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Executive Director

State of Florida
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

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Rick Scott
Governor

Pam Bondi
Attorney General

Jeff Atwater
Chief Financial Officer

Adam Putnam
Commissioner of Agriculture

DATE: February 14, 2017

TO: The Honorable Rick Scott
The Honorable Pam Bondi
The Honorable Jeff Atwater
The Honorable Adam Putnam

FROM: Glenn W. Sutphin, Jr.
Executive Director



SUBJECT: Quarterly Report – Second Quarter, Fiscal Year 2016 - 2017

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs submits the Quarterly Report for the Second Quarter of the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year, covering the period October 1 – December 31, 2016.

The report will be placed on the agenda at a future meeting of the Governor and Cabinet.

If you have any questions regarding any matter covered by this report, please contact Deputy Executive Director Al Carter at (727) 518-3202 or Legislative and Cabinet Affairs Director Roy Clark at (850) 487-1533.

CC: Sen. Anitere Flores, Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services
Sen. Audrey Gibson, Chair, Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee
Rep. MaryLynn Magar, Chair, Health Innovation Subcommittee
Rep. Jason Brodeur, Chair, Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee
Rep. Scott Plakon, Chair, Local, Federal & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee
Cynthia Kelly, Director, Governor's Office of Policy and Budget

Attachment 1: FDVA Quarterly Report

ATTACHMENT 1

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS SECOND QUARTER REPORT October 1 – December 31, 2016

This report covers the activities of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) for the Second Quarter of the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year.

1) Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs Administrative Highlights

a) Current Issues/Concerns

i. Executive Direction:

During the Second Quarter of Fiscal Year 2016-2017, the Executive Director, Lt. Col. Glenn Sutphin, presented and/or attended the following events:

- Accepted the Hurricane Matthew Disaster Response Medal from Governor Rick Scott. Three state veterans' homes were in the path of October's Hurricane Matthew, but they sheltered-in-place to ensure a safe continuity of long-term health care for residents and staff.
- Received proclamation from Governor Rick Scott commemorating the 72nd Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge during World War II.
- Presented an American flag to commemorate the Pearl Harbor 75th Anniversary. The flag was flown over the State of Florida Capitol, and presented to Rolling Thunder during their Dec. 2 visit to Tallahassee.
- Presented remarks at the Okaloosa County Veterans' Court about the vulnerable veterans suffering with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), and Substance Abuse.
- Served as a panel member of the Tax Exemption Property Appraiser meeting, held in Jacksonville on November 16, 2016, about veteran's tax issues and initiatives.
- Met with American Legion National Commander Charles E. Schmidt to provide an overview of the agency and its operations.
- Supported the Florida Health Care Association Veterans Day Program to recognize Veterans and their families in Tallahassee for their dedication to the country.
- Commissioned four cadets as 2nd Lieutenants into the Active Army and Florida National Guard at the Florida State University's Army ROTC Commissioning Ceremony in Tallahassee.
- Attended the following events to honor veterans for their services to our nations:
 - The County Veterans Service Officer Association (CVSOA) Training Conference in Safety Harbor.
 - The Filipino American Veterans Society (FAVS) Gala Night in Jacksonville.

- The Florida Veterans Hall of Fame Class of 2016 Induction Ceremony in Tallahassee.
- The Tallahassee Veterans' Day Parade.
- The Leon County Veterans Treatment Court Graduating Class.

Deputy Executive Director Col. Al Carter and key agency staff attended the following events:

- Attended the construction meeting in Orlando for the proposed Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Lucie.
- Provided introductory remarks for the Governor's Veterans Service Awards, held at the U.S. Army National Guard Armory in Fort Myers. One hundred twenty three (123) veterans were awarded a medal in honor of the services provided to Florida and the nation.
- Attended the 52nd Annual Veterans Day Tribute hosted by Hillsborough County in Tampa.
- Joined Hillsborough County Leaders at the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Veterans Resource Center in Tampa.
- Supported and attended the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame Class of 2016 Induction Ceremony.

ii. Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance:

(1) Bureau of Veterans' Claims Services:

During the Second Quarter of Fiscal Year 2016-2017, the bureau provided maximum effort to progress in all areas of operation with many new Claims Examiners. The Claims Services advocated for 7,775 Veterans and their families, while 7,713 rating reviews of claims for disability benefits were completed. A forty-eight percent (48%) increase in rating reviews occurred this quarter by the development of new methodology to track those claims, which are situated all over the nation in the VA National Work Queue. Seventy (70) Veterans were represented before the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) to uphold their appellate rights for Veterans' benefits. Additionally, while 97 Personal Hearings were scheduled with the St. Petersburg VA Regional Office. A large percentage of these local hearings were mitigated prior to the hearing date as a result of our advocacy and claims development, saving disabled veterans the trauma and costs associated with travel. December presented an opportunity to participate in a BVA long-term pilot project, a Veteran-centric process to alleviate the current backlog of BVA appeals. Our participation in, "Project Hurricane", to review cases prior to the demarcation date of 31 July 2014 will identify and present to a Veteran Law Judge, cases which could be granted quickly if they are remanded without waiting for a future hearing. This Bureau looks forward to this collaboration with the BVA, while we also continue to optimize our increasing mission requirements by continuing training of newly hired Claims Examiners.

Bureau of Veterans' Claims Statistics:

EVENT FY 2016-2017	FIRST QUARTER	SECOND QUARTER	YEAR TO DATE FY 2016-2017	2 nd Qtr. ACTUAL FY 2015-2016
Retroactive Compensation	\$25,357,679	\$47,236,297	\$72,593,976	\$30,781,712
Largest Single Retro. Benefit	\$166,302	\$256,700	\$256,700	\$213,652
Debt Relief	\$80,555	\$105,342	\$185,897	\$118,711
Notices of Disagreement	786	800	1,586	1,598
Statements of Argument in Appeals Cases*	353	411	764	493
Act as Representative at Hearings*	194	97	291	397
Veterans' Appeals Hearings*	203	270	473	309
Ratings Reviewed	3,700	7,713	11,413	10,157
* The appeals representation process includes formal filing of the appeal application, and paralegal representation with the veteran at the Regional Office and in teleconferences with the Board of Veterans' Appeals.				

(2) Bureau of Veterans' Field Services:

Field Service's staff members David Austin, Ernie Kuykendall and Harry Rudy provided instruction at the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs Certification Course during December 5 – 8, 2016. Together, with the training courses and normal workload, Field Services staff was able to present, attend and/or otherwise support 137 outreach events, providing earned benefit information to 6,640 veterans and their families. Additionally, 7,702 disability claims were submitted and 742 rating decisions were reviewed. Field Services organized and facilitated the semiannual American Legion Post Service Office training November 18 - 19, with over 200 in attendance. The course covered various VA benefits, including: Disability Compensation, Pension, Health Care, Life Insurance, Education, State Veterans' Nursing Homes, State Veteran Benefits, Burial, Waivers, Discharge Review/Military Records, and the VA Home Loan Guaranty Program. Field Services provided 49 man hours and six Veterans Claim Examiner's (VCE's) to support two Governor's Veterans Service Award Ceremonies this Quarter.

Bureau of Veterans' Field Services Statistics:

EVENT FY 2016-2017	FIRST QUARTER	SECOND QUARTER	YEAR TO DATE FY 2016-2017	2 nd Qtr. ACTUAL FY 2015-2016
Number of Issue Resolution	4,788	4,739	9,527	7,445
Total Amount of Issues Resolution	\$22,113,449	\$13,196,529	\$35,309,978	\$29,839,481
Outreach Visits	129	137	266	354
Veterans Served at Outreach	5,688	6,635	12,323	15,491
Bedside Interviews	2,633	4,812	7,445	6,256
Walk-ins/ Counseling	30,952	27,754	58,706	48,489
Claims	8,897	7,702	16,599	14,307
Voter Registration Pref. Forms	2,529	1,805	4,334	6,371
Homeless Walk In	N/A	N/A	N/A	494
Ratings Reviewed Orlando/W Palm	87	742	829	1,434

(3) The Bureau of State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans' Education and Training:

Operating within the federal fiscal year, this quarter found the SAA extremely busy submitting required end-of-year reports and the annual Self-Evaluation to VA. In addition, the extreme and unusual challenges of the prior quarter where the U.S. Department of Education (USDoE) de-recognized the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS-approximately 100 Florida schools) and where ITT Technical Institute schools, nationwide, abruptly closed their doors, created lingering issues. In Florida, we had twelve (12) ITT Technical School campuses.

- Two other Florida schools with nationwide campuses abruptly closed their doors this quarter.
- USDoE commenced webinars to coordinate state Departments of Education, SAAs and ACICS schools in efforts to enhance communications related to acquisition of new accreditors.
- Passage of H.R. 5985 aligned veteran legislation with USDoE practices, allowing SAAs to provide schools an 18-month grace period prior to withdrawing approval of administration of GI Bill® benefits of affected schools, thereby providing veterans with time for decision-making changes.

The new Fiscal Year 2016-2017 VA/SAA contract also ushered in additional work, responsibilities and subsequent changes in processes for the SAAs. The public and not-for-profit private school approvals were given back to the SAAs from VA and additional duties working with Registered Apprenticeships were added to the SAA workload. Offsetting some

of this work, the Florida SAA's compliance survey visit requirements were reduced to 116 institution visits, down 24 visits from the previous year's 140 visits.

Bureau of State Approving for Veterans' Training (SAA) Statistics:

EVENT FY 2016-2017	FIRST QUARTER	SECOND QUARTER	YEAR TO DATE FY 2016-2017	2 Qtr. ACTUAL FY 2015-2016
SAA Programs Approved	3,156	4,933	8,089	5,851
Other Approval	394	497	891	1,421
Compliance Visits	23	20	43	58
Inspection Visits	13	11	24	19
Outreach Activities*	245	268	513	528
Liaison Activities**	204	237	441	311
Technical Assistance***	938	773	1,711	2,007
<p>* Outreach Activities are any activity designed to inform or encourage those with entitlement to use it.</p> <p>** Liaison activities are those that foster education about the SAA with other education and training professionals, which promote and encourage the exchange of information and support to raise awareness of the professional nature of the SAA approval function.</p> <p>*** Technical assistance is any interaction designed to assist an individual or a facility with any aspect of the approval function.</p>				

- Summary of veterans' benefits derived vs. cost of the benefits staff: \$89:\$1 (ROI).

Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance Outreach*

EVENT FY 2016-2017	FIRST QUARTER	SECOND QUARTER	YEAR TO DATE FY2016-17	2 nd Qtr. ACTUAL FY2015-16
Reintegration and Pre-Deployment Events for Guard and Reserve units	3	2	5	13
Homeless Veteran Stand Down Events	8	8	16	17
Medical Center Welcome Home events	0	0	0	0
Congressional Open House events	1	1	2	1
National Conferences	3	0	3	4
New Patient Orientation	21	21	42	74
Transition Assistance Briefings	13	9	22	17
Other	78	93	171	221
<p>* Supervisors and VCEs throughout the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance provide presentation, orientations, and briefings on state, federal, and local veterans' laws and benefits.</p>				

iii. Division of State Veterans' Homes:

The State of Florida is vulnerable to a variety of hazards that threaten our communities, businesses, and the environment. Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) State Veterans Homes develop and maintain a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan establishes the framework to ensure that the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) will be adequately prepared to deal with these hazards. 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.

The Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan addresses the four phases of emergency management (preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation), and parallels state activities set forth in the "Florida State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan" and describes how resources will be coordinated to supplement Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) resources in response to a disaster.

Governor Rick Scott issued an Executive order, declaring a state of emergency in response to Hurricane Matthew, an impending storm. Hurricane Matthew posed a severe threat to the entire State of Florida, requiring the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) to take timely precautions to protect the general welfare of residents and their families, staff, and critical infrastructures. Three (3) of the seven (7) State Veterans' Homes were impacted: Alexander "Sandy" Nininger Veterans' Nursing Home in Pembroke Pines, the Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home in Daytona Beach, and the Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Augustine.

All three FDVA Nursing Homes sheltered in place, welcoming and accommodating family members of both residents and staff who were forced to evacuate from their homes. Each facility was able to appropriately accommodate all of our Veterans' medical needs; including food, water and a safe environment for all.

The Executive Director of FDVA was awarded the Hurricane Matthew Disaster Response Medal on behalf of the Homes Program. Three state veterans' homes were in the path of Hurricane Matthew, but their shelter-in-place preparations ensured a safe continuity of care for residents, staff and families while providing superb service to our Florida Veterans, during Hurricane Matthew.

2) Required Items per Florida Administrative Code/F.A.C. 55-1.003(s):

a) Contracts (F.A.C. 55-1.003(e))

- i. Prior FDVA "Pharmacy Services" contract, with USDVA VISN-16, expired 9/30/2016. Contract closed out 11/8/2016 (new USDVA VISN-16 contract commenced 10/1/2016). Annual contract amount was/is \$538,000.
- ii. Prior FDVA "Pharmacy Services" contract, with USDVA VISN-8, expired 8/31/2016. Contract closed out 11/30/2016 (new USDVA VISN-8 contract commenced 9/1/2016). Annual contract amount was/is \$2,400,000.
- iii. Prior FDVA "Treasury Services/Resident Trust Funds" contract, with Bank of America (BOA), expired 9/30/2016. Contract closed out 10/28/2016 (new BOA contract commenced 10/1/2016). Annual contract amount was/is \$14,400.

- iv. Clifford Chester Sims SVNH “Treasury Services/Resident Trust Funds” contract, with Hancock Bank, terminated 8/31/2016. Contract closed out 11/30/2016 (contract was no longer necessary/not replaced). Annual contract amount was \$2,000.
- v. Emory L. Bennett SVNH “Parking Lot and Roadway Enhancements” contract with Halifax Paving, Inc. expired 9/26/2016. Contract closed out 10/19/2016. Total contract amount was \$335,000.
- vi. FDVA annual certification of Florida Veterans Foundation (FVF) performance of “Direct Support Organization” contract, for Fiscal Year 2015-2016, executed and received 10/13/2016. Annual/total contract amount is N/A.
- vii. FDVA “Resident Safety Lift and Transfer System” contract Amendment No. 2, with Tollos, Inc., executed 11/7/2016 (revised requirements for “X-Y” rooms, cabinets, gantry installation, and updated public records contract language). Total contract amount is \$5,523,399.
- viii. Douglas T. Jacobson SVNH “Chillers Removal and Replacement” contract, with Johnson Controls, Inc., executed 11/7/2016. Total contract amount is \$314,536.
- ix. FDVA “Adaptive Bowling Pilot Program” contract (per legislative appropriation), with Bowlers to Veterans Link, Inc., executed 12/6/2016. Total contract amount is \$75,000.
- x. Robert H. Jenkins SVDH “Healthcare Resources Sharing Agreement” contract, with USDVA (North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System), executed 12/12/2016. Annual contract amount is \$29,070.
- xi. Robert H. Jenkins SVDH “CCTV Security System” solicitation (Invitation to Bid) issued 12/6/2016. Pre-bid meeting 12/15/2016. Pending total contract amount is \$96,000.
- xii. Robert H. Jenkins SVDH “Boiler Replacement” solicitation (Invitation to Bid) issued 11/17/2016. Pre-bid meeting 12/1/2016, bid opening 12/20/2016, and received two bids on December 20th Lowest bid is \$224,900 Pending approval to move forward with executing the contract.
- xiii. Emory L. Bennett SVNH “Roof Repairs, Repainting, and Gutters Installation” solicitation (Invitation to Bid) issued 12/15/2016. Pending total contract amount is \$430,000.

b) Consultants (F.A.C. 55-1.003(h))

- i. Pre-litigation efforts with AG for possible injunctive relief for VA sharing agreement but that was resolved by executing satisfactory agreement.

c) Leases (F.A.C. 55-1.003(i))

- i. FDVA made no additions, alterations or modifications to leased space this quarter.

d) Lawsuits/Claims in Litigation or Settled this Quarter (F.A.C. 55-1.003(k) and (l))

- i. **3 General Liability Claims:** (0 new this quarter), 1 won, 0 settled, 0 lost, 2 pending
- ii. **10 Employment Liability Claims:** 0 won, 4 settled, 0 lost, 6 pending

e) Notifications to State Attorneys, Sheriffs or other Law Enforcement (F.A.C. 55-1.003(m))

i. None.

f) Donations (F.A.C. 55-1.003(n))

i. Cash Donations Received by State Veterans' Homes

Fiscal Year 2016-2017			
Facilities	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Total Year to Date
Robert H. Jenkins SVDH, Lake City	\$700	\$950	\$1,650
Emory Bennett SVNH, Daytona Beach	\$1,391	\$2,715	\$4,106
Baldomero Lopez SVNH, Land O' Lakes	\$8,357	\$1,571	\$9,928
Alexander "Sandy" Nininger SVNH, Pembroke Pines	\$240	\$430	\$670
Clifford Chester Sims SVNH, Panama City	\$100	\$0	\$100
Douglas T. Jacobson SVNH, Port Charlotte	\$137	\$1,240	\$1,377
Clyde E. Lassen SVNH, St. Augustine	\$210	\$1,175	\$1,385
All State Veterans' Homes	\$11,135	\$8,081	\$19,216
* State Veterans' Nursing Homes (SVNH).			
** State Veterans' Domiciliary Home (SVDH).			

ii. Non-Cash Donations Received by State Veterans' Homes

Second Quarter 2016-2017		
	Items	Value
Robert H. Jenkins SVDH, Lake City	No donations this quarter	\$0
Emory L. Bennett SVNH, Daytona Beach	Jazzy Elite ES Power Wheelchair	\$3,529
Baldomero Lopez SVNH, Land O' Lakes	No donations this quarter	\$0
Alexander "Sandy" Nininger SVNH, Pembroke Pines	No donations this quarter	\$0
Clifford Chester Sims SVNH, Panama City	Resident TV Sanyo 32"- 5 @ \$132 Resident DVD - 5 @ \$25.00	\$660 \$125

Second Quarter 2016-2017		
	Items	Value
Douglas T. Jacobson SVNH, Port Charlotte	Jazzy Electric wheelchair 113	\$1,899
	TV 65" UHD Samsung/BluRay Player	\$1,530
	5-Serta Recliners @ \$250. ea.	\$1,250
Clyde E. Lassen SVNH, St. Augustine	HP Slimline desktop computer	\$250
	Jazzy Electric wheelchair GT	\$1,750
	TV Vizio 70" 4k Ultra HDTV	\$1,398
Total Value		\$12,391

g) Memberships in Professional Organizations Paid During Second Quarter (F.A.C. 55-1.003(p))

Second Quarter 2016-2017			
Division	Professional Organizations	Amount	Total
Executive Direction	NASDVA	\$800	\$800
* National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA) annual membership.			



3) Veterans Florida

During the Second Quarter of Fiscal Year 2016-2017, Veterans Florida continued its work of implementing its statutory programs as well as continuing its efforts to assist veterans in finding and connecting with services and benefits.

- a) The Veterans Florida Business Training Grant Program continues to award grants to companies that desire to hire and train veterans. In the last quarter, businesses reported a total of 31 additional veteran hires bringing the program total to 91 since its inception in January 2016. Of the 91 veterans hired to date, 60 have completed training for a total reimbursement of \$257,262.69. Veterans Florida also awarded Business Training Grant contracts to an additional Five companies last quarter, bringing the total number of companies under contract to twenty with an additional 19 companies in various stages of the application process.
- b) Year Two of the Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program began in October with the Seven participating colleges and universities: Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, University of Central Florida, University of West Florida, Florida Atlantic University, Hillsborough Community College, University of North Florida, and Florida Gulf Coast University. Registration for Year Two was open from October- December resulting in 460 veteran sign ups. All participating institutions held Open Houses in December allowing veterans and faculty to meet and discuss the year's curriculum prior to the beginning of instruction in January.
- c) As of December 31, 2016, Veterans Florida has 74,429 Facebook likes, 9,735 email newsletter subscribers, 218 Twitter followers, and 299 LinkedIn followers. Additionally, Veterans Florida has had 264,828 visitors to its website, www.veteransflorida.org.
- d) Veterans Florida staff continues to work with Miles Media to distribute brochures promoting, as well as raise awareness of, the Veterans Florida Career Portal. Brochures target the veteran audience, showing veterans the services offered by Veterans Florida including the Veterans Career Portal, Skills Translator, Transition Assistance, Entrepreneurship Program and highlight the benefits available to veterans throughout the state. Brochures were printed in large quantities and were distributed to military bases throughout the state and across the country.
- e) Miles Media has completed production on new videos for the Veterans Florida marketing campaign. Video production focused on a series of regional videos, which will highlighted the diversity of the State of Florida. Additional videos highlighting the Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program and Business Training Grant Program are in post-production and are expected to be completed in the coming months.
- f) The Monster.com Career Portal, which launched in September 2016, continues to draw employers and veterans looking for career and staffing opportunities. Veterans Florida also continues to promote the Career Portal with several ads running on Military.com and their associated social properties. There are currently 500 veteran job seekers registered on the portal as well as over twenty employers.

- g) The Veterans Florida Audit Committee approved the organization's Fiscal Year 2015-2016 audit which was then submitted to the Board of Directors in full at the November Board of Director's meeting. Also approved was a military leave policy modeled after the State of Florida's employee leave policy.
- h) Executive staff and Board members held meetings with the Florida Cable Telecommunications Association, Florida Power and Light, Gulf Power, and Bunker Labs to discuss the Business Training Grant Program and partnership opportunities. Additionally, Board Members and staff participated in the ITEN Wired Conference, HCC Veterans Entrepreneurship Training Symposium, and Florida Diversity Council Veteran's Summit.



4) Florida Veterans Foundation

In accordance with the agreement between The State of Florida, Office of the Attorney General and the Florida Veterans Foundation, Inc. (FVF), the FVF is herewith submitting its report for the Second Quarter beginning October 1, 2016 and ending December 31, 2016. During this period, the FVF received 220 emergency assistance applications and provided financial assistance services to 176 Florida Veterans, expending funds for \$112,043 on purposes set forth in the agreement.

The FVF serves Florida veterans and their families by providing direct services in partnership with a spectrum of other organizations including state and local governments, other veteran service organizations, and educational institutions to improve our veterans' physical, financial, mental, emotional, and social well-being. The FVF supports the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs mission of advocacy by educating the public and governmental entities to increase awareness on veteran-related issues.

While many of Florida's more than 1.5 million veterans successfully transitioned to a post-military career, many veterans encounter barriers and challenges that impede their progress during this juncture. Among veterans, the reported priority services needed during this transitional phase were employment assistance, paying rent, mortgage, and utilities. The high needs for assistance with mortgage, rent, and utilities and for employment services are moderated by having good availability of services and a relatively low rate of being unmet.

Some of the major recurring issues faced by Florida veterans include access to health care and benefits; housing, jobs and unemployment; traumatic brain injury (TBI), and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). HELP grant funds provide Florida veterans with emergency services, including managing debt and household expenses as outlined in part B of this report.

The Leon County Veterans Service Office provides monies through the VEAP Leon County to fund emergency financial assistance to veterans who reside in Leon County. The County in partnership with the Foundation can pay a maximum of \$500 towards a veterans housing; \$300 towards utilities; \$200 temporary lodging and/or discretionary items; \$100 travel; \$50 birth certificate and other categories as authorized in a claim. These funds are a tremendous benefit to the Foundation and Leon County veterans. They support the efforts of the Foundation in providing emergency financial assistance at \$12,500 per quarter. Due to Hurricane Hermine, Leon County provided an additional \$25,000.

Each month the FVF continues to experience an increase in the number of veterans requesting and receiving services. The widespread and aggressive marketing efforts have illuminated our existence and the HELP Grant that provides the financial wherewithal to assist veterans facing emergency situations. These results are reflective of collaborative efforts on the part of service providers who target veterans living throughout the state of Florida through various mediums (electronic, face-to-face, print, etc.) social media, statewide advertising, Stand Downs, conferences, and other activities.

a) Veterans Served

As stated above, there are more than 1.5 million veterans in Florida. For administrative purposes, Florida has been divided into 8 Service Districts, as follows:

**FLORIDA VETERANS BY DISTRICT
AND TOTAL VETERANS SERVED IN 2nd QUARTER BY DISTRICT**

TOTAL			TOTAL	
DISTRICT	VETERAN POP	% VET POP	SERVED 2nd Q	% VET POP
1	182,211	11.69%	66,544	36.52%
2	177,400	11.38%	27,600	5.33%
3	131,926	8.47%	8,015	6.07%
4	339,396	21.78%	12,034	3.55%
5	249,170	15.99%	2,059	0.83%
6	163,787	10.51%	240	0.13%
7	133,732	8.58%	353	0.24%
8	180,818	11.60%	542	0.30%
TOTAL	1,558,440	100.00%	117,387	7.53%

As the metrics above show, District 1 has accomplished the most this quarter by providing information about the HELP grant to 66,544 veterans, or more than 36.52% of the total veterans in that district. Additionally, the center of the state accounts for a significant concentration of veterans: District 4 on the west coast of Florida together with District 5 on the east coast of Florida account for more than 36% of Florida's total veteran population.

The goal of the grant is to serve approximately 329,000 veterans during the first year of the grant, or 82,263 per quarter. For the second quarter ending December 31, 2016, the grant has touched the lives of 117,387 veterans. FVF's marketing efforts will continue to target our efforts of providing services in all of the areas and to assist veterans throughout the state, districts and counties.

b) Expenditures

AREA OF SERVICE	ANNUAL BUDGET	<u>Q2</u> <u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>
GRANT FINANCIAL ANALYST	\$10,000	\$2,500	\$0	0.00%
GRANT QUALITY MANAGER	\$18,000	\$4,500	\$5,781	128.47%
GRANT AUDITOR	\$3,250	\$813	\$0	0.00%
GRANT PROGRAM ADVERTISEMENT	\$35,000	\$8,750	\$1,631	18.64%
HEALTH (HBOT, TBI, PTSD)	\$133,500	\$53,000	\$16,317	30.79%
HOUSING	\$260,000	\$100,000	\$59,802	59.80%
UTILITIES	\$80,000	\$35,000	\$16,086	45.96%

AREA OF SERVICE	ANNUAL BUDGET	<u>Q2</u> <u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>
COMMUNICATIONS, PHONE, INTERNET	\$600	\$150	\$0	0.00%
BENEFITS GUIDES POSTAGE	\$18,500	\$4,625	\$41	0.89%
EDUC-ENTREPRENEURIAL (TRANSP.)	\$55,000	\$13,750	\$6,513	47.37%
EDUC-TRAIN THE TRAINER	\$12,500	\$3,125	\$1,209	38.69%
EDUC-DEPENDENCY INDEM COMP (DIC)	\$85,000	\$21,250	\$4,500	21.18%
TOTAL	\$711,350	\$247,463	\$111,880	45.21%

Based on the expenditures for the second quarter, Florida veterans' needs for Housing and Utilities emergencies are approximately (59.80% and 45.96% respectively). As the results demonstrate, the greatest need is assistance in the Housing category: a total of \$59,802 was spent during the quarter to prevent eviction and homelessness. Actual expenditures demonstrate the needs and may serve as the metric for reallocation of monies. Second Quarter expenditures in the amount of \$111,880 represent approximately 45.21% of the \$247,466 budgeted for this quarter. Continuously throughout the 2nd Quarter, the Foundation received requests for financial assistance due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g., joblessness, family crisis, disabilities, holiday expenditures, climatic conditions, unexpected or chronic health problems, and etcetera) that created financial hardships for veterans and their families. Our core mission is to provide emergency assistance to prevent veterans from being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless. The reality being, that veterans need the financial assistance because the abovementioned variables are constant in the lives of veterans throughout the state.

c) Events/Expenditures in Support of Veterans Served

i. Veterans Florida:

Veterans Florida and Florida Veterans Foundation have established a network for sharing of information, the need of services and case notes to monitor the status of a claim to veterans within the state of Florida. Veterans Florida implementation of the UNITEUS program and interfacing with the FVF has proven to be an effective resource to widening their reach to veterans. It is important to provide a "common corridor" for veterans to learn to go to for assistance and support.

ii. Florida A&M University School of Pharmacy (40th Year Symposium):

Planning continues for the Symposium to be held in February 2017 (30 persons in attendance) Theme: Achieving Health Equity Through Interprofessional Care: Focus on U.S. Veterans.

iii. The Florida Veterans Hall of Fame:

The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame held the Induction Awards Ceremony in the Cabinet Room of the Florida State Capitol Building in Tallahassee on November 9, 2016. There were 11 new members added to the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame. The Florida Veterans Foundation Chairman, retired Army Colonel Washington J. Sanchez Jr. was one of the eleven inductees. He is a Vietnam veteran and Purple Heart recipient whose countless, inexhaustible volunteer hours supporting veterans in need has earned him statewide honors.

The Florida Veterans Hall of Fame Ceremony was attended by more than 165 attendees, and the Governor's Reception was held that evening at the Governor's Mansion for honorees and their guests; attended by more than 175 persons. The day's activities received TV, newspaper coverage, as well as other mediums for highlighting the celebration of the distinguished award to recipients.

iv. Veterans Day:

November 11, 2016: Veterans Day pays tribute to veterans for their sacrifices to defend and protect this nation. Throughout the state a plethora of events were held to recognize the courageous commitment made by the men and women who served in the armed services. Veterans Day events in Washington, DC, were attended by Col. Sanchez (included the Marine Corps War Memorial Parade in Arlington and the Arlington National Cemetery Presidential Wreath Laying and Speech Ceremony in the Memorial Amphitheater). A multitude of events were held in communities throughout the State of Florida and attended by the masses to include: parades, programs sponsored by Veteran Service organizations, churches, federal, state and city/county governmental agencies, businesses, and, etc.

v. Dinner for Community Leaders:

First Lady Ann Scott recognized community leaders at the Dinner for Community Leaders on November 29, 2016 at the Governor's Mansion. Donna Barron was selected to attend the dinner because of her contributions as Director, North Florida Stand Down (NFSD) 2016. Community service providers and volunteers provided services and support to more than 256 homeless and at-risk veterans during NFSD 2016.

vi. FVF Holiday Celebration:

The FVF staff and several other persons who actively support and assist the Foundation in serving veterans gathered to celebrate the holidays. The Holiday Luncheon was held on December 16, 2016 at the University Club on December 16, 2016.

vii. ASPEN DENTAL:

Aspen Dental contacted the Foundation and offered to adopt 58 veterans and their families for Christmas 2016. The Aspen Dental Offices that participated in this venture are located throughout the state of Florida and purchased and delivered gifts to 37 veterans and their families.

viii. KENWOOD PLACE:

A meeting was held with Representative Mayo on November 3, 2016 to discuss placement of eligible veterans in one and two-bedroom apartments (112 Units) to open in Tallahassee on February 1, 2017. Another facility of this kind was opened in Tampa.

ix. Stand Downs and Summits:

During the Second Quarter one three-day Stand Down for homeless/at-risks veterans was held (Jacksonville, FL, October 20 – 22, 2016) and one Summit; these events have proven to benefit our clientele.

The impetus being to provide services to assist the veteran as they transition from the military and in other cases to combat homelessness/at-risk of being homeless – providing a hand up.

A Subject Matter Expert (SME) for respective topics presented and educated participants on available opportunities in “HELP.” Both Summits were well attended by more than 100 veterans respectively. Continued efforts with the emphasis of targeting the more rural areas to ensure we can REACH those who can’t attend the regional summits will be pursued. The purpose of these events is not only to provide information or services to veterans but also to receive information from them concerning their actual needs.

x. Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT):

The Foundation has devoted a vast amount of effort and energy towards advocacy, education and service to Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT). It continues to be a top contender of discussion and effort due to the number of veterans who are suffering from Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and who are daily committing suicide at an alarming rate of 20-22/day.

- Colonel Sanchez participated in the second television taping on KERA/PBS television station in Dallas on September 13th, 2016. The **Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy for Our Veteran and Others** airing on KERA, Channel 13, at 11:30 AM (CDT) on October 30, 2016. A copy of this video was made available to FSU PBS TV stations and other PBS Stations nationwide. Another video titled: **Our Veteran's Silent Wounds of War, was** shown on October 23, 2016 at 11:30 AM (CDT).
- **Military Order of the Purple Heart** (MOPH) on October 26, 2016 (Col. Sanchez in Orlando) HBOT.
- December 7: Met with Ray Cralle in Delray Beach on HBOT and left veterans info (35 brochures & 18 Kuwait books) for Don Lanman (3 veterans).
- December 8: Met with Nyloxin Pain Medication CEO Rix Deitsch in Coral Springs concerning a possible fund raising partnership (2 veterans).
- December 8: Met with Miami VA Medical Center Chief of Staff Vincent DeGenaro on the estimated 18,000 TBI/PTSD veterans in the Miami area; HB 55 on TBI/PTSD Alternatives and HBOT request using the CHOICE Program (4 veterans attended).

xi. Other Initiatives:

The Florida Veterans Foundation completed the Medal of Honor Node Brick Memorial located in the Capitol Courtyard. The foundation raised over \$42,000 in funds in the project. Currently the project is on hold until the Capitol Grounds Restoration project is completed.

The Florida Veterans Foundation has established a Fundraising board that is working collaboratively with FDVA and Corporate Businesses to raise funds in support of their core mission of providing emergency financial aid to Veterans in need. They are developing talking papers to present to legislators as well as a long term and short term strategy to build an endowment for the future successes of the FVF.

The Foundation has suspended hosting quarterly Driver Licenses Clinic in Tallahassee until the February/March 2017 timeframe. This service will be a focus prior to and at the annual Stand Down. The efforts are aimed at assisting veterans who have had their licenses revoked due to legal issues, providing the necessary assistance to resolve and remove infractions for the reinstatement of their licenses. Financial assistance is available to those veterans that submit an Emergency Assistance Application and are approved for funding.

Colonel Sanchez and Dan Hendrickson are working with the Dean, FSU Law School and coordinated the plans for hosting Legal Clinic services for veterans. Services will include Community Service (commute imposed penalties to Community Service hours for a broad spectrum of infractions), License and Child Support. FSU Law students will be trained and will provide counsel/services to veterans (law students to be located at the Tallahassee VA clinic); program replicates the program in Jacksonville.

d) Self-Evaluation

During the Second Quarter, the FVF continued to provide services to veterans. We connected and engaged with veterans, and became increasingly involved in issues that are concerning and/or impacting their lives. The emphasis has been to advocate and educate the public and governmental entities awareness of veteran issues, experience in the field and evaluating where changes in the HELP grant's administration and/or emergency assistance network can improve and expedite outcomes covered by the agreement.

While significant progress is being made, the FVF primary focus and services are based on laws and recognized needs and have been prioritized and acted upon with the veterans' interest of primary concern (physical, financial, mental, emotional, and social well-being) and under the guidelines of HELP grant. The ultimate goal is to meet the veteran at the time of their need; reduce bureaucracy and provide efficient/effective responsive programs and services. Thus, to help integrate and maintain the veteran into the community and enhance the quality of their life.

i. Application:

Continued attention is being directed to explore options for making the application process for emergency assistance more efficient and user-friendly for those veterans in need. Both the capturing of grant reporting requirements and the expeditious approval of applications are the fundamentals of significance. FVF has created significant energy between the County Veteran Service Officers, Veterans Florida, and the Foundation to educate, advocate and best serve veterans throughout the State of Florida. Currently, there is effort to change financial aid applications from faxed paper applications to email applications whereby it is easier for the veterans to apply.

The Florida Veterans Foundation has begun to work directly with the County Veteran Service Officers (CVSO), in the realization that they are the "frontline" to the veterans throughout Florida. The results of cultivating these relationship has been witnessed in a more streamlined process with Emergency Assistance Applications from the CVSO.

ii. Marketing:

The recommendations to create a new logo and to redesign the website for friendlier navigation has been completed. The activation of the Foundation's redesigned website was launched in November 2016. The newly redesigned webpage has been well received and has experienced a significant increase to the number of daily visits from interested parties. The Foundation has secured services for the development of video Public Service Announcements in hopes of finding sponsors and donations to build the financial base.

iii. Mobile Services:

Transportation has been identified as the most critical unmet need facing veterans in the State of Florida, particularly in rural areas. Persistent efforts to provide services to unserved or underserved veterans living in the most remote areas of a district/county, continue to be a priority. The FVF has already been successful in arranging bus passes for veterans able to use public transportation. Unfortunately, not all approved services are located readily

accessible by public transportation, making alternative transportation arrangements desirable.

Efforts to effect a change to our Statewide transportation needs resulted in the FVF Chairman contacting Uber Technologies Inc. to initiate a pilot program in Lakeland, Polk County. While the concept remains intact, the location for the pilot program has been reconsidered.

During the Second Quarter 2016-2017, discussions continued to ensue on this initiative with an anticipatory implementation date during the Third Quarter 2016-2017. The deterrent was that Uber was unable to activate the pilot program because not all participants had Smart phones for the download of the Uber application; involved parties are working to allow those participants without Smart phones to contact the Big Bend Transit Call Center to schedule their trip. The concept is for FVF to fund Uber discounted rides for veterans traveling to designated locations. Various organizations throughout the various counties already provide transportation services to specific segments of the population and, in many cases, to Veterans Clinics.

Minute progress has transpired during the Second Quarter 2016-2017 on the collaborative partnership between StarMetro, Tallahassee, FL and the Foundation. The intentions of this initiative is for StarMetro to provide two vans, fuel and insurance for this endeavor. The vans will be used to provide transportation to shuttle veterans to various facilities to receive services. Continually attention and guidance are required to advance (requires further exploration of strategic planning) for the execution and implementation.

iv. Florida Veteran Foundation Funding and Fundraising:

The Florida Veteran Foundation's reputation for being the beacon of hope to Veterans in need of emergency financial assistance has been established. The ever increasing and irreversible need for available funds to provide financial assistance to Florida Veterans is constant and without ceasing. Sponsorships and fundraising opportunities are being explored and developed for the continuance of funds and to remain in a viable capacity to provide emergency assistance to Florida veterans.

The FVF is a volunteer Veterans service organization. We do not receive any State Funds, nor does the FVF receive any Residual Funds from Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA). The Florida Veterans Foundation provides direct support to the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs who in turn has the mission of providing for 1.5 million Veterans plus their dependents. We must also consider that our Florida Veterans are the oldest in age and on average suffer the most Severe Disabilities of Veterans in any other State. Providing for the care and welfare for this number of our Veterans is a DAUNTING TASK, a task that cannot be taken lightly. This is a task that should be given our highest priority. After all, our Veterans gave AMERICA their ultimate Priority when they were putting their lives on the Line for our country. The Veterans put our State of Florida First then and we should put our Veterans FIRST now.

The FVF remains steadfast and is working diligently with the Legislative Affairs Officer at the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs to seek the granting of recurring funding by the state be in place prior to the end of the AG HELP Grant. Emphasizing that, without state funding, the enormity of the financial impact on the lives of veterans throughout the State of Florida who are faced with a financial crisis and have come to depend on the Foundation as a last

recourse for financial assistance and to provide relief in their moment of despair is the top priority for the Foundation.

v. Creation of Fundraising Board:

Another effort underway is the creation of a "Fundraising Board." This board consists of senior military, Florida Veterans Council support, and senior representatives from large businesses and corporations. They can also serve to endorse Federal Grants that we could apply. Nothing is off the table going forward.

Former Representative William Proctor has committed to coming up three times during the session with the sole intent of supporting Florida Veterans in the greatest way that his legislative influence can compel. His comment that \$1-\$1.5 million is not much on a \$20 billion budget. He believed that we should start big and work down from there on amount.

We are working collaboratively with FDVA and all our available resources to be a vibrant and rewarding. General Milligan, General Snodgrass, and Major Haynes have come to the table to see how we all can play a support role in helping your quest for funding.