



SARATOGA COUNTY
VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY
152 WEST HIGH ST., BALLSTON SPA, NY 12020

SC-VSA

November 11th, 2013

Executive Summary, Saratoga County, Veterans' Service Agency (VSA)

Subject: Events and Activities Summary for October 1st through November 11, 2013.

Executive Summary Intent: The purpose of this document is to provide situational awareness and understanding to subordinate and adjacent leaders and staff of the Veterans' Service Agency (VSA). This document does not by itself dictate official policy or decision.

Mission: To fulfill President Lincoln's promise "To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan" by serving and honoring the men and women who are America's veterans.

Vision: We will accomplish this by providing quality service, advocacy and counseling for the Veterans of Saratoga County and their families. In coordination with other Saratoga County departments, non-government organizations, community based partners and affiliates, we will make sure our Veterans receive the right services, external assistance and benefits through outreach. The most essential portion of our charter is to ensure that our Veterans, especially those we come in contact with, are treated professionally with dignity and respect.

Summary:

1. Veterans Self Sufficiency.

- a. On Wednesday, October 9th, 2013, Amy Amoroso, Veterans Business Advisor, Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC), conducted the Veterans Business 101Class to three Veterans and their families. The class was conducted at the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce.
- b. On Tuesday, October 22nd, 2013, the team participated in the VA Stratton Veterans Job Fair. Noney M. Grier, HVSEP Vocational Rehab Specialist, Department of Veterans Affairs, introduced us to several "Veteran Friendly" employers as possible partners for VetHelp in order to address the issues of Homeless Veterans through a streamlined employment process.
- c. On October 24th, 2013, Members of Task Force set up display booths and tables in order to inform/teach the public about what benefits are available for our Veterans and for businesses that hire Veterans. Noney M. Grier was the "Veterans Employment" guest speaker at the Expo. Amy Amoroso also introduced our new "contact information card."
- d. On October 24th, 2013, we conducted a meeting to discuss the final touches of our bill proposal to grant Veteran Owned Businesses preferential treatment.
 - 1) Bill #A8230/S5968, OORAH! (*Opening Opportunities, Resources and Access for Heroes*) provides to Veterans' Businesses:
 - Affirmative action providing access and opportunities for a successful business
 - Veteran-owned Business Enterprise (VBE) certification status
 - Assistance by the Division of Minority, Women and Veteran-owned Business Development

- Inclusion as a VBE in the directory of certified minority, women, and now, veteran-owned business enterprises which is distributed to all state contracting agencies encouraging MWVBE use.
- A percentage share of state contract procurement determined by the next Study of Minority, Women and Veteran-owned Business Enterprise Programs
- Listing in the New York City-wide contracting goals enabling VBEs to be a part of agency utilization plans and outreach activities
- A percentage share of New York City-wide contracts used to set agency goals determined by the 2015 city review
- Incubator space
- Business start-up loans, micro-loans, revolving trust fund accounts

2) Working group partners included:

- Kathleen A. Marchione - Senator, New York State, 43rd Senate District
- John T. McDonald III – Assemblyman, New York State, 108th Assembly District
- Dan Stec - Assemblyman, New York State, 114th Assembly District
- Mary Ann Johnson – Supervisor, Town of Day/Chair Saratoga County Veterans Committee
- Daphne Jordan - Legislative Director, New York State, 43rd Senate District
- Amy Amoroso - Veterans Business Advisor, Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC)
- Denise Romeo – Vice President, Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce
- Felipe Moon – Director, Saratoga County Veterans Service Agency

2. Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO). Nothing significant to report for this summary period.

3. Veterans Peer to Peer Support Program. The Board of Supervisors approved the resolution to begin production of the Peer to Peer marketing video.

4. Veterans Benefits Outreach Initiative.

- a. On Tuesday, October 29th, 2013, we conducted our second Veterans Benefits Outreach day in the Town of Waterford. Frank briefed 4 Veterans/family members on available benefits, resulting in 3 one on one engagements and one Compensation claim.
- b. On Tuesday, November 26th, 2013, our host will be the Town of Saratoga.

5. Veterans Trust Fund Initiative.

- a. On Saturday, November 9th, 2013 at 10:00AM in the vicinity of Hudson Crossings Park, the Town of Saratoga hosted the 2nd Annual Saratoga County Veterans Trust Fund 5K Race and Children's 1/2 Mile Nature Run.

- Over 25 Sponsors! (\$250.00 Minimum Donation)



- Over 170 people ran out 205 registered runners!



- b. Fall Fund Drive. Peter Bardunias, (President/CEO) and the Chamber of Commerce of Southern Saratoga County will conduct a Fund Drive to kick off on Veterans Day and end on Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.

1) The donation levels will be the following:

Fife & Drum	\$5.00
Enlisted Soldier	\$10.00
Officer	\$25.00
Col Kosciuszko	\$100.00
Gen. Lincoln	\$250.00
General Schuyler	\$500.00
General Gates	\$1000.00

2) Peter will kick this off Tuesday, November 5 broadcast on 101.3 FM with Walt and Heidi. Neerav Patel, owner of the station, is going to also let Peter create some PSA announcements urging people to contribute.

3) Peter is planning to develop a couple of PSA announcements for the campaign. for 1300AM.

6. Saratoga County Veteran’s Business Council.

a. The council met on Wednesday, October 30th, 2013 at 3:00 p.m. at the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce.

b. Below is the article written by Denise Romeo, Vice President, Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce:

In partnership with the Saratoga County Veterans Services Agency, your Chamber is building a valuable resource for Saratoga County’s business community and for those who have served our great nation.

The Veterans Business Council, made up of Chamber members who are Veterans, will guide the organization to explore potential opportunities that will benefit both our local Veterans and Saratoga County’s business community. We know that many of our local Veterans, who are transitioning out of military service, are looking for work. We also know that our local business community is always looking for a talented, educated and well trained work force with a strong work ethic. The Chamber, and the Veterans Business Council, looks to be the conduit to make sure our Veteran’s skills and talents are matched to private sector needs. A connection has already been facilitated through the Chamber’s Human Resources Council, the Saratoga County Employment and Training office, the Department of Labor as well as the Veterans Services Agency of Saratoga County.

Statistics show that approximately nine percent of American business owners are Veterans. When including businesses where Veterans are at least half-owners, those numbers rise to 13.5 percent. Self-employment and small business ownership are increasingly viable options for returning and discharging Veterans and the Chamber’s Veterans Business Council is working on avenues in which we can be a resource. We are connecting Veterans with representatives from SCORE who have been leaders in providing mentoring and training to our returning Veteran entrepreneurs. We are working with the Small Business Development Center to connect local Veterans with a Veterans Business Advisor who can

counsel them on such things as capital, federal contracting and other business development tools and services.

The Council is assisting the Saratoga County Veterans Services Agency with their 2nd annual 5K run to be held on Saturday, November 9th at the Hudson Crossing Park, Route 32, in Schuylerville starting at 10:00 a.m. All proceeds will go to the Saratoga County Veterans Trust Fund which assists local Veterans with their education, training, housing, car repairs, etc. Please call the Chamber for more details at 584-3255 or visit <http://beta.active.com/schuylerville-ny/running/2nd-annual-saratoga-county-veterans-trust-fund-5k-2013> to register as a runner.

The Chamber thanks Chris Homicz, of Momentive Performance Materials, for Chairing the Veterans Business Council and the following Chamber members for their service to our Country and their participation on this exciting new Council: Ally Andolina, DeCrescente Distributing, Jennifer Therrien, Globalfoundries, Laurel Tator, The Wesley Communities, Jon Ruscitto, NBT Bank, Brian Adelson, Adirondack e-Payment Solutions, Mike Billok, Bond Schoeneck & King PLLC, Karen Charbonneau, Realty USA/Living Healthy Rocks, Chuck VanVorst, Empire State College, Courtney Burns, NYS Military Museum, Dan Colvin, AngioDynamics, Pat Phillips, Insurance Agency Group of NY, LLC, Michelle Taylor, Logo Wearhaus, Allison Clower, H&V Collision Center, Michelle Rusk (Chamber Intern), and Felipe Moon, Saratoga County Veterans Services Agency (Advisor). As a Chamber member, if you are, or have a veteran working for you who may have an interest in joining our Council, please contact the Chamber at 584-3255 for additional information.

7. Veterans Outreach. (This portion will seem vague due to the nature of the incidents and confidentiality.)
 - a. During this reporting period our “network” assisted several Veterans navigating through acute urgent matters regarding civil legal matters, family advocacy and potential traumatic events which would have had catastrophic effects.
 - b. We are developing a new partnership between the Saratoga County Bar Association and the University of Albany Law School in order to provide our Veterans with Pro Bono legal assistance.
8. Veterans Service Operational Update.
 - a. October 2013 Honor our Deceased Veterans Ceremony took place on the 15th at 2:30 in the Board Room. The honoree was Civil War Veteran James Cutbush from the Town of Milton.
 - b. November’s Honor our Deceased Veterans Ceremony will take place on the 19th of November at 2:30 in the Board Room. The honoree will be Harry August Stanford, a WWI Veteran from the City of Saratoga Springs.
 - c. In coordination with Leatherstocking Honor Flight and the Patriot Guard Riders; On Saturday October 19th, 2013, we ensured transportation to Albany International Airport for five of Saratoga County’s WWII Veterans and three “Guardians” to assist them on this memorable day.
 - 1) Leatherstocking Honor Flight Mission: Transport America's veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit those memorials dedicated to honor their service and sacrifices.

- 2) Goal: Helping every single veteran in America, willing and able, of getting on a plane or a bus to visit THEIR memorial.
 - 3) Priority: Top priority is given to America's most senior heroes — survivors of World War II and any veteran with a terminal illness who wishes to visit THEIR memorial. The program will naturally transition to Korean War, Vietnam War and all other veterans who served, on a chronological basis.
- d. The Saratoga County Veterans Service Agency transported 139 Veterans to the VA hospital this month.

Ridership derived from the following towns:

- Saratoga Springs – 44
- Ballston Spa – 23
- Stillwater – 14
- Saratoga/Schulyerville - 2
- Clifton Park – 12
- Milton – 10
- South Glens Falls (Moreau) - 6
- Halfmoon – 2
- Hadley – 2
- Wilton – 9
- Mechanicville –12
- Malta – 2
- Greenfield – 1

- e. Vietnam Veterans Association and Korean War Veterans Association Flag Initiative. The flags are in and we will distribute them this month to the towns/cities.

- 1) The Korean War Association Flag will be flown from June 28th through July 27th.
- 2) The Vietnam Veterans Association Flag will be flown from March 31st through April 30th.

- f. Veterans Service Officer Actions.

- 1) Frank processed 23 new claims at an average of 1 hour per claim.
- 2) Frank conducted 12 open claims follow up engagements at an average of .75 hours per engagement.
- 3) Frank scheduled 9 claim appointments at an average of 1.25 hours per scheduling.
- 4) The team served 22 walk-in clients at an average of 30 minutes per visit.
- 5) The team processed 618 phone call inquiries at an average of 8 minutes per inquiry.

6) The team received 10 referrals from within from County DSS resulting in 2 scheduled appointments.

9. Upcoming Events:

November 12th, 2013 – Veterans Committee Meeting

November 13th, 2013 – Saratoga County Bar Association Meeting

November 19th, 2013 – Honor Deceased Veterans Ceremony – Saratoga Springs

November 21st, 2013 – Meeting with NYS DOC and VetHelp

November 22nd, 2013 – Saratoga County Veterans Employment Task Force Meeting

November 26th, 2013 – Veterans Benefits Outreach – the Town of Saratoga

November 26th, 2013 – 3rd Annual Saratoga County Veterans Trust Fund 5K Meeting

Conclusion: Over the last several months the goal was to make significant strides to improve the life of the Saratoga County Veteran and his/her family. Through cooperation, collaboration, coordination and communication (C4) within our network of government and nongovernment affiliates; we achieved this by Veterans Day! There is more to do and plenty of work to share!

Felipe C. Moon/Saratoga County Veterans Service Agency at (518) 884-4116 or fmoon@saratogacountyny.gov.