
Office of Tribal Government Relations Newsletter ~ May 2014

Greetings and welcome to the May edition of the OTGR monthly newsletter. This spring has been a season of transitions. As I write this note to our readers, we mourn the loss of the last original Navajo Code Talker, Chester Nez, who used his native language that he was not allowed to speak while growing up to defend our country during World War II. We are so grateful for Mr. Nez and for his fellow Code Talkers' service to our country. We also bid farewell to VA Secretary Eric K. Shinseki and very much appreciate the support he gave in crafting VA's first formal tribal consultation policy and understanding the importance of the role of tribal relations and the government-to-government relationship in better understanding the priorities and needs of Veterans in Indian Country. We welcomed VA's Acting Secretary, Sloan Gibson, and look forward to continuing to support Secretary Gibson's leadership as we move forward. There is still so much to be done in the days ahead. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Jerry Gidner for serving as Acting Director, VA Office of Tribal Government Relations (OTGR) while I've been on a special assignment these past few months. I am glad to be back doing the important work of building relationships and supporting the effort to strengthen partnerships and ties between tribal governments and the VA.

On the *training* front, OTGR specialists worked in collaboration with local planning committees to host three Veterans Training Summits this past spring in Flagstaff, Arizona; Lewiston, Idaho and Philadelphia, Mississippi. Each of the summits offered important opportunities for tribal leaders, Veteran service providers, Veterans and all community members to meet and network with VA leadership and staff from all three administrations as well as engage with other key federal, state and local partners to learn more information about how to effectively link Veterans with the services and benefits they've earned. This summer, plans are underway for three more training summits to be held in: Towaoc, Colorado (August 20-21, Southwest Region); Durant, Oklahoma (August 26, 27, Southern Plains Region); and Spirit Lake, North Dakota (August 7,8 Central Region). OTGR specialists and our VA colleagues also have been supporting the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) CMS ITU Training Sessions, offering presentations this past month in Baltimore, Maryland; Dallas, Texas and Auburn, Washington. Our colleagues from VHA's Chief Business Office also presented information about the Reimbursement Agreement process between VA, IHS and Tribal Health Programs during the Annual Tribal Self Governance Conference held in Arlington, Virginia. Peter Vicaire, OTGR Central and Eastern (Northeast) tribal government relations specialist teamed up with VA Palo Alto, California Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist (VJO) Kristi Woodard (Colville Tribe) in making a presentation focused on working with tribes and tribal Veterans at the Justice for Vets conference in Anaheim, California. A number of participants were particularly interested about linking up tribal justice systems and justice involved Native Veterans with the VA VJOs as well as seeking more information about how Veterans courts work.

Meanwhile, in the world of tribal relations, over in North Dakota, Peter Vicaire, along with Fargo VAMC Director Lavonne Liversage, North Dakota State Senator Richard Marcellais and Fargo VAMC Minority Veteran Program Coordinator Harold Lindsay, toured the Indian Health Service facility on the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation and also met with Turtle Mountain Veterans in order to gain a better understanding of their needs and concerns. Also coming up in North Dakota, on June 14, Senator Heidi

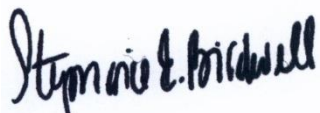
Heitkamp is hosting a Native American Veterans Summit at the United Tribes Technical College Wellness Center from 10 am until 4 pm. Peter and I will both be on hand as well as other senior officials from VA, the IHS and the North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.

Southwest Region Tribal Government Relations specialist Homana Pawiki attended the White Mountain Apache Tribe (located in Arizona) tribal inauguration this month (where half of the tribal council are Veterans). The tribe is very active in Veterans Affairs issues and Homana was honored to be present for this event. She also offered support to the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona (ITCA) in lining up VA speakers and presenters to discuss VA programs and services during a series of benefits trainings hosted by ITCA during the month of May. Over in Oklahoma, Southern Plains/Eastern (Southeast) Tribal Government Relations Specialist Mary Culley enjoyed the opportunity to serve as the keynote speaker for the Comanche Indian Veteran Association (CIVA) Armed Forces Banquet. Mary has been very active in working with tribes within her regions to increase awareness of the VBA Native American Direct Loan (NADL) mortgage program opportunity for Veterans living in Indian Country. To learn more about Mary's efforts with NADL outreach, you may contact her directly via email at Mary.Culley@va.gov.

On the health care front, we are pleased to share with our readers that as of the posting of this newsletter, VA has entered into 53 Reimbursement Agreement with Tribal Health Programs nationwide and has paid over \$7 million in reimbursements to IHS and Tribal Health Programs for direct care provided to American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans. These agreements serve as important access points for Veterans living in Indian Country. They also provide opportunities for IHS and Tribal Health Programs to strengthen ties with the VA and the services and benefits that extend to Veteran not just through VHA but also through the Veterans Benefits Administration and the National Cemetery Administration.

Looking ahead to June and July, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) will be hosting their mid-year conference at the Dena'ina Center in Anchorage, Alaska the week of June 8. Our Alaska VA colleagues will be making presentations to the NCAI Veterans committee and will also have an information booth on site. We encourage you to stop by and say hello. The VA team in Alaska is exceptional and does a lot of great outreach and work with the Alaska Native community. Our Tribal Government Relations Specialist for the Western Region, Ms. Terry Bentley has been involved as a member of the planning committee preparing for the upcoming Veterans Summit hosted by the Native Wellness Institute: Gathering of Warriors which will be held on July 10-11 in Grand Ronde, Oregon. Registration information is available at www.NativeWellness.com. Also during the month of July, Peter Vicaire will be making presentations to the Great Lakes Intertribal Council at Stockbridge Munsee, Wisconsin.

We hope you find this edition informative and look forward to having the chance to meet with you during our travels in the days ahead. Happy Reading – Stephanie





Navajo President Shelly orders flags at half-staff in honor of Navajo Code Talker Corporal Tom Jones, Jr.

Click [HERE](#) to read the original story, which was published in Navajo Times



Corporal Tom Jones

Another Navajo hero has passed. Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly ordered flags on the Navajo Nation to be flown at half-staff in honor of Navajo Code Talker Cpl. Tom Jones, Jr., from sunrise on May 14 to sunset on May 17, according to a press release from his office. "The Navajo Nation has lost another hero and role model to our people," Shelly said. "We are saddened by the loss of Tom Jones, Jr. and the Nation sends our condolences and prayers to his family." Jones passed on May 12 at the San Juan Regional Medical Center in Farmington, N.M., after a battle with pneumonia and other medical conditions. He was 89 years old. His service in the U.S. Marine Corps began on Nov. 16, 1943, and he was honorably discharged on Dec. 30, 1945. Jones was a messenger for U.S. Marine Corps 3rd Division, Unit 297 and served with the Navajo Code Talkers 767 and Navajo Code Talkers 642 Platoons at Camp Pendleton.

"Our father was a private, humble, simple, caring and giving father, grandfather, brother, friend and comrade," said daughter Carmelita Nelson. "His heart was caring, his mind was strict, his life was blessed and his soul was graceful."

Funeral services will take place on May 17 at the Diné Christian Center in Shiprock, N.M., beginning at 10 a.m. An account with Wells Fargo Bank has been established for donations under account number 2221454164. Jones leaves behind three children, eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

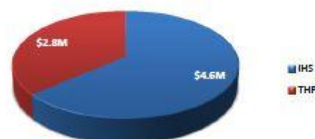


How to Establish Reimbursement Agreements Between the VA and Tribal Health Programs

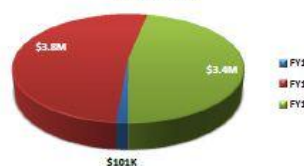
See below for a recently made video [58:13] explaining the process for Tribal Health Programs (THPs) to enter into a reimbursement agreement with VA for treating Veterans. <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/va-channel-2>. As of May 22, 2014, there has been over \$7.3 million reimbursed by VA to IHS and THPs. To begin the process to be reimbursed by VA for serving American Indian Veterans, send an initial inquiry to: tribal.agreements@va.gov.

CBO Purchased Care, Program Oversight and Informatics Department of Informatics (10N3B)			Purpose of Report	
Indian Health / Tribal Health Program			The purpose of the report is to capture the total amount disbursed, to unique Veterans, total billed charge, total VA amount Paid, and total number claims using the Central Fee Files for the Indian Health & Tribal Health Program	
Reporting:	May 2014			
Last Updated:	5/22/2014			
Extracted by:	Jenaya Lee			
National Central Fee Data Roll-Up				
Total Disbursement - Agmt Date to FYTD	Total Disbursement by Program - Agmt Date to FYTD			Total Veterans - Agmt Date to FYTD
\$7,370,519.89	Program	Total Disbursed	Total Unique Vets	2,834
	IHS	\$4,691,334.13	2343	
	THP	\$2,679,185.76	495	

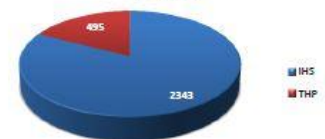
Total Disbursed by Program



Total Disbursed by Transmitted Fiscal Year



Total Unique Veterans by Program



New Veterans Health Identification Card

Click [HERE](#) to go to VA's website on this news

The new Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC) provides: (1) Increased security for your personal information - no personally identifiable information is contained on the magnetic stripe or barcode; (2) A salute to your military service - The emblem of your latest branch of service is displayed on your card. Several special awards will also be listed. The VHIC replaces the Veteran Identification Card (VIC) and will be issued only to Veterans who are enrolled in the VA health care system.

Purpose of the VHIC. The VHIC is for identification and check-in at VA appointments. It cannot be used as a credit card or an insurance card, and it does not authorize or pay for care at non-VA facilities.



Getting the New Card is Easy!

In February 2014, VA began issuing the VHIC to newly enrolled Veterans and enrolled Veterans who were not previously issued the old VIC but requested an identification card. Beginning in May 2014, VA will automatically mail a VHIC to enrolled Veterans who were issued the VIC. Because we will be reissuing more than 6 million cards, we ask for your patience during this time. Veterans who were issued a VIC do **not** need to return to their VA medical center to have a photo taken for the VHIC.

Enrolled Veterans who do not have the VIC can contact their local VA medical center Enrollment Coordinator to arrange to have their picture taken for the new VHIC, or they may request a new VHIC at their next VA health care appointment. To ensure their identity, Veterans must provide either one form of primary identification or two forms of secondary identification. Please see the **Acceptable Documents for Identity Proofing** table below.

The VHIC will be mailed to all valid mailing addresses, including P.O. boxes.

Important!! Veterans who are already enrolled should ensure the address we have on file is correct so you can receive your VHIC in a timely manner. To update or to confirm your address with us, please call 1-877-222-VETS (8387). If the post office cannot deliver your VHIC, the card will be returned to the VA.

What to do if you are NOT enrolled

If you are not currently enrolled with the VA for your health care, we encourage you to apply for enrollment online at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll or by calling 1-877-222-VETS (8387). You may also apply for enrollment in person at your local VA medical facility. Once your enrollment is verified, your picture will be taken at your local VA medical center so that, once production begins, a VHIC will be mailed to you. To ensure your identity, you must provide either one primary or two secondary documents. See the **Acceptable Documents for Identity Proofing** table below.

What to do if you do not receive your new VHIC. You should receive your VHIC within 7 to 10 days after you request a VHIC card. Although we strive to do all we can to ensure we enroll Veterans in a timely manner, sometimes we are unable to either verify your military service or we need additional information from you. If so, we will try to contact you to get the information we need to complete your enrollment application. If we are unable to reach you, we encourage you to contact the local VA facility where the card was requested or contact us at 1-877-222-VETS (8387) to complete your application and find out the status of your card.



What to do with your old VIC. VA wants all enrolled Veterans to have a Veteran Health Identification Card that protects their personal information. Until Veterans receive the new, more secure VHIC, Veterans are encouraged to safeguard their old VIC, just like they would a credit card, to prevent unauthorized access to their identity information. Once the new VHIC is received, Veterans should destroy their old VIC by cutting it up or shredding it.

What to do if you're VHIC is lost or stolen. If your VHIC is lost or stolen, you should contact the VA Medical Facility where your picture was taken to request a new card be re-issued, or call us at 1-877-222-VETS (8387). Identifying information will be asked to ensure proper identification of the caller.

Acceptable Documents for Identity Proofing

The old VICs and VHICs are acceptable forms of primary identification. The chart below lists the additional forms of identification which are accepted primary and secondary identification.

Primary Identification	Secondary Identification
Present ONE form of Primary Identification	If a Primary form of identification is not available, present TWO forms of Secondary Identification
State-Issued Driver's License	Certified Birth Certificate
State Issued ID	Original Social Security Card
United States (U.S.) Passport	DD214 or equivalent certificate issued by Department of Defense or War Department
VA Identification Card (VIC) or VHIC	Marriage License (certified copy)
Military ID Card	State Vote Registration Card
Temporary Resident Card	Student ID Card
Resident Alien Card	Native American Tribal Document
Permanent Resident Card	Certificate of U.S. Citizenship (INS Form N-560 or N-561)
Other Federal or State issued photo ID	Certificate of U.S. Citizenship (INS Form N-550 or N-570)
	Certificate issued by US Consular Offices documenting the birth of a child on foreign soil to a US citizen. (Form FS-545, Form DS-1350, DS Form 240 or Form 240)



TRANSPORTATION GRANT: Mobility Services for All Americans (MSAA) Deployment Planning

5/1/2014. Request for Proposals (RFP): **Solicitation of Project Proposals for MOBILITY SERVICES FOR ALL AMERICANS (MSAA) DEPLOYMENT PLANNING.** The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announces the availability of \$795,545 in Research, Development, Demonstration, and Deployment Program, through cooperative agreements, for the deployment planning of Travel Management Coordination Centers (TMCCs) to support interoperable, coordinated human service transportation (HST) systems. FTA may award multiple projects totaling greater than what is currently available should additional funds become available. Synopses and full announcement are posted on Grants.gov site as opportunity FTA-2014-003-TRI. **Proposals must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov website by midnight Eastern Time on July 1, 2014.**

Summary: A key strategic goal of DOT and FTA is to improve and maintain America's public transportation systems to ensure they are safe and in a state of good repair in order to meet performance objectives. This Notice for Request of Proposals (RFP) makes funds available through cooperative agreements to engage in the deployment planning and preparation of coordinated HST systems that utilize ITS capabilities. This solicitation is targeted for communities of any size or definition, and the application may be submitted by a lead agency designated by the project team members. Eligible lead agencies may include public entities currently establishing, operating, coordinating, or brokering general public and HST, including, but not limited to, public transit agencies, state/local governments DOTs, health and human service agencies, federally recognized Indian tribes, and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in the U.S. All agencies submitting proposals in response to this RFP consent to be publicly identified as respondents.

Eligible Applicants: This solicitation is targeted for communities of any size, and the application can be submitted by a lead agency designated by the project team members. Eligible lead agencies are public or private non-profit entities currently establishing, operating, coordinating, or brokering general public and HST, including, but not limited to, public transit agencies, state/local governments DOTs, health and human service agencies, federally recognized Indian tribes, and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in the U.S. Each agency may submit one, and only one, application as the lead agency. Should multiple applications be received from the same lead agency, FTA reserves the right to select one or reject all for application review. All agencies submitting proposals in response to this RFP consent to be publicly identified as respondents.

For-profit companies may participate on project teams; however, recipients and subrecipients of funding under this program may not charge a fee or make a profit from FTA program funding. For profit vendors and suppliers engaged in a commercial relationship with a recipient are considered third-party contractors and may charge associated fees.



The proposal must include a detailed statement regarding the role of any public transportation provider who is a project partner but may not be the lead applicant in the implementation of the project.

Link and Instructions for attaching the supplemental form to the SF-424: All applicants must complete a supplemental form (PDF) and attach it to their submission in Grants.gov. (Note: Supplemental form is currently being developed and will be available soon in this location.)

FAQs: Frequently Asked Questions related to this RFP will be posted at a later date.

Dates: An applicant must submit a proposal electronically by midnight Eastern Time on **July 1, 2014**. Any agency intending to apply should initiate the process of registering on the Grants.gov site immediately to ensure completion of registration before the submission deadline.

For Further Information Contact: For information on this RFP for MOBILITY SERVICES FOR ALL AMERICANS (MSAA) DEPLOYMENT PLANNING, contact Program Specialist Matthew Lesh, Office of Mobility Innovation, e-mail: matthew.lesh@dot.gov.

Faster Social Security Benefit Decisions for Veterans

Here's a piece from Yolanda York, Social Security Public Affairs Specialist



On Memorial Day, as we pay tribute to the men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country, we also share some news about Social Security disability benefits for veterans with disabilities: a new expedited disability process.

We believe it is important to recognize those who currently serve in the military as well as those injured in the line of duty and consider it an honor and a duty to serve them.

Whether the injury is physical or mental, getting a decision about Social Security disability benefits from your government shouldn't add to the problems faced by the injured.

Carolyn W. Colvin, Acting Commissioner of Social Security, recently unveiled a new initiative to expedite disability applications from veterans with a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation rating of 100 percent Permanent and Total (P&T). Under the new process, Social Security will treat these veterans' applications as high priority and issue expedited decisions, similar to the way we currently handle disability claims from wounded warriors.

"Our veterans have sacrificed so much for our country and it is only right that we ensure they have timely access to the disability benefits they may be eligible for and deserve," said Acting Commissioner Colvin.

Learn more about the new expedited process for veterans at www.socialsecurity.gov/pressoffice/pr/2014/expedited-dib-process2-pr.html.

Read about this new service at www.socialsecurity.gov/pgm/disability-pt.htm.

Also, you'll want to visit our Wounded Warriors page at www.socialsecurity.gov/woundedwarriors. There you'll find informative webinars, a *Disability Planner*, an overview of our disability programs and the convenient online disability application.



Social Security and VA Disability Benefits



SSA AND VA DISABILITY BENEFITS: TIPS FOR VETERANS



Connecting Veterans with Social Security Administration (SSA) disability benefits is a critical step to increasing income stability for Veterans and their families, as well as providing health insurance for those who may not qualify for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care. Veterans may be eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), in conjunction with, or as an alternative to VA disability compensation. They may also use the Medicaid and Medicare health benefits that come with SSI/SSDI to supplement VA health services.

The definition of disability and application process is different for SSA and VA disability benefits, and Veterans may begin receiving SSA benefits while they are waiting on a VA benefit decision.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

VA Benefits

For disability benefits through the VA, also known as service-connected disability, the applicant must show that they have a disabling condition that was “incurred or aggravated by their military service.”¹ The compensation rates are paid on a graduated scale, based on the degree of a Veteran’s disability, ranging from 10 to 100 percent, in 10 percent increments.

SSA Benefits

Alternatively, the definition of disability for SSI/SSDI does not require the Veteran’s disability to be linked to their military service, does not take into account a Veteran’s discharge status, and does not pay on a graduated scale. For SSI/SSDI, the Veteran needs to show:

1. Evidence of a physical or mental health condition, which results in functional impairments that limit their ability to work at a substantial gainful level (quantified as \$1070/month in 2014).
2. That the disabling condition has lasted, or is expected to last, for 12 months or end in death.

SSA EXPEDITED PROCESSING FOR VETERANS

Veterans may qualify for programs from SSA that expedite disability decisions:

1. 100% Permanent and Total Veterans Initiative

In March 2014, SSA introduced a new initiative to expedite the processing of applications from Veterans who have a 100% Permanent and Total (P&T) disability rating from the VA. To receive expedited processing, Veterans should identify themselves as a “Veteran rated 100% P&T” when initiating the SSI/SSDI application, and should provide the VA rating notification letter to SSA.

2. Wounded Warriors

Veterans who received disabling mental or physical health injuries while on active duty on or after October 1, 2001 are eligible for expedited SSI/SSDI application processing, regardless if the injury occurred in the U.S. or in combat. When initiating the SSI/SSDI application, Veterans should inform SSA that their injury occurred while on active duty.

More information about these expedited processes can be found at: www.socialsecurity.gov/veterans.

¹ “Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors,” U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2013 Edition.



HOW SSA AND VA DISABILITY BENEFITS IMPACT ONE ANOTHER

Veterans who receive a partial VA disability rating and limited VA benefits, may also receive SSA benefits. For cash benefits, the receipt of VA benefits will affect SSI and SSDI differently.

SSI

Since SSI is a needs-based program, additional income from VA benefits will affect the cash benefit amount. SSA classifies VA benefits as “unearned income,” since it does not come from paid employment. As such, it will be deducted dollar for dollar from the SSI federal payment amount, after a general exclusion of \$20. All SSI recipients are eligible for this exclusion, where the first \$20 of earned or unearned income is not counted against their SSI payment.

For example, Paul receives partial VA benefits of \$400 per month, and has been approved for SSI. The following table illustrates how the VA benefits will affect his SSI cash benefit:

VA Monthly Disability Benefit Amount	\$400
General Exclusion	- \$20
Counted Income	= \$380
Maximum Monthly SSI Benefit Amount (2014 rates)	\$721
Counted Income	- \$380
Monthly SSI Amount	= \$341
Total Monthly Income (VA + SSI benefit amounts)	\$741

SSDI

Alternatively, SSDI benefits are not affected by unearned income through VA benefits. In the following example, Jane receives partial VA benefits of \$400 per month. Because she worked and paid into the Social Security system, she now receives \$850 per month in SSDI. Her VA and SSDI monthly benefit amounts will be added together:

VA Monthly Disability Benefit Amount	\$400
SSDI Monthly Benefit Amount	+ \$850
Total Monthly Income	= \$1250

RESOURCES:

USING THE SOAR MODEL TO ASSIST VETERANS

The SOAR (SSI/SSDI, Outreach, Access, and Recovery) model assists Veterans nationwide who are experiencing or at-risk of homelessness in accessing SSA disability benefits. Training in the SOAR model is available, free of charge, from the SAMHSA SOAR Technical Assistance Center. For more information on SOAR, contact SOAR@prainc.com or visit <http://soarworks.prainc.com>

NATIONAL CALL CENTER FOR HOMELESS VETERANS

If you, or a Veteran you know, is experiencing or at-risk of homelessness, make the call to 877-4AID-VET (424-3838) to access 24/7 confidential support and connect with VA services.

GRANT OPPORTUNITY: Minority Health Community Programs to Improve Minority Health

Click [HERE](#) to be taken to the grant website

Partnerships to Increase Coverage in Communities Initiative Estimated Funds Available for Competition: Up to \$2,700,000 Anticipated Number of Awards: 10-13
Announcement Description: The purpose of the Partnerships to Increase Coverage in Communities Initiative is to identify and assist minority populations, to educate them about the Health Insurance Marketplace and to assist them with enrollment, completion of the application to determine their eligibility and purchase of health insurance offered through the Marketplace. Activities will include: utilizing coalitions and partnerships to maximize outreach and education of the underserved population(s); developing and providing comprehensive information and education sessions to consumers relative to the Health Insurance Marketplace; disseminating CMS or state-developed information that will increase awareness of the Marketplace and, where necessary, appropriately updating materials to more effectively provide culturally competent services specific to the underserved population, including translation services; assisting individuals from underserved and hard to reach minority populations and help them apply for health insurance coverage offered through the Health Insurance Marketplace; and monitoring and adapting strategies to reach enrollment targets.



Sallie Mae Ordered to Pay \$96.6 Million for Violating Troops Rights

WASHINGTON, May 14, 2014 – Justice Department officials announced an enforcement action yesterday against the nation’s largest servicer of federal and private student loans, which was found to be systematically violating the legal rights of U.S. service members.

Sallie Mae -- also known as Sallie Mae Bank and Navient Solutions -- is ordered to pay \$96.6 million in restitution and penalties, officials said, adding that the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation also reached a settlement with the companies that addresses allegations of student loan servicing misconduct. “I commend Attorney General Eric Holder, FDIC Chairman Martin Gruenberg, and the staff at the Department of Justice and FDIC for taking action to protect student loan borrowers,” said Holly Petraeus, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau assistant director, who leads the CFPB’s Office of Servicemember Affairs. “I have been concerned for some time about the way that military personnel are



treated by their student loan servicers,” Petraeus said in a statement. “The men and women serving this country should receive quality customer service and the legal protections afforded to them. Instead, Sallie Mae gave service members the runaround and denied them the interest-rate reduction required by law. This behavior is unacceptable. And it’s particularly troubling from a company that benefits so generously from federal contracts.”

The Justice Department’s civil rights division has initiated a number of enforcement actions in recent years to pursue those who don’t fulfill their legal obligations under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, Petraeus said. “I applaud their actions, which have put millions of dollars back in the pockets of service members,” she added.

The enforcement action should serve as warning not only to the student loan servicing industry, but also to all institutions that provide or service loans to the military, Petraeus said. “Federal agencies will be vigilant about holding all financial institutions accountable for providing the protections that our service members have earned through their selfless service to our nation,” she added.

A 2012 CFPB report found that service members faced serious hurdles in accessing their student loan benefits, including the provisions of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act that cap the interest rate on pre-existing student loans and other consumer credit products at 6 percent while the service member is on active duty, CFPB officials said. Servicers were not providing them with clear and accurate information about their loan repayment options. The CFPB heard from military borrowers, including those in combat zones, who were denied interest-rate protections because they failed to resubmit unnecessary paperwork. These kinds of obstacles prevent service members from taking advantage of the full range of protections they have earned through their service to this country, officials said.

The CFPB has partnered with the Defense Department to create better awareness of the rights and options for service member student loan borrowers. A CFPB guide for service members who have student loans contains clear information on the various ways student loans can be repaid. Officials noted that the CFPB began accepting student loan complaints in March 2012, and added that service members who have an issue with their servicers should submit a complaint to the CFPB.

To submit a complaint, consumers can: -- Go online at <http://www.consumerfinance.gov/complaint>; -- Call the toll-free phone number at 1-855-411-CFPB (2372) or TTY/TDD phone number at 1-855-729-CFPB (2372); -- Fax the CFPB at 1-855-237-2392; or -- Mail a letter to: Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, P.O. Box 4503, Iowa City, IA 52244 - Additionally, through “Ask CFP,” or by calling 1-855-411-CFPB (2372), consumers can get clear, unbiased answers to their questions, officials said.



OTGR Central Region



Office of
Tribal Government
Relations

AMERICAN INDIAN VETERANS TRAINING SUMMIT

SAVE THE DATE

AUGUST 7-8, 2014


SPIRIT LAKE CASINO & RESORT
7889 HIGHWAY 57, ST. MICHAEL, ND

ALL VETERANS, FAMILY MEMBERS
AND SERVICE PROVIDERS WELCOME

Registration is free ~ to register, contact Peter Vicaire at:
Peter.Vicaire@va.gov or
(651) 405-5676



Tribal Veteran Representative (TVR) Training in Farwell, Michigan – July 21-25

The Department of Veteran's Affairs will be hosting a **FREE** training on July 21st - 25th at the American Legion Post 558 in Farwell, Michigan. This training is open to anyone who is interested in attending. The purpose of this knowledge-based training is to help the attendees understand the VHA-VBA-& NCA benefits, programs, and services available so they can most effectively help the returning Veterans of the current OEF/OIF conflict and engage them in current programs available to them. As well as all Veterans of previous conflicts and their Family Members. [Click Here to Register for this Event](#) ~ [Click Here for More Information about this Event](#) ~ [Click to Tell a Friend](#) ~  [Add to My Calendar](#)



Native American Veterans Plaque Ceremony

On May 22, Tribal Leaders, Minnesota Governor Dayton and Commissioner Larry Shellito spoke at plaque ceremony honoring American Indian Veterans. A memorial plaque which was placed in the Court of Honor on the State Capitol grounds will now serve as a permanent memorial to American Indian Veterans who have served in peacetime and in war. Click [HERE](#) to see a set of 24 pictures from the event.



South Dakota Coalition for Military Families ~ September 10-11, 2014 ~ Sioux Falls, SD

The SD Coalition for Military Families, or SDCMF, is a connection point for all individuals and organizations in the state that serve, support and interact with Service Members, Veterans and their families. SDCMF is a response to national initiatives from the White House and the National Guard Bureau called, "Joining Force" and "Joining Community Forces", respectively. SDCMF seeks to connect organizations with each other for increased awareness, education, and mutual support of Service Members, Veterans and their families. If you are a Post-Secondary Higher Educator, School Counselor, Health Care Provider, First Responder, Social Worker, Therapist, Counselor, Human Resource Specialist, Spiritual advisor or simply interact with our military and veteran community on a daily or periodic basis, this Symposium is for you.

We look forward to seeing you in at the Washington Pavilion in Sioux Falls for the 2nd Annual SD Coalition for Military Families Symposium. LTC Bryan Jacobson - Director, Service Member & Family Support South Dakota National Guard bryan.a.jacobson.mil@mail.mil - (W) 605-737-6728; (C) 605-415-3131; (F) 605-737-6088; Family Assistance 800-658-3930"



FREE Academic Preparedness Program - Veterans Wanted

An accelerated 8-week summer college program in Hayward, WI - designed to jumpstart your college experience. Veterans have been specifically invited to attend.

Academic Preparedness Program

An Accelerated Summer College Program Specifically
Designed to Help Jumpstart Your College Experience
Eight weeks (June 9 - August 8) Monday - Friday

Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College

Want to get a Beneficial Start in your Degree?
Enroll Fall Semester 2014 - STRESS FREE?

Receive 6 College Credits:

EDU 110 Intro to Higher Education (3 cr)
CPS 101 Computer Applications (3 cr)

Preparation in:

Math
English

Writing Research Papers

Attend Workshops on:

Career Planning
Academic Study Skills
Job Readiness
My LCO & more

- Meet Staff & Faculty
- Become familiar w/campus
- Help build self-esteem

FREE BONUSES

Lunch
Supplies
Gas Voucher/Tokens
Stipend (money)
Yes, a stipend to attend!

For information contact:
Roxanne Martinson
rmartinson@lco.edu
(715) 634-4790 ext. 173

Don't Miss Out On A Great Opportunity!!!

Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College



Menominee Nation Veterans Golf Tournament June 22, 2014

Veterans of the Menominee Nation

1ST ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT SUNDAY JUNE 22ND, 2014



PINE HILLS GOLF COURSE 4-PERSON SCRAMBLE SHOTGUN START @ 10:30AM

\$400 PER TEAM ~ PRIZES, RAFFLES, BANQUET

DINNER WILL BE AT THE MENOMINEE CASINO/CONFERENCE CENTER AT 5:00 PM. WITH PRIZES AND RAFFLES TO FOLLOW.

COCKTAILS AVAILABLE AT 3:30 PM.

\$20 PER PERSON FOR DINNER ONLY



**MENOMINEE
CASINO RESORT**



**CONTACT
ANDY BOIVIN 715-851-2127
JOHN TELLER 920-562-3762**



PINE HILLS
GOLF COURSE



**REGISTER ON FACEBOOK
FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/MENOMINEEVETERANS/EVENTS**



Operation RAV (Reaching All Veterans) - June 5-6 at the Pine Ridge Powwow Grounds



*** Operation RAV ***

"REACHING ALL VETERANS"

You served, now let us serve YOU!

Veterans and family, please attend our **OPEN HOUSE** to learn about benefits you may be eligible for.

Professionals from the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs and your County Veterans Service Officer Lynette Quinsaas will be there to answer your questions.

Benefits you may be eligible for:

- Service Connected Compensation
- Veterans and Survivors Pension
- VA Medical Care
- VA Home Loan
- Burial Benefits
- State Benefits
- State Veterans Home

DATE:

June 5-6, 2014

TIME:

10:00 am - 2:00 pm

WHERE:

Pine Ridge Pow Wow
Grounds



<http://vetaffairs.sd.gov>





OTGR Southwest Region

U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

SOUTHWEST REGION

VETERANS TRAINING SUMMIT

UTE MOUNTAIN UTE RESORT – Convention Center

3 Weeminuche Drive | PO Box 268 | Towaoc, CO 82334



REGISTRATION FORM (registration is free)
August 20-21, 2014

Name	
Tribal Affiliation	
Veteran (Yes/No)	
Branch of Service	
Phone Number	
eMail Address	
Address	



Please return this form to L. HoMana Pawiki by Monday, August 11, 2014.

eMail: Lorae.pawiki@va.gov

Fax: 928.771.2509

Mail: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Tribal Government Affairs – Southwest Region
ATTN: L. HoMana Pawiki
Northern Arizona VA Health Care System
500 Hwy 89 North
Prescott, AZ 86313

Phone: 928.776.5306

Hotel Reservations call directly to front desk 888-565-8837 or 970-564-2500 Ute Mountain Hotel (Summit Room Rate: \$69.95 per night + tax on Aug 20, 21) (POW WOW WEEKEND Rate \$79.95 per night + tax on Aug 22, 23)

DAY 1: Wednesday, August 20, 2014

Start: 8:00 am (MDT)

End: 5:00 pm

DAY 2: Thursday, August 21, 2014

Start: 8:00 am (MDT)

End: 3:00 pm

POW WOW WEEKEND

Friday, August 22, 2014

Saturday, August 23, 2014



Society of American Indian
Government Employees
P.O. Box 7715, Washington, D.C. 20044



Honoring Our Ancestors
Through Government Service
www.saige.org

Warriors / Veterans

SAIGE invites you to a FREE day at the 2014 SAIGE National Training Program, at the Isleta Resort in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Thursday, June 12, 2012 / 10:00-4:00, is dedicated to warriors & veterans – speakers and activities include;

**Department of Defense
U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs
New Mexico Department of Veteran Affairs
Career Fair and Networking Opportunities
Free Lunch**

For more information and a complete agenda of the entire week, please visit the SAIGE web site, www.saige.org or find us on Facebook.





9th Annual Zuni Housing Fair



9th Annual Zuni Housing Fair

Continuing Our Journey Towards A Solid Foundation – Past, Present & Future

Zuni Housing Authority invites you to the 9th Annual Zuni Housing Fair

This Year's Attractions: More booths, more entertainment, more hands on education, children and elderly activities, food and fun. Tenant and Homebuyer of the Year. New this Year - Selection of Zuni Teen Ambassador

Questions and Communication to:

vkallestewa@pozha.org - Gina

lrluna@pozha.org - Linda

asoseeah@pozha.org - Angie

icnatachu@pozha.org - Jeanine



Event Date:

Friday, September 26, 2014
104 D Avenue, Zuni, NM 87327
(Blackrock, ZHA Administration Building)

Preliminary Schedule:

Thursday – Sept. 26, 2014

3:00 to 5:00 Booth Setup

Event Day:

8:00 to 10:00 Booth Setup

10:00 Presentation of Colors

Welcome

Entertainment

12:00 LUNCH provided by Zuni Housing Authority

1:00 to 3:00 Tenant and Homebuyer of the Year

Zuni Teen Ambassador Selection



hm Heard Museum

American Indian Veterans Golf Classic



American Indian Veterans National Memorial

Golf Classic



Enjoy golfing on We-Ko-Pa Golf Club's Saguaro course and support the American Indian Veterans National Memorial at the Heard Museum. This Coore/Crenshaw course has been ranked by "Golfweek" as the #1 public access course in Arizona.

Presented by We Ko Pa and the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation. Sponsored by the Heard Museum and the Inter Tribal Golf Association.



www.golfnative.com
1-317-399-GOLF (4653)

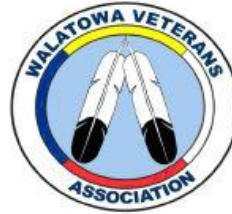
For Sponsorship information or to register to play, contact Eric S. Trevan at 602.251.0251 or email etrevan@heard.org.

hm Heard Museum

2301 N Central Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85004
602.252.8840 | heard.org



Walatowa Veterans Graduation



We are please to announce that the following World War II Walatowa Veterans will be receiving their Honorary Diploma from Walatowa Charter High School. Education is an important achievement in one's life. These men were drafted into the military and never had the opportunity to attend their graduation.

Napoleon Loretto

Richard Tafoya

Geronimo Fragua

Jerome Gachupin

Frank Magdalena

Jose Guadalupe Fiosa

Jose Reyes Magdalena

Felix Waque

Graduation exercises will be at 10am

On Saturday, June 14, 2014

Walatowa Youth Center

Reception to follow





Northern Arizona Community Mental Health Summit – August 2014



Coming Soon to Flagstaff:

The 2nd Annual Northern Arizona VA Community Mental Health Summit

August 2014



*Sustaining our Joint
Commitment to Improve
the Mental Health of
Veterans and Their
Families*



This second year of the Community Mental Health Summit provides an opportunity to sustain and enhance the positive working relationships and joint vision established last year in order to better address the mental health care needs of Veterans and their families.

The 2014 VA Community Mental Health Summit will be held in Flagstaff early August 2014, and we would like to invite you to attend and participate in the planning. Contact Nancy DeVine, Northern Arizona VA Medical Center Facility Summit Coordinator by email:

Nancy.devine@va.gov

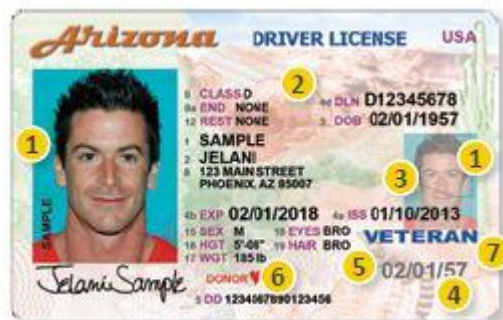
Or phone at 928-445-4860 ext. 5281

Arizona Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Division Unveils New Drivers Licenses With Veterans Designation

The Arizona Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Division is pleased to introduce Arizona's newly redesigned driver license/identification card. Enhanced security features have been incorporated into the DL/ID credential to safeguard personal information and help prevent identity theft.

Customers will receive a temporary credential before leaving an MVD or Authorized Third Party office, and they will receive the permanent credential in the mail within 15 days. The temporary contains a photo and the basic information that appears on the actual credential. It is printed on security paper for added customer protection. The decision to accept the temporary credential as proof of identity exists solely with the organization requesting to see the license or identification card. These changes take effect June 16.

If you would like hard copy brochures, we will be happy to supply them. Please contact the Arizona Motor Vehicle Division Distribution Center at 602.712.7306.



Northern Arizona Regional Behavioral Health Authority



May 21, 2014

Dear Honored Guest,

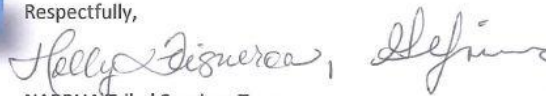
The NARBHA Tribal Services team is pleased to announce our 1st Annual Tribal Summit. This summit will allow for 2 days of meaningful dialogue for tribal communities in the NARBHA service area. It will present opportunities for NARBHA to hear firsthand what some of the needs are so that NARBHA can work towards addressing the identified needs.

We have secured dynamic speakers to present on a variety of topics that will allow for professional growth and networking, including Historical Trauma, Tribal Involuntary Commitment, AHCCCS billing, Prevention, Veteran Services, The Peer and Family Support Model and a round table discussion on Coordination of Care, Traditional Practitioner Services, The Managed Care System and Crisis Services.

NARBHA cordially invites you to attend the 1st Annual NARBHA Tribal Summit to be hosted at the Twin Arrows Casino and Resort on June 23rd and 24th, 2014. Our staff looks forward to your involvement in our event.

Confirmation of your attendance is kindly solicited. Please confirm your attendance with Kelli Behrends @ Kelli.Behrends@narbha.org.

Respectfully,



NARBHA Tribal Services Team,
Northern Arizona Regional Behavioral Health Authority



White Mountain Apache Tribe Holds Inauguration Ceremony ~ Army Veteran Colleen Faden Elected

On May 7, 2014, the White Mountain Apache Tribe of the Fort Apache Reservation in Whiteriver, Arizona, held an Inauguration Ceremony officially appointing elected representatives to the White Mountain Apache Tribal Council. Among the six Council representatives elected is Colleen Faden, an Army Veteran.

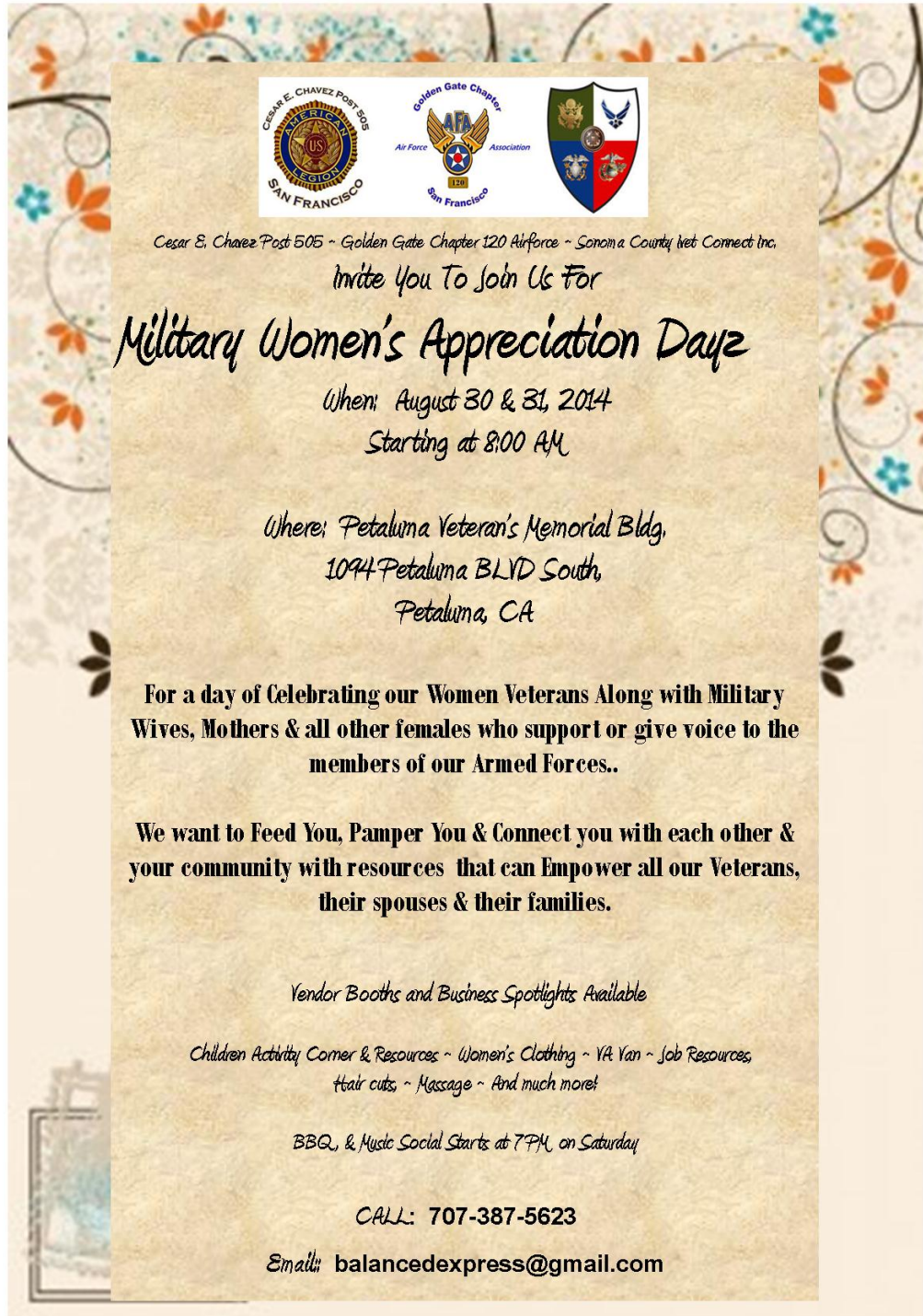
Ms. Faden represents District II on the Tribal Council. She is married to an Army Veteran, Dennis Faden; both are parents to four children, three of whom are Army Veterans. Veterans are in both sides of the Faden family (in-laws, nieces, nephews, uncles). Of importance as well, Chairman Ronnie Lupe, a Marine Veteran, was elected to his ninth term as Tribal Chairman and Mr. Jerome Kasey, a Marine Veteran, will serve four years as District IV representative to the White Mountain Apache Tribal Council.






Left to right: Leland lavender (son-in-law) Firefight; Joseph Faden Sr (Father-in-law) US Navy; Dennis J Faden II (son) US Army; Amanda Faden (daughter-in-law) Army Spouse; Emily Faden (daughter) US Army; Colleen Faden US Army; Angela Faden daughter) US Army; Dennis Faden I (Husband) US Army; Tonya Faden (daughter) Nurse; John Faden (brother-in-law)



OTGR Western Region



Cesar E. Chavez Post 505 ~ Golden Gate Chapter 120 Air Force ~ Sonoma County West Connect Inc.

Invite You To Join Us For

Military Women's Appreciation Dayz

When: August 30 & 31, 2014
Starting at 8:00 AM

Where: Petaluma Veteran's Memorial Bldg,
1094 Petaluma BLYD South,
Petaluma, CA

For a day of Celebrating our Women Veterans Along with Military Wives, Mothers & all other females who support or give voice to the members of our Armed Forces..

We want to Feed You, Pamper You & Connect you with each other & your community with resources that can Empower all our Veterans, their spouses & their families.

Vendor Booths and Business Spotlights Available

*Children Activity Corner & Resources ~ Women's Clothing ~ VA Van ~ Job Resources,
Hair cuts ~ Massage ~ And much more!*

BBQ, & Music Social Starts at 7PM on Saturday

CALL: 707-387-5623

Email: balancedexpress@gmail.com



Veterans Fishing Day – Diamond Lake, OR

Diamond n Vets

JUNE 18, 2014
DIAMOND LAKE OREGON

Sponsors: Diamond Lake Lodge, Dr. J. Lee Sharp Dental Center (Roseburg), Bailey Veterinarian (Roseburg)
Dianne's Deli (Roseburg)



Diamond Lake June 1956

Darwyn Sumstine
Korean Vet

Chuck Sumstine
Viet Nam Vet

Second Annual Veterans Fishing Day

On June 18th 2014 the Second Annual Veterans Fishing Day will be held at Diamond Lake. This year numerous Veterans/Wounded Warriors will be the Honored Guests and after breakfast they will be treated to a day of fishing on the lake. This is NOT a Derby, it is simply a day for veterans to gather and be recognized for the service they provided to their country. **All Veterans are invited and welcome**, bring you family, bring your friends, bring other vets and enjoy a day of whatever the lake has to offer and know this day is dedicated to you. Since camping is going to be a little tight at that time of year I would suggest you make reservations. If you don't have a boat YOU may want to catch a ride with one of the volunteers standing by or there are boats for rent at the lodge and you may want to reserve one of them also. Two years ago an 11 year old boy caught the largest recorded fish since the lake was cleaned up and it went 9lbs. plus. Fishing starts at the normal time if you are an early bird fisher however The Honored Guests will be meeting at the lodge at 0700 for a meet and greet, then breakfast and off for a day of fishing. ALL ODFW AND CAMPING REGULATIONS DO APPLY. Please come and enjoy this day.