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January 22, 2025



DMAVA

Department of Military
and Veterans Affairs

Ready To Serve ★ Proud To Have Served

Commissioner's Corner



Governor Murphy delivers the State of the State address at the assembly chambers in Trenton on January 14, 2025 (Edwin J. Torres/NJ Governors Office).

State of the State 2025

Last Tuesday, I had the opportunity to represent the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs at Governor Phil Murphy's 2025 State of the State Address at the State House in Trenton. This was my first time attending this joint session of the Legislature since I assumed my duties as Adjutant General and Commissioner. The Governor highlighted his Administration's progress over the past seven years in raising wages, creating jobs, and fostering economic growth. He also outlined how, during his final year in office, his absolute top priority remains delivering economic security and opportunity to every New Jerseyan.

I am blessed to do the work that I do. Before the start of the address, in my conversations with members of the Cabinet, Senators, and members of the General Assembly, I was struck by their bipartisan commitment to our important work on behalf of Garden State Service Members, Veterans, and their families. What we do each day would not be possible without their collaboration, advocacy, and support, and that of our partners in Veterans Service Organizations. I am so grateful to serve alongside individuals who continue to selflessly serve our community, state, and country.

As we enter 2025, the state of the New Jersey National Guard is strong. Our Airmen and Soldiers continue to maintain their readiness to deploy in support of our communities and the strategic interests of the United States. The state of state-delivered veteran benefits, programs, and services is strong. We are working with the

Department of Community Affairs to effectively end veteran homelessness. Our teams continue to serve as points of entry for Garden State heroes to access the state and federal benefits that they have earned through their service.

As always, thank you for staying connected to DMAVA.

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

Brigadier General Yvonne L. Mays
Adjutant General & Commissioner



Featured Event



Catholic Charities
Diocese of Paterson

Providing help - creating hope.



NEW JERSEY SOS VETERANS
STAKEHOLDERS GROUP



Please Join Us for a NJ SOS Special Stakeholders Meeting

Thursday, January 30th, 2025,
12:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m.



691 Wyckoff Avenue
Wyckoff, NJ 07481

RSVP DPEARSON@CATHOLICCHARITIES.ORG (973) 818-3601

Or Nancya@wyckoffymca.org (201)-891-2081 ext 152

Bring information and business cards!

Lunch and refreshments will be provided thanks to the Wyckoff Family YMCA

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.

- January 22 | Franklin Twp
[Veterans Town Hall hosted by Assemblyman Joe Daniels](#)
- January 24 | Lawrenceville
[Guest Speaker: NJ in "The War to End All Wars"](#)
- February 8 | Bordentown
[NJARNG Last Formation](#)
- February 13 | Carneys Point
[Salem County Veteran Town Hall & Claims Clinic](#)
- February 15 | Bordentown
[Career Fair Expo](#)

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



508th MP Yellow Ribbon and Welcome Home Ceremony

Around 125 Soldiers from the 508th Military Police Company, 117th Combat Support Battalion, [42nd Regional Support Group](#) were welcomed home in a ceremony and Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program event at the Hilton Parsippany Hotel in Parsippany-Troy Hills, NJ on January 12, 2025.

The event was held to recognize the Soldiers for their duty and sacrifice and ensure they and their families receive information about benefits they are entitled to.

The 508th MP Co. returned to home station at Teaneck, NJ in November 2024 from a year-long mission to the U.S. southwest border in support of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

[View Images](#)



Recruit Sustainment Program

Soldiers with the New Jersey Army National Guard's Recruit Sustainment Program reported for their first weekend drill of 2025 at the National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt, NJ on January 11, 2025.

The Recruit Sustainment Program is a program of the Army National Guard designed to introduce new recruits to the fundamentals of the U.S. Army before they leave for Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training.

[View Images](#)



New Jersey Guard Hosts U.S. Northern Command Joint Staff Training

NJ National Guard | nationalguard.mil | January 16, 2025

LAWRENCEVILLE, N.J. - The New Jersey National Guard hosted a U.S. Northern Command Joint Staff training course focused on the readiness of Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen to support emergency management in New Jersey and beyond Jan. 10-12 at the NJNG Joint Operations Center.

“From hurricanes to the next pandemic, our staff continually prepares for dynamic support to our interagency partners across a spectrum of emergencies,” said U.S. Army Col. Arthur Roscoe Jr., director of the NJNG Joint Staff. “This course honed our team’s

knowledge and coordination on key tasks when every decision counts.”

[Read Full Article](#)

Join Our Team

100% Free College Tuition
Bonuses | GI Bill
Student Loan Repayment



DMAVA Veterans Services



Vincent Solomeno, Deputy Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, addresses the audience at the Veterans Services Council meeting on January 15, 2025.

Veterans Services Council

The New Jersey Governor's Veterans Services Council met January 15, 2025 at American Legion Post 310 in Little Ferry, New Jersey. The meeting included representatives from local and statewide veterans service organizations and focused on the state's initiative to effectively end veteran homelessness in the Garden State.

"This is a chance to talk with key stakeholders on how we are moving forward on Veterans services and support," said U.S. Army Veteran Sophia Dmoch, the council's chairperson. "Between legislative work and private organizations, there is a lot underway."

Dmoch explained that the council meets monthly. Beginning this year, they will also conduct quarterly meetings in different regions of the state, giving veterans a better chance at attending and offering input and feedback. Dmoch assumed the duties of chair in the fall of 2024. The all-volunteer 12-member council, appointed by the

Governor and subject to confirmation by the New Jersey Senate, was established in 1947 and is among state government's oldest advisory bodies.

"When it comes to supporting those currently serving, those who have served, and those who love them, New Jersey is investing more, doing more, and achieving more than at any time in our history," said Vincent Solomeno, the state's veterans affairs administrator and Deputy Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. "The work of veterans organizations is a testament to their selfless service and our state is blessed to have an active council speaking on their behalf."

At the meeting, Solomeno briefed the details of Bringing Veterans Home, the interagency initiative led by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and DMAVA. Applying evidenced based lessons learned from other states and over \$30 million in state funds, the initiative aims to achieve functional zero for veteran homelessness by July 1, 2026. Managed by DCA's Office of Homelessness Prevention, Bringing Veterans Home deploys regional street outreach teams to identify unhoused veterans, social workers to provide case management, capacity for rapid rehousing, and a surge of vouchers dedicated to former service members.

"Our goal is ensuring that every Garden State hero is assured stable housing," concluded Solomeno. "There is much work ahead, but I know that we will achieve functional zero through the leadership and collaboration of the Veterans Services Council and our state's many veterans service organizations."

For more information, refer to [Bringing Veterans Home](#).



State Medal Ceremony

The New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs hosted a State Medal Ceremony at the Moorestown Mall in Moorestown, NJ on January 16, 2025.

Veterans were honored for their service with the New Jersey Distinguished Service Medal, New Jersey Meritorious Service Medal, Desert Storm Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and Global War on Terrorism Medal. Learn more about these awards on our website at [NJ Service Medals](#).

The ceremony featured inspiring remarks from guest speaker Col. (R) Mark Preston, recognizing the dedication and sacrifices of New Jersey's Veterans.

[View Images](#)



New Jersey Desert Storm Medal

On August 2, 1990, more than 200,000 Iraqi soldiers flooded into neighboring Kuwait. President George H.W. Bush described the invasion as "naked aggression" and set out to form a global coalition opposing the unprovoked attack.

Under Operation Desert Shield, American forces deployed to southwest Asia. From the New Jersey National Guard, Soldiers of the 328th Transportation Detachment, 253d Transportation Company, 144th Supply Company and Airmen from the 170th Air Refueling Group deployed to the region in support of operations against the Iraqi military, while many other guardsmen were activated for support roles stateside.

Operation Desert Storm began early January 17, 1991 with the aerial bombardment of Iraqi military targets, followed by a ground invasion of Kuwait on February 24th. Iraqi forces were driven out within 100 hours of commencing ground combat operations and Kuwait regained its sovereignty.

Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm Veterans can apply for your award at [New Jersey Desert Storm Medal](#).



Get Connected to Resources & Services

The New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs has partnered with Unite Us to connect individuals and families to a wide variety of services and resources.

Unite Us is a coordinated care referral network of health and social service providers. Unite Us can connect our New Jersey military and veteran community to resources to obtain benefits, food assistance, housing, education, transportation, behavioral health services, peer support and more.

[**Learn More & Request Assistance**](#)

Veteran Service Providers

Do you provide services to Veterans? We would like to get you enrolled in this new online referral network, Unite NJ Veterans. This digital platform connects Veterans to the resources around them quickly. [Learn more and enroll](#).

**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:

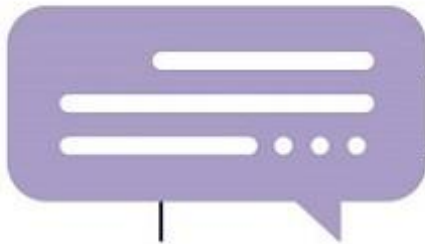
(888) 865-8387,

OR EMAIL:

VBB@DMAVA.NJ.GOV



SUPPORT IS PEER TO PEER



**Call Us 24/7
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



NJ Youth Challenge Academy

The staff and cadre of the [New Jersey Youth Challenge Academy](#) welcomed in Class 59 on January 14, 2025 at the National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt, NJ.

Class 59 "Intake Day" involved check-in, bag drag, haircuts (males only), security check, supply, medical screening and then assignment to one of three platoons: Alpha, Bravo, or Charlie.

Cadets also had a chance to say goodbye to their families until the "Family Day" events halfway through the 22-week program.

The mission of the NJYCA is to train and mentor disengaged teenage youth so they become responsible and productive citizens of their community, state, and country.

[View Images](#)

NEW JERSEY YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY

DREAM. BELIEVE. ACHIEVE.



TUITION
FREE

Now accepting applications
for Class 60 - July 2025.

APPLY
NOW!

FOR MORE INFORMATION:



njyca.org/admissions



rpm@dmava.nj.gov



(800) 997-5587 / (732) 974-6516



NJ National Guard Family Programs

(SRAP) State Rental Assistance Program

DCA will be accepting pre-applications



Enrollment Period

9:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.
January 13, 2025 — January 31, 2025

Priority Preference: Veterans & Surviving Spouses



NJ State Agencies

- [Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicides among Service Members, Veterans & Their Families](#)
- [The New Jersey's Governor "We Value Our Veterans" Awards](#)
- [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](#)
- [Veterans & Spouses Entering the Educator Workforce](#)
- [Journey Through Jersey](#)

Federal Partners



Veterans may be eligible for one more year of G.I. Bill benefits

VA News | January 3, 2025

Are you a Veteran who served at least two periods of service? In other words, [did you reenlist](#)? If so, there's a chance that you're eligible for additional G.I. Bill benefits.

Today, VA announced that it has updated its process for awarding G.I. Bill benefits. This means that many Veterans who served multiple periods of military service ([for example, Veterans who reenlisted](#)) may be eligible for additional benefits for themselves or their beneficiaries.

Specifically, under the previous policy, eligible Veterans who served at least two periods of service were forced to choose between the [Montgomery GI Bill](#) and the [Post-9/11 GI Bill](#) for a maximum of 36 months of G.I. Bill benefits. Under the updated policy, Veterans will no longer have to make that choice when they apply for benefits,

meaning that they can qualify for up to 48 months of G.I. Bill benefits.

[Learn More](#)

Prepare for VA's secure sign-in changes

In 2025, you'll have two secure sign-in account options (Login.gov and ID.me) for all VA websites and apps.

The VA will remove the My HealtheVet option after January 31, 2025, and the DS Logon option after September 30, 2025. You'll still be able to use your My HealtheVet health portal - you will just need to sign in to it with a Login.gov or ID.me account.

[Learn More](#)





theSITREP Podcast

By: Department of Veterans Affairs
Podcast



VIETNAM



GULF WAR



POST - 9/11

**WERE YOU EXPOSED TO BURN PITS,
NUCLEAR WEAPONS, CHEMICALS,
AGENT ORANGE, OR OTHER TOXINS
WHILE SERVING IN THE MILITARY?**



**Apply for VA
health care today
at [VA.gov/PACT](https://www.va.gov/PACT).**

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



Have questions?

Call 1-800-MyVA411 and press 0
to speak with someone right away.



The Women Veterans Call Center is Your Guide to VA

Live women representatives, many of whom are Veterans, are standing by to help.

**Call or text 1-855-VA-WOMEN
(1-855-829-6636)
or chat with us online**

Weekdays 8:00 am – 10:00 pm ET
Saturday 8:00 am – 6:30 pm ET



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Featured Links

- [National Parks Pass](#)
- [VALife Insurance](#)
- [VA Urgent Care Services](#)
- [VA Caregiver Support Program](#)
- [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](#)
- [VA Resource Navigator](#)

Community Spotlight



Employers Attend ESGR Ambassador Program

The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) held an Ambassador Program meeting at the [Joint Military & Family Assistance Center](#) in Bordentown, NJ on January 10, 2025.

Attendees learned about the ESGR's mission of fostering cooperation and offering mediation services between employers and service members. The Ambassador Program aims to designate volunteers as the corporate liaison to the [NJ ESGR office](#), while also teaching volunteers employer "best practices" and unique solutions to enhance current military support programs.

[View Images](#) | [View Video](#)



Groundbreaking Ceremony

Deputy Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Vincent Solomeno and Director of Veterans Services Esther Chucaralao attended the groundbreaking ceremony for a new 22-unit facility for homeless and at-risk Veterans at [American Legion Post #3](#) in Westfield, NJ.

This incredible project, which includes a revitalized post, is a testament to the dedication of the American Legion and its partners in supporting those who have served our nation.

This effort aligns closely with the State of New Jersey's "Bringing Veterans Home" initiative, a shared mission to provide stability and resources for our Veterans.

A heartfelt thank-you to the American Legion leadership team, the Foundation for Sustainable Veterans Housing, SoldierOn, Monarch Housing, PM Al Betau, the Westfield Mayor, and the City Council for their commitment to Union County Veterans.

As the designated project for Middlesex County, we eagerly anticipate the groundbreaking of the [Stars & Stripes Veterans Center in South Amboy](#), ensuring more Veterans have a place to call home.

Together, we continue to honor and support our Veterans. View a video of the event on [YouTube](#).

Courtesy photo by [American Legion Department of New Jersey](#).



Princeton Battlefield Reenactment 2025

[Princeton Battlefield Society 1777](#) hosted its annual reenactment of the Battle of Princeton at Princeton Battlefield State Park in Princeton, NJ on January 5, 2025.

The narrated reenactment honored the 4,500 American troops who fought and afterwards a wreath laying ceremony was held for the legacy units that fought.

[View Images](#)

In The News



HeroCare Connect™ collaboration between Deborah Heart and Lung and Cooper University Health Care can save time and lives

Ray Zardetto | roi-nj.com | January 15, 2025

The [HeroCare Connect™](#) program is a medical concierge scheduling and navigation service for active-duty and retired military, veterans, and their families. It was created via a unique partnership between Deborah Heart and Lung Center and Cooper University Health Care.

The program helps military members schedule specialty medical appointments, follow-up visits and tests, as well as help them manage prescriptions and insurance requirements.

For military members, the program can save time and frustration. But most importantly, it can save lives.

[Read Full Story](#)

Veterans' Oral Histories



Kenneth Falls

Desert Storm



Robert Ferrone

Desert Storm

[Veterans History Project](#)

Did You Know?



Paris Peace Accords Signed

On January 27, 1973, the “Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam,” otherwise known as the Paris Peace Accords, is signed by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Republic of Vietnam, the Provisional Revolutionary Government (Viet Cong), and the United States.

Among other stipulations, the agreement established a ceasefire, a 60-day period for withdrawal of all American and other foreign troops, and the return of U.S. civilian and military personnel held prisoner by Communist forces. The accords officially end direct U.S. military involvement in Vietnam.

The next day, President Nixon uses an executive order to end the draft and inaugurate an all-volunteer military.

Source: [The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration](#)

Never Forget



New Jersey Fallen Heroes Memorial

In Honor of all those from New Jersey who gave their lives in the fight against terrorism during Operation Enduring Freedom & Iraqi Freedom.

In humble gratitude, we remember their sacrifice.

Memorial Inscription

"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



Grave marker for Civil War Veteran George Ashby.

January 25, 1844

George Ashby was born in Burlington. Ashby, an African-American, served in the Forty-fifth United States Colored Infantry regiment during the Civil War from 1864 to 1865, rising from private to first sergeant. When he died in Allentown, on April 26, 1946, Ashby was the last surviving New Jersey Civil War veteran.

January 25, 1942

Varanger, a Norwegian tanker sailing from Curacao to New York City with 12,750 tons of fuel oil, was torpedoed by a German submarine at 3:00 AM twenty-eight miles off Atlantic City. Hit by three torpedoes, Varanger split into three pieces, but all hands escaped in life boats. The crew was rescued by two fishing boats and brought to the US Coast Guard station at Sea Island Inlet, arriving there at 12:45 PM.

January 29, 1833

Alexander Arsace Vandoni was born in Italy. Vandoni emigrated to America in 1841, eventually settling in Chatham as a self-employed broom maker. In 1862 he enlisted as a musician in the Twenty-seventh New Jersey Infantry. After campaigns in

Virginia and Kentucky, Vandoni was discharged with his regiment in 1863, and returned to Chatham as one of a relatively small number of Italian-American Civil War veterans. He died on February 29, 1908 and is buried in Florham Park.

January 29, 1957

The New Jersey National Guard ceased to be an all-male organization when the first women soldiers in its history, two nurses, Captain Frances R. Comstock and 1st Lieutenant Lucille Valentino of Paterson, were sworn in as members of the 114th Mobile Surgical Hospital.

February 1, 1977

A British force skirmished with New Jersey militiamen at Drake's Farm, near Springfield, as the "forage war" between the British seeking supplies in the countryside and the local militia heated up.

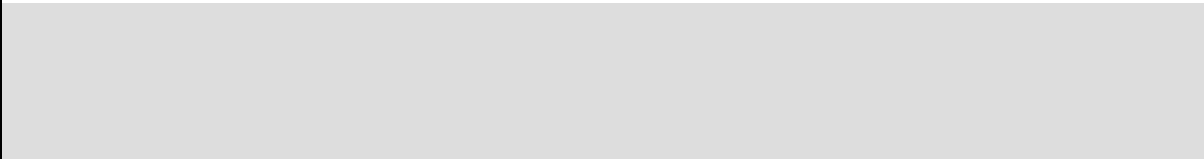
February 1, 1865

New Jersey governor Joel Parker presented New Brunswick native Captain Charles Stewart Boggs with a presentation sword in recognition of Boggs' heroic actions commanding the gunboat Varuna in the naval battles leading to the capture of New Orleans in April, 1862. Boggs sank six Confederate gunboats before his own ship began to sink, then ran Varuna into shore, tied her up to some trees and kept firing on the enemy.

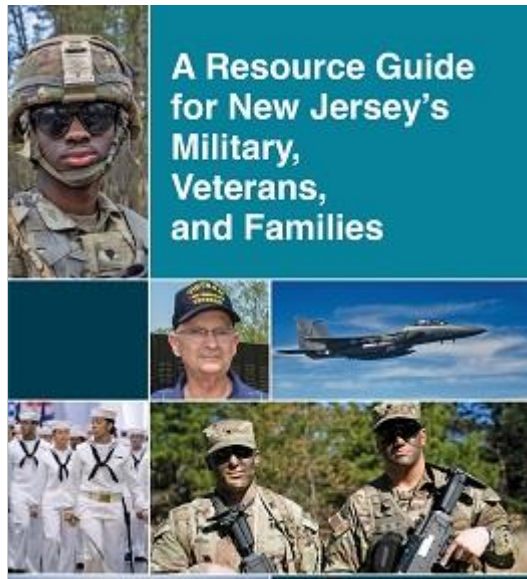
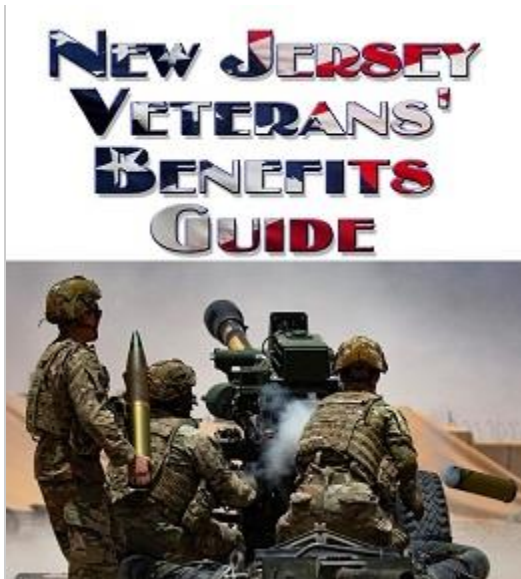
February 3, 1943

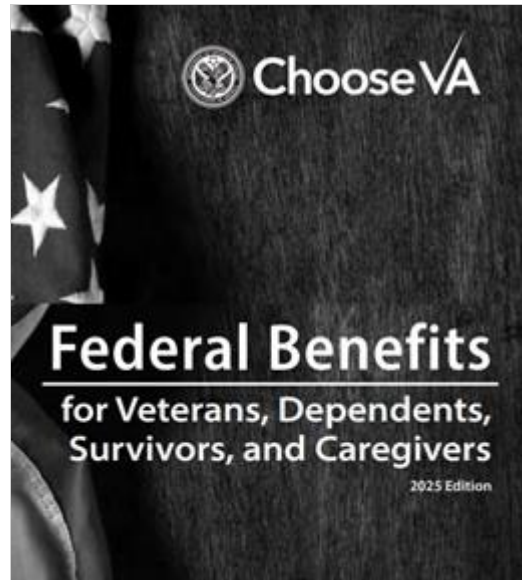
The troop ship SSAT Dorchester, with 904 men aboard, was torpedoed off Greenland. Four chaplains - one Jewish, two Protestant and one Catholic - gave their lifejackets to soldiers, joined arms, said prayers and went down with the ship. There were 230 survivors. The Catholic chaplain, Father John Washington, born in Newark in 1908, was a graduate of

Seton Hall University and Darlington Seminary and assigned to St. Stephen's parish in Kearny when he enlisted in the Army. The chaplains were posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and the Purple Heart. There is a monument to Father Washington at Saint Rose of Lima Church, his home parish, on Orange Street in Newark and another to all four chaplains at St. Stephen's.



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

[Vacancies](#)

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