



"Serving Those Who Served"

VETERAN VOICES

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WAServes.org

WAServes Launch

WAServes, part of the national AmericaServes network, is a coordinated network of public, private and non-profit organizations serving veterans, service members and their families in the

Washington area. WAServes utilizes a common technology platform to create accountability and formalize communication, coordination and transparency among its partner providers in order to efficiently and effectively guide veterans and their families to the most appropriate services and resources available to achieve their unique goals.

Who is Served?

Active duty, National Guard, Reserve service members as well as veterans, and their families who reside in the Greater Puget Sound area are eligible for support from the network at no cost. WAServes aims to support all individuals who have worn the uniforms of our military – regardless of age, era, branch or discharge status. When discharge status impacts eligibility of some services, Care Coordinators will strive to find an appropriate local resource. The Greater Puget Sound area consists of the following 8 counties: King, Snohomish, Island, Kitsap, Pierce, Thurston, Mason and Lewis.

How Does it Work?

The WAServes network continues to work collectively to improve the coordination and direct service delivery to military and veteran families. By adopting the technology and aggregating community-wide data, we are able to more accurately identify and measure:

- Who is requesting services
- What services they are requesting
- Availability of those services
- Time it takes to meet the need



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WDVA Hot JOBS:

[Nursing Assistant Residential Living \(WWVH\)](#)

[Registered Nurse 2 \(WWVH\)](#)

[ITS6 IT Security Program Manager](#)

[Licensed Practical Nurse 2 \(0113\) \(WSH\)](#)

[Registered Nurse 2 Orting \(0181\)](#)

More Info: recruiters@dva.wa.gov

"Serving Those Who Served"

A Message from the Director Lourdes "Alfie" E. Alvarado-Ramos Alfie@dva.wa.gov



2017 YesVets Message

The YesVets Hiring Initiative is helping connect Washington Veterans with jobs in their communities. Since the program began last year, over 400 employers have signed up as YesVets Partners and nearly 1,000 veterans have been hired!



YesVets Employers receive a YesVets decal which lets customers, veterans, and their families know they are a *Proud Employer of U.S. Veterans!* And each year the company hires a veteran, they receive a new year tab to add to their decal.



If you are a business who hired a veteran in 2016, be sure to connect with your [veterans employment representative](#) the next time you're hiring to earn your 2017 tab!

And, if you haven't yet signed up to be a [YesVets Partner](#), please take a moment to do it now. It's as

simple as entering your company name, location, email address and phone number! The best part is that after you've signed up, you'll be connected with your [veterans employment representative](#) who can work with you to find veterans who have the skills your company needs!



Have you said Yes?



2016 YesVets Recognition Event at the Capitol

Tax Credits & Recognition Programs: YesVets

Recognition Programs and Tax Credits make saying Yes to Hiring Veterans good for Employers and for Veterans!

YesVets: Make a commitment to hiring veterans by signing up at YesVets.org! From there you can connect with a veteran employment representative who can help you find the veteran with the skills you need. Once you've hired a veteran, you will receive a YesVets decal letting your customers know that you hire veterans with pride!

Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC): Employers who hire veterans from certain [target groups](#) may be eligible for the federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). The amount of the credit varies from \$2,400 to \$9,600, based on the length of your unemployment and whether the veteran has a service-related disability.

Veteran Target Groups

- A veteran who received food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP) for 3 consecutive months within the last 15-months (**Max. credit \$2,400**)
- A veteran entitled to compensation for a service-connected disability, **and**
 - Hired within 1 year of discharge from active duty (**Max. credit \$4,800**) -**or-**
 - Unemployed for at least 6 months during the year before the hiring date (**Max. credit \$9,600**)
- A veteran who has been unemployed for
 - At least 4 weeks in the year ending on the hiring date **BUT**
 - Less than 6 months during the year before the hiring date (**Max. credit \$2,400**)
 - At least 6 months within one year before the hiring date (**Max. credit \$5,600**)

To be eligible for WOTC in a Veteran Target Group an individual must

- Have served on active duty (not for training) in the U.S. Armed Forces for more than 180 days, **-or-** have been discharged from active duty for a service-connected disability; **AND**
- Not have a period of active duty (not for training) of more than 90 days that ended during the 60-day period ending on the hiring date.

[How to apply for the WOTC.](#)

WorkSource Veterans Services: Under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, employers may receive funding for training assistance and/or supportive services to eligible candidates **AND** certain jobs may qualify for On the Job Training (OJT) opportunities that can reimburse an employer 50 percent of a trainee's wages, up to a maximum of \$5,000. Most Veterans will qualify for WIOA if they are unemployed. Job candidates must be screened and certified eligible before their first day of work.

Visit the Veterans Resources pages on WorkSourceWA.com for information on how to connect with veterans services at WorkSource.

B&O Tax Credit or PUT Tax Credit: Beginning October 1, 2016, businesses that hire unemployed veterans for full-time employment (positions located in Washington) may receive a credit against their Business and Occupation (B&O) tax or Public Utility Tax (PUT). Businesses can earn credits through June 30, 2022, and must claim all credits earned by June 30, 2023.

Credit Amount:

- Individual cap - 20% of wages and benefits paid to qualified employee not to exceed \$1,500
- Statewide cap - \$500,000 per fiscal year

*Visit http://dor.wa.gov/Docs/Pubs/SpecialNotices/2016/sn_unemployed_vets.pdf for information on how to apply for the B&O or PUT Tax Credits.

Camp Lejeune Service-Connected Disability Benefits

Did YOU Serve at Camp Lejeune?

Know a Veteran, former Reservist, or National Guard member with One or More of the Following Conditions?

- ⇒ Adult Leukemia
- ⇒ Aplastic Anemia and other myelodysplastic syndromes
- ⇒ Bladder Cancer
- ⇒ Kidney Cancer
- ⇒ Liver Cancer
- ⇒ Multiple myeloma
- ⇒ Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- ⇒ Parkinson's Disease

If you are a veteran an honorable discharge who served at Camp Lejeune, NC for a minimum of 30 days (cumulative) between August 1, 1953 and December 31, 1987 you may be entitled to service-connected disability benefits from the VA. If awarded service-connected disability benefits you may also be entitled to medical/prescription benefits for those conditions.

Surviving Spouse of a Veteran

or

Know a Surviving Spouse of a Veteran Who Passed Away from One of the Conditions Above? (or one of the above conditions was listed as a contributing factor in the Veteran's death on the death certificate) If you are the surviving spouse of a qualifying Veteran who passed away due to one of the conditions listed above, or due to complications from those primary conditions, you may be entitled to Dependency and Indemnity Compensation benefits based on the Veteran's death. Please Call Us Today to See if You May Qualify!

Please Call Us Today to See if You May Qualify!

Washington Department of Veterans Affairs

www.dva.wa.gov or - 1-800-562-2308



"Serving Those Who Served"

UW Bothell Announces Veterans Life Initiative



Photo: L-R UW Bothell Student Veterans Association Vice President May Azcarraga, Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs Director Lourdes E. "Alfie" Alvarado-Ramos, UW Bothell Chancellor and Navy veteran Wolf Yeigh. (Photo by Marc Studer)

BOTHELL, Washington -- University of Washington Bothell Chancellor Wolf Yeigh has announced the Veterans Life Initiative, a long-term commitment to help military veterans succeed as students.

The initiative expands on existing services and was announced Thursday as Yeigh signed a memorandum of understanding with Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs Director Lourdes E. "Alfie" Alvarado-Ramos. The memorandum continues UW Bothell's six-year membership with Partners for Veteran Supportive Campuses, a statewide coalition of colleges.

About 250 UW Bothell students are eligible for veteran benefits.

As a Navy veteran who returned to school after four years of active duty and remained in the reserves through school, Yeigh understands the need to remove barriers, make veterans feel welcome and support their educational experience. An initiative

task force of student veterans, faculty, staff and alumni will recommend programming and processes to be incorporated into UW Bothell's Diversity Action Plan.

"This will be our battle plan to increase support for veterans on campus and their families," Yeigh said.

One example, already in progress, would provide grants for veterans to intern in cybersecurity positions through the UW Bothell-based Center for Information Assurance and Cybersecurity.

Via <https://www.uwb.edu/news/february-2017/veterans-support-pr>



Photo: University of Washington Bothell Chancellor Wolf Yeigh and Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs Director Lourdes E. "Alfie" Alvarado-Ramos renew memorandum of understanding for the Partners for Veterans Supportive Campuses. (Photo by Marc Studer)



The Veterans Club of Skagit Valley College served 103 homeless community members on February 17th at the Friendship House Cafe. This cafe has been a beacon of hope in the community for over 30 years.



We would like to thank Walmart for a donation of refreshments and Growing Veterans Farm on Starbird Rd. for pitching in funds with us to buy the 29 pizzas that were a hit with young and old.

A wonderful time with wonderful veterans!

Retsil Ladies' Shopping and Visiting Day



Thank you to all who gathered clothing and to the many that came to help YOUR Washington Veterans Home in Retsil.

"I wish you all could have been there to see the joy it brought to the ladies," one of the veteran residents stated. "You know people forget about us or don't know about us and they think of the Veteran's home and think it's just men."

This clothing donations allows women veteran residents to shop and find the things they like without having to physically go out and try to shop for them.

"We had several men come and want to know what was happening," one of the event volunteers stated. "We promised them a men's event once we talk to the Activities Director."

The donations was well received with an estimated 2/3 of the clothing being taken.

"When we do this again we will concentrate on finding more 2X and 3X sizes as those were the needed items."

"Those of us that were there, see the need," the volunteer added. "if nothing more, than for the companionship."

2017 Washington Soldiers Home Valentines Dinner



Washington Soldiers Home in Orting residents and their guests enjoyed a fine dining experience on Valentine's Day with pictures, a delicious meal, excellent service and live piano music.

Special thanks to Resident Council, D & Gs Snack Bar, Judy White, volunteers and staff for providing this exceptional Valentine's Dinner for WA Soldiers' Home residents and their guests!



2017 Patriotic Day & Massing of the Colors



One would be hard pressed to not already associate the American flag with patriotism, but the term, "Massing of the Colors", isn't necessarily a household name.

"The American public in general may've automatically associated patriotism with Massing of the Colors," said Patriotic Day event coordinator, retired Maj. Gen. John Hemphill. "But the new Washington State Patriotic Day from its title states the purpose is patriotism and includes the name of our foremost patriot President George Washington."

It is no surprise that Washington state will now tie the gap between the importance of honoring patriotism with this nation's flag and George Washington's iconic history with the flag.

"The American flag is the most prominent patriotic symbol of our country," said Hemphill. "General George Washington's Continental Army was the first to fly the American flag in June of 1777 at the Middlebrook encampment in New Jersey."

Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes as our official national flag June 14, 1777. Since then, the American flag has been and continues to be proudly flown by all of our country's military organizations wherever they are located, whether that be on land or sea.

The symbolism attributed with the American flag may seem to have lost its impact in the recent years, but the Washington State Patriotic Day provided the perfect opportunity to honor the flag as George Washington did, to honor the sacrifices of this nation's servicemembers.

"Freedom is not free. Patriotism expresses the will and determination that our country will remain free and a beacon of free democracy to the world."

That important link between patriotism and the American flag is the primary message and intended goal of Patriotic Day and Massing of the Colors for Washingtonians.

The Puget Sound Chapter of Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW) hosted Patriotic Day and the Washington State Massing of the Colors event, Feb. 25, at Stadium High School.

The purpose of the patriotic event is to celebrate active military personnel and veterans in the Evergreen State, as well as to celebrate the birth of this nation's first patriot, George Washington (Feb. 22). This annual event held every year at Stadium High School took on a new extended look by renaming the event to Patriotic Day.

The name change implemented hoped to better inform the public of the intended mission of the Massing of the Colors event, even for those that had never heard of Massing of the Colors.

Via <http://www.northwestmilitary.com/news/news-front/2017/03/state-patriotic-day-pays-tribute-to-nation/>

Orting Music & Memory Program Making a Difference



SPRING – 2017, LAMBDA ALPHA CHAPTER, TACOMA, WA, Carol OBrien

PREFACE: The Music/Memory is alive and well at the Washington Soldiers Home. We have finally purchased a brand new Apple computer with a donation from our chapter and an anonymous donor with another member donating a printer. Apple Business has been instrumental in training and advising us on the music/memory program and we are more than excited to grow and expand this program.

The following is a personal account of “Carl”—not his real name—and how music is making a difference for him:

“Failure to thrive.” was the diagnosis for Carl at the Washington Soldiers Home in Orting Washington. That was on his medical records when he first arrived. Depressed, suffering from PTSD, and paranoia, he did not interact well with staff or residents; he was generally combative as well as isolated.

The caring staff at the facility, having undergone training in the music/memory program, recognized that music/memory therapy would very likely help in lifting him out of deep depression and isolation. When staff interviewed Carl, his love of music became evident, and a playlist was created just for him and downloaded onto a donated Ipod Shuffle featuring his favorite singers and artists. When Carl has the headset on and is listening to this music, he is a happy man full of knowledge, humor, interaction, and excitement and best of all a wide toothy grin.

When I interviewed Carl on how music affected him and what it meant to him, he said: “It calms me down. I feel good and I think about good times. I don’t think about the bad memories.” He has a love for music and can name every song, singer from the Blues era. He would be listening to some song and come over to me, take his headphones off and ask, “Now, who is that singer?” Just to see if I knew.

Every time I see Carl with his headset on, listening to his music, and that happy smile on his friendly face, I know we are doing something worthwhile.

The Carl I see before me is far from being the depressed and sad person he once was.

Submitted, Carol Obrien



Are Your Vaccines Up to Date?

We’re just about midway through a [particularly deadly flu season](#), five counties recently reported [286 total cases of mumps](#), and the risk of pneumonia is high.

Now is the time veterans and their families need to be thinking about vaccines and ensuring they are up to date on their immunizations. The VA has a [helpful list](#) of the top vaccines you definitely need to consider. Not sure if you and your family members vaccines are up to date? Schedule an appointment with a medical provider today and find out. Wellness Works!

<http://www.publichealth.va.gov/vaccines.asp>



NOW HIRING: Four Veterans Homes

Now Hiring RNs, LPNs and CNAs at our Four Washington State Veterans Homes.



Contact a WDVA Recruiter at Recruiters@dva.wa.gov or call 360-725-2183

We offer a competitive salary, medical, retirement and vacation benefits!

Vietnam Veteran Donates Vietnam Artwork



Donated: Association of U.S. Army, PFC William Kenzo Nakamura Chapter Curtis Thompson is a native of the greater Seattle area. He served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War as a medic with the 44th Medical Brigade attached to the 25th Infantry Division.

He has a long history of volunteering with multiple organizations to advocate for Veterans and their families including King County Veterans' Levy Oversight Board, NAMIWA Board, NAMI-Eastside, Agent Orange committee for Washington State Council of VVA, and as a community volunteer and presenter on Veteran topics in Lake Washington and Mercer Island School Districts.

He currently serves as chapter president and representative for AUSA on the Washington State Veterans Legislative Coalition in Olympia and acts as a patient advocate with the VA Puget Sound Healthcare System. "Artillery Support" was taken during the battle near the border of Cambodia in Tay Ninh Province, Vietnam on an August morning in 1969.



This Vietnam Artwork was recently donated to Spokane & Walla Walla Veterans Homes.

Walla Walla Veterans Home Ribbon Cutting Event



The first residents of the new state Walla Walla Veterans Home will be welcomed soon, following a ribbon cutting ceremony on February 18th, 2017.

The \$34 million nursing care facility has 80 private rooms for residents expected from 10 nearby counties, including Benton and Franklin.

Democratic Gov. Jay Inslee cut the ribbon to ceremonially open the new home with the help of Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, R-Wash.

Those who saw violence and tumult from Iwo Jima to Pleiku to Fallujah “are now going to have the peace and dignity of the Walla Walla Veterans Home,” Inslee said.

“It is fitting that this home is built on the historic grounds of Fort Walla Walla,” McMorris Rodgers said.

The new home is a way to show gratitude to those who have served the nation and see that they get the care they deserve, she said.

Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., worked to get about \$22 million in federal money for the project, and the state of Washington contributed about \$12 million.

Although it is owned by the state, it is on the campus of the Walla Walla Veterans Affairs Medical Center, a federal facility.

50,000 veterans in counties served by new Walla Walla home

20,000 of those veterans estimated to be 65 or older

The new complex was built using a small house model. Residents will live in eight individual houses, each with 10 private bedrooms and bathrooms, and an open kitchen, dining and living area.

Via: <http://www.tri-cityherald.com/news/local/article133637399.html#storylink=cpy>

2017 Legislative Update—Military Related Bills

The Legislature is in full swing and working hard to pass bills prior to the March 8 house of origin cut-off. *Cut-off dates signify milestones that a bill must meet in order to be eligible for consideration during the session.* While some bills such as the budget and other bills necessary to implement the budget can miss a cut-off and still be considered, most have to meet the milestone in order to move forward.

Below are several Veteran or Military related bills that have already met the March 8 cut-off. You can find the full list of bills on our Legislative Updates Page at <http://www.dva.wa.gov/about-wdva/legislative-updates>:

Bill	Title and Summary
SHB 1055 & SB 5021	Military members/pro bono - Creates an Office of Military and Veteran Legal Assistance within the Office of the Attorney General to promote and facilitate civil legal assistance programs, pro bono services, and self-help services for military service members, veterans, and their families.
SHB 1320 & SB 5209	Gold Star license plates - Allows qualifying Gold Star widows or widowers to apply for a standard issue license plate in lieu of a Gold Star special license plate and continue to be exempt from license plate and annual vehicle registration fees.
HB 1534 & SB 5391	Dept. of Veterans Affairs - Clarifies and updates a variety of statutes relating to the duties and responsibilities of the Washington Department of Veterans' Affairs. Expands certain counseling services and employment opportunities available for veterans and their families. Changes the definition of veteran used to qualify veterans for veteran owned businesses, burial, and relief services. <i>(WDVA Agency Request Bill)</i>
E2SHB 1802	Veterans/shared leave access - Creates the Veterans' In-State Service Shared Leave Pool (VISSLP). Allows state employees who are veterans or their spouses, who are caring for them, to access shared leave from the VISSLP immediately upon employment.
SHJM 4007 & SJM 8005	I-5 bridge names / Nisqually - Requests that the Interstate 5 bridges over the Nisqually River be named for and recognize the veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts.

HB – House Bill * **SHB** – Substitute House Bill * **E2SHB** – Engrossed 2nd Substitute House Bill * **SB** – Senate Bill * **SHJM** – Substitute House Joint Memorial * **SJM** – Senate Joint Memorial * [Legislative Glossary](#)

WAServes Continued

(Continued from Cover Page) This collective impact and improvement in delivery of provider services would not be possible without the commitment and servant leadership of WAServes partner providers as well as the generous support of donors. The community has come together to create a new innovative approach of leveraging existing strengths, philanthropic leadership, and local coordination to better serve our military and veteran families. WAServes is funded by a generous donation from the Schultz Family Foundation. Most importantly, the data will provide insight into individual outcomes as a result of those services delivered. This collective impact and improvement in delivery of provider services would not be possible without the commitment and servant leadership of WAServes partner providers as well as the generous support of donors. The community has come together to create a new innovative approach of leveraging existing strengths, philanthropic leadership, and local coordination. This collective impact and improvement in delivery of provider services would not be possible without the commitment and servant leadership of WAServes partner providers as well as the generous support of donors. The community has come together to create a new innovative approach of leveraging existing strengths, philanthropic leadership, and local coordination.





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*We'll keep on serving,
You keep on sharing!*

www.facebook.com/wsdva



"Serving Those Who Served"

1-800-562-2308
www.dva.wa.gov

Keep informed about upcoming Veteran events by checking
our Calendar/Public Events Page often
<http://www.dva.wa.gov/calendar>

Have an event of interest to Veterans you want others to know about?

Send fliers and information to
communications@dva.wa.gov

WDVA Veteran Voices
PO Box 41150
1102 Quince Street SE
Olympia, WA 98504-1150
1-800-562-0132 opt. 1
communications@dva.wa.gov

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Governor of Washington
Jay Inslee

WDVA Director
Lourdes E. Alvarado-
Ramos (Alfie)
alfie@dva.wa.gov

WDVA Deputy Director
Gary Condra
garyc@dva.wa.gov

**WDVA Assistant
Director**
Mary Forbes
maryf@dva.wa.gov

**Communications
Director**
Heidi Audette
heidia@dva.wa.gov

**Community & Media
Relations**
Gary Lott
garyl@dva.wa.gov

**Web & Veteran
Owned Business**
Jennifer Montgomery
jenniferm@dva.wa.gov

