

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2016-2017

Lt. Col. Glenn W. Sutphin Jr., U.S. Army (Retired), Executive Director



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Honoring those who served U.S.

Contents



3	Executive Director's Message
4	Salute to Excellence
6	Who We Are
	◊ Veterans' Assistance Locations Map
	◊ Department Organization
8	Who We Serve
9	Performance Measures
10	Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance
13	Division of State Veterans' Homes
16	Fiscal Impact
18	Department Recognitions
	Appendices
21	◊ I. Actions Taken Relevant to Florida Statutes
23	◊ II. County Populations and Federal Benefit Distributions
25	◊ III. Florida Veterans Foundation
27	◊ IV. Florida is for Veterans, Inc. (Veterans Florida)
30	◊ V. Associated Veteran Service Organizations
31	◊ VI. Certified Veterans Service Officers
32	◊ VII. Annual Summaries of State Veterans' Homes

Executive Director's Message

December 20, 2017

To: The Governor of the State of Florida, Members of the Cabinet, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

I am very honored to submit the 2017 annual report for the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. Watching over and advocating for our state's veterans and their families are the more than 1,100 men and women of FDVA. Their story of patriotism, dedication and commitment is showcased in this report.

At the end of World War II, the State of Florida recognized the need to provide services to returning service members and created a division within state government to connect veterans with their earned federal and state benefits. To better serve veterans and their families, Florida voters in 1988 overwhelmingly approved a Constitutional Amendment to create a Cabinet Agency to "Honor Those Who Served U.S."



Today, the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs is the premier point of entry for Florida veterans to access earned services, benefits and support. We serve the nation's third largest veterans' population with more than 1.5 million veterans residing in the Sunshine State.

FDVA plays a major role in the direct infusion of more than \$17.9 billion annually for veterans into Florida's economy through federal compensation, education and pension benefits, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' medical services and military retired pay.

But as impressive as that sounds, there are many thousands of our veterans and their families who, for whatever reason, are not taking advantage of benefits earned through their military service. Florida offers unique benefits such as in-state tuition rates for veterans and their families using the Post-9/11 GI Bill®, several layers of property tax exemptions, expanded veterans' preference, and extensive benefits, licensure and fee waivers for many activities and occupations.

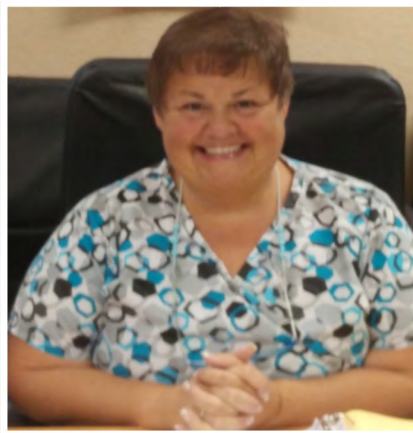
Help us reach out to our veterans. Let them know of the many federal, state and local benefits available to them as a result of their noble service. Be as determined to assist a veteran as he or she was to defend your freedoms.

We honor the service of our veterans. Let us never forget them and their families, through whose selfless service and sacrifice we today enjoy freedom and liberty.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Glenn W. Sutphin Jr.".

Glenn W. Sutphin Jr.
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired)
Executive Director, Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs

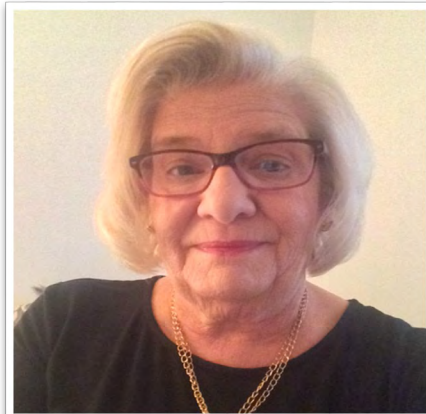
Salute to Excellence



Ms. Barbara Klein
Licensed Practical Nurse
Employee of the Year / 3rd Quarter Winner



Ms. Colleen O'Sullivan-Velez
Educator / Infection Control Nurse
Employee of the 1st Quarter



Ms. Grace Orlik
Medical Records Health Info. Specialist
Employee of the 2nd Quarter



Ms. Kimberly Franzolino
Accountant III
Employee of the 4th Quarter

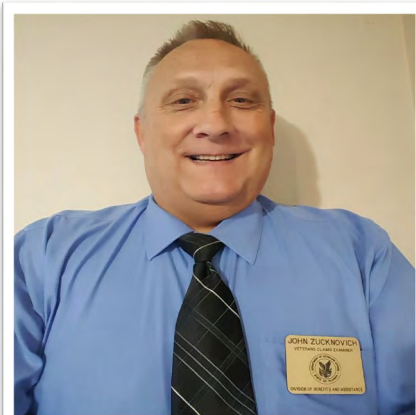
Salute to Excellence



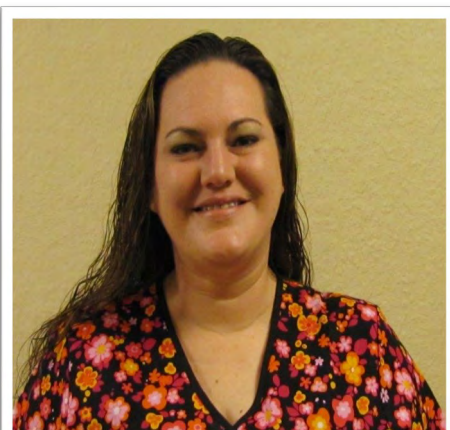
Mark (AJ) Johnson
Supervisor of the Year



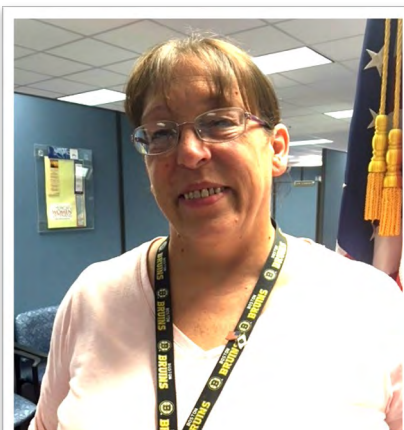
Steven Walsh
Veterans' Claim Examiner of the Year
Bureau of Field Services



John Zucknovich
Veterans' Claim Examiner of the Year
Bureau of Veterans' Claims



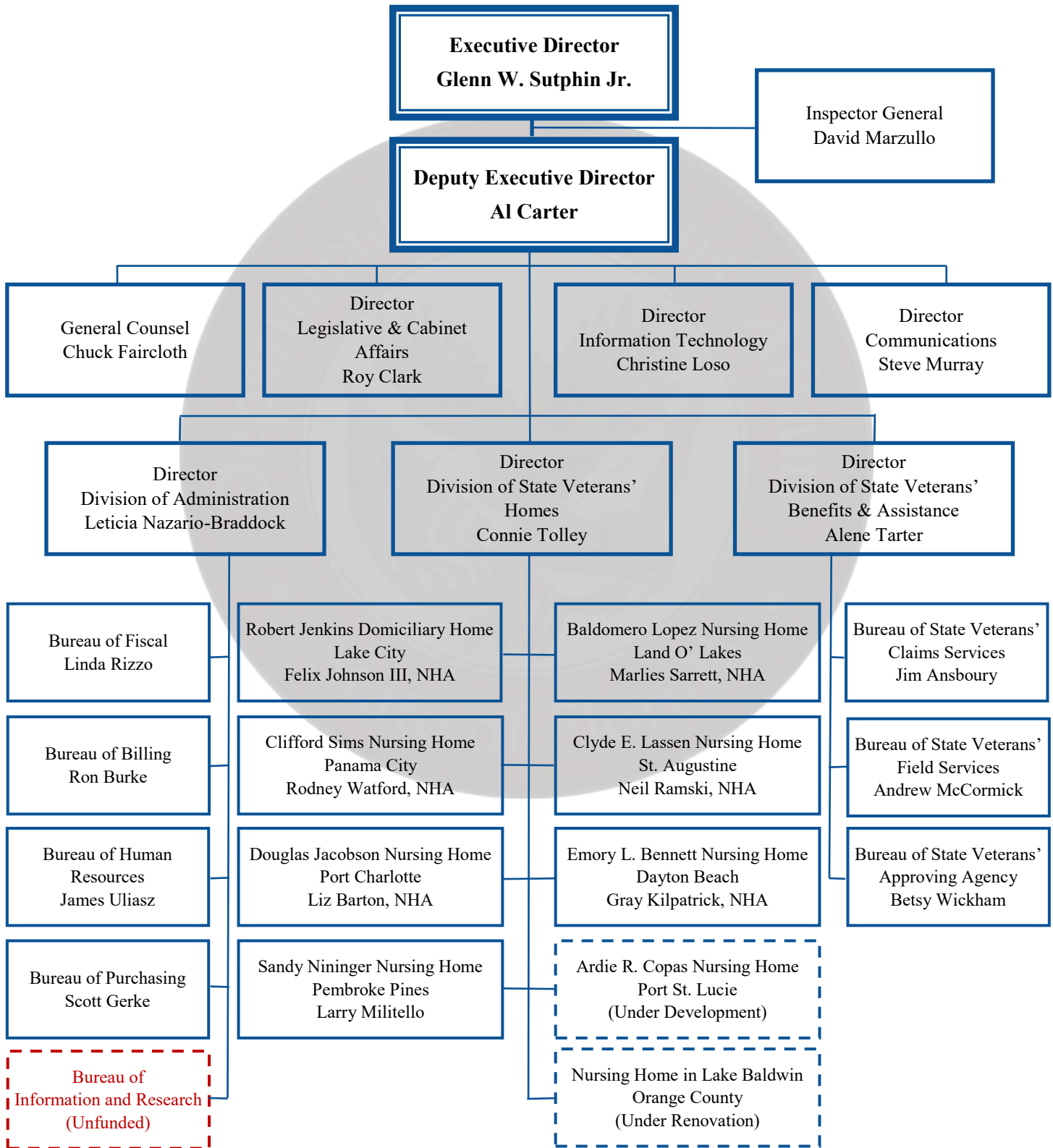
Ms. Christina Johnson
Winner of Nursing Student Loan
Forgiveness Program



Anne Welch
Administrative Assistant of the Year

Who We Are

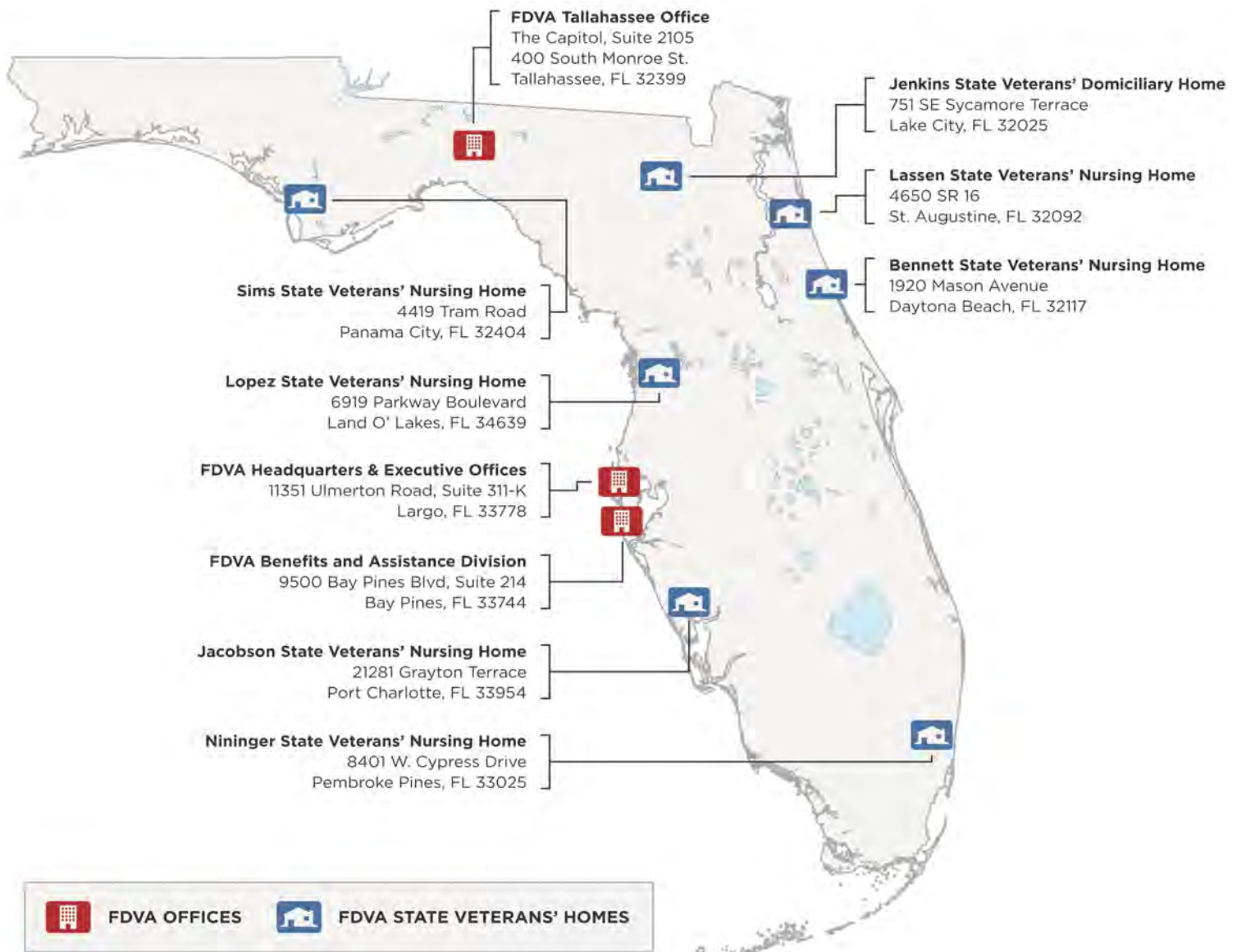
Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs



Our Mission: To advocate with purpose and passion for Florida veterans and link them to superior services, benefits and support.

Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs

Primary Locations



The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) is a Cabinet agency responsible for assisting Florida veterans, their families and survivors in improving their health and economic well-being through quality benefit information, advocacy, education and long-term health care.

FDVA's main administrative office is in Largo with a Capitol office in Tallahassee. Its two primary program areas are located throughout the state:

- **The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance** provides professional assistance to Florida veterans and their dependents in obtaining financial benefits and health care treatments from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- **The State Veterans' Homes Program** provides comprehensive, high-quality health care to eligible veterans in need of long-term skilled or assisted living care.

Who We Serve

Florida's 1,533,306 Veterans by Primary Service Era



Gulf War (1990 to 9/11) 190,446

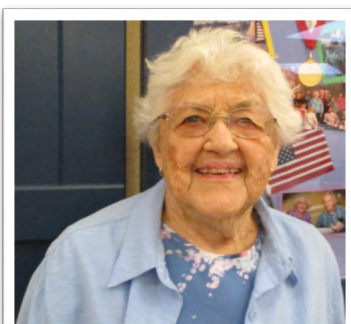
Urban warfare has changed not only the face of war, but also what our veterans face after the war. With advances in technology and medicine, more service members are surviving injuries incurred in war that would have killed them in previous eras.



Doyle Cromer

Korean War 144,445

As these veterans have aged, benefits and services that address a variety of issues unique to their demographic, including changing health risks and long-neglected mental health needs, financial challenges and long-term care needs are being implemented.



Gloria S. Bowie

World War II 65,941

World War II veterans were among the nation's first to participate in modern warfare. Their service also coincided with major advances in modern medicine, resulting in a then extraordinary survival rate.

Post-9/11 Veterans 173,469

Our returning veterans, much like the Greatest Generation of World War II, are seeking employment, housing and education opportunities for themselves, their spouses and families. Research suggests that 10% to 18% of these service members are likely to have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) after they return.

Peacetime 393,541

Almost a quarter of Florida's veteran population served honorably during a unique and relatively conflict-free time in our history. Many of these veterans do not seek benefits, mistakenly believing that if they did not serve in combat, then they must not qualify for veteran benefits and programs.



Ron Copland

Vietnam War 496,526

FDVA has seen an increase in disability claims filed on behalf of Vietnam veterans due to triggered responses to the current wars and the manifestation of acute diseases brought on by exposure to Agent Orange. Veterans of this era comprise the largest demographic of Florida's veterans.

Performance Measures

Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance

Provide information and advocacy to Florida veterans, their families and survivors, and assist them in obtaining all federal and state benefits due to them.

Measure	Actual FY 2015-16	Actual FY 2016-17	Standard FY 2016-17
1. Value of cost avoidance because of retroactive compensation.	\$127,084,442	\$317,642,636	\$88,426,563
2. Value of cost avoidance because of issue resolution.	\$64,096,958	\$69,072,422	\$21,248,389
3. Number of veterans served.	95,191	98,876	95,258
4. Number of claims processed.	33,240	35,999	21,806
5. Number of services to veterans.	675,133	711,647	474,415

Division of State Veterans' Homes

Provide quality long-term health care services to eligible Florida veterans.

Measure	Actual FY 2015-16	Actual FY 2016-17	Standard FY 2016-17
1. Occupancy rate for homes in operation 2 years or longer.	98.3%	98.1%	90%
2. Percent of state veterans' homes in compliance with quality of care health care regulations.	100%	100%	100%
3. Number of state veterans' homes beds available.	870	870	870

Division of Executive Direction and Support Services

Provide effective and responsive management to support the divisions and programs serving veterans.

Measure	Actual FY 2015-16	Actual FY 2016-17	Standard FY 2016-17
1. Administration costs as a percent of total agency costs.	4.0%	3.8%	6.8%
2. Administrative positions as a percent of total agency positions.	2.5%	2.5%	4.4%

Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance

The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance provides professional assistance to Florida's veterans and their dependents in an effort to obtain financial benefits and health care treatment from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Success is measured by the number of veterans the department assists and the number of issues resolved for those veterans. "Assistance" is seen in a variety of components, including medical treatment, prescriptions, prosthetic devices, benefit checks, school program approval, veterans' preference investigations and determinations, voter registration and disseminating veteran data to the general public.



Mark (AJ) Johnson addressing a retirement seminar at NAS Jacksonville.

The Division is comprised of a Division Director, support staff, and three Bureaus: Bureau of Veterans' Claims and Assistance (FS 292.05(1)); Bureau of Field Services (FS 292.05(1)); and Bureau of State Approving Agency (FS 292.05(04)). Also included within the Bureau of Veterans' Claims is Veterans' Preference, Section 295.11, F.S.

Veterans' Claims Examiners (VCEs) are trained to resolve the myriad of issues facing veterans who served in World War II through today's conflicts, with each era having unique issues and challenges. Each day finds VCEs offering assistance and guidance

at Transition Assistance Program briefings for separating service members, congressional veterans' appreciation days, Homeless Veteran Stand-Downs, and veteran service organization gatherings. Though FDVA employees remain proactive in providing services to Florida's veterans, of the 1.5 million veterans in Florida, fewer than 340,000 currently receive VA service-connected compensation and pension benefits (not to be confused with military retirement benefits). Efforts to reach these veterans, counsel them regarding benefits they may have earned, and assist them in garnering those benefits are expanding. For every state dollar expended for this division, more than \$148 of federal monies are brought into Florida.

The Bureau of Veterans' Field Services provides benefits counseling services to inpatients and outpatients in 42 of the VA's medical facilities in Florida and State Veterans' Homes, as well as outreach activities for FDVA throughout the state. Field Services also assists in staffing the state's Disaster Recovery Centers when established by the Division of Emergency Management. The Bureau's primary responsibility is to help veterans initiate, develop, submit and prosecute claims and appeals for state and federal veteran benefits. The focus of Field Services is face-to-face contact with the client and the resolution of any number of issues related to the submission of claims for compensation, pension, or medical care.

The VCEs of the Bureau of Veterans' Field Services work closely with patient advocates in VA Medical Centers.

They also perform extensive outreach and help veterans navigate the confusing and cumbersome process to obtain benefits from the VA. The services can result in monetary benefits, but often result in determining, verifying and obtaining eligibility for medical treatments, medications, wheelchairs, hearing aids, ambulance bill reimbursements, lost check replacements prosthetics and other, non-monetary yet valuable benefits within the VA system. This service provides Florida veterans with significant economic value.

The Bureau of Veterans' Claims Services provides counseling and assistance to veterans, their dependents and survivors, with the preparation, submission and prosecution of claims and appeals for state and federal benefits as well as applications to correct military records. The bureau also supports the VA's initiatives of Homeless Outreach, Women Veterans' Integration, and 'Fully Developed Claims' program.



Gov. Rick Scott and FDVA Benefits and Assistance Director Alene Tarter greet veterans in Cocoa Beach at a Governor's Veterans Service Award presentation.

The Bureau's primary responsibility is to work directly with the decision resources in the VA Regional Office to expedite claims and to influence, through proactive advocacy, the most positive outcome. To this end, Veterans' Claims Services provides a quality control function by reviewing completed VA benefits rating decisions and paralegal due process assistance in the prosecution of veterans' disagreements with and appeals of VA rating decisions and debt identification and relief.

The Bureau is also charged by statute to train and certify County Veteran Service Officers. To maintain proficiency with the rapid changes in veterans' programs, the bureau provides training twice a year during the counties' semi-annual conferences.



The Bureau of State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans' Education and Training is charged under the provisions of Title 38, United States Code and the federal contract entered into between FDVA and the VA and governed by Florida Statute 295.124. The Bureau is 100% federally funded. The Bureau reviews, evaluates and approves programs of veterans' education at Florida's institutions of higher learning and non-college degree schools for participation in VA Education Benefit programs. GI Bill® -eligible veteran flight training and employer On-the-Job and apprenticeship training also fall under the SAA's purview.

Education is one of the keys to the successful transition from active-duty to veteran status. Certifying quality programs in the state, and encouraging the use of Post 9/11 GI Bill® benefits for those programs, is emphasized in all FDVA outreach activities. Attracting and keeping a young, educated veteran population is beneficial for all in Florida.

Federal dollar garnered in support of Florida's veterans for Fiscal Year 2016-17

- Compensation and Pension: \$6,288,593,000
- Medical Benefits: \$5,053,073,000
- Military Retired Pay to Retirees and Beneficiaries: \$5,779,404,000
- Other Benefits (Education, Insurance, Construction, Etc.): \$1,252,245,000



VA Deputy Secretary Thomas Bowman visits with FDVA Executive Director Glenn Sutphin.

Division of State Veterans' Homes

The State Veterans' Homes Program provides comprehensive, high-quality health care on a cost-effective basis to eligible veterans in need of either long-term skilled nursing care or assisted living services. Care is provided to veterans with qualifying war or peacetime service, who are residents of Florida preceding admission, and who require skilled care as certified by a VA physician. Admission criteria are based on the need to maintain a safe environment for all residents. The skilled nursing and assisted living homes only admit those persons whose needs can be met within the accommodations and services it provides with consideration for all residents.

Assisted Living level care is provided at the Robert H. Jenkins State Veterans' Domiciliary Home in Lake City, and includes rehabilitative assistance and other therapeutic measures to eligible ambulatory veterans who are not in need of hospitalization or skilled nursing services. The focus of care in the Domiciliary Home is preparing veterans to function at their highest level of independence. A multidisciplinary approach is followed with the veterans participating in an established care plan.



Honorees at the Purple Heart Recognition Ceremony at the Robert H. Jenkins Jr. State Veterans' Domiciliary Home in Lake City.



FDVA's Lucy Scibek with a resident at the Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home in Land O' Lakes.

Skilled nursing home care provides full-service, long-term residential nursing care to eligible veterans in six State Veterans' Nursing Homes. The homes are supervised 24-hours daily by registered and licensed nurses.

Five of the six skilled nursing facilities operated by FDVA have dementia-specific neighborhoods:

- Alexander Nininger State Veterans' Nursing Home, Pembroke Pines
- Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home, Land O' Lakes
- Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home, Panama City
- Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home, St. Augustine
- Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home, Port Charlotte

Comprehensive services and a deep concern for all veterans go hand in hand at our FDVA nursing homes. Around-the-clock medical and nursing care is provided by a full-time staff of registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and certified nursing assistants. Rehabilitative services, such as occupational and physical therapies, speech therapy and recreational activities are provided under the direct supervision of licensed therapists.

A variety of on- and off-site recreational and social activities are provided to encourage active minds, bodies and spirits, and slow the process of physical and mental decline. A wide range of other medical services is also offered. These include dental, podiatric and dermatological care. In spacious dining rooms, residents are provided with wholesome meals prepared under the supervision of licensed dietitians.

The State Veterans' Home Program has a proud tradition of commitment to veterans. We remain at the forefront in ensuring that the level of care and services provided to our veterans meets or exceeds the highest standards in an environment that enhances the quality of life of each veteran.

State Veterans' Homes Program Occupancy Rates

During Fiscal Year 2016-17, the average occupancy rate for State Veterans' Homes in operation two years or longer was 98.1% and the average for all skilled nursing facilities was over 97.9%.



Volunteer Artist LEBO presents a painting class at the Sandy Niningger State Veterans' Nursing Home in Pembroke Pines.

Assisted living facilities traditionally operate at a lower occupancy than skilled nursing facilities, and the department is proud to announce the Robert H. Jenkins Jr. State Veterans' Domiciliary Home in Lake City had an occupancy rate far above the 90% performance measure goal for the year and achieved a 99% occupancy rate.

Quality of Care

An amazing year for the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs as all six State Veterans' Nursing Homes were recognized as Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) five-star quality rated nursing homes. With the strict evaluation of so many different factors going into the rating, it was a tall task for our six homes to earn the highly sought honor.

Within the overall nursing home rating, 24 different quality categories are individually measured by CMS. It was important for the State Veterans' Homes to prioritize and focus on the areas facing the most challenges when compared to the state or national level.

The key to success in areas of quality measurement is having a cohesive working relationship between the director of nursing, nursing staff supervisors and the medical director at the home. The physician must be on board and supportive of the treatment plans the nurses are executing at the ground level. When both have a unified strategy and common goal in mind, the pathway to achieving a five-star rating is streamlined in an invaluable way.

The rating system features an overall five-star rating based on facility performance in three categories, and each category holding a different weight of performance measures, that associated with the rating.



Several residents and staff from the Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Homes participated in an Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.

The Categories are:

1. Health Inspections (measures based on outcomes from state health inspection surveys)
2. Staffing Level (measures based on nursing home staffing levels reported at the time of state health inspection)
3. Quality Measures (measures based on the CMS Minimum Data Set (MDS)).

CMS' Five-Star quality ratings for the health inspection domain are based on the relative performance of facilities within a state. This approach helps to control for variation between states. Facility ratings are determined using these criteria:

- The top 10 percent (lowest 10 percent in terms of health inspection deficiency score) in each state receive a Five-Star rating.
- The middle 70 percent of facilities receive a rating of two, three, or four stars, with an equal number (approximately 23.33 percent) in each rating category.
- The bottom 20 percent receive a one-star rating.

FDVA has six nursing homes that are rated in the top 10 percent in the State of Florida and have received a Five Star Overall Rating. As of January 2017, only 3,036 nursing homes earned an overall rating of Five Stars from CMS with only 141 nursing home earning Five Stars in the State of Florida.

FDVA's top performing homes received a Five Star rating:

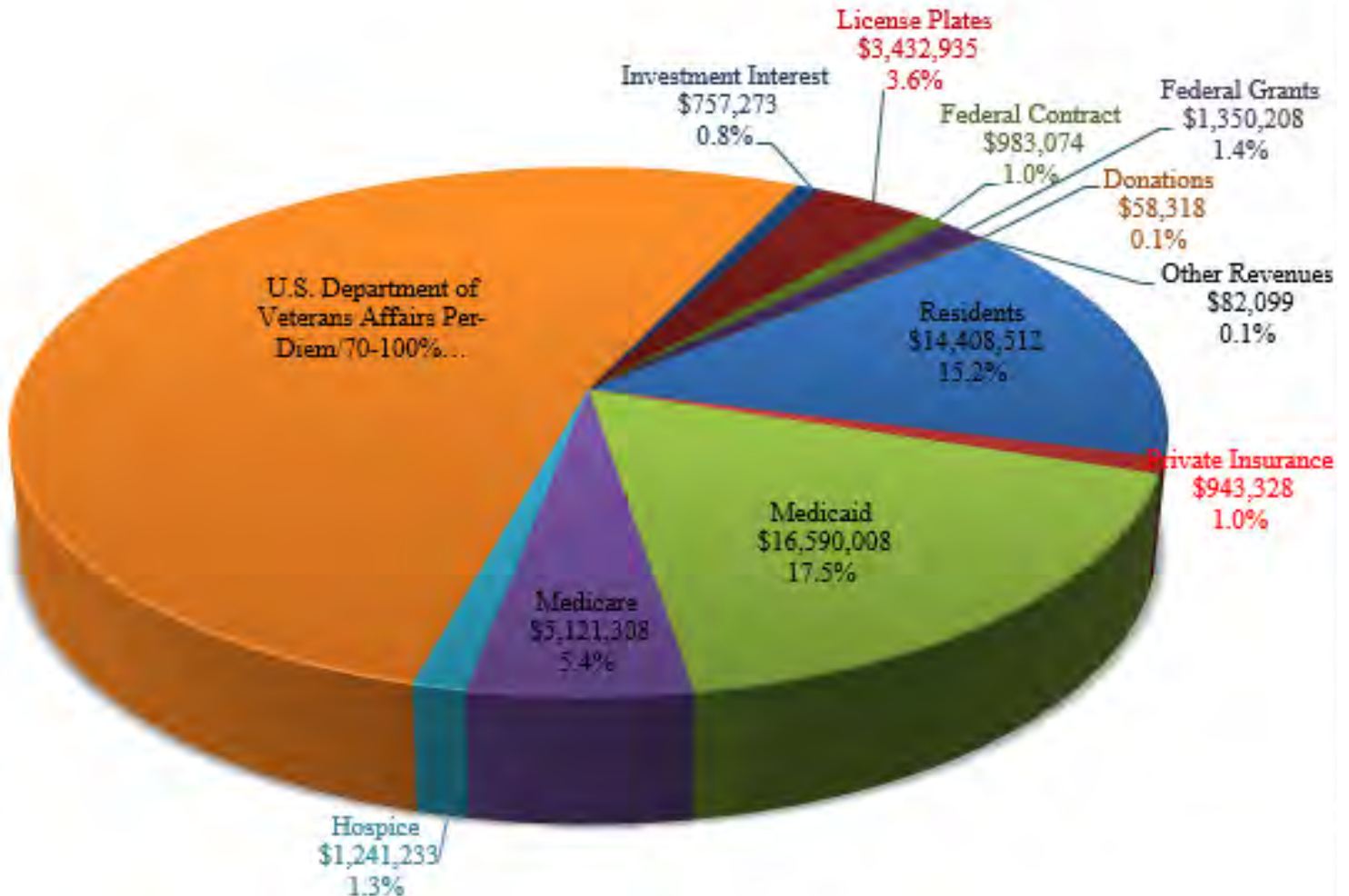
- Alexander "Sandy" Nininger State Veterans' Nursing Home, Pembroke Pines
- Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home, Land O' Lakes
- Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home, Panama City
- Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Homes, St. Augustine
- Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home, Port Charlotte
- Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home, Daytona Beach



CFO Jimmy Patronis, left, joined Gov. Rick Scott and FDVA Executive Director Glenn Sutphin at a Governor's Veterans Service Award presentation in Panama City.

Fiscal Impact

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS	
REVENUE REPORT	
July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017	
Revenues	State Veterans' Homes Program
Residents	\$ 14,408,512
Private Insurance	\$ 943,328
Medicaid	\$ 16,590,008
Medicare	\$ 5,121,308
Hospice	\$ 1,241,233
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Per-Diem/70-100%	\$ 50,049,459
Investment Interest	\$ 757,273
License Plates	\$ 3,432,935
Federal Contract	\$ 983,074
Federal Grants	\$ 1,350,208
Donations	\$ 58,318
Other Revenues	\$ 82,099
Total Revenues	\$ 95,017,755

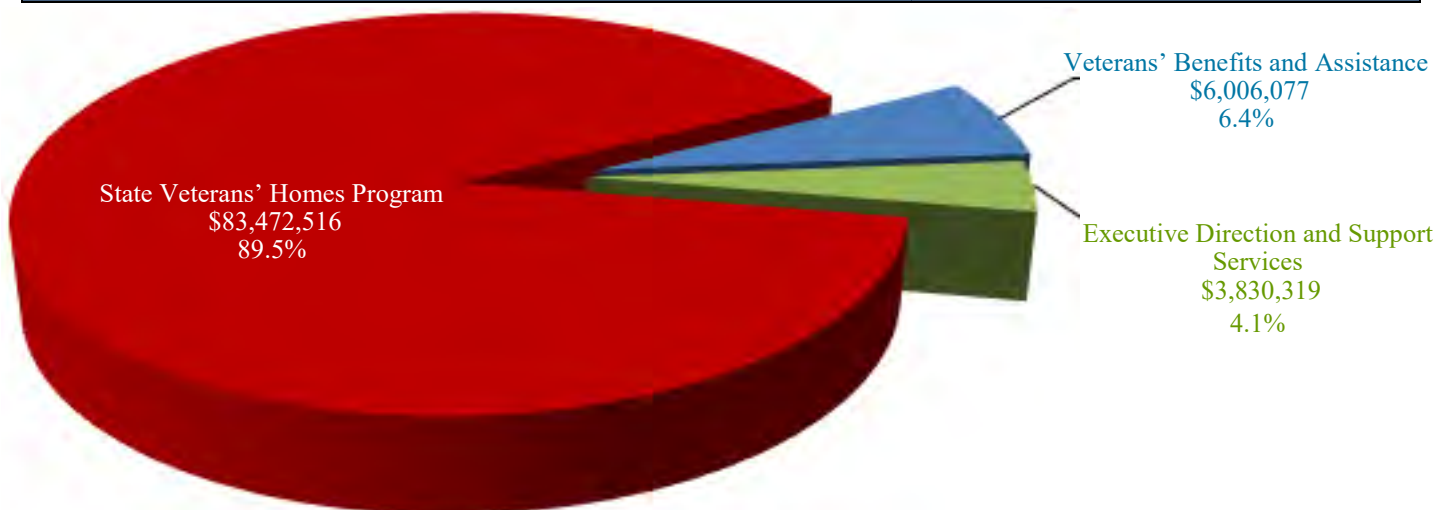


FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

EXPENDITURE REPORT

July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017

	State Veterans' Homes Program	Veterans' Benefits and Assistance	Executive Direction and Support Services
Operating Expenditures			
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 46,687,018	\$ 5,553,124	\$ 2,257,588
OPS	\$ 3,164,073	\$ 9,812	\$ 11,905
Expenses	\$ 14,671,465	\$ 304,730	\$ 836,959
Other Capital Outlay	\$ 1,187,370	\$ 2,103	\$ 220,020
Food Products	\$ 3,271,155	\$ -	\$ -
Vehicle	\$ 79,648	\$ -	\$ -
Contracted Services	\$ 11,712,522	\$ 77,627	\$ 469,419
Recreational Equip. Supplies	\$ 66,918	\$ -	\$ -
Risk Management Insurance	\$ 2,288,014	\$ 24,713	\$ 6,452
Human Resources Assessment	\$ 344,333	\$ 33,967	\$ 9,319
Data Processing Svc SRC	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18,656
Total Operating Expenditures	\$ 83,472,516	\$ 6,006,077	\$ 3,830,319
Non-Operating Expenditures			
Service Charge to General Revenue	\$ 325,895	\$ 962	\$ -
Refunds-State Revenues	\$ 595,062	\$ -	\$ -
Investment Cost	\$ 57,831	\$ -	\$ -
Payment Sales Tax	\$ 3,721	\$ -	\$ -
Trust Fund Sweep	\$ 1,400,000	\$ -	\$ -
Total Non-Operating Expenditures	\$ 2,382,509	\$ 962	\$ -
Fixed Capital Outlay			
New Home Construction	\$ 1,856,478	\$ -	\$ -
Add & Improvements to State Veterans' Homes	\$ 2,065,243	\$ -	\$ -
Maintenance/Repair	\$ 2,449,314	\$ -	\$ -
Total Fixed Capital Outlay	\$ 6,371,035		
Total	\$ 92,226,060	\$ 6,007,038	\$ 3,830,319



Department Recognitions

The 38th Annual Telly Awards honored FDVA with a Bronze-level Telly Award for the agency's two new public service announcements highlighting FDVA's Veterans' Homes Program. The two videos were created under the auspices of Quest Corporation of America and their subcontractor Diamond View Studios. The Telly Awards was founded in 1979 to honor excellence in local, regional and cable TV commercials. Non-broadcast video and TV program categories were soon added. Today, the Telly is one of the most sought-after awards by industry leaders, from large international firms to local production companies and ad agencies. On average, The Telly Awards receives more than 13,000 entries yearly from all 50 states and 5 continents.



The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration announced Jan. 17 that 11 nursing facilities have received the Gold Seal Award from the Governor's Panel on Excellence in Long-Term Care, including two state veterans' homes. Among the new award recipients for 2017 are the Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home in Land O' Lakes and the Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Augustine. They join the Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home in Panama City as one of 37 statewide recipients of the award, which recognizes long-term care facilities that consistently provide their residents with exceptionally high levels of care.

Facilities that wish to be considered for the Gold Seal Award must be in operation for a minimum of 30 months and meet rigorous standards for quality of care, financial soundness, family and community involvement, training and workforce stability. Facilities must also have an excellent regulator history in the 30 months preceding their application.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicare Services (CMS) created the Five-Star Quality Rating System for Nursing Homes to help residents and their family members compare the quality of care and services provided at skilled nursing facilities. There is one overall 5-Star rating for each nursing home, and a separate rating for each of the following three sources of information:

- Health inspection results
- Staffing data
- Quality Measures

Homes that receive an overall rating of 5-Stars are in the top 10 percent of all homes measured. FDVA is proud to share that all six State Veterans' Nursing Homes are recognized as CMS Five Star quality rated nursing homes.





FDVA's Award-Winning Home Administrators

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs State Veterans' Homes were recognized with the 2017 Bronze Commitment to Quality Award by the American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living. The National Quality Award Program provides a pathway for providers of long-term and post-acute care services to demonstrate their commitment toward performance excellent for the quality of care to seniors and persons with disabilities. The five veterans' homes are:

- Alexander "Sandy" Nininger State Veterans' Nursing Home, Pembroke Pines
- Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home, Land O' Lakes - past Bronze recipient
- Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home, Panama City
- Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home, Port Charlotte
- Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home, Daytona Beach
- Robert H. Jenkins State Veterans' Domiciliary Home, Lake City



The Governor presented three State Veterans' Homes with a Hurricane Matthew Disaster Response Medal for their superb efforts in caring for residents and staff during the named storm. The three skilled nursing facilities receiving recognition are:

- Alexander "Sandy" Nininger State Veterans' Nursing Home, Pembroke Pines
- Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home, St. Augustine
- Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home, Daytona Beach

Each State Veterans' Home has a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan that outlines their roles and responsibilities in the event of a disaster. These plans are submitted, reviewed, and approved by each perspective County Emergency Management team.

2017 PRUDENTIAL PRODUCTIVITY AWARDS

The Prudential Productivity Awards are made possible through the generosity of Prudential, and the vision of the late J. E. Davis and A. D. Davis, co-founders of Florida TaxWatch. Since 1989, Florida TaxWatch has publically recognized and rewarded state employees and work units whose work significantly and measurably increases productivity and promotes innovation to improve the delivery of state services and save money for Florida taxpayers and businesses.



FDVA received one individual and one team recognition plaques during FY 2016-17. Awardees include:

- Katherine Snyder, Program Consultant, Bureau of State Approving Agency
- Thom Mitchell, Social Services Work Coordinator, Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home
- Luanne Unangst, MDS Coordinator, Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home
- Vicki Danter, Social Service Work Coordinator, Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home
- Leigh DeVane, Activities Coordinator, Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home
- Jenny Rutledge, Therapy Assistant, Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home
- Sharon Whitty, RN Supervisor, Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home

The Trailblazer Award is presented annually to an individual who has diligently advocated on behalf of women veterans issues. Retired Air Force Master Sgt. Alene Tarter, FDVA's Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance Director, was this year's recipient of the Trailblazer Award at the 4th Annual State Women Veterans' Conference. She has served in a myriad of leadership roles both in military and with the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs.



Benefits and Assistance Division Director Alene Tarter, center, is honored with the Trailblazer Award at the 2017 State Women Veterans' Conference.

Appendix I

Actions Taken Relevant to Florida Statutes

Chapter 292, FLORIDA STATUTES

§§ 292.05(4) F.S. *The Department may apply for and accept funds, grants, gifts, and services from the state, the United States Government or any of its agencies, or any other public or private source and may use funds derived from these sources to defray clerical and administrative costs as may be necessary for carrying out its duties.*

State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans' Education and Training

FDVA maintains a contract with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide for State Approving for Veterans' Education and Training. Costs are reimbursed 100% by the VA and include coverage of clerical and administrative expenses of the Bureau, SAA within the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance.

Division of State Veterans' Homes

The Division of State Veterans' Homes applies for and receives federal funds from the VA including per diem as well as construction and renovation grants. Our homes accept funds from Medicare, Medicaid, hospice, private insurance reimbursements and from individual residents in the form of co-payments for services rendered. Our network of veterans' homes also accepts cash donations as well as gifted items and services for the benefit of the residents.

§§ 292.05(5) F.S. *The Department shall conduct an ongoing study on the problems and needs of those residents of this state who are veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States and the problems and needs of their dependents. The study shall include but not be limited to:*

- *A survey of existing state and federal programs available for such persons that specifies the extent to which such programs presently are being implemented, with recommendations for the improved implementation, extension or improvement of such programs.*
- *A survey of the needs of such persons in the areas of social services, health care, education and employment, and any other areas of determined need, with recommendations regarding federal, state and community services that would meet those needs.*
- *A survey of federal, state, public and private moneys available that could be used to defray the costs of state or community services needed for such persons.*

FDVA continually surveys its constituency through feedback garnered while counseling thousands of veterans, receipt of training critiques, participation on numerous veteran-related governmental committees, regular meetings with veterans' organizations and their leadership, and as possible analyses of official VA data and reports. The Bureau of Information and Research, intended by the legislature to perform this task full time, has never been funded. FDVA attends Florida Veterans Council meetings with veteran service organization representatives throughout the state as a best-effort to not only gather information on veterans and their needs, but to disseminate information on available benefits to as many veterans as we can reach.

§§ 292.05(7) F.S. *The Department shall administer this chapter and shall have the authority and responsibility to apply for and administer any federal programs and develop and coordinate such state programs as may be beneficial to the particular interests of the veterans of this state.*



FDVA Legislative and Cabinet Affairs Director Roy Clark receives a Vietnam War Service Pin from NASDVA Executive Director Les Beavers in Washington, D.C.

State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans' Education and Training

Under the provisions of Title 38 United State Code and the contract maintained between the FDVA and the VA, the SAA is charged with inspecting, approving and supervising programs and courses offered by accredited and non-accredited educational institutions (public and private) as well as training organizations. Lists of such educational institutions and specific courses, which it has approved, are furnished to the VA Regional Office at Bay Pines so that eligible veterans or other eligible persons enrolled in such courses may receive veterans' education benefits.

Division of State Veterans' Homes

The Homes' Program may apply to receive federal funds that provide for the needed facility renovations and monthly per diem for eligible residents for the cost of care.

The total number of beds currently available in the Division of State Veterans' Homes is 870. Of those, 720 are nursing home beds. The veteran population over 65 years old in Florida is estimated to be 773,284. According to Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration, Florida has a total of 83,733 nursing home beds and an over-65 population total of 3.4 million--more than half a million with Alzheimer's or related dementias.

The construction of new state veterans' nursing homes is subject to approval by the Governor and Cabinet, with 35% of the funding provided by the Florida Legislature and 65% of construction costs matched by the VA.

Chapter 295, FLORIDA STATUTES

§§ 295.05(7) F.S. *Veterans' Preference in Hiring and Retention.*

Florida Statute (§ 295.07) provides that the State and political subdivisions accord preferences in appointment, retention and promotion to eligible veterans. Section 295.11, Florida Statutes, tasks FDVA, upon written request of any eligible person, to investigate complaints alleging violation of veterans' preference rights.

Appendix II

County Population and Federal Benefit Distributions

FY16 Summary of Expenditures by State						
Expenditures in \$000s						
County / Congressional District	Veteran Population*	Total Expenditure	Compensation & Pension	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care
ALACHUA	16,513	\$ 240,914	\$ 72,056	\$ 12,753	\$ 2,012	\$ 142,399
BAKER	2,094	\$ 14,275	\$ 6,879	\$ 871	\$ 59	\$ 6,466
BAY	24,571	\$ 166,244	\$ 120,262	\$ 14,613	\$ 750	\$ 30,619
BRADFORD	2,337	\$ 25,802	\$ 8,051	\$ 742	\$ 106	\$ 16,903
BREVARD	70,275	\$ 597,526	\$ 337,739	\$ 43,508	\$ 5,464	\$ 195,402
BROWARD	85,475	\$ 637,935	\$ 312,052	\$ 76,592	\$ 7,630	\$ 241,662
CALHOUN	1,348	\$ 8,974	\$ 4,556	\$ 355	\$ 21	\$ 4,041
CHARLOTTE	22,916	\$ 132,112	\$ 77,813	\$ 3,486	\$ 1,510	\$ 49,303
CITRUS	20,569	\$ 152,903	\$ 75,400	\$ 3,908	\$ 1,009	\$ 72,585
CLAY	27,337	\$ 212,547	\$ 127,932	\$ 31,663	\$ 1,951	\$ 51,000
COLLIER	29,324	\$ 99,911	\$ 61,419	\$ 4,921	\$ 3,097	\$ 30,473
COLUMBIA	6,749	\$ 115,057	\$ 35,912	\$ 2,203	\$ 266	\$ 76,677
DE SOTO	2,171	\$ 14,596	\$ 8,418	\$ 346	\$ 128	\$ 5,705
DIXIE	1,659	\$ 20,202	\$ 6,771	\$ 281	\$ 82	\$ 13,068
DUVAL	91,296	\$ 630,106	\$ 330,762	\$ 108,636	\$ 4,557	\$ 184,464
ESCAMBIA	41,556	\$ 306,308	\$ 193,875	\$ 29,134	\$ 2,477	\$ 75,598
FLAGLER	11,725	\$ 76,572	\$ 44,269	\$ 4,688	\$ 803	\$ 26,812
FRANKLIN	1,019	\$ 6,801	\$ 3,858	\$ 164	\$ 90	\$ 2,688
GADSDEN	3,527	\$ 26,336	\$ 12,538	\$ 893	\$ 348	\$ 12,557
GILCHRIST	1,681	\$ 18,205	\$ 6,780	\$ 409	\$ 304	\$ 10,712
GLADES	996	\$ 7,100	\$ 2,154	\$ 36	\$ 22	\$ 4,889
GULF	1,586	\$ 10,970	\$ 7,291	\$ 407	\$ 100	\$ 3,171
HAMILTON	948	\$ 12,841	\$ 5,567	\$ 419	\$ 75	\$ 6,780
HARDEE	1,425	\$ 9,476	\$ 4,432	\$ 365	\$ 56	\$ 4,623
HENDRY	1,598	\$ 12,928	\$ 7,698	\$ 453	\$ 55	\$ 4,722
HERNANDO	20,359	\$ 187,942	\$ 101,432	\$ 7,308	\$ 1,506	\$ 77,696
HIGHLANDS	11,196	\$ 76,353	\$ 40,913	\$ 1,813	\$ 594	\$ 33,034
HILLSBOROUGH	98,307	\$ 1,114,812	\$ 490,033	\$ 118,979	\$ 8,798	\$ 476,061
HOLMES	1,756	\$ 16,454	\$ 12,193	\$ 460	\$ 36	\$ 3,765
INDIAN RIVER	15,267	\$ 97,797	\$ 55,692	\$ 3,687	\$ 1,961	\$ 36,458
JACKSON	4,407	\$ 35,337	\$ 20,509	\$ 1,436	\$ 356	\$ 13,035
JEFFERSON	1,328	\$ 8,917	\$ 4,725	\$ 337	\$ 58	\$ 3,797
LAFAYETTE	562	\$ 5,317	\$ 1,430	\$ 128	\$ 1	\$ 3,758
LAKE	34,562	\$ 245,513	\$ 137,067	\$ 11,269	\$ 2,944	\$ 94,233
LEE	62,578	\$ 334,209	\$ 180,905	\$ 17,873	\$ 4,394	\$ 131,037
LEON	18,034	\$ 126,312	\$ 55,164	\$ 13,255	\$ 1,240	\$ 43,724
LEVY	4,759	\$ 52,174	\$ 16,105	\$ 914	\$ 184	\$ 34,972
LIBERTY	527	\$ 2,648	\$ 1,528	\$ 207	\$ 1	\$ 912

County/ Congressional District	Veteran Population*	Total Expenditure	Compensation & Pension	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care
MADISON	1,330	\$ 12,534	\$ 5,750	\$ 396	\$ 14	\$ 6,373
MANATEE	32,410	\$ 201,715	\$ 112,120	\$ 11,669	\$ 2,943	\$ 74,983
MARION	39,272	\$ 308,240	\$ 135,437	\$ 8,716	\$ 2,884	\$ 161,203
MARTIN	14,526	\$ 91,099	\$ 45,905	\$ 3,562	\$ 2,429	\$ 39,203
MIAMI-DADE	61,075	\$ 630,769	\$ 257,102	\$ 75,110	\$ 4,441	\$ 290,699
MONROE	7,398	\$ 57,783	\$ 29,046	\$ 5,073	\$ 293	\$ 23,370
NASSAU	8,947	\$ 48,471	\$ 28,527	\$ 4,532	\$ 378	\$ 15,035
OKALOOSA	35,636	\$ 270,113	\$ 200,768	\$ 34,052	\$ 1,716	\$ 33,577
OKEECHOBEE	2,876	\$ 31,093	\$ 14,863	\$ 694	\$ 215	\$ 15,321
ORANGE	69,938	\$ 716,955	\$ 322,131	\$ 85,065	\$ 5,336	\$ 290,827
OSCEOLA	17,683	\$ 212,465	\$ 105,228	\$ 16,127	\$ 1,286	\$ 89,824
PALM BEACH	85,707	\$ 663,953	\$ 278,562	\$ 42,602	\$ 13,774	\$ 319,020
PASCO	51,749	\$ 455,103	\$ 219,907	\$ 27,875	\$ 3,166	\$ 204,156
PINELLAS	90,533	\$ 1,033,457	\$ 382,639	\$ 43,334	\$ 7,278	\$ 466,984
POLK	50,218	\$ 399,038	\$ 196,228	\$ 22,627	\$ 4,592	\$ 175,591
PUTNAM	7,110	\$ 72,393	\$ 26,791	\$ 2,035	\$ 541	\$ 43,026
SAINT JOHNS	19,939	\$ 118,235	\$ 67,713	\$ 12,810	\$ 1,869	\$ 35,798
SAINT LUCIE	25,603	\$ 211,786	\$ 106,305	\$ 12,111	\$ 1,770	\$ 91,601
SANTA ROSA	24,444	\$ 193,459	\$ 140,271	\$ 22,573	\$ 1,371	\$ 29,244
SARASOTA	43,405	\$ 217,313	\$ 127,876	\$ 11,458	\$ 5,231	\$ 72,748
SEMINOLE	31,017	\$ 237,437	\$ 119,102	\$ 21,970	\$ 2,905	\$ 93,460
SUMTER	20,027	\$ 111,461	\$ 60,929	\$ 1,034	\$ 946	\$ 40,256
SUWANNEE	4,183	\$ 46,792	\$ 16,301	\$ 1,114	\$ 116	\$ 29,262
TAYLOR	1,930	\$ 15,509	\$ 7,069	\$ 357	\$ 51	\$ 8,032
UNION	1,064	\$ 9,386	\$ 3,933	\$ 247	\$ 32	\$ 5,175
VOLUSIA	55,270	\$ 438,536	\$ 239,074	\$ 44,120	\$ 3,992	\$ 151,350
WAKULLA	2,718	\$ 18,637	\$ 10,051	\$ 922	\$ 30	\$ 7,634
WALTON	7,042	\$ 36,994	\$ 24,961	\$ 2,199	\$ 644	\$ 9,190
WASHINGTON	2,391	\$ 16,969	\$ 11,826	\$ 554	\$ 257	\$ 4,332

FLORIDA (Totals)	1,559,778	\$ 12,738,121	\$ 6,288,593	\$ 1,034,448	\$ 125,546	\$ 5,053,073
-------------------------	------------------	----------------------	---------------------	---------------------	-------------------	---------------------

Notes:

* Veteran population estimates, as of September 30, 2015, are produced by the VA Office of the Actuary (VetPop 2016).

Prior to FY 08, "Loan Guaranty" expenditures were included in the Education & Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (E&VRE) program. Currently, all "Loan Guaranty" expenditures are attributed to Travis County, TX, where all Loan Guaranty payments are processed. VA will continue to improve data collection for future GDX reports to better distribute loan expenditures at the state, county and congressional district levels.

** Unique patients are patients who received treatment at a VA health care facility. Data are provided by the Allocation Resource Center (ARC).

Expenditure data sources: USASpending.gov for Compensation & Pension (C&P) and Education and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (EVRE) Benefits; Veterans Benefits Administration Insurance Center for the Insurance costs; the VA Financial Management System (FMS) for Construction, Medical Research, General Operating Expenses, and certain C&P and Readjustment data; and the Allocation Resource Center (ARC) for Medical Care costs.

1. Expenditures are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars. For example, \$500 to \$1,000 are rounded to \$1; \$0 to \$499 are rounded to \$0; and "\$ -" = 0 or no expenditures.

2. The Compensation & Pension expenditures include dollars for the following programs: veterans' compensation for service-connected disabilities; dependency and indemnity compensation for service-connected deaths; veterans' pension for nonservice-connected disabilities; and burial and other benefits to veterans and their survivors.

3. Medical Care expenditures include dollars for medical services, medical administration, facility maintenance, educational support, research support, and other overhead items. Medical Care expenditures do not include dollars for construction or other non-medical support.

4. Medical Care expenditures are allocated to the patient's home location, not the site of care.

Appendix III



FLORIDA VETERANS — F O U N D A T I O N —

In 2008, the Florida Legislature established the Florida Veterans Foundation (FVF) as a Direct Support Organization of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA). The Foundation operates for the direct and indirect benefit of the veterans of Florida, the FDVA and state veterans service organizations. The FVF is also a nonprofit organization operating for charitable and educational purposes under Section 501(c)(3). While many of Florida's veterans successfully transitioned to a post-military career, many encountered challenges that impede their progress. Veterans report priority services needed during this transition were employment assistance, transportation, housing, mental health, and utility assistance in emergencies.

Serving All Florida Veterans

FVF has taken charge of representing Florida veterans and their families through Congressionally chartered Florida-based Veterans Service Organizations. FVF created a unified team to carry a top-three, prioritized list of initiatives to the legislative menu. This dynamic with support of County Veteran Service Officers will bring education resources and relief to meet the needs of veterans.

- FVF matched a mental health /wellness grant, transitioning homeless veterans for reintegration to a productive life.
- FVF funded a portion of the purchase of new vans for *Disabled American Veterans* in Florida, to provide veterans transportation to appointments to outpatient clinics and hospitals.
- FVF entered into an agreement to educate the more than 3,100 Florida Assisted Living Facility Administrators to provide education to elderly resident veterans regarding their earned benefits, pensions, and aid and attendance opportunities. This initiative alone can provide more than \$300 million in benefits.
- FVF has furthered the education of veterans through the statewide services of the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles when veterans request additional direction on earned entitlements.
- FVF advocates for Veterans Court that support rehabilitation rather than incarceration.
- FVF demonstrated a serious positive impact on Florida veterans' lives through the execution of a \$1.25 million grant, which distributed more than \$363,000 to over 500 veterans and their families for housing and utilities. Additional resources were awarded for hurricanes Hermine and Irma.
- The Florida Veterans Foundation, as its core mission, engaged in providing financial assistance to veterans throughout Florida. The financial sustainment for its core mission was aggressively pursued from Nov. 12 through completion of the Medal of Honor Node in October 2016. A total of 987 bricks were installed.
- The Florida Veterans Foundation funded the 2016 Florida Veterans Hall of Fame induction ceremony.
- The FVF purchased and disseminated 100,000 Florida Veterans' Benefits Guides throughout the state to educate veterans on earned benefits, services and support.

- FVF partnered with DataSpec, Inc. and the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to manage veterans' requests for earned benefits and other information.
- FVF completed the 6th quarter of their \$1.25 million grant as of June 30, 2017. The grant has been extended into a third year of expenditure to ensure quality disbursement to meet the emergency financial need of veterans.
- FVF Summits showcased the "Subject Matter Experts" in each area to aid veterans in learning more about their earned benefits and how to apply for them.
- Each Veteran Stand Down assists Homeless/At-Risk veterans and their families who are living on the street or who do not have permanent housing by being qualified appropriately by the VA. Seven Stand Downs were supported through the grant by a \$2,500 per day disbursement. The North Florida Stand Down was held on April 21-22, 2017, serving 322 homeless/at-risk veterans.
- Overall the HELP Grant exceeded its original contracted numbers to reach 329,050 Florida veterans. FVF reached 385,748 Florida veterans.
- The FVF performed at 5% or \$62,500 in administrative support in the execution of the grant, and 95% or \$1,187,500 of grant dollars are in direct support of the veteran.
- Through the HELP grant, our Emergency Financial Aid assisted and approved 520 veterans for a total of \$363,346.64.
- FVF has increased its statewide presence in social media through FSU Interns and VA Work Studies. Accordingly, FVF has created, with the support of the pro bono work of Ron Seggi and Tom Lupo, four videos to promote the story and work of the FVF. We extended our reach through Facebook, the Website and Twitter to an audience in excess of 150,000.
- FVF sponsored the annual Florida Women Veterans' Conference at Lake Nona.
- FVF initiated an outreach program through which we provided packets of benefits information to veterans statewide via churches, veteran service organizations and other events.
- FVF has worked to bring cohesiveness to the Florida Veterans Council in order to gain greater influence in the legislative process, presenting a "Top Three" priority push to gain support through legislative leadership.
- FVF has sponsored Caregiver, Vietnam Veteran, Military Officers Association of America, Military Order of the Purple Heart, VFW, and many other conferences/meetings to connect with, and educate veterans and their families, on benefits and assistance.
- FVF contacted the 900 Florida Independent Funeral Directors to offer those families of deceased veterans to make donations to the FVF in lieu of flowers as a way to honor their veteran.
- The FVF met with the Florida State Lottery Secretary to ask that the FVF image be placed on lottery scratch-off tickets as an incentive to sell more "patriotic" or "veteran-friendly" ticket images. This would potentially realize approximately two and a half percent of sales as revenue.
- The FVF teamed with Florida HR and received over \$34,000 from their annual conference.

Appendix IV



Veterans Florida (Florida is for Veterans, Inc.) is a non-profit corporation created by the State of Florida in 2014 to help veterans fully transition to civilian life in the Sunshine State. We connect veterans to employers, grant funds to employers to hire and train veterans, and educate veterans on how to open their own businesses in the Florida.

Veterans Florida is backed by the State of Florida. Our board is appointed by the Governor, Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, and the President of the Florida Senate. Additionally, our staff is composed of veterans with experience in state veterans' programs, economic development, and workforce development. Our unique programs assist Florida businesses recruit, train, and hire veterans to meet workforce needs.

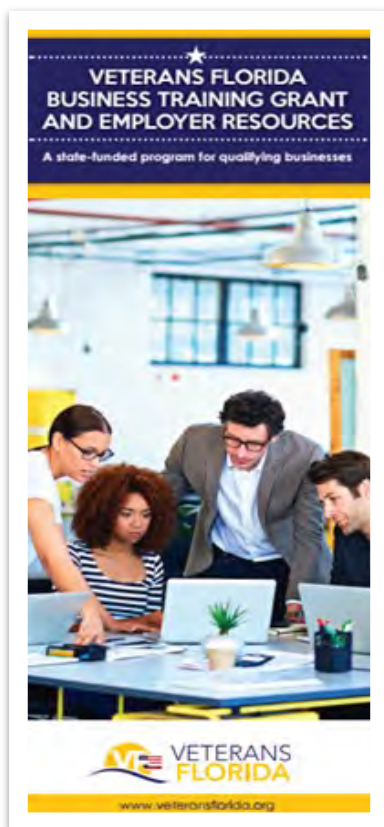
Every business has a need for a talented workforce and today's veterans are a great fit for any company looking for hard-working, intelligent men and women with a unique mission-focused attitude. Veterans Florida is here to help Florida businesses recruit, hire and train America's best talent resource, our veterans.

The Veterans Florida Career Portal was recently revamped to help connect veterans who live or would like to move to Florida with employers who have been approved for the Veterans Florida Business Training Grant. Approved employers will have their job announcements posted to the career portal and Veterans Florida will actively recruit for their open positions from our resume database.

Veterans Florida works with Visit Florida to administer a comprehensive, nationwide advertising campaign that draws hundreds of thousands of veterans and their families to our website to learn more about the benefits and opportunities available for them in the Sunshine State.

Veterans Florida also manages two statutory grant programs, The Veterans Florida Business Training Grant Program and the Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program.





Veterans Florida Business Training Grant Program

The Veterans Florida Business Training Grant program provides grant funding for customized, skills-based curriculum development and training, through partial reimbursement, to businesses in Florida's targeted, high-growth and high-wage industries (qualified targeted industries). These are high-skill industries producing goods or services and wages generally 125 percent above state or local wages.

The program is a state-funded grant program that provides funding to qualifying businesses to train their new, full-time employees. Funding is provided in the form of a performance-based reimbursable grant, for a 12-month maximum term per new employee. A business pays for pre-approved, direct training-related costs and is reimbursed by Veterans Florida upon submission of required documentation. Also, a business may apply for and receive funds concurrently with the Quick Response Training Program or Florida Flex Grants administered by CareerSource Florida.

Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program

The Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program is entering its third year of operation in Fiscal Year 2017-18. To date, the program has received more than 1,000 applications, served over 700 veterans and had more than 300 veterans graduate from the program. Many of our participants have gone on to open successful businesses who have collectively earned more than \$4.8 million dollars in revenue, accessed over \$1 million in debt and equity financing, and hired 34 employees.

The 2017-18 program will feature three pathways of instruction designed to meet the needs of veteran entrepreneurs at different stages of their entrepreneurial journey. Veterans can enter at any stage of the program (acceptance is required for the advanced class) and the pathways do not need to be done in any particular order or sequence.

The first pathway, Discover, comprises online lessons that will familiarize veterans with basic terminology and concepts. Veterans Florida has licensed an existing online entrepreneurship program for veterans to give our participants a low-risk, low-commitment option to start learning the foundations of entrepreneurship. This pathway will act as a gateway and lead generator for the second and third pathways.

The second pathway, Explore, offers specialized workshops held on the campuses of our six academic partners. This pathway is comprised of a minimum of six, 2-3 hour workshops held at each network partner's campuses. Designed for veterans with early-stage ideas or early-stage companies. Open to all veterans, no acceptance required.

The third pathway, Master, is an advanced on-campus program that delves more deeply into all aspects of entrepreneurship. This pathway is comprised of 60 hours of in-class training held at one of our six participating institutions of higher education and is designed to prepare participants for all elements of entrepreneurship. This pathway is reserved for a maximum of 20 veterans with well-defined business ideas or early-stage companies at each network partner. Acceptance into this portion of the program is required. The applications are collected by Veterans Florida but the final decision on acceptance has been delegated to each network partner.

Veterans Florida Program Statistics



Marketing Campaign (January 1, 2017 – October 10, 2017)

Unique Website Visitors to veteransflorida.org: 61,195
 Facebook “Likes”: 75,178
 Twitter Followers: 284
 LinkedIn Followers: 607
 Newsletter Subscribers: 13,192

Veterans Florida Business Training Grant Program - (January 1, 2016 – October 10, 2017)

Number of Businesses Under Contract: 32
 Number of Veteran Hires to Date: 218
 Reimbursements Paid to Businesses: \$787,470
 Average Reimbursement: \$3,982.68
 Total Salaries of Veterans: \$6,074,556
 Average Salary of Veterans: \$38,204.75
 Return on Investment: \$9.59 in salary earned to every \$1 in training reimbursement paid.

Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program - (January 1, 2016 – October 10, 2017)

Fiscal Year	Applications Received	Participants Served	Program Graduates
FY 2015-16	612	424	167
FY 2016-17	458	300	147
FY 2017-18*	444		
<i>*As of Oct 9, 2017 there have been a combined total of 444 Discover online program signups, Explore Workshop RSVPs and Master program applications.</i>			

Fiscal Year	# of Instruction Hours Delivered	# of Mentors	Mentoring/Consulting Hours Delivered
FY15-16	823	95	951
FY16-17	10,942.92*	224	3,389.65
<i>* Total personnel hours billed to program from Network Partners in 2016-17.</i>			









Business Loans Received	Capital Invested	Employees Hired	Revenue Generated
\$780,000	\$251,200	34	\$4,854,900
<i>* All data reported by program graduates as of July 2017.</i>			

Appendix V

Associated Veteran Service Organizations

As the accredited representative of 11 veterans' organizations, FDVA has the opportunity to prosecute claims before the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs on behalf of veterans who have placed their trust in these organizations by completing an "Appointment of Veterans Service Organization as Claimant's Representative" designation. There are no fees charged to veterans for FDVA services.

Listed below are the veterans' service organizations which this department represents in claims processing with the VA:

	American Ex Prisoners of War
	American Legion
	American Red Cross
	Blinded Veterans Association
	Fleet Reserve Association
	Jewish War Veterans
	Marine Corps League
	National Association of County Veteran Service Officers
	Non-Commissioned Officers Association
	The Retired Enlisted Association
	Veterans of World War I (Family Members)

Appendix VI

Certified Veteran Service Officers

In rendering assistance to the veterans of Florida, the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs works closely with all county and city veteran service officers. A listing of each county veteran service officer, their location, phone number and e-mail address is available at <http://floridavets.org/locations/>. If you are reading the FDVA Annual Report online, your computer will let you go directly to the site by pressing and holding down the Ctrl key on your keyboard and left clicking your mouse on the link.

The FDVA website <http://floridavets.org/> provides many references and programs that can assist veterans and their families at the federal, state, county and city level. All agencies work together in assisting Florida's veterans, their families and survivors to improve their health and economic well-being.



Steve Walsh, FDVA Veterans' Claims Examiner of the Year, accepts his award from Alene Tarter, Director of the Division of Benefits and Assistance.

Appendix VII

Robert H. Jenkins Jr. State Veterans' Domiciliary Home Lake City (Columbia County), Staffing: 69 2016-17 Occupancy Rate: 99.0% (59 Admissions, 60 Discharges)



The facility is the very first Veterans' Home in Florida and the only Assisted Living Facility, having opened to residents in May 1990. With ongoing maintenance and energy-saving and quality of life renovations, the home is in excellent condition. The 150-bed Assisted Living Facility provides a special combination of housing, personalized support services and incidental medical care to its veteran residents.

Home Life: *Set on a quiet property with deer and wild turkey observed nearly every evening, Jenkins' residents enjoy diverse outings and multiple activities on the grounds and in the local community. The Domiciliary Home prides itself in providing excellent customer service in a home-like environment. We don't just look after residents' essential needs: We integrate opportunities to participate in lectures, book and special interest clubs, celebrations, socials and other programs that promote healthy, vibrant lifestyles.*



**Robert H. Jenkins Jr. State Veterans' Domiciliary Home
Lake City**



Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home Daytona Beach (Volusia County), Staffing: 137 2016-17 Occupancy Rate: 97.9% (64 Admissions, 36 Discharges)

The facility opened to residents in December 1993 and is in excellent condition. Situated on 30 acres, this 120-bed facility provides skilled nursing care. This Five-Star Quality Rated home is in the top 10 percent of skilled nursing homes.

Home Life: *At Emory L. Bennett, we are a tight-knit family of residents and staff. We enjoy great support from our volunteer organizations. Every day we focus on serving our residents with compassion, sharing their lives and providing peace of mind for their families.*



Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home
Daytona Beach



Five-Star Quality Rated
by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services



Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home **Land O' Lakes (Pasco County), Staffing: 145** **2016-17 Occupancy Rate: 99.6% (42 Admissions, 12 Discharges)**

The facility opened to residents in 1999. The 120-bed home provides skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. The dedicated staff provides stellar care 24 hours a day to our American heroes residing at this residence. This Five-Star Quality Rated home is in the top 10 percent of skilled nursing homes.

Home Life: *Set on a quiet property, veteran residents enjoy diverse outings and activities. The Home prides itself on incorporating family and community members into our events, and fostering deep friendships among the residents. We encourage resident-driven choices, including the adoption of two cats and adding an aviary to the Baldomero Lopez family.*



Governor's Gold Seal Award

Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home is a recipient of the Governor's Gold Seal Award. The program recognizes nursing home facilities that demonstrate excellence in long-term care over a sustained period, promotes the stability of the industry and facilitates the physical, social and emotional well-being of nursing home residents.



Alexander “Sandy” Nininger State Veterans’ Nursing Home Pembroke Pines (Broward County), Staffing: 141 2016-17 Occupancy Rate: 96.3% (63 Admissions, 17 Discharges)

The facility opened to residents in 2001. The 120-bed facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer’s disease. The home provides veterans with 24-hour nursing care, daily living and recreational activities, rehabilitative therapy and nutritional cuisine. This Five-Star Quality Rated home is in the top 10 percent of skilled nursing homes.

Home Life: *Life in the Nininger Home is anything but sedentary. Frequent outings provide the residents with an open forum to the surrounding community. The home enjoys superb community and volunteer support.*



Alexander “Sandy” Nininger State Veterans’ Nursing Home
Pembroke Pines



Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home Panama City (Bay County), Staffing: 139 2016-17 Occupancy Rate: 98.1% (51 Admissions, 22 Discharges)

The facility opened to residents in 2003. The 120-bed facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. The home remains in excellent condition and is located strategically in the state to care for our veterans in their time of need. The dedicated staff provides stellar care 24 hours a day to our American heroes. This Five-Star Quality Rated home is in the top 10 percent of skilled nursing homes.

Home Life: *The skilled nursing facility is located in a beautiful, wooded setting, surrounded by wildlife and nature. The residents enjoy regular outdoor activities and frequent offsite events such as ballgames, movies, restaurants and shopping.*



Governor's Gold Seal Award

Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home is a recipient of the Governor's Gold Seal Award. The program recognizes nursing home facilities that demonstrate excellence in long-term care over a sustained period, promotes the stability of the industry and facilitates the physical, social and emotional well-being of nursing home residents.



Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home Port Charlotte (Charlotte County), Staffing: 137 2016-17 Occupancy Rate: 95.9% (76 Admissions, 24 Discharges)

The facility opened to residents in 2004. The 120-bed facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. We provide our veterans with 24-hour nursing care, daily living and recreational activities, rehabilitative therapy and nutritional cuisine. This Five-Star Quality Rated home is in the top 10 percent of skilled nursing homes.

Home Life: *A modern skilled nursing facility surrounded by an involved community of supportive public and civic organizations, Douglas T. Jacobson actively celebrates and honors veterans with interactive community events both on the secluded grounds and within the historical neighboring cities.*



Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home
Port Charlotte



Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home **St. Augustine (St. Johns County), Staffing: 155** **2016-17 Occupancy Rate: 99.6% (51 Admissions, 12 Discharges)**

The facility opened in September 2010 and remains in excellent condition. This is FDVA's newest State Veterans' Nursing Home, a LEED-certified Gold facility that respects the environment while providing a warm, caring atmosphere for its residents. This state of the art facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. The home provides residents with 24-hour nursing care, daily living and recreational activities, rehabilitative therapy and nutritional cuisine. This Five-Star Quality Rated home is in the top 10 percent of skilled nursing homes.

Home Life: *The Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home, situated in a lodge-like setting, prides itself in customer care and services. Residents enjoy a wide variety of special events and diverse activities designed to appeal to individual interests.*



Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home
St. Augustine

**Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home
Port St. Lucie (St. Lucie County)
2016-17 Occupancy Rate: N/A—Facility Under Development.**



Initial Artist's Draft

Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home

Port St. Lucie



Our website at www.FloridaVets.org acts as a portal to help veterans find the information they need to access benefits and services more efficiently and effectively. In addition, our free mobile application, offered in the Apple and Android markets, integrates with the website and offers veterans reminders and updates about services. It also points veterans to Employ Florida Vets, the state's veteran employment website, to help them find available jobs. For those of you online, you can also join us on Facebook and LinkedIn. Thank you for your service. We're honored to represent you.

“Honoring Those Who Served U.S.”