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DATE: October 14, 2022

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

FROM: James S. “James S.” Hartsell
Executive Director

SUBJECT: Quarterly Report – Fourth Quarter, Fiscal Year 2021 - 2022

The Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs submits the Quarterly Report for the Third Quarter of the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year, covering the period April 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022.

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 Sprowls, 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, Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security
Robert Tornillo, Senior Cabinet Aide, Office of Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis

Attachment 1: FDVA Quarterly Report

ATTACHMENT 1
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
FOURTH QUARTER REPORT
April 1 – June 30, 2022

This report covers the activities of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) for the Fourth Quarter of the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year.

1) Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs Administrative Highlights

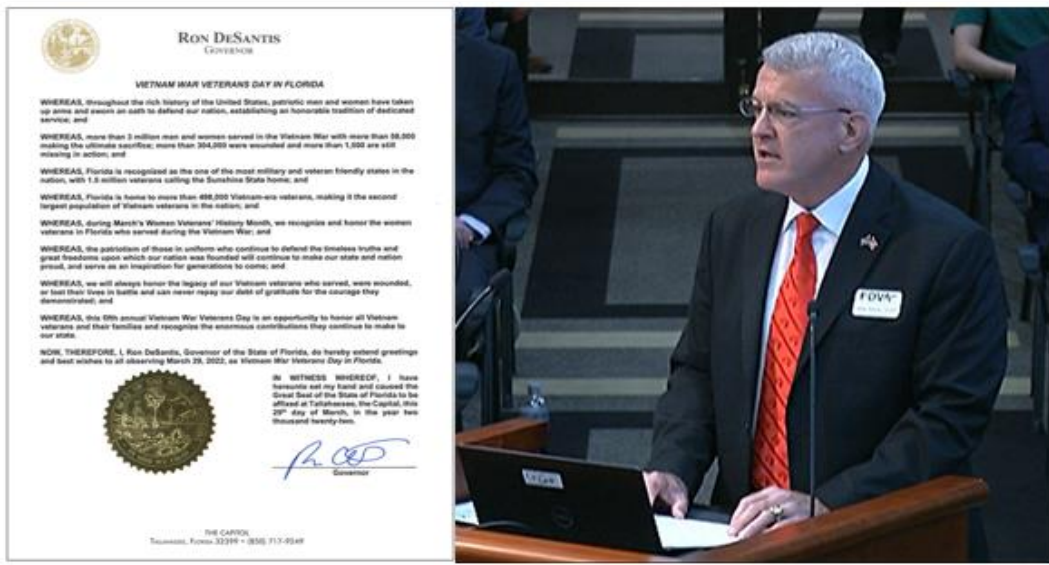
a) Current Issues/Concerns

i) Executive Direction:

The fourth quarter saw a lot of activity as the Agency sought to close out initiatives, one-time and recurring contracts, and to open the two newest State Veterans' Nursing Home additions to the State of Florida. General Hartsell announced that Lake Baldwin SVNH will be renamed to Alwyn C. Cashe State Veterans' Nursing Home in honor of U.S. Army Sergeant First Class Alwyn C. Cashe, a newly recipient and First African American Servicemember to receive the Medal of Honor. The Alwyn C. Cashe State Veterans' Nursing Home is the first SVNH in the Nation and Florida's First to be named after a Post 911 Medal of Honor Recipient. General Hartsell provided updates on the nearly complete renovations of Lake Baldwin SVNH in Orlando and invited the Governor and Cabinet to the May 21, 2022, Open House and Renaming Ceremony. The Executive Director also announced the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame inductees who are honored for their significant contributions to the communities, businesses and public within the State of Florida following their military service.



Maj Gen (Retired) Hartsell traveled throughout Florida providing updates on what was transpiring during the legislative session and what benefits Veterans and their families could look forward to receiving following the close of session. He, along with his directorate senior leaders continued his engagement with State affiliated leaders, federal counterparts, service and community organizations and agencies. The Executive Director also supported the initiatives and local veteran projects sponsored by legislators to promote their success. Highlights of these engagements for the fourth quarter follow:



Veterans Education and Awareness

Beginning on April 4, 2022, Communication Director, Steve Murray, attended the Florida Department of Children and Families' Prevent Child Abuse Event outside the Historic Capitol in support of Child Abuse Prevention Month. Attendees wore the color blue at the kickoff event, which focused on Agencies' efforts made to ensure Floridian children thrive in a safe, healthy and productive environment.

On April 5, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Bob Asztalos, virtually met with Pines of Sarasota Management Corporation's Board of Directors, to discuss alternative therapy treatments and its challenges, options and available rehabilitation care and services offered at Pines of Sarasota Rehabilitation and Senior Care Community Nursing Home to Florida's seniors and veterans. The meeting focused on improving the quality of life for Florida's Servicemembers and Veterans, as well as provided feedback on how to improve benefit access to Florida's veterans and their family members. FDVA Leadership continuously connects and collaborates with other organizations that support veterans and their families.

On April 7, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Bob Asztalos, and key Agency staff met with Sophia Leeuwenburgh to discuss Qualtrics' digital industry software products and services designed to expand real-time network communication, as a wireless communication management system and platform for active servicemembers and veterans to interface, voice their concerns and share information on community organizations and services available to veterans and their families.

On April 11, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, met with Maj Gen (Retired) James W. Lukeman, President and CEO of the Marine Heritage Foundation / Marine Corps Museum, and Lt Gen (Retired) Chuck Chiarotti, President and CEO of the Marine Corps Association, to provide them an overview of the Agency, its operations and inform them of opportunities and collaboration for Veterans in Florida. Afterwards, General Hartsell attended the 2022 Marine Corps Marksmanship Championship Awards Ceremony at the Marine Corps Base in Quantico, VA.

On April 13, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Bob Asztalos, and Chief of Staff, Col. (Retired) Alfred Carter, attended the Falls Prevention Program Steering Committee Meeting via teleconference to discuss fall prevention policies and intervention strategies and techniques within healthcare facilities aimed at reducing the risk of fall injuries to patients. Members advised on sustainability efforts relevant to the committee, focused on the action plan to date, implementing best practices and educating administrators, clinical nurses and staff on how to conduct fall risk assessments for nursing home residents.

On April 13, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Bob Asztalos, participated in the Council on Homelessness Affordable Housing Committee Call to address veteran homelessness, discuss policies and best practices, inter-agency collaboration with veteran organizations, as it relates to temporary emergency shelter and affordable housing. Mr. Asztalos offered feedback on how the Agency might improve benefit access to Florida's veteran homeless population and their families.

On April 20, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell virtually participated in the (GDX) Webinar Presentation, hosted by National Association of State Directors of Veterans' Affairs (NASDVA) to address the Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures and estimated dollar allocated for major VA programs at the state, county, and Congressional District levels. The meeting focused on increasing healthcare personnel, skilled caregivers and medical staff to support State's rising senior populations, as it relates to assisted living facility residents and nursing homes. Also, members addressed the workforce challenges healthcare providers are experiencing and possible solution to combat this crisis.

On April 22, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell met with Quiet Professionals' Leadership to provide them an overview of the Agency, its operations and share available opportunities that allow veterans to connect with veteran service organizations and local institutions that specialize in veteran support services, educational benefits and wellness programs. General Hartsell will also address the need to expand upon the number of industries that recognize the value of transitioning servicemembers, veteran employees and their credentials that are crucial to our state's economic development, as well as industries that are intended to improve benefit access to Florida's veterans and their family members.

On April 27, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, and key Agency staff, facilitated the Class of 2021 Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and Reception at The Capitol. The annual event honored 15 inductees for their significant contributions to the communities, businesses and public services in the State of Florida following the completion of their military service. During the ceremony, the Young Marines North Port Florida Color Guard Unit assisted with the presentation to honor the 15 inductees for their milestone accomplishments and selfless sacrifice to the State and Nation. General Hartsell recognized the Young Marines North Port Florida Unit as the 2021 National Young Marine Unit of the Year.

On April 27, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, virtually met with Secretary Ricky Dixon, Florida Department of Corrections to provide him an overview of the Agency, its operations and discussed the Governor's Challenge Initiatives and Veterans Treatment Courts. General Hartsell shared available opportunities that allow veterans to connect with veteran service organizations and local institutions that specialize in veteran support services, educational benefits and wellness programs. The VTC program assist veterans in

achieving sustain recovery, to increase public safety by addressing the underlining issues that have resulted in the veterans being involved in the criminal justice system.

On May 9, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, hosted the National Association of Directors of Veterans Affairs South East District (NASDVA SE District) Meeting. This virtual meeting is held prior to the annual NASDVA training conference in August in Hawaii was to set the District's agenda topics and issues to ensure equities of the SE District States are addressed. The meeting further provided an opportunity to exchange best practices among SE District States in efforts to improve delivery of Veterans' earned benefits and services.

On May 24, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, and key Agency staff, met with newly appointed Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation, Jared W. Perdue, to provide him an overview of the Agency, its operations and discussed common issues, to include veteran population growth, benefit access to programs within local, state and federal levels that are available to servicemembers, veterans and their families.

On May 25, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James S. Hartsell, and key Agency staff, virtually met with Secretary Shevaun Harris of the Florida Department of Children and Families, as a follow-up to a previous meeting on May 18, 2022, to discuss Child Protection Services. The meeting focused on benefits and services available to veteran's eligible dependents, improving interagency collaboration, as it relates to benefit access, support services and programs designed to better the quality of life for veterans and their eligible family members

On May 25, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, met with Richard Black, Executive Director of California Electronic Asset Recovery (CEAR) to discuss guardianship programs and veterans.

On May 25, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, met with Paul Mitchell, Partner at The Southern Group and former Chief of Staff at the Florida Department of Financial Services and Florida Department of Insurance, to provide him an overview of the Agency, its mission and operation and current initiatives, including veteran related bills that support affordable housing, best policies and practices as it relates to economic sustainability. They also discussed strategies to assist veterans access their benefits.

On May 25, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, attended the Florida Health Care Association (FHCA) District Meeting to discuss cultivating long-term caregivers for Florida's senior communities and veterans, receive updates on FHCA's Workforce Initiatives and provided feedback on how the Agency might improve access to benefits and services offered to Florida's 1.5 million veterans and their families.

On May 25, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, met with Edwin H. Moore, Ryan L. Fierst and Thomas C. Feeney, Members of All Things Florida Consulting, to discuss government grants, as it relates to veteran health care benefits, disabled veterans in Florida, veteran housing and government financial funding opportunities that are available to improve the quality of life for Florida's servicemembers and veterans.

On June 2, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James S. Hartsell, and key Agency staff, virtually met with Secretary Shevaun Harris of the Florida Department of Children and Families, to discuss the Veteran Recruitment Initiative, employment opportunities and job advancements. The meeting focused on interagency collaboration, as it relates to benefit access, support services and programs designed to better the quality of life for veterans and their eligible family members.

FDVA Communications and External Affairs Director Murray presented a veteran education update to the delegates at the Florida Advisory Council on Military Education 2022 Workshop in Tallahassee, June 6.

On June 28, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, participated in the VA Virtual Partnership Roundtable – Community of Practice, with Guest Speakers, Tanya Bradsher, VA's Chief of Staff, and Guy Kiyokawa, Assistant Secretary for Office of Enterprise Integration, to provide an opportunity for attendees to voice their concerns and panelists to share information on federal and state programs. The meeting focused on VA updates, as it relates to Women Veterans, Environmental Exposures, Caregiver Support, Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, as well as solicited feedback on how to improve benefit access to Florida's veterans and their family members.

On June 29, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, participated in the National Association of State Directors of Veterans' Affairs (NASDVA) All Conference Call to receive relevant updates from NASDVA's President Tom Palladino, as it pertains to the 2022 Annual Training Conference slated for August 12-18, 2022, the upcoming Mid-Winter Conference and address veteran related initiatives, to include healthcare innovation and state benefits and services that support servicemembers, veterans and their families.

On June 30, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, met with Dr. Anthony M. Hassan, President and CEO of the Cohen Veterans Network, Brigadier General (Retired) Michael P. Fleming, Outreach Director of the Cohen Veterans Network, and Ben Middleton, Centerstone Tennessee CEO, in Jacksonville to provide them an overview of the Agency, its operations and discussed mental healthcare treatment plans offered to veterans and their family members diagnosed with PTSD, anxiety and depression. General Hartsell discussed the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Aspire Health Partners, in Tampa, and its first clinic to provide mental healthcare at no or low cost to Post 9/11 Veterans in Tampa.

Suicide Prevention/Governor's Challenge Efforts

FDVA continued its collaborative with veterans and military organizations to unveil the initiative to prevent suicide among servicemembers, veterans and their families. The initiative is known as the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among servicemembers, veterans and their families. The statewide initiative uses evidence-based practices to address the mental health needs to prevent and reduce suicide attempts. The program is in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). In addition, the program encourages interested stakeholders to increase their statewide suicide prevention efforts. In support of mental health, FDVA website provides resource links at <https://floridavets.org>.

Governor DeSantis signed into law important legislation on April 6 designed to expand Veteran Suicide Prevention efforts in Florida. Senate Bill 1712, known as the Veteran Suicide Prevention Training Pilot Program, requires the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs to establish a pilot program to provide suicide prevention training to state veterans' outreach staff and county and city veteran service officers. Sen. Danny Burgess sponsored the legislation in the Senate, while Rep. Ben Diamond was the companion bill sponsor. The legislation is effective July 1, 2022.

On April 7, 2022, Chief of Staff, Col. (Retired) Alfred Carter, participated in the Florida Suicide Prevention Interagency Action Committee (SPIAC) Meeting to review the action plan progress to date as it relates to Substance Abuse and Mental Health, the State's resources and priority needs to prevent suicide. Committee members addressed Agencies' reports, the Zero Suicide initiative plans and measurable data regarding healthcare access to Florida's citizens, Service Members and Veterans and their Families.

FDVA Executive Director Hartsell participated in the Home Base Veterans Mental Health Outpatient Program launch in Naples, April 7.

On April 8, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Bob Asztalos, will meet with the Florida Veterans Foundation Chairman and President, Lew Wilson, and Calvin Carter, Operations Officer at the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs at The Kearny Center in Tallahassee to address veteran homelessness, temporary emergency shelter and affordable housing throughout the Big Bend region. Mr. Asztalos will offer feedback on how the Agency and Foundation might improve benefit access to Florida's veteran homeless population and their family members. While not specifically direct suicide prevention, these programs/initiatives attack root causes and risk factors for suicide.

On April 11, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, met with Brooke P. McLean, President and CEO of Victory Village, at Victory Village in Shalimar, to discuss affordable housing, address the needs of wounded veterans, tour the veteran facility and interface with residents and their caregivers, as well as share information on community organizations and services available to veterans and their families.

On April 20, 2022, Chief of Staff, Alfred Carter, virtually participated in the Communities of Practice: Lethal Means Safety and Safety Planning Conference in support of the Governor's Suicide Prevention Challenge Initiatives. The topic of discussion focused on communication strategies effective policies and expanding media operations, resources and access to community-based services to servicemembers, veterans and their families in efforts to prevent weapon involved suicide attempts.

On June 15, 2022, Chief of Staff, Alfred Carter, virtually met with Cory Smith, Florida Department of Health's Suicide Prevention Coordinator, to discuss Mental Wellbeing and Substance Abuse Prevention, its objective development, priorities of the Florida Suicide Prevention Interagency Action Plan and increasing public awareness within Florida communities.

On June 15, 2022, Chief of Staff, Alfred Carter, virtually participated in the Communities of Practice: Lethal Means Safety and Safety Planning Conference in support of the Governor's Suicide Prevention Challenge Initiatives. The topic of discussion focused on communication strategies effective policies and expanding media operations, resources and access to community-based services to servicemembers, veterans and their families in efforts to prevent weapon involved suicide attempts.

On June 21, 2022, Chief of Staff, Alfred Carter, virtually participated in the Mental Wellbeing and Substance Abuse Prevention Strategy Development Meeting to discuss early intervention and prevention strategies. The meeting focused on the impacts of state and federal funded programs, promoting public awareness and identifying servicemembers and veterans suffering with related illnesses, as well as providing them access to benefits and services to reduce substance misuse and mental disorders.

On June 27, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, and key Agency staff participated in the June Governor's and Mayor's Challenge Team Lead Call to discuss committee progress to date, as it relates to suicide prevention, community resources and programs offered to Floridians, servicemembers and veterans and their families.

On June 28, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, and Chief of Staff, Alfred Carter, participated in the Florida Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council (SPCC) Meeting to address and identify suicide preventative measures by developing statewide programs that offer protection from suicidal behaviors through infrastructure, training, federal and state government collaboration and outreach/engagement initiatives. The Governor appointed council focused on increasing public awareness within Florida communities, National Guard, and active duty service members and their families.

Community Outreach

This quarter highlighted efforts to get back to a pre-COVID19 pace for community outreach.

Beginning April 1, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James S. Hartsell, attended the U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Central Change of Command Ceremony and Retirement Celebration for General Kenneth F. McKenzie Jr. at the Tampa Convention Center in Tampa, for his 42-year commitment to federal services for veterans and their families. General Kenneth F. McKenzie will relinquish command to U.S. Army General Michael E. Kurilla.

FDVA Executive Director Hartsell participated in the Inaugural Florida Gold Star Ride from Tampa to the Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, April 5. He provided comments and presented a proclamation from Governor DeSantis. April 5 was Gold Star Spouses Day

On April 7, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, attended the Florida Atlantic University Student Union's Event Ceremony in Boca Raton to support Governor Ron DeSantis in honoring U.S. Army and World War II Veteran Benjamin Ferencz, for his military services to the State and Nation. Sergeant Ferencz graduated from Harvard Law School, was a Former Prosecutor at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial and Chief Prosecutor for the United States in the Einsatzgruppen Case, where twenty-two defendants were charged with the death of over a million people during The Holocaust in Nazi Germany.

On April 7, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, toured Florida Easter Seals Disability Services Headquarters and meet with Easter Seals' President and CEO Sue Ventura, Assistant Director Gertrude McCray and staff to provide them an overview of the Agency, its operations, and discuss alternative therapy and recreational activities for veterans and citizens with cognitive and physical disabilities. The meeting focus on collaborating with veteran related organizations on benefits and accessible resources to enhance support services and programs design to better the quality of life for veterans and their eligible family members.

On April 9, a capacity crowd under sunny skies witnessed the POW-MIA Honor Chair Dedication Ceremony at the Florida Capitol. The ceremony, led by Rolling Thunder (Florida), unveiled the chair to honor and remember the more than 81,000 missing service members since World War II. FDVA Communications and External Affairs Director Steve Murray represented FDVA at the ceremony.

On April 8, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James S. Hartsell, attended the Saint Leo University's Wellness Center Grand Opening, Time Capsule Installation and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony. The Wellness Center features a new mental health counseling center, clinical health services and spiritual support to campus scholars, veteran students and their eligible family members, as well as access to new resources dedicated to promoting students' wellbeing. Afterwards, General Hartsell will meet with Dr. Jeffrey D. Senese, Ph.D., President of Saint Leo University to discuss the Veterans' Bachelor Program, first in the nation, and how FDVA can assist with connecting veterans and their families with additional educational benefits.

On April 8, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James S. Hartsell, joined the Honorable Matthew T. Quinn, VA Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, at the Memorial Services for Mr. Ray Donald at the Purcell Funeral Home Chapel and burial service at the Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell.

On April 8, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James S. Hartsell, met with Judge Kristie Healis, State of Florida Fifth Judicial Circuit Court/ Hernando County, to provide her an overview of the Agency, its operations, and to discuss the Veterans Treatment Courts (VTC). Florida's VTC allows jurisdictions to serve a large segment of the justice-involved veteran population. The VTC comprehensive treatment program provides veterans the tools needed to lead productive and law abiding lifestyles.

On April 9, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James S. Hartsell, provided remarks at the U.S. Marine Corps League, Department of Florida 2022 Spring Conference in Safety Harbor to honor veterans for the selfless service to the State and Nation.

On April 11, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, participated in the Disabled American Veterans Team Meeting to provide information on accessible benefits and services offered to veterans and their eligible family members.

Communications and External Affairs Director Murray represented FDVA at the Florida Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics at the Capitol, April 12. Later that evening, he participated in the Chiles High School Baseball Military Appreciation Night in Tallahassee.

On April 12, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, served as a key note speaker at the Quantum Leap Farm Veterans' Retreat's STAR Dinner in Saint Petersburg to celebrate the success of Equine-assisted therapy programs and alternative therapy treatments for veterans. The event notably focused on wellness programs that connect mental health professionals with veterans to create meaningful bonds and support services including service animal companion and pairing programs for veterans, servicemembers and their families.

On April 14, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, attended the USMC Operation New Uniform Graduation Ceremony in Tampa to support veterans transiting from military service to civilian careers. General Hartsell shared available opportunities that allow veterans to connect with veteran service organizations and local institutions that specialize in veteran support services, employment opportunities, job advancements, educational benefits and wellness programs.

On April 16, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, will attend a Testimonial Dinner for Andrew Marshall, Disabled American Veterans (DAV) National Commander and Department of Florida Executive Director, in Safety Harbor to honor him for his military service, civil contributions and his selfless sacrifice to the State and Nation.

On April 21, 2022, Chief of Staff, Col. (Retired) Al Carter, participated in the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and Community Health Advisory Person (CHAP) hosted by the Florida Department of Health in Columbia County to discuss barriers and challenges when accessing healthcare services, community partnerships and healthcare (dental care, mental health care and substance use treatment) improvement for residents.

On April 22, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, will meet with the Florida Veterans Foundation Chairman and President, Lew Wilson, in Tallahassee to address veteran related issues including veteran homelessness, temporary emergency shelter and affordable housing for Florida's veteran homeless population. The meeting will focus on how the Foundation might improve benefit access and state resources to Florida's servicemembers, veterans and their families.

On April 23, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell served as Keynote Speaker at the 3rd Annual Soldiers Freedom Outdoors Appreciation Dinner in Melrose to honor military servicemembers, veterans, donors and volunteers for their civil contributions and selfless sacrifice to the State and Nation. Maj Gen Hartsell will provide remarks on his military career and continued service to veterans and the State, as well as expressed his gratitude to the nonprofit organization and their volunteers for their significant and measurable contributions that have improved the quality of life for servicemembers and veterans.

Communications and External Affairs Director Murray participated in Honor Flight Tallahassee, April 23

On April 24, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, attended the Shield of Faith Missions (SOF Missions) Female Veterans Cohort in Wesley Chapel, to address gaps in

services that impact Women Veterans, to include Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services. General Hartsell discussed social support centers, initiatives and Bills that support Women Veterans' entitlements, as well as link them with available local and state resources offered to Florida's Women Veterans and their eligible family members.

On April 26, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, conducted an interview with Ross Rowlinson, Freelance Videographer at BMI Productions & Boss Images, at the Capitol to address USA Warrior Stories, General Hartsell's military career and continued service to veterans and the State. The interview focused on the Agency's initiatives to connect Florida's 1.5 million Veterans to benefits and services, available resources and military and veteran friendly organizations through outreach events. Also highlighted was the Governor's Challenge Initiatives and mission to promote veteran suicide prevention programs, affordable housing and veteran homelessness, Vietnam War Veterans, Woman Veterans and transitioning servicemembers with earned benefits.

On April 26, 2022, Chief of Staff, Col. (Retired) Alfred Carter, met via teleconference with Virginia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services to discuss the Governor's Challenge Five Star Incentive Awards Program, which urges participants, sponsors, supporters and volunteers to join the efforts in combating mental health illnesses, substance abuse and broadcasting best practices that reduce suicide among Florida's citizens.

On April 28, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, attended the Florida National Cemetery Joint Veterans Committee Meeting in Bushnell to discuss the issuance of new cemetery burial lots, personnel contacts for the coordination of grave openings and maintaining the perpetual care of the cemetery. Maj Gen Hartsell will address Florida's Veteran population growth, burial benefits, offered services and available resources to veterans and their eligible family members.

On April 28, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, attended the Special Operations Warrior Foundation Event in Tampa, to provide an overview of the Agency's mission, its operations and discuss the Governor's Challenge Initiatives, mental health care for servicemembers and veterans, suicide prevention and to address issues impacting Florida's Veterans at large. General Hartsell will solicit feedback on how to improve veterans' access to benefits and services and state initiatives that support Florida's 1.5 million veterans and their families.

On April 28, FDVA Communications and External Affairs Director Steve Murray represented FDVA at the DEO Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day Event, at the Capitol.

On April 29, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, attended the Commanding Officer of Florida A&M University (FAMU) Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps' Commanding Ceremony at the Capitol to honor Naval ROTC cadets for their academic excellence, commitment to potentially serve in the United States Military and ongoing efforts to encourage military service through the pursuit of ROTC Scholarships.

On May 3, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, attended the Flag and General Officers' Network (TFGON) Quarterly Event in Tampa to provide them an overview of the Agency, discuss common issues, to include veteran population growth, benefit access and suicide prevention programs within local, state and federal levels that are available to servicemembers, veterans and their families. The meeting focused on veteran organization networks and best practices for enhancing social support and resource centers in veteran communities statewide.

On May 4, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, attended the Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce 2022 Military Appreciation Dinner in Tampa to honor local armed forces

for their contributions to the community and selfless sacrifice and dedication to the State and Nation.

On May 4, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, participated in the Council on Homelessness Executive Committee, hosted by the Florida Department of Children and Families to review its 2022 Annual Report, address affordable housing, housing shortage and policy challenges that impact Florida's citizens, to include veteran residents and their families. The meeting focused on interagency collaboration, state programs that provide additional benefits and services to Florida's homeless population and veterans, as well as available resources to offset Florida's homeless crisis statewide.

On May 5, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, participated in the Florida Supportive Housing Coalition's Policy Committee to address affordable housing, discuss initiatives, policies and funds to increase supportive housing services including down payment assistance. The meeting focused on promoting community awareness and networking with supportive housing industries and developers statewide, local government and homeless coalitions, as it relates to Florida's housing crisis.

FDVA Communications and External Affairs Director Murray led a discussion on veterans' issues with the Florida Department of State's Online Veteran Services Webinar, May 5.

On May 11, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, met with Pasco County Sheriff's Office to discuss veteran employment opportunities with sheriff's Office, and veteran's involvement with law enforcement in the community.

On May 12, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, met with Pasco County Sheriff's Office's senior leadership to discuss potential treatments for traumatic brain injury for veterans and law enforcement members.

On May 12, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, participated in the Florida Health Care Association's Workforce Public Relations Committee Meeting. The meeting was to discuss CaregiversFL Career Program statewide advertising campaign that is underway to recruit job seekers into the long term care profession.

On May 16, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, attended the K9s For Warriors' Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in Ponte Vedra. The nonprofit has a long-standing partnership with veterans' service organizations and continues to enhance veteran community services. K9s For Warriors offers alternative therapy, wellness programs and service companion dog pairing programs for senior veterans, servicemembers and their families, which supports the Governor's Challenge initiatives and suicide prevention action plan to eradicate suicide among Floridians, veterans and servicemembers.

On May 18, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, visited the University of Florida Genetics Institute in Gainesville to discuss medical research and advancements, as it relates to PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) treatments for veterans.

On May 20, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, participated in the Council on Homelessness Executive Committee, hosted by the Florida Department of Children and Families to review its 2022 Annual Report, address affordable housing, housing shortage and policy challenges that impact Florida's citizens, to include funds to increase supportive housing services and available resources including down payment assistance. The meeting will focus on interagency collaboration, state programs that provide additional benefits and services to Florida's homeless population and veterans, as well as promoting community awareness and networking with supportive housing industries, developers statewide, local government and homeless coalitions in support of the Governor's Challenge initiatives, as it relates to Florida's housing crisis.

On May 27, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell served as Keynote Speaker at the 24th Annual Family Café featuring the Governor's Summit on Disabilities in Orlando to promote community awareness on disabilities, veteran benefits and services, and access to state programs for disabled residents. General Hartsell expressed his gratitude to the nonprofit organization and their volunteers for their significant and measurable contributions that improve the quality of life for disabled residents, servicemembers and veterans.

Governor DeSantis welcomed the crowd at the 2022 Heroes Honor Festival, honoring Vietnam Veterans, at the Daytona Beach Speedway on May 28. Residents and staff members from the Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home in Daytona Beach attend the 2022 Heroes Honor Festival at Daytona Beach Speedway, while FDVA Executive Director Hartsell met up with singer songwriter Toby Keith and presented him with an FDVA Challenge Coin. The event serves as an opportunity to connect active-duty military servicemembers and veterans to Veterans Support Organizations.

On May 29, 2022, Chief of Staff, Al Carter, attended the Veterans Memorial Park and Museum Memorial Day Event in Hillsborough County, FL. The event honors the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. Military. Originally called Decoration Day, Memorial Day stemmed from the early tradition of decorating graves with flowers, wreaths, and flags following the Civil War and became an official federal holiday in 1971.

On May 30, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, read the Governor's Memorial Proclamation to the audience at the Memorial Day Remembrance Ceremony at the Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell. Servicemembers, veterans and their families honored Florida's fallen heroes for their selfless sacrifice in service to the U.S. Military.

On May 30, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, attended the City of Jacksonville Memorial Day Ceremony and visited the Veteran's Memorial Wall in remembrance of Jacksonville's fallen heroes. During the ceremony, Gold Star Families were recognized for their sacrifice and support of soldiers who have given their lives in service to the State and Nation.

On May 30, 2022, Chief of Staff, Al Carter, attended the CRISP @ MacDill Park's Gold Star Families Memorial Day Ceremony at the Gold Star Families Memorial Monument, Tampa, FL, in remembrance of those who have given their lives in service to our country. CRISP, which stands for Commitment. Respect. Integrity. Service and Pride, brings together like-minded citizens to identify, highlight and celebrate the contributions of Tampa to the U.S. Military.

On June 1, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, served as Keynote Speaker at the 7th Annual Tampa Bay Safety Summit at Tampa International Airport in Tampa. He provided them an overview of the Agency and mission, discussed common issues, to include veteran population growth, interagency collaboration as it relates to benefit access, veteran organization networks and best practices for enhancing social support and resource centers in veteran communities statewide.

On June 1, 2022, Chief of Staff, Alfred Carter, met with Christine Long, Chief Programs Officer, Metropolitan Ministries, and select staff, to tour the facility and discuss ways in which both entities could mutually support each other's efforts to reduce homelessness and provide services to Veterans and their family members. Metropolitan Ministries provides care for the homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless in our community through services that alleviate suffering, promote dignity and instill self-sufficiency... as an expression of the ongoing ministry of Jesus Christ.

On June 2, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, and Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, virtually met with Chairman Mike Bousher, Florida Veterans' Council, and Bruce Comer, Department Adjutant at The American Legion, Department of Florida to

address legislative priorities, Agency initiatives and collaboration, economic opportunities and support programs to include, local and state resources that are available to National Guard and active duty service members and their families.

On June 3, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, and Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, provided remarks at FDVA's Women Veterans Celebration and Recognition Event in Jacksonville. The symposium links female servicemembers, veterans and their families with local and state resources that are available and provides awareness of amended Bills that are in support of veterans' entitlements.

On June 6, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, met with Jacksonville City Councilman Rory Diamond and toured the K9s For Warriors' Mega Kennel and training facility construction site in Ponte Vedra. The nonprofit has a long-standing partnership with veterans' service organizations and will house more than 150 service dogs. K9s For Warriors continues to enhance veteran community services and offers alternative therapy, wellness programs and service companion dog pairing programs for senior veterans, servicemembers and their families. The programs directly support the Governor's Challenge initiatives and suicide prevention action plan to eradicate suicide among Floridians, veterans and servicemembers.

On June 6, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, visited the newly open Ocala VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in Marion County. This meeting also provided an opportunity to meet staff and discuss available benefits and services offered to Florida's 1.5 million veterans and their eligible family members.

On June 8, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, met with Mr. Mark Van Trees, Director of Support the Troops and Chairman of the Medal of Honor Foundation, to address the importance of providing aid, supplies and care packages to servicemembers, veterans and Florida's State Veteran Nursing Homes (SVNHs). At donations were assembled for delivery to all eight SVNHs and Domiciliary to be dispersed amongst the veteran residents.

On June 8, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, met with Unite Us, a nonprofit veteran-built technology company, to provided them an overview of the Agency and mission, its operation and to discuss ways to promote community awareness of federal and state veteran programs, veteran access to benefit and services and networking with supportive veteran organizations to improve the quality of life for Florida's Servicemembers, Veterans and their eligible family members.

On June 10, 2022, Executive Director, Major General (Retired) James S. Hartsell, attended Memorial and burial services for U.S. Marine Corps Reservist and Veteran Sherman E. 'Gene' Pitts at the Florida National Cemetery in Sarasota.

On June 12, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, attended the 2nd Annual Flag Retirement Ceremony at Harvester United Methodist Church in Land O' Lakes. This event is hosted by Randy Holyfield, Commander, Post 108, Department of Florida, American Legion.

On June 14, FDVA Deputy Executive Director Asztalos joined many of his colleagues at the Tallahassee headquarters of the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. In a patriotic ceremony, they proudly honored the more than 700 Veterans who serve statewide in their agency and the Florida Highway Patrol.

On June 14, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, and Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, attended the 7th Annual Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV) Veterans' Recognition Day in Tallahassee to honor Florida's 1.5 million veterans for their selfless sacrifice to the State and Nation. The event highlighted Florida's Military and Veteran Specialty License Plates, which supports veterans' causes, crisis and hardships, and

promotes veterans' advocacy through veterans' service organizations and their mission to improve the quality of U.S. retired military servicemembers and their families.

On June 15, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, met with Ashley Lowery, President and CEO of the Homeless Emergency Project, Homeless Empowerment Program (HEP), to discuss the housing and support services provided through HEP emergency, transitional and permanent supportive housing for veterans. General Hartsell provided her an overview of the Agency, its mission and current initiatives, including veteran related bills that support affordable housing, best policies and practices as it relates to economic sustainability. They also discussed strategies to assist veterans with accessing their benefits.

On June 15, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, supported the Remembrance Ceremony and read Florida's Fallen Heroes' Names during the Unaccompanied Veteran Funeral Services held at the Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell.

On June 15, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, participated in the Quarterly Leadership To End Veteran Homelessness Teleconference, hosted by the Homeless Leadership Alliance of Pinellas to discuss Pinellas County Veterans Task Force Strategic Plan, new U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements and the Homeless Services Network of Central Florida's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Data Quality Plan for Continuum of Care. The meeting focused on affordable housing, housing shortage and policy challenges that impact Florida's citizens, interagency collaboration, state programs that provide additional benefits and services to Florida's homeless population and veterans, to include down payment assistance to offset Florida's homeless crisis statewide.

On June 17, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, accompanied Senator Marco Rubio at the Veterans of Foreign Wars' 92nd Annual Convention in Orlando to honor veterans for their selfless sacrifice to the Nation. The convention served as an opportunity to address national priorities and veteran related issues that impact military servicemembers, veteran and their families.

On June 17, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, attended the Disabled American Veterans 2022 National Convention in Lake Mary to support the needs of veterans and provide feedback on how to access available benefits and services for veterans and their eligible families. The conventions provide an opportunity for veterans to link with Veteran Service Officers (VSO) and veteran service organizations that provide assistance and access to eligible benefits and services including employment opportunities, affordable housing and available federal and state veteran programs.

On June 18, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, attended the Veterans Florida Expo 'Vendor Circulation and Appreciation' to support the transition of military servicemembers, Florida SkillBridge initiative, the first in the nation, and veteran service organizations to ensure that active and retired servicemembers connect with eligible benefits and services offered to Florida's 1.5 million veterans and their families. The event is designed to increase public awareness of veterans' service organizations and provides an opportunity for servicemembers and veterans to connect with local VSO and veteran resource centers.

On June 21, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, met with Steve Cone, Capital Caring Health Chief of Communications and Marketing, to provide him an overview of the Agency, its mission and current initiatives, the opening of Ardie R. Copas and Alwyn C. Cashe State Veteran Nursing Homes and programs that support the improvement of veterans. The meeting focused on opportunities to promote public awareness of veterans suffering from dementia and companion pets, to include robotic pets offered to elder veterans as an alternative when live animals are not available or no longer safe.

On June 22, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, met with Leeanne Sacino, Executive Director, Florida Coalition to End Homelessness, to discuss the Council on Homelessness Continuum of Care (CoC) Committee, policies impacting the 27 CoC lead agencies, updates on state and federal impacts and activities related to homeless veterans. The meeting focused on available funding, programs and initiatives that directly support improving the quality of life for Florida's homeless population including veterans and their families.

On June 22, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, met with Lew Wilson, President of the Florida Veterans Foundation, to address the needs of Florida's homeless veteran populations and available funding to support veterans suffering from economic hardship, to include affordable housing, rising utility expenses, food shortage and lack of transportation. The meeting focused on promoting community programs and available resource centers that provide quality care for homeless veterans, as well as the ability to secure affordable housing and down payment assistance to offset Florida's homeless crisis statewide.

On June 22, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, attended the Boys Town Presentation at the Donald L. Tucker Civic Center in Tallahassee to support State Agencies and programs that combat child abuse and neglect through short-term intervention. The presentation promotes efforts made to ensure Floridian children thrive in a safe, healthy and productive environment.

On June 23, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, met with Raymond H. Cralle, RPT at the Oxygen Rescue Care Centers of America in Delray Beach to receive an overview of the health services offered to veterans suffering from Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and PTSD, updates on the progress to date, as it relates to Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) provided during clinical trials at the University of South Florida Health, its treatments and other alternative therapies which yield positive healing results for injured/ wounded veterans.

On June 23, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, met with Seth Eisenburg, President and CEO of Purpose Built Families and Operation Sacred Trust, a non-profit that supports rapid re-housing program funded through the Veterans Administration to secure permanent affordable and stable housing for veterans and their families.

On June 23-25, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, attended the American Gold Star Mothers' 2022 National Convention in West Palm Beach to honor veteran mothers for their selfless sacrifice, support and tireless efforts to provide continuous care to veterans and their families through community outreach. The convention will serve as an opportunity to address veterans and their families' needs and priorities, as well as for attendees to voice concerns, share ideas on improving benefits and services, and accessing state programs that improve the welfare of Florida's veteran population. Later, General Hartsell will visit the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall.

On June 26, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, attended the Jewish War Veterans of America's National Convention in Delray Beach to honor veteran for their selfless sacrifice to the State and Nation. The convention served as an opportunity to address American Jewish Veterans and their families' needs and priorities, promote military and community services, voice concerns and share ideas on improving benefits and services and access to federal and state programs that improve the wellbeing of Florida's 1.5 million veterans and their families. FDVA Executive Director Hartsell spoke at the National Gold Star Families Convention in West Palm Beach, June 25 and to the Jewish War Veterans State Convention in Delray Beach June 26. He presented his agency's challenge coin to the leadership of both organizations.

On June 30, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, participated in the videography of Fire Watch's new public service announcements (PSA) in Jacksonville, to discuss the expansion of their Veteran watch-stander model and life-saving networks across the State of

Florida. General Hartsell discussed the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Servicemembers, Veterans and their Families Initiatives and joint venture with the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (VA/SAMHSA) and community stakeholders that strive to reduce its veteran suicide rate by identifying veterans suffering with mental disorders and substance abuse. Last, General Hartsell discussed Agency and stakeholders' efforts to promote mental wellness, substance abuse prevention and suicide prevention programs that directly support improving the quality of life for Florida's 1.5 million veterans and their family members.

Legislative Activities

Engagement and collaboration with legislators and their staff is pivotal in ensuring Veterans needs are known and programs and initiatives are formulated to meet those needs. As with last quarter, FDVA Leadership's desired endeavor is that the agency continues to assist with strengthening the state's support for Florida's 1.5 million veterans and their families with education, healthcare, mental health, employment and family programs. Again, during this quarter, Executive Director Hartsell provided progressive updates to the legislators and committee members about the COVID-19 pandemic impacts and implemented protocols at State Veterans' Homes and Division of State Veterans' Benefits and Assistance functions. Executive Director Hartsell, as a parallel effort, encouraged his key staff leaders to educate legislators and community leaders on the Agencies needs and initiatives.

Thanks to a budget signed into law June 2 by Governor DeSantis, the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs continues to be the premier point of entry for Florida's 1.5 million veterans to access earned services, benefits and support. The agency's \$172 million budget is a direct investment in Florida Veterans and their families. "I'm extremely proud of Governor DeSantis and the State Legislature in recognizing the vital importance of our health care professionals who provide critical and loving care to our veterans' home residents," said FDVA Executive Director Hartsell. "The budget strengthens our ability to recruit and retain critical care providers in our network of state veterans' homes, helping us ensure Florida continues to be the most veteran sought after state in the nation."

The Executive Director, Deputy Director, and staff leadership met with the following legislative/Executive Branch leaders during the Quarter:

- On April 5, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James S. Hartsell, joined Senate President Kathleen Passidomo in support of the Home Base Florida's Mental Health Outpatient Program's Partnership Announcement, Launch and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at the David Lawrence Centers for Behavioral Health in Naples. The union of Home Base Florida and David Lawrence Centers will provide new outpatient mental health services for veterans and service members impacted by PTSD, anxiety, anger, grief and loss, transitional challenges and addiction. Psychiatrists, specially trained clinicians and outpatient services are at no cost to veterans and include services program, case management, a Veterans Care Action Network and Collier County Veteran's Treatment Court.
- FDVA Executive Director Hartsell joined Governor DeSantis as he honored Benjamin Ferencz in Boca Raton, April 7. The governor awarded the 102-year-old Army World War II Veteran and last living prosecutor of the Nuremberg Trials with the Governor's Medal of Freedom. Afterwards, Executive Director Hartsell presented Mr. Ferencz with FDVA's challenge coin.
- On April 19, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, met with Florida's First Lady, Casey DeSantis' Chief of Staff, Katherine Russo, at the Capitol to discuss the Governor's Challenge Initiatives, mental health care for servicemembers and veterans,

suicide prevention and to address issues impacting Florida's Veterans at large. General Hartsell discussed improving veterans' access to benefits and services, state initiatives that support Florida's 1.5 million veterans and their families, and welcomed all involvement, leadership and support of the First Lady and her staff.

- During the week of May 23-26, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, and key Agency staff, attended the Florida Legislative Special Session on Property Insurance to receive updates on the State's property insurance market and rates, the Reinsurance to Assist Policyholders (RAP) program and Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund (FHCF). Legislators discussed a reform bill that could bring stability to the market by addressing roofing, fraud, litigation and consumer rates including condominium reform and a bipartisan proposal in response to the Surfside condo collapse. The reform bill would allocate \$2 billion dollars from the State's General Revenue Funds into the RAP program that would allow insurance companies to access to cover losses, which in turn reduces cost to property owners including Florida's 1.5 million veterans and their families that participate in the RAP program.
- Gov. Ron DeSantis signed six bills June 9 to support veterans, military members, and their families in finding employment and educational opportunities in Florida. These pieces of legislation build on funding provided in the Freedom First Budget signed earlier by Governor DeSantis to support Florida's military members and their families. FDVA Executive Director Hartsell joined Governor DeSantis as he signed the military and veteran-related bills resulting from the 2022 Florida Legislative Session.
- On June 9, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, met with Representative Patt Maney and the Crispy Warriors Veterans Group to provide them an overview of the Agency, discuss veteran related bills, current initiative and proposals, as well as address state resources and wellness programs that are available to Vietnam and women veterans.
- On June 9, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, proudly supported Governor Ron DeSantis' Bill Signing Ceremony which encompassed veteran related bills Senate Bill (SB) 0438-United States Space Force, SB 0514 - Substitution of Work Experience for Postsecondary Educational Requirements and SB 0896-Educator Certification Pathways for Veterans, all presented by Senator Danny Burgess; SB 0430-Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children, presented by Senator Tom Wright, SB 0562-Military Occupational Licensure, presented by Senator Janet Cruz and House Bill (HB) 0045-Educational Opportunities for Disabled Veterans, presented by Florida House of Representatives Christopher Benjamin and Daisy Morales.
- Deputy Executive Director, Bob Asztalos, met with Representative Patt Maney, to provide him an update on the Agency and discuss current initiative, proposals, affordable housing and state resources that are available to veterans and their families.
- Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, met with Florida House Health and Human Services Committee staff, Chris McElroy and Jo Morris, to discuss current programs for veterans including health care licensing issues and impacts, medical training and educational opportunities that support veterans working in the healthcare industry.
- On June 22, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, accompanied and supported Florida's First Lady Casey DeSantis on her announcement to launch the Continue The Mission Initiative, which promotes the recruitment of veterans, military spouses and former law enforcement officers to be child protective investigators. The joint collaboration of the State, FDVA and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) encourages former law enforcement officers, veterans and their spouses with a passion to service their communities to become child protective investigators, case managers and mentors with an opportunity to

become new case managers in efforts to protect Florida's children from child abuse and neglect. Photo is featured below.



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.

- No proclamations were drafted during the reporting period.

ii) Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance:

On May 1-3, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, attended the presented remarks to more than 150 CVSOs and FDVA Veterans' Claims Examiners attendees at the CVSOA Training Conference in Safety Harbor. General Hartsell provided relevant updates on the Governor's Challenge Initiatives and its benefits and services offered to veterans and their families, as a result of continuous interagency collaboration. General Hartsell discussed the long-standing partnership with veterans' organizations including the VA, VBA and VA Sunshine Healthcare Networks, as well as the necessity to make contact with as many Florida Veterans as possible to allow them to receive their earned benefits and assistance by virtue of their selfless service to our great nation.

On May 2, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, Chief of Staff, Col. (Retired) Alfred Carter, Division of Benefits and Assistance Director, Don Stout and key Agency staff attended the FDVA/ County Veterans' Service Officers (CVSO) Semi-Annual Training Conference in Safety Harbor. Mr. Asztalos provided introductory remarks and updates on policy challenges, as it relates to improving services to the homeless population, affordable housing and enhanced benefits for veterans as a whole. Don presided over the conference and presented awards to the CVSOs and VCEs for their professional competence and personal dedication in servicing Florida's 1.5 million veterans and their families.

On June 9, 2022, Chief of Staff, Alfred Carter, met with the Florida Association of Veterans Education Specialists (F.A.V.E.S.) officers to brief them on the Agency and mission, the Governor's Challenge Initiatives and common issue impacting Veterans access to higher level

education institutions, vocational and technical schools. He also discussed best practices for enhancing social support, educational opportunities and resource centers in veteran communities statewide. Finally, Mr. Carter highlighted college and institution closures due to inclement weather and its impacts.

Bureau of Veterans' Claims Services

The Bureau of Veterans' Claims Services fourth quarter production review of rating decisions increased slightly over last quarter. We continue to have an increase of virtual hearings for local and BVA appeals. We have processed a review of 13,693 claim's rating decision for disability benefits through the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS). Our offices provide walk-in services. BVA hearings decreased slightly by 12 percent since the third quarter. Local in-person Personal Hearings also have seen a decrease of 32 percent from the last quarter. Our group email address and telephone helpline service received 5,155 inquiries throughout this period. We have conducted 633 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 |
|---|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Retroactive Compensation | \$54,895,241 | \$45,088,978 | \$54,954,516 | \$60,345,271 |
| Largest Single Retro. Benefit (1) | \$433,959 | \$421,176 | \$359,994 | \$378,198 |
| Debt Waiver Resolutions | \$79,744 | \$36,222 | \$19,805 | \$52,322 |
| Notices of Disagreement | 2,983 | 2,517 | 3,004 | 3,210 |
| Statements of Argument in Appeals Cases (2) | 102 | 71 | 62 | 54 |
| Act as Representative at Hearings* | 216 | 420 | 584 | 516 |
| Veterans' Appeals Hearings* | 142 | 131 | 171 | 117 |
| Number of Ratings Reviewed | 13,690 | 10,823 | 11,634 | 13,693 |

(1) The "Largest Single Retro. Benefits" Year to Date for FY 2020-21 and the Actual for FY 2021-22 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.

Women Veterans

This year's annual conference was held in June at Jacksonville, Florida, with Northeast Florida Women Veterans Org. (NFWVO) as the co-host of the conference. The one-day conference was to honor and to celebrate women veterans in the state of Florida. This event kicked off a week of celebration and informational resources to Women Veterans. NFWVO procured sponsorship from many community organizations to help fund the events for the week. Sponsors included Wounded Warrior Project and Florida Blue as the main contributor of the event, donating \$10,000.00 each to support the Women Veterans week of Recognition.

Highlights:

- 150 women veterans registered through Event Bright. 174 attended the luncheon.
- 37 veteran service organization set up tables and distributed information to women veterans.
- 2 Guest speakers
- 8 break-out Sessions provided new resources and updated VA policies and information to the attendee.
 - Social Security Administration

- Suicide Awareness Certification – Sponsored by Fire Watch
- Financial Educations -Sponsored by Women to Women
- Education Benefits (State and Federal)
- Her Story – Her contribution to the Military
- Chat and Craft – Sponsored by Hope4Vets
- Self – Care

In related Women Veteran specific activities, the following events and activities were supported by the Executive Director and senior leadership staff:

On June 5, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, attended the Women of the Wall Ceremony and supported the 9th Annual Women Veterans Tribute and Recognition Week hosted by the City of Jacksonville’s Military Affairs and Northeast Florida Women Veterans, Inc. in Jacksonville to honor all female veterans for their contribution and service to the U.S. military and Nation. Afterwards, General Hartsell participated in an interview and new public service announcements (PSA) at the Duval County Veterans Memorial Wall in Jacksonville to promote public awareness and connect Florida’s 1.5 million Veterans to available resources, benefits and services. Photos are featured below.



On June 21, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, met with Deloris ‘Dee’ Quaranta, President and CEO of Northeast Florida Women Veterans, and Vanessa Thomas, FDVA’s Women Veterans’ Coordinator, to the discuss veteran related bills, healthcare programs and access to community resource centers and clinics that support the unique challenges and needs of Women Veterans.

Deputy Executive Director Asztalos collaborated with the Florida Advisory Committee on Women Veterans. At the monthly committee meetings, Executive Director Asztalos proposed an initiative to increase outreach to the women veterans through social media and a survey to identify the needs of women veterans.

Deputy Executive Director Asztalos and Florida Women Veterans Coordinator Vanessa Thomas attended the women veteran honor ceremony in Destin on November 11.

Florida Women Veterans Coordinator Vanessa Thomas attended a monthly teleconference with the National Center for Women Veterans (NCWV). Coordinator Thomas provided updates to the department on medical services for Women Veterans and services supporting women veterans. Some key topics included: 1) “She Wears the Boots”, a Podcast for Women Veterans presented by the Veterans Health Administration, with a focus to get more listeners; and 2) the Million

Veteran Program (MVP) with a focus to encourage ambassadorship in enrolling more women veterans into the program. MVP has targeted an 11 percent increase in the number of women veterans for the coming year. In December, she also attended the National Association of State Women Veteran Coordinators (NASWVC) monthly meeting. Coordinator Thomas also met with the MISSION UNITED Council, which seeks to provide women veterans with resources.

Outreach Event:

- HerVOICE Virtual Series - the Series encompassed the voices of Women veterans with topics of serving in the military, the evolution of the military and transitioning back to civilian life.
- Monument to Women Veterans - the Monument to Women Veterans, Inc., a 501c3 Charitable Non-Profit Corporation established in 2011, has been paramount in recognizing and empowering our military women through various community outreach and awareness efforts. Their goal is two-fold: first to provide critical resources for female veteran care, and second to pursue the erection of a monument to honor all women veterans.
- Wound Warrior Project (WWP) hosted the October 7 Women Veterans Town Hall meeting in Jacksonville. WWP expressed a desire to assist FDVA with Women’s veteran issues and offered to sponsor the upcoming Women Veteran Conference in June 2022.
- FDVA met with Patriot Services to focus on Women Veteran Homelessness in northeast Florida. This collaboration is to provide safe housing for women veterans and their families.

Bureau of Veterans’ Field Services

The Executive Director directed all FDVA employees to contact and meet face to face with all State Legislators. Field Services contacted 98 and met face to face with 16 State Legislators this quarter to introduce the Veteran Claim Examiner and to explain the services we offer. The Bureau of Field Services continues to provide face to face and virtual services to veterans and their families. West Palm Beach remains closed due to asbestos in the offices. Field Services advocated for 40,689 veterans’ and their families completing 8,868 new disability claims. Attended 213 outreach events to include 2 Yellow Ribbon Reintegration events for Guard and Reserve Units and 9 Homeless Veteran Stand Down events. Field Services’ supervisors assisted the Bureau of Veterans’ Claims by reviewing and entering 612 rating decisions.

| Event | First Quarter | Second Quarter | Third Quarter | 4 th Quarter |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| Number of Issue Resolutions | 7,694 | 5,150 | 4,151 | 5,463 |
| Total Amount of Issues Resolution | \$22,304,715 | \$16,246,772 | \$16,502,329 | \$19,844,031 |
| Outreach Visits | 92 | 127 | 118 | 213 |
| Veterans Served at Outreach | 2,132 | 4,232 | 4,297 | 6,689 |
| Bedside Interviews | 11 | 12 | 17 | 435 |
| Walk-ins / Counseling | 12,116 | 10,418 | 12,784 | 15,259 |
| Disability Claims | 7,910 | 7,061 | 7,913 | 8,868 |
| Voter Registration | 687 | 640 | 599 | 1,164 |
| Homeless Walk In | 101 | 96 | 164 | 118 |
| Ratings Reviewed | 631 | 690 | 642 | 612 |

| Event | First Quarter | Second Quarter | Third Quarter | Fourth Quarter |
|---|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Reintegration and Pre-Deployment Events for Guard and Reserve Units | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Homeless Veteran Stand Down Events | 1 | 5 | 3 | 5 |
| Medical Center Welcome Home Events | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----|-----|----|-----|
| Congressional Open House Events | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| National Conferences | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| New Patient Orientation | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 |
| Transition Assistance Briefings | 19 | 17 | 28 | 26 |
| Other Events | 68 | 102 | 85 | 172 |

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

The Bureau of State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans' Education and Training: The SAA's primary duties are fulfilling U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) contract specific requirements for the monitoring of quality and the integrity of veteran education programs and also with the oversight and enforcement of approval-related laws in Title 38, pertaining to veteran education benefits. Public Law 116-315, the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020, with over 30 provisions which impacted veteran education benefits also greatly impacted State Approving Agency (SAA) approval and re-approval requirements for the participating educational institutions. With heightened requirements for SAA oversight and accountability pertaining to the approval/withdrawal of facilities participating in GI Bill® Veterans Education Benefits, some of the most impactful requirements included: a shift of veteran beneficiary debt from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to the certifying school when students reduce or terminate enrollment. This shift will create obstacles in the form of school imposed holds for veteran beneficiary's enrollment and transcript acquisition if the veteran beneficiary has a balance at the school. Chapter 33 veteran beneficiaries must now verify their enrollment, each month to VA and School Certifying Officials must certify Chapter 33 beneficiary enrollment twice each term which increases school workload, but could potentially reduce erroneous VA payments each term. As a condition of approval for participation, and effective 8/1/2021, school officials must abide by Section 1018 of Isakson and Roe, which created 38 USC 3679(f). This new law requires school officials to provide veteran beneficiaries with a Personalized Financial Form, the school must adopt 3 new policies, and the school must adhere to multiple prescribed practices, or be withdrawn from approval. On December 21, 2021, the passage of the Responsible Education Mitigating Options and Technical Extensions Act, or REMOTE Act, made the following amendments to Isakson and Roe: Placed Section 1018/38 USC 3679(f) on hold until 8/1/2022. Provided that schools may be exempt from all of Section 1018/38 USC 3679(f) if schools adopt the use of the U.S. Department of Education's College Financing Plan form with prospective and current veteran beneficiaries. The COVID-19 provisions initially created by Public Law 116-128 and extended and expanded by several other Public Laws, would be extended until June 1, 2022. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs waited until June 13, 2022 to recognize the use of the U.S. Department of Education's College Financing Plan form, as a means for schools to be exempt from all requirements within Section 1018/38 USC 3679(f), as provided for in the December 21, 2021 REMOTE ACT. Due to the delayed recognition, schools are currently scrambling to revise their Fall semester catalogs and processes, to submit to the SAA, to allow for the exemption of this enormous and crippling law. Within the state of Florida and effective July 1, 2022, Florida House Bill 45 created 295.011 Florida Statute, providing for funding for 100% total and permanent service-connected disabled Florida veterans at public universities, colleges and career centers. The law provides for gap funding by the institution for these disabled Chapter 33 beneficiaries who are using Post 9/11 benefits and who are determined by VA to qualify at less than the 100% benefit level. Other eligibility requirements may apply. Please see the law for complete details.

State Approving Agency performance activities for the fourth quarter are below:

| Event | First Quarter | Second Quarter | Third Quarter | Fourth Quarter |
|--------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| SAA Programs Approved | 4,428 | 5,581 | 3,009 | 1,517 |
| Other Approval | 681 | 780 | 943 | 477 |
| Compliance Visits | 18 | 13 | 15 | 28 |
| Inspection Visits | 3 | 8 | 3 | 6 |
| Outreach Activities (1) | 118 | 104 | 111 | 111 |
| Liaison Activities (2) | 119 | 159 | 250 | 205 |
| Technical Assistance (3) | 720 | 550 | 518 | 518 |

iii) Division of State Veterans' Homes:

The Division of State Veterans' Homes administration finalized requirements for opening the two newest facilities. These requirements included but were not limited to AHCA and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs inspections, licensure, food service contracts, and facility initial staffing. Simultaneously, efforts to maintain the operational status of existing facilities post COVID were taking shape. The activities below reflect those efforts:

- On April 13, 2022, Homes Program Director, Connie Tolley, attended the National Association of State Veterans Homes' (NASVH) Winter Teleconference Financial Information Session to address financial updates on state veteran nursing facility operations, the livelihood and required care of disable veterans, skilled nursing care programs and administrators' concerns, as it relates to adequate support for residents and personnel. Leaders received recommendations for improving veteran access to eligible benefits, services and programs, to include MEDICARE/MEDICAID reimbursements. Ms. Tolley announced the Open House, Flag Raising Ceremony and Renaming of Lake Baldwin SVNH in honor of Medal of Honor Recipient, Alwyn C. Cashe on May 21, 2022.
- Deputy Executive Director, Bob Asztalos continued his weekly virtual attendance of , attended the "OFFICE HOURS" - Office on Homelessness – Council on Homelessness Virtual Forum to address affordable housing innovations and projects, policy challenges and shared information, as it relates to improving services to the homeless population in efforts to eliminate this condition across Florida and the Nation. He also participated in a weekly conference call with American Rescue Plan (ARP) to discuss the American Rescue Plan Act, State Fiscal Recovery Fund, resources, offsets and economic opportunities to enhance benefits and services to Florida's 1.5 million veterans and their families.
- On May 11, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, participated in the Falls Prevention Program Steering Committee. The Falls Prevention Program Steering Committee provides guidance and advises on sustainability efforts relevant to reducing risks associated with elderly ambulation and mobility; which reduces overall facility and Agency liability.
- On May 17, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, participated in the Sims Veterans Games and joined veteran residents of the Clifford Sims SVNH in a game of baseball at Frank Brown Park in Panama City Beach. The event was hosted by the Rotary Club of the Emerald Coast Panama City Beach and increased public awareness for people with intellectual disabilities, as well as provided them an opportunity to develop and demonstrate their physical fitness in the American sport of baseball. The game is pictured below.



- On May 21, 2022, Executive Director, Maj Gen (Retired) James Hartsell, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos and key Agency staff, will provide remarks during the Alwyn C. Cashe SVNH Open House and Flag Raising Ceremony, held on Armed Forces Day in honor of U.S. Army Sergeant First Class Alwyn C. Cashe, a newly recipient and First African American Servicemember to receive the Medal of Honor. The Alwyn C. Cashe State Veterans' Nursing Home is the first SVNH in the Nation and Florida's First to be named after a Post 911 Medal of Honor Recipient. This event will provide the legislative and local municipality leaders an opportunity to view the facility and officially dedicate the building to State government use.
- On June 3, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, attended the 2022 Nurse Leadership Conference and Circle of Excellence Luncheon hosted by the Florida Health Care Association (FHCA) in Saint Petersburg. The conference provided an opportunity for Florida's long term care professionals to discuss the impact of new state and federal regulations, advancing infection control practices and surveillance, strengthening risk compliance plans, updates to skin care and wound management, as well as will provide strategies and solutions for delivering high-quality care.
- On June 8, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Robert Asztalos, and Chief of Staff, Alfred Carter, participated in the Falls Prevention Program Steering Committee. The Falls Prevention Program Steering Committee provides guidance and advises on sustainability efforts relevant to reducing risks associated with elderly ambulation and mobility; which reduces overall facility and Agency liability.

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

- The home was licensed by AHCA in late June and accepted its first residents in early July. For admission, a veteran must be a Florida resident, honorably discharged from the armed services and have a certificate of need from a VA physician.
- The 120-bed home in Port St. Lucie is named after Fort Pierce resident Sgt. Ardie R. Copas. Who was killed in action in Vietnam in 1970. The home has 60 beds reserved for residents with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Also, the home will include six bariatric rooms for patients with chronic and severe obesity. The home is equipped with additional facilities such as beauty and barbershop, café, chapel, a multi-purpose room, dining area and an in-house kitchen to serve daily fresh meals to the residents. The 121,000 square-foot facility is designed with the best effort to create a feel-like home atmosphere for the veterans' residents.
- This will be the eighth Veterans' Affairs nursing home in the state. The other seven State Veterans' Homes are located in Daytona Beach, Land O' Lakes, Orlando, Panama City, Pembroke Pines, Port Charlotte and St. Augustine.

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

- The home was licensed by AHCA and admitted its first resident in July. Projects include HVAC certifications, plumbing rerouting, etc. The furniture installation and IT system migration at the facility is in progress. We continue to work with Department of Management Services to complete final projects while simultaneously working toward a certificate of occupancy and final inspection 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))

- i. Purchase Orders processed: 603 for the total amount of \$2,771,005.59.
- ii. E-Quotes processed: 80.
- iii. Confirming Order Justification (COJ): 30.
- iv. Processed four Surplus Property requests.
- v. FDVA “Encore Rehab Therapy Services” contract Amendment No. 2 (contract renewal) executed 6/7/22. Approximate annual contract amount \$5,715,000.
- vi. Cashe SVNH (Lake Baldwin CLC) “Veterans Canteen Services” executed contract, with USDVA Veterans Canteen Service Office, received 4/4/22. Total contract amount \$1,761,538.
- vii. Cashe SVNH (Lake Baldwin CLC) “Veterans Canteen Services” executed contract Amendment No. 1 (annual renewal), with USDVA Veterans Canteen Service Office, received 4/22/22. Total contract amount \$1,761,538.
- viii. Cashe SVNH (Lake Baldwin CLC) “Veterans Canteen Services” executed contract Amendment No. 2 (annual renewal), with USDVA Veterans Canteen Service Office, received 4/22/22. Total contract amount \$1,761,538.
- ix. Jacobson SVNH “Automatic Transfer Switch” contract Amendment No. 3 (extension), with Santa Fe Professional Services, Inc., executed 4/26/22. Total contract amount \$201,250.
- x. Jacobson SVNH “Automatic Transfer Switch” contract Amendment No. 4 (extension), with Santa Fe Professional Services, Inc., executed 5/31/22. Total contract amount \$201,250.
- xi. Nininger SVNH “Automatic Transfer Switch” contract Amendment No. 7 (extension), with Santa Fe Professional Services, Inc., executed 3/28/22. Total contract amount \$181,000.
- xii. Nininger SVNH “Automatic Transfer Switch” contract Amendment No. 8 (extension), with Santa Fe Professional Services, Inc., executed 5/31/22. Total contract amount \$181,000.
- xiii. Sims SVNH “Automatic Transfer Switch” contract Amendment No. 5 (extension), with Zabatt Engine Services, Inc., executed 5/25/22. Total contract amount \$225,322.
- xiv. Bennett SVNH “Automatic Transfer Switch” contract Amendment No. 4 (extension), with Zabatt Engine Services, Inc., executed 6/21/22. Total contract amount \$173,857.
- xv. Bennett SVNH “Kitchen Line Replacement” contract, with Direct Supply, Inc., closed out 5/3/22. Total contract amount \$89,000.
- xvi. Lassen SVNH “Exterior Painting” contract Amendment No. 1 (extension), with Five 12 Painting & Remodeling, LLC, executed 4/8/22. Total contract amount \$58,372.
- xvii. Lassen SVNH “Exterior Painting” contract Amendment No. 2 (extension), with Five 12 Painting & Remodeling, LLC, executed 5/4/22. Total contract amount \$58,372.
- xviii. Lassen SVNH “Exterior Painting” contract, with Five 12 Painting & Remodeling, LLC, expired 6/9/22. Total contract amount \$58,372.

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

- i. None

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

- i. FDVA Office of General Counsel prepared updates to the Land Use Management Plans for six State Veterans’ Homes in accordance with Section 253.034(5), Florida Statutes, pertaining to

BOTIITF leases: 3873, 4007, 4261, 4339, 4415, and 4462. Short term accomplishments will be next reported on 11/29/2026, and next updates to the Land Use Management Plans will be due on 11/29/2031.

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

- i. **3 - General Liability Claims:** (0 new this Quarter), 0 won, 0 settled, 0 lost, 3 pending.
- ii. **2 - Employment Liability Claims:** (1 new this Quarter), 0 won, 0 settled, 0 lost, 2 pending.
- iii. **2 - Other Liability Claims:** (1 new this Quarter), 0 won, 0 settled, 0 lost, 2 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. None

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

| Foir Quarter | | | | |
|---|------------|----------|----------|-------------------|
| Facility | Item | Quantity | Value | Total |
| Robert H. Jenkins SVDH - | Pergolas | 2 | \$593.30 | \$1,186.60 |
| | - Chairs | 3 | \$293.00 | \$879.00 |
| Robert H. Jenkins SVDH, Lake City | | | | \$2065.60 |
| Ardie R. Copas SVNH - | Pergolas | 2 | \$593.30 | \$1,186.60 |
| | - Chairs | 3 | \$293.00 | \$879.00 |
| Ardie R. Copas SVNH, Port St. Lucie | | | | |
| Emory L. Bennett SVNH - | Pergolas | 2 | \$593.30 | \$1,186.60 |
| | - Chairs | 3 | \$293.00 | \$879.00 |
| Emory L. Bennett SVNH, Daytona Beach | | | | \$2065.60 |
| Baldomero Lopez SVNH - | Pergolas | 2 | \$593.30 | \$1,186.60 |
| | - Chairs | 3 | \$293.00 | \$879.00 |
| Baldomero Lopez SVNH, Land O' Lakes | | | | \$2065.60 |
| Nininger SVNH | - Pergolas | 2 | \$593.30 | \$1,186.60 |
| | - Chairs | 3 | \$293.00 | \$879.00 |
| | - Boombox | 1 | \$150.00 | \$150.00 |
| Sandy Nininger SVNH, Pembroke Pines | | | | \$2,215.60 |
| Sims SVNH | - Pergolas | 2 | \$593.30 | \$1,186.60 |
| | - Chairs | 3 | \$293.00 | \$879.00 |
| Chester Sims SVNH, Panama City | | | | \$2,065.60 |
| Lassen SVNH | - Pergolas | 2 | \$593.30 | \$1,186.60 |
| | - Chairs | 3 | \$293.00 | \$879.00 |

| | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------|--------------------|
| Clyde E. Lassen, SVNH St. Augustine | | | | \$2,065.60 |
| | | 2 | \$593.30 | \$1,186.60 |
| | | 3 | \$293.00 | \$879.00 |
| Douglas T. Jacobson SVNH, Port Charlotte | | | | \$2,065.60 |
| | Cashe SVNH - Pergolas | 2 | \$593.30 | \$1,186.60 |
| | Chairs | 3 | \$293.00 | \$879.00 |
| Alwyn C. Cashe SVNH, Orlando | | | | \$2,065.60 |
| Total Non-Cash Donations | | | | \$18,432.80 |
| (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 2021-22 |
|---|----------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Robert H. Jenkins SVDH, Lake City | \$810 | \$530 | \$0.00 | \$982.10 | \$2,322.10 |
| Ardie R. Copas SVNH, Port St. Lucie | \$0 | \$0 | \$0.00 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Emory L. Bennett SVNH, Daytona Beach | \$0 | \$1,300 | \$3,025 | \$2,576.00 | \$6,901.00 |
| Baldomero Lopez SVNH, Land O' Lakes | \$651 | \$1,598 | \$6,280 | \$1,765.00 | \$10,294.00 |
| Alexander "Sandy" Nininger SVNH, Pembroke Pines | \$1,100 | \$1,000 | \$2,170 | 0 | \$4,270.00 |
| Clifford C. Sims SVNH, Panama City | \$1,025 | \$500 | \$1,100 | \$50 | \$2,675.00 |
| Douglas T. Jacobson SVNH, Port Charlotte | \$0 | \$1,481 | \$1,505 | 4,415.00 | \$7,401.00 |
| Clyde E. Lassen SVNH, St. Augustine | \$1,454 | \$1,000 | 100,000 | \$0 | \$2,454 |
| Total Cash Donations | \$5,040 | \$7,409 | \$114,080 | \$9,788.10 | \$126,529.10 |

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

| Third Quarter | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Executive Director | NASDVA | \$800.00 |
| Communications Director | NASDVA | \$250.00 |
| Alwyn C. Cashe SVNH, Lake Baldwin | Activity Connection | \$42.74 |
| Ardie R. Copas, St. Lucie | Activity Connection | \$42.74 |
| Internal Auditor | The Institute of Internal Audit | \$175.00 |
| Senior Attorney | Florida Bar | \$265.00 |
| | | \$4,341.00 |
| | | Total: \$1,575 |



3) Veterans Florida (VF)

The 2022 Regular Session ended and the legislature met our full budget request, to include streamlined Proviso. We await the Governor's review and signing of the state budget. For FY 22-23 we are seeking:

| | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Operations Funding | \$400,000 Recurring | Increase of \$55,894 Recurring |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|

VETS Program Funding

\$2,000,000 Non-recurring

Increase of \$700,000 Nonrecurring; restores to FY 2020-21 funding level

Consuela Wilson joined us on May 9, 2022 as Office and Board Manager and Derrick Fraser joined us on May 31, 2022 as VETS Specialist. Employer partners for SkillBridge are currently being signed for the fiscal year.

During this quarter, Veterans Florida staff traveled to in-person events and continue to participate in virtual events and webinars to spread awareness of our services.

Marketing

Quarter four marketing focused on the Veteran Florida 2022 Expo in-person event hosted in Orlando, FL on June 17-18, 2022. The total number of people at the Expo was 247, 132 of which were general attendees. The Expo featured 37 employers, 15 exhibitors, 14 pitch competitors, 5 sponsors, and 7 panel discussions with 28 speakers. A highlight video featuring the main stage panels and pitch competition are available on our YouTube channel.

| Network Partner | Performance | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|--------|--------|
| | April | May | June |
| Unique Website Visitors | 4,260 | 11,053 | 34,519 |
| Facebook Organic Post Reach | 9,299 | 5,211 | 13,805 |
| Newsletter Subscribers | 32,789 | 33,064 | 33,315 |
| LinkedIn Post Reach | 9,965 | 10,129 | 10,841 |
| Twitter Post Reach | 3,500 | 3,465 | 4,013 |

Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS)

The VETS team continues contacting and assisting veterans who are looking for employment and training services.

Career Services Program

Veterans Florida continues the work to expand both workforce grant employers as well as career matching opportunities to the benefit of our veterans. The team attended many job fairs and events around the state.

| Veteran Leads Metrics | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Month | Grant Reimbursement Amount | Lead Interest 2021-22 | Website | Total |
| April | \$8,584.89 | Career | 1,395 | 357 |
| May | \$22,698.50 | SkillBridge | 932 | 357 |
| June | \$25,000.00 | Entrepreneurship | 740 | 411 |
| Total | \$56,283.39 | Total | 3,067 | 1,125 |

* Budget has been depleted.

Veteran Agriculture Program

In October, we began our second year of the Veterans Florida Agriculture Program three year award. The team continues to recruit agriculture fellows to fill openings at partner research and education centers. The Veterans Florida Agriculture Program is an immersive, hands-on 6 month paid fellowship, veterans or transitioning service members study at a University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Research and Education Center, learning about Florida agriculture. Veterans under the program are funded by our USDA funds, and service members under the program are through SkillBridge. The team attended the Military Agriculture Tour in Seffner.

Research and Education Partnership Status

| Partners | Location | Pending | Active | Completed |
|--------------------------|------------|---------|--------|-----------|
| Fort Lauderdale REC | Davie | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Gulf Coast REC | Wimauma | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Indian River Rec | Ft. Pierce | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Mid-Florida REC | Apopka | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Tropical Aquaculture Lab | Ruskin | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Southwest Florida REC | Immokalee | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Tropical Agriculture Lab | Ruskin | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| West Florida REC | Milton | 0 | 2 | 0 |

U.S. Department of Defense SkillBridge

We continue to expand our Skillbridge fellowship offerings with employers throughout the state of Florida to better serve our transitioning active duty service members. Veterans Florida added Cosco & Associates, Legends Airways, and Career Source Escarosa to the SkillBridge catalog this month. The team attended the 50strong EmployerConnect SkillBridge Job Fair virtually.

| SkillBridge Partnership Status | | | | |
|--|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Partner | Location | Pending | Active | Completed |
| ARES Technical Services | Kennedy Space Center | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Florida Department of Economic Opportunity | Statewide | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Florida Highway Patrol | Statewide | 25 | 7 | 5 |
| Boca Aircraft Maintenance | Boca Raton | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| S&B Metal | Lakeland | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| University of Florida IFAS | Statewide | 7 | 12 | 8 |
| Vineyards Country Club | Naples | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Vets2PM | Statewide | 5 | 1 | 5 |
| Florida Department of Corrections | Statewide | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Iron Eagle X | Tampa | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Legends Airways | Lakeland | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Maritech Marine | Panama City | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Pensacola Police Department | Pensacola | 11 | 1 | 0 |
| Piper Aircraft | Vero Beach | 1 | 5 | 0 |
| Randy Wise Homes | Crestview | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Santa Rosa Sheriff's Office | Milton | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Seaside Claims | Jacksonville | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Cosco & Associates | Crestview | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Gulf Coast State College | Panama City | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| HSU Education Foundation | Ft. Walton Beach | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| H.T. Hackney Company | Ft. Walton Beach | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| White Wilson Medical Center | Ft. Walton Beach | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | | 68 | 32 | 35 |

Entrepreneurship Program

Entrepreneurship partners have completed their offerings for fiscal year 2021-22 and are preparing for the upcoming fiscal year. The program will start early September 2022 with cohorts, workshops and networking events.

We recently received a corporate donation from Boeing for SkillBridge and VETS Program support.

| Funder | Amount | Purpose | Status |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Boeing Corporate Donation | \$10,000 | General Support | Received 3/16/2022 |
| Bank of America | \$20,000 | Expo Sponsor | Awarded/received 3/22/2022 |
| CareerSource Florida | \$10,000 | Expo Sponsor | Pending |

❖ Development

We recently received a corporate donation from Boeing for VETS Program support.

| Funder | Amount | Purpose | Status |
|--------------|----------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Boeing Grant | \$50,000 | VETS Program Support | Notified of Award 06/17/2022 |

Board of Directors Meeting

The June Board of Directors meeting was held on June 17, 2022 at the Hilton Orlando during Expo. The primary agenda item was the discussion and approval of the FY 2022-23 budget. During the meeting Boeing leadership joined to share that Veterans Florida was awarded a \$50,000 grant to support the VETS Program. We are planning the September 21, 2022 Board of Directors meeting in Fort Walton Beach, FL. We will be providing financial updates, program updates and working on updating the Strategic Plan.



NO FLORIDA VETERAN LEFT BEHIND

4) Florida Veterans Foundation (FVF)

The Foundation operates for the direct and indirect benefit of the Veterans of Florida, the FDVA and the state Veteran's 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 has two full time contracted employees, one part-time intern paid by outside source and one contracted grant writer.

Board of Directors, FVF Staff & Volunteer Outreach

Florida Veterans Foundation board of directors, ambassadors and partners are volunteers who donate time and resources to support the mission of FVF and its programs to help Veterans in need.

| Team Members | Hours | Events | Veterans Served |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Board of Directors & Volunteers | 4,505 | 269 | 29,633 |
| New Volunteers & Staff | | 12 | 3697 |
| FVF Headquarters Staff Received Calls | | 36 | 930 |

| Outreach Metrics | Reach | Followers |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Facebook | | 200,467 |
| Newsletter Subscribers | | 2,451 |
| Veteran Data Services | | 25,126 |
| Website Page Views | | 15,695 |

Incoming Grants, Fundraising and Donations

Created a new donation webpage for donors to select Veterans in need options.

Below is an overview of funds raised FY 2021-22 fiscal year to date.

| Grants, Fundraising & Donations via Donations Webpage | First Quarter | Second Quarter | Third Quarter | Fourth Quarter | FY 21-22 Totals |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Corporate / Business Grants | \$56,124 | \$115,404 | \$10,501 | \$3,591 | \$3, |
| Direct Public Support | \$53,534 | \$97,903 | \$26,231 | \$12,002 | \$168,380 |
| Agency Grants | \$21,000 | \$98,500 | \$92,500 | \$39,500 | \$177,283 |
| Special Events | \$2,950 | \$29,521 | 0\$ | \$3,750 | \$30,824 |
| Agency Reimbursements | 0 | \$9,284 | 0 | 0 | \$9,284 |
| TOTAL | \$133,608 | \$350,612 | 129,232 | \$58,843 | \$672,295 |

FVF Grants and Funds

| Revenue / Projections | Amount |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Incoming Grants Approved | \$116,000 |
| Incoming Grants Pending Approval | \$95,000 |

Florida Veterans Support Crisis Hotline

In addition to the Foundation's Veterans Crisis Support Lines, 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.

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.

FVF Outreach Programs

| YTD Veterans Assistance = \$177,499 July 1, 2021 thru June 30, 2022 | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Veterans Homeless Shelter Programs | COVID-19 Project Vet Relief Fund |
| VA Pension Claims Assistance | Homeless Meals and other Assistance |
| Emergency Referral Services | Veterans Recognition Awards |
| Volunteer Recruitment Program | Emergency Shelter Assistance |
| Veterans Nursing Home Packages | Blankets, Socks & Meal Drives |
| Medical Equipment Drives | Emergency Dental Services |

Aging Wartime Veterans

FVF & Claims partners provided 77 seminars, and worked 2,038 of Veterans claims for Aid & Attendance during the fiscal year. Below is the approval numbers.

| Forgotten Warrior Project Approved Year to Date | 1,038 Claims Approvals |
|--|------------------------|
| Average Benefit Per Veteran Over 3 Years | \$51,200 |
| Average Total Veteran Benefits Over 3 Years | \$53,145,600 |
| Economic Impact | x 2.39% |
| Total Amount with Economic Impact | \$127,017,984 |
| <i>*Figures based on three-year life expectancy after claims approval.</i> | |

Legacy of Service

The Foundation signed a recent Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Sachs Media who has designed a “Legacy of Service” campaign to further the mission of the Foundation to help veterans in need. It is fully funded by outside sources who support the project through paid advertising.

Veterans First, Mission of Mercy, Emergency Dental Services

The Foundation provided \$15,000 to provide emergency dental services to over 300 Veterans at this event. It was a huge success.

Gadsden Flag License Plate

FVF continues to promote the sale of the License Plate Vouchers. Funding helps the foundation continue its mission of helping Veterans in need. The plate goes into production when 3,000 vouchers are sold. Current count is approximately 970 sold.

Volunteer Florida Grant (VFG)

Ongoing Grant to recruit and track 500+ volunteers, their hours and participation, etc. As of June 30, 2022, we have catalogued over 500 new volunteers who assist with the grant requirements and have logged in over 7,300 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

FVF recruited nine new Ambassadors that support the FVF with sustainable funding and extended outreach. FVF has a total of thirty ambassadors as of March 30, 2022.

FLORIDA VETERANS FOUNDATION IN ACTION



Board Members and Staff Participated in the following Events This Quarter:

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Veteran Treatment Courts | Veterans Council Meetings | Veterans Day Ceremonies |
| Transport Fallen Veterans | Community Veterans Fundraise | Wreaths Across America |
| Veterans Task Force Seminars | Florida Veterans Council | Veterans Claims Seminars |
| 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 | HUD Vash Programs | Women Veterans Workshops |
| Veterans Recognition Events | Afghanistan Withdrawal Group | Veterans Claims Seminars |
| DAR & SAR Events | Gold Star Families Events | |

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.