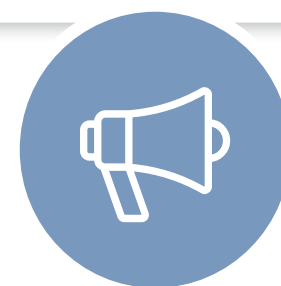
Key Partnerships



- **Adaptive Sports:** Provided the Cities of Las Vegas and Reno with grants for Adaptive Sports Programs that benefit disabled veterans.
- **Rural Transportation Grants:** Partnered with Veterans Services Organizations and rural Nevada counties in funding grants for transportation to healthcare appointments and developing telehealth outreach for Nevada veterans during the pandemic.
- **“Missing in Nevada” Program:** 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.
- **Veterans in Care Outreach:** Partnered with assisted and skilled nursing facilities across Nevada to ensure our Veterans in Care program reached thousands of veterans living in these facilities.
- **Unique Veteran Populations:** Partnered with federal, State, nonprofits, and community groups to extend outreach to veterans with unique needs, including Native American, women, LGBTQ, and incarcerated veterans.
- **Employment:** Partnered with Nevada’s businesses in support of veteran hiring and education through our Patriot Employer Program.
- **Housing:** Partnered with local, State, federal and nonprofits who are helping eliminate veteran homelessness.
- **Veteran Recognition:** Partnered with veterans service organizations and veteran supporters to ensure Nevada veterans are honored for their service.
- **Recognition for State of Nevada Veteran Employees:** Participated in the State of Nevada Department of Administration Peer Mentor Program to honor and recognize State employees who have served or are serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.



2021 NDVS Accomplishments



SFY 2021 was a year filled with significant accomplishments that demonstrate the tremendous talent, passion, and commitment of the NDVS Team. Below are some of our noteworthy accomplishments.

Employee Retention, Appreciation, Recruitment Initiatives and Programs

The U.S. Labor Department reported job openings, new hires and total separations across the nation experienced significant shifts in early 2020 at the start of the pandemic. These changes in the workforce continued through 2021, making hiring and retaining employees a challenge across the nation. In response, NDVS instituted new programs designed to help hire and retain talented team members.

- **Golden Ticket Program:** NDVS created and presented to each employee an employee appreciation pin and a “Golden Ticket” card for a day off for self-care and reflection. In exchange, employees were tasked with using the time to consider improvements to NDVS operations and to provide suggestions to their supervisor upon their return. The program resulted in some suggestions that have already been implemented, such as placing a VSO in a virtual breakout room during the virtual Women Veteran Conference in March 2021. Other suggestions are under consideration for implementation.

NDVS OVERVIEW

2021 NDVS Accomplishments

- **Healthcare Provider COVID-19 Support:** NDVS paid for motel/hotel rooms for healthcare providers at the Northern or Southern State Veterans Homes who were concerned about spreading COVID-19 to loved ones at home or had worked long-hours and were at-risk of an accident during long-distance travel back home. This policy supported healthcare providers during this stressful time.

- **PFC David “Nick” Crombie Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Training Academy**

This workforce development training academy was created to address staffing shortages at the Southern Nevada State Veterans Home (SNSVH). The Crombie Academy offers an introduction to basic nursing skills, nursing assistant duties and responsibilities, as well as an understanding of veteran culture in an acute and long-term care setting at the SNSVH at no cost to participants.

(Read more about this program under Healthcare Services in this report.)



2021 Other Accomplishment Highlights

- NDVS received the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence Award for the suicide prevention program, “Operation Mission Ready.” This is the fourth Pillars of Excellence Award for NDVS. This award recognizes innovation and best practices.
- NNSVH received the highest, 5-Star quality rating, in its first assessment by the Centers for Medicare and Medicare CMS after becoming eligible following its opening in 2019.
- SNSVH maintained the highest, 5-Star quality rating, from CMS, for the sixth year.
- SNSVH received the 2021 Eli Pick Facility Leadership Award for the sixth year. This national recognition identifies top performing leadership of skilled nursing care facilities from across the country. Only two of the more than 60 nursing homes in Nevada received the award.
- Launched the Nevada Veterans Transition Assistance Program (NVTAP) online portion of the program which is designed to assist separating military members connect to earned benefits, resources, and programs once they choose to call Nevada their home.
- Launched quarterly virtual conferences for veteran students across Nevada.
- Responded quickly and effectively in response to the global pandemic by providing the series of two COVID-19 vaccinations, along with the booster shot, to State Veterans Home residents and team members in an efficient and expeditious manner.



2021 NDVS Accomplishments



- Initiated the launch of a new Youth Service Award.
- Launched a Veterans Benefits Registry (VIS) to ensure veterans connect to information about the benefits and services earned through their military service.
- Worked closely with its Congressional delegation, VA, community partners and others to advance the VA National Cemetery Initiative in Elko.
- Obtained VA federal funding to expand the SNVMC by seven acres to support demand that will be necessary in 2023.
- Continued to move forward with the implementation of Scatter Gardens at both Veterans Memorial Cemeteries by initiating design plans and requesting donations.
- Obtained VA federal funding to support Adaptive Sports Programs in Las Vegas and Reno.
- Successfully hosted and executed the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA) Training Conference in Reno.
- Successfully hosted and executed the virtual Veterans Legislative Summit.
- Successfully hosted and executed Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature (VAMDAL) for the 81st Session of the Nevada Legislature.
- Successfully hosted and executed in-person Memorial Day ceremonies in Boulder City and Fernley.
- Successfully hosted and executed an in-person Veterans Day Ceremony in Las Vegas at the State Veterans Memorial outside the Grant Sawyer Building.
- During the Veterans Day ceremony, conducted in-person recognition of all southern Nevada Veteran of the Month and Veteran Supporter of the Month recipients who missed an in-person ceremony due to the pandemic.
- Expanded NDVS presence at Memorial Day ceremonies in rural areas by attending events in Tonopah and Hawthorne.
- Hosted three Suicide Prevention, “Veteran at End-of-Life” virtual conferences, in conjunction with Hospice Veteran Partnership of Nevada, with a total of 280 attendees participating.
- Hosted the March 2021 Virtual Women Veteran Conference with 185 total attendees participating.
- Launched first phase of the Find Your Loved One (FYLO) GPS Grave Locator Project at our State Veteran Memorial Cemeteries which assists in locating deceased loved ones by using a personal mobile device or NDVS website.
- Developed plan to launch a NDVS website search of the Benefits and Resources page by Zip Code.
- With the help of volunteers, scanned more than 47,000 of 80,000 archived military discharge documents into the Veterans Information System (VIS), helping NDVS locate and support Nevada veterans and their families.
- Answered 1,174 “Ask a VSO” online inquiries.
- Successfully reinstated in-person, by appointment VSO visits across the State of Nevada. VSOs filed 2,491 claims to assist veterans and families to earned benefits and services bringing a total of \$213,508,047 dollars in federal funding to Nevada.
- Successfully integrated to the State of Nevada’s SMART 21 system that modernizes the State’s technology ecosystem, improving Finance and Human Resources processes.

HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Every Veteran, Every Generation, Every Era

Overview

Each year, NDVS seeks to honor and recognize Nevada veteran through multiple avenues. Throughout the year, NDVS plans, supports, or hosts various events, ceremonies, and celebrations. We also assist obtain Governor proclamations and use all our communication avenues, including our website, social media, and media partners to honor and recognize Nevada veterans. The next few pages include highlights of the recognition program, "Every Veteran, Every Generation, Every Era."

Honoring All Veterans Highlights

2021 Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature

Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature (VAMDAL) is outlined in NRS 236.047. VAMDAL is held on the third Wednesday in March during each regular session of the Nevada Legislature. The day is set aside to recognize the contributions veterans have made to Nevada and to the prosperity of the Silver State and the United States. In 2021, the pandemic prohibited in-person events or ceremonies. Instead, NDVS, in partnership with the Nevada National Guard, produced a video honoring all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces including the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force and Coast Guard. The video was shown in both the State Senate and Assembly Chambers during the 81st Legislative Session.

Nevada's Veterans, Military and War Memorial Project

NDVS launched Nevada's Veteran, Military and War Memorial Project in 2019. By 2021, more than 130 memorials had been identified and cataloged. The project goal is to identify all of Nevada's public and private memorials dedicated to veterans and military members. The identified public and private memorials across Nevada may be viewed on the NDVS website or the new educational kiosk, featured in this section. The information on the memorials provides a photo, GPS location, map, as well as information about the memorial. The GPS technology pinpoints the latitude and longitude coordinates of each memorial making it easy to find and visit by using a mobile phone or mobile device.

Nevada's Fallen Heroes Project

In 2021, the Nevada's Fallen Heroes website section received an upgrade. Thanks to the Nevada Golden Star Families Foundation, certain biographical information was provided and added to create hero profiles for Nevadans killed in service during the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars. Additionally, World War I profiles were added, using information taken from the Nevada Golden Stars: A Memorial, prepared under the direction of Nevada's Adjutant General in 1924. This information provides the public with more than a list of names. It provides insight into the lives of the warriors who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in those three wars. The names of Nevada's Fallen Heroes, along with this new biographical information, also appear in the Battle Born Educational Kiosk Project listed below. NDVS is still seeking additional information from families, relatives, or loved ones regarding this project. If you can provide biographical information about any fallen hero listed, please email pio.ndvs@veterans.nv.gov so we may verify the information.

Battle Born Educational Kiosk Project (Phase 1)

In 2021, NDVS unveiled this educational kiosk during the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs Training Conference held in Reno in September 2021. The kiosk showcases three areas. First, it provides photos, information, and GPS coordinates on every identified memorial from the Nevada Veteran, Military and War Memorial Project. This will encourage visitation to each memorial. Second, it honors Nevada's Fallen Heroes by featuring the names, and some biographical information on the lives of Nevadans who died in service. Finally, the educational kiosk provides information about Nevada's role in America's wars and conflicts, prior to, and after Nevada became a State. You may find the kiosk in the lobby of the Nevada State Library, Archives, and Public Records Building in Carson City. Phase 2 of this project will feature a passport style booklet, that will be stamped by NDVS, after users visit a memorial.



HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Every Veteran, Every Generation, Every Era

Gold Star Families

2021 Second Anniversary of Nevada's Gold Star Monument and Second Luminary Event

On September 26, 2021, Gold Star Families, veterans, veteran advocates, and media members from around northern Nevada gathered in Sparks to mark the second anniversary of the dedication of the Gold Star Families Memorial at the NNSVH.

The Gold Star Memorial serves as testament to loved ones lost and the ultimate sacrifice made by the warrior and the family members left behind.

Luminary events honor and remember Gold Star Families and their fallen loved ones. These events also provide an opportunity for all to come together in support and to raise awareness in the community. During the event, attendees recognize the sacrifices of the Fallen and their families. After the ceremony, each participant turns on a fire-resistant, battery-operated tea candle and places it inside a paper bag, that is placed next to the memorial. Yellow roses are also placed on and next to the memorial. Because these ceremonies are held at sunset, the glowing candles bask the memorial and roses with a warm glow.

NDVS is proud to partner with the Nevada Gold Star Foundation and support its events and efforts to educate the public about the sacrifices of Gold Star Families.

Vietnam War Veterans Day Honored

NDVS supports events hosted by veterans' service organizations across Nevada. Support includes publicizing, speaking at, or attending an event. In 2021, NDVS leaders attended and spoke at the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter #989 event at Bartley Ranch Regional Park in Reno honoring Vietnam War Veterans Day, which is the National Day of Honor set aside each March 29 to honor those who served during the Vietnam War.

Purple Heart Day, Buffalo Soldiers Day, POW/MIA Day

NDVS supported Purple Heart Day, Buffalo Soldiers Day, and POW/MIA Day in Nevada by attending and supporting special ceremonies and assisting in obtaining proclamations from Governor Sisolak in honor of these important dates, each set aside for specific recognition.



HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Every Veteran, Every Generation, Every Era

Memorial Day Ceremonies Extend to Tonopah and Hawthorne

NDVS was once again able to host in-person ceremonies in 2021 at both the Northern and Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemeteries. Additionally, NDVS leaders attended other ceremonies across Nevada to include ceremonies in Tonopah and Hawthorne. These ceremonies provided the opportunity to thank the families of military members for their service and sacrifice. Special pins honoring military families were provided at many of these events.

New Venue for Veterans Day Ceremony

In 2021 NDVS was once again able to host an in-person ceremony. For the first time, the Veterans Day celebration was held at the Nevada State Veterans Memorial outside the Grant Sawyer Building in downtown Las Vegas. The new venue provided an opportunity for attendees of the annual downtown Las Vegas Veterans Day Parade to conveniently attend the ceremony at a closer location.

Special Recognition for Southern Veteran of the Month and Veteran Supporter of the Month Recipients During Veterans Day

The in-person Veterans Day Ceremony at the Nevada State Veterans Memorial provided the opportunity for Governor Sisolak to personally recognize the southern Nevada recipients of the Veteran of the Month and Veteran Supporter of the Month awards. These recipients missed an in-person ceremony due to COVID-19 restrictions.

New Youth Service Award

In 2021, the Veterans Services Commission approved a new recognition program designed to honor those under the age of 21, who are volunteering their time, energy, and youthful enthusiasm to support or benefit veterans, military members or family members of veterans or military members. The new award will be offered in the fall of 2022. *(See more about this award under Administrative Support Services, IT Operations Support in this report.)*



HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Every Veteran, Every Generation, Every Era



AMERICAN CIVIL WAR (1861-1865)

The April 2021 issue of the Veterans Voice noted the anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War. The November 2021 issue featured the Joint Information Center's "History of Nevada." It outlines how Nevada became a State within the United States in "News You Can Use." Nevada's Fallen Heroes from the Civil War are featured on the NDVS website and in the NDVS Kiosk Educational Project.

WORLD WAR I (1914-1918)

The NDVS Kiosk Educational Project is bringing Nevada's Fallen from WWI to life. In 2021, we added individual photos and the life stories of each Fallen Hero to the NDVS website and to the Fallen Heroes pages on the NDVS Kiosk Education Project.

WORLD WAR II (1939-1945)

The Veterans Voice e-newsletter highlighted Nevada WWII heroes and veteran authors who wrote about these heroes. Assisted the VA, as well as private citizens, in hosting or supporting birthday celebrations or funeral services across the State for WWII veterans. Publicized Honor Flight events. Nevada's fallen heroes from WWII are featured on the NDVS website and in the NDVS Kiosk Educational Project.

COLD WAR (1947-1989)

Provided special, one-on-one recognitions for veterans during in-person Veterans in Care ceremonies. Nevada Cold War veterans were profiled in our NDVS newsletter and on social media.

KOREAN WAR (1950-1953)

Assisted and hosted special recognitions for veterans during in-person Veterans in Care ceremonies. From June through December 2021, NDVS continued to distribute the book, Korea Reborn: A Grateful Nation Honors War Veterans and The Remembered War along with a DVD documentary as a free gift from the South Korean government to Korean War veterans as a thank you for their service. Supported Honor Flight Nevada and Honor Flight Southern Nevada by publicizing their events. Nevada's Fallen Heroes from the Korean War are featured on the NDVS website and in the NDVS Kiosk Educational Project.

VIETNAM WAR (1965-1973)

Supported and publicized Vietnam War Veterans Day local events, including the in-person event held by the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter #989 at the Bartley Ranch Park in Reno as well as those held in Carson City and Winnemucca. Provided special recognitions for Vietnam veterans during in-person Veterans in Care ceremonies. Honored Vietnam Veterans of America founding in January through special mention in Veterans Voice newsletter and social media posts. Nevada's Fallen Heroes from the Vietnam War are featured on the NDVS website and in the NDVS Kiosk Educational Project.

GULF WAR (1990-1991)

The year 2021 marked the 30th Anniversary of the beginning of Operation Desert Storm. Special recognition was provided in Governor Sisolak's Veterans Day remarks. From May through December 2021, NDVS continued to distribute the free book and DVD sets, 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 2021 Veterans Voice newsletter, as well as important dates posted on social media. Nevada's Fallen Heroes from the Iraq War are featured on the NDVS website and in the NDVS Kiosk Educational Project.

GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM (2001-PRESENT)

The year 2021 marked the 20th Anniversary of the beginning of the U.S. involvement in the Afghanistan War in Operation Enduring Freedom. NDVS assisted in obtaining a proclamation from the Governor's Office noting the anniversary. The Governor also recognized the anniversary in his remarks during the Veterans Day ceremony. 2021 was also the year the U.S. withdrew from Afghanistan. Using multiple communication platforms, NDVS provided connections to resources for those dealing with strong emotions due to the event. Important Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) dates were posted on social media and featured in the Veterans Voice e-newsletter. Nevada's Fallen Heroes from Iraq War are featured on the NDVS website and in the NDVS Kiosk Educational Project.

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

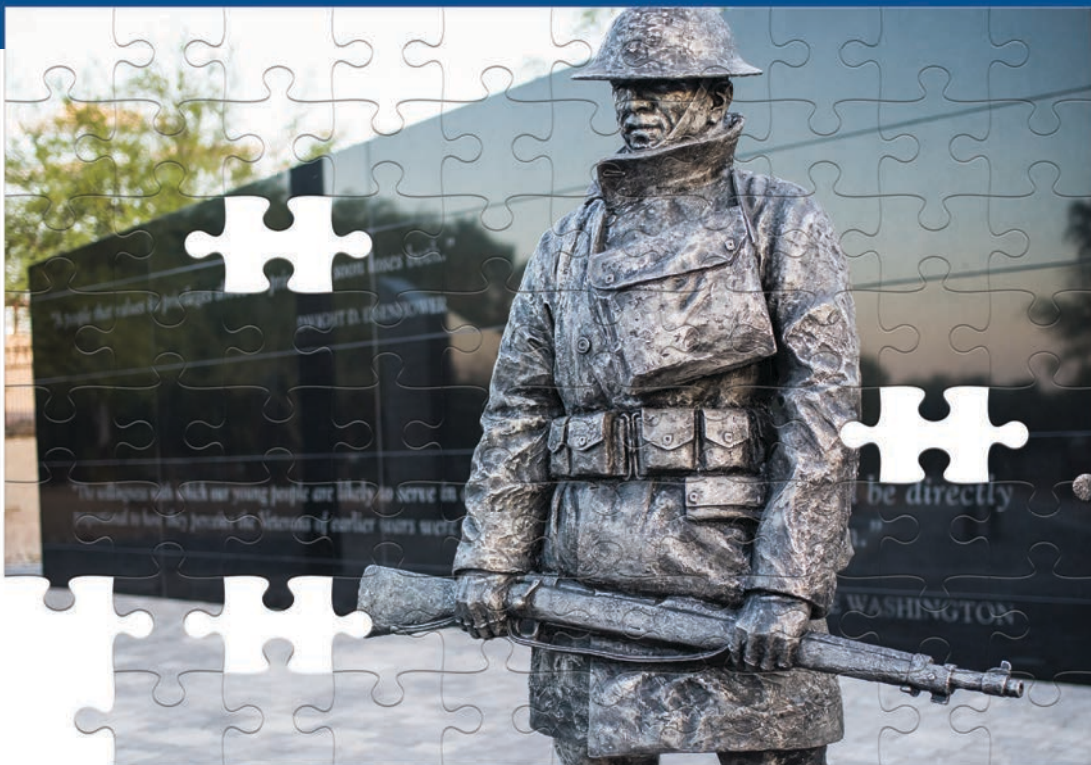
Nevada State Veterans Memorial, Grant Sawyer Grounds, Las Vegas

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.



HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Veteran of the Month Program



2021 ***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 www.veterans.nv.gov/benefits-and-services/veteran-of-the-month-program.

JANUARY:

Al Camp – U.S. Navy Veteran

FEBRUARY:

Robert Edwards – U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

MARCH:

Willette Gerald – U.S. Air Force

APRIL:

Raymond Scow Sr. – U.S. Army Veteran

MAY:

James Ebert – U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

JUNE:

Jerome Washington – U.S. Army Veteran

JULY:

Rayshawn Williams – U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

AUGUST:

Sandra Valdezate – U.S. Air Force Veteran

SEPTEMBER:

Jesse Tiffany – U.S. Army Veteran

OCTOBER:

J.R. Stafford – U.S. Coast Guard Veteran

NOVEMBER:

Tim Casey – U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

DECEMBER:

John Dickinson – U.S. Air Force Veteran

HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Veteran Supporter of the Month Program

2021 Veteran Supporters of the Month

This monthly award recognizes groups, organizations, and non-military individuals who support and serve our veterans, 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 www.veterans.nv.gov/benefits-and-services/veteran-supporter-of-the-month.



HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Veteran Supporter of the Month Program

2021

Veteran Supporter of the Month Recipients

January: Military Order of the Purple Heart

Chapter 730 works to help veterans, widows, and their dependents in handling veteran affairs, records requests, claims and letters. The office also works to support the Vietnam Veterans of America chapters and Student Veterans of the Nevada State College. Their office has also worked to support currently serving military members with their pre-discharge requirements. Additionally, the office partners with the Nevada Army National Guard Family Assistance Program to ensure service men and women have the resources they need.

February: Jon Yuspa of Washoe Valley is an active veteran and military supporter involved with the creation and continued work of Honor Flight in northern Nevada. He also supports Gold Star Families as well as several veteran support initiatives too numerous to list.

March: Las Vegas Raiders Foundation

Foundation is committed to increasing community and civic health through support of the military, veterans, and youth development. Through this commitment, the foundation donated \$10,000 to the Southern Nevada State Veterans Home supporting the home's "COVID-19 Safe Programs." In honor of Veteran's Day, the foundation conducted a "homegate," or an event for staff and residents of the home to show their appreciation. The organization is also committed to supporting active-duty military members at Nellis and Creech Air Force bases.

April: Barbara Dreyer is an author and small business owner who contributes portions of her sales to several support initiatives for veterans. She also donates many hours to helping feed challenged veterans.

May: David Wolosin is a southern Nevada optician who has provided free eye care services ranging from eye glass repair to fittings and adjustments to minor eye exams. He is a supporter of the Military Order of the Purple Heart and provides free eye care services to the Henderson National Guard Armory for family members of current guardsmen.

June: Merging Vets and Players is a nonprofit with a primary mission to bring combat veterans together with professional athletes to assist veterans transitioning to civilian life. The program promotes personal development, comradery, and support.

July: American Legion BMI Post 40 is a veteran service organization located in Henderson that is committed to sharing information on benefits, services, and community resources available to veterans, their families, and survivors. The post brings veterans together through "Legion Baseball." The post also supports the Henderson Military Recognition Banner Program.

August: Greg Weeks and Steve Custer are members of the Elks Lodge #1468 who are incredible volunteers for the "Adopt A Vet" dental program. During the pandemic, they created hygiene kits, bagged groceries, and distributed up to 30,000 pounds of food to 130 veterans.

September: Steve Seccora is a local franchise owner of Sports Clips Haircuts in Sparks. He is both a financial contributor and volunteer with the VFW Post 3396, helping to fundraise for many of the post's programs including the Youth Scholarship Award, "VFW/ Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" as well as supporting veterans through post-secondary education and trade school programs. Seccora has also provided free haircuts to veterans and active-duty servicemembers on Veterans Day.



HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Veteran Supporter of the Month Program

October: Brigitte Stafford is the Area Representative for the Associates for Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) and the event planner for VVA Chapter #989. Her volunteer activities in support of veterans and their families are far too numerous to list, but highlights include fundraising and organizing major events for the VVA Chapter #989. She also supports student veterans in higher education in northern Nevada as well as assists in obtaining donations and contributions for residents at the NNSVH.

November: Russ Childers is an active member of the Nevada State Elks Association and the Las Vegas Elks Lodge 1468. He has served as their representative to the VA Southern Nevada Health Care System since 2012 attending the VA Volunteer Service meetings. In this capacity, he has helped direct \$62,000 in funds to the VA to cover expenses, such as buying a coffee cart or coffee supplies, as well as pay for reading materials. His efforts helped to purchase a popcorn machine for the waiting rooms at various clinics throughout the hospital. Additionally, he can be found helping the Paralyzed Veterans of America with food distribution for veterans' program, cooking and serving meals at the Elks July and Thanksgiving BBQ dinners and adding to the 1,000 hours he's volunteered at the VA's Northwestern Primary Care Clinic.

December: CAMO-RNO is a 12-to-18 month court treatment program initiated for high risk/high need offenders who are veterans or currently serving servicemembers. The program is modeled after other problem-solving courts from around the country where participants remain under the court's supervision. The program connects veterans to a mentor and to services and resources that alleviate the underlying issues. Since its launch, CAMO-RNO has been able to help 35 to 40 individuals move through its four-phase program enabling 30 individuals to graduate.

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

HONORING NEVADA'S VETERANS

Veterans in Care Program

The Veterans in Care Program (VIC) recognizes and thanks veterans across Nevada who are living in skilled nursing or assisted living facilities, as well as veterans who are homebound. The heartwarming ceremonies honor each veteran, but they also provide an important opportunity. The lives of some of these veterans may be greatly enhanced by the benefits, programs and services earned through military service. These ceremonies help identify veterans in need and assist NDVS in connecting these veterans to benefits they have earned. In August 2021, NDVS began offering in-person ceremonies once again as COVID-19 vaccines and boosters became widespread and mask wearing, along with social distancing, kept everyone safe.

Recurring Special Ceremonies

- Flag-In Day events prior to Memorial Day at our State Veterans Cemeteries
- Special Forces Ceremony prior to Memorial Day at SNVMC
- Memorial Day Ceremonies
- Veterans Day Ceremonies
- POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony
- Missing in Nevada Project Ceremonies
- Ceremonies for Unaccompanied Veterans
- Wreaths Across America



Providing Support Through Life's Transitions



FRED WAGAR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Overview

The Deputy Director of Operations provides oversight for the following areas:

- Nevada's two State Veteran Memorial Cemeteries
- The Veterans Advocacy and Support Team (VAST)
- Emergency Management Operations
- The Community Outreach Team

Nevada's State Veterans Memorial Cemeteries

Support for One of Life's Toughest Transitions

NDVS supports burial benefits for eligible veterans and their families. The department manages two State Veteran Memorial Cemeteries, the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (SNVMC) in Boulder City and the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (NNVMC) in Fernley.

In addition to eligible veterans, these State Veteran Memorial Cemeteries also serve as a dignified final resting place for eligible spouses, dependents, and Gold Star Parents. There is no cost for veterans. The cost for eligible dependents and Gold Star Parents is \$450 (*Prices are subject to change*).

Our cemetery staff often refers families to our NDVS Veterans Advocacy and Support Team (VAST) who provide survivors support, information, and resources to help them navigate these tough times. Survivors may see one of our Veteran Service Officers to learn more about benefits and claims, free of charge. (*See the Health Care section of this report for additional resources for survivors.*)

Pre-Registration Available

Eligible veterans, spouses, dependents, and Gold Star Parents may pre-register for cemetery interment through the NDVS Online Cemetery Registration Form or in-person at either cemetery. There are no fees for pre-registration. Required forms for pre-registration include a copy of the veteran's discharge document. Additionally, a marriage certificate is required for pre-registration of a spouse. To pre-register, visit:

www.veterans.nv.gov/online-cemetery-registration-form



Nevada's State Veterans Memorial Cemeteries

Recurring Ceremonies

Ceremonies for the Unaccompanied – Volunteer organizations ensure no veteran ever makes their final walk alone. These volunteers assist with ceremonies when family members or friends of a deceased veteran are not present. Unaccompanied services include a live bugle rendition of “Taps,” a three-volley salute, and a flag-folding ceremony.

- **SNVMC** – Held weekly on Thursdays at 8:40 a.m. They are supported by many southern Nevada veterans’ organizations including the Southern Nevada Patriot Guard Riders and the Women Veterans of Nevada.
- **NNVMC** – Held monthly on the fourth Thursday of the month at 9:00 a.m. during May-October and at 3:00 p.m. from November-April. These ceremonies are supported by the Nevada Veterans Coalition.

Flag-In Event – Held annually on the Saturday before Memorial Day to place an American flag on each individual headstone.

Memorial Day – Held annually on the final Monday in May.

Veterans Day – Held annually on November 11th.

Wreaths Across America – Held annually on the third Saturday in December to place a wreath on each individual headstone.

SERVICES OFFERED

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • Gravesites | • Assist with Determining Eligibility |
| • Cremation In-ground | • Committal Services |
| • Cremation Columbarium | • Military Honor Service |
| • Open/Closed Graves | • Perpetual Care |
| • Interment Site | • Grave Locator Services |
| • Markers and Headstones | |



“We ensure the promise made when you signed your name on the dotted line is a promise kept. All veterans deserve and have earned the right to a dignified burial with respect and honor. We also ensure no veteran will ever have to make the walk to their final resting place alone.” ~The late Mr. Brett Palmer, Former President, Nevada Veterans Coalition, talking about the mission of the coalition.

*RIP Brett Palmer
07/10/1952 - 08/23/2021*



MAKE A DONATION

Visit www.veterans.nv.gov/donate
Select from donation options. Thank you!

OPERATIONS DIVISION

Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery



The SNVMC remains the second busiest State Veterans' Cemetery in the nation with 2,137 interments and an additional 135 memorial services in SFY 2021. Since opening in 1990, the SNVMC has performed 49,031 interments of eligible veterans and family members.

SNVMC INTERMENT SERVICES SFY21

VETERANS
1,484

TOTAL: 2,137

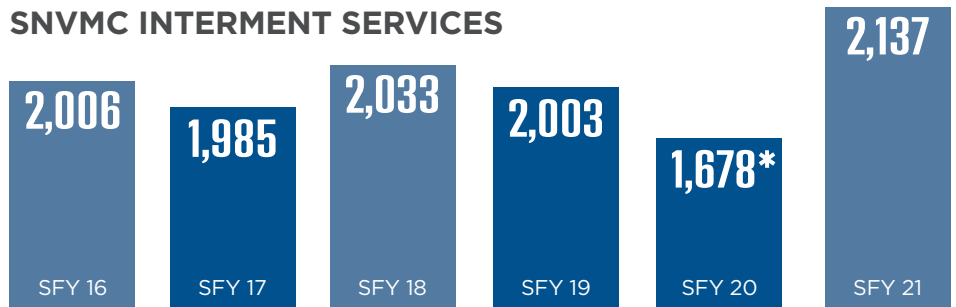
DEPENDENTS/SPOUSES
653

TOTAL ACRES: 71

TOTAL ACRES DEVELOPED: 41

STAFF SIZE: 15

SNVMC INTERMENT SERVICES



OPERATIONS DIVISION

Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery



NNVMC provides a place of peace, solitude, and comfort for families to gather and honor those they have lost. Since its opening in 1990, NNVMC has interred 12,344 veterans and spouses.

NNVMC INTERMENT SERVICES SFY21

VETERANS
486

TOTAL: 663

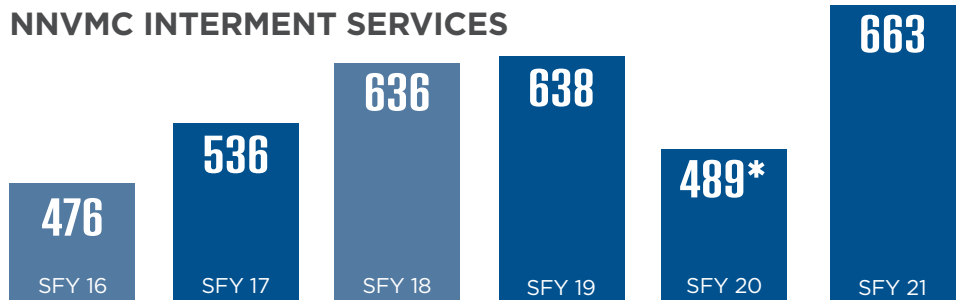
DEPENDENTS/SPOUSES
177

TOTAL ACRES: 44

TOTAL ACRES DEVELOPED: 18

STAFF SIZE: 5

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.

State Memorial Veterans Cemeteries Current and Future Projects

VA Grants and State Funding Will Provide Enhancements and Improvements

NNVMC – NDVS secured a total of \$5,182,845 in VA federal and State funding in 2021 to develop 757 in-ground plots and 3,580 columbarium wall cremation niches as well as 806 pre-placed crypts. Additional infrastructure projects are included to improve the cemetery, including a loading dock for unloading markers and other heavier deliveries. This expansion will create a new area of interment that will be needed by the year 2023 at the Fernley cemetery. A total of \$297,774 in State funding was approved by the 81st Legislature to renovate the committal pavilion. The project began in December 2021.

SNVMC – Boulder City’s SNVMC was offered a “grant opportunity” by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for up to \$5,780,000 to expand the cemetery by seven acres. The State of Nevada already set aside \$607,271 in State matching funds for the project. The expansion will add 5,376 niches and 11,481 in-ground cremation plots which will add seven new burial sections.

Donations Sought to Design and Build Scatter Gardens

Some families have requested the option of a Scatter Garden, which is specified area that provides a peaceful, beautiful setting to spread cremains in a dignified and honorable way. Plaques, benches, and markers of deceased loved ones are placed in Scatter Gardens for loved ones to visit, reflect and remember.

NDVS has been accepting donations for the design and construction of a Scatter Garden at both the northern and southern cemeteries. To donate visit: www.veterans.nv.gov/donate and select Scatter Garden from the donation options. Your donation is greatly appreciated.

VA National Cemetery in Elko Initiative Advances

The effort to place a veterans’ cemetery in Elko has been years in the making. Since the project was first announced, NDVS has worked closely with the VA, Nevada’s federal delegation, and northeastern veterans’ organizations to help advance this important project. The project was originally approved by the VA in 2013. In 2021, the VA announced its renewed commitment to build a 15-acre National Veterans Cemetery in Elko. In November 2021, the VA began soliciting name recommendations from veterans and military organizations for the new cemetery which will provide a local burial site for approximately 3,700 northeastern Nevada veterans and their eligible family members.

Find Your Loved One (FYLO) Grave Locator GPS/GIS Mapping Project (Phase 1)

Finding loved ones interred at either the Northern or the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemeteries can be difficult because the computerized federal grave locator system often experiences disruptions. And, even when the system is working, it can be difficult to navigate from the monitor located on our administrative building to an actual interment location. In 2021, we uploaded the location of each final resting place by GPS location. This information will soon be available through the NDVS website and on personal mobile devices through a free app, allowing visitors to navigate directly to an interment site, like the system used at the Arlington National Cemetery. In Phase 2, families will be able to upload information, biographies, stories, or photos about their interred loved ones onto our GPS locator so they can be shared with future generations.

Community Support Makes a Difference

Thank you to all the volunteers who provide services to our cemeteries! This includes the veteran service organizations that arrange events and provide honors during interment services throughout the year. Additionally, veterans’ service organizations and individuals donated their time to help keep the cemetery grounds looking beautiful. Many donated funds and equipment over the course of 2021 to provide cemetery staff with additional resources and tools to support their hard work. For these services and more, we thank our supporters and all the volunteers. Your generosity matters and makes a difference!

OPERATIONS DIVISION

Veterans Advocacy and Support Team

NDVS has been supporting veterans with claims assistance since the agency was established in 1943. Since then, our Veterans Service Officers (VSOs) remain at the core of the services NDVS provides. Our VSOs are part of the Veterans Advocacy and Support Team (VAST).

VSOs assist servicemembers, veterans, and their families in connecting to needed information about, and access to, their earned benefits, programs, and services. From helping file VA claims and appeals, to providing information about benefits and services, VSOs guide transitioning veterans through what can be a confusing process.

Nevada-based VSOs are trained by NDVS or by their parent veterans' services organization, and accredited by the VA.

Average Annual Monetary Award Generated by VSOs:
\$18,330,780
Comparison to Previous Year (SFY 2020):
\$16,823,340

Annual Active Awards: \$12,239
Active Awards per Veteran, Monthly: \$1,491
Comparison to Previous Year (SFY 2020): \$1,569

Claims or Other Support Actions for Incarcerated Veterans: 187

Records Submitted Electronically to VA: 10,707
(VAST is now 99.5 percent paperless!)

Phone Calls: 18,329
Previous Year: 5,454

Office Visits: 491
Previous Year: 7,167

Emails: 8,282
Previous Year: 3,174

During the pandemic, VA "hard copy" notifications received by VAST dropped to nearly zero. During the last quarter, VA notifications skyrocketed to 3,311 letters requiring VSOs to manually update status of claims, scheduling of doctor appointments, and awards in the NDVS claims management database.

VSOs Overcome Pandemic Challenges

At the start of the pandemic, our VAST offices were closed and claims assistance was provided virtually. In June 2021, the VAST offices re-opened with claims assistance provided by appointment, while virtual claims services continued. VAST was challenged with staffing shortages experienced by employers across the country and by temporary state hiring freezes resulting in a 2021 VAST average staffing of 66 percent. While a significant decrease in the ability to file claims was expected, the decrease was only 8.2 percent. This higher-than-expected claims filing rate was a direct result of increased productivity of our VSOs who were operating at peak performance under extremely challenging conditions.

The NDVS website feature, "Ask a VSO," provides a quick, efficient, and convenient way for veterans to access a VSO to learn about their benefits or ask questions concerning a wide array of veteran-related topics.

Number of Active Nevada VSOs: 36

Number of NDVS VSOs: 20

Claims Filed and VA Monetary Awards to Nevada (Data from SFY July 2020 - June 2021)

CLAIMS FILED: 2,491

New Claims: 1,674

VA Monetary Awards to Nevada: \$213,508,047

COMPARISON TO PREVIOUS YEAR (Data from July 2019 - June 2020)

Claims Filed: 2,729

VA Monetary Awards to Nevada: \$205,210,682

"Ask a VSO" Sets Record

The NDVS website feature "Ask a VSO" allows anyone to email a question to a VSO and receive a response within 24-to-48 hours. Of special note, 114 of the "Ask a VSO" inquiries over the course of the year were from veterans in other states and in other countries, showing how valued this "immediate response" system is to America's veterans.

VSO Inquiries: 1,174
Previous Year (Prior to March, Pre-COVID-19): 320

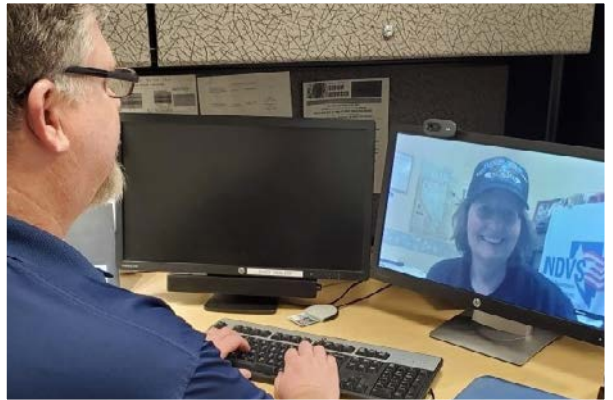
 To connect with a VSO, visit veterans.nv.gov and find a VSO near you under Benefits and Services.

OPERATIONS DIVISION

Veterans Advocacy and Support Team

Claims Videoconferencing Expansion

Videoconferencing created new opportunities for VSOs in assisting Nevada veterans connect to earned benefits, resources, and services. NDVS began offering this virtual assistance prior to the pandemic, positioning NDVS for the pandemic's impact. This technology has made it possible to connect with veterans in places that are challenging to reach, including Nevada's rural areas as well as incarcerated veterans. Videoconferencing is also reducing the time and expense associated with travel, freeing up time for VSOs to assist more veterans. The VAST team is researching new software that will allow signatures on a veteran's phone or tablet with the goal of making the virtual claims process even more convenient in 2022 and beyond.



VSO Expansion in Rural Areas

NDVS created a part-time VSO position to support veterans in Winnemucca. This VSO fills an important gap. Prior to NDVS creating this position, veterans in Humboldt and Lander Counties had to make a two-hour trip (one-way) to meet face-to-face with a VSO in either Reno or Elko. Additionally, NDVS entered into an agreement with the City of Henderson to provide a part-time VSO support in their Veterans Center, filling another service gap. Finally, negotiations are ongoing with other municipalities to place part-time VSOs in community-based locations to improve access to these important services.



Veteran Information System (VIS) Scanning Project Reaches Milestone

The VAST team oversees this important project that involves scanning hard copy military documents (DD Form 214s and earlier forms of discharge documents) into the State of Nevada electronic database system. For more than three years, specially trained and vetted volunteers, along with NDVS staff, have been scanning approximately 80,000 hard copies. In 2021, the group marked a major milestone scanning and entering more than 47,000 documents. This project is now 60 percent complete! This project is critical to identifying Nevada veterans so that NDVS can better advise veterans and families about new benefits or changes to existing ones.



Welcome Home Campaign

When a servicemember decides to leave the U.S. Armed Forces, either through the expiration of their term of service or through retirement, they are asked where they intend to reside in their new civilian life. When the answer is Nevada, the VAST Team takes action to welcome them and connect them to important State and federal resources. In 2021, the team sent 3,452 "Welcome Home" letters and packets to servicemembers which included information on colleges and universities, Job Connect offices, State benefits, State Veterans Cemeteries and State Veterans Homes. The "Welcome Home" packet also includes contact information for all VA offices, hospitals, and clinics.

FAST FACT:

In 2021, VAST sent 724 "Welcome Home" packets to women transitioning from the military, representing 21% of the 3,452 packets sent to transitioning servicemembers.

OPERATIONS DIVISION

Emergency Management

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, NDVS wrote a Pandemic Annex to our Continuity of Operations Plan to ensure the department was prepared to respond to and mitigate the effects of a loss of workforce due to pandemics. The Deputy Director of Operations (DDO) was appointed as the Nevada Department of Emergency Management (NDEM) Operations Liaison. As a liaison, the DDO is responsible for the coordination of State emergency response, including notification to the NDEM, as well as key legislative, and congressional partners with Situation Reports on pandemic issues facing the department. As a member of Nevada's emergency management team, the DDO attended frequent NDEM meetings to help support the needs of Nevada's veterans and their families during the pandemic.



OPERATIONS DIVISION

Community Outreach

Veterans Community Councils

NDVS reaches veterans where they live by hosting or attending community events. The next time you're attending a community event, chances are an NDVS Outreach team member is attending the same event too. This direct outreach is particularly important to veterans living in rural areas, who may not have knowledge or immediate access to their earned benefits and services.

In 2021, the Outreach Team hosted 28 NDVS virtual or in-person events, reaching 1,538 people across Nevada. The team returned to the office in June 2021 as vaccine rates increased and social isolation protocols began to ease. In 2021, the Outreach Team made more than 600 welfare calls to Nevada veteran organizations to ensure the well-being of those who may still be isolated due to the pandemic.

2021 OUTREACH EVENTS SUMMARY:

OUTREACH EVENTS HOSTED: 28

(Either virtual or in-person)

Attendees reached: 1,538

OUTREACH EVENTS ATTENDED: 200

Attendees reached: 82,766

Interactions with attendees: 1,442

Nevada Veterans Advocates
assisting with events: 217

Direct referrals for service: 478



Community Outreach

Nevada Veterans Transition Assistance Program Launches

The Nevada Veterans Transition Assistance Program (NVTAP) ensures transitioning servicemembers, veterans, and their families obtain information, specific to Nevada, regarding earned benefits and services offered by State, county, local entities, and organizations. NVTAP, created by NDVS, is based on a similar California program. NVTAP was submitted as a Government Affairs Committee Bill during Nevada's 81st Legislative Session at the request of Governor Steve Sisolak. On successful passage of the bill, the State of Nevada launched NVTAP in the fall of 2021. As the program lead, NDVS coordinates delivery of NVTAP with other State partners. Go to veterans.nv.gov and click the Nevada Veterans Transition Assistance Program tab.

NDVS Website – Community Outreach Support

Reaching Veterans Where They Live

The NDVS website is the department's virtual "front door" for veterans seeking information. Website additions and improvements support NDVS Outreach efforts. *(Be sure to visit the Information Technology (IT) section of this report under Administrative Support Services to see additional internet, virtual, and website projects!)*

Join the Nevada Veterans Benefit Registry!
Visit veterans.nv.gov and register today!

**Sign-up for the NDVS free, monthly newsletter, Veteran's Voice by visiting
www.veterans.nv.gov/sign-up-for-the-ndvs-newsletter**

2021 NDVS Website Community Outreach Support Highlights:

- **Benefits and Services** – A website redesign in the previous year made it easier to find information ranging from employment to housing assistance. In 2021, more features and additional information were added making the Benefits and Services section the #1 visited page on the NDVS website, which received a total of 82,052 visitors in 2021.
- **At-Risk or Homeless Veterans** – With the help of partners across Nevada, NDVS expanded the Housing Stability section of our website, adding important information about resources, programs and services that help veterans secure and maintain housing stability. Information on a wide variety of resources, programs and services is now available in one location that may be conveniently accessed 24-hours a day, seven days a week.
- **Nevada Veterans Benefit Registry** – In the fall of 2021, NDVS launched this feature on the front page of its website. Veterans who join the registry can discover and learn more about the benefits they've earned. It also provides NDVS with the opportunity to inform registered veterans about new or changing benefits as well as develop new programs to address emerging needs. Any personal information collected is confidential and only used to notify registered veterans about benefits changes or important veteran-related information or events.
- **Events Calendar** – The online NDVS Events Calendar was revamped to provide Nevada veterans and their families with easier access to up-to-date community events and activities of interest to the veteran community. To post an upcoming event to the NDVS website Events Calendar, email us at pio.ndvs@veterans.nv.gov.

Unique Veterans Populations

Incarcerated Veterans Outreach

Supporting Reintegration of Veterans Within the Justice System

The Veteran Justice Reintegration Program helps veterans within the criminal justice system gain access to services, programs and resources that support their successful return to society as productive citizens with promising futures.

NDVS works with a network of government agencies, nonprofits and community stakeholders who provide wraparound services to veterans identified in this at-risk population. Services include housing, employment, healthcare, counseling, mentoring, as well as VA claims filing assistance. Important partners include the VA, the Nevada Department of Corrections (NDOC), the Office of the Attorney General, and State and Federal Court justices and court representatives.

Two NDOC facilities, High Desert State Prison and Warm Springs Correctional Center, contain designated veteran units, which house and provide specific services for incarcerated veterans. NDOC has plans to open more veteran units at other Nevada correctional facilities in the future.

2021 Justice Reintegration Highlights

Collaboration continues with the Veterans Treatment Court programs (VTC), NDOC and community partners to ensure veterans reintegrating into society have the best opportunity to succeed and reduce recidivism. In 2021, NDVS staff attended 11 VTC graduations recognizing veterans for their completion of the program. Forty-one veterans connected with VSO staff and received continued supportive services.

- A “Reentry Checklist,” developed by NDVS and NDOC, is now being used to reduce the amount of time justice-involved veterans spend waiting for important benefits and services at reentry.
- Participants in the VTCs throughout Nevada interview with an NDVS VSO as part of the enrollment process to ensure they received earned benefits due to military service.
- NDVS is part of a collaboration led by NDOC to offer all inmates reentry programs including educational and vocational opportunities. Incarcerated veterans receive assistance from NDVS on requests procuring their DD-214, applying for a discharge upgrade (if eligible), connection to veteran service organizations, and housing assistance through the VA, upon release.

VETERAN INMATE POPULATION	MILITARY BRANCH	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
	Air Force	86	1	87
	Coast Guard	5	0	5
	Navy	160	4	164
	Marines	113	0	113
	National Guard	37	2	39
	Army	337	12	349
	TOTAL	738	19	757

FIVE-YEAR TREND	Year	Male	Female	Inmate Population
	2021	738	19	757
	2020	813	15	828
	2019	867	19	886
	2018	917	14	931
	2017	1014	11	1025

*Information provided by NDOC. Nevada’s veteran inmate population saw a 9% percent decrease from 2020 to 2021 (71 fewer veteran inmates) and a 26% percent decrease over the past five years (268 fewer veteran inmates).

Unique Veterans Populations

Housing Stability and At-Risk Veterans Supporting Veterans Seeking Shelter or Other Basic Needs

Safe, affordable, stable, and reliable housing is critical to the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families. In 2021, housing costs, whether renting or buying, climbed across the nation as well as in Nevada. This created economic burdens that were made worse by the loss of jobs resulting from the pandemic. NDVS played an important role in keeping veterans informed of initiatives designed to help, such as eviction moratoriums, grant opportunities and other housing resources. Still, many veterans face challenges in finding and maintaining housing which underscores the continuing need for NDVS to identify resources and help veterans connect to them.

Military members transitioning into civilian life may be at-risk of homelessness. A recent VA study revealed that more than 40 percent of servicemembers leave the military without having identified permanent housing. Servicemembers can access our NVTAP program online before leaving their duty station and exiting military service. One of our 2022 goals is to reach out to military transition assistance centers supporting significant numbers of veterans who indicate they plan to make Nevada home. NDVS has recently begun gathering this data. While our database is not yet robust, early data shows the bases Nevada veterans are most likely to come from (in order) are as follows: Camp Lejeune, NC; Naval Base San Diego, CA; Nellis Air Force Base (AFB), NV; Travis AFB, CA; Camp Pendleton, CA; Fort Gordon, GA; Fort Leonard Wood, MO; Fort Lewis, WA; Fort Sam Houston, TX; Lackland AFB, TX, And McClellan AFB, CA.

In 2021, the NDVS website was expanded to feature a section specific to the needs of at-risk, homeless, or other veterans seeking access to basic needs. The website provides information in an easy-to-use regional format to connect veterans to resources, services and programs in their counties. The website may be accessed at any time, 24-hours a day, seven days a week by visiting veterans.nv.gov.



LGBTQ Veterans

Assisting with Discharge Upgrades and More

During the past decade, NDVS has worked to reach LGBTQ veterans who became newly eligible for VA benefits and discharge upgrades due to national policy changes. This work has been challenging as many of these veterans are unaware of these benefits changes, and others who had a negative experience in military service are sometimes reluctant to engage with the VA or VSOs. To help develop trust with this community of veterans, in 2021, NDVS hired an LGBTQ VSO who has helped NDVS understand and better support these veterans.

In addition to assisting veterans with discharge upgrades, NDVS VSOs assist veterans in requesting a characterization upgrade, change of narrative in the reason for their discharge, and change of separation and reenlistment code to reflect an honorable discharge. These changes are important as they can connect previously ineligible veterans to important benefits such as the GI Bill, the VA Home Loan Program, VA medical care, and VA burial benefits. Veterans seeking more information or wishing to apply should contact a VSO by visiting veterans.nv.gov, clicking Benefits and Service, and contacting a VSO nearest to them.



OPERATIONS DIVISION

Unique Veterans Populations

Women Veterans

Supporting Engagement and Identifying Needs

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, service gaps remain in meeting the unique needs of women serving in the military, as well as those transitioning into civilian life. The Nevada Women Veterans Advisory Committee supports NDVS in identifying and seeking solutions to fill these gaps.

In 2021, 2,208 separating military personnel indicated they were moving to Nevada. Of those, 21.5 % or 476 individuals were women. In response, NDVS created a special “Welcome Home” letter and packet to send to women who plan to make Nevada their home after discharge, directing them to services and providing information about Nevada’s women veterans organizations.

To further connect with the community, in March 2021, NDVS hosted a virtual Women’s Veterans Conference. It was well attended with 185 women veterans participating in the event. In response to tremendously positive feedback, NDVS made the Women Veterans Conference an annual event with the next Women Veterans Conference scheduled for March 12, 2022. The conference will offer both virtual and in-person opportunities to attend, with the in-person event at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center.



Women Veterans

2021 Accomplishments and Highlights

- Planned and executed the NDVS March 2021 Virtual Women Veterans Conference.
- Supported partner events, such as the July VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System Drive-Through Baby Shower and the VA Southern and Northern Nevada Healthcare Systems Women Veterans Committee meetings.
- Assisted Reno Lady Vets conduct their regular meetings virtually, hosting meetings in January, March, May, July, September, and November using our teleconferencing platform. With this support, the Reno Lady Vets were able to expand participation in their meetings and involve more rural women veterans.
- Supported the October 2021 National Women Veterans, “UnConference,” which provided benefits information. This event helped NDVS make connections with women veterans, schools, major corporations and other women veteran organizations across the country.



Unique Veterans Populations

Native American Veterans

Enhancing Connections by Building Upon Relationships

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, per capita, Native Americans consistently maintain the highest rates of enlistment in the U.S. Armed Force, however, they continue to rank near the bottom in accessing earned benefits. Because of this, outreach to Nevada's Native American veterans remains a priority.

In August 2021, the Outreach Team attended the Southern Bands Health Fair resulting in contact with 97 veterans or family member of a veteran. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, the events at Owyhee and Duck Water were canceled.

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Virtual claims filing continues to provide more opportunities to connect these veterans and their families to earned benefits and resources. NDVS also continues to work with the Nevada Indian Commission to improve efforts to inform Nevada's Native American veteran community about their earned benefits and to assist in connecting them to those benefits.

Rural Veterans

Expanding Outreach into New Rural Areas

In 2021, NDVS added a new part-time VSO position in rural Winnemucca. This fills an important gap. Prior to filling this position, veterans seeking a face-to-face visit with a VSO had to make a two-hour trip (one-way) to either Reno or Elko.

In southern Nevada, another important service gap is being filled. NDVS signed a memorandum of understanding with the Henderson Veterans Center, agreeing to staff and support a part-time VSO at their center to provide improved community-based VSO services. NDVS is negotiating with other Vet Centers across Nevada to provide similar community-based VSO support.

Nevada Veterans Advocate Program

Engaging Others and Extending Outreach Even Further

Nevada Veterans Advocates (NVAs) are volunteers who are trained and certified through the NDVS' NVA Program, which is recognized by the VA as a national best practice that effectively connects veterans and their families to earned benefits. Some NVA volunteers also assist in outreach at community events across Nevada. The total number of Nevada Veterans Advocates certified as of December 31, 2021 was 774.

The NVA course is provided both online and through in-person training opportunities, when deemed safe to do so, due to the pandemic. In 2021, in-person training was suspended due to COVID-19, but online training remained available. The NVA course provides training on 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 and tasked to support the many thousands of veterans who call Nevada their home.

Today, with the assistance of virtual technology, the NDVS goal is to have any VSO assist any veteran or members of their family wherever they may live in Nevada.

Become an NVA!

Start the journey here:

www.veterans.nv.gov/community/veterans-advocacy

OPERATIONS DIVISION

Employment Program

Supporting the Transition to a New Job or Career

Securing gainful employment is one of the keys to success when transitioning from the U.S. Armed Forces back into life as a civilian. Employment not only helps ensure financial stability, but it also provides secondary social benefits for the veteran and the community.

In 2020, Nevada veteran unemployment jumped from 5 percent to 9.4 percent, driven largely by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nationwide, unemployment reached levels not seen since 1948, with the loss of 22.1 million jobs. Nevadans were hit particularly hard as the leisure and hospitality sector (Nevada's primary economic driver) experienced the greatest job loss. In 2021, Nevada's economy began to rebound as businesses reopened and the tourism economic sector saw some recovery. Nevada's veterans' unemployment rate as of December 31, 2021 was 7.4 percent.

NDVS is committed to helping remove obstacles to veteran employment. An important part of our effort is the Patriot Employer Program, an online education program that educates employers about the benefits of hiring veterans, where to find qualified veteran employees, and the financial benefits associated with hiring veterans.

We also rely on our strong partnerships with the Nevada Department of Business and Industry and the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation to help connect veterans to businesses, jobs and educational opportunities. Additionally, our NVTAP program (discussed under the Operations Division of this report) includes employment resources, along with information related to entrepreneurship.



Patriot Employer Program Supporting Veteran Hiring and Nevada Businesses

Finding and hiring the right person has always been a challenge for employers, and the pandemic did not make this task any easier. The Patriot Employer Program (PeP) is designed to tackle the obstacles veterans may face in obtaining gainful employment.

PeP training includes:

- 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

As of December 31, 2021, there 69 Patriot Employers in the State of Nevada. For a full list of Patriot Employers, please visit: <https://veterans.nv.gov/patriot-employers>

* VETERAN UNEMPLOYMENT ANNUAL AVERAGE

*Unemployment Rate for Veterans as of December 31, 2021



	Nevada	National
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR VETERANS	7.4%	4.4%
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE	60.3%	46.7%
MEDIAN VETERAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	\$60,956	\$67,521
VETERANS WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED RATING (Estimates per Veteran Population)	29%	26%

POVERTY STATUS

Nevada Veteran
Poverty Status **7%**

Nevada
Poverty Rate **12.5%****

National Veteran
Poverty Status **7%**

National
Poverty Rate **13.4%**

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Nevada Housing Assistance Council; Federal Reserve Bank

OPERATIONS DIVISION

Education Program

Supporting the Transition to New or Better Opportunities

Another key to successful transition is education. NDVS continues to strengthen its partnerships with both the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) institutions and non-NSHE schools by hosting and participating in meetings and events that support veteran students. Important 2021 collaborations include:

- During the pandemic, in-person VSO presence at NSHE campuses had been placed on hold. In 2021, NDVS met with representatives of NSHE to ensure continued academic success for student veterans, and as a result, NDVS reestablished VSO in-person services at NSHE campuses to help address student veteran questions and concerns.
- In addition, NDVS and 12 non-NSHE college representatives met to identify gaps in services for veteran and dependent students. In 2021, no significant barriers were discussed, but most schools were interested in attending online webinars focused on additional benefits that may be available for veterans with VSOs requested to be in attendance.

There are many helpful student veteran programs offered by NSHE and other schools, ranging from the Veterans Upward Bound Program at Truckee Meadows Community College to the Veterans Resource Centers located at NSHE campuses across the State. By supporting cross-institutional collaboration, NDVS helped strengthen support for veterans and their family members who seek advanced degrees and certifications.

**Total Nevada Veterans/Eligible Family Members
Using VA Education Benefits:** **10,552**

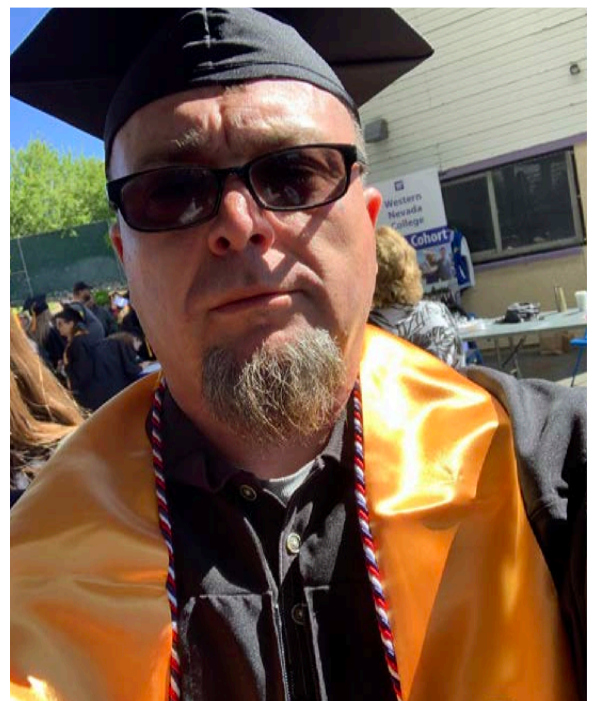
NATIONALLY: **1,505,270**

Total Nevada GI Bill Students: **6,165**

NATIONALLY: **895,745**

Total Nevada Post 9/11 GI Bill Students: **4,387**

NATIONALLY: **609,525**



TOTAL NEVADA EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING PROGRAMS

Number of Approved Educational Facilities	96
NSHE Program	8
Non-NSHE Program	170
OJT/Apprenticeship	65
Licensed Flight Schools	21

APPROVED PROGRAMS UNDER THE STATE APPROVAL PROGRAM AUTHORITY

NSHE Program	7
Non-NSHE Program	59
OJT/Apprenticeship	28
Licensed Flight Schools	2

OPERATIONS DIVISION

Community Outreach

Veterans Community Councils

Veterans Community Councils (VCCs) consist of key community members in cities, towns and communities across Nevada. These citizen panels prioritize local objectives and formalize coordination between service organizations at the community level. NDVS assists VCCs and other councils, commissions and organizations to 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. Veterans and their supporters are encouraged to support these important community initiatives.



Statewide Veterans Community Councils

CARSON CITY VETERANS COMMUNITY COUNCIL (INACTIVE)

When: Times, dates vary

Where: Meets in Carson City, location varies

Contact: Frank Reynolds

Email: fwatonka@aol.com

PACE COALITION (ELKO)

When: Meets monthly on the first Tuesday

Where: Virtual

Contact: Laura Oslund, Director of PACE

Email: laura@pacecoalition.org

CHURCHILL COMMUNITY COALITION

When: Meets quarterly, second Tuesday at 11:00 a.m.

Where: Fallon Convention Center,
100 Campus Way, Fallon

Contact: Holly Meador

Phone: 775-423-6695, ext. 2

Email: sscoordinator@churchillcounty.org

SILVER SPRINGS COMMUNITY CENTER

When: Times, dates vary

Where: Silver Springs Community Center,
2945 Fort Churchill Street, Silver Springs

Contact: Quest Lakes

Phone: 775-246-7550

Email: Quest@theodata.com

Statewide Veterans Community Councils

FAMILY STABILITY COUNCIL (WINNEMUCCA)

When: Meets monthly, fourth Tuesday at 1:00 p.m.
Where: Nevada National Guard Armory
735 West 4th Street, Winnemucca

Contact: Alaine Kliewer-Nye
Phone: 775-623-9003
Email: fcaahumboldt@gmail.com

SOUTHERN NEVADA VETERANS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BOARD

When: Meets quarterly, times vary
Where: Location varies

Contact: Toni Giddens
Phone: 702-856-4951
Email: toni.giddens@workforwarriorsnv.org

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COALITION (LYON AND STOREY COUNTIES)

When: Meets monthly, second Thursday at 9:00 a.m.
Where: Silver Springs Community Center,
2945 Fort Churchill Street, Silver Springs

Contact: Quest Lakes
Phone: 775-246-7550
Email: Quest@theodata.com

TONOPAH COALITION (NYE COUNTY)

When: Meets first Monday of the month at 12:00 p.m.
Where: Location varies

Contact: Jess Rosner
Phone: 775-482-6561
Email: jess@nyecc.org

HENDERSON VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS FORUM

When: Meets quarterly
Where: Heritage Park Senior Center
300 South Racetrack Road, Henderson

Contact: Michael Daduk
Email: Daduk@gmail.com

TRUCKEE MEADOWS COMMUNITY COLLEGE UPWARD BOUND (RENO/SPARKS)

For student veterans
When: Times, dates vary
Where: 5270 Neil Road, Meadowood Center, S303
Phone: 775-829-9007
Web: www.tmcc.edu/veterans-upward-bound/contact

MESQUITE INTERAGENCY (NEW!)

When: Meets first Monday of the month at 11:00 am
Where: Location varies

Contact: Michelle Reber
Phone: 702-346-5181, ext. 2105
Email: mreber@mesquitenv.gov

TRUCKEE MEADOWS VETERANS COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE (RENO/SPARKS) (INACTIVE)

When: Meets every other month, second Wednesday
at 3:00 p.m.
Where: Location varies
Contact: Chaplain Hal Woomer
Phone: 775-384-5800
Email: harold.g.woomer2@mail.mil

NORTH LAS VEGAS VETERANS COMMUNITY COMMISSION (INACTIVE)

When: Meets monthly, second Thursday at 5:30 p.m.
Where: North Las Vegas Council Chambers
2250 Las Vegas Boulevard, North Las Vegas

Contact: Amanda M. Dillard
Phone: 702-633-1016
Email: DillardA@cityofnorthlasvegas.com

WELCOME ALL VETS EVERYWHERE (WAVE) (MINDEN)

When: Meets monthly, second Monday at 1:00 p.m.
Where: Douglas County Community Center
1329 Waterloo Lane, Gardnerville

Contact: Carl Schnock
Phone: 775-781-4849
Email: mctthree68@gmail.com

2021 Outreach Examples

01 JANUARY

Las Vegas and Reno - Nevada Veterans Legislative Summit

Las Vegas - Operation Enduring Freedom Recognition Event

Virtual - Tonopah Coalition Monthly Meeting

Virtual - FEMA Public Health Assessment Roundtable Discussion Series

02 FEBRUARY

Fallon - Churchill Community Coalition

Reno - Suicide Prevention Benefits Briefing for Nevada National Guard 152nd Air Group

Virtual - Healthy Communities Coalition

Virtual - Las Vegas Workforce Consortium

03 MARCH

Virtual - Women Veterans Conference

Mesquite - Community Interagency Meeting

Pahrump - Quilts of Valor Awards Ceremony

Winnemucca - Family Stability Council

04 APRIL

Virtual - Healthy Communities of Lyon and Storey Counties

Gardnerville - Welcome All Veterans Everywhere

Virtual - Community Foundation of Western Nevada

Virtual - Henderson Veteran Center Advisory Committee

05 MAY

Mesquite - Community Meeting *(Introduction to new victim advocates)*

Reno - Classic Car Show

Virtual - AARP Blue Star Families Town Hall

Las Vegas - Nevada Veterans Expo

06 JUNE

Virtual - Resource Town Hall hosted by Family Connections Task Force

Reno - LGBTQ Veterans Resource Fair with Reno VA Medical Center

Virtual - Nevada Homeless Alliance

Virtual - Nevada Veterans Peer Mentor Program



OPERATIONS DIVISION

2021 Outreach Examples

07 JULY

Reno - LGBTQ Support Group

Winnemucca - Pride Fest

Virtual - Las Vegas Golden Knights Foundation

Las Vegas - Coffee and Conversation with area Vet Center leaders

08 AUGUST

Virtual - Statewide Emergency Managers Briefing *(Nevada's 17 counties and Nevada's Tribal partners participated)*

Reno - Blue Star Moms

Fallon - Cantaloupe Festival Virtual Veterans Voices

09 SEPTEMBER

Winnemucca - Tri-County Fair

Sparks - Gold Star Families Luminary Event

Fernley - Community Connections Resource Fair

Las Vegas - Hope Heals Mental Health Resource Fair

10 OCTOBER

Carson City - Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter #388

Winnemucca - Community Health Fair

Virtual - Mental Health Summit with VA Partners

Virtual - Women Veterans Alliance "UnConference"

11 NOVEMBER

UNLV - Veterans Engagement Breakfast

Reno - Veterans Fair at Truckee Meadows Community College

Virtual - Veteran Benefits Presentation to Sierra Nevada Corps

Henderson - Veterans Resource Fair

12 DECEMBER

Fallon - Churchill & Lyon Counties County Community Coalition Benefits Presentation

Virtual - Santa's Workshop Preparations

Carson City - Nevada National Guard Retiree Breakfast

Fernley - Ceremony for the Unaccompanied



HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Overview



AMY GARLAND
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF
HEALTHCARE SERVICES

The Deputy Director of Healthcare Services provides oversight for two Nevada State Veterans Homes (skilled care nursing facilities), and a wide array of healthcare service programs and initiatives focused on the specific healthcare needs of veterans, their families, and caregivers. The partnerships that make these programs possible and successful include organizations such as the VA, the State of Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, the Perry Foundation, the Sanford Center for Aging, and the Nevada System of Higher Education, among others mentioned throughout the Healthcare Services section in this report.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Nursing Home Programs
Providing Quality Care and Comfort Through Life's Transitions

Nursing Home Programs

The NDVS Nursing Home Programs includes management of our two State Veterans Homes, as well as the following special programs: Heroes for Heroes, Bravo Zulu, and Veterans in Care (VIC). These programs support veterans living in skilled nursing care facilities and other community-based care facilities throughout Nevada.

State Veterans Homes

NDVS' two State Veterans Homes are skilled nursing care facilities that provide round-the-clock nursing care to eligible veterans, their spouses, and Gold Star Parents. The Southern Nevada State Veterans Home (SNSVH) is in Boulder City and the Northern Nevada State Veterans Home (NNSVH) is in Sparks. In addition to physical care, our veterans home teams conduct programs that focus on the emotional needs of residents, enriching the lives of those we are honored to serve.

These award-winning State Veterans Homes set a high standard of excellence in skilled nursing care. There are certain aspects of our State Veterans Homes that make them special and unique. Our homes provide a sense of community between staff, residents, and community supporters. Our facilities are designed and operated to feel like homes, 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 that understanding leads to better healthcare outcomes for the veterans we serve.

AWARDS

- 5-Star Quality Rating by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
- Eli Pick Leadership Award
- Pinnacle Quality Insight Customer Experience Award



HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Nursing Home Programs

Providing Quality Care and Comfort Through Life's Transitions

Telehealth

This is the second year residents at both State Veterans Homes could participate in telehealth appointments. Telehealth appointments are vitally important. They allow residents to access critical healthcare services without risking exposure to COVID-19 and other stressors associated with travel outside of the home. Residents can connect with care providers at Nevada's VA Hospitals and with other medical and mental health providers using this technology.

Communication tablets have ensured the success of our telehealth program, which will undoubtedly continue to prove valuable for years to come.

Technology needs were supported by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and "Seniors in Service," a nonprofit working to improve the quality-of-life of homebound older adults in Nevada during the COVID-19 pandemic. "Seniors in Service" delivered tablets to eligible residents and other older Nevadans who needed access to smart technology for medical appointments, socialization, and other supportive needs. This program was made possible through funding from the State of Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division.

"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 were compiled and played via closed-circuit TV at both homes during important occasions, such as Veterans Day and Thanksgiving for all veterans and staff to enjoy. More than 200 people have uploaded files to communicate their appreciation and love.

Heroes for Heroes Program

This program, known as Heroes for Heroes, was developed in partnership with the NEST Collaborative (Nevada Ensures Support Together) and is hosted by NDVS. The program provides online, in-person and phone-based social support to veterans who may feel isolated in the community. Heroes for Heroes officially launched on February 5, 2021. Over the course of the year, the program has served 23 participants and trained 15 volunteers. NDVS is excited to further Heroes for Heroes in the program's second year by identifying additional community partners and extending services to the Northern Nevada State Veterans Home.

Heroes for Heroes connects veterans with volunteers in the community who are interested in giving back to those who have given so much. Whether it is an old-fashioned phone call, video chat or drop-by visit, Nevada's Heroes can now connect with one of our highly trained volunteers. For more information on how to get involved or to participate, visit our website at www.veterans.nv.gov/heroes.



HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Nursing Home Programs

Providing Quality Care and Comfort Through Life's Transitions

Veterans in Care Program

The Veterans in Care Program (VIC) was launched in the spring of 2016 to improve 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 benefits 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** - honors and recognizes veterans living in skilled nursing, assisted living or homebound settings for their service, while also connecting them to earned benefits, programs and services.
- **Military Culture Education Training** - offers training resources for facility staff to enhance understanding of how military experience affects aging veterans, especially those with cognitive impairments.

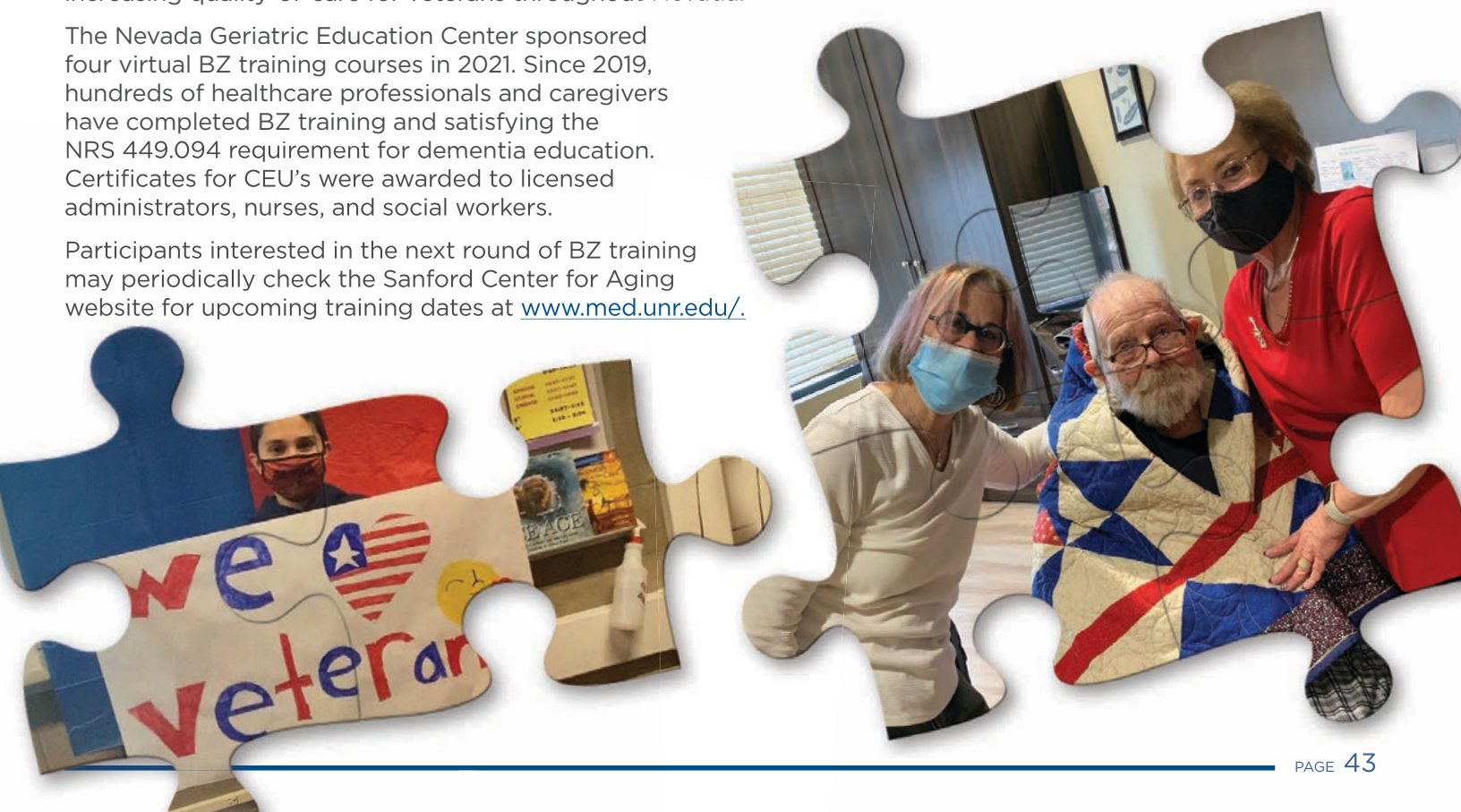
The VIC Program was put on hold for several months during the pandemic to ensure all older Nevadans were kept safe and exposure free. In 2021, NDVS hosted six VIC ceremonies, three in the Greater Las Vegas area, as well as three in Reno. Almost 150 veterans were recognized and given the opportunity to connect with a VSO. Conducting recognition ceremonies and connecting veterans to earned benefits has helped restore a sense of community for those who have been isolated as a result of the pandemic. NDVS plans to increase the number of VIC ceremonies in 2022. To learn more or to schedule a ceremony, contact Rachel Jelenic at jelenicr@veterans.nv.gov.

Bravo-Zulu Military Culture Training for Healthcare Providers

In 2017, NDVS, in partnership with the Perry Foundation, launched a special training course for healthcare professionals called, "Bravo-Zulu: Achieving Excellence in Relationship Centered Care." Healthcare professionals who attend Bravo Zulu (BZ) training are offered continuing education units (CEU's) from the Nevada State Board of Nursing, Board of Examiners for Long-Term Care and Board of Social Workers. CEU's are offered to encourage Nevada's healthcare providers to learn how veterans' military service may play a role in their aging process, both mentally and physically. BZ helps community-based care facility staff better relate to those they work with, increasing quality-of-care for veterans throughout Nevada.

The Nevada Geriatric Education Center sponsored four virtual BZ training courses in 2021. Since 2019, hundreds of healthcare professionals and caregivers have completed BZ training and satisfying the NRS 449.094 requirement for dementia education. Certificates for CEU's were awarded to licensed administrators, nurses, and social workers.

Participants interested in the next round of BZ training may periodically check the Sanford Center for Aging website for upcoming training dates at www.med.unr.edu/.



Southern Nevada State Veterans Home



ELI QUINONES - SNSVH ADMINISTRATOR

The Southern Nevada State Veterans Home (SNSVH) in Boulder City is an award-winning skilled nursing care facility with a long track record of demonstrated excellence in quality care for veterans and their families. The 180-bed facility provides 24-hour skilled nursing care seven days a week. The SNSVH is State-owned and operated, and accepts Medicare/Medicaid, VA per diem and private pay, making the home more affordable than other comparable nursing homes for most veterans.

19th Anniversary Celebration

On Wednesday, August 20, 2021, community members showed their support for both residents and staff at the SNSVH through a special community celebration held in partnership with the Boulder City Chamber of Commerce.

Federal and State Funding for Important Renovations

Plans are underway to upgrade and remodel SNSVH. The building saw its first residents admitted nearly two decades ago in August of 2002. SNSVH is slated to receive \$4,229,717 for advanced planning to make improvements that will include turning shared bedrooms into private rooms with private baths. Not only will this create a better quality-of-life for residents, but it will also reduce the risk of infections associated with sharing living quarters.

The upgrades will also turn common areas into homelike settings and include a Town Hall with restaurant style dining. Audio/visual equipment is included in the renovations to provide audio entertainment and a movie theater for residents. Other improvements will include renovations of the parking lot, main entryway (including resident pick-up and drop-off area), kitchen, physical therapy room, as well as nursing stations and employee break spaces.

In addition to this significant remodeling project, the home will also receive a new temperature control system. In 2021, NDVS received a \$445,600 grant to replace the SNSVH’s 20-year-old digital system. Work on that replacement is scheduled to begin soon.

PFC David “Nick” Crombie Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Training Academy (Crombie Academy)

The Crombie Academy, established in 2021, provides both training and CNA job opportunities at the SNSVH, at no cost to participants. This workforce development program is housed within the SNSVH.

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 program offers an introduction to basic nursing skills, nursing assistant duties and responsibilities, as well as an understanding of veteran culture in an acute and long-term care setting at the SNSVH. The four-week (120) hours of training includes 40 hours of classroom instruction, 40 hours of laboratory practice and 40 hours of supervised clinical instruction delivered on-site at the SNSVH.

The first class launched on November 1, 2021, graduating on December 20, 2021. Four CNA training classes are planned for 2022. Each four-week session (30 hours per week) will have a maximum of 15 students. The training prepares participants for the CNA State Board of Nursing Examination.

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

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Southern Nevada State Veterans Home

Participants who pass the Certification Exam will be provided a front-line opportunity to apply for CNA positions within the SNSVH. Preference for Crombie Academy selection is given to Gold Star Families, veterans, spouses of veterans, families of SNSVH team members and Boulder City residents. Interested candidates may learn more about eligibility and where to apply by visiting www.veterans.nv.gov/new-certified-nursing-assistantacademy.

“Our CNAs are a crucial part of our patient care team, and they help us with providing high quality care to our residents. The CNA Academy will ensure we will have a highly trained pool of CNAs at the ready when needed so we are able to continue to provide the kind of care our residents deserve.”

– Kat Miller, NDVS Director

Honoring PFC David “Nick” Crombie

The Academy is named in honor of PFC David “Nick” Crombie from Winnemucca. The 19-year-old was killed in 2006 when an improvised explosive device detonated near his Humvee during combat operations in Iraq. He was serving as a combat medic, assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, in Baumholder, Germany.

WHO WE SERVE

RESIDENTS	Number Served FY 2021
Male	192
Female	14
Non-Vet Spouse	42
Total since 8/12/2002	2,031
male & female	

US MILITARY BRANCH	Number Served FY 2021
Army	81
Marine Corps	25
Navy	52
Air Force	49
Coast Guard	1

**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.

SERVICE ERA	Number Served FY 2021
WWII	27
Korea	48
Vietnam	123
Gulf War	6
Lebanon	3
Afghanistan	1
Desert Storm	3
Peacetime	28
Iraq	1

OCCUPANCY	Number Served FY 2021
2021 Admission Average	8.50
	per month
2021 Discharge Average	9
	per month
Total Beds	180
% Occupancy	78
	per day average

Northern Nevada State Veterans Home



NICOLE OWCZARSKI
NNSVH ADMINISTRATOR



MICHAEL BALL
FORMER NNSVH ADMINISTRATOR
(FROM OPENING TO 2021)

The Northern Nevada State Veterans Home (NNSVH) opened in late 2019 and is filling a previously unmet need for quality skilled nursing care for eligible veterans, their spouses, and Gold Star Parents living in northern Nevada. Until 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.

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. After one year in operation, the 96-bed facility reached full census in 2021.

The 102,000 square-foot facility is uniquely designed so the environment feels more like a home than a healthcare setting. The design is intended to provide residents with an experience similar to a high-end resort that also offers superior nursing care services.

NNSVH offers a host of amenities. Each resident has a private room, bathroom, and shower. Residents share a den, living room and dining area with 15 other residents. Each household of eight residents has its own 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:

- 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 Number Served FY 2021

Male	133	
Female	14	
Non-Vet Spouse	7	
Total since 2019	203	

male & female

US MILITARY BRANCH Number Served FY 2021

Army	58	
Marine Corps	14	
Navy	44	
Air Force	25	
Coast Guard	0	

SERVICE ERA

Number Served FY 2021

WWII	14	
Korea	20	
Vietnam	71	
Gulf War	2	
Lebanon	0	
Afghanistan	0	
Desert Storm	1	
Peacetime	37	

OCCUPANCY

Number Served FY 2021

2021 Admission Average	7.9	
	<i>per month</i>	
2021 Discharge Average	6.2	
	<i>per month</i>	
Total Beds	96	
% Occupancy	71	
	<i>per day average</i>	

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

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 HEALTHCARE PROGRAMS

Supporting Veterans' Healthcare Through Life's Transitions

In 2021, the Healthcare Services Division managed the Healthcare Champions Program, Veterans Recreation Programs, Caregivers and Homebound Programs, Military Sexual Trauma Program, and the Suicide Prevention Program.

Healthcare Champions Program

The Healthcare Champions Program directly engages with Nevada's doctors, nurses, licensed therapists, and other healthcare professionals to educate them about possible military health risks and the special health needs of those who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. Through military service, veterans may have been exposed to certain hazards, putting them at risk for illnesses or diseases.

The other important function of the Healthcare Champions Program is connecting veterans to earned benefits and compensation through the VA. Some veterans may have been diagnosed with medical conditions due to certain hazards or exposures, which the VA presumes to be connected to military service. Since presumptive conditions are directly tied to past military service, veterans diagnosed with a presumed medical condition are entitled to receive health care, monetary compensation and other services for the cumulated injury or disease.

To help us understand the exposure risks faced by Nevada's veterans, NDVS, in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), collects and analyzes data associated with exposures and military service. This is done through the Exposure Risk Questionnaire, which can be accessed through the home page of the NDVS website. With the data compiled from the questionnaire, DHHS releases the Veterans Health Survey¹ to inform Nevadans on the current health risks and needs of veterans. In the most recent report under NRS 417.126, the following information on military health risks was collected:

- In Nevada, the NDVS website was the number one place veterans went to find information regarding veterans benefits, resources, and programs.
- The majority of Nevada's veterans taking the questionnaire served in the U.S. Army.
- The base where the greatest number of Nevada's veterans served was Camp Lejeune.
- The majority of veterans taking the questionnaire received a service-disability rating from the VA.
- The most common service-connected conditions were sleep disturbances and anxiety.
- The majority of surveyed veterans are receiving health care or other benefits from the VA.

¹ Office of Analytics. (March 2021). *Veteran Health Survey*. Nevada Department of Health and Human Services Division of Public and Behavioral Health.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Veterans Recreation Programs

Adaptive Sports Programs

Many veterans living with one or more disabilities participate in adaptive sports in communities across Nevada. Their participation allows them to socialize with other veterans and enhance their lifestyle through fun and immersive activities. 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 Nevada's veterans and their families.



Veterans Recreation Programs



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** provides low impact exercise 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 designed to provide greater strength, mobility, coordination, balance, endurance, and flexibility, offering both in private and group settings.

For more information on the City of Las Vegas Adaptive Recreation Programs for Veterans, visit:
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, California 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:
www.reno.gov/government/departments/parks-recreation-community-services/adaptive-recreation/veteran-programs

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Veterans Recreation Programs

Veterans K-9 Corps Peer Support Group

This program, known as the Veterans K-9 Corps, is a collaboration between NDVS and the Truckee Meadows Dog Training Club. The Veterans K-9 Corps provides participating veterans with an opportunity to learn with “man’s best friend,” while bonding and sharing experiences with other veterans. The program offers four, nine-week training sessions per year where veterans can come together for exercise, shared experiences, and fun. NDVS is looking for opportunities to expand this program to other parts of the State, including Las Vegas and rural Nevada, by partnering with canine training nonprofit organizations in those areas.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Caregiver/Homebound Programs

For Caregivers

NDVS routinely communicates with veterans and their caregivers to inform them about community partners, organizations, and resources available to support them. This communications outreach includes information about events, programs, training opportunities, and more. If you would like to join the Caregiver and Veterans Resource Email Listserv, send your request to jelenicr@veterans.nv.gov.

For Survivors

Losing someone you love is one of the most stressful, and painful, times in life. NDVS VSOs are available to help survivors find answers to questions on burial benefits, financial compensation, and health care.

Caregiver and Survivor Resources

The Caregivers & Survivors Guide is an excellent resource for agencies and individuals who would like to learn more about the services and benefits available. If you would like a printed copy of the Caregivers & Survivors Guide, email: jelenicr@veterans.nv.gov.



Caregivers Guide:

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

Survivors Guide:

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

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. For more information, contact healthcare@veterans.nv.gov.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Military Sexual Trauma Program

Military Sexual Trauma

The Department of Defense defines Military Sexual Trauma (MST) as rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment. While MST affects both men and women in uniform, servicewomen are at much higher risk for sexual assault and harassment. MST often leads to debilitating conditions such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and major depression.

To help address the impact of MST among Nevada veterans, in 2016 NDVS created an MST Program. This program has three components: (1) provides information to health care providers (HCP) who might treat veterans with MST; (2) provides needed information to veterans suffering from MST; and (3) assists MST survivors obtain VA disability benefits for the enduring mental health effects of MST. While the VAST team is the NDVS lead for assisting veterans in obtaining disability benefits, the Healthcare Services team takes the lead in providing information to veterans about resources that can help them cope with the effects of MST and to HCP who may encounter these veterans.

As a part of NDVS' continuing MST educational efforts, NDVS partnered in 2021 with the Southern Nevada Health Care System, the Sierra Nevada Health Care System, and the Perry Foundation to conduct a free, three-part virtual series, "Exploring the Identification and Treatment of MST." It addressed the behavioral and mental health needs of MST survivors as well as the cultural sensitivity and ethical considerations of healthcare professionals. These events were well attended and resulted in the referral of veterans to needed mental health services.

Suicide Prevention Program

Suicide Prevention Program

The Suicide Prevention Program works directly with Nevada's veterans, active, guard, and reserve servicemembers; their families, caregivers, survivors, and community stakeholders to connect with suicide prevention initiatives, resources, and direct services. As the lead for the Governor's Challenge Team and liaison to the Mayors' Challenge Teams, our program develops and implements suicide prevention strategies to identify servicemembers, veterans and their families, promote connectedness and increase Lethal Means Safety throughout Nevada. The program partners with community stakeholders to educate, inform and communicate on veteran-specific, suicide risk and protective factors, in support of a holistic, public health approach to ending veteran suicide.



HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Healthcare Special Programs

Governor's and Mayor's Challenge Programs

NDVS is proud to be a partner in Nevada's Mayor's and Governor's Challenge Programs. Both programs help 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.

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. For questions about the Governor's or Mayor's Challenge, contact Sarah Hagues at hagues@veterans.nv.gov.

Nevada Challenge Teams Focused Priority Areas

- Identify service members, veterans, and their families and screen for suicide risk
- Promote connectedness and improve care transitions
- Increase Lethal Means Safety and safety planning

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 Challenge Teams and Timeline

The NDVS Suicide Prevention Team has recruited more Mayor's Challenge Teams than any state in the nation to now include Truckee Meadows, Las Vegas, Elko and Winnemucca. The Mayor's Challenge Teams, along with the Governor's Challenge Team, are all working together to eliminate suicide by using a comprehensive public health approach to suicide prevention. The timeline of Challenge Team development is as follows:

- 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

Get Involved in Preventing Suicide

Free, online trainings, listed below, are available for anyone who wants to join suicide prevention efforts and make a difference.

- safeTALK
- A.S.I.S.T.
- Nevada Gatekeeper
- PsychArmor's S.A.V.E.

These trainings provide knowledge to recognize the 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:

www.veterans.nv.gov/benefits-and-services/suicide-prevention/suicide-prevention-resources



HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Healthcare Special Programs

2021 Suicide Prevention Accomplishments and Awards

- **National Award for Operation Mission Ready Initiative** - NDVS received the national Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence Award for its “Operation Mission Ready” (OMR) initiative aimed at preventing veteran suicide. OMR was developed and executed by the Truckee Meadows Mayor’s Challenge Team in collaboration with NDVS, Office of Suicide Prevention, and the Reno Police Department.

The OMR program destigmatizes mental health treatment through a unique and different approach. First responders augment mental health professionals in presenting command-sponsored suicide prevention presentations. While mental health professionals are compassionate and knowledgeable, the NDVS team noticed these skilled professionals were not perceived by the intended audience as having a shared culture or experience. The first responders were perceived as being more credible and relatable. This perception made a big difference in how the information was received. OMR was launched in March 2019. Within the first six months of having first responders present suicide prevention presentations to members of the Nevada National Guard, the number of those seeking mental health assistance increased by 38%.

Department of Veterans Affairs Deputy Secretary Donald Remy presented the award to NDVS and State Veterans Affairs Departments in three other states at the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA) conference held in Reno on September 13 -16, 2021. The award recognizes excellence and innovation by honoring outstanding state programs that support veterans within their states.

This is the fourth national Pillars of Excellence Award for NDVS.

- **Chase Rauchle PTSD NOW! Suicide Prevention Grant** - NDVS received a \$200,000 grant from the nonprofit, Chase Rauchle PTSD NOW!, to hire two mental health professionals that will provide counseling, needs assessments, intake evaluations, and diagnostic assessments to Nevada’s National Guard members. Suicide prevention is being addressed through several fronts, but this is a new and significant effort making a direct impact on those in need looking to access mental health care.

Since the launch of the program in the spring of 2021, NDVS and the Nevada Office of the Military have onboarded a mental health counselor for the PTSD NOW! Program in Northern Nevada. Members of the Nevada National Guard now have an additional resource when it comes to mental health.

- **Rural Expansion of Challenge Teams and 2021 Activities** - The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) partnered with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to bring the Governor’s and Mayor’s Challenge programs to states and communities across the nation.

The Mayor’s Challenge was launched in March 2018 bringing together representatives to develop local action plans to prevent veteran suicide. Nevada joined the effort early, starting in southern Nevada with the Las Vegas Mayor’s Challenge Team and expanding to northern Nevada through the Truckee Meadows Mayor’s Challenge Team. This effort has now expanded to include the communities of Elko and Winnemucca.

- **On January 8, 2021**, the NDVS Suicide Prevention Program Manager was asked by SAMHSA to present the accomplishments of the Nevada Governor’s Challenge Team at the SAMHSA Governor’s Challenge Implementation Academy 2021 Kick-Off Virtual Policy Academy. The event provided the opportunity to share best practices with more than 100 participants from across the nation.
- **On February 22, 2021**, the Elko Mayor’s Challenge Team, with support from NDVS, participated in the SAMHSA/VA Crisis Intercept Mapping Policy Academy 2021.
- **On March 29-30, 2021**, Military Culture and Transition Training, NDVS, in collaboration with the VA Sierra Nevada Healthcare System and the Reno Vet Center, provided a Military Culture and Transition Training session to staff at Crisis Support Services of Nevada.
- **On May 26, 2021**, a Nevada Faith-Based Summit was hosted virtually by Nevada’s Governor and Mayor’s Challenge Teams, NDVS, the Nevada Office of Suicide Prevention, the Foundation for Recovery, the VA Sierra Nevada Healthcare System, the VA Southern Nevada Health Care System, and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division of Public & Behavioral Health (DPBH). More than 140 attendees participated.
- **On August 30-31, 2021**, the Las Vegas Mayor’s Challenge Team participated in a VA/SAMHSA virtual site visit.
- **On October 27, November 3, and November 17, 2021**, a Suicide Prevention, End-of-Life training was provided in collaboration with the Hospice Veterans Partnership with a total of 280 attendees.
- **On November 4, 2021**, the Governor’s Challenge Team hosted a panel discussion with leaders from all four Mayor’s Challenge Teams and Forgotten Not Gone, a veteran-owned nonprofit focused on “stomping out” veteran suicide. This panel was moderated by Tish McCullough with SAMHSA’s TA Center at the Nevada Suicide Prevention Conference in Las Vegas.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

Overview



KURT GREEN
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Administrative Support Services plays a central role in the operation of NDVS. This division performs the following functions:

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

The following pages are the financial summary for SFY 2021.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

2021 Financial Review Expenditures

TOTAL HEALTHCARE EXPENDITURES \$34,032,956

Southern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$25,605,566
Northern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$8,426,234
Veterans-in-Care Program	\$1,155

TOTAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES EXPENDITURES \$4,721,286

Veteran Advocacy	\$1,484,213
Cemeteries	\$1,747,689
Special Programs and Services	\$1,447,156
Nonprofit Support	\$42,226

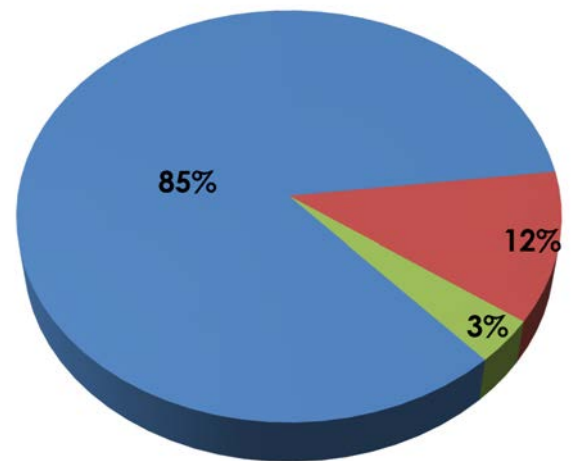
TOTAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH EXPENDITURES \$54,684

Nevada Advocate Program	\$10,598
Veterans Information System	\$44,085

TOTAL ADMINISTRATION \$1,406,422

*Majority of NDVS expenditures are for Healthcare

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES FY21 EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM



- Healthcare \$34,032,956
- Programs and Services \$4,721,286
- Administration \$1,406,422

EXPENDITURES

Healthcare	\$34,032,956
Programs and Services	\$4,721,286
Community Outreach	\$54,684
Administration	\$1,406,422

Total Expenditures \$40,215,349

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

2021 Financial Review Revenues

GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS \$2,478,483

Healthcare	\$342,803
Northern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$342,803
Programs and Services	\$2,135,680
Veterans Advocacy	\$2,028,892
Cemeteries	\$106,787

FEDERAL FUNDS \$30,467,107

Healthcare	\$28,517,264
Northern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$8,990,525
Southern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$19,526,739
Programs and Services	\$1,949,843
Cemeteries	\$1,854,478
Special Programs and Services	\$95,365

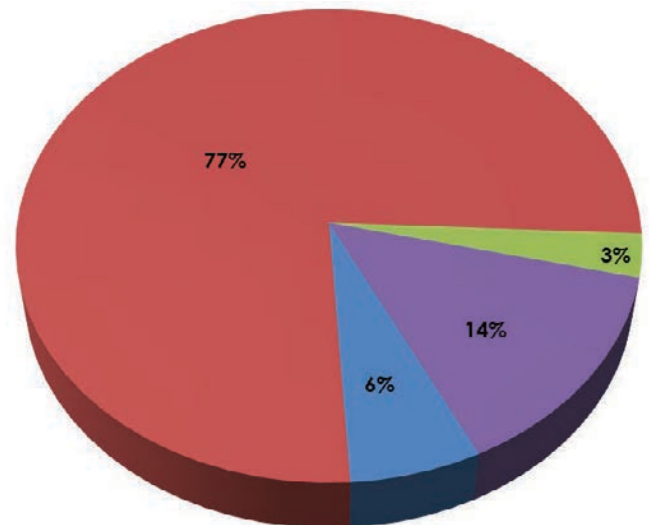
DONATIONS \$1,182,314

Healthcare	\$51,064
Southern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$22,090
Northern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$28,974
Programs and Services	\$1,131,250
Cemeteries	\$100,041
Special Programs and Services	\$1,031,209

OTHER REVENUE \$4,754,255

Healthcare	\$4,748,005
Southern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$4,747,864
Northern Nevada State Veterans Home	\$141
Programs and Services	\$6,250
Cemeteries	\$129
Special Programs and Services	\$6,121

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES FY21 REVENUE SOURCES



- General Fund \$2,478,483
- Federal Funds \$30,467,106
- Donations \$208,183
- Other \$4,754,254

REVENUES

General Fund	\$2,478,483
Federal Funds	\$30,467,107
Donations	\$1,182,314
Other	\$4,754,254

Total Revenues \$38,882,158

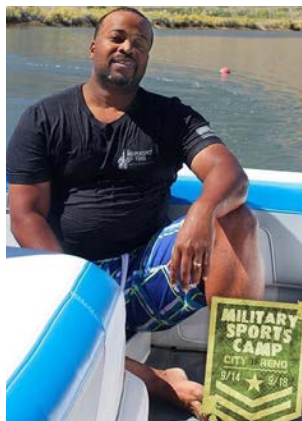
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

Grant Awards Helping Veterans

Since 2013, NDVS applied for and received 29 grants, totaling more than \$63 million dollars. This grant funding helped to build and modernize facilities, create disabled veteran sports programs, fund transportation for rural veterans needing access to healthcare, and more!

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

NDVS applied for and was awarded \$29,035 in SFY21 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. This grant provided for instruction, participation, and competition in adaptive sports; training, technical assistance to program administrators, coaches, recreation therapists, and instructors; and athlete assessment, sport-specific training techniques, sports equipment, and supplies. Veterans participated in activities that included: chair yoga, adaptive golf, fishing, archery, pickleball clinics, fishing, and a multiday Military Sports Camp. Membership passes provided access to adaptive programs at gyms, pools, and other sports facilities, at no charge to the veteran.



Grant Awards Supporting Rural Transportation

Rural Transportation Grants are offered through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration, the Highly Rural Transportation Grants (HRTG) program.

The HRTG program helps rural veterans gain access to travel to visit the VA or VA-authorized health-care facility. 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 SFY21. The funds were divided equally between the Elko County Transit District and our new partner, the Nye Communities Coalition. A total of 1,226 trips were provided covering 19,976 miles.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

Grant Awards 2021 and Beyond

Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery

The Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (SNVMC) has been offered a “grant opportunity” by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for up to \$5,780,000 to expand the cemetery by seven acres. NDVS anticipates the cemetery expansion will be among the 12 conforming projects the VA says it will approve for federal funding. (The VA defines conforming projects as those that already have the required state legislation or matching funds in place.) The State of Nevada has already set aside \$607,271 in State matching funds for the project. The current plans show the expansion will be adding 5,376 niches (12 new columbarium walls) and 11,481 in-ground cremation plots (7 new burial sections). The additional acreage will be needed by 2023 to fulfill current demand.

Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery

The Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (NNVMC) was awarded \$5,182,845 in federal grant funding from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The grant will provide for the expansion of the cemetery, which opened in 1990. This will include 3,548 new columbarium wall niches, 825 new pre-burial vaults, and 802 new in-ground cremains sites. Additionally, the cemetery was approved under a Capital Improvement Project for the renovation of the pavilion, which is used for funeral services. The project will include approximately \$205,000 of construction improvements, including renovation to the roof, block walls and windows.



ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

Information Technology Operations

The NDVS Information Technology (IT) Operations team plays an important role in overseeing and supporting the wide-ranging technological needs of the agency. In 2021, the IT team researched and implemented technologies across the agency to create greater efficiencies and better serve Nevada's veterans and their families. Some of the major 2021 accomplishments and highlights include the following:

IT Operations Overcomes Pandemic Challenges

Transition to Virtual Operations

At the start of the pandemic in March 2020, the IT Operations team began the swift implementation to expand the department's virtual operations to permit working from home and supporting veterans who could not safely/easily visit our offices. Within weeks, the IT team was able to support the department so NDVS job functions could be performed, remotely, from home. Some of these virtual platforms included Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and others. By 2021, the IT Operations team had smoothly transitioned the department so that job functions that could be performed virtually. This included a wide range of department functions including internal operations, such as hiring and staff meetings, as well as external operations, from hosting and attending events, to setting up virtual capabilities for our veterans service officers to continue filing claims on behalf of our veteran clients.

Transition to State of Nevada's SMART 21 Platform

The SMART 21 (Silver State Modernization Approach for Resources and Technology in the 21st Century) modernizes Nevada's IT technical platforms that support the areas of financial management and human resources. The State's existing system was put into place nearly two decades ago and until now, had not seen significant upgrades since the original implementation. The SMART 21 system provides a more efficient, secure, and upgradable IT system that standardizes data and processes. It is also aimed at delivering excellent customer service and streamlining overall processes.

SMART 21 required end-user training so staff could understand and use the new platform. The NDVS IT team was among the early adapters, participating in this training to assist or troubleshoot during the implementation. As with any new IT system, the SMART 21 transition presented a few challenges, however, with the help of the IT Operations team, the NDVS Finance and Human Resources teams overcame the challenges and are continuing to learn and navigate through the new system.

NDVS Website Support

The NDVS website supports the mission of the department by providing information that connects veterans and their families to earned benefits, programs, and services. In 2021, major website initiatives, not included in previous sections of this report*, are as follows:

- **Search by Zip Code Feature (Phase 1)**

The Benefits and Resources page is among the most visited section of the NDVS website. It offers information on a wide range of programs, benefits, services, and resources across Nevada. This new search feature will allow end users to find what they need, in their own community, and not on the opposite side of the State. Phase 1 identifies which programs and resources have physical locations and verifies zip codes.

- **Serving Veterans – Youth Award**

The NDVS website supports this new program by offering online nominations. In the fall of 2021, the Veterans Services Commission (VSC) recommended a new recognition program, The Serving Veterans – Youth Award. It recognizes the volunteer work of a young Nevadan or a group of young Nevadans who contribute time, energy, and effort in support of veterans, military members or families of veterans and military members. The youth award is patterned after the Veteran of the Month/Veteran Supporter of the Month recognition program, with nominations submitted to the VSC for recommendation to the Governor's Office where the final determination is made. The first youth recognition is scheduled to be awarded in the last quarter of 2022. Eligibility, as well as nomination forms may be found under Veteran Appreciation at: www.veterans.nv.gov/benefits-and-services/veterans-appreciation

*Since the website encompasses so many areas of the department, please note, there are additional IT projects listed in this report under the Operations Division, NDVS Website section that include: NVTAP, Find Your Loved One (FYLO) Grave Locator GPS Mapping Project, Videoconferencing, "Ask a VSO," NDVS Online Events Calendar and Veteran Information Scanning Project. Other IT projects are listed in this report under Honoring Nevada's Veterans are as follows: Nevada's Veteran, Military and War Memorial Project, Nevada's Fallen Heroes Project (Phase 1), and the Battle Born Educational Kiosk Project.

VETERANS AND THE 81ST SESSION OF THE NV LEGISLATURE

Overview

There are three legislative events conducted by NDVS in partnership with the United Veterans Legislative Council and the Nevada National Guard. They include the Veterans Legislative Symposium, the Veterans Legislative Summit, and Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature (VAMDAL).

United Veterans Legislative Council

For decades, NDVS has coordinated the efforts of Nevada's veterans' community by convening legislative meetings and councils to gather issues important to veterans that could be considered for a legislative bill draft request, and educate veterans, their families, and their supporters so they might fully participate in the legislative process. One important partner in these areas is the United Veterans Legislative Counsel (UVLC).

Veterans Legislative Symposium

As a result of the pandemic, NDVS chose to conduct a virtual Legislative Symposium, rather than an in-person event. The May 26, 2020, event brought together leaders from all of Nevada's major veterans service organizations, individual veterans, and their supporters.

The virtual event provided the opportunity to identify and prioritize issues of importance to the veteran community to make recommendations to Nevada's elected officials. Forty-eight recommendations were identified, with 11 prioritized as most critical. Two were federal issues and were referred to Nevada's federal delegation for consideration.



Photo By: Brad Horn, Nevada State Photographer

THERE WERE SEVERAL COMMON THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THE RECOMMENDATIONS. THESE THEMES, IN PRIORITY ORDER, WERE:

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

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

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

STATEWIDE THEME 4: Provide needed support to families and caregivers.

Veterans Legislative Summit

Because of the pandemic, NDVS chose to conduct a virtual Legislative Summit, rather than an in-person event.

The January 19, 2021, Legislative Summit provided participating veterans an update on the status of the prioritized legislative recommendations developed during the 2020 Veterans Symposium. Other information provided at the Summit included the description of pre-filed bills with the Legislative Counsel Bureau as well as information on how veterans and veteran supporters could participate in the legislative process.

Veteran-Related Legislation Signed into Law in 81st Legislative Session

81st Nevada Legislative Session

The Nevada Legislature meets biennially and in 2021, the Legislature held its 81st session. There were 24 bill draft requests supporting veterans, military, and their families that were assigned a bill. Fifteen important veterans' bills were signed by Governor Sisolak and one Senate Joint Resolution was enrolled and sent to the Secretary of State. Eight bills failed by the Legislative deadline.

IN THE 2018 LEGISLATIVE SYMPOSIA, EACH THEME IDENTIFIED WAS ADDRESSED THROUGH THE 15 BILLS SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR OR THROUGH PASSAGE OF GOVERNOR SISOLAK'S SFY 22-23 BUDGET.

STATE-WIDE THEME 1: Improve outreach and information programs: AB 22, AB 316.

STATE-WIDE THEME 2: Reduce State fees, tuition, and taxes: AB 28, AB 102, AB, 156, AB 165, AB 202, SB 185, SB 193, SB 440.

STATE-WIDE THEME 3: Support veteran mental and medical health care: AB 76, AB 77, SB 185, SB 390.

STATE-WIDE THEME 4: Provide needed support to families and caregivers. AB 76, AB 156, SB 193, SJR 06, and Governor's CIP Budget to remodel the Southern Nevada State Veterans Home and to expand and improve Southern and Northern Nevada State Veterans Memorial Cemeteries.

Veteran-Related Legislation Signed into Law in 81st Legislative Session

More than half of the bills signed into law during the 81st Session of the Legislature supported veterans in transition. They are indicated in red.

AB 22: (Supports transition from military) Establishes a State Transition Assistance Program (Nevada Veterans Transition Assistance Program or NVTAP) for veterans and servicemen and servicewomen (BDR 37-283). The NVTAP online program launched ahead of schedule, in September 2021. In-person NVTAP programs are on hold until COVID-19 positivity rates are below five percent and can be safely conducted.

AB 28: (Supports transitioning to employment or owning a business) Imposes an inverse preference on certain bidders for State purchasing contracts, making exceptions to include persons with a principal place of business in the U.S. that is outside the State of Nevada (BDR 27-238).

AB 76: (Supports aging with dignity) Authorizes NDVS to establish and operate adult day health care facilities (BDR 37-284).

AB 77: (Supports mental health) Adds veterans suicide prevention and homelessness programs to NDVS statutory duties; standardizes veterans advisory public body terms to 3 years (BDR 37-285). NDVS has hired a full-time contracted Suicide Prevention Program Manager and a Homelessness/Justice Re-Integration Program Manager to ensure that these important programs are properly implemented and managed.

AB 102: Revises requirements for the issuance of certain annual permits for entering, camping, and boating in state parks and recreational areas (BDR 35-877). Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is the lead for this action.

AB 121: Revises the deadlines by which military and overseas voters may submit certain applications to register to vote and cast a ballot (BDR 24-896). The Secretary of State is the lead for this action.

VETERANS AND THE 81ST SESSION OF THE NV LEGISLATURE

Veteran-Related Legislation Signed into Law in 81st Legislative Session

AB 156: Allows members of the Nevada National Guard to transfer NSHE tuition waiver to a spouse or child (BDR 34-23). The Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) and the Nevada National Guard are the leads for this action.

AB 165: (Supports education and employment) Removes five-year limit on assessing certain tuition charges against honorably discharged veterans (BDR 34-681). NSHE is the lead for this action.

AB 202: Revises provisions relating to charitable lotteries and charitable games (BDR 41-581). The Department of Taxation is the lead for this action. Note: AB 202 met the intent of AB 234, 285, and 293 and no final action was taken on those bills.

AB 316: (Supports access to earned benefits) Requires the disclosure of certain information concerning certain events and services relating to benefits or entitlements for veterans; creating a cause of action for certain violations of such requirements; providing a civil penalty; and providing other matters properly relating thereto. NDVS has updated its website to provide information to veterans, veterans organizations, and businesses regarding this new requirement.

SB 28: Establishes the offense of sexual harassment within the Nevada Code of Military Justice (BDR 36-261). The Nevada National Guard is the lead for this action.

SB 185: Makes an appropriation of \$500,000 to the Department of Veterans Services to provide financial assistance and support for the Adopt a Vet Dental Program (BDR S-381). NDVS will receive these funds and distribute them to the Adopt a Vet Dental Program in accordance with State fiscal procedures.

SB 193: (Supports education and retraining for employment) Requires the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada to create a preference in admission to certain programs for veterans; prohibits the assessment of a tuition charge against veterans and their spouses and dependents. NSHE is the lead for this action.

SB 390: (Supports mental health) Provides for the establishment of a suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline (BDR 39-635). The Department of Health and Human Services is the lead for this action.

SB 440: Amends NRS 372.7281 to create a sales tax holiday, on Nevada Day (observed) and weekend immediately following the holiday for uniformed members of the Nevada National Guard who are on active status and are residents of Nevada, along with members of their household. The Department of Taxation and the Nevada National Guard are the leads for this action.

SJR 06: (Supports military spouses and families) Expresses support for the creation of a federal retirement plan for spouses of members of the military (BDR R-384). The Legislative Council Bureau is the lead for this action.

81st Session of the Legislature – 2021 Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature

The third Wednesday in March during each regular session of the Legislature is established as “Veterans Day at the Legislature” in the State of Nevada in recognition of the contributions veterans have made to the prosperity of Nevada and the United States (NRS 236.047).

VAMDAL is jointly hosted by NDVS, the UVLC, and the Nevada National Guard. The event provides an opportunity for veterans to talk directly to legislators about legislation important to them and to learn more about the Nevada National Guard capabilities and equipment. In 2021 VAMDAL was observed as a virtual presentation on March 17, 2021, at the Carson City Capitol and Legislative Complexes on both floors of the State Assembly and State Senate. The presentation may be viewed at <https://sg001-harmony.sliq.net/00324/Harmony/en/PowerBrowser/PowerBrowserV2/20210325/-1/13222?mediaStartTime=20210317120410&mediaEndTime=20210317121410&viewMode=3&globalStreamId=4>.

The next VAMDAL is set for March 15, 2023.

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
- Improve Military Spouses Licensure Programs



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
- Adult Day Health Care Study
- SN State Veterans Home Redesign (120 Bed) — “Home Again” Project
- NLV Veterans Home on VA Campus (120 Bed) Design and Approval
- Disabled Veteran Sports Program Expansion
- Veteran Homelessness Program Support
- Veterans Court 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**.

A Look Ahead...



The tremendous accomplishments made in 2021 serve as testament to the passion, dedication and hard work put forward by the NDVS Team. Their work and ability to succeed, in achieving goal after goal, never ceases to amaze me. I could sing their praises at length, but I believe the veterans served in 2021 say it much better. Below is a small sampling of the kind remarks from those we had the honor to serve:

“Great staff [at the cemetery], thank you for all your hard work. The place is beautiful!”

“My VSO supported me in the last year through my VA disability claim. He was able to get to over 100%!”

“I appreciate the condition [of the veterans home] and how friendly the staff is. The admissions process was excellent.”

“My first attempt [filing a claim] was difficult and then I happened to call about information... my VSO turned by experience around. She filled out the paperwork over the phone, so no need to travel to Reno. My claim went smoothly. I’m so happy I connected with her!”

“You walk in, and you cannot even tell it is a veterans home. It smells like home or food.”

“My VSO was very helpful and very knowledgeable. She explained benefits that I was entitled to and that I didn’t know existed. She also knew about medical issues I could claim, that were new to me as well. She is doing a wonderful job and was recommended by all of my co-workers.”

“The staff is very helpful, and the cemetery is beautiful, peaceful!”

“The quality of care [at the veterans home] compared to other places she was in is astounding. It is great.”

Their kind words speak volumes about the impact our team members make every day. I have always been proud of my teammates, and never more so than in this past year. I know that together the women and men of NDVS will continue to provide the tremendous support to veterans and their families for which they have earned such a great reputation.

In closing, I wish you all a wonderful 2022. As I retire, I know I will always be grateful to all of you who supported our vital mission of “Serving Nevada’s Heroes.”

Respectfully,
Kat Miller

Director

Serving Nevada's Heroes Since 1943

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES



www.veterans.nv.gov

NDVS Annual Report SFY 2021 overseen by NDVS Communications Director, Terri Hendry. Designed by The Factory, Reno, NV. For more information contact: hendryt@veterans.nv.gov