

## A Message From the Director

### Greetings from Your WDVA Director - David Puente



We want to thank the Seahawks and Boeing for their continued support of YesVets and many other veteran-related programs in the state.

*YOUR* Washington Department of Veterans Affairs and dozens of other resource providers and more than 70 employers came together to hire more than 60 veterans during this year's Seahawks Military Hiring & Resource Fair, held at Lumen Field on May 23rd.

This free event for military members, spouses, and their families provided numerous opportunities for attendees to learn more about their earned benefits and find their next job or career!

During the event, your WDVA was available with numerous program information and opportunities, with our Veterans Benefits Specialists, our Digital Navigator Program, Military Spouse Liaison, Vet Corps representatives, employment recruiters, our Apprenticeship program, and even provided delicious food with the assistance of several Certified Veteran Owned Business Food Trucks onsite as well. Several military vehicles were also on display for job seekers to check out while visiting the food trucks.

We want to thank the Seahawks, Boeing, Seahawks General Manager John Schneider (who also received the first-ever YesVets Military Champion Award), and all of the volunteers, employers, and resource providers for making this a successful event! Mark your calendars for November 7th for the upcoming Seahawks and YesVets virtual hiring event to take place during the Seahawks' Salute to Service Week of events.

If you want to learn more about YesVets and how to become recognized as a YesVets employer, please visit [www.YesVets.org](http://www.YesVets.org).



## June Events & Observances List

[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.

[Submit Your Event](#)

### June 6

[ASPIRE: Demystifying Entrepreneurship for Military Spouses](#)

### June 7

[Chehalis Veterans Museum - Veterans Journey Forward](#)

### June 8

[VA S.A.V.E. Suicide Prevention Training \(1.5 CEU\)](#)

[LGBTQ+ Veteran Outreach Symposium: Celebrating Pride and Informing the Community](#)

### June 9

[Post-Traumatic Growth Workshop \(3 CE Hours\)](#)

### June 10

[Fairfield Washington Flag Day Parade](#)

[Women Veterans Day Celebration- Western Washington](#)

[Spokane Valley Women Veterans Day](#)

### June 15-16

[Muckleshoot Veterans Summit & Resource Event](#)

### June 23

[Beyond Diversity: Preventing Veteran Suicide Through Deepening Our Understanding of the Lived Experiences of LGBTQ+ Veterans](#)

### June 30

[Assessing & Managing Suicide Risk \(6 CEUs\)](#)

### July 18-20

[Veteran Service Officer Professional Development Conference | WDVA \(wa.gov\)](#)

### Aug 24/25

[6th Annual Serving Those Who Served Conference - 'Engagement | Making Every Connection Matter' | WDVA \(wa.gov\)](#)



June is **Pride Month**, and your Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs wants to join the nation in recognizing LGBTQI+ veterans and service members.

It is estimated that there are a little more than 1 million LGBTQI+ Veterans in the United States. Since the Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act of 2010, surveys have found that more than 5% of active-duty service members identify as part of the LGBTQI+ community.

Beginning in 1999, four U.S. presidents officially declared June as Pride Month – President Bill Clinton, President Barack Obama, President Donald Trump, and President Joe Biden. The 2023 White House proclamation for Pride Month can be found [here](#).

[Read More](#)



### Walla Walla Veterans Home

Here at the Walla Walla Veterans Home, it's an exciting day! Nothing can calm, heal, and energize the soul like music.

The [Washington State Arts Commission](#) deserves a huge thank you for providing the grant money that made this dream a reality for our veterans, their families, and all of us who are proud to serve those who have served.

[#musictherapy](#) [#WeLoveOurCommunity](#)



### Washington Veterans Home in Port Orchard

Residents of our Washington Veterans Home in Port Orchard greeted Destiny Riders of the Christian Motorcyclist Association while enjoying the nice weather and popsicles.

A very interested audience listened as the group discussed various motorcycle models and displayed their wheels.

[#WeLoveOurCommunity](#)



### Washington Soldiers Home in Orting

The Washington Soldiers Home Memorial Day Program was a time to acknowledge, remember and pay tribute to our honored veterans and family members who reside on campus and those who have come before us and rest at the WA Soldiers Home Cemetery.

It was a beautiful day, which made the Gazebo Site a perfect venue for the program!

Thank you to all the participants and veteran service organizations, community groups, businesses, schools, and individuals for supporting the WA Soldiers Home Memorial Day Program.

[#WeLoveOurCommunity](#)



### Spokane Veterans Home

Residents of our Spokane Veterans Home have started a new art class with local artist Tom Quinn. These art lessons are offered thanks to a brand-new Wellness, Art, and the Military Grant that the [Washington State Arts Commission](#) made possible.

Residents used their artistic talents to create landscape paintings.

[#WeLoveOurCommunity](#)

## WDVA Hot Jobs - Incentives Available

### Available Opportunities:

DVA Rural Suicide Prevention Peer Specialist, Full Time - Permanent, Eastern Washington

WDVA Veterans Benefit Specialist 2, Full Time - Permanent, Olympia

WDVA Nursing Assistant Certified, In-Training, Washington Soldiers Home

WDVA Veterans Benefit Specialist 2, Full-Time, Project, Pierce County

WDVA Customer Service Specialist 2, Full Time - Permanent, Washington Soldiers Home

WDVA Senior Compliance Auditor, Management Analyst 5, Full-Time, Washington Veterans Home

WDVA Mental Health Practitioner, Full Time - Project, Washington Veterans Home

WDVA Human Resource Consultant 1, Full-Time, Non-Perm, Spokane Veterans Home

WDVA Veterans Benefit Specialist 2, Full-Time Project, King County Veterans Services

WDVA Dietitian 1, Part-Time (75%), Spokane Veterans Home

WDVA Nursing Assistant Certified, In-Training, Washington Veterans Home

WDVA Nursing Assistant Certified IN TRAINING, Spokane Veterans Home

WDVA Registered Nurse 2, On-Call, Walla Walla Veterans Home

WDVA Licensed Practical Nurse 2, Full Time - Non-Perm, Walla Walla Veterans Home



**Recruiters@dva.wa.gov**

### ALL WDVA JOBS:

State of Washington Job Opportunities

## WDVA News and Current Events

### Solomon Gilbert named Deputy Director of your Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs

**OLYMPIA, WA** – Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs Director David Puente welcomes Solomon Gilbert, as the new deputy director to the WDVA Team where he will oversee agency operations.

"We are delighted to bring Solomon to back our WDVA team. He brings a wide-ranging experience overseeing statewide programs and has extensive background and knowledge in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion," said Puente. "His experience will move us toward the vision and strategic priorities of WDVA and will serve our team, residents, clients, and the Veterans' Community well."

Solomon has over 22 years of leadership and management experience, including enterprise-level supervision of staff across a large geographic region. His background includes service in the nonprofit sector as the Senior Vice President, and HR Director for the greater Seattle YMCA.

[Read More](#)

### Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs to Open their First On-site Nursing Assistant Academy

The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs is proud to announce the creation of the first WDVA Nursing Assistant Academy. The training center is in O'Connor Hall on the grounds of the Washington Soldiers Home and will allow the agency to efficiently train and retain direct care staff who are vital to the operation of the State Veterans Homes.



With a nursing assistant vacancy rate of 23.5% across the four State Veterans Homes, WDVA was unable to open beds to Veterans and families who needed rehabilitative or nursing home care. The new WDVA Nursing Assistant Academy initiative will further the agency's mission of *Serving Those Who Served* and allow the agency to provide care to more Veterans and families.

Join our Academy! for more information e-mail: [Recruiters@dva.wa.gov](mailto:Recruiters@dva.wa.gov)

[Learn More](#)

### PROCLAMATION - Memorial Day 2023

WHEREAS, since the late 19th century, each year in May, Americans pause to observe Memorial Day, a special day and National holiday since 1971 set aside to remember with dignity and admiration those who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation; and

WHEREAS, our predecessors shaped the structure of our political system, set forth the groundwork for higher discoveries in science, technological, and medical research, started long-lasting traditions that enrich our heritage, and fought in wars so that future generations would have freedom; and



WHEREAS, on Memorial Day, it is important to cherish the memories of our friends and family members who have died, and to remember the contributions they made to improve our lives; and

WHEREAS, the veterans who fought and died for our country helped preserve the freedoms and rights guaranteed to all people under the U.S. Constitution; and

WHEREAS, Memorial Day provides us with the opportunity to reflect and honor the past, to renew and pass on our patriotism, and pay tribute to those who died in service to our country;

NOW THEREFORE I, Jay Inslee, Governor of the state of Washington, do hereby proclaim

GOVERNOR STEVE INSLEY, Governor of the State of Washington, as hereby proclaimed  
May 29, 2023, as Memorial Day in Washington, and I encourage all people in our state to  
join me in honoring those who have died for this country.

Signed this 21st day of April, 2023

[Read More](#)

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### Suicide Prevention



Learn More: [Suicide Prevention and Support](#)

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## National News

### VA hires at record rates to deliver care and benefits to Veterans

This year, VA has hired employees at record rates to help better deliver world-class care and benefits to Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.

The Veterans Health Administration increased its total workforce by 13,627 (3.6%) between October 2022 and April 2023, the highest growth rate for VHA in over 20 years. The Veteran Benefits Administration hired 4,120 employees during the same time period, the highest growth rate for VBA in 15 years. VHA now has 393,500 employees, and VBA now has more than 28,000 employees for the first time ever.

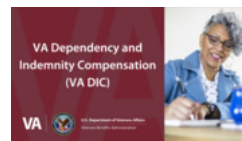


This hiring push will help VA continue to deliver more care and more benefits to more Veterans than ever before. It will also help VA implement the [PACT Act](#), the largest expansion of Veteran care and benefits in generations.

[VA hires at record rates to deliver care and benefits to Veterans](#)

### Survivor and dependent compensation (DIC): About VA DIC for spouses, dependents, and parents

If you're the surviving spouse, child, or parent of a service member who died in the line of duty, or the survivor of a Veteran who died from a service-related injury or illness, you may be able to get a tax-free monetary benefit called VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (VA DIC). Find out if you can get VA benefits or compensation.



To learn more visit: [Survivor and Dependent Compensation](#)

### How to check your PACT Act claim status

Many Veterans, their families and survivors have filed claims related to a new law that expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, radiation and other toxic substances—the [PACT Act](#). It also added more health conditions that VA will presume are caused by exposure to these substances making it easier for beneficiaries to access VA benefits and services.



You can easily [check the status of your PACT Act claim](#) once it has been submitted.

[How to Check your PACT Act Claim Status](#)



### PTSD Awareness Month

In 2010, the U.S. Senate declared June 27 to be National PTSD Awareness Day. However, in 2014, it designated the whole month of June to be observed as National PTSD Awareness Month.

PTSD is a mental health problem that some people develop after experiencing or witnessing a life-threatening or traumatic event. If symptoms last more than a few months, it may be PTSD. The good news is that there are effective treatments.

Learn More: [PTSD: National Center for PTSD](#)

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## We Want to Hear from You About the New Format

Please take a few moments and provide us with feedback to make us better in 2023 at Serving Those Who Served for our email distribution.

Your feedback is instrumental in the continued improvement of your Washington Department of Veterans Affairs and will help to inform us on potential topics and subjects that we should include in the future.

Please email us at [communications@dva.wa.gov](mailto:communications@dva.wa.gov) with any feedback you may have.



### Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs

Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs  
1102 Quince St. SE, PO Box 41150, Olympia, WA 98504-1150  
[1-800-562-2308](tel:1-800-562-2308)



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