

Mission: Providing veterans with access to legal services that protect their interests and promote justice



June 10, 2019

After Action Report for North Florida Stand Down (NFSD) 2019

North Florida Stand Down 2019 was held on May 17-18, 2019 at the North Florida Fairgrounds and served **three hundred sixty (360) homeless and at-risk veterans**; the majority were at-risk veterans. The event was successful due to the collaborative efforts of all parties involved. There were more than **sixty (60) agencies/service providers** and **more than three hundred persons** who volunteered and participated/assisted in this venture. The monetary donations totaled **\$33,610.00** and the in-kind donations including pro bono legal services exceeded **\$80,000**. We are appreciative of all those sponsors, organizations and volunteers that generously gave to help defray the cost of hosting Stand Down for our Veterans. Overall, we were able to provide many needed services to our honored Veterans and heighten the awareness of the challenges that many Veterans continually encounter.

Veterans Registration: Veterans Registration was staffed by Veterans Affairs employees. **VA reported that 360 veterans signed in at Stand Down and over one hundred twenty-five veterans pre-registered for the event.**

Opening Ceremony: FL/GA VA Regional Director, Thomas Wisnieski, Tallahassee Mayor John Daily, Leon County Commissioner Jimbo Jackson, Leon County Clerk of Court Gwen Marshall, Property Appraiser Administer Bill Eichhoefer were guest speakers at the Opening Ceremony. State Attorney, 2nd Judicial Circuit, Jack Campbell, City Commissioner Curtis Richardson, Marine Core League Commandant James Sigman and other dignitaries were present during the Ceremony. Retired LTC Ray Mosley was the MC for the third year. TVLC President Attorney Dan Hendrickson welcomed the veterans, volunteers, and dignitaries. A repeat performance was made by the Leon High School Marine Corps JROTC Color Guard and Ms. KeTurah Poole led us in singing the National Anthem. Retired Col. Washington Sanchez and SD 2019 Coordinator Katina Johnson presented 6-year participation plaques to Dr. Sondra Brown of Northwood Animal Hospital and Michelle Posey of Randazzles Hair Company.

Housing: Big Bend Homeless Coalition screened approximately 15 veterans and is currently serving 2 of those veterans. Six were eligible for HUD/Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program;

Education: TCC/FSU Vet Success Representatives, FAMU Student Veteran Representatives and FSU Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship-Veteran Entrepreneurship training services provided educational counseling services to more than **40 Veterans**. TCC/FSU Vet Success was able to gather 4 CH 31 Vocational Rehabilitation applicants who have now been entered and are being scheduled as soon as possible.

Legal Services: **More than 130 Veterans** requested legal assistance concerning various legal questions, updates, referrals and even the annual court proceeding which resolved dozens of cases for nineteen individual veterans. The TVLC legal team included 82 attorneys, paralegals, and other assistants.

Court: SD 2019 court proceedings allowed more than 2000 hours of community service to satisfy approximately \$50,000 of court costs from old criminal and civil cases in at least three counties in the 2d Judicial Circuit, Leon, Gadsden, Jefferson. Over thirty veterans had cases go before Judge Nina Ashenafi Richardson, to clear old court obligations, remove subpoenas/warrants, withdraw pleas and enter new pleas with revised sentencing, and agreeing to the conversion of tens of thousands of dollars in court obligations to community service

Drivers Licenses: Scores of Veterans took advantage of the DHSMV's Flow mobile, located adjacent to legal tents, to receive an updated history of their driving records. Twenty-five were able to obtain their driver's license and three received Florida ID cards.

Veteran Service Officers: The VSOs who participated from Leon County provided information on available benefits and/or services to **60 Veterans**. FL Department of Veterans Affairs VSO saw 10 Veterans with cases. Services included compensation claims/Non-Service Pension Application; Service Treatment Medical Record Requests, Bass Pass Application for Health Benefits (10-10EZ).

VA Medical: It was noted that the pre-registration of veteran participants is very valuable to the VA Outpatient Clinic staff; it allows them to distribute committee tasks with core members. The Nursing and MAS staff reviewed the **(125+) Veterans** who had pre-registered and determined if they were eligible for care. 22 Advanced directives were discussed and noted; 40+ veteran engagement, providing informational, supportive and navigation through the VA; 10 eligible veterans enrolled into VA services; 2 veterans consulted with community base providers for immediate needs (shortness of breath, dental complaints).

Bond Community Health Center (BCHC): **Thirty Veterans** received medical services on the Bond Mobile Unit. **Leon County Health and Neighborhood Health Center** performed

Blood Glucose, Syphilis, blood pressure, BMI Check and/or HIV testing for 70 Veterans and others. **Big Bend Cares served approximately 100 veterans**, providing educational material on HIV along with other STD's. Contraceptives and information on testing were also provided. **PanCare medical van served 25 veterans**, providing medical care (mostly physicals), with one emergency breathing treatment being completed.

Mental Health: Counselors from the VA Clinic, LOSS, Apalachee Center and Behavioral Health Outreach, Capital Regional Medical Center participated, and each vendor provided information to more than **(100) Veterans**.

Apalachee Mental Health: **Served (32) Veterans**. Most individuals appeared to be reluctant to discuss mental health concerns or need for services.

2-1-1 Big Bend served 13 veterans providing counseling, referrals, and follow ups.

Dental Services:

- a) **PanCare of Florida, Inc.** (Sean Golder, Operation Manager, a dentist, and four hygienists) provided oral exams, teeth cleanings and extractions to **(49) Veterans**.
- b) **Florida Baptist Convention Dental Mobile Unit** (staffed by Drs. Alberto Sixto, Richard Bastien, Brittney Craig and David Cardman.) Services were provided to **(40) Veterans**.

Chiropractic care: Dr. Joanne Eash and 6 interns, Palmer College of Chiropractic provided chiropractic services to **(100) persons**. **Services included adjustments, exams, etc.**

Social Services:

Transportation: **Star Metro** graciously provided free bus rides to veterans interested in attending Stand Down. In addition, The Purple Heart Bus was provided for display both Friday and Saturday.

Meals: A total of 5 meals were served on Friday and Saturday. There were several restaurants and catering companies (Sharkey's and Lindy's Chicken, Grandma Honey's, Krispy Kreme and Dunkin Donuts, Elks Lodge, Bradfordville Church, Arms of Angels catering, Roadhouse BBQ, Ms. Betty's Homemade Cakes and Community Coffee) that provided the culinary needs for SD 2019.

Voting: The Office of Supervisor of Elections Leon County and staff provided 2019 Election Dates and Deadlines materials, donated over 100 LCSOE red and blue draw string bags and **registered and updated (32) voters**. Also, provided information on last fall's Amendment 4 to the state constitution.

Photographer: AJ Studios Photography provided photography services to more than **60 Veterans**, he took individual headshots as well as group photos.

Stand Down Photographers: **Brenda Little and Maria Renzulli** both took amazing photos of our veterans and volunteers during SD 2019. Their photos can be seen on TVLC Website at: www.tvlc.legal.

Employment Services: CareerSource Capital Region staff members in conjunction with staff representatives from Big Bend SHRM, provided services to **(80) Veterans**, including consultations and planning, Disabled Veterans Outreach Employment Services, resume reviews, head shots, and partnering employers hiring for their vacancies and scheduled follow up appointments.

Veterinarian Care: Dr. Sondra Brown, Veterinarian and two other veterinarians provided full exams, medical treatment, vaccines, heartworm prevention and flea/tick control for a total of **(39) dogs and (8) cats**. Of those, 18 were new dogs we had never seen before and 4 were new cats. Not all the clients were new Veterans and **a total of 36 veteran families were served**.

Haircuts: North Florida Cosmetology Institute (Lori Scott) and eight student stylists cut and styled hair of more than **(109) Veterans**.

Items Distributed: Numerous toiletries and socks donated from various organizations were distributed to participating Veterans. Additionally, 243 veterans and 128 family members were provided food and from Farm Share and Second Harvest.

Red Cross: Staff members provided **250 comfort kits and 75 home fire campaign smoke detector requests**

Bicycles: Bicycle vouchers were given to over 100 veterans and 20 veterans were selected by voucher number for redemption at the Bicycle House. The bicycles had been donated by the FSU Police Department (abandoned bicycles) and required minor repair. Veterans were required to perform the needed repairs (Bicycle House staff and volunteers were available to instruct/assist with repairs).

Free Raffles/Giveaways: There were over 45 gifts cards/certificates for services that were graciously donated by Zaxby's Chicken, Ruby Tuesday's Restaurant, BJ's Restaurant, The Egg restaurant and CMX Cinemas from local businesses for raffle/giveaway to Veterans. Gail Ernst prepared 12 gift baskets which were also given away during the free raffle plus a large grand prize gift basket was donated by Career Source.

Recreational - Taoist Tai Chi Society provided information to veterans and did frequent short demos of the Tai Chi set and invited people to join. Approximately 20 people participated in the demos within a 4-hour timespan.

Tallahassee National Cemetery served approximately 119 veterans with 50 interested in filing out pre-need forms. Staff explained to veterans/spouses about their burial benefits and gave Brochures of Scheduling, Benefit Brochures for Survivors and Brochures about the Tallahassee National Cemetery. Staff also distributed Pre-Need forms and flyers to inform veterans of activities going on at the cemetery through-out the year.

Suicide Prevention Training: As an event of the Stand Down, VA presented, and Bethel Baptist Church hosted a Clergy/Veterans Prayer Breakfast and Suicide Prevention Training on 17 May. The breakfast was jointly sponsored by TVLC and Bethel Baptist. Suicide Prevention training was provided by Ms. Bette Van Trump Stephens from Malcom Randall VAMC, representing VA's Center for Faith and Outreach Initiative. There were 30 attendees representing clergy, veterans, and volunteers.

Additional SD 2019 After Action Reporting:

Interim SD 2019 Court: A Follow-up SD Court was held on May 26, (19) Veterans were on the docket and appeared before Judge Nina Ashenafi Richardson. Almost all Veterans were ordered to complete Community Service Hours (CSH). Tallahassee Veterans Legal Collaborative has staff to assist veterans with volunteer location if need. Veterans are actively working towards completion of their CSH requirements.

SD 2019 Appreciation Dinner: An Appreciation Dinner will be held on July 18, 2019 at the American Legion Post 13 to honor the efforts of around 200 volunteers who helped to make SD 2019 a successful venture for the Homeless and At-Risk Veterans.

signed
COL Washington J. Sanchez, Jr. USA (Ret.)
SD 2019 Director

Signed
Katina M. Johnson
SD 2019 Coordinator