

FEBRUARY 8, 2023



READY TO SERVE ★ PROUD TO HAVE SERVED

COMMISSIONER'S CORNER



Black History Month

It is hard to believe we are already in the second week of the second month of 2023. In my estimation, it is and will continue to be a busy but productive year for the Department.

I recently attended the FORSCOM DCG-ARNG TAG Huddle with my fellow Adjutant Generals to discuss issues impacting the mission of the Army National Guard, our soldiers, and their families.

I also had the opportunity to participate in the European Strategy conference and workshop in Germany with some of our most senior leadership from all three components of the Army. I can say that the future is now and that we are engaged and well positioned to contribute to the National Defense Strategy.

On February 6th, the Westfield Armory hosted me and a group of approximately twenty-five state and military men and women at my Quarterly women's forum. I am the host but it is the soldiers, airmen, and civilians who work in the Departments meeting. Next quarters meeting location and date will be set and communicated via email and all are invited to attend and contribute.

On February 7th, I had the opportunity to take some of our legislators on a tour of our Menlo Park Veterans Memorial Home and showcase the outstanding work that is done there and the quality of care we provide for our Veterans, Veteran Spouses, and Gold Star families who call our facility home.

While we celebrate the accomplishments of all of our personnel each day, February is Black History month.

75 years ago this month, before President Truman desegregated America's military, the New Jersey National Guard became the first integrated state militia. To read the story, visit: [New Jersey National Guard Pioneered the End of Segregation](#).

To gain more insight into New Jersey's military past, we recommend two historical narratives.

[Sanspeur \("Without Fear"\)](#) by Dr. (COL Ret) William C. Lowe is a

scholarly work chronicling the segregated Army from the Civil War through the post-WWII period.

In *Freedom to All - New Jersey's African-American Civil War Soldiers*, author Joseph G. Bilby provides a chapter on the heroic exploits of the [22nd United States Colored Infantry](#).

Throughout the Department there will be several opportunities to attend and/or participate in events to highlight and/or inform us about the contributions past or present by African Americans; it is my hope that you find the time to attend at least one.

Thank you for what you do every day in service to our Veterans, military personnel and their families.

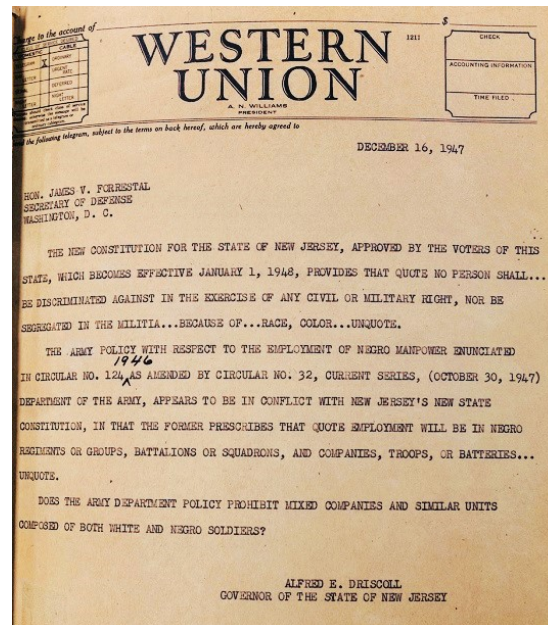
We encourage you to share ideas, events and feedback. Please email our team at outreach@dmava.nj.gov.

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



FEATURED

The End of Segregation in NJ



Telegram sent from New Jersey Governor Alfred E. Driscoll to James V. Forrestal, Secretary of Defense on Dec. 16, 1947, asking: "Does the Army Department Policy prohibit mixed companies and similar units composed of both white and negro soldiers?" New Jersey had passed a new constitution in 1947 that ended segregation in the New Jersey National Guard. Army policy at the time prohibited racially mixed units.

1948 FEB 9 AM 9 13 7 February 1948

Honorable Alfred E. Driscoll
Governor of New Jersey
Trenton, New Jersey

Dear Governor Driscoll:

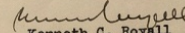
On January 8 you addressed to me a telegraphic inquiry concerning the utilization of Negro manpower in the militia of New Jersey. I have had the matter carefully reviewed by the military Staff of this Department and have myself given it full consideration.

In accordance with a report of competent and experienced officers, the War Department on 27 April 1946 issued regulations which, among other things, required (subject to certain exceptions) that when Negroes are employed in Army units below the battalion, they will be organized into separate units.

This provision was considered to be in the interest of national defense, and both the Staff and I feel that this is still the case. Therefore, these regulations will be continued in force for the Regular Army and, subject to the exception noted below, will also be effective for the Federally recognized civilian components of the Army.

I have noted the fact that the people of New Jersey by direct majority vote have provided in their Constitution that "no person shall . . . be segregated in the militia because of race, color . . ." While the authority to determine all questions relating to the Federally recognized National Guard must necessarily be exercised by the Department of the Army, yet I recognize the importance to a sovereign state of a constitutional provision such as yours, and I have determined that for the present, Army militia units of New Jersey, if otherwise qualified, will not be denied Federal recognition on the ground of non-segregation.

Sincerely yours,


Kenneth C. Royall
Secretary of the Army

Letter from Kenneth C. Royall, Secretary of the Army, sent to New Jersey Governor Alfred E. Driscoll on Feb. 7, 1948, authorizing racially mixed units in the New Jersey Army National Guard. This made the New Jersey National Guard the first federally recognized military component to be integrated.

DMAVA EVENTS

Community Resource Day



February 18th, 2023 10am – 4pm

34 local social service organizations will be available for discussions at:

Tabernacle United Methodist Church
Michael Hall
702 Seashore Rd.
Erma, NJ 08204

For additional information please contact
732-850-5453 bistaksp@gmail.com

Snacks and Beverages will be provided
Hazardous weather date 3/18/23

This event will focus on raising community awareness on the resources available to provide aid to those in need within our community..... be it food, clothing, shelter, physical or mental health support, or other needs.

The following organizations have committed to participate.

- Cape May County Department of Human Services
- Cape May County Division of Aging & Disability & Meals on Wheels
- Cape May County Veterans Services
- US Department of Veterans Affairs
- New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
- Cape May County One Stop Career Center
- Tabernacle Basic Blessings
- Cape May Community Food Closet
- Family Promise of Cape May County
- Hope Pregnancy Center
- The Arc
- The Branches Outreach
- Cape Assist
- Seashore Community Church Food Pantry
- St. Barnabas Cares Food Pantry – Villas.
- St. Barnabas Thrift Store – Villas
- Cape Regional Home Health Care: managed by BAYADA
- Hope One
- Visiting Angels
- Holy Spirit Lutheran Church – Villas
- Volunteers in Medicine
- Angelic Health
- Redeemer Health
- Holy Redeemer Food Pantry
- Healthy Living
- Brookdale Sr. Living
- Pelican Point Post Acute|Nursing & Rehabilitation
- Complete Care – Victoria Commons, NCM
- Complete Care CMCH
- Atlantic Cape Community College
- Cape Regional Hospital
- Ennoble Care
- Our Lady of Angels Food Pantry CMCH
- Fare Free

DMAVA will have a Veterans Service Officer present



JOIN OUR **IN-PERSON** SUPPORT GROUP

NJVet2Vet will be hosting an **in-person** veteran support group for anyone who can attend.

DATES:	LOCATION:	TIME:
2/18/23	NJ Vietnam	12:00 PM
3/18/23	Veteran's	- 2:00 PM
4/15/23	Memorial	
5/20/23	and	
6/17/23	Vietnam Era Museum	

Veterans Service Officer present to help and assist any veteran.
Call (866) 838-7654 for more information.



February 24, 2023
11:00am

DMAVA MEDAL CEREMONY & VETERANS OUTREACH CAMPAIGN

**Clearbrook Community
Ballroom**

1 Clearbrook Drive
Monroe, NJ 08831

DMAVA will have a Veterans Service Officer present to help and assist any Veteran or family member.

For more information contact the Veterans Benefits Bureau at vbb@dmava.nj.gov.

VETERAN INFORMATION SESSION

The Wilmington VA Medical Center and Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC)

Outreach Specialist will be hosting a presentation on information regarding enrollment, eligibility, services, and programs offered by the Sessions offer general information and how to navigate VA. Q & A and one-on-one information will be provided for all Veterans, their families, and caregivers in attendance.

Please contact the VA Outreach Specialist a VA provider or staff member if you would like to attend. (Seating is limited and based on availability)

UPCOMING SESSIONS

4th Thursday of every month

11:00 AM

(or scheduled by request with Outreach Specialist)

WHERE

Atlantic County CBOC
1909 New Road
Northfield, NJ 08225



**VA OUTREACH
SPECIALIST**
Jacqueline Hinker
302-304-5509

CLINIC STAFF
PACT Team
Nurse Manager
Behavior Health
AMSA Supervisor
AMSA

**VETERAN SERVICE
OFFICER**

CONTACTED BY PHONE

DMAVA will have a Veterans Service Officer present

VETERAN INFORMATION SESSION

The Wilmington VA Medical Center and Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) Outreach Specialist will be

hosting a presentation on information regarding enrollment, eligibility, services, and programs offered. The Sessions offer general information and how to navigate VA. Q & A and one-on-one information will be provided for all Veterans, their families, and caregivers in attendance.

Please contact the VA Outreach Specialist a VA provider or staff member if you would like to attend. (Seating is limited and based on availability)

UPCOMING SESSIONS

4th Monday of every month

10:00 AM

(or scheduled by request with Outreach Specialist)

WHERE

Cape May County CBOC
3801 Route 9 South
Rio Grande, NJ 08242



**VA OUTREACH
SPECIALIST**
Jacqueline Hinker
302-304-5509

CLINIC STAFF
PACT Team
Nurse Manager
Behavior Health
AMSA Supervisor
AMSA
Physical Therapy

**DMAVA
VSO**
Alicia Kagan
609-441-3060
Or
CMC Veteran
Services Office
David Louderback
609-886-2762

DMAVA will have a Veterans Service Officer present

VETERAN INFORMATION SESSION

The Wilmington VA Medical Center and Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) Outreach Specialist will be hosting a presentation on information regarding enrollment, eligibility, services, and programs offered by the Sessions offer general information and how to navigate VA. Q & A and one-on-one information will be provided for all Veterans, their families, and caregivers in attendance.

Please contact the VA Outreach Specialist a VA provider or staff member if you would like to attend. (Seating is limited and based on availability)

UPCOMING SESSIONS

4th Tuesday of each month

11:00 AM

(or scheduled by request with Outreach Specialist)

WHERE

Cumberland County CBOC
79 W. Landis Avenue
Vineland, NJ 08360



**VA OUTREACH
SPECIALIST**
Jacqueline Hinker
302-304-5509

CLINIC STAFF
PACT Team
Nurse Manager
Behavior Health
AMSA Supervisor
AMSA

**DMAVA
VSO**

DMAVA will have a Veterans Service Officer present

FEATURED EVENTS



Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)
Outreach, Transition & Economic Development (OTED)
will host a

Virtual Minority Veteran Outreach Symposium

Thursday, February 9, 2023
1:00 – 4:00 p.m. (EST)

In recognition of Black History Month, this symposium will celebrate African American service in military, as well as Veteran contributions to our Nation. The symposium will also provide information on current and future VA benefits, to include filing a VA disability claim online, fraud prevention and awareness and the Sergeant First Class (SFC) Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act.

Join on **Your Computer or Mobile App via WebEx**
[Click Here to Join the Symposium](#)

Or Call-In (Audio Only)

Phone: 1-404-397-1596 Access Code: 2762 187 6496

FREE Day of Medical Care

Services available

- Free Medical Exam
- Free Vision screening
- Free Diabetes, BP and Cholesterol check
- Free Ortho Consults
- Prescription Assistance
- Free Vaccinations
- Free Fun Activities
- FREE LUNCH

And much, much more!

All are welcome but priority will be given to the uninsured.



Friday

February 10
12:00 to 6:00

Wildwoods
Convention
Center



Volunteers
in Medicine

FREE CARE FOR THE UNINSURED

More info:
(609) 463-2846
info@vimsj.org



Catholic Charities and Operation Sisterhood
invite you to attend



Morris County Stakeholders Meeting



The NJ SOSVETS
Morris County Stakeholder Meeting

Will Meet:
February 15, 2023, at 10:30AM

Hope House
101-103 Bassett Highway
Dover, NJ 07801

Please RSVP to Jackie Looby jlooby@cfp-mnh.org or David Pearson
dpearson@catholiccharities.org

We welcome all providers who serve our Military, Veterans, and their families to
come network, share and learn from other service providers.
Please have flyers, brochures, and contact info ready to share.

Refreshments will be provided.

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
New Jersey Health Care System

PACT ACT ENROLLMENT EVENT

Eligibility & Enrollment
Toxic Exposure Screenings
VBA Claims Clinic

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2023

CHOOSE YOUR TIME

9:00-10:00AM 10:00AM-11:00AM
11:00AM-12:00PM 12:00PM-1:00PM

JAMES J. HOWARD BRICK CLINIC
970 ROUTE 70
BRICK, NJ 08724

Not enrolled in VA health care?

Bring your DD214 and a completed IO-10EZ and enroll on the spot...get screened and start a claim! Applying for PACT Act benefits will not automatically impact your current benefits. Veterans who currently receive compensation for a service-connected condition will not have their previously awarded claims re-adjudicated simply because they file for new benefits under the PACT Act.



Register Here!
Choose your time & email
VANJHSCCommsTeam@va.gov



Coming Soon!!

PACT Act "On the Road" Events

February TBD

Hackensack clinic (or area)

We want to ensure the chosen location for this event meets the needs of the Veteran community in that area.



Assemblywoman
Cleopatra Tucker



COUNCIL MEMBER AT LARGE
LOUISE SCOTT-ROUNTREE

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF NEWARK



Interfaith Suicide Awareness Seminar



Calling all of our Community Faith Based Leaders! Join Us to learn about community resources available to our veterans in crisis. Lunch and refreshments will be served!

Presentations by Community Leaders and the Department of Veteran Affairs Suicide Community Engagement Team

Good Neighbor Baptist Church, 100 Chancellor Avenue, Newark, NJ 07112

February 22nd, 2023 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

R.S.V.P. at DPearson@catholiccharities.org or NJSOSVets@gmail.com

Special thanks to SSG Kettles of the Mayor's Office of Newark for her support!

Are you a Veteran with questions or concerns about airborne hazards and burn pits? Get information and answers you need.

Airborne Hazards and Burn Pits: What You Need to Know A Class for Veterans

VIRTUALLY on Webex via a personal computer, smart phone or tablet.

REGISTER at: <https://veteransaffairs.webex.com/veteransaffairs/onstage/g.php?MTID=c3a9b751476829915f3d772e6fa20c4a7>
Thursday, February 23, 2023
1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. EST

Presenters

• **Anays Sotolongo, MD**
Director, Airborne Hazards and Burn Pits Center of Excellence
• **Michelle Robertson, MD, MPH**
Clinical Director, Airborne Hazards and Burn Pit Center of Excellence

Topics

• Defining Airborne Hazards
• Understanding Exposures to Burn Pits/ Other Airborne Hazards
• Clinical Effects of Airborne Hazards
• Burn Pit Registry
• Tips to Manage Common Symptoms

*This is NOT a Compensation and Pension class.

Veterans must register for the class through the above link. Logging into the class will begin 15 minutes before the start time. Email njwriisc@denver.va.gov with subject header "Air Haz Class" if you have difficulty with registration.



WARRELATEDILLNESS.VA.GOV/WARRELATEDILLNESS/AHBPCE

UPCOMING EVENTS

DMAVA & Community Calendar

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

[View Full Calendar](#)

DMAVA VETERANS SERVICES

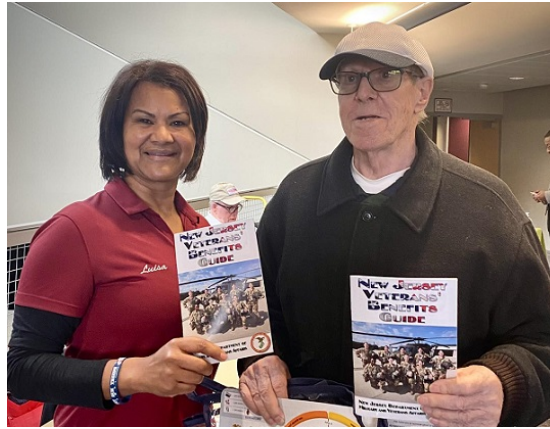


DMAVA Medal Ceremony

U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Edward J. Chrystal, left, Officer in Charge, Task Force-23, U.S. Vietnam Veteran Commemoration, Office of the Secretary of the Defense, presents the New Jersey Distinguished Service Medal to World War II Veteran Army Technician 4th Grade Vincent A. Graziano during a New Jersey State Medals Ceremony at the Quaker Bridge Mall in Lawrenceville, New Jersey, Jan. 19, 2023.

Graziano served in the Asiatic-Pacific Theatre of Operations from July 1943 to October 1945. He also recently celebrated his 103rd birthday.

[View Images](#)



Veterans Outreach Campaign

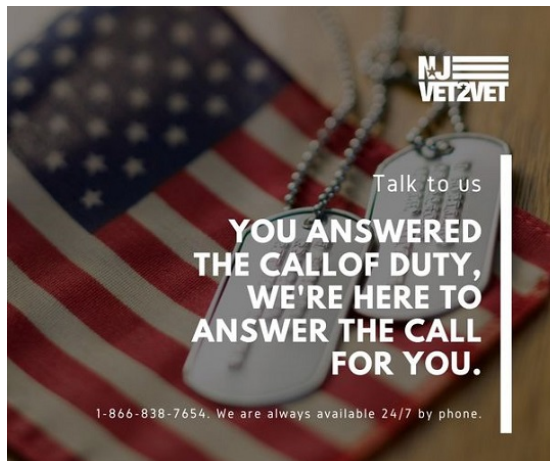
Luisa Sanchez, left, Veterans Outreach Specialist, discusses Veteran's benefits with Air Force and Vietnam War Veteran Louis Boharsik at the Community & Veterans Wellness & Resource Fair held at the Atlantic Cape Community College in Cape May Court House, New Jersey, Jan. 27, 2023.

[NJ Veterans' Benefits Guide](#)



Happy Birthday!

World War II Veteran Anthony Orsini celebrated his 100th birthday at the New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home at Menlo Park, Edison, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 2023.



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

[Veterans Outreach Schedule](#)

[Veterans Service Offices](#)

NJ NATIONAL GUARD



Flyover

The New Jersey Air National Guard's [177th Fighter Wing](#), flying a four-ship F-16C delta formation for the national anthem before the NFC Championship game at Lincoln Financial Field Stadium, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Jan. 29, 2023.

[DVIDS Video](#)

[Facebook Video](#)



Flyover

Following the flyover of the Philadelphia Eagles' NFC Championship game, 177th Fighter Wing F-16C Fighting Falcon fighter pilots, from left, 1st Lt. Zachary Smith, Lt. Col. Michael K. Long, Maj. Eric Emerson and Maj. John Loveman, landed their vipers and returned to the Lincoln Financial Field Stadium.



State Partnership Program

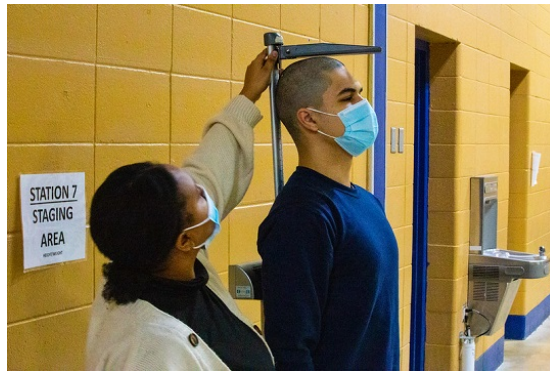
Cyprus National Guard Col. Georgios Ioannou visited the [177th Fighter Wing](#) for the first in a series of visits by Republic of Cyprus leaders since the country was named the New Jersey National Guard's newest partner through the State Partnership Program last year.

Join Our Team

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



DMAVA DEPARTMENTS



Welcome NJYCA Class 55

New Jersey Youth ChalleNGe Academy Class 55 in-processed at the National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt, N.J., on Jan. 23, 2023.

The NJYCA is an alternative education program designed to reclaim the lives of at-risk 16 to 18 year old youths and produce graduates with the values, skills, education, and self-discipline necessary to succeed as adults.

The National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program was established by Congress in 1993. New Jersey's first ChalleNGe class began in September 1994.

[View Images](#)

NEW JERSEY
YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY
DREAM. BELIEVE. ACHIEVE.

YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY

TUITION FREE

APPLY NOW!

Now accepting applications for Class 56 - July 17, 2023.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- (800) 997-5587 / (732) 974-6516
- rjm@dmava.nj.gov
- njyca.org/admissions

STATE PARTNERS

Geoffrey Taylor, M.A.
Disabled Veteran Outreach Specialist, U.S. Army

Camden County One Stop

Thanks to Camden County One Stop Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist Geoffrey Taylor, who met with residents at [Veterans Haven South](#) Feb. 2, 2023. The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development assists Veterans in becoming "work ready" and obtaining employment. Watch the video to learn more and to contact Mr. Taylor.

[Watch Video](#)

Mercer County VETERANS SERVICES NEEDS YOUR HELP!

To honor National Vietnam War Veterans Day, we would like to display your photos on a continuous slide show on the Mercer County Veteran Services web page.

Photographs may be submitted by Veterans or their family members. Include the Veteran's name, unit, and service dates, if known. All photos will become the property of Mercer County and will not be returned.

Submit photos to:
MCVeteranServices@mercercounty.org

You can also drop off images to:
Mercer County Veteran Services
1440 Parkside Ave. Ewing

Mercer County Connections
957 Highway 33, Hamilton

**ATTENTION
VIETNAM VETERANS**

**SUBMIT PHOTOS BY
MARCH 13, 2023**

NEEDED: Volunteer Veteran Mentors!

Help a Fellow Veteran Undergoing Life-Changing Rehabilitation, Counseling and Treatment!

The Cape May County Prosecutors Office operates a **Veterans Diversion Program (VDP)** which offers Veterans charged with crimes an alternative to trial and sentencing. The program offers **Veterans treatment and assistance** for mental health, substance abuse and other issues which may have contributed to their arrest and criminal charges.

Instead of **Incarceration**, the program helps Veterans with:

- Treatment and Rehabilitation
- Community services and assistance
- Veterans Affairs counseling and benefits
- Mentoring support & coaching

VETERAN MENTORS are a vital part of the program, offering a frontline source of guidance and support for the participants...and **MORE** are needed in our community!



ARE YOU READY TO LEND A FELLOW VET A HELPING HAND?

PLEASE CONTACT:

David L. Shutter
SPC-4, US ARMY – LCDR, USNR
VFW-386, Cape May, NJ

Veteran Diversion Program Coordinator
Cape May County Prosecutors Office

dshutter@cmcpfos.net
609-465-1135





OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR
County of Atlantic



ERIK M. BERGMAN

First Assistant Prosecutor

RICHARD E. McKEVLEY

Executive Assistant Prosecutor

MARIO C. FORMICA

Chief Counsel to the Prosecutor

WILLIAM E. REYNOLDS
Atlantic County Prosecutor

4997 Unami Boulevard, Suite 2
P.O. Box 2002
May Landing, NJ 08530
609-909-7800 – Fax 609-909-7802

BRUCE K. DESHIELDS

Chief of County Detectors

PATRICK F. SNYDER

Acting Deputy Chief of Detectors

RAYMOND G. ROYSTER

Director of Community Outreach

ATTENTION VETERANS,
FAMILY MEMBERS and SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

The Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office **Veterans Diversion Program** is available to certain veterans of the armed services who have pending non-violent criminal charges in Superior Court.

ACPO is seeking veterans willing to serve as **MENTORS** to become trained by the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs in working with fellow veterans through the diversion process.

For more information, please contact Detective Chris Southard at southard_c@acpo.org / (609) 909-7965, Detective Hannah Piatt at piatt_h@acpo.org/609-909-7859, or Executive Assistant Prosecutor Rick McKelvey at mckelvey_r@acpo.org / (609) 909-7722.

Defendants who have served and are currently pending criminal charges in Superior Court should consult with their attorney or visit <https://www.acpo.org/resource-page/55>.



NJ State Agencies

- [Vote For Valor](#)
- [Career Connections for Veterans](#)
- [Tax Resources for Military/Veterans](#)
- [Educator Certification for Military Spouses and 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

VA | NEWS RELEASE

VA New York/New Jersey Healthcare Network Announces New Executive Medical Center Director

EAST ORANGE, NJ –The Department of Veterans Affairs is pleased to announce the appointment of Patricia O’Kane as the new Executive Director of the [VA New Jersey Healthcare System](#). Ms. O’Kane will lead the executive team that oversees healthcare delivery at 11 locations in New Jersey and is one of the leading healthcare systems serving Veterans in the New York/New Jersey VA Health Care Network.

“We are excited to bring Patricia O’Kane on board as the new Executive Medical Center Director of the VA New Jersey Healthcare System,” said Dr. Joan McInerney, Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 2 Director. “Her sound leadership qualities and proven experience will be valuable assets for the healthcare system, the employees and volunteers, and most importantly, for the Veterans we are honored to serve. We anticipate she will arrive at the medical center on February 12, 2023 to begin her appointment.”

Ms. O’Kane’s proven leadership and considerable experience make her well-equipped to oversee the delivery of high-quality care to our nation’s Veterans at the VA New Jersey Healthcare System. Her wide variety of roles during her time with VA has allowed her to gain a strong knowledge of the complexities of VA at the national and local levels. She is an expert in the VA governance system. Throughout her time with VA, she has demonstrated that she takes pride in listening and engaging with clinical and administrative staff to understand their unique needs and challenges.

VA | NEWS RELEASE

Suicide Prevention

WASHINGTON – Starting Jan. 17, Veterans in acute suicidal crisis will be able to go to any VA or non-VA health care facility for emergency health care at no cost – including inpatient or crisis residential care for up to 30 days and outpatient care for up to 90 days. Veterans do not need to be enrolled in the VA system to use this benefit.

This expansion of care will help prevent Veteran suicide by guaranteeing no cost, world-class care to Veterans in times of crisis. It will also increase access to acute suicide care for up to 9 million Veterans who are not currently enrolled in VA.

[Read Full News Release](#)

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

New Airborne Hazards and Open Pit Registry Data

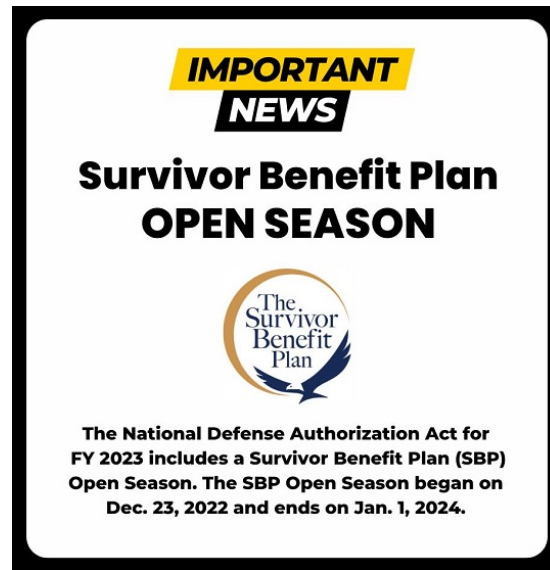
Recently, VA launched a new webpage that shows the number of [Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry \(AHOBPR\)](#)

[participants by state and congressional district.](#)

The current webpage contains breakouts as of Sept. 12, 2022, for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and five other jurisdictions (Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, United States Virgin Islands and Northern Mariana Islands). The data will be updated biannually.

Section 808(b)(2) of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 (PACT Act) requires VA to make information public about the number of participants in the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry (AHOBPR) by State and congressional district.

Learn more about the [PACT Act](#).



Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) Proposed Open Season

Congress provided for a Survivor Benefit Plan Open Season in the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). 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](#)



Scholarships for Military Children

Children of military families can now apply for one of the 500 Defense Commissary Agency \$2,000 scholarships for the 2023-2024 academic year. The Scholarships for Military Children Program was created to recognize the contributions of military families to the readiness of the fighting force and to celebrate the role of the commissary in the military family community.

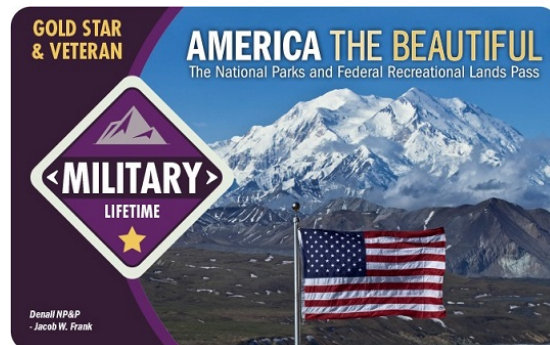
The deadline to submit an online application is Feb. 15, 2023.

[Learn More](#)



Schedule Your PACT Act Event

If your Veterans Service Office, university/college or community organization would like to host the VA New Jersey Health Care System (VANJHCS), they will bring the information, screeners and staff to you and your Veterans. Contact them at VANJHCSCommsTeam@va.gov to schedule your PACT Act event.



New National Parks Pass

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

This new 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.

The Interagency Military Pass has been part of the America the Beautiful – The National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass Series since 2012. On December 27, 2021, President Biden signed into law S. 1605 "The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022" (NDAA). Section 641 of the NDAA makes Gold Star families and Veterans eligible for lifetime passes to federal recreational lands.

[Learn More at VA News](#)



VA Life

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](#)

Featured Links

- [Download VA Benefit Letters](#)
- [Podcasts on Veterans' Issues](#)
- [VA Women's Health Reengagement Training](#)
- [VA and FCC make it easier for Veterans to get internet access](#)
- [13 places that offer free wills or trusts for Veterans](#)
- [Fast facts about new toxic exposure screening for Veterans](#)
- [Simplifying the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill application process](#)
- [Free legal services for Veterans, service members](#)
- [VA Health and Benefits Mobile App - six essential facts](#)
- [Women Veterans Call Center](#)
- [Preserve Your Loved Ones Story with Veterans Legacy Memorial](#)
- [Million Veteran Program](#)



**The Women
Veterans Call
Center is *your*
guide to VA.**

 **CALL**  **TEXT**  **CHAT ONLINE**

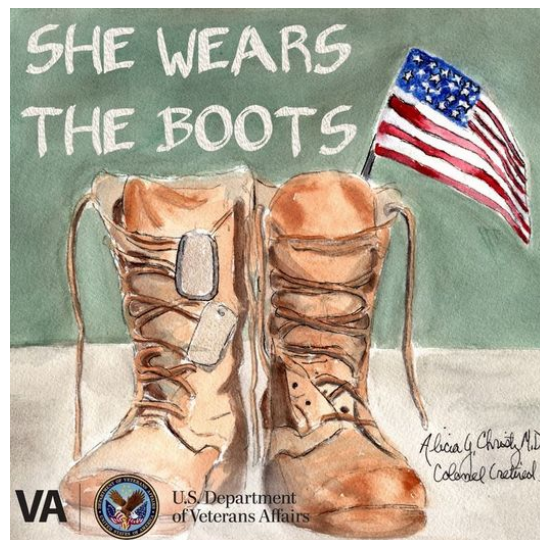
855-829-6636

WE ARE OPEN

Weekdays:
8:00 am–10:00 pm ET

Saturday:
8:00 am–6:30 pm ET

PODCAST





#VetResources

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



COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Veteran Transitional Housing

Vetnetwork is proud to announce our partnership with [Lacey United Methodist Church](#) as we introduce our Veteran transitional housing program, Mount Zion!

At Mount Zion, Vetnetwork is able to provide a safe space for Veterans to lay their heads as they transition to a more secure housing situation through the VA or other programs. This is a first for us here in Ocean County and we have been very lucky to have such wonderful support from our friends at Lacey United Methodist Church and their parishioners.

[View Facebook Post](#)

VETERAN SUPPORT ORGS

THE NJ VETERANS NETWORK
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
THE NJ STATE VFW
AND THE FOOD BRIGADE
PROUDLY PRESENT

FOOD-4 HEROES

FREE FOOD AND GROCERIES FOR VETERANS
FEB 19, 2023
FOOD IS AVAILABLE VIA PICK UP AND DELIVERY
IN PARTICIPATING AREAS THROUGHOUT NJ

AGENCY REFERRALS WELCOME
MUST PROVIDE PROOF OF SERVICE

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT
DOC SCHUPP 551-293-3049 DOCSCHUPP@GMAIL.COM
OR
MICHAEL BOLL 973-332-1556

NJ REENTRY CORPORATION

Veterans Outreach Services

SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Veterans Emergency and At-Risk Housing
- Addiction Detox and Treatment
- Mental Health/Medical Services
- Medicaid (Hospital/Prescription Drugs)
- Case Management of Comprehensive Veterans' Services
- SNAP (food stamps)/General Assistance
- ID/Driver's License/DD214 Applications
- Bus Tickets/Transportation
- Housing Referrals
- Employment Training and Placement
- Work with Allied Veterans to coordinate New Jersey and VA benefits
- NJRC refers Veterans to VA Medical Centers and Behavioral Health Clinics
- NJRC partners with National Veterans Legal Services Program
- NJRC helps Veterans with upgrades of less than honorable discharge status and other legal needs

"OUR VETERANS HAVE SERVED THE NATION,
LET US NOW SERVE OUR VETERANS" - NJRC

For more information, please contact
Sharon McGreevey
201.252.7641

SOLDIER ON

SSVF Program SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR VETERAN FAMILIES

The Soldier On SSVF program assists veterans and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

We provide:

- Case management
- Referral services
- Temporary financial assistance

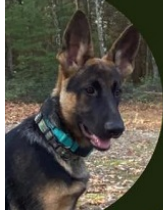
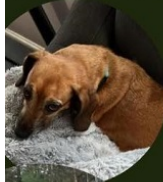
If you know of a veteran who is homeless, or struggling with issues related to housing, please send them our way!

Call us for more information:
1-866-406-8449



WE'RE ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

If you are a veteran or a first responder suffering from PTSD and in need of an emotional support dog, please apply today or contact us for more information



Operation K9 Beethoven
501(c)(3) NJ Non-profit Organization
EIN: 87-1417235
Telephone: 201-986-1111
Email: k9beethoven@yahoo.com
FB: Operation K9 Beethoven
Insta: operation_k9_beethoven
www.operationk9beethoven.com

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.

February 10, 2012
Operation Enduring Freedom
LCpl. Osbrany M. De Oca
U.S. Marine Corps
North Arlington, New Jersey

February 18, 2007
Operation Enduring Freedom
CW3 John A. Quinlan
U.S. Army
Bradley Beach, New Jersey

February 14, 2012
Operation Iraqi Freedom
SSGT Oscar E. Canon
U.S. Marine Corps
Dumont, New Jersey

February 21, 2010
Operation Enduring Freedom
SGT Marcos Gorra
U.S. Army
North Bergen, 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

VETERANS' ORAL HISTORIES



Henry Whitman
Cold War / Vietnam



Robert Yancey
WWII / Korea / Vietnam

Veterans History Project

HISTORY



Charles Hopkins with his wife

February 8, 1862

The Ninth New Jersey Infantry became the first New Jersey unit engaged in a full scale battle in the Civil War. At Roanoke Island, North Carolina, the regiment charged through a swamp, gaining

February 14, 1934

Charles F. Hopkins, the last surviving New Jersey Civil War Medal of Honor recipient, died in Boonton. Hopkins was awarded the medal for carrying a wounded comrade off the battlefield at

the nickname "Jersey Muskrats." The Muskrats lost nine men killed and twenty-five wounded in the fight. Among the dead was Captain Joseph Henry, the first New Jersey officer killed in action in the Civil War.

February 8, 1840

Cornelia Hancock, known as the "Florence Nightingale of America," was born at Hancock's Bridge. In 1863, Hancock traveled to Gettysburg in the aftermath of the battle as a volunteer nurse and served through the remainder of the Civil War. After the war she taught freed slaves at Mount Pleasant, South Carolina and served as a pioneering social worker in Philadelphia. Hancock lived a long, fruitful and socially useful life before dying in Atlantic City on December 31, 1927. Her wartime letters were published in book form and are an important Civil War source.

February 12, 1948

Under orders from Governor Alfred E. Driscoll, the New Jersey adjutant general's office published General Order No. 4, specifying that "no qualified person shall be denied any military rights, nor be discriminated against in exercise of any military rights, nor be segregated in the militia because of religious principles, race, color, ancestry or national origin," officially desegregating the state's National Guard, despite opposition from the United States Department of War. New Jersey was the first state to desegregate its National Guard.

Gaines Mill, Virginia in 1862. He was buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Boonton.

February 19, 1945

Marine Sergeant John Basilone of Raritan, awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroism on Guadalcanal in 1942, personally destroyed a Japanese strong point on Iwo Jima, using hand grenades and other explosives. Shortly afterward, while guiding a tank out of harm's way, he was killed in action. Basilone was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross, the Marine Corps' second highest decoration. He was inducted into the New Jersey Hall of Fame in 2011.

February 19, 1968

U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Fred Zabitovsky of Trenton, although wounded himself, rescued a pilot whose helicopter had crashed and who was pinned down under heavy fire on a mission in Laos. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroism.

February 20, 1864

A number of African-American New Jerseyans fought in the ranks of the Eighth United States Colored Infantry regiment at the battle of Olustee, Florida. Jerseymen killed at Olustee included Charles Anin, Jacob Hall, Henry Harris, Levi Scruby, Joseph Thompson, William H. Trimble, George Willett and Benjamin Wooley. Israel Cox of Trenton and John W. Adams of Salem County were badly wounded. Cox died in the hospital and Adams was finally discharged in November, 1865.



RevolutionNJ

1776 - 2026 | ENGAGE THE PAST. SHAPE THE FUTURE.

RevolutionNJ's New Website

The RevolutionNJ website is now active! It launched on November 30th and will continue to add information and photos over time. The website will be the location for all things related to RevolutionNJ around the state. Check out the [new website!](#)

WINTER 2023
Vol. 9 No. 1



New Jersey Studies
Interdisciplinary Journal

<https://bit.ly/NJStudiesWinter23>

New Jersey Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal is a project of the New Jersey Historical Commission, Rutgers University Libraries, and Monmouth University.

The Journal publishes original scholarship on all aspects of NJ studies, including military history.

Veterans Archives

Visit Our Friends at JTJ



IN THE NEWS



Manasquan High School students explore Vietnam War

Sophie Diehl | Star News Group | February 2, 2023

MANASQUAN – The students of Jim Fagen’s Historical Perspective, Research and Debate class at the Manasquan High School are defining why “Vietnam Still Matters” through blog posts and interviews with Vietnam veterans.

“The idea is that the students write about something that was going on during the Vietnam Era and how something similar to that is still going on today,” Mr. Fagen told The Coast Star.

He explained that the students have been discussing “... the role that music plays in spreading messages, professional athletes protesting things that they see as injustices, adoption laws and so on.”

The class partnered with the Vietnam Veterans’ Memorial Foundation [VVMF] to speak with veterans, research and write blog posts about how the issues people face today compare to those faced during the Vietnam War.

[Read Full Story](#)



New Jersey Juniors Collect Unique Items for Bench and Picnic Table Projects

American Legion Auxiliary | January 25, 2023

Imagine collecting 1,500 pounds of plastic lids and new and used sneakers for an ALA project. That's what the New Jersey Atlantic County American Legion Auxiliary Juniors did.

ALA Unit 158 member Barbara Mortillite is all about saving the environment. When trying to think of a project for Junior members, she came across a company, Eco Plastic Products of Delaware, which constructs benches out of recycled lids. The benches are UV protected, weather resistant, and maintenance free. She ran it by co-chair Jamie Morgan and the two agreed to begin the project.

"I thought it was a good way to get the Juniors involved with the planet and give back to our veterans," Mortillite said. "It's a win-win."

[Read Full Blog Post](#)



Wilmington VA Medical Center Police partnered with 14 New Jersey law enforcement departments to hold a first-of-its-kind Veteran crisis training known as Veteran Response Team (VRT).

James Pernol | VA Public Affairs Specialist | January 25, 2023

VRT training addresses how to peacefully resolve incidents involving Veterans in crisis and get them connected to support services. For two days, local New Jersey law enforcement learned how their military background and police training can help deescalate intense situations and prevent violence.

"Our team provides local officers with the skills and resources to respond to incidents involving Veterans outside of the walls of VA and get them engaged in treatment with VA," said Paul Woodland, chief of police at Wilmington VA. "This helps address the root causes Veterans are having that leads to justice system involvement."

VRT training emphasizes on connecting Veterans with local resources designed to improve their health and well-being. Crisis intervention, housing, counseling support and health care are some of the most common resources officers get Veterans connected with.

[Real Full Story](#)

DID YOU KNOW?



Sergeant George Ashby

Last Surviving New Jersey Civil War Veteran

George Ashby was born in Burlington, New Jersey, on January 25, 1844. In 1864, Ashby, an African-American then living in Crosswicks, enlisted as a private in the 45th United States Colored Infantry, organized at Camp William Penn outside of Philadelphia between June and August of 1864. He served in Virginia during the siege of Petersburg and was present for the Confederate surrender at Appomattox Court House in April 1865.

At the end of hostilities, the 45th, with a large number of other federal troops, was transferred to Texas on occupation duty. While serving with his regiment, Ashby was promoted several times until he reached the rank of first sergeant of Company H.

Sergeant Ashby was mustered out of the service at Philadelphia with the 45th in November 1865 and returned to his life as a New Jersey small farmer. After the war, he married Phoebe Cole of Crosswicks, who predeceased him at their Waker Avenue home in Allentown.

In January 1944, a reporter interviewed the old Veteran, who predicted an allied victory in World War II and stated that if he could, he would "enlist all over again."

When George Ashby died in Allentown on April 26, 1946, he was the last surviving New Jersey Civil War Veteran. He had 9 children, 16 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren and 7 great-great-grandchildren at the time of his death at the age of 102.

Ashby received a military funeral complete with color guard and firing squad provided by Hamilton Township American Legion Post #31 and was buried in the Allentown A. M. E. church cemetery.

Narrative by Joseph G. Bilby

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Soldier Gives Gift of Life

We have an update to a story we ran one year ago in conjunction with Black History Month.

Sergeant First Class Contessa Nash, a Citizen-Soldier with the New Jersey Army National Guard, works full-time as a bureau chief with the Information Services Division at the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

In 2011, after a friend was diagnosed with cancer, Nash was inspired to submit a sample to see if she was a match for someone in need.

"I was surprised to find out that Blacks and Hispanics have lower numbers for matching donors in the registry," said Nash.

Nearly a decade later, Nash was contacted by [Salute to Life](#), an organization that works with military personnel, family members, Department of Defense civilians, Reservists, Coast Guard, and National Guard members to facilitate bone marrow and stem cell donations.

"When I got a call that I had a match, they don't tell you anything about your recipient except for gender and age," said Nash. After the ninth month, donors can contact Salute to Life to learn how the patient is doing.

Nash hoped for a happy ending. And now we have more information.

The survivorship report indicated that as of July 6, 2022 the survivor had a successful stem cell transplant and was alive.

In September, Nash completed a release of information request form through Salute to Life to agree to direct contact with the recipient. There has not been any contact yet, but Nash will be following up with the case manager for further updates.

[Read Initial Story](#)

DMAVA QUICK LINKS



Veterans Service Offices



Request Military Records



Family Programs Office



Veterans Memorial Homes



NJ State Medals



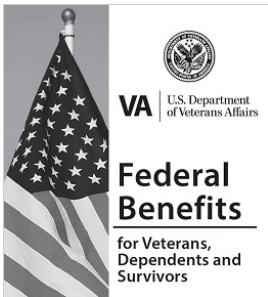
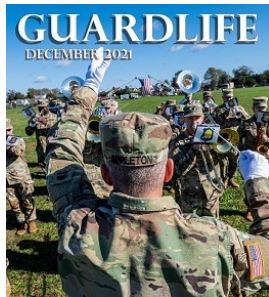
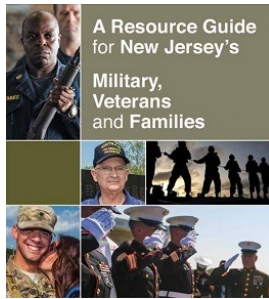
Military Funeral Honors



Doyle Veterans Cemetery

[DMAVA Homepage](#)

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.

Stay updated on job openings by subscribing to our [Jobs Bulletin](#).

Vacancies

STAY CONNECTED



The graphic features the text "UPCOMING EVENTS" in large, bold, black and red letters. To the right is a calendar for "This Month" showing dates from 1 to 31. Below the graphic is a red button with the text "Click Here".

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 to get contact information.

Contact DMAVA

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

To view previous editions of our newsletter, please visit the [DMAVA archives](#).

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