

NVTAC Monthly Newsletter: May 2023

Monthly Newsletter
May 2023



MAY SPOTLIGHTS



It's Mental Health Awareness Month

May celebrates Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness of and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers resources to help those facing a variety of mental health challenges through their benefits and treatment, including depression, anxiety, military sexual trauma, and substance use.

[VA Mental Health Resources](#)



Head Space and Timing Podcast

Throughout this podcast series, combat veteran and clinical mental health counselor Duane France interviews mental health professionals, veterans, and those who support

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them to help listeners understand more about military service member and veteran mental health.

[Head Space and Timing Podcast](#)



New Study Aims to Explain Gulf War Illness Symptoms

The VA and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) recently began a five-year study to explain the chronic symptoms of Gulf War Illness. Chronic symptoms associated with the disease include fatigue, headaches, memory and cognitive difficulties, joint and muscle pain, poor sleep, and problems with gastrointestinal and respiratory function. Gulf War Illness affects roughly one-third of the nearly 700,000 service members who served in the Persian Gulf during operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

“Taking advantage of the resources available only at NIH, this comprehensive study will take a new look at this illness and uncover biological mechanisms that may pave the way to treatments,” said Director of National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke Walter Koroshetz, M.D.

[More About the Gulf War Illness Study](#)



Helping Justice-involved Veterans Get their Second Chance

The [latest podcast episode of Ending Veteran Homelessness](#) featured special guest Sean Clark, National Director for Veterans Justice Programs, and Madolyn Gingell,

National Coordinator for Legal Services for Veterans, who discussed why it is important to help veterans get a second chance. The guests also cover what the justice system is, how past incarceration can impact veterans' risk for homelessness, and what the VA is doing to help.



Budget Cut Plans Will Negatively Affect Veteran Services

A proposed budget cut of 22 percent would threaten key services for veterans provided by the federal government and the VA. Budget cuts would affect services that include medical care, access to telehealth, wait times for benefits, housing, job training, and other support services for veterans experiencing homelessness.

[Details about the Budget Cuts](#)



New Program for Transitioning Service Members to Work for the VA

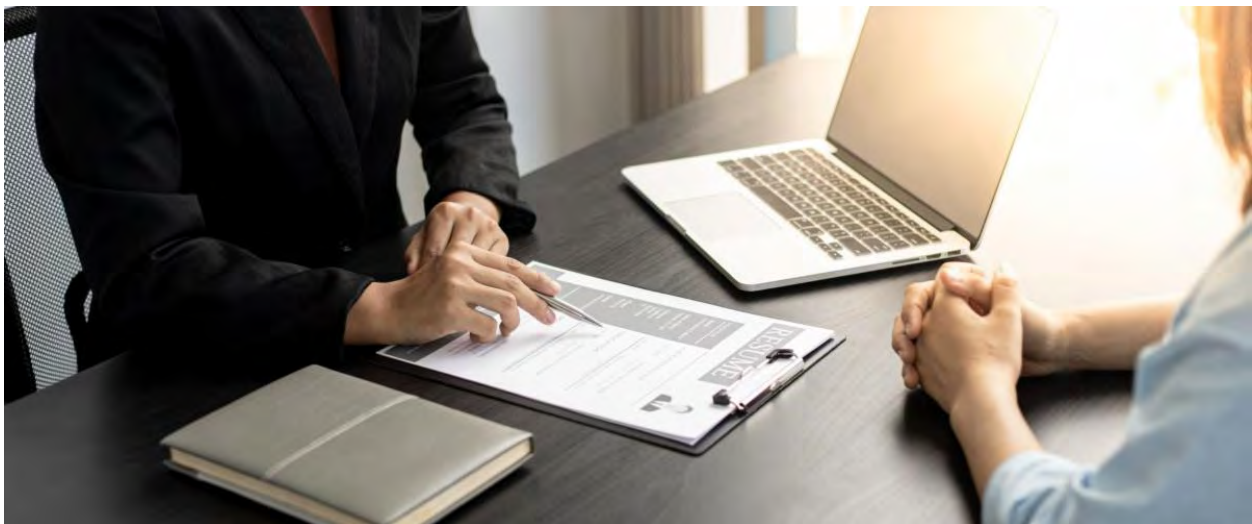
The VA is finalizing a program that trains transitioning service members to become claims representatives and claims adjudicators, positions the department needs to fill to

accommodate new filings under the [Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics \(PACT\) Act](#), which extended VA benefits to millions of veterans who were exposed to radiation and hazardous chemicals as part of their military service since the 1960s.

The veteran service representative course takes six weeks to complete, while the rating representative class takes 11 weeks. After successfully completing the training, graduates are qualified for jobs that start at around \$50,000 to \$60,000, with raise and promotion opportunities that can reach 6 figures.

[VA Training Program](#)

SUCCESS STORY



The following is a Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) success story of a veteran told from the grantee's perspective. The name of the veteran has been changed to protect their identity.

HVRP Led to Childcare and Education Opportunities

The HVRP participant was referred from the District of Columbia (DC) American Job Center (AJC) with several employment goals and barriers. She was interested in Special Police Officer (SPO) training, the DC infrastructure program, project empowerment, and continuing her education. She was not successful at securing any of those opportunities due to one of her main barriers, which was childcare. After being in the program for several months, the HVRP staff provided her with a recommendation letter for a Tuition Assistance Program Initiative for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TAPIT) (TANF) scholarship, which would give her the opportunity to finish her bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communication. With ongoing HVRP staff support, the participant resumed classes at Trinity Washington University; and the

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Department of Human Services referred her to KRA Corporation to obtain childcare vouchers while enrolled in school.

Do you have a success story you would like to share? If you are a grantee who helped a veteran who is struggling with housing or employment, we would love to hear from you.

[Submit Your Success Stories](#)

RESOURCES



New National Veterans' Training Institute's (NVTI) On-Demand Learning Resources

NVTI just posted a new webinar, [Veteran Suicide Prevention: VA S.A.V.E.](#), that explains how to identify a veteran who may be at risk for suicide, what to do when someone identifies a veteran at risk, and outlines the VA S.A.V.E. steps which explain how to act with care and compassion if you encounter a veteran who is in crisis.

In addition, NVTI recently released [Addressing Burnout and Secondary Trauma for Veteran Service Providers](#), the fifteenth episode in its podcast series. In this podcast, you can learn about the relationship between burnout and secondary trauma, ways to identify signs of both, and what actions service providers can take to alleviate burnout or secondary trauma while working with their veteran clients.

You can access these resources and more on [NVTI.org](https://nvti.org). Be sure to visit frequently to see what new learning ecosystem components are available.



National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) Veteran Resources

The NCTE advocates changing policies to increase empathy, opportunity, justice, understanding, and acceptance of transgender people. To help achieve its goal, the NCTE offers resources for transgender service members and veterans.

[**NCTE Veteran Resources**](#)



Boots to Business (B2B) Courses for Veterans

B2B is an entrepreneurial education and training program offered by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) as part of the Department of Defense Transition Assistance Program (TAP). Courses cover numerous topics, including business fundamentals, entrepreneurship, and developing a business model. They are available for active duty service members, veterans, and their spouses.

[**B2B Website**](#)

EVENTS



Cross-Country March Honoring Veterans and Service Members

Between April 27 and May 27, the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) and Carry the Load organized a 20,000-mile march honoring veterans and service members that covers 48 states and five separate routes. Participants are asked to [register in advance](#) to participate in the march.

Photographs and videos of the cemetery visits are being shared on the NCA's [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages.

[List and Schedule of Participating Cemeteries](#)

