



Wounded Warrior Voice

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FROM THE DESK OF COL GADSON: Celebrating Diversity, Equality, and Justice for All

Now is the time to begin working actively toward our goals for 2012 and I look forward to seeing everyone's commitment to laying the groundwork necessary to reach them. We must shift gears from enjoying the rewards of last year's goals, into establishing momentum to achieving new ones. As the year continues, we must not only maintain and sustain, but encourage each other to remain focused on our efforts to help the wounded, ill, and injured Soldiers, Veterans, and their Families.

During January, we celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a man whose legacy helped shape so many individuals who not only serve in the Army, but for the nation. His dedication caused major changes resulting in a commitment to justice and equality for all people. These values are the foundation of our Army. We are working for equality for Soldiers, Veterans, and their Families who have served in the Army, making sure they have all the care and assistance seeking their opportunities to continue in the Army, or transition into the civilian community.

As February approaches, I want to encourage the observance of Black History Month. We are not only recognizing the contributions of one group of individuals, but the diversity that encompasses America. Our strength is that we are a nation of diversity. It is not only about race, creed, color, or abilities, but all of the contributions we make. The nation has to endure in its responsibility to our fellow human beings both at home and around the world. I encourage everyone to participate in the commemorative activities available, and continue to learn more about the diverse cultures that add to the richness of our nation. As stated in the tri-signed letter celebrating Martin Luther King Jr. Day, we must continue to "Remember, Celebrate, and Act!"

Read the tri-signed letter at <http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/c/downloads/231849.pdf>

AW2 Advocates Assist the Coalition to Salute Americas Heroes

By Kyra Davis, Central Region Supervisor

On December 18, 2011, AW2 Advocate Patti Walker assisted the Coalition to

Salute Americas Heroes by facilitating a fully catered dinner at the Warrior Transition Battalion clamshell for over 35 AW2 Soldiers and their Families. A total of 103 guests were present. Each of the 35 AW2 Soldiers and Veterans who attended this event were presented a \$500 check. AW2 Advocate Walker worked simultaneously with AW2 Advocates Mike Hall, Raymond Gillett, and Matt Kohen, and acted as the POC for the Coalition to Salute Americas Heroes. A total of 49 additional checks were mailed to local AW2 Veterans throughout the state of Kansas.

For more information, contact AW2 Advocate Patti Walker, Fort Riley, Kansas, 785-239-8361

VA Update: VA on Social Media

By Jane Dulin, AW2 VA Liaison

All Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers are now actively represented on Facebook, the world's largest social networking site. The VA is reaching out to the thousands of returning servicemembers through multiple social media outlets.

The process that began with a single Veterans Health Administration Facebook page in 2008 has now produced over 150 Facebook pages, 64 Twitter feeds, a YouTube channel, a Flickr page, and the VAntage Point blog. Additionally, in June 2011, VA produced a department-wide social media policy that provides guidelines for communicating with Veterans online. The overarching strategy is designed to help break down long-perceived barriers between the (VA) and its stakeholders.

VA clinicians can't discuss the specific health concerns of individual Veterans on Facebook, but that doesn't prevent staff from monitoring VA's sites closely each day, and providing helpful information to Veterans when they can. For instance, in the last year the VA's Crisis Line counselors have successfully intervened on Facebook in cases where Veterans have suggested suicidal thoughts or presented other emotional crises.

VA currently has over 345,000 combined Facebook subscribers ("fans"). The department's main Facebook page has over 154,000 fans, and its medical centers have a combined subscribership of over 69,000. The department plans to continue expanding its Facebook presence while also focusing on bringing Twitter to every VA medical center as well.

For more information, visit: www.va.gov/opa/SocialMedia.asp and www.facebook.com/VeteransAffairs?sk=app_714647010

VA Update: Veterans Benefits Assistance Services

By Jane Dulin, AW2 VA Liaison

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and Benefits Assistance Services, reminds everyone that VBA information can be found on the Veterans Benefits Administration Facebook page. Posts are made seven days a week and cover many different topics. Additionally, Ebenefits is a portal site that Soldiers and Veterans can register for. It is a great tool for getting information, finding important documents such as a DD214, VA preference letter, and certificates of eligibility for home loans, etc.

Visit the VBA Facebook page at: <http://www.facebook.com/VeteransBenefits?v=wall&ref=ts> and check out Ebenefits at: www.ebenefits.va.gov.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has had a change in regulations regarding payments for emergency care provided to eligible Veterans in non-VA facilities. The new regulation extends VA's authority to pay for emergency care provided to

eligible Veterans at non-VA facilities until the Veteran can be safely transferred to a VA medical facility.

For more information about emergency care in non-VA facilities, visit www.nonvacare.va.gov.

VA Update: Veterans Group Life Insurance

By Jane Dulin, AW2 VA Liaison

Some Veterans covered under the Veterans Group Life Insurance (VGLI) now have the opportunity to increase their coverage to the current maximum coverage under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) program. The current maximum coverage for SGLI is \$400,000. For Veterans who are covered by VGLI, and have less than the maximum coverage (currently \$400,000), they can now increase their coverage by \$25,000 at each five-year anniversary date of their policy.

The additional coverage will be issued regardless of the Veteran's health. To be eligible to purchase this additional coverage, the Veteran must have active VGLI coverage, have less than the current maximum coverage of \$400,000, request the additional coverage during the four month period prior to each five-year anniversary date, and be less than 60 years old on the five-year anniversary date of his or her coverage. Eligible Veterans should be receiving notices from the VA concerning their eligibility for this benefit.

You may find more information on the Ebenefits portal site at www.ebenefits.va.gov under "Benefits Link-" "Insurance."

THE BLOG UPDATE: January 2012

Commander's Drumbeat: Military Athletes Compete at Warrior Care Month Sitting Volleyball Tournament

<http://WTC.armylive.dodlive.mil/2011/11/commanders-drumbeat-military-athletes-compete-at-warrior-care-month-sitting-volleyball-tournament/>

Helping Soldiers On and Off the Court

<http://WTC.armylive.dodlive.mil/2011/12/helping-soldiers-on-and-off-the-court/>

Oklahoma City YMCA Rolls out the Red Carpet for Soldiers Participating in the 2011 WTC Sitting Volleyball Clinic

<http://WTC.armylive.dodlive.mil/2011/12/oklahoma-city-ymca-rolls-out-the-red-carpet-for-soldiers-participating-in-the-2011-wtc-sitting-volleyball-clinic/>

WTC Soldier Reunites with Sister at Army's 2012 Warrior Games Sitting Volleyball Team Selection Clinic

<http://WTC.armylive.dodlive.mil/2011/12/wtc-soldier-reunites-with-sister-at-armys-2012-warrior-games-sitting-volleyball-team-selection-clinic/>

WTC Will Host Warrior Care Month All Service Sitting Volleyball Tournament

<http://WTC.armylive.dodlive.mil/2011/11/WTC-will-host-warrior-care-month-all-service-sitting-volleyball-tournament/>

Commander's Drumbeat: Updates in Warrior Care

<http://WTC.armylive.dodlive.mil/2011/12/commander%e2%80%99s-drum-beat-updates-in-warrior-care/>

AW2 Soldier's Sight Set on Gold

<http://AW2.armylive.dodlive.mil/2012/01/aw2-soldier%e2%80%99s-sight-set-on-gold/>

AW2 Advocate Meets with Nebraska Lieutenant Governor to Discuss

Community Support for Wounded Warriors

<http://AW2.armylive.dodlive.mil/2012/01/aw2-advocate-meets-with-nebraska-lieutenant-governor-to-discuss-community-support-for-wounded-warriors/>

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