

APRIL 19, 2023



READY TO SERVE ★ PROUD TO HAVE SERVED

COMMISSIONER'S CORNER



Victoria Ragucci
Chief Diversity Officer

Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

DMAVA Team,

The New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs is committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and fostering a sense of belonging among our workforce and those who we serve. As Adjutant General, I recognize the importance of investing our mission, strategy, policies, and programs with a respect for the dignity of each and every individual, the need to build a just society, and in doing so, to have an authentic and positive impact on all Garden State Service Members, Veterans, and families.

This commitment begins with our own organization. Today, I am pleased to announce the appointment of Victoria Ragucci as DMAVA's first Chief Diversity Officer, tasked with leading a new Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DMAVA-DEIB). As we strive for a just society, we should take individual and collective action to develop a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment. As a team, we must also foster a climate that bridges opportunity gaps and develops a diverse workforce through recruitment, retention, mentorship, and professional development. DMAVA-DEIB is intended to do just that.

My intent is for DMAVA-DEIB to develop a statement of shared principles for diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging for all members of the DMAVA team. The office will also investigate examples from both the public and private sector, especially the U.S. Department of Defense and our sister state agencies, to identify resources, build structures, and formalize processes. I have also tasked them with establishing clear expectations of support of departmental diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging goals in all administrative and operational units to ensure the prioritization of sufficient and sustainable resources for this work.

Creating a climate of respect, dignity, and opportunity is central to DMAVA's mission. I am grateful to the many members of our team

for their efforts to realize these goals. I especially wish to acknowledge our Human Resources Division. The new Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging will build upon their work. In doing so, we ensure that our organization reflects a sense of welcome and support in order to extend the same to the Service Members, Veterans, and families who we serve.

Thanks to each of you for all you do to make the Department and the State a better place.

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



MILITARY HONORS



Sergeant David Solinas, Jr.

Sergeant David Solinas, Jr. was one of nine soldiers who were killed when two Black Hawk helicopters crashed near Fort Campbell in Kentucky during a training exercise on March 29, 2023. Solinas was a member of the 101st Airborne Division.

On April 16, 2023, the hearse carrying the 23-year-old soldier's casket arrived by a fairwell procession in his hometown of Oradell, NJ. The hearse was greeted by a Military Funeral Honors team from the New Jersey Army National Guard.

[Visitation and Funeral Service Details](#)



Staff Sergeant James Rotunno

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced on November 14, 2022 that U.S. Army Staff Sergeant James Rotunno, 27, of Brooklyn, New York, killed during World War II, was

accounted for September 27, 2022.

In January 1945, Rotunno was assigned to Company K, 3rd Battalion, 157th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry Division. The unit was engaged with German forces during the Battle of Reipertswiller in France and was surrounded, along with four other companies. The surrounded companies were given the order to attempt a break-out on January 20, but only two men made it through German lines. The rest were either captured or killed. Rotunno was among those killed in the aftermath on January 21, but his body could not be recovered because of the fighting.

Staff Sergeant Rotunno's casket is planned to arrive at Newark Liberty International Airport on April 21, 2023. A Military Funeral Honors team from the New Jersey Army National Guard will provide plane-side honors.

Funeral services are scheduled for the following day with burial in North Arlington, NJ.

[Funeral Service Details](#)



Private First Class Steven Gonzalez

PFC Steven Gonzalez was an active-duty Army Soldier who was killed in an accident just outside of Ft. Hood, TX on April 13, 2023.

A Military Funeral Honors team from the New Jersey Army National Guard will be rendering full military honors on Saturday, April 22, 2023 in Vineland, NJ.

[Funeral Service Details](#)

NJ GUARD EVENT



19TH ANNUAL

5K NUTTER RUN

JUNE 17TH, 2023

STARTS 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

REGISTRATION: RUNSIGNUP.COM/RACE/NJ/SEAGIRT/SGTNUTTERS5K

SCAN ME!



VIRTUAL RUN OPTION AVAILABLE

OUR 2023 HONOREE



STAFF SERGEANT JESSE SMITH OF THE NJ ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

NATIONAL GUARD TRAINING CENTER, 100 CAMP DR SEA GIRT, NJ 08750
ocsgnutterrun@gmail.com
www.sgtnutterrun.org



amazonSmile
Your shop. Amazon gives.
facebook

DMAVA EVENTS



April 20, 2023
9:00am - 3:00pm

DMAVA VETERANS OUTREACH CAMPAIGN

Columbus Farmers Market

2919 US-Route 206
Columbus, NJ 08022

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.



Operation Stand Down Vets Connect

Rowan College of South Jersey

1400 Tanyard Rd. Sewell, NJ 08080

Friday April 21, 2023

10:00am - 2:00pm

Operation Stand Down- Vets Connect is a Meet & Greet opportunity for our servicemembers, veterans, and military families to obtain support services and information regarding State and Federal Benefits & Services, Healthcare, Transition, Outreach, Education, Homeless Assistance, Employment, and much more.

Please join us

Behavioral Science Center

Parking Lot - D

CONTACT: MILITARY SERVICES 856-464-5239

Register here: RCSJ.edu/OperationStandDown

DMAVA will have a Veterans Service Officer present



Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst
America's Premier Joint Warfighting Base

SAVE THE DATE!!

**Joint Base McGuire-
Dix-Lakehurst
invites ALL military
retirees to the
Annual Retiree
Appreciation Day!**

Who: All Military Retirees - All Branches

What: JB MDL Annual Retiree Appreciation Day

When: Saturday, Apr 22, 2023 0830-1300

**Where: Timmerman Center, 5441 8th St, USASA,
Fort Dix, NJ 08640**

****Retirees will have an opportunity to
speak to various vendors; hear from the
Veterans Administration; Tricare; and
renew ID Cards at the ID card offices on
installation.**



DMAVA will have a Veterans Service Officer present

**3rd Annual
We Got Your 6
Poker Run
&
Veteran Resource Fair**



Live music

**\$25
Donation**



April 22, 2023



Military vehicle show

Contact us to bring yours

**\$25
Donation**

** All proceeds go to serving our Nation's Heroes **
Motorcycles not needed. All vehicles welcome. Participants do not have to do run

From North:
Toms River VFW Post
6063
209 Courthouse Ln
Toms River, NJ 08753
732-349-5766

**Gift Basket
&
50/50 Raffle**

Vendors
Contact us to join us

85 Harding Highway
Pittsgrove, NJ 08318
856-358-3144

WoodsnWater.org



Registration: 9-11
Ends At:




From South:
Pennsville VFW Post
1952
171 South Broadway
Pennsville, NJ 0800
856-678-8250

**BEST HAND
WINS \$\$\$**


**Each stop has
chance to win
a prize**

GDaly@WoodsnWater.org

DMAVA will have a Veterans Service Officer present



SUN, 23 APR 2023, 0830-1200
**RESERVE & NATIONAL GUARD,
"TRANSITION BENEFITS
WORKSHOP" (TBW)**




**Are you leaving the Reserves or National Guard?
ETS, Medical, "ALL" discharge types (within the
next 4 months or less), AND ALL Retirements
(Within next 18 months or less)**

**Have you been briefed on the "NUMEROUS" benefits you have
earned or have "Not" earned during your time in service? Are you
a "Veteran" and can you file for a VA Disability Claim? What
benefits do you have in the state you live in? Are you eligible for
Tricare coverage after you get out? Let us answer these and
MANY other questions you have "BEFORE" you get out.**

To attend this event, please scan our QR code -or- [e-mail](mailto:egraham@gapsi.com) Mr.
Ed Graham, RCTAA at egraham@gapsi.com.

**(Registration is "Required" to attend as seating/materials are
limited) SUTA/Split Train letter is available at workshop!**

DOD Contractor




**Tricare Options for
ETS & Retirees**

**Federal & State
Benefits**

VA Disability Q&A

**Employment &
Education Help**



Workshops held at:
Bordentown NG Armory,
1048 US Rt 206 South,
Bordentown, NJ. 08505

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

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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

VETERAN INFORMATION SESSION

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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

2023 CASINO CAREER FAIR

Thursday, April 27
9:00 am - 1:00 pm

1325 Boardwalk & Tennessee Ave.
Atlantic City, NJ 08401

Casino Control Commission
(indoors)

For more information contact:

Patricia Tatum (609) 703-2487

p.tatum@njamericanlegion.org

Bob Looby (908) 894-0746

r.looby@njamericanlegion.org

Pre-register at:
www.njccc.gov/vets

All job seekers

are welcome to attend, submit resumes, and talk with casino recruiters.

Veteran resources and services are provided in collaboration with prominent veteran organizations.



Networking

Career Information

Industry Insight



In Demand:

- Intelligence
- Logistics
- Transportation
- Finance
- I.T.
- Engineers
- Administrative
- Food Service
- Legal

Use Your Transferable Skills

Critical Thinking	Dependability	Dedication
Honorable Character	Planning/Prioritizing	Professional Demeanor

Resume Services

For additional information or to schedule an appointment for resume assistance contact:

James Mosby (609) 813-3907

James.Mosby@dol.nj.gov

Casinos

Bally's	Borgata	Caesars
Golden Nugget	Hard Rock Resorts	Harrah's
Ocean Casino		Tropicana

DMAVA will have a Veterans Service Officer present



June 12-13, 2023
9:00am - 4:00pm

GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP

Lawrenceville Armory



151 Eggert Crossing Road
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

DMAVA and Grant Writing USA will present a two-day grants workshop.

This training is for grant seekers across all disciplines. Attend this class and you'll learn how to find the funding sources and write winning grant proposals.

[Learn More](#)

FEATURED EVENTS



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, APRIL 22, 2023

**CHOOSE YOUR TIME
ONLY 30 AVAILABLE SLOTS PER HOUR**


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

**HAMILTON SENIOR CENTER
409 CYPRESS LANE
HAMILTON, NJ 08619**

Not enrolled in VA health care?
Bring your DD214 and a completed 10-10EZ 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
May TBD

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

Veteran Benefits

Enjoy Breakfast & Join the Conversation to Learn about Veterans Benefits

April 27, 2023

Registration & Breakfast: 9:00AM-10:00AM
Discussion: 10:00AM - 11:00AM

SpectraCare Foundation
777 Blackwood Clementon Road, Lindenwold, NJ 08021

Presented By: Kaitlin Dirxx



As the Director of the Public Benefits team at Rothkoff Law Group, Kaitlin comes from an Estate Planning background as a Legal Assistant with experience in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and California. She graduated from Temple University with a degree in Journalism, which honed her attention to detail, writing and organizational skills.

RSVP by April 20th
www.spectracarefoundation.org/rothkoff



U.S. Army Support Activity, Fort Dix
Military Family Program

Tuesday, May 9, 2023
1100-1330

Kelley Army Reserve Center
(Bldg. 2101, Route 68 (Fort Dix) Joint Base M-D-L)

Guest Speakers:

Mr. Christopher Arnold, DoD Family Programs

- Mr. Christopher Arnold serves with the U.S. Army's Military Community and Family Policy Program which is directly responsible for establishing and overseeing quality-of-life policies and programs that ensure our service members, their families, and survivors are well and mission-ready.

1SG Christopher Peffley, USA Ret, Military OneSource

- 1SG (Ret) Christopher Peffley serves as the U.S. Army's New Jersey contact for the programs and services that support the everyday needs to service members and immediate family members of the military community. These DoD services are accessible 24/7/365.

Deli lunch with drinks will be served

Please register at: <https://ausa-dixchapter-milfamilyprogram.eventbrite.com>

Closing date to RSVP is Thursday 4 May 2023



Sponsored by Dix Chapter, AUSA



FEMALE VETERAN LUNCH & LEARN

Women Veterans, come join us for a free and delicious lunch made by the Wilmington VA Medical Center's Nutrition Team!

Lunch will be Chicken tortellini soup with a low carb garlic bread.

When: Friday, May 12th
11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Atlantic Cape Community College
341 Court House South Dennis Rd. Cape May Court House, NJ 08210

Only 25 seats are available

For registration contact Jacqueline Hinker 302-304-5509.

The Lunch and Learn will be a comfortable environment to ask questions to our VA Outreach & Nutrition team on PACT ACT, enrollment, Women's Health and Nutrition Services.

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Wilmington VA Medical Center

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](#)

NJ NATIONAL GUARD



177th Security Forces Squadron

Airmen of the 177th Security Forces Squadron recently held a barbecue where defenders spent time with their loved ones before leaving for a deployment to the Middle East.

During the event, the [American Legion Riders Post 352 Somers Point, NJ](#) wished the Airmen good luck, and escorted their convoy out of the 177th Fighter Wing as the deploying Airmen said goodbye to their loved ones and began their travel.

[View Images](#)



177th Fighter Wing

During a recent commander's all call, Col. Derek B. Routt, the 177th Fighter Wing commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Michael F. Sears, 177th Fighter Wing command chief, recognized Airmen for their exceptional performance in 2022.

Congratulations to the award recipients.

[View Images](#)

Join Our Team

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



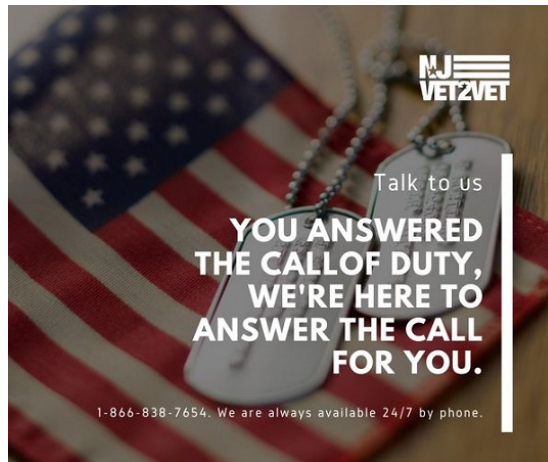


A Perfect 300

William "Skip" Wentzell Jr. was recognized for bowling a perfect 300 in a ceremony at the [New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home at Vineland](#), Vineland, New Jersey, April 12, 2023.

Wentzell, who served in the Army in Vietnam, was presented with a bowling medallion, a small engraved trophy, and a T-shirt that read "Member of the 300 Club".

[View Images](#)



NJ Veterans' Benefits Hotline

888-865-8387

vbb@dmava.nj.gov

Veterans Outreach Schedule

Veterans Service Offices

DMAVA DEPARTMENTS



National Guard Training Center

Correctional Staff Training Academy Class 254 began its journey early in the morning on April 10, 2023.

The 83 men and women will undergo 19 weeks of physical and mental training, including self defense, interpersonal communication, criminal justice, firearms proficiency, and much more at the National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt, NJ.

Photo by Chris Carden / NJ Department of Corrections



Purple Up Day

The staff at the [Family Programs Office](#) in Bordentown dressed in purple on April 14, 2023. The event was in support of April's Month of the Military Child.



NJ Youth Challenge Academy Docuseries

Are you ready for the Challenge?

In this nine-part docuseries, experience the 22-week residential program of [NJ Youth Challenge Academy's](#) Class 55, from candidacy at the National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt to graduation.

In the first episode, the NJCA staff give a brief walkthrough of the candidate intake process. Plus, you'll hear from the candidates and their motivation to *Dream, Believe, Achieve*.

Stay tuned for future episodes.



NEW JERSEY
YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY
DREAM. BELIEVE. ACHIEVE.

YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY

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

APPLY NOW!

TUITION FREE

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

The advertisement features a dark blue background with a white outline of the state of New Jersey. A circular inset shows a group of people in high-visibility vests standing in front of a classical building. A yellow speech bubble contains the text 'APPLY NOW!' and a yellow starburst contains 'TUITION FREE'.

STATE PARTNERS



The Adjutant General speaks before state Senate Military and Veterans Affairs Committee

Brig. Gen. Lisa J. Hou, D.O., The Adjutant General of New Jersey and Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, spoke before the New Jersey Senate Military and Veterans Affairs Committee at the State House Annex in Trenton, New Jersey, April 4, 2023.



Governor Murphy Signs Resolution to Designate Annual "Military Child Appreciation Day"

4/14/2023

TRENTON – In recognition of the challenges children face and the sacrifices they make when they have a parent in the military, Governor Phil Murphy today signed a bipartisan resolution (SJR-106) into law to designate April 14 as “Military Child Appreciation Day” in New Jersey each year.

“The children of military members face unique challenges as a result of their parent’s service that it is important we recognize,” said Governor Murphy. “Designating an annual Military Child Appreciation Day encourages the residents of New Jersey to honor the sacrifices these children make and serves as a reminder that we must continue to support and address the needs of military families throughout our state.”

“Few know the sacrifices of our military families better than our children,” said U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Lisa J. Hou, D.O., New Jersey’s Adjutant General and Commissioner for Military and Veteran Affairs. “May the focus of this special day help them feel uniquely appreciated.”

[Read Full News Release](#)



Veterans Medal Ceremony

On April 13, 2023, DMAVA partnered with the Camden County Board of Commissioners and the Camden County Office of Veterans Affairs for a medal ceremony at the Cherry Hill Mall to recognize the service of local Veterans.

Commissioner and Gold Star mother, Melinda Kane, liaison to the county’s Office of Veterans Affairs, discussed the importance of the ceremony.

“The patriotism and courage these individuals have displayed cannot go unrecognized,” Kane said. “This ceremony is just a small token of our gratitude to these Veterans whose sacrifices and courage have made a positive impact on our county, state and nation.”

There were 19 awardees receiving 47 medals, a mix of both county and state medals.

[View Images](#)



Veterans Host Appreciation Lunch for Morris County Veteran Staff

American Legion Post 59 of Morristown hosted a lunch for the Morris County Veterans Service Office, the staff at the Veterans Affairs Clinic at Morris View and Morris County officials to thank them for the aid they provide former service members.

[Read Full Story](#)



Youth ChalleNGe Tours State House

New Jersey Youth ChalleNGe Academy Class 55 cadets tour the New Jersey State House in Trenton, New Jersey, April 11, 2023.

[View Images](#)



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, NIH launch study of Gulf War Illness

WASHINGTON - On April 18, 2023, the Department of Veterans Affairs and National Institutes of Health [began a joint, five-year study](#) that aims to explain the chronic symptoms of [Gulf War Illness](#). The study may lead to more definitive diagnostic criteria for Gulf War Illness, development of new diagnostic testing, and potential treatments.

Gulf War Illness affects multiple systems in the body and includes chronic symptoms such as fatigue, headache, memory and cognitive difficulties, joint and muscle pain, poor sleep, and problems with gastrointestinal and respiratory function.

This disease affects about a third of the nearly 700,000 men and women who served in the Persian Gulf during operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

[Read Full News Release](#)

Veterans have access to acute suicide care, but who is eligible?

Some Veterans discharged under other than honorable conditions are eligible.

Eligible veterans and some former service members can now go to any VA or non-VA hospital for emergency health care during an acute suicidal crisis, and it will be paid for by VA.

This includes ambulance transportation, related prescriptions, up to 30 days of inpatient or crisis residential treatment, and up to 90 days of outpatient care at no cost to them.

The new benefit is saving lives and supports one of VA's top clinical priorities—preventing veteran suicide.

[Learn More at VA News](#)

VA Home Loans

In this episode of *theSITREP*, the host discusses the advantages of Veterans using their VA home loan benefit - especially for those who may lack funds for a down payment, have experienced a bankruptcy or foreclosure, or who may have a low credit score.

[Watch Video](#)

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](#)

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.

[Learn More at VA News](#)

VA Life 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](#)

Featured Links

- [How to Check Your PACT Act Claim Status](#)
- [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](#)

#VetResources

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

Subscribe

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



School Visit

Students from Brigantine Community School recently visited the 177th Fighter Wing, where they met the 177th Operations Group commander, observed an F-16 Fighting Falcon static display, and were briefed by an Explosive Ordnance Disposal team member, members of the Aircrew Flight Equipment team and a firefighter from the 177th Fighter Wing's firehouse.

Thanks for visiting, Brigantine Community School, we were glad to have you!

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.

April 22, 2008
Operation Iraqi Freedom
PVT Ronald R. Harrison
U.S. Army
Budd Lake, New Jersey

April 22, 2011
Operation New Dawn
1LT Omar Vazquez
U.S. Army
Hamilton, New Jersey

April 23, 2005
Operation Enduring Freedom
PV2 Robert C. White III
U.S. Army

April 25, 2003
Operation Iraqi Freedom
SPC Narson Bertil Sullivan
U.S. Army
North Brunswick, New Jersey

April 28, 2007
Operation Iraqi Freedom
SSG Michael R. Hullender
U.S. Army
Little Falls, New Jersey

April 29, 2010
Operation Enduring Freedom

Camden, New Jersey

April 23, 2010
Operation Enduring Freedom

SGT Ronald A. Kubik

U.S. Army
Brielle, New Jersey

1LT Salvatore S. Corma

U.S. Army
Wenonah, New Jersey

May 2, 2005

Operation Iraqi Freedom

LtCol John C. Spahr

U.S. Marine Corps
Cherry Hill, 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



The *Intelligent Whale* enroute to its new home in April 2020.

April 19, 1780

General George Washington welcomed distinguished visitors "the Chevalier de la Luzerne, Minister of France, with another French gentleman, and Don Juan de Miralles, a gentleman of distinction from Spain," to the Ford Mansion, his Morristown headquarters.

April 19, 1899

In compliance with General Orders No. 5, the New Jersey National Guard was reorganized according to federal military standards into four infantry regiments of twelve companies each, two Gatling gun companies, two troops of cavalry and two battalions of naval militia.

April 23, 2020

In preparation for the [National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey's](#) move to its new facility, the only surviving Civil War-era submarine - the *Intelligent Whale* - took a short trip down the road at

April 25, 1898

The United States declared war on Spain following the sinking of the Battleship Maine in Havana harbor on February 15, 1898. New Jersey National Guardsmen would subsequently be called to Sea Girt to form volunteer regiments for service in the ensuing Spanish - American War. The New Jersey Naval Militia was called up to serve on various navy ships, some of them engaged in the blockade of Cuba.

May 3, 1861

New Jersey's four regiment militia brigade, enlisted for three months' service, left Trenton for Washington aboard motorized canal boats down the Delaware River. Some militiamen celebrated by firing handguns randomly in the air, and one careless Jersey City man accidentally shot another soldier. The Jerseymen debarked at Annapolis and boarded trains to Washington - the first full brigade to reach the capital.

the National Guard Training Center
in Sea Girt, NJ.

IN THE NEWS



'It starts with a name,' says veteran who honors fallen heroes

Mackenzie Fitchett | The Ocean Star | April 7, 2023

BAY HEAD — More than 30 members of the U.S. Armed Forces who died during war will be memorialized next month in Bay Head, Point Pleasant Beach and Point Pleasant Borough thanks to Brick resident William Duffy.

"First, you need a name," said Mr. Duffy, who has spent years researching the names and backgrounds of United States Veterans in order to honor them in war memorials across the state.

"I came home, millions and millions of US Veterans came home from the war. But these people did not and I think they should be remembered and honored."

[Read Full Story](#)



Rutgers Business School

Student veterans and military-affiliated students were the focus of the cover story in the most recent edition of the [Rutgers Business School - Newark and New Brunswick Impact Report](#).

[Read Full Story](#)



K2 veterans sue Defense Department for records on Uzbek base amid new evidence of toxic materials

Catherine Herridge, Jessica Kegu | CBS News | April 10, 2023

A group of veterans took the unusual step this month of suing the Defense Department to obtain records about toxic conditions at a military base in Uzbekistan they believe is linked to their rare cancers and other illnesses. At least 15,000 service members passed through Karshi Khanabad Air Base, commonly known as K2, to support missions in nearby Afghanistan after 9/11.

The veterans advocacy groups taking legal action against the Department of Defense claim that public records about K2 do not explain the high rates of cancers among those who deployed there. The lawsuit argues "records from DoD could contain information that would allow healthcare providers to know with greater certainty the type and quantity of toxic substances that Karshi-Khanabad veterans were exposed to."

[View Full Story](#)

RETIREE SPOTLIGHT



Son flies father on fini flight

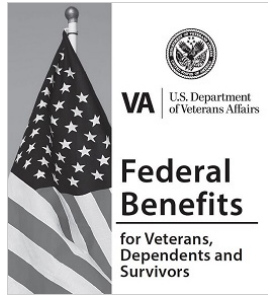
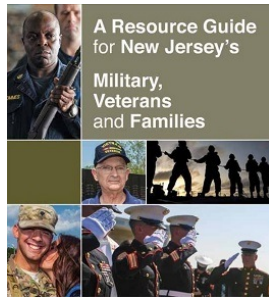
U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 3 Paul J. Ciervo Jr., right, Detachment 19, New Jersey Army National Guard, poses for a photo with his father, retired NJARNG Col. Paul Ciervo, in front of a C-12 Huron prior to his final flight in the National Guard at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, April 18, 2023.

Eighteen years ago, Col. Ciervo flew his son on his final flight with the 1st Battalion, 150th Assault Helicopter Battalion. Chief Ciervo enlisted in 2003 and is retiring after more than 20 years of service, during which he deployed multiple times in support of wartime and domestic response operations. His father served with the NJARNG from 1980 to 2004 and retired as the State Aviation Officer.

The final flight, or fini flight, is a tradition among pilots and air crew to celebrate one's last flight with their unit or on a certain airframe.

The C-12 is used for personnel transport, intelligence gathering and reconnaissance, as well as carrying cargo. Detachment 19 is part of the Joint Operational Support Airlift Center, which is comprised of 56 detachments nationwide.

RESOURCES



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