



James S. "Hammer" Hartsell
Executive Director

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

DATE: September 24, 2021

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

FROM: James S. "Hammer" Hartsell
Executive Director

SUBJECT: Quarterly Report – Fourth Quarter, Fiscal Year 2020 - 2021

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs submits the Quarterly Report for the Fourth Quarter of the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year, covering the period April 1 - June 30, 2021.

The Quarterly Report is submitted pursuant to the procedures authorized by Rule 55-1.003 Florida Administrative Code (06/10/2008).

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

CC:

Chris Sprows, Speaker of the House, Florida House of Representatives
Wilton Simpson, President, Florida Senate

Chris Spencer, Policy Director, Governor's Office of Policy and Budget
Eric Miller, Policy Chief, Local Administration and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee
Diana Caldwell, Staff Director, Military and Veterans Affairs and Space

Attachment 1: FDVA Quarterly Report

ATTACHMENT 1
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
FOURTH QUARTER REPORT
April 1 – June 30, 2021

This report covers the activities of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) for the Fourth Quarter of the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year.

1) Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs Administrative Highlights

a) Current Issues/Concerns

i) Executive Direction:



Retired Marine Corps Major General James S. "Hammer" Hartsell was appointed Executive Director of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs by Gov. Ron DeSantis during the May 4, 2021 Cabinet Meeting. Florida's three Cabinet Officers unanimously approved the appointment. General Hartsell served in the United States Marine Corps with honor for 37 years of active and reserve duty, beginning as an enlisted Marine in 1981 and completing a distinguished and highly decorated military career as a Major General.

A native of Florida, his 22-year civilian career in the Healthcare Industry included serving in Marketing, Product Management, U.S. and Global Business Development, Hospital Administration and Healthcare Leadership. Upon retirement from the Marine Corps, he moved back to his home state of Florida and joined the Pasco Sheriff's Office, where he launched the Future Operations Division.

Executive Director Hartsell briefed senior leadership on the Department's COVID-19 protocol and vaccine distributions, agency budget, legislative updates, and operational challenges at weekly Board of Directors meetings.

On April 22, Florida Secretary of State Laurel M. Lee and Executive Director Hartsell honored the Consul General of the Republic of Korea Young-jun Kim with a Florida Flag for his generous

donation of 10,000 KF94 facial masks to the FDVA State Veterans' Homes during a televised ceremony at the Capitol. Communications and External Affairs Director Steve Murray served as a Master of Ceremony. The masks are designed to prevent the spread of airborne viruses like COVID-19.

As of June 2021, FDVA received notification of \$5.8 million in the Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The grant funds were authorized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to assist with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. FDVA has designated the funds to offset incurred revenue losses, address staffing shortfalls, purchase personal protective equipment (PPE) and supplies, and other COVID-19 related matters.

FDVA ultraviolet light sanitization airborne pathogen systems at all nine State Veterans' Homes. State Veterans' Homes residents and staff members were provided opportunities to receive COVID-19 vaccinations. Division of State Veterans' Homes Director Connie Tolley and State Veterans' Homes Administrators continued to promote the safety and welfare of residents and staff. Admissions are slowly returning to all State Veterans' Homes.

Communications and External Affairs Director and Emergency Coordinating Officer Murray provided continuous updates to the agency regarding the Governor's mitigation and remediation efforts on COVID-19. Director Murray, in his role as FDVA Emergency Coordinating Officer led a multi-day internal Hurricane Response Exercise for the agency's seven operational State Veterans' Homes. As a part of the exercise, each Veterans' Home ran their respective generators for four consecutive hours to test emergency preparedness.

FDVA Executive Director Hartsell, Legislative and Cabinet Affairs Director Roy Clark, General Counsel Chuck Faircloth and Communications and External Affairs Director Murray participated in the June 21 State Agency Department Head Hurricane Season meeting at the State Emergency Operations Center.

❖ **Veterans Education and Awareness**

FDVA Office of Communications produced the *Forward March* Veterans' Newsletter for April, May and June. The newsletter has 30,000 subscribers.

The Governor's Challenge website (www.SaveFLVets.org) and Facebook page (@SaveFLVets) were launched on June 30. From Florida's 21 military bases to our 1.5 million veterans, the *Governor's Challenge* supports efforts to use evidence-based practices to prevent and reduce the suicide of our service members, veterans, and their families. Executive Director Hartsell and FDVA leadership participated in monthly virtual sessions with the *Governor's Challenge* Workgroups. FDVA encouraged all interested stakeholders to increase their statewide suicide prevention efforts to reduce veteran suicide rates in the community.

Executive Director Hartsell and FDVA Leadership represented FDVA at the following education and awareness events.

- Executive Director Hartsell and Chief of Staff Al Carter participated in teleconferences with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the HHS on April 7 and June 3.
- Executive Director Hartsell participated with the Veterans Benefits Administration (VA Benefits) in a VA Senior Leadership teleconference on April 8.
- Chief of Staff Carter participated in the Florida Suicide Prevention Interagency Action Committee (SPIAC) meetings on April 8 and April 23.

- Executive Director Hartsell and Communications and External Affairs Director Murray provided legislative updates to the delegates of the annual Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) in Sarasota, May 14-15.
- Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance Director Don Stout served as a guest speaker in the virtual Veteran's Benefits Summit on May 25. The joint venture was organized by Blue Star Families, Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Centerstone and Building Healthy Military Communities.
- FDVA was a co-sponsor of the Public Broadcasting Services (PBS) National Concert on the Mall, which aired live on all nine Florida PBS television stations on May 30, as part of Florida's observance of Memorial Day.
- Chief of Staff Carter attended the 24th Annual Memorial Day Weekend Remembrance in Tampa on May 30.
- Executive Director Hartsell attended the Marine Corps League Detachment 708 Flag Lowering Ceremony in Brooksville on May 31. That day, he also attended the Gold Star Families Monument Memorial Day ceremony in Tampa.
- Executive Director Hartsell participated with the Gold Star Family Monument Committee in a virtual meeting on June 1.
- Communications and External Affairs Director Murray provided a legislative update to the Veterans Florida Board of Directors meeting in Tallahassee on June 14.

❖ **Community Outreach**

Executive Director Hartsell and FDVA Leadership represented FDVA at the following Community Outreach activities.

- Executive Director Hartsell attended a virtual meeting with Cybrix Group President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Tim Jones on April 7.
- Executive Director Hartsell attended a virtual meeting with Cohen Veterans Network President and CEO Anthony M. Hassan on April 12. That day, he also attended a virtual meeting with Hernando County Commissioner Jeff Holcomb.
- Executive Director Hartsell and Chief of Staff Carter participated in a workshop with the Florida Virtual Implementation Academy, April 13-15.
- Chief of Staff Carter met with the Florida Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services Nicole "Nikki" Fried at the Florida State Fairgrounds Flip the Switch ceremony in Tampa on April 22.
- Executive Director Hartsell attended a virtual meeting with Florida State University Admissions Director Hege Ferguson on June 2.
- Executive Director Hartsell participated in a teleconference with the Pasco County Division of Veterans Services on June 3. On that day, he also met former President of Saint Leo University Dr. William J. Lennox Jr. and Florida Veterans Foundation Chairman Bob Asztalos in St. Leo.

❖ **Legislative Activities**

Executive Director Hartsell met with the Governor's Staff and Governor's Office of Policy and Budget (OPB) regarding the Department's proposed budget and veteran-related bills at the 2021 Legislative Session. During the meetings, he proposed best practices for veterans' initiatives to improve benefit access for Florida's 1.5 million veterans and their family members.

During the 2021 Session, Executive Director Hartsell and FDVA Senior Management met with legislators and/or represented FDVA at the following committee meetings to support veteran-related legislative bills in Tallahassee.

- Executive Director Hartsell met with the Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff Beau Beaubien in Tallahassee on April 6.
- Executive Director Hartsell attended the Senate Committee on Appropriations meetings on April 19 and April 21.
- Executive Director Hartsell attended a virtual meeting with the Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff Courtney Coppola on May 27.

Following the 2021 Florida Legislative Session, Governor DeSantis approved the FDVA requested base budget and provided about \$20 million of additional funds to support veterans' initiatives, programs and tools to enhance service and outreach activities in the State. The Governor also provided additional funding of \$2 million for the final construction costs of the Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port St. Lucie.

To Strengthen Commitment to Supporting Florida veterans, service members and their families, Governor DeSantis signed the following veteran-related bills from the 2021 Legislative Session.

- **HB 231 - Services for Veterans and Their Families.**
As part of the state's focus on mental health care and veteran suicide prevention with the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay and others, the legislation requires the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs to establish the Florida Veterans' Care Coordination Program to provide and expand behavioral health care referral and care coordination services for veterans and their families and to partner with Florida 2-1-1 Network participants to provide such services.
- **HB 416 - POW-MIA Vietnam Veterans Bracelet Memorial.**
The bill establishes a POW-MIA Vietnam Veterans Bracelet Memorial across the street from the Old Capitol in Tallahassee, which will be installed next to Florida's Vietnam War Memorial. The Vietnam Veterans of Big Bend Chapter 96 paid for the seven-foot high bracelet memorial.
- **House Bill (HB) 429 - Purple Star Campuses.**
The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) will establish a "Purple Star Campus Program" to identify schools that support military-connected children and demonstrate a commitment to provide critical transition support to military families.
- **HB 435 - Veterans Employment and Training.**
The bill authorized Veterans Florida (Florida Is For Veterans, Inc.) to direct the Veterans Employment and Training Program. The FIFV serves as the state's principal assistance organization under the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) SkillBridge program; prescribes duties of a corporation to facilitate administration of the SkillBridge program.
- **Senate Bill (SB) 922 - Veterans' Preference in Employment.**
The bill authorizes state and political subdivisions to waive certain postsecondary educational requirements for employment for eligible service members and veterans. It also enhances point preferences for veterans and their family members when a numerically based selection process is used for hiring.
- **HB 7023 - Veterans Treatment Courts.**

The legislation creates uniform standards and procedures for Florida's current and future Veterans Treatment Courts (VTC). It allows a court with criminal jurisdiction to create and administer a VTC, which may adjudicate felonies and misdemeanors, except for the pretrial intervention of misdemeanor criminal traffic offenses.



Governor DeSantis signed some of those veteran-related bills into law at a news conference in Ponte Vedra Beach on June 4. The Governor addressed the conference about his commitment to our nation's heroes. He honored them by making investments in military bases, schools around those bases, and programs that serve veterans and their families.

First Lady Casey DeSantis also addressed the conference with her experience as a veteran family member and the unique challenges that come to a military service family.

Senator Tom A. Wright, Senator Danny Burgess, Representative Tyler Sirois, Representative Nick DiCeglie and Representative James Buchanan made remarks at the conference in honor of the veterans and their families. Executive Director Hartsell and Veterans Florida Executive Director Joe Marino expressed their gratitude to Governor DeSantis and Legislators for their support and commitment to Florida's heroes. At the conference, Executive Director Hartsell made remarks; *Working together to ensure a positive future for Florida veterans and their families, we'll ensure Florida continues to be the most sought-after state by veterans in the nation.*

❖ Proclamation

Governor DeSantis signed proclamations in Florida to commemorate veterans for their selfless dedication to the nation. FDVA Office of Communications drafted the following proclamations for the Governor.

- On May 12, Governor released the annual Armed Forces Day in Florida Proclamation.
- On June 12, Governor released the Women Veterans Day in Florida Proclamation.

ii) Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance:

❖ Bureau of Veterans' Claims Services

The Bureau of Veterans' Claims Service's fourth quarter production review of rating decisions continued from the previous quarter. The Bureau continues to have an increase of virtual hearings for the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA). The Bureau of Claims Services processed 12,801 rating decision reviews of disability benefits claims through the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS). As of June 1, Claims Services reopened for walk-in services, while the St. Petersburg Regional Office prefers in-person visits by appointment only. The Board of Veterans Appeals partially opened for hearings but not for our local operations other than virtual hearings with its Washington, D.C. facility. Claims Services further anticipates BVA video hearings will resume in August. Local in-person personal hearings continued at a steady pace. The Veterans' Benefits and Assistance statewide phone and email box received 9,031 inquires throughout this period. The Bureau anticipates an increase in the future for in-person meetings as COVID-19 restrictions are reduced for Federal facilities. Accordingly, the Bureau has expanded the virtual hearings with the VA and has conducted 422 hearings. As always, we continue to stand ready to meet the increasing demands of veterans' appeals requirements.

Event	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	Annual FY 2020-21	Annual FY 2019-20
Retroactive Compensation	\$41,616,436	\$47,772,997	\$49,576,183	\$55,702,757	\$194,668,373	\$156,994,948
Largest Single Retro. Benefit (1)	\$496,582	\$705,032	\$598,400	\$424,831	\$705,032	\$566,392
Debt Waiver Resolutions	\$12,107	\$0	\$176,262	\$81,833	\$270,202	\$913,639
Notices of Disagreement	2,304	2,403	2,684	3,004	10,395	14,855
Statements of Argument in Appeals Cases (2)	232	136	101	85	554	176
Act as Representative at Hearings*	97	64	208	219	588	1,620
Veterans' Appeals Hearings*	96	153	147	203	599	1,937
Number of Ratings Reviewed	10,256	10,055	10,977	12,801	44,089	55,429

(1) The "Largest Single Retro. Benefits" Year to Date for FY 2019-20 and the Actual for FY 2020-21 reflects only the largest benefit amount that was received for the quarter.

(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.

❖ Bureau of Veterans' Field Services

The Bureau of Veterans' Field Services continues to provide in-person and virtual services to veterans and their families during the fourth quarter. Field Services advocated for 36,488 veterans and their families while conducting 69 outreach events, providing earned benefit information to 1,971 veterans and their families. Field Services also completed 8,182 new disability claims. In addition, Field Services attended a Homeless Stand Down event, and 26 Transition Assistance Briefings. Field Services' supervisors assisted the Bureau of Veterans' Claims by processing and reviewing 569 rating decisions. Field Services also assisted more than 779 veterans to voter registration.

Event	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	Annual FY 2020-21	Annual FY 2019-20
Number of Issue Resolutions	4,227	3,288	4,114	6,058	17,687	20,877
Total Amount of Issues Resolution	\$14,532,515	\$11,262,693	\$14,727,585	\$21,409,827	\$61,932,620	\$69,163,531
Outreach Visits	42	47	55	69	213	861
Veterans Served at Outreach	647	1,132	937	1,971	4,687	28,593
Bedside Interviews	8	17	23	15	63	722
Walk-ins / Counseling	3,853	7,860	10,818	13,231	35,762	105,099
Disability Claims	4,546	5,486	7,142	8,182	25,356	37,250
Voter Registration	824	720	826	779	3,149	5,214
Homeless Walk In	39	43	62	88	232	232
Ratings Reviewed	934	880	927	569	3,310	2,681

Event	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	Annual FY 2020-21	Annual FY 2019-20
Reintegration and Pre-Deployment Events for Guard and Reserve Units	0	2	0	0	2	5
Homeless Veteran Stand Down Events	0	2	0	1	3	15
Medical Center Welcome Home Events	0	0	0	0	0	3
Congressional Open House Events	0	0	0	0	0	6
National Conferences	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Patient Orientation	6	6	2	10	24	157
Transition Assistance Briefings	5	9	16	132	162	73

Other Events	31	28	37	614	710	592
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.						

❖ **The Bureau of State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans' Education and Training**

The SAA's primary duties are fulfilling the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) contract requirements for monitoring the quality and integrity of veteran education programs and the oversight and enforcement of approval-related laws in Title 38, pertaining to veteran education benefits. SAA consistently maintained compliance with GI Bill® education programs and benefits-related change mandated by Federal Government and Congress on U.S. Law No: 116-128, 116-140 and 116-315 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Per U.S. Code Title 38 § 3673, upon approval from VA, the SAA performed compliance survey and risk based survey (RBS) audits of facilities remotely and determined the cause of the change in the risk factor. During the fourth quarter, the SAA performed compliance surveys in both in-person and remote visits to the facilities while waiting on the VA permit for the SAA to performed RBS audits in-person. To date, the SAA completed 123 remote compliance surveys and about 70 percent of RBS virtual visits. Overall, SAA met the established federal mandate for FY 2021 (Federal Fiscal Year October 1 through September 30). SAA is setting a goal to renew the annual contract with VA for FY 2022 (Federal Fiscal Year).

The SAA team participated in a joint venture of the Florida Association of Veterans Education Specialists (FAVES) annual teleconference and Florida Veterans School Certifying Officials (SCO) virtual training during June 7-9. SAA Bureau Chief Betsy Wickham, FAVES President Sandra Torres Pintos, Veterans Readiness and Employment program team members Chuck Peterman and Rick Robertson presented at the tele conference to over 300 Florida certifying officials.

Event	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	Annual FY 2020-21	Annual FY 2019-20
SAA Programs Approved	4,682	3,662	2,446	2,916	13,706	14,988
Other Approval	894	724	755	587	2,960	3,835
Compliance Visits	38	21	30	34	123	73
Inspection Visits	2	8	5	5	20	38
Outreach Activities (1)	190	73	144	136	543	701
Liaison Activities (2)	246	150	116	178	690	702
Technical Assistance (3)	1,022	814	767	844	3,447	3,565

- (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:

The Division of State Veterans' Homes administration is diligently working on construction projects for two new State Veterans' Nursing Homes.

- **Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port St. Lucie:**

The Home's open house is scheduled for August 27, 2021. The home's construction is completed and is undergoing various validation activities; medical equipment installation, furniture installation and IT system migration. Staff recruitment/hiring is in progress with the core staff hired. The City of Port St. Lucie also issued a certificate of occupancy for the

facility. The VA per diem certification application was completed and directive staff assisting VA with follow-up questions.

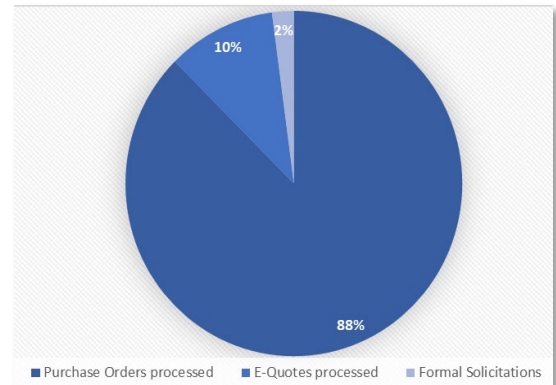
- **Lake Baldwin State Veterans' Nursing Home in Orlando:**

The home is scheduled to open for resident admissions by end of 2021. Indoor construction projects continue, which include HVAC certifications, plumbing rerouting, etc. The furniture installation and IT system migration at the facility are in progress. We continue to work toward a certificate of occupancy from AHCA.

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

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

- Purchase Orders processed: 588 for the total of \$3,353,960.
- E-Quotes processed: 70.
- Formal Solicitations: 14.
- FDVA "VISN-16 Pharmacy Services" contract Amendment No. 5 (staffing requirement change), with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA), executed 4/27/2021. Total contract amount \$600,000.
- FDVA "Veterans Benefits Information System" contract Amendment No. 6 (Tyler Technologies acquisition), with DataSpec, Inc., executed 4/2/2021. Total contract amount \$269,750.
- NEW - FDVA "Veterans Benefits Information System" solicitation (Sole-Source) PUR-7776 purchase Intent issued 4/29/2021, no protest by 5/10/2021. PUR-7778 Decision Intent issued 5/11/2021, no protest received by 5/14/2021. Contract awarded to Tyler Technologies, Inc. (formerly DataSpec, Inc.) 5/14/2021. Contract executed 5/17/2021. Total contract amount \$137,688.
- NEW - FDVA "Time Clock/Payroll Based Journal System" solicitation (Sole-Source) PUR-7776 purchase Intent issued 5/12/2021, no protest received by 5/21/2021. PUR-7778 Decision Intent issued 5/24/2021, no protest received by 5/27/2021. Contract awarded to IT Computing Services, Inc. 5/27/2021. Contract executed 6/1/2021. Total contract amount \$346,203.
- NEW - FDVA "CMS Medicare/Medicaid Cost Reporting" solicitation Request for Proposal (RFP) issued 3/31/2021. Proposal opening held 4/28/2021. Proposal evaluation meeting held 5/18/2021. Contract awarded to Moore Stephens Lovelace (MSL), PA on 5/18/2021. Contract executed 6/14/2021. Total contract amount \$262,182.
- Alexander "Sandy" Nininger SVNH "Automatic Transfer Switch" contract Amendment No.1 (extension), with Santa Fe Professional Services, Inc., executed 6/1/2021. Total contract amount \$181,000.
- Ardie R. Copas SVNH "Landscaping" solicitation Invitation to Bid (ITB) issued 5/19/2021. Pre-bid meeting 6/2/2021. Bid opening 6/17/2021. Contract awarded to Juniper Landscaping of Florida, LLC 6/22/2021. Contract executed 6/28/2021. Total contract amount \$287,368.
- Clifford C. Sims SVNH "Automatic Transfer Switch" contract Amendment No. 1 (extension), with Zabatt Engine Services, Inc., executed 5/3/2021. Total contract amount \$162,000.
- Douglas T. Jacobson SVNH "Dining Room/Lanai Remodel" contract, with Design Build Remodel, Inc., closed out 4/30/2021. Total contract amount \$325,099.



- xiii. Douglas T. Jacobson SVNH “Automatic Transfer Switch” solicitation ITB issued 5/17/2021. Pre-bid meeting 6/3/2021. Bid opening 6/22/2021. Contract awarded to Santa Fe Professional Services, Inc., 6/25/2021. Contract execution pending 6/30/2021. Total contract amount \$201,250.
- xiv. Emory L. Bennett SVNH “Automatic Transfer Switch” solicitation ITB issued 2/26/2021. Pre-bid meeting 3/10/2021. Bid opening 3/26/2021. Contract awarded to Zabatt Engine Services, Inc. 3/31/2021. Contract executed 4/16/2021. Total contract amount \$173,857.
- xv. Emory L. Bennett SVNH “Automatic Transfer Switch” contract Amendment No. 1 (extension), with Zabatt Engine Services, Inc., executed 5/3/2021. Total contract amount \$173,857.
- xvi. Emory L. Bennett “Kitchen Tray Line Replacement” solicitation ITB issued 5/25/2021. Bid opening 6/11/2021. Contract awarded to Direct Supply, Inc. 6/14/2021. Contract executed 6/28/2021. Total contract amount \$79,596.
- xvii. Lake Baldwin CLC “Remodel/Retrofit” DMS Client Agency Agreement Amendment No. 3 (project funding) executed and received 4/1/2021. Total contract amount \$9,821,004 (65 percent Federal funded; 35 percent State funded).
- xviii. Lake Baldwin CLC “New Fencing” solicitation ITB issued 4/13/2021. Pre-bid meeting 4/26/2021. Bid opening 5/12/2021. Contract awarded to Pergola Roof Miami, LLC on 5/17/2021. Contract executed 6/1/2021. Total contract amount \$48,422.
- xix. Lake Baldwin CLC “CCTV Additions” sole-source contract awarded to Viking Security Systems, Inc. Executed on 4/28/2021. Total contract amount \$110,940.
- xx. Robert H. Jenkins SVDH “Replacement of Wall Rails and Guards” contract with Shine and Company, Inc., closed out 3/29/2021. Total contract amount \$229,000.

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

- i. None

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(3) (k) and (3) (l))

- i. **1 - General Liability Claims:** (0 new this Quarter), 0 won, 0 settled, 0 lost, 1 pending.
- ii. **1 - Employment Liability Claims:** (2 new this Quarter), 1 won, 0 settled, 0 lost, 1 pending.
- iii. **1 - Other Liability Claims:** (1 new this Quarter), 0 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. None

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

- i. Retainer Agreement with Office of Attorney General (OAG) for FY 2021-22 executed on May 26 by Executive Director James S. Hartsell.

g) Notifications to State Attorneys, Sheriffs or other Law Enforcement (F.A.C. 551.003(3) (m))

- i. None.

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

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

Fourth Quarter				
Facility	Item	Quantity	Value	Total
	No Donations this Quarter			
Robert H. Jenkins SVDH, Lake City				\$0
	No Donations this Quarter			
Ardie R. Copas SVNH, Port St. Lucie				\$0
	No Donations this Quarter			
Emory L. Bennett SVNH, Daytona Beach				\$0
	No Donations this Quarter			
Baldomero Lopez SVNH, Land O' Lakes				\$0
	No Donations this Quarter			
Alexander "Sandy" Nininger SVNH, Pembroke Pines				\$0
	No Donations this Quarter			
Clifford C. Sims SVNH, Panama City				\$0
	No Donations this Quarter			
Douglas T. Jacobson SVNH, Port Charlotte				\$0
	No Donations this Quarter			
Clyde E. Lassen SVNH, St. Augustine				\$0
Total Non-Cash Donations				\$0
(1) State Veterans' Nursing Home (SVNH)				
(2) State Veterans' Domiciliary Home (SVDH)				

ii. Cash Donations Received by State Veterans' Homes

Facilities	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	YTD FY 2020-21
Robert H. Jenkins SVDH, Lake City	\$120	\$850	\$850	\$1,000	\$2,820
Ardie R. Copas SVNH, Port St. Lucie	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$200	\$200
Emory L. Bennett SVNH, Daytona Beach	\$4	\$150	\$1,840	\$500	\$2,494
Baldomero Lopez SVNH, Land O' Lakes	\$5,630	\$1,848	\$265	\$5,040	\$12,783
Alexander "Sandy" Nininger SVNH, Pembroke Pines	\$13,378	\$0	\$1,626	\$609	\$15,613
Clifford C. Sims SVNH, Panama City	\$250	\$25	\$450	\$0	\$725
Douglas T. Jacobson SVNH, Port Charlotte	\$522	\$3,680	\$1,576	\$650	\$6,428
Clyde E. Lassen SVNH, St. Augustine	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Cash Donations	\$19,904	\$6,553	\$6,608	\$7,999	\$41,063

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

Fourth Quarter	
Florida Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators	\$30



3) Veterans Florida (VF)

During the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2020-21, the budget of approximately \$1.3 million was passed during the 2021 Florida legislative session and approved by the Governor Ron DeSantis.

The 2021 Legislative Session approved the proposed House Bill 435 for the Veterans Employment and Training program initiative. Veterans Florida (Florida Is For Veterans, Inc.) is designated as the State’s principal SkillBridge assistance organization. Veterans Florida promoted a statewide initiative, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) SkillBridge program, to increase awareness of the benefits to employers and transitioning service members who wish to remain or move to Florida.

Employer partners for SkillBridge are currently being re-signed for FY 2021-22. The Veterans Florida Virtual Expo meeting with a technology provider is rescheduled for July 29. VF participated in several outreach events in-person and virtual to continue spreading awareness of veteran services.

VF team collaborated with the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) for the triennial reviews. Staff is assisting the OPPAGA team in providing updates on the VETS Program.

❖ Marketing

The Veteran Florida Virtual Expo was presented by Bank of America on June 24. Following the Expo, about 50 businesses registered with the panels and over 500 registrations were received as of June 30.

Network Partner	Performance		
	April	May	June
Unique Website Visitors	3,679	7,911	33,832
Facebook Organic Post Reach	5,845	4,292	7,691
Newsletter Subscribers	33,319	33,322	34,430
LinkedIn Post Reach	5,960	7,849	5,693
Twitter Post Reach	7,831	3,920	6,498

❖ Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS)

VETS Director Jeremy Sinnemaki and the VETS team attended the Florida Chamber of Commerce Foundation Learners to Earners Summit in Orlando. Director Sinnemaki addressed the summit on the DoD SkillBridge program and veteran earned benefits.

The VETS team continues contacting and assisting veterans who are looking for employment and training services. VF continues to provide services to veterans and employers amidst COVID-19.

❖ Career Services Program

The Career Services team conducted employer training grant evaluations and preparation for contract renewals for FY 2021-22. The VETS team continued the work to expand both workforce grant employers and career matching opportunities to the benefit of our veterans. The VETS team participated in the Recruit Military Transitioning Army and Army Spouse virtual

summit on May 13. The VETS team also attended the Recruit Military Orlando Regional Career fair in Orlando on June 10.

Veteran Leads Metrics				
Month	Grant Reimbursement Amount	Job Fair	Website	Total
April	\$0	108	137	245
May	\$39,000	71	220	291
June	\$0	31	200	231
Total	\$39,000	210	557	767

❖ **Veteran Agriculture Program**

VF was awarded a federal three-year Enhancing Agricultural Opportunities for Military Veterans Program grant by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) to conduct the Veterans Florida Agriculture Program. The Veterans Florida Agriculture Program is an immersive, hands-on six-month paid fellowship, and selected veterans study at the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Research and Education Center.

During the fourth quarter, the VETS team attended a virtual meeting with the 2021 Veterans Florida Virtual Expo committee.

Research and Education Partnership Status				
Partners	Location	Pending	Active	Completed
Gulf Coast REC	Wimauma	1	3	0
Mid-Florida REC	Apopka	2	0	0
North Florida REC	Quincy	1	0	0
Tropical REC *New	Homestead	0	2	0
West Florida REC	Milton	0	1	0

❖ **U.S. Department of Defense SkillBridge**

Veterans Florida continued to expand the DoD SkillBridge fellowship offerings with employers throughout the State of Florida to serve our transitioning active duty service members. VF partnered with the Florida Highway Patrol to bring project management, cybersecurity and IT SkillBridge opportunities to former service members throughout Florida. VETS team attended over 50 virtual outreach events, including the Strong SkillBridge Connect Servicemember Opportunity Fairs.

SkillBridge Partnership Status				
Partner	Location	Pending	Active	Completed
University of Florida	Gulf Coast REC (Wimauma)	0	1	0
University of Florida	West Florida REC (Milton)	2	0	0

❖ **Entrepreneurship Program**

The Entrepreneurship team collaborated with the Florida Entrepreneurship Program partners for the 2021 Veterans Florida Virtual Expo Pitch Competition. These partners provide mentorship and resources to eligible veterans. The team attended Small Business Leadership Conference in Orlando and a networking event in Tampa.

❖ Development

VF team contacted potential sponsors for the 2021 Veterans Florida Virtual Expo and collaborated with Bank of America as the presenting sponsor, Learning Alliance as a platinum sponsor, CareerSource Florida and VITAS Healthcare as gold sponsors, and other six organizations as silver sponsors.

Partner	Purpose	Grant Amount	Date
Boeing	VETS Program	\$75,000	4/29/2021
Bob Woodruff Foundation	VETS Program	\$100,000	5/10/2021
**SBA Community Navigator	Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program	\$2,500,000	7/23/2021

❖ Board of Directors Meeting

The Board of Directors approved the FY 2021-22 Operating Budget at the monthly meeting on June 14.



NO FLORIDA VETERAN LEFT BEHIND

4) Florida Veterans Foundation (FVF)

The Foundation operates for the direct and indirect benefit for the veterans of Florida, the FDVA and State Veteran Service Organizations (VSO). FVF is a 501(C) (3) nonprofit operating for charitable and educational purposes. The Foundation operates solely on grants, donations and fundraisers. The Foundation operates with a full-time and a part-time employee and one intern.

❖ **Board of Directors, FVF Staff & Volunteer Outreach**

All FVF board of directors are volunteers who donate time and resources to support the Foundation’s mission and its programs to help veterans in need.

Team Members	Hours	Events	Veterans Served
Board of Directors & Volunteers	7,859	445	122,862
10 New Recruit Volunteers	80	3	200
FVF Headquarters Staff Received Calls	425	21	749

Outreach Metrics	Reach	Followers
Facebook Organic Reach	71,000	20,833
Newsletter Subscribers	3,125	34.2%
Veteran Data Services	23,624	
Website Page Views	16,185	9,057

❖ **Incoming Grants, Fundraising and Donations**

FVF created a new donation webpage for donors to select veterans in need options. Year to Date, FVF raised the following funds for FY 2020-21.

Grants, Fundraising & Donations	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	YTD FY 2020-21
Corporate / Business Grants	\$3,000	\$100,500	\$5,700	\$7,364	\$116,564
Corporate / Individual Contributions	\$9,283	\$18,270	\$14,049	\$36,594	\$78,196
Agency Grants		\$25,000	\$2,500	\$3,500	\$31,000
Fundraising Events	\$10,760	\$22,685	\$1,075	\$3,700	\$38,220
Affiliated Organization Contributions		\$1,500	\$66	\$20	\$1,586
TOTAL	\$23,043	\$167,955	\$23,390	\$51,178	\$265,566

❖ **FVF Income Projections**

Grants/Funds	Amount
Five Incoming Grants Pending Approval	\$110,000
Veterans In Crisis Appropriation Confirmed	\$245,000
Aging Veterans Grant Confirmed	\$30,000
Donations Rewards Programs Confirmed	\$23,500
Four New Ambassadors	\$12,000

❖ **Gadsden Flag License Plate**

The funds will help with recurring funding for foundation sustainability and continue its mission of helping veterans in need. The plate will go into production soon. FVF sold approximately 300 vouchers, FVF Marketing plan in on standby to sell 3,000 vouchers.

❖ **Volunteer Florida Grant (VFG)**

Ongoing grant to recruit and track 400+ volunteers, their hours and participation, etc. As of June 30, we have cataloged over 300 new volunteers on record who assist with the grant requirements and have logged in over 5,000 hours of volunteer work.

❖ **A State at War, Florida during WWII Documentary**

A new project in collaboration with 82 West Productions to produce a film on Florida during WWII explores the contributions Floridians made and their sacrifices that helped to win the war. FVF retains 10 percent of all monies for the project along with future DVDs and other sales.

❖ **Forward March Ambassadors for Veterans Council**

The Ambassadors support the FVF with sustainable funding and extended outreach. A total of 21 Ambassadors serve at FVF, which includes for new Ambassadors recruited during the fourth quarter.

❖ **FVF Outreach Programs**

YTD Veterans Assistance = \$217,587 July 1, 2020 thru June 30, 2021	
Veterans Homeless Shelter Programs	90,000 Veterans Benefits Guides
VA Pension Claims Assistance	COVID-19 Project Vet Relief Fund
Emergency Referral Services	Veterans Recognition Awards
Toys for Tots / JROTC Programs	Holiday Cards for Heroes
Volunteer Recruitment Program	Homeless Meals and other Assistance

**Figures based on three-year life expectancy after claims approval.*

❖ **Agging Wartime Veterans**

VA Pension - Aid & Attendance Financial Workshops Claim partners provided nine free seminars and received approvals for 431 Aids & Attendance Claims.

Forgotten Warrior Project Approved Year to Date		*431 Claims
Average Benefit Per Veteran Over 3 Years		\$51,200
Average Total Veteran Benefits Over 3 Years		\$22,067,200
Economic Impact		x 2.39
Total Amount with Economic Impact		*\$52,740,608

**Figures based on three-year life expectancy after claims approval.*

❖ **Florida Veterans Support Crisis Hotline**

FVF continues its partnership with the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay to support Suicide Prevention, Opioid Addiction and Mental Health issues. The center attains approximately 12,000+ calls per quarter.

❖ **Veterans in Career Transitions Workshops**

The Foundation developed and presented three Zoom presentation workshops during the fourth quarter. The workshops help veterans who experience job loss; also helps them with life after their military careers.

❖ **COVID-19 Project Relief Fund**

The Foundation has partnered with the American Legion of Florida and created the COVID-19 Project Relief Fund to help veterans affected by the pandemic with various needs.

❖ **Get There Initiative for Veterans**

The FVF collaborated with Florida’s Workforce Education Initiative (FDOE), connecting veterans to resources at Florida’s twenty-eight State Colleges.

❖ **DHSMV Veterans Recognition Program**

The Foundation partnered with the Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) to recognize those Troopers who are veterans and who went beyond the call of duty to help our citizens.



❖ **Board Members and Staff Participated in the following Events:**

Veteran Treatment Courts	Veterans Council Meetings	PTSD Awareness Summits
Veterans Task Force Seminars	Florida Veterans Council	Veterans Recognition Events
WWII Project Presentations	Homeless Vets Meal Deliveries	Flag Dedications
Burial & Memorial Services	Senior Veterans Events	FVF Board Meetings
Veterans Workforce Meetings	Virtual Networking Events	Veterans Transition Consulting
Veterans Graves Maintenance	Veterans Workshops	Veterans Death Transportation
Veterans Flag Presentations	Mopar Classic Car Show	Women Veterans Workshops
Veterans Recognition Events	Veterans Summer Splash Show	Veterans Claims Seminars

Acknowledgement: FVF is grateful for FDVA’s partnership through the provisions of office space, administrative and legal collaboration efforts that helps to support FVF mission objectives.