

WDVA Veteran Voices  
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## WDVA Veteran Voices

JUNE 2022



### A Message from the Director



#### 2022 Update on WDVA's Suicide Prevention Program

Your WDVA's Suicide Prevention Program vision is to Identify, Connect, and Save. Washington State lost 1025 Veterans to suicide from 2015 to 2020. We believe we can have positive outcomes and prevent Service Member, Veteran and Family (SMVF) suicide by using the principles of Identify, Connect, and Save.

Four suicide prevention specialists will work in our communities to establish resources, participate in information dissemination, connect Veterans to resources or support in their community, and provide training where needed. In addition to establishing a "no wrong door" policy, we believe in investing in promising practices within the community. A collaborative effort between WDVA and the Health Care Authority, will result in a Certified

### June Events & Observances List

June 12 - Women Veterans Day Celebration (Western WA) [Women Veteran's Day Celebration - Theme: Hope in Action | WDVA \(wa.gov\)](#)

(Eastern WA) [Women Veterans Day In Eastern Washington | WDVA](#)



Here is a current list of upcoming events that your WDVA is tracking.

Please email us your events at [communications@dva.wa.gov](mailto:communications@dva.wa.gov) so we can get them added.

June 08 - Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee Town Hall - [VAAC Townhall Meeting at American Legion Post #62 | WDVA \(wa.gov\)](#)

June 23 - Seahawks/YesVets Military Community Fair - [Seahawks Task Force 12 Military Community Fair - A Seahawks and YesVets hiring event | WDVA \(wa.gov\)](#)

June 25 - Korean War Commemorative Ceremony - [Korean American Association Wreath Laying Event at the Capitol | WDVA \(wa.gov\)](#)

June - Veterans Training Support Center - [VTSC Events | WDVA \(wa.gov\)](#)

Aug 24/25 - Serving Those Who Served Conference - Wenatchee - [Save the Date! 5th Annual Serving Those Who Served | WDVA \(wa.gov\)](#)

Peer Counselor program where volunteers can become state certified to work within Behavioral Health settings on a peer level and provide outreach services and peer support to SMVF's in need.

Our Suicide Prevention Program has also partnered with the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and their Families. Thirty-five states have taken the challenge and have convened multiagency teams to implement best practices that are right for their state. Washington's team convened in January 2020 and includes the Federal VA, UW Forefront, Nine Line Veterans Services, Heroes Homestead, WA National Guard, JBLM, DoD, Health Care Authority, Department of Health, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.



[Read More](#)

## Memorial Day Wreathlaying on Capitol Campus

WDVA was honored to partner with the Northwest Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America to honor Veterans lost in service to our Country including those lost to service connected disabilities and those who died by suicide. NWPVA donated wreaths to be placed at the WWI, WWII, Korea, and Vietnam War Memorials. After a wreath was placed at each location, veterans in attendance read a short description of the Memorial.



[Watch Video](#)

## June is Pride Month - Honoring & Assisting LGBTQIA+ Veterans

Welcome and thank you for your service, we are here to serve you with the respect and dignity you deserve. We strive to create an environment where all are able to live their life authentically; feeling safe, supported, and empowered free from discriminatory policies and practices.



**Your** Washington Department of Veterans Affairs is committed to a diverse workforce, and an inclusive workspace and understands that diversity and inclusion are essential for delivering the best

## WDVA Hot Jobs

# \$3,000

## incentive payment for current and new NAC staff!



Full-time NACs and NAC Leads who have been permanent employees for one year are eligible for an immediate payment of **\$3000**.

New hires are eligible for a payment of **\$1,500** on the date of their hire. These new staff members may also be eligible for an additional **\$1,500** after their six-month probationary period and any required training.

Any current staff who recommend hires that lead to a permanent, full-time staffer can receive a **\$200** payment.

For more information, go to

[www.dva.wa.gov/nursing-assistant-recruitment-and-retention-incentive](http://www.dva.wa.gov/nursing-assistant-recruitment-and-retention-incentive)

service to Washington State's veterans. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer+ (LGBTQ+) community is a vital facet of our veteran population. Each day we are advocating, celebrating diversity, and promoting inclusion and equal protection.

Learn More: [LGBTQ+ Veterans | WDVA \(wa.gov\)](#)

[Recognizing LGBTQ+ Veterans During Pride Month | Veterans Affairs \(va.gov\)](#)



**WE'RE HIRING**

RNs | Drivers  
LPNs | Chefs  
CNAs | & More

Make and Impact and Join a Career in Serving Those Who Served!

**APPLY NOW!**  
Recruiters@DVA.WA.GOV

[WDVA Registered Nurse 2, On-Call, Walla Walla](#)

[WDVA Psychiatric Social Worker 2, On-Call, Spokane](#)

[WDVA Resident Care Manager, Registered Nurse 3, Full Time, Walla Walla Veterans Home](#)

[WDVA Nursing Assistant Certified \(CNA\), Part-Time, Orting](#)

[WDVA Charge Nurse, Registered Nurse 2, Port Orchard](#)

[WDVA Public Disclosure/Public Records Program Manager, Management Analyst 4](#)

[WDVA Fiscal Analyst 4, Olympia](#)


[WDVA Bus Driver \(Truck Driver 1\), On-Call, Walla Walla](#)

And many more Nursing, NAC, and other jobs can be found at:

[State of Washington Job Opportunities |](#)

[Other Positions](#)

## Walla Walla Veterans Home

BBQ lunch on the patio, and special Memorial Day concert and program.   
[#ServingThoseWhoServe](#)



A very special thank you to our presenters and musicians, and to Tammy, Teresa, Alan, Darran, Melissa W, and Melissa C for coordinating and arranging this wonderful afternoon!

Chinook Winds Band, Chaplain Vic Phillips, Trina Parish Commander at VFW Post #992,

[View Open Positions](#)

Available at our Walla Walla, Spokane, Orting & Port Orchard Veterans Home.  
[Recruiters@dva.wa.g](mailto:Recruiters@dva.wa.g)

[View More](#)

## Spokane Veterans Home



Spokane Veterans Home has a new pet therapy dog, Jeff!!! 🐶

Jeff was a guide dog for the last 10 years and recently enjoyed spending two hours in our Spokane Veterans Home with our honored residents.

It was an amazing time seeing all of our Veterans and staff with so many smiles on their faces.

[#WeLoveOurCommunit](#)

[Read More](#)

More from Spokane Veterans Home:  
Check Out the recent Quilt of Valor Donation to SVH Honored Residents - [\(12\) Facebook](#)

## Washington State Veterans Cemetery

## You can help recognize Washington as a Purple Heart State...Donate Today!

Recognizing and Honoring Washington State Purple Heart Veterans – Washington Highway Sign Campaign

Every donation counts towards the goal of placing Purple Heart Highway Signs at all 34 state entrances into Washington!

Purple Heart Medals are presented to Armed Forces members who are killed or wounded in combat.

Learn more: [Purple Heart Donation](#)

**WASHINGTON STATE DESIGNATED A PURPLE HEART STATE**

# DONATE and recognize WA as a Purple Heart State!

**THE PURPLE HEART MEDAL IS PRESENTED TO THOSE MEMBERS OF THE ARMED SERVICES WHO ARE KILLED OR WOUNDED IN ACTION AS THE RESULT OF AN ACT OF AN ENEMY OF THE UNITED STATES OR IN MILITARY COMBAT.**

**DONATE NOW**  
Your donation will help place Purple Heart signs at all 34 highway entrances into Washington State.  
Donations in any amount are welcome and every donation counts! Signs can also be fully sponsored by individuals or organizations!  
Learn more at [www.dva.wa.gov/purpleheart](http://www.dva.wa.gov/purpleheart)

Donate: [www.dva.wa.gov/purpleheart](http://www.dva.wa.gov/purpleheart)  
More information: [communications@dva.wa.gov](mailto:communications@dva.wa.gov)

The Washington State Legislature passed HB 1250, officially designating the state a Purple Heart State. This further acknowledges our States' gratitude to the men and women of the military who were killed or wounded as a result of an act of an enemy of the United States or in military combat.

**Purple Heart State**

**WSDOT WDVA**

## Washington Soldiers Home in Orting

Friends of Gunny Flag Retirement Ceremony at the Washington Soldiers Home

Former members of the [Patriot Guard Riders, Inc.](#) held their Annual





## Memorial Day Ceremony

More than 600 people attended Monday's service in honor of Memorial Day, the first in-person ceremony held at the veterans cemetery in Medical Lake after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This year's ceremony featured speeches from local officials and veterans, a presentation of colors by an honor guard from Fairchild Air Force Base and performances from the Lilac City Community Band.

Rudy Lopez, director of the veterans cemetery, said it felt great to be able to host a proper ceremony after the last two were canceled.

Lopez was disappointed the ceremony was paused during the last two years of the pandemic, but understood the precautions were in place to protect vulnerable populations like the many senior veterans in attendance. He said the Memorial Day ceremony can be impactful for the loved ones left behind.

"We do this for the families; they need this," Lopez said. "This helps with the closure process. It provides them comfort and helps them find closure," Lopez said. "Many of the families might have just interred someone within this past year." [via Spokesman.com](https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2022/may/22/memorial-day-ceremony-at-washington-soldiers-home/)

[Read More](#)

Flag Retirement Ceremony at the WA Soldiers Home in memory of Patriot Guard Rider Tomas Shirey AKA "Gunny". Gunny was a USMC gunnery sergeant during the Vietnam War.

Gunny was also a loyal Washington Soldiers Home volunteer who assisted with numerous volunteer programs such as bingo and holiday events.

We were honored to have Gunny's wife, Donna, for the event and a regular participant in the Annual Friends of Gunny Flag Retirement Ceremony At The Washington Soldiers Home. The retired flag was proudly given to David Bitts, Resident Council Chairman.

[Read More](#)

## Updates on WDVA's Military Spouse Initiative



**Memorial Day at WA Veterans Cemetery**



**Military Spouse**

Initiative Mission: Serving those who served by serving military spouses; Our vision is that every military spouse in the State of Washington is empowered and supported on their journey to fulfilling their needs and/or finding meaningful employment.

2022 Updates: [Program Updates on WDVA's Military Spouse Initiative - May 2022 | WDVA \(wa.gov\)](#)

**Photo Album:** [2022.05.30 Memorial Day at Cemetery | Flickr](#)

## Counseling & Wellness Programs for Veterans - Highlighting WDVA Programs



The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs maintains a one-of-a-kind, state-funded outreach/counseling program designed to provide confidential

counseling services to Washington State veterans and family members.

Learn more by visiting: [Counseling and Wellness | WDVA \(wa.gov\)](#)

Video Link: [Counseling & Wellness Programs for Veterans - Highlighting WDVA Programs WA Dept of Veterans Affairs - YouTube](#)

## Sign Up for Available Veterans Conservation Corps Internships:

**Veterans Conservation Corps Internships**

- Ecostudies Institute (Olympia)
  - o Prairie Habitat Restoration Internship
- Farmer Frog Farm (Woodinville)
  - o Farm & Livestock Internship
- Skokomish Valley Farms (Shelton)
  - o Regenerative Farming Internship
- Grays Harbor Conservation District (Montesano)
  - o Habitat Restoration Internship
- Lewis Conservation District (Chehalis)
  - o Prairie Habitat Restoration Internship
- Spokane Conservation District (Spokane)
  - o Vets on the Farm Internship
- Thurston Conservation District (Tumwater)
  - o Habitat Restoration Crew Internship
  - o Prairie Habitat Restoration Internship

For detailed information about each VCC internship opportunity and how to apply, please visit: [www.dva.wa.gov/internships](http://www.dva.wa.gov/internships)

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
"Serving Those Who Served"

## Celebrating Juneteenth - Highlighting Major General Gordon Granger

*Juneteenth and General Orders, No. 3*

Two and a half years later, in June of 1865, more than two thousand Federal soldiers of the 13th Army Corps arrived

The Veterans Conservation Corps was created in 2005 in an effort to help veterans find healing and purpose through the restoration and cultivation of Washington's natural resources.

This WDVA program links veterans to internships and volunteer opportunities around the state.



in Galveston and with them Major General Gordon Granger, Commanding Officer, District of Texas. Granger's men marched through Galveston reading

General Order, No. 3 at numerous locations, including their headquarters at the Osterman Building, 1861 Custom House, courthouse, and then the Negro Church on Broadway, as Reedy Chapel-AME Church was referred to then. The order informed all Texans that, in accordance with a Proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves were free.

It was from that moment that Juneteenth would be born. Since then, the annual commemoration has grown from local roots to a national celebration featuring parades, readings, processions, and more. In the late 1970s, the Texas Legislature declared Juneteenth a "holiday of significance [...] particularly to the blacks of Texas". Texas was the first state to establish Juneteenth as a state holiday under legislation introduced by freshman Democratic state representative Al Edwards (Houston). The law passed through the Texas Legislature in 1979 and was officially made a state holiday on January 1, 1980. After Texas recognized the date, many states followed suit. Currently, 47 of the 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia have recognized Juneteenth as either a state holiday or ceremonial holiday, a day of observance. [via GalvestonHistory.org](http://via.GalvestonHistory.org)

[Juneteenth and General Orders, No. 3 - Galveston Historical Foundation \(galvestonhistory.org\)](http://Juneteenth and General Orders, No. 3 - Galveston Historical Foundation (galvestonhistory.org))

Register Now: [Washington State Juneteenth Celebration](http://Washington State Juneteenth Celebration)

[Internships | WDVA \(wa.gov\)](http://Internships | WDVA (wa.gov))

## Vet Corps Applications are Now Open!

Site Opportunities across [Washington State](http://Washington State)

10-month AmeriCorps service term starting Sept 1, 2022

Monthly living stipend: \$1650

Education award (upon completion): \$6495

Learn more about Vet Corps at [www.dva.wa.gov/vetcorps](http://www.dva.wa.gov/vetcorps)

Questions? [vetcorps@dva.wa.gov](mailto:vetcorps@dva.wa.gov)

**VET CORPS**

**SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED:**

- Veterans, spouses and dependents are eligible for positions
- Position starts 09/01 and ends 6/30
- Mandatory Training Aug 24-26, 2022
- Full time 40-hours per week (with flexibility) for a total of 1,700 hours of national service at the end of 10 months
- Volunteer monthly living stipend
- \$6,495 education benefit awarded upon completion

**APPLY AT:**  
[my.americorps.gov](http://my.americorps.gov)  
 Search for  
 Vet Corps Listing ID 111798

**LEARN MORE:**  
[www.dva.wa.gov/vetcorps](http://www.dva.wa.gov/vetcorps)

AmeriCorps Washington logo and Department of Veterans Affairs logo with the slogan "Saving Those Who Served"



## ALL TRANSITIONING SERVICE MEMBERS

**About to Separate or Retire from Service?**

*Contact Us Now to Get Started on Your Pre-Discharge VA Disability Claim.*



### VA Accredited Claims Assistance:

*Disability Claims, Federal & State Veterans Benefits, Earned Benefits and More!*



**Have YOU Filed Yet???**  
**Time is Ticking...**



**\*You MUST File Your Pre-Discharge Claim between 90-180 days before Separation**

**CONTACT US TODAY**  
**SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED**



*"Serving Those Who Served"*

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**[SHAWN.PRESCHER@dva.wa.gov](mailto:SHAWN.PRESCHER@dva.wa.gov)**

**MALCOLM LEACH: 253.548.6018**  
**[MALCOLM.LEACH@dva.wa.gov](mailto:MALCOLM.LEACH@dva.wa.gov)**

Please take a few moments and provide us with feedback to make us better in 2022 at Serving Those Who Served.

Your feedback is instrumental in the continued improvement of your Washington Department of Veterans Affairs.



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WDVA2022>

Washington Department of Veterans Affairs  
1102 Quince St SE, Olympia WA  
1-800-562-2308  
[Unsubscribe](#)  
[Communications@dva.wa.gov](mailto:Communications@dva.wa.gov)  
[www.dva.wa.gov](http://www.dva.wa.gov)