

View in Web Browser

December 6, 2023



Ready To Serve ★ Proud To Have Served

Commissioner's Corner



The talented musicians of the [63rd Army Band](#) performed holiday classics in Manasquan, NJ on December 2, 2023.

Looking Back, Marching Forward

Holidays Are Upon Us!

I hope you are able to spend some time with friends and loved ones, as well as enjoy some of the many festivities around our Garden State this month.

Mental Health First Aid Training

Despite the excitement and some snowflakes in the air, especially for readers of this newsletter, we never know when we might notice

a Veteran friend or family member is not doing so well. We are sometimes suddenly in a place to help make a difference in the life of someone going through a hard time.

I want to highlight our Mental Health First Aid Training sessions continuing in the months ahead throughout New Jersey. You might recall from this summer that as part of the [Governor's Challenge](#) to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families, DMAVA, the New Jersey Hospital Association and the Mental Health Association of New Jersey partnered to deliver 42 Mental Health First Aid classes around the state.

The eight-hour training sessions are intended for community organizations that interact with Service Members, Veterans, and their families at the local level, but is open for all interested participants. I encourage you to check on the [schedule of upcoming events](#) to identify a free-of-charge opportunity near you!

National Guard Birthdays

For over 319 years, celebrated on December 12th, the New Jersey National Guard has served our state and nation with distinction. Serving with you is an honor! The Citizen Soldier and Citizen Airman construct has proven to stand the test of time, and I can only imagine the great things you will do for New Jersey and the United States in the coming years.

On December 13, 1636, the Massachusetts Bay Colony General Court issued the order to organize the first militia regiments in North America. This action gave birth to the National Guard as America's oldest and longest-serving military force. Our 181st Infantry Battalion, still based in Massachusetts and under the 44th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, headquartered in New Jersey, is one of the four oldest military units in our nation's armed forces.

Happy birthday to the New Jersey National Guard and happy birthday to the National Guard!

Always Ready, Always There

In 2023, our Soldiers and Airmen of the New Jersey National Guard have trained around the clock to remain able, ready, and willing to take on every mission coming their way.

The [44th Infantry Brigade Combat Team](#) successfully led two dozen states' Guard and Reserve forces at Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), Fort Johnson, Louisiana in preparation for its 2024 deployment to the Central Command area of operations.

The [42nd Regional Support Group](#) continued to set the conditions for success as they supported not only JRTC, but the 2023 Guardian Response validation exercise at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, and prepared for stateside deployment alongside elements of 57th Troop Command.

The [254th Regional Training Institute](#) remains key to multiple programs' successes, including our welcome to the Republic of Cyprus as our new state partner, and support to our 30+ engagements with the Republic of Albania.

Taking a lead on modernization, development and reform, the [108th Wing](#) transitioned from the KC-135R Stratotanker to the KC-46 Pegasus in a new association with the 305th Wing at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.

Right now, at the tip of the spear downrange, several hundred [177th Fighter Wing](#) Airmen are supporting regional stability and deterrence, and protecting our forces abroad in the Middle East.

It is an honor to serve alongside these Citizen Soldiers and Airmen.

As always, thank you for staying connected to DMAVA and be safe!

We invite you to share ideas, events and feedback. Please email our team at outreach@dmava.nj.gov.

Brigadier General Lisa J. Hou, D.O.
The Adjutant General & Commissioner



Featured Events

Veterans of Delaware, and the New Jersey Counties of Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem, Join Us For Your

VA |  U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Experience Office

Veterans Experience Action Center (VEAC)

**DECEMBER
12-14, 2023
10AM - 3PM ET**

Speak directly with VA and community experts!

 Get 1-on-1 assistance with:

- VA Health Care
- VA Benefits
- PACT Act
- Community Services
- Peer-to-Peer Connection
- Memorial Affairs
- Crisis Resources


"Together, VA and our ecosystem of partners can work to deliberately and consciously change the way benefits, care, and services are delivered to marginalized and underserved communities."

—VA Secretary
Denis McDonough

 **REGISTER FOR THE VEAC TODAY!**
Please note this event is only open to residents of Delaware and Cape May, Cumberland, Salem and Atlantic Counties of New Jersey and all event times are in Eastern Time.

WWW.VA.GOV/VEAC



 **YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY**

THE STAFF AND CADETS OF THE NEW JERSEY YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY FOR

CLASS 56

Friday, December 15, 2023 @ 6:00 p.m.

Lawrenceville Armory
151 Eggerts Crossing Road
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648



Multiple Dates and Locations
Free Eight-Hour Training Sessions

Mental Health First Aid Training

Learn How to Support Veterans

Intended for community organizations that interact with Service Members, Veterans, and their families at the local level, but is open for all interested participants.

[Learn More and Register](#)

Events



DMAVA Calendar

DMAVA is sponsoring or will participate in the events below. A DMAVA Veterans Service Officer will be present at many of these events. Please check details to confirm.

- December 7 | Bordentown
[Retirement / Transition Seminar](#)
- December 10 | American Dream Mall
[63rd Army Band Holiday Concert](#)
- December 15 | Lawrenceville
[NJYCA Class 56 Graduation](#)

- December 16 | Wrightstown
[Wreaths Across America](#)
- December 16 | Toms River
[Survivor Outreach Services Holiday Party](#)

Community Calendar

We add new events to our calendar on a daily basis so please bookmark and check back often.

[View Full Calendar](#)

Veteran Spotlight



Major Ronald M. Mayercik

DMAVA Veterans Outreach Coordinator Chuck Robbins had the honor to present three New Jersey State Medals to Jan Buttler, sister of Vietnam MIA, U.S. Air Force Major Ronald M. Mayercik.

Major Mayercik was awarded the New Jersey Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the New Jersey POW-MIA Medal and the New Jersey Vietnam Service Medal.

The presentation took place on December 2, 2023 at the George P. Vanderveer American Legion Post 129's annual POW-MIA Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony in Toms River, NJ.

Mayerick, of Edison, served with the 432nd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing as a First Lieutenant. On Thanksgiving Day in 1967, Mayerick and another crewmember, Major Brendan P. Foley departed Udorn Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand, on a night-time weather reconnaissance mission over North Vietnam in a RF-4C Phantom II. After losing radio contact and failing to return to the base as scheduled, both were reported missing in action and remain unaccounted for. Following the incident, Mayerick was promoted to Major, and Foley to Colonel.

Today, Major Mayerick is memorialized on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific.

His name is also inscribed along with all his fallen comrades on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, DC.

View Major Mayerick's Personnel Profile at the [Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency](#).



NJ National Guard



63rd Army Band

The New Jersey Army National Guard's [63rd Army Band](#) performed a Veterans Day concert for the residents at the [New Jersey Veterans Home at Paramus](#) on November 12, 2023.



National Guard Readiness Center

Construction nears completion on the National Guard Readiness Center at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, NJ, November 29, 2023.

The \$17 million, 40,762 square foot facility will provide the Soldiers of Bravo Company, 250th Brigade Support Battalion, 44th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, New Jersey Army National Guard, with a modern, state-of-the-art facility with classroom training, administration, maintenance operations, and equipment storage.

In addition, the project will achieve the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Silver Certification, a globally recognized symbol of sustainability achievement.

[View Images](#)

Join Our Team

- 100% Free College Tuition**
- Bonuses up to \$20,000**
- Student Loan Repayment**



DMAVA Veterans Services



Andre' Daigle, Salem/Cumberland VSO

My name is Andre' Daigle. I am a retired 20-year disabled Navy Veteran. I enlisted right out of high school in 1986 and retired from 20 years of honorable service in 2006. I was stationed mostly on the West Coast until I was near retirement. I served on the following Naval Ships: USS OGDEN (LPD 5), USS PELELIU (LHA 5), and deployed onboard the USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN (CVN 72) while attached to VFA 113 Fighter Squadron. I was in many theaters of combat and conflicts throughout my years in the Navy.

Upon retirement I gained employment as a Storeroom/Warehouse Manager at a local Glass factory. Unfortunately, the factory was sold, and the doors were closed after I was employed for 7 years. I was faced with an adversity that seemed life changing. I had to file for unemployment. Fortunately, I met a Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) who educated me on all my earned veteran benefits at the local Career One Stop. I utilized my Veteran Readiness and Employment benefits (formerly called Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment) to acquire my Bachelor of Social Work Degree from Stockton University. I learned about applying for service connection and filed a claim with a Veteran Service Officer (VSO). This changed my mindset and I pursued a new career serving veterans again but as a Social Worker.

I served veterans on active duty as a Yeoman since I enlisted in 1986. I had the opportunity to continue servicing fellow veterans after retirement and learned firsthand the importance of knowing your veteran benefits. After graduating from college, I worked for the county government as an Assistant Veteran Service Officer and an employment counselor. In early 2022 I was blessed with the opportunity for employment as a State of New Jersey DVOP located in Rio Grande, New Jersey. This opportunity is where I made a difference in fellow veterans' lives who were faced with various significant barriers to employment. I worked with homeless veterans, low income veterans, and veterans who just needed someone to provide them an ear.

During this time, I was notified of a vacancy as a VSO for Cumberland and Salem County still with the State of New Jersey. This was another opportunity to service fellow veterans but on a larger scale and located in my county of residence. I started my journey as a VSO in October 2023 and look forward to making an even bigger impact on veterans' lives.

I have learned first hand how important it is to know what you earned serving this great country as a veteran. I am so grateful for meeting fellow veterans who presented me with the ability to pursue a new career after retirement, and at the same time provide me the knowledge to understand what a service connection is. I am now returning the favor. I am giving back as much as I can to ensure that any veteran in need has someone there advocating for them. I firmly believe veterans serving veterans is essential for creating a more positive impact on their daily lives.

I volunteer time as a member of the Civilian Veteran Action Committee located in Cape May county. I also have a show truck that I attend events to contact veterans with the goal of providing information that veterans need to know. I have dedicated my life since 1986 to service veterans and hope to continue serving fellow veterans as a VSO.

I am blessed to have a supporting wife and family who understands what it means to me to assist fellow veterans. They understand that I am a retired disabled Navy Veteran who has a passion to assist veterans at any opportunity. I am grateful for not only my family's support but, also for the fellow veterans, advocates, counselors, friends, and shipmates who always pushed me to be better. Because of all this support I am able to give back.

This journey as a VSO has just begun and I look forward to making a difference in fellow veterans' lives.

To contact me or one of my colleagues around the state, please visit our website at [Veterans Service Offices](#).



Veterans Memorial Home at Menlo Park

Several residents of the [Veterans Memorial Home at Menlo Park](#) attended the Ohio State vs. Rutgers game on November 4, 2023 for Military Appreciation Day.

Among the attendees was Veteran and Resident Council President Jerry Luna. Pictured with Jerry are Virginia Fiess (Quality Assurance Coordinator at DMAVA), Lisa Kranis (Menlo Park CEO) and Rochelle Guglielmo (Director of Veterans Healthcare Services).

Thank you to Patrick Mullen of the [NJ Central District Elks](#) for sponsoring the trip. Everyone had a fantastic time!



Veterans Haven South

Residents and staff at [Veterans Haven South](#) held a Wellness & Walk Day in observance of diabetes awareness, stress awareness and National Hiking Day on November 20, 2023.



Veterans Haven North

What a great occasion for the residents at [Veterans Haven North](#). Hunterdon Auxiliaries from VFW District 19 treated the veterans with a wonderful holiday lunch on December 2, 2023.

**THE DMAVA READJUSTMENT
COUNSELING PROGRAM PROVIDES
VETERANS WITH:**

**INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING
GROUP COUNSELING
FAMILY COUNSELING**

**SCAN THE CODE AND CALL YOUR
LOCAL VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER,**

OR CALL:

(888) 865-8387,

OR EMAIL:

VBB@DMAVA.NJ.GOV



**SUPPORT
IS PEER TO PEER**



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7 days a week
(866) 838-7654**

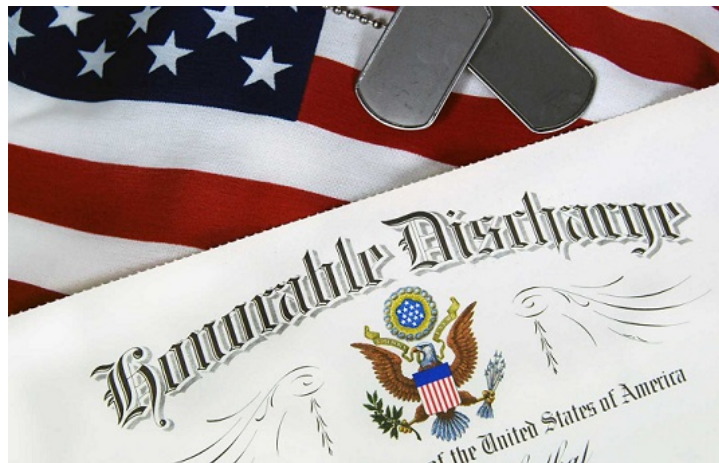


NJ Veterans' Benefits Hotline
888-865-8387
vbb@dmava.nj.gov

Veterans Outreach Schedule

Veterans Service Offices

DMAVA Departments



Office of Records and Archives

DMAVA's Administrative Services Division's Office of Records and Archives is the office that receives military discharges from the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, and occasionally, the Merchant Marines. This applies to both the Active Duty and their Reserves, to include the National Guard.

The DMAVA employees of the Records and Archives Office are some of the busiest people within the Department. They are responsible for the archiving, storage and issuance of copies of military records of all the State's service members and Veterans.

The Office receives about 10 to 20 military records per week that need to be scanned, indexed and placed into a database. For Calendar Year 2022, the Office received over 2,026 requests for military records for an average of 184 requests per month.

For more information, visit our website at [Request Military Records](#).

NEW JERSEY
YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY
 DREAM. BELIEVE. ACHIEVE.



YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY

Now accepting applications for Class 57 - January 2024.

APPLY NOW!

TUITION FREE



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
 (800) 997-5587 / (732) 974-6516
 rpm@dmava.nj.gov
 njyca.org/admissions



Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

DEIB Newsletter

State Partners



Mental Health Association of Ocean County

The Mental Health Association of Ocean County hosted a 'Mental Health First Aid for Military, Veterans and their Families' training to 24 wonderful people who work in the mental health field! Training was at our Manahawkin, NJ office on December 4, 2023.

Congratulations to all who attended and received their certificate!

Image and caption courtesy of [MHA-Ocean County](#).

Note: This project is an initiative of the [Governor's Challenge](#) to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and their Families and the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. Refer to the [schedule of upcoming training](#).



Camden County Medal Ceremony

On November 29, 2023, Commissioner Melinda Kane and the Camden County Office of Veterans Affairs held a medal ceremony to recognize the service and sacrifices of six individuals.

[View Images](#)



NJ State Agencies

- [Vote For Valor](#)
- [Career Services for Veterans](#)
- [Tax Resources for Military/Veterans](#)
- [Educator Certification for Military Spouses and Veterans](#)
- [Civil Service Preference for Veterans](#)
- [NJ National Guard Hunting / Fishing Licenses](#)
- [NJ Special Hawker and Peddlers License](#)
- [Veterans Designation for Drivers License](#)
- [Military CDL Skills Waiver Program](#)
- [Disabled Veteran / Purple Heart Recipient Placards](#)
- [Disabled Veteran Hunting and Fishing Licenses](#)
- [Veteran and Disabled Veteran-Owned Business](#)
- [Division of Consumer Affairs Military Outreach & Support](#)
- [Professional & Occupational Licenses for Veterans and Spouses](#)
- [Military and Overseas Voting](#)
- [Troops to Teachers](#)



Federal Partners



**The Survivor Benefit Plan Open Season
Ends Jan. 1, 2024**

Check the DFAS Webpage for Important Deadlines and Eligibility Info

<https://www.dfas.mil/sbpopenseason23>

Survivor Benefit Plan Open Season

Congress provided for a Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) Open Season in the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act. The SBP Open Season began on December 23, 2022 and ends on January 1, 2024.

The SBP Open Season allows for retirees receiving retired pay, eligible members, or former members awaiting retired pay who are currently NOT enrolled in SBP or RCSBP (Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan) to enroll.

The SBP Open Season also allows eligible members and former members who are currently enrolled in either SBP or RCSBP to permanently discontinue their SBP coverage.

[Learn More](#)

Benefits Open Season

Both TRICARE and Federal Benefits Open Seasons started on November 13th. If you want to enroll or make changes to your current plans, this is the time to do it.

Need more information? Visit tricare.mil/openseason, benefeds.com, or opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/open-season.

BENEFEDS is also hosting a [Virtual Benefits Fair](#) throughout Federal Benefits Open season to help you get the answers you need.

2024 Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for Military Retirees and Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) Annuitants

Based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index, there will be a 3.2 percent Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for most retired pay and Survivor Benefit Plan annuities effective Dec. 1, 2023.

Retirees will see the change in their Dec. 31, 2023 payment and SBP annuitants in their Jan. 2, 2024 payment.

For details, see the [Fiscal Year 2024 COLA Memorandum](#).

All WWII Veterans are now eligible for no-cost VA health care and nursing home services

November 10, 2023

WASHINGTON - Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced that all World War II Veterans are now eligible for no-cost VA health care, medical services, and nursing home care.

All WWII Veterans who served between Dec. 7, 1941, and Dec. 31, 1946, are eligible under this expansion, regardless of their length of service or financial status. These Veterans will not have to pay copays, enrollment fees or monthly premiums.

VA is reaching out by phone and mail to encourage WWII Veterans who are not currently enrolled in VA care to apply today. Veterans who enroll may also keep their private providers, Medicare, and most other insurance to meet their health care needs.

[Read Full News Release](#)

VA adds three new Vet Centers and six satellite locations to increase access to counseling for Veterans and service members

December 1, 2023

WASHINGTON - Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced the addition of three new Vet Centers and six Vet Center Outstations (smaller satellite locations) to improve access to counseling for Veterans and service members.

The new Vet Centers and Outstations will be located in Arizona, California, Minnesota, New Jersey, Tennessee, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.

The newly approved Vet Centers, Vet Center Outstations, and their statuses include:

- **Vineland (New Jersey) Vet Center Outstation:** This Outstation is in the leasing phase, with the anticipated opening date to be determined.

[Read Full News Release](#)

VA now offers online ordering for CPAP supplies

December 4, 2023

Veterans who rely on CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) machines to manage sleep-related breathing disorders, including sleep apnea, now have a new [streamlined online ordering system for CPAP supplies](#).

VA has added the CPAP supply ordering feature as part of the online tool that's already in place, same as how veterans [order hearing aid supplies](#) on VA.gov. The addition improves how veterans order, manage and efficiently receive health care supplies. It's a notable improvement to the previous CPAP supply ordering process, which was by phone call or traditional mail order forms sent to VA's Denver Logistics Center (DLC).

[Read Full News Release](#)

National Parks Pass

There is a new lifetime pass for National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands, called America the Beautiful.

This lifetime pass for Gold Star Families & Veterans is being offered to demonstrate the country's immense gratitude and respect for those who have served and defended our country.

[Learn More at VA News](#)

VALife Insurance

Veterans Affairs Life Insurance (VALife) provides guaranteed acceptance whole life coverage of up to \$40,000 to Veterans with service-connected disabilities. Lesser amounts are available in increments of \$10,000. Under this plan, the elected coverage takes effect two years after enrollment as long as premiums are paid during the two-year period.

All Veterans age 80 or under with a VA disability rating of 0 to 100% are eligible for the VALife program and have no time limit to apply.

[Learn More](#)



VA Disability - with Mike Figlioli, VFW Director of National Veterans Services

In this episode, theSITREP asks Mike Figlioli, VFW Director of National Veterans Services, about VA disability: what is it, how to apply, and more.

[theSITREP Podcast](#)

VA NEW JERSEY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
11 Locations Serving 14 Counties

Community Outreach

Scott Dadaian
Community Outreach Specialist

201-587-5990 (Cell)


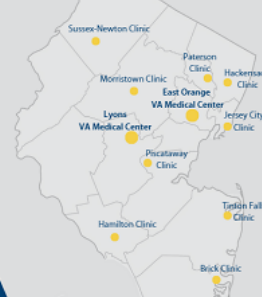
scott.dadaian@va.gov

For General Questions & Media Inquiries:

vanjhcscommsteam@va.gov

Find Us Online

www.va.gov/new-jersey-health-care/
VA New Jersey Health Care System
@vanjhcs



Featured Links

- [Accessing Records from the National Archives or NPRC](#)
- [PACT Act Performance Dashboard](#)
- [How to Check Your PACT Act Claim Status](#)
- [Download VA Benefit Letters](#)
- [Podcasts on Veterans' Issues](#)
- [VA Health and Benefits Mobile App](#)
- [Women Veterans Call Center](#)
- [Veterans Legacy Memorial](#)
- [Million Veteran Program](#)

#VetResources

Subscribe to #VetResources to receive a weekly newsletter from the VA for Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.

Subscribe

Community Spotlight



Rutgers-Camden Alumna Recognized for Decade of Service to Fellow Veterans

Christina Lynn | Rutgers.edu | November 27, 2023

Rutgers University in Camden alumna Tina Mikes’s work on behalf of fellow veterans is not a job so much as a calling. As a field supervisor for the nonprofit Soldier On, Mikes connects veterans who are homeless or are at risk of homelessness with housing and health care resources. The Burlington County resident, who earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in social work at Rutgers-Camden, extracts joy from helping those with whom she has an unspoken connection.

“With us veterans, there’s an understanding that we have with other veterans,” Mikes said as she accepted the first-ever Excellence Award at Rutgers–Camden’s Veterans Day Observance event this fall. “We have that bond. It’s just something special.”

[Read Full Story](#)



Family Child Care Program is back, and growing!

The Department of the Air Force is reviving a special Family Child Care program (FCC).

Military families, or other families in our communities, can open their homes as a small business to military families in need of childcare. This includes drill weekends for Guard and Reserve members seeking childcare!

Oversight and restrictions apply, please contact Alicia Stasiulis at alicia.stasiulis.1@us.af.mil and (609) 562-2192 for details.

Never Forget



In Honor of all those from New Jersey who gave their lives in the fight against terrorism during Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. In humble gratitude, we remember their sacrifice.

December 10, 2005
Operation Iraqi Freedom
**SGT Clarence L. Floyd,
Jr.**
U.S. Army
Newark, New Jersey

December 16, 2006
Operation Iraqi Freedom
PFC Joe R. Baines
U.S. Army
Newark, New Jersey

December 11, 2011
Operation Enduring Freedom
**SPC Ronald H. Wildrick
Jr.**
U.S. Army
Blairstown, New Jersey

*"But on the battlefield their feet stood fast, and in an instant at the height of their fortune, they passed away from the scene, not of their fear, but of their glory."
~ Pericles*

NJ Fallen Heroes Memorial

History



Alfred Joyce Kilmer

December 6, 1886

Alfred Joyce Kilmer, journalist, poet and World War I soldier, was born in New Brunswick. Kilmer was killed in action on July 30, 1918 while serving as a sergeant in the 165th Infantry regiment.

December 7, 1941

The Imperial Japanese Navy attacked the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Army sergeant George Schmersahl of Bloomfield was killed in action that day, perhaps the first New Jerseyan to die in World War II.

December 7, 1942

Governor Charles Edison spoke a few words and then his wife Carolyn smashed a champagne bottle on the ship's bow at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard launching ceremony for the battleship USS New Jersey. The ship was commissioned in 1943 and subsequently served in the Pacific during World War II and in Korea, Vietnam and the Middle East. The New Jersey, now a floating museum in Camden, became the most decorated American battleship in history.

December 8, 1941

The United States declared war on Japan in the wake of the Pearl Harbor attack. Around 560,500 New Jerseyans, including 10,000 women and 360,000 draftees, served in all branches of the armed forces during World War II. A total of 10,372 of them, including ten of the state's seventeen Medal of Honor awardees, made the ultimate sacrifice and were killed in action or died of wounds or other causes.

December 12, 1704

On this date the first militia act was signed by the newly joined East and West Jersey Provinces.

December 13, 1776

American General Charles Lee, a former British officer, was captured while dallying at Basking Ridge as the British army crossed New Jersey in pursuit of the retreating Americans.

December 13, 1862

Most of the New Jersey regiments in the Union Army of the Potomac were present at the disastrous Civil War battle of Fredericksburg. Some units suffered heavy losses,

including the Twenty-fourth New Jersey regiment, with 136 casualties, and the Twenty-eighth New Jersey regiment, with 193.



The First Muster

The history of the National Guard began on December 13, 1636, when the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony ordered the organization of the Colony's militia companies into three regiments: The North, South and East Regiments.

The colonists had adopted the English militia system which obligated all males, between the ages of 16 and 60, to possess arms and participate in the defense of the community. The early colonial militia drilled once a week and provided guard details each evening to sound the alarm in case of attack. The growing threat of the Pequot Indians to the Massachusetts Bay Colony required that the militia be in a high state of readiness.

First Muster, a National Guard Heritage Painting by Don Troiani, courtesy the National Guard Bureau.

Soldier Spotlight



Private Anthony Del Tufo

New Jersey Army National Guard soldiers enlist to serve their community, usually aiming to serve in uniform after completing their training.

However, Private Anthony Del Tufo's story differs significantly. While still in training, he took action to protect his community by guiding an elderly couple to safety during a house fire.

To him, it was simply the right thing to do. When his recruiter Sergeant Miguel Valoy learned of this, he emphasized that doing what's right often means taking decisive action, something many hesitate to do.

His actions warranted recognition - an Army Achievement Medal. For a soldier with little time in their career, this is an exceptional achievement.

Congratulations Private Del Tufo on your award, being an outstanding Soldier and doing the right thing.

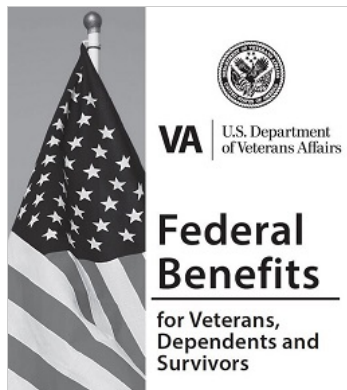
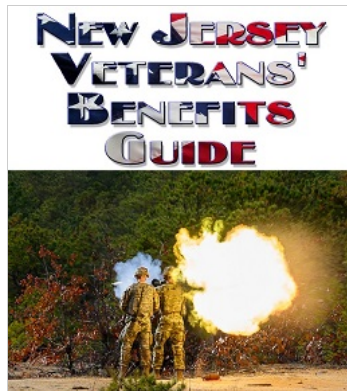
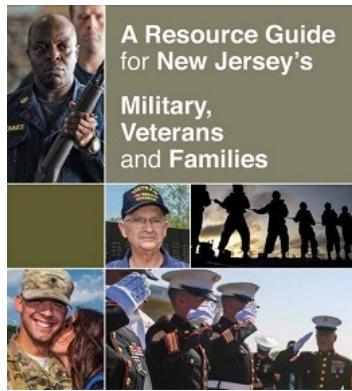
Did You Know?



Military Funeral Honors

The [Military Funeral Honors](#) Team from the New Jersey Army National Guard performed 3,885 missions in FY 2023.

Resources



DMAVA Careers



We Are Hiring!

At the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs we take our work in support of Veterans, Servicemembers and their families very seriously. Whether supporting our Veterans with nursing care, transitional housing, or assisting them in navigating access to their Veteran benefits, the Department provides valuable services and can offer rewarding career opportunities to members of the public.

We also have opportunities in facilities management and program management. In addition, we have job openings for members of our military to serve in AGR and Federal Technician roles.

Subscribe to our [Jobs Bulletin](#) to stay updated on job openings.

Vacancies

Stay Connected



We hope you enjoy receiving our newsletter and find it both educational and engaging. If you have questions about our department, our programs or your benefits, please visit our website at [nj.gov/military](https://www.nj.gov/military) to get contact information.

Contact DMAVA

Please email us at outreach@dmava.nj.gov with feedback and comments regarding the newsletter. If you would like to contribute with an item of interest to our subscribers, please email us your proposal.

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101 Eggert Crossing Road
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