



State of Florida
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
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Ashley Moody
Attorney General
Jimmy Patronis
Chief Financial Officer
Nikki Fried
Commissioner of Agriculture

Daniel W. "Danny" Burgess Jr.
Executive Director

DATE: November 7, 2019

TO: The Honorable Ron DeSantis
The Honorable Ashley Moody
The Honorable Jimmy Patronis
The Honorable Nikki Fried

FROM: Daniel W. "Danny" Burgess Jr.
Executive Director

SUBJECT: Quarterly Report – First Quarter, Fiscal Year 2019 - 2020

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs submits the Quarterly Report for the First Quarter of the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year, covering the period July 1 - September 30, 2019.

The Quarterly Report is submitted pursuant to the procedures authorized by Rule 55-1.003 Florida Administrative Code (06/10/2008). 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 James S. Hartsell at (727) 518-3202 or Legislative and Cabinet Affairs Director Allison Sitte at (850) 487-1533.

CC:
Senator Aaron Bean, Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services
Senator Tom A. Wright, Chair, Military and Veterans Affairs and Space Committee
Speaker Pro Tempore MaryLynn Magar, Chair, Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee
Representative Bobby Payne, Chair, Local, Federal & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee
Chris Spencer, Policy Director, Governor's Office of Policy and Budget

Attachment 1: FDVA Quarterly Report

ATTACHMENT 1
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
FIRST QUARTER REPORT
July 1 – September 30, 2019

This report covers the activities of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) for the First Quarter of the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year.

1) Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs Administrative Highlights

a) Current Issues/Concerns

i) Executive Direction:

Executive Director Danny Burgess appointed Retired U.S. Navy Senior Chief Bob Asztalos as the chair of the Florida Veterans Foundation.

FDVA partnered with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Crisis Center of Tampa Bay to highlight our state's veteran suicide prevention efforts during Florida Veteran Suicide Prevention Week, September 8-14. A proclamation from Governor Ron DeSantis was released as part of the observance. A joint editorial signed by the leadership of FDVA, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VISN 8) and the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay garnered positive statewide coverage in most of the state's major newspapers.

FDVA monitored Hurricane Dorian for its potential impact on Florida's veteran population, to include its network of State Veterans' Homes and Medical Centers of VA Outpatient Clinics. Messaging was shared with our state and federal counterparts. We've reached out to our State Department of Veterans' Affairs counterparts in Georgia and the Carolinas to offer support, as necessary.

The Governor's Initiative on Lawyers Assisting Warriors (GI LAW) program connected more than 60 active duty Florida service members with pro bono (no charge) civil legal services since the initiative began in March 2019. Seven different statewide law firms represent service members pro bono through the GI LAW program. GI LAW staff trained and granted statewide program access to Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps legal offices of the U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force and U.S. Coast Guard. Further, U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Army JAG Corps units are scheduled for GI LAW training in the near future.

❖ Veterans Education and Awareness

FDVA has completed the regional assessment phase of the *Forward March* veterans' advocacy campaign. FDVA Executive Director Burgess had launched the *Forward March* initiative on March 29 at the University of South Florida (USF) in Tampa. The *Forward March* initiative was announced by Governor DeSantis to bring together the combined energy and resources of our state agencies, Veterans' Service Organizations, private partners and local community providers to ensure Florida is providing the very best services and support for our veterans and their families. FDVA hosted seven *Forward March* regional summits in Pensacola, Jacksonville, West Palm Beach, Ocala, Miami, Port Canaveral and Sarasota. Feedback was gathered from the regional summits to identify actionable veterans' related issues. FDVA will issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and Cabinet.

During the first quarter, Executive Director Burgess and key agency staff also represented FDVA at the following veterans' educational and awareness visits and meetings:

- FDVA Communications and External Affairs Director Steve Murray participated for the day in a 95-year-old World War II veteran's cross country journey by foot in Monticello, Florida on July 4.

- Deputy Executive Director James “Hammer” Hartsell conducted a site visit of the Alexander “Sandy” Nininger State Veterans’ Nursing Home in Pembroke Pines on July 10.
- Deputy Executive Director Hartsell visited the Pasco County Veterans Center in New Port Richey on July 12.
- Executive Director Burgess visited the 211 Crisis Center of Tampa Bay on July 15.
- Deputy Executive Director Hartsell visited the Orlando VA Medical Center in Orlando and the Viera VA Outpatient Clinic in Melbourne on July 16. Afterward, he conducted a site visit of the Emory L. Bennett State Veterans’ Nursing Home in Daytona Beach, and visited the William V. Chappell Jr. VA Satellite Outpatient Clinic in Daytona Beach on July 17.
- FDVA Leadership attended the 2019 Annual State Conference for the National Guard Association of Florida in St. Petersburg on July 19.
- FDVA Leadership met with the Bay Pines VA Community Engagement Board at the FDVA headquarters in Largo on July 22.
- Executive Director Burgess attended the 120th Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) National Convention in Orlando on July 23. Afterward, Executive Director Burgess met with VA Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Chief of Staff Lawrence Connell.
- Deputy Executive Director Hartsell visited the James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital - Primary Care Annex in Tampa on July 25.
- Deputy Executive Director Hartsell conducted a site visit of the Baldomero Lopez State Veterans’ Nursing Home in Land O’ Lakes on July 29.
- Executive Director Burgess attended the Honor and Remember Flag unveiling ceremony in Miami on July 30.
- Chief of Staff Al Carter attended the *Housing for Vets* meeting on July 31.
- Deputy Executive Director Hartsell met with Dr. Chaudhry at the James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital - Primary Care Annex in Tampa on August 5.
- Deputy Executive Director Hartsell met with the VA My HealtheVet Coordinator team on August 5.
- FDVA Leadership, including the State Veterans’ Homes Administrators, attended the Florida Health Care Association annual conference 2019 in Orlando on August 5-6.
- Communications and External Affairs Director Murray joined Florida’s First Lady Casey DeSantis at the dedication ceremony of the Purple Heart Memorial in Tallahassee on August 7.
- FDVA Leadership supported the Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame Council meeting in Tallahassee on August 8.
- Deputy Executive Director Hartsell and, Communications and External Affairs Director Murray attended the 2019 Annual Convention of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA) conference in Omaha, Nebraska on August 11-14.
- Chief of Staff Al Carter attended the VA and Hillsborough County Suicide Prevention Working Group conference at the Veterans Resource Center in Tampa on August 14.



- Executive Director Burgess attended the Florida Chamber Foundation's 2019 Military, Defense and Veterans Opportunities summit in Jacksonville on August 13.
- Deputy Executive Director Hartsell visited the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital - Primary Care Annex in Tampa on August 14.
- FDVA Leadership attended the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 8 Suicide Prevention Initiative meeting with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in St. Petersburg on August 15.
- FDVA Leadership met with VeteransPlus & Yellow Ribbon Network Executive Director John Pickens III and his support team at FDVA headquarters in Largo on August 19.
- Deputy Executive Director Hartsell presented remarks at the Mission United Veterans Forum in Sarasota on September 24.
- Deputy Executive Director Hartsell visited the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Aspire Health Partners in Tampa on September 25.
- Deputy Executive Director Hartsell attended the Mid-Florida VA Community Suicide Prevention and Whole Health is Mental Health summit in Ocala on September 26.
- Communications and External Affairs Director Steve Murray delivered remarks at the Gold Star Mothers' and Families' Day Observance at MacDill AFB in Tampa on September 29.

❖ **Community Outreach**

FDVA coordinated cinema advertising and social media campaign featuring a 30-second FDVA-produced health care recruitment public service announcement aired in all markets with a State Veterans' Home. Our goal was to reduce the number of health care professional vacancies at our State Veterans' Homes in Panama City, Lake City, St. Augustine, Daytona Beach, Pembroke Pines, Port Charlotte and Land O' Lakes. The campaign continued through August 11.

Nielsen TV ratings were released on July 12. More than 215,000 households in Florida watched the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) special, "National Memorial Day Concert," which aired live in all nine PBS markets in Florida on the evening of Sunday, May 26. It cost us a little more than two cents per household to have our public service announcement run before the opening titles. Our continued sponsorship of new veteran-related programming on PBS is garnering us great results for our investment.

FDVA signed a contract with *Quest Corporation of America* on September 27 to produce a new public service announcement (PSA) to help connect veterans with their earned services, benefits and support.

FDVA also has conducted visits with local health care and mental health facilities related to alternative therapies and treatment options for veterans.

Executive Director Burgess and key agency staff represented FDVA at the following community outreach visits and events.

- Executive Director Burgess met with community stakeholders in Port Canaveral on July 15-17.
- Executive Director Burgess visited Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute in Tampa on July 18. Later that afternoon, he addressed the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce members on veterans issues.
- Deputy Executive Director Hartsell met with *Quest Corporation of America*, our outreach vendor in Land O' Lakes on July 19.
- Executive Director Burgess met with community stakeholders in Orlando and Tallahassee on July 23-26.

- Executive Director Burgess visited the Oxygen Rescue Care Centers (ORCCA) of America in Delray Beach on July 29.
- Chief of Staff Al Carter attended U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM) pursuit meeting in Tallahassee on August 1.
- Executive Director Burgess visited the U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM) in Cape Canaveral on August 5.
- FDVA Leadership met with First Lady Casey DeSantis in Tallahassee on August 20.
- Executive Director Burgess addressed the Heritage Springs Country Club in Trinity on August 20.
- Executive Director Burgess addressed the club members at the Rotary Club of Zephyrhills weekly meeting on August 22. Later that afternoon, he presented remarks at the 2019 Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce awards banquet.
- Executive Director Burgess addressed the Rotary Club of New Tampa on September 27.

❖ **Legislative Activities**

Executive Director Burgess provided a list of sixteen Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame inductees for approval to the Governor and Cabinet at the September 24 Cabinet meeting. The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame inductees are being honored for their significant contributions to the communities, businesses, and public within the state of Florida. The Executive Director also provided an update to the Governor and Cabinet on two new State Veterans' Nursing Homes and the Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home in Panama City regarding its post-hurricane Michael roof replacement project.

Further, the Executive Director Burgess met with the Governor's Office of Policy and Budget (OPB) and with legislators regarding veteran-related bills. During the meetings, he proposed best practices for veterans' initiative to improve benefit access for Florida's veterans and their family members. He also addressed top financial issues that could impact Florida veterans' resources and programs.

Executive Director Burgess and key agency staff also represented FDVA at the following legislative meetings.

- Deputy Executive Director Hartsell met with chair Senator Tom A. Wright of the committee on Military and Veterans Affairs and Space in New Smyrna Beach on July 29.
- FDVA Leadership attended the Florida Veterans Council Legislative Priorities meeting in Orlando on August 15.
- Executive Director Burgess met with Legislators and Florida Cabinet members in Tallahassee on September 23-26.
- FDVA Leadership met with the Office of Policy and Budget regarding the proposed 2020-21 Legislative Budget Request in Tallahassee on August 20.

Governor DeSantis signed the following proclamations to commemorate veterans for their selfless dedication to the nation.

- Governor proclaims July 25 as Hire a Veteran Day in Florida.
- Governor proclaims July 27 as the 66th anniversary of Korean War Armistice Day.
- Governor proclaims August 7 as Florida Purple Heart Day.
- Governor proclaims August 14 as Spirit of '45 Day.
- Governor proclaims September 11 as Patriot Day.
- Governor proclaims September 20 as POW/MIA Recognition Day in Florida.
- Governor proclaims September 29 as Gold Star Family Day in Florida.

ii) Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance:

1. Bureau of Veterans' Claims Services:

Claims Service's First Quarter production review of rating decisions remained steady. Seaman Donald "Don" Stout assumed duties as the new Division Director of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance. Director Stout has a wealth of experience with FDVA, County Veterans' Service Offices and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. In September, former Director of Veterans' Benefits of Assistance Sergeant Alene Tarter retired after 20 years of dedicated and honorable service to FDVA. The agency will sorely miss her guidance and leadership.

The Bureau of Claims Services advocated for 27,773 veterans and their families, with 15,023 rating decision review of claims for disability benefits completed through the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS). Bureau of Claims represented 493 veterans before the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) to uphold their appellate rights for veterans' benefits.

Additionally, the Bureau represented 95 local Personal Hearings with the St. Petersburg VA Regional Office. We continued to mitigate the majority of these local issues to the advantage of the veteran prior to the hearing date. As always, we continue to stand ready to meet the increasing demands of veterans' appeals requirements.

Fiscal Year 2019-2020			
Event	First Quarter	YTD FY 2019-20	First Quarter FY 2018-19
Retroactive Compensation	\$35,250,634	\$35,250,634	\$22,824,266
Largest Single Retro. Benefit ⁽¹⁾	\$274,769	\$274,769	\$297,550
Debt Waiver Resolutions	\$231,335	\$231,335	\$306,197
Notices of Disagreement	2,211	2,211	999
Statements of Argument in Appeals Cases ⁽²⁾	92	92	170
Act as Representative at Hearings*	510	510	218
Veterans' Appeals Hearings*	607	607	305
Number of Ratings Reviewed	15,023	15,023	9,057

(1) The "Largest Single Retro. Benefits" Year to Date for FY 2019-20 and the Actual for FY 2018-19 reflects only the largest benefit amount that was received as of fourth quarter of the fiscal year.

(2) 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:

The Bureau of Field Services advocated for 72,112 veterans and their families, while conducting 300 outreach events, providing earned benefit information to 9,061 veterans and their families. Field Services also completed 12,303 disability claims. In addition, Field Services attended nine Homeless Stand Down events, 29 Transition Assistance Briefings to file disability claims during those presentations, and 62 New Patient Orientations in VA Medical Centers and VA Outpatient Clinics.

Field Services' supervisors assisted the Bureau of Veterans' Claims by reviewing and entering 401 rating decisions. Field Services also assisted more than 1,768 veterans related to voter registration.

Fiscal Year 2019-2020			
Event	First Quarter	YTD FY 2019-20	First Quarter FY 2018-19
Number of Issue Resolutions	6,620	6,620	8,476
Total Amount of Issues Resolution	\$22,240,581	\$22,240,581	\$23,969,566
Outreach Visits	300	300	221
Veterans Served at Outreach	9,061	9,061	7,791
Bedside Interviews	244	244	308
Walk-ins / Counseling	38,533	38,533	33,247
Disability Claims	12,303	12,303	10,262
Voter Registration Pref. Forms	1,768	1,768	3,623
Homeless Walk In	84	84	96
Ratings Reviewed Orlando / West Palm	401	401	597

Summary of veterans' benefits derived vs. the cost of the benefits staff: \$168:\$1 (ROI).

Fiscal Year 2019-2020			
Event	First Quarter	YTD FY 2019-20	First Quarter FY 2018-19
Reintegration and Pre-Deployment Events for Guard and Reserve Units	4	4	4
Homeless Veteran Stand Down Events	2	2	8
Medical Center Welcome Home events	0	0	0
Congressional Open House Events	1	1	1
National Conferences	0	0	0
New Patient Orientation	62	62	49
Transition Assistance Briefings	29	29	36
Other	0	0	123

(1) 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.

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

The SAA operates under contract with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to review, audit, evaluate, approve and oversee school and training facilities that participate in GI Bill® Education Benefit programs. Therefore, SAA performance goals are based on the Federal government calendar year (October 1 through September 30).

Overall, SAA met established federal goals for Fiscal Year 2019 (Federal Fiscal Year). The annual contract between FDVA and VA was renewed for Fiscal Year 2020. FDVA officials are extremely pleased with the outcome, especially knowing that VA did not offer the Fiscal Year 2020 SAA contract to the state of California.

The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 (Forever GI Bill®) ushered in 34 changes which impacted VA Education Benefits. Due to the inability to integrate with VA computer systems, VA has been unable to implement one of the most significant changes. The monthly housing allowance payment to U.S. Code Title 38 Chapter 33 beneficiaries based on the location of the campus where the individual takes the majority of

classes. Using a revised strategy, VA tasked the SAAs to perform approval actions of Branch and Extension campuses, rather than creating a zip code determiner. The SAA submitted approximately 600 additional campus approvals to VA this quarter. VA's new "Go-Live date" for compliance with the requirement of Section 107 of the Colmery Veterans Education Act 2017 is December 1, 2019.

The Veterans Benefits and Transition Act of 2018 also greatly impacted SAA performance this quarter. One of the components of the law, which created U.S. Code Title 38 § 3679(e) prevents all schools from assessing financial or access penalties to Chapter 31 (Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program) and Chapter 33 (Post 9/11 Veterans Benefits) beneficiaries for up to 90 days, while the institution awaits payment from VA. All Florida schools had to demonstrate to the SAA, their adopted compliance with this new law by August 1, 2019.

Fiscal Year 2019-2020			
Event	First Quarter	YTD FY 2019-20	First Quarter FY 2018-19
SAA Programs Approved	4,550	4,550	5,920
Other Approval	1,727	1,727	676
Compliance Visits	20	20	24
Inspection Visits	10	10	18
Outreach Activities ⁽¹⁾	149	149	257
Liaison Activities ⁽²⁾	192	192	240
Technical Assistance ⁽³⁾	1,358	1,358	1,041

(1) Outreach Activities are any activity designed to inform or encourage those with entitlement to use it. SAA contact with non-approved schools and training facilities, inviting them to apply for approval to participate in GI Bill® programs, also are considered outreach.

(2) 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.

(3) Technical assistance is any interaction designed to assist an individual or a facility with any aspect of the approval function.

iii) Division of State Veterans' Homes:

Delayed onset Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has typically been observed among the elderly, who may develop PTSD stemming the development of symptoms after exposure to single or multiple traumatic events. PTSD can characterize differently between persons. Some people may predominately notice they do not enjoy the things they used to, or feel dissatisfied or indifferent about their life. Others may experience behavioral symptoms and/or a fear-based re-experiencing of the traumatic event. More symptoms include experiencing negative thoughts, avoidance, or becoming unnecessarily reactive to stimuli.

Veterans at State Veterans' Homes, who experience symptoms of PTSD, can gain from music therapy as a treatment option to improve functioning and foster resilience. In addition, findings suggest that music therapy is effective in reducing depression symptoms and improving health-related quality of life. Music therapy has been employed as a therapeutic intervention to facilitate healing across a variety of clinical populations. Emotions are produced by music and can be used intentionally to help regulate the resident by planning with the resident/family to

have a list of songs that increases his or her mood. This can be used as a positive distraction technique during a crisis.

This music therapy is in addition to standard treatment to address symptoms for PTSD. For example, it will be used as a way to build rapport and allow the residents to express himself or herself nonverbally since some of our residents with PTSD have a difficult time talking about the trauma. Music can help prompt memories when a resident is unable to reprocess a memory due to not remembering it. It can also be used as a tool to ground the client because music can prompt feelings of calmness. Music gives our resident something to focus on in the here-and-now so the veteran can remember that he/she is in a safe place. The State Veterans' Homes using music therapy with residents to help them to express themselves and their emotions in words. Music in a group setting can reduce isolation and feelings of detachment, and increase pleasurable emotions.

Music therapy is a useful therapeutic tool to reduce symptoms and improve functioning among residents with trauma exposure and PTSD. In addition, music therapy may help foster resilience and engage individuals who struggle with stigma associated with seeking professional help.

State Veterans' Homes is working to provide MP3 players to all our resident veterans. The activity staff is assisting them to download books, music, old-time radio programs, and most importantly, providing carefully selected eight hours long sleep music to help fall asleep to our veteran residents, who are suffering from PTSD.

State Veterans' Nursing Homes continue to be the long-term leaders in providing the most extraordinary programs that produce the highest quality of health care for our Florida veterans.

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

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

- i. FDVA New "Veterans Therapeutic K-9 Services" contract (for FY 2020), with K-9's for Warriors, Inc., executed on 7/30/2019. Total contract amount \$500,000.
- ii. FDVA New "Veterans Housing and Reintegration Services" contract (for FY 2020), with Five S.T.A.R. Veterans Center, Inc., executed on 8/1/2019. Total contract amount \$250,000.
- iii. FDVA New "Veterans Legal Services Hotline" contract (for FY 2020), with Bay Area Legal Services, Inc., executed on 8/21/2019. Total contract amount \$500,000.
- iv. FDVA New "Veterans Integrated Healthcare Resources" contract (for FY 2020), with Trilogy, Inc., executed on 9/13/2019. Total contract amount \$335,000.
- v. FDVA "Pharmacy Services" contract Amendment No. 4 (annual renewal), with USDVA/VISN 8 (five Homes), executed on 8/28/2019. Annual contract amount \$3,000,000.
- vi. FDVA "Pharmacy Services" contract Amendment No. 3 (annual renewal), with USDVA/VISN-16 (one Home), executed on 9/13/2019. Annual contract amount \$600,000.
- vii. FDVA "Veterans Therapeutic K-9 Services" contract (for FY 2019), with K-9's for Warriors, Inc., closed out on 7/12/2019. Total contract amount \$250,000.
- viii. FDVA "Veterans Housing and Reintegration Services" contract (for FY 2019), with Five S.T.A.R. Veterans Center, Inc., closed out on 7/24/2019. Total contract amount \$150,000.
- ix. Alexander "Sandy" Nininger SVNH "Generator Fuel Hook Up" single source intended purchase notice issued 7/31/2019. Vendor responses due by and received on 8/9/2019. Single source intended decision/award notice issued 8/12/2019 (no responses or protests). Contract execution, with Pantropic Power, Inc. pending environmental review as of 9/30/2019. Total project budget/contract amount \$121,750.

- x. Baldomero Lopez SVNH “Power System Automation” solicitation (Invitation to Bid - ITB) under development as of 9/30/2019. Total project budget/contract amount \$140,000.
- xi. Douglas T. Jacobson SVNH “Dining Room/Lanai Remodel” contract Amendment No. 1 (additional services and extension), with Design Build Remodel, Inc., executed on 9/24/2019. Total contract amount \$325,099.
- xii. Lake Baldwin CLC “Remodel/Retrofit” DMS contract Amendment No. 1 (Phase 2), with OHL Arellano, executed and received 9/16/2019. Total project budget amount \$8,677,000 (65% federally funded; 35% state funded).

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

- i. None

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

- i. None.

d) Lawsuits/Claims in Litigation or Settled this Quarter (F.A.C. 55-1.003(3)(k) and (3) (l))

- i. **1 - General Liability Claims:** (0 new this Quarter), 0 won, 0 settled, 0 lost, 1 pending.
- ii. **4 - Employment Liability Claims:** (4 new this Quarter) 4 won, 0 settled, 0 lost, 4 pending.
- iii. **1 - Other Liability Claims:** (1- new this Q) 1 won, 0 settled, 0 lost, 1 pending.

e) Contracts and agreements required to carry out programs approved by the Legislature or Governor and Cabinet (F.A.C. 55-1.003(3)(e))

- i. Bay Area Legal Services Florida Veterans Helpline
- ii. Five S.T.A.R Veterans Center, Inc.
- iii. K 9’s for Warriors - Training Service Dogs
- iv. Trilogy Integrated Resources - Network of Care for Veterans and Military Service Members.
- v. Alternative Treatment for veterans - University of South Florida (U.S.F.).

f) Professional Services (F.A.C. 55-1.003(3)(k))

- i. None

g) Notifications to State Attorneys, Sheriffs or other Law Enforcement (F.A.C. 55-1.003(3)(m))

- i. None.

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

- i. **Non-Cash Donations Received by State Veterans’ Homes**

Fiscal Year 2019-2020				
First Quarter				
Facility	Item	Quantity	Value	Total
	No Donations this Quarter			
Robert H. Jenkins State Veterans’ Domiciliary, Lake City				\$ 0
	No Donations this Quarter			
Emory L. Bennett State Veterans’ Nursing Home, Daytona Beach				\$ 0
	Walker (new)	1	\$50	
	Furniture (used twin beds)	1	\$100	

	Recliner	1	\$25	
	Exercise Bike - Schwinn	1	\$75	
	Transport Chair	1	\$25	
Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home, Land O' Lakes				\$275
	No Donations this Quarter			
Alexander "Sandy" Nininger State Veterans' Nursing Home, Pembroke Pines				\$ 0
	32" Sanyo TV	4	\$132	\$528
Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home, Panama City				\$528
	Lightweight Transport Chair	1	\$25	
	Electric Wheelchair	1	\$10	
	Electric Wheelchair	1	\$10	
	TV 32" Flat Screen LCD Model 2010	1	\$75	
Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home, Port Charlotte				\$120
	No Donations this Quarter			
Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home , St. Augustine				\$ 0
Total Non-Cash Donations				\$923

ii. Cash Donations Received by State Veterans' Homes

Fiscal Year 2019-2020		
Facilities	First Quarter	YTD FY 2019-20
Robert H. Jenkins SVDH, Lake City	\$10,050	\$10,050
Emory L. Bennett SVNH, Daytona Beach	\$0	\$0
Baldomero Lopez SVNH, Land O' Lakes	\$160	\$160
Alexander "Sandy" Nininger SVNH, Pembroke Pines	\$0	\$0
Clifford C. Sims SVNH, Panama City	\$0	\$0
Douglas T. Jacobson SVNH, Port Charlotte	\$1,365	\$1,365
Clyde E. Lassen SVNH, St. Augustine	\$155	\$155
Total Cash Donations	\$11,730	\$11,730
(1) State Veterans' Nursing Home (SVNH)		
(2) State Veterans' Domiciliary Home (SVDH)		

i) Memberships in Professional Organizations Paid (F.A.C. 55-1.003(p))

Fiscal Year 2019-2020			
First Quarter			
Facilities	FHCA	NASVH	Total

			FY 2019-2020
Robert H. Jenkins SVDH, Lake City	\$1,652	\$900	\$2,552
Emory L. Bennett SVNH, Daytona Beach	\$4,316	\$900	\$5,216
Baldomero Lopez SVNH, Land O' Lakes	\$4,329	\$900	\$5,229
Alexander "Sandy" Nininger SVNH, Pembroke Pines	\$4,354	\$900	\$5,254
Clifford C. Sims SVNH, Panama City	\$4,316	\$900	\$5,216
Douglas T. Jacobson SVNH, Port Charlotte	\$4,341	\$900	\$5,241
Clyde E. Lassen SVNH, St. Augustine	\$4,341	\$900	\$5,241
All State Veterans' Homes	\$27,649	\$6,300	\$33,949
The National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs, Inc.			\$475
Institute of Internal Auditors-Tallahassee			\$165
Total Paid			\$34,589
(1) State Veterans' Nursing Home (SVNH) (2) State Veterans' Domiciliary Home (SVDH) (3) Florida Health Care Association (FHCA) (4) National Association of State Veterans Homes (NASVH)			



3) Veterans Florida (VF)

During the First Quarter of Fiscal Year 2019-2020, the Veterans Florida leadership attended all of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs *Forward March* events and submitted Legislative Budget Requests.

Marketing

The marketing department presented the new Veterans Florida brand and Salesforce-integrated website to the Board of Directors on September 10, and subsequently launched and promoted via email and social media marketing. The new messaging and website experience have generated strong results. We are producing updated print materials that incorporate the new brand.

September 2019 campaign statistics:

- 4,280 unique website visitors
- 9,683 post reach on Facebook
- 44,009 newsletter subscribers
- 5,088 post reach LinkedIn followers
- 4,854 post reach on Twitter

Career Services Program

Career Services activity metrics continue to be refined as we learn Salesforce reporting functions. Grant reimbursement payments are below:

Job fairs attended this fiscal year:

Fiscal Year 2019-2020	
First Quarter	Grant Reimbursement
July	\$43,248
August	\$100,265
September	\$79,251
YTD Total	\$222,764

Fiscal Year 2019-2020		
First Quarter	Event Location	Team Members
July	Amalie Arena, Tampa, FL	Justin, Kolby
August	Fort Stewart, Hinesville, GA	Justin, Kolby
September	Fort Jackson, Columbia, SC	Andrea, Kolby

Entrepreneurship Program

The approved Network Partners are starting their various cohorts. Network partners have been holding various workshops and networking events to address specific challenges, and to create a pipeline of participants for the fall and spring cohorts. The Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) period remains open, the team is answering questions, publishing answers of received questions on our website and preparing incoming bids for scoring. Negotiations have been ongoing to award contracts to several additional network partners in early October.

Fiscal Year 2019-2020				
Network Partner	Cohort	Applications	Selected	Start Date
Action Zone, Inc.	Business Modeling 1	18		October 5
Action Zone, Inc.	Provisional Board	8	6	September 17
Florida Gulf Coast University	Facilitated Startup	19	15	September 25

Fiscal Year 2019-2020		
Network Partner	Total Contracted Amount	YTD Payments
Action Zone, Inc.	\$81,773	\$8,190
Florida Gulf Coast University	\$76,500	\$0
JULO Strategy LLC.	\$60,000	\$0
YTD Total	\$218,273	\$8,190

Veteran Agriculture Selection Program (VASP)

In September, we started a final round of veterans starting internships at the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Research and Education Centers. As many of the current internships wrap up, we continue to place veterans in private internships at farms and ranches as well as aggressively pursue post-internship employment opportunities that align with the veteran's interests and skills. To date, all the veterans who have completed the internship have been placed into agriculture-related positions.

Development

Boeing granted us \$55,000 for career services support initiatives to veterans. This is an increase of \$5,000 over the previous year's amount. We are pursuing a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant, known as a 2501 grant for outreach to veteran farmers and ranchers in order for them to gain better access to USDA programs and available funds. USDA was supposed to notify us in September; however, there are no status updates from USDA on our application.

Board of Directors Meeting

State Representative Mel Ponder, Northwest Florida State College President Dr. Devin Stevenson, and CareerSource Okaloosa Veteran Employment Specialist Neely Jo Harrington joined the Board of Directors meeting at the Northwest Florida State College in Niceville on September 10. The next scheduled Board of Directors teleconference is on October 4, 2019. The meeting will be focused on Entrepreneurship Network partners to consider additional contracts from prospective partners.



FLORIDA VETERANS

— F O U N D A T I O N —

4) Florida Veterans Foundation (FVF)

In 2008, the Florida Legislature established the Florida Veterans Foundation (FVF) as a Direct Support Organization of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. The Foundation operates for the direct and indirect benefit of the veterans of Florida, the FDVA and state veteran service organizations (VSO). FVF is also a nonprofit organization operating for charitable and educational purposes under Section 501(c) (3).

FVF seeks out the greatest unmet needs of Florida veterans and works proactively and collaboratively with state veteran service organizations to solve issues that impede their progress, such as employment, housing, transportation and benefits assistance.

We welcome the inspirational leadership of Chairman Bob Asztalos, who was appointed to his position this summer. He is very optimistic about the future through his creative ideas on securing recurring funding. The following initiatives will affect veterans in a positive productive manner.

❖ **Fundraising**

Through the creativity of current leadership, there is an excitement of raising money to support veterans emergency relief, transportation and collaboration with life-saving programs relating to Crisis Center partnerships and support of USF Alternative Treatment for Veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Opioid addiction.

❖ **Trilogy Partnership**

FVF is contracting with Trilogy Integrated Resources, Network of Care for veterans and military service members.

❖ **Forward March**

The Florida Veterans Foundation led the way through district networking to support FDVA with the Governor announced initiative *Forward March*. To date, the FVF has been in lock step with FDVA in making this program viable. FVF continues to stand ready to assist FDVA in execution of taking "ideas to action!"

❖ **Kenan Family Trust Grant**

The grant provide support to veterans' outreach and education program. The program makes it possible for veterans to remain for longer periods of time in their own homes for their health and welfare. The grant was awarded for \$300,000 in partnership with the National Association of Veterans and Families (NAVF).

❖ **Attorney General Veterans Literacy Grant**

FVF has completed the Attorney General's Veterans Literacy Grant in the amount of \$250,000. The benefit of Aid and Attendance, Pension and Disability claims helps connect veterans with Federal VA funding, thereby freeing up State Medicaid money. Another bi-product is of this outreach that for every 800 veterans registered with the VA, the state earns an additional of five federally funded medical professionals.

❖ **Suicide Prevention, Opioid, Mental Health Services**

FVF collaborated with the Tampa Bay area's 2-1-1 Crisis Center to provide support for a targeted statewide campaign that will connect the veteran population to service providers at all levels regarding issues such as Suicide Prevention, Opioid Abuse, PTSD, and Mental Health Treatment.

❖ **Veteran Treatment Court**

The Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) statewide committee, Rehabilitation vs. Incarceration supports the veterans suffering from PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) from roadside bombs and suicide bombers Improvised Explosive Devices. The FVF has been connecting VTC's throughout the state to one common thread for effective, shared best practices.

❖ **Homeless Veterans Stand Down**

FVF is currently in development of best practices of Homeless and At-Risk Veteran Stand Downs through the *Forward March* Initiative. FVF is working to build county models to serve homeless and at-risk veterans to develop a program of a day of service for effective, meaningful support, which will allow greater resources for year-round service.

❖ **Chartered Functions and Success**

FVF's direct support of FDVA is "proactive" to ensure success of military personnel prior to discharge. We are producing needs assessments to create roadmaps for new veterans to educate them on their journey from cradle to grave. FVF is becoming the "Systems Management" of the statewide processes to support the Florida veterans.

- During the First Quarter, FVF provided financial support to 124 veterans through the American Legion's project *Vet Relief*.
- Supported Disabled American Veterans (DAV) to arrange transport for veterans to medical appointments. This quarter FVF served 4,713 veterans to medical and other appointments.
- FVF and District Directors connected 286,713 veterans and families through personal contact and media.
- FVF collaborated with American Patriot Service Corp (APSC) and National Association of Veterans & Families (NAVF) to conduct 43 Aging Veterans Presentations.
- FVF served 12,342 veterans through Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) for education and benefits.
- FVF provided support to over 3,000 veterans through Bay County Veterans Council for the education of benefits and services in Hurricane-affected area.
- Supported the publication of the Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide.
- Provided financial and administrative support to the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council and Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame.

"Transition for Success"