



NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES

2017 ANNUAL REPORT - SFY 2017





Table of CONTENTS

Letter from the Director	1
Nevada Department of Veterans Services Overview	2
About the Nevada Department of Veterans Services	2
The Heroes We Serve	5
Key Partnerships	6
Key Partnership Highlights	8
Administrative Support Services	10
Financial Summary	10
Grants	12
Programs and Services	13
Veterans Advocacy and Support	13
Women Veterans Program	14
Incarcerated Veterans Program	15
Native American Veterans Program	15
Cemeteries and Memorials	16
Ceremonies	16
Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (SNVMC)	17
Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (NNVMC)	18
State Veterans Memorials	19
Education, Employment and Financial Stability	20
Education	20
Employment	21
Patriot Employer Program	22
Community Outreach	23
Statewide Veterans Community Councils	24
Nevada Veterans Advocacy Program	25
Nevada Vet Corps	26
NDVS Website	26



Health and Wellness	26
State Veterans Homes	26
Nevada State Veterans Home	26
Northern Nevada Veterans Home	29
Honoring Nevada’s Veterans	32
Veterans in Care Program	32
The “Welcome Home” Campaign	33
Veteran Supporter of the Month Program	33
Special Wellness Programs	34
Disabled Veterans Sports Program	34
Suicide Prevention Program	34
Veterans Legislative Overview	36
2017 Legislative Summary	36
Moving Forward	40



“Our servicemen and women have given us all and we will do nothing less for them.”

~ *Governor Brian Sandoval*

INTRODUCTION

Letter from the Director

BRIAN SANDOVAL
Governor



STATE OF NEVADA

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES

2017 was a "Gang-Buster" year for the Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS). "Gang Busters" was a famous old-time radio program that opened with dramatic and exciting sound effects like police sirens, machine guns, and screeching tires. And while the NDVS Team may not have squealed any wheels, 2017 year was dramatic and exciting by any definition!

For me, the year was really defined by an absolute "**explosion**" of outreach. Outreach to elder veterans in care facilities. Outreach to Native American veterans. Outreach to incarcerated veterans. Outreach to gay and lesbian veterans. Outreach to veterans who experienced military sexual trauma and traumatic brain injury. Outreach to disabled veterans. Outreach to employers, encouraging them to hire veterans. Outreach to veterans of every generation at special events in urban and rural communities across the State. **And more outreach, outreach, outreach...**

How were we able to expand our presence? Well, it was partly because of additional staffing and funding we received as a part of Governor Sandoval's continued commitment to our military, veterans and their families. The NDVS team is the strongest it has ever been; these dedicated women and men are creating innovative programs and processes to ensure that where ever veterans live, they have access to needed services. But this is only part of the story. A key force multiplier is our Nevada Veterans Advocates who are working in their communities to help connect veterans with benefits and services that improve their lives. Their selfless service has made—and is making—a huge difference.

In addition to the dramatic expansion in outreach, in 2017 we leveraged Federal grants to improve our Veterans Memorial Cemeteries and to make critical infrastructure modifications at the Nevada State Veterans Home in Boulder City. In this report you will see examples of the many awards we received as a result of the hard work of our Veterans Home and Cemetery teams. And while we are always honored to receive this National recognition, it is the appreciation that we receive in the form of calls, card, and letters from the veterans and families we serve that we value above all else. One of these wonderful notes is in this report.

Finally, while Nevada received approval for a Federal grant in 2006 to build a new veterans skilled nursing facility in northern Nevada, Congressional appropriation of the needed Federal funds could have taken many more years. Governor Sandoval was unwilling to let veterans and their families wait any longer for this critically needed home. So, in June 2017 he signed a bill authorizing millions of dollars to build the home in advance of a Federal appropriation. Make no mistake—this was not an easy task, but Governor Sandoval went "'all in" and made sure it happened. The groundbreaking for the home was held in Sparks on July 17, 2017.

In conclusion, I hope you enjoy reading this report and learning why I am so grateful and privileged to lead this great agency—and why I am so very proud of the men and women of NDVS who truly embody the agency motto: "*Serving Nevada's Heroes.*"

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kat Miller".

Respectfully,
Director Kat Miller
January 1, 2018

Nevada Department of Veterans Services Overview

About the Nevada Department of Veterans Services

The Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) has a long and proud history of honoring and supporting the veterans, servicemembers, and their families who call Nevada home. NDVS was created by the Nevada Legislature in 1943 as the Nevada Veterans Service Commission. Back then, one person assisted WWII veterans in filing claims within the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Since then, NDVS has experienced significant growth. Today, NDVS is comprised of 223 dedicated staff responsible for giving aid, assistance and counsel to each and every problem, question or situation, affecting any veteran, servicemember or their dependents, collectively or individually. Our State motto “Battle Born” attests to our warrior heritage and the pride we take in the contributions to our military.

Our Mission

Provide vital and efficient service to, and advocacy on behalf of, veterans, their dependents, and survivors; and provide our community and partners the opportunity to contribute in these endeavors. Through our four major programs we assist veterans prepare and submit claims for benefits, provide skilled nursing care, provide burial support at our State veterans’ cemeteries, and help veterans successfully integrate into Nevada communities.

Our Vision

Nevadans across the State celebrate the legacy of America’s heroes—and working together we will ensure veterans and their families understand and have access to opportunities that improve their lives.

This year ushered in many exciting changes for NDVS. Increasing and expanding outreach are among the most exciting highlights as NDVS was able to reach more veterans and their families than ever before through:

- Increasing participation of our Nevada Veterans Advocates thus broadening our connections to Nevada’s communities;
- Expanding outreach to new areas we’ve never reached before;
- Targeting and reaching veterans with unique needs including Native American, women, LGBTQ, and incarcerated veterans;

- Expanding our Veterans in Care program to reach even more veterans in skilled care facilities;
- Expanding Veterans in Care outreach to homebound veterans;
- Providing training opportunities to health care professionals and providers so they will gain a better understanding of military culture and its impact on the quality of care;
- Reaching out to Nevada’s businesses and institutions of higher learning in support of veteran hiring and education through our Patriot Employer Program;
- Supporting disabled veterans through grants and partnerships for Adaptive Sports Programs;
- Supporting rural veterans through grants and partnerships that provide transportation so these veterans can see their health care provider;
- Focusing on veteran suicide prevention through NDVS support of key measures;
- Taking aim at preventing veteran homelessness and providing assistance to homeless veterans in need;
- Focusing attention on the needs of spouses and survivors; and
- Making sure every veteran, those who served in combat and those who served in times of restless peace, is recognized, honored and remembered for his or her service.

Moreover, NDVS experienced significant milestones this year; one re-affirms our commitment to quality care, another fills a tremendous need in northern Nevada. All the achievements this year were centered on ensuring promises were kept:

- The Nevada State Veterans Home in Boulder City received numerous awards for exceptional quality care.
- NDVS broke ground on a new Northern Nevada State Veterans Home in Sparks, Nevada.
- The State Veterans Memorial Cemeteries in both Fernley and Sparks are solidifying their foundation as a gathering place for remembering and honoring all who have served.

NDVS didn’t do this alone; partners were a key part of any department success. NDVS will continue to work with State, Federal, and local government leaders, as well as nonprofit and charitable organizations, to serve and support our military, our veterans, and their families.

“ I am determined to make Nevada the most veteran and military friendly State in the Nation. ”

Governor Brian Sandoval



STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES

Certificate of Recognition
Presented to

George Winslow

With deep appreciation for your service to America, we thank you for advancing the universal hope of liberty, justice and freedom for all.

Katherine Miller

Katherine Miller, Director
Nevada Department of Veterans Services



The Heroes We Serve

NDVS serves veterans, active servicemembers, National Guard and Reserve, their families, and their survivors. With more than 221,990¹ identified by the VA², Nevada ranks 30th in total veteran population. Women veterans make up 9.69% of Nevada's heroes, and 46.47% of the current veteran population is over the age of 65, with the majority having served during the Vietnam era.

NEVADA VETERANS BY COUNTY

Churchill	3,253
Clark	151,579
Douglas	4,916
Elko	3,187
Esmeralda	97
Eureka	273
Humboldt	1,215
Lander	427
Lincoln	419
Lyon	6,445
Mineral	600
Nye	6,261
Pershing	486
Storey	465
Washoe	39,096
White Pine	783
Carson City	5,223

Source: va.gov/vetdata, VetPop2016 County-Level Veteran Population by State, 9/30/16

NEVADA VETERANS BY CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CD 1	35,700
CD 2	58,502
CD 3	56,085
CD 4	57,976

Source: [Census.gov/My Congressional District](http://Census.gov/MyCongressionalDistrict), Veteran Population by Congressional District.

NEVADA VETERANS BY ERA SERVED

Wartime	170,029
Gulf War	78,435
Vietnam Era	79,435
Korean Conflict	15,702
World War II	5,646
Peacetime	51,967

Source: va.gov/vetdata, VetPop2016 Living Veterans By State, Period of Service, 9/30/16

NEVADA VETERANS BY AGE

75+	19.7%
65 to 74 years	26.6%
55 to 64 years	19.2%
35 to 54 years	24.9%
18 to 34 years	9.6%

Source: va.gov/vetdata, VetPop2016 Living Veterans by State, Age Group, 9/30/16

	Nevada	National
Number of Veterans	221,996	20,392,192
Percent of Adult Population that are Veterans	10.35%	6.60%
Number of Women Veterans	21,509	1,860,516
Percent of Women Veterans	9.69%	9.12%
Number of Military Retirees	28,983	2,129,774
Percent of Veterans that are Military Retirees	13.06%	10.44%
Number of Veterans Age 65 and Over	103,165	9,560,748
Percent of Veterans Age 65 and Over	46.47%	46.88%

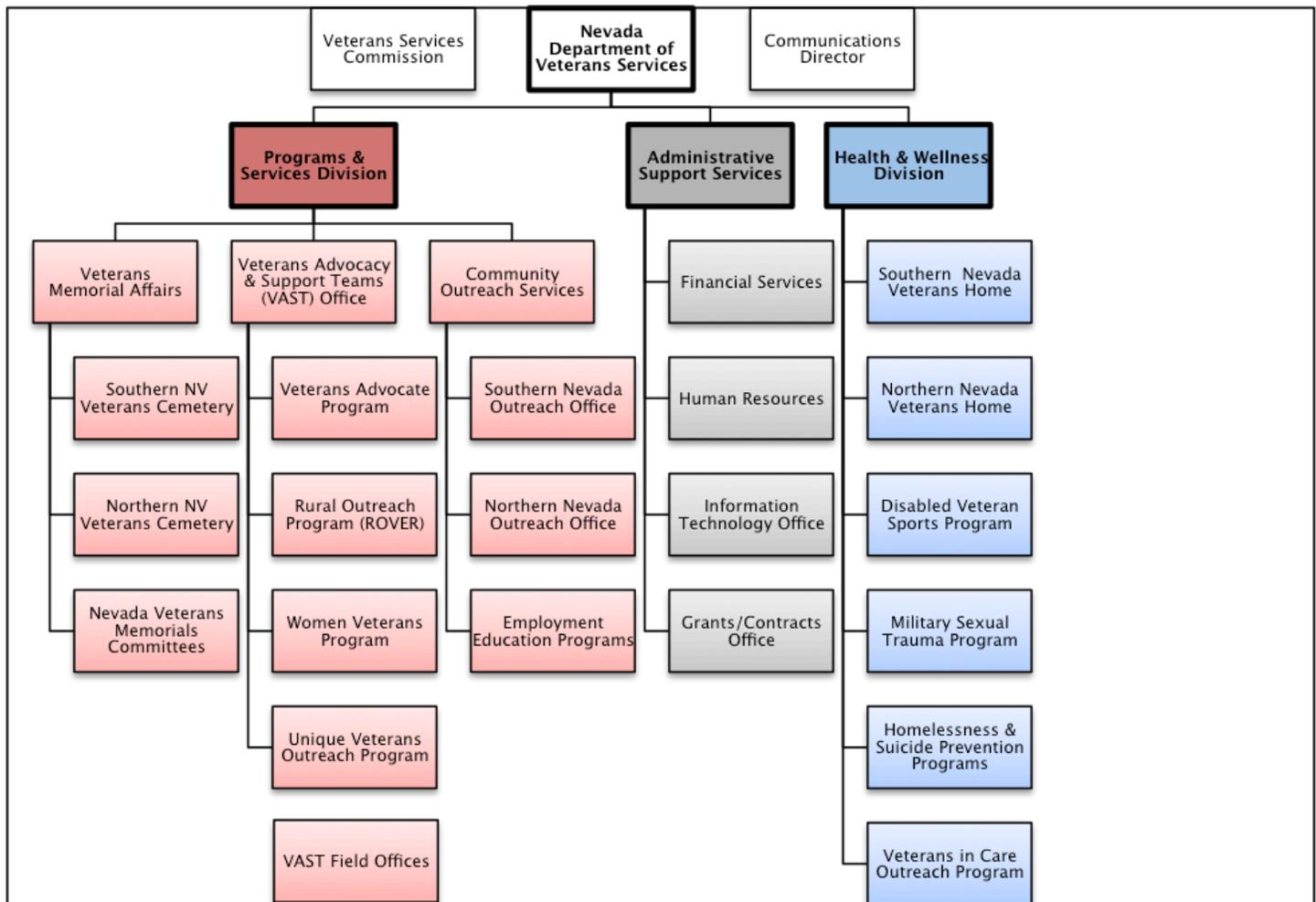
Source: va.gov/vetdata, State Summaries, Nevada Veteran Population (FY2016)³

¹https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/State_Summaries_Nevada.pdf

²VA VetData is more than a decade old and believed to be understated by 15% to 20% due to migration of veterans to southern and western states. However, VA data does provide breakdowns by percentage that can help identify general demographics and locations.

³https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/State_Summaries_Nevada.pdf

Department Organization



Key Partnerships

It takes collaboration and teamwork to support Nevada’s veterans and their families. Nevada is fortunate to have many key stakeholders committed to this challenge. Our partners include Federal and State agencies, private industries, nonprofit organizations, local businesses, community partners and many others including but not limited to:

Federal:

- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)
- Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)
- VA’s Office of Tribal Relations Government (OTGR)

State:

- Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- Nevada Department of Education, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR)
- Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE)
- Nevada Department of Administration (DOA)
- Nevada Department of Public Safety (DPS)
- Nevada Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Nevada Equal Rights Commission (NERC)
- Nevada Indian Commission (NIC)
- Attorney General's Office (AG)
- Secretary of State's Office (SOS)
- Veteran Community Councils / Collaboratives (VCCs)



Nonprofit:

- The Perry Foundation
- Dozens of National and State Veterans Service Organizations
- The Alzheimer's Association
- Honor Flight Nevada
- The Fisher House and the Veteran's Guest House

Key Partnership Highlights

- ◆ Partnered with the Nevada Geriatric Education Center, the Stanford Center for Aging, and the Perry Foundation to create veteran-centered care training for licensed nursing home administrators, nurses, and social workers.
- ◆ Partnered with Nevada Native American Tribes to train Tribal Veteran Representatives so they can assist tribal veterans in their communities.
- ◆ Placed an AmeriCorps member in the Nevada's Department of Health and Human Services Behavioral Health Program, housed within the Division of Public Behavioral Health. This member helped identify and assist veterans struggling with mental health issues.
- ◆ Placed an AmeriCorps member at the Nevada Department of Corrections re-entry facility at the High Desert Correctional Facility in Indian Springs, NV. This member helped reconnect veterans to benefits and resources necessary for successful re-entry into society after incarceration.
- ◆ Partnered with the Nevada Attorney General's Office (Office of Military Legal Assistance) to conduct outreach events across the State that provided assistance preparing claims and free legal counsel for service members and veterans.
- ◆ Partnered with the "Meals on Wheels" organization to provide benefit literature to homebound veterans.
- ◆ Partnered with the Disabled American Veterans, Department of Nevada, Veterans Transportation Program with vehicles.
- ◆ Partnered with the Cities of Las Vegas, Reno, and Elko to provide financial and marketing support for disabled veterans fitness and sports programming.
- ◆ Partnered with Elko and Nye Counties by acquiring grants for rural veteran transportation programs.
- ◆ Partnered with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to bring education and information programs to Nevada veterans, their families, and their survivors.



Administrative Support Services

Financial Summary

The Nevada Department of Veterans Services receives funding from State, Federal, and County sources to serve and support veterans and their families. Below is the financial summary for 2017 Fiscal Year.

REVENUES		TOTAL	GRAND TOTAL	EXPENDITURES	
General Fund Appropriations			\$1,831,555	Nevada State Veterans Home	\$18,303,640
Health Care		\$0		Northern Nevada Veterans Home	\$53,956
- Nevada State Veterans Home	\$0			Veterans in Care	\$47,629
- Northern Nevada Veterans Home	\$0			Total Health Care Expenditures	\$18,405,225
Programs and Services		\$1,831,555		Veterans Advocacy	\$1,081,364
- Veterans Advocacy	\$915,778			Cemeteries	\$1,516,224
- Cemeteries	\$915,777			Special Programs and Services	\$483,951
- Special Programs and Services	\$0			Nonprofit Program Support	\$82,000
Community Outreach		\$0		Total Programs and Services Expenditures	\$3,163,539
- NV Vet Corps	\$0			NV Vet Corps	\$148,542
- Nevada Veterans Advocacy Program	\$0			Nevada Advocate Program	\$114,089
- Veterans Information System	\$0			Veterans Information System	\$0
				Total Community Outreach Expenditures	\$262,631
Federal Funds			\$18,568,761	Total Administration	\$1,297,667
Health Care		\$16,397,616			
- Nevada State Veterans Home	\$16,397,616				
- Northern Nevada Veterans Home	\$0				
Programs and Services		\$2,153,791			
- Veterans Advocacy	\$738,540				
- Cemeteries	\$738,540				
- Special Programs and Services	\$676,712				
Community Outreach		\$17,354			
- NV Vet Corps	\$0				
Donations			\$2,092,266		
Health Care		\$422,177			
- Nevada State Veterans Home	\$148,795				
- Northern Nevada Veterans Home	\$95,195				
- Veterans in Care	\$178,187				
Programs and Services		\$1,339,666			
- Cemeteries	\$225,930				
- Special Programs and Services	\$955,149				
- Nonprofit Program Support	\$158,586				
Community Outreach		\$330,423			
- NV Vet Corps	\$17,819				
- Nevada Veterans Advocate Program	\$242,334				
- Veterans Information System	\$70,270				
Other Revenue			\$9,265,648		
Health Care		\$9,260,406			

REVENUES		TOTAL	GRAND TOTAL	EXPENDITURES
- Nevada State Veterans Home	\$9,260,406			
- Northern Nevada Veterans Home	\$0			
Programs and Services		\$5,242		
- Veterans Advocacy	\$286			
- Cemeteries	\$4,727			
- Special Programs and Services	\$229			
Community Outreach		\$0		
- NV Vet Corps	\$0			
- Nevada Veterans Advocate Program	\$0			
- Veterans Information System	\$0			
TOTAL REVENUES			\$31,758,230	TOTAL EXPENDITURES
				\$23,129,062

LEGEND TO CHART ABOVE

General Fund Appropriations

- Budget Account 2560

Federal Funds

- Budget Account 2560 (Cemetery Interment Fees, Veterans Administration Transportation Grant)
- Budget Account 2561 (Veterans Administration Reimbursement, Medicaid, Medicare)

Donations

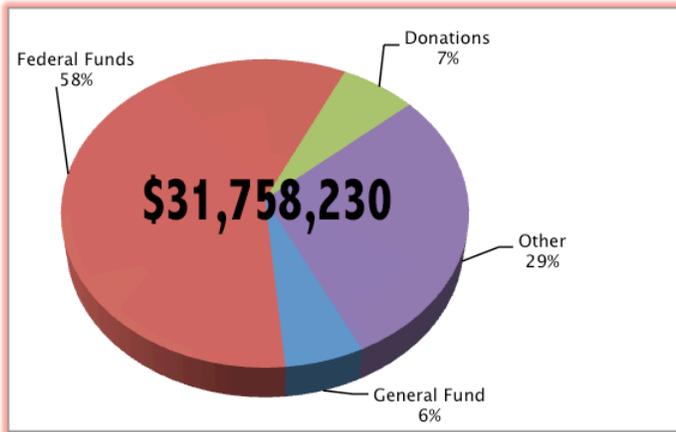
- Budget Account 2562 (Cemetery Gift & Donations)
- Budget Account 2563 (Southern Nevada Veterans Home Gift & Donations)
- Budget Account 2564 (The Gift Account for Veterans)
- Budget Account 2565 (Northern Nevada Veterans Home Gift & Donations)

- Budget Account 2566 (Fallen Memorial Soldier Gift & Donations)
- Budget Account 2567 (Las Vegas Memorial Gift & Donations)

Other Revenue

- Budget Account 2560 (Prior Year's Reimbursement, Cost Allocation)
- Budget Account 2561 (Patient Collections, Hospice Charges, Clark County Receipts, Insurance)

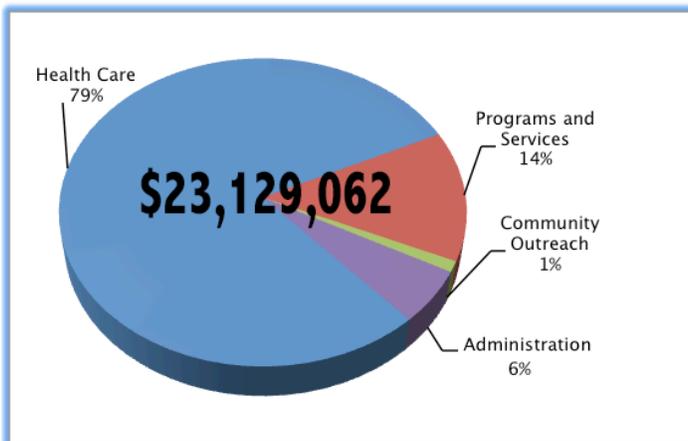
REVENUES



Federal Fund	\$18,568,761
Other	\$9,265,648
Donations	\$2,092,266
General Funds	\$1,831,555
Total Revenues	\$31,758,230

NDVS receives slightly more funding from donations than State taxpayers (General Fund).

EXPENDITURES



Health Care	\$18,405,225
Programs and Services	\$3,163,539
Administration	\$1,297,667
Community Outreach	\$262,631
Total Expenditures	\$23,129,062

The majority of expenditures (79%) were for Health Care.

Grants

Examples of grant funds received and distributed:

U.S. Department of Veterans Administration (VA)	\$46,000 to support Adaptive Sports Programs at Sky Tavern in Reno (\$25,000), the City of Reno (\$16,000), and the City of Las Vegas (\$3,000). These community-based programs provide therapeutic recreational services allowing disabled individuals to stay active and involved in their communities.
Veterans Health Administration (VHA) - Rural Transportation Grants (HRTG)	\$100,000 Transportation Grant ensures veterans in Nye and Elko counties have free transportation to VA medical clinics, health care providers and hospitals. This is the fourth year in a row NDVS has received this grant.
VA	\$38,400 to help fund the development of a Veterans Information System (VIS) in partnership with the VA, Nevada's Department of Administration, and six other states, to collect information from many databases across the State to locate and better serve veterans.
AmeriCorps Operational Grant	\$752,753 through the AmeriCorps Operational Grant to create the Nevada Vet Corps which included 20 AmeriCorps members who helped low-income or disabled veterans as well as, individuals and families experiencing homelessness, unemployment, or are low-income military families. These AmeriCorps members helped connect these individuals to benefits and services
VA - Veterans Cemetery Grants Program	\$5 million for required maintenance to raise and align headstones at the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery.
VA - State Home Construction Grants	\$637,475 for NSVH Renovation - Water Treatment/HVAC/Patient Wander System/ Replacement of most of the beds.
VA - State Home Construction Grants	\$33.5 million for New Northern Nevada Veterans Home - Construction of a new 96-bed facility



Amy Garland, Executive Officer

Programs and Services

Veterans Advocacy and Support

The mission of the Veterans Advocacy and Support Team (VAST) is to assist veterans, servicemembers, and their families gain access to veterans' benefits and services for which they have earned through military service. VAST is comprised of Veteran Service Officers (VSOs) and support staff who provide a full range of information and claim filing services for veterans, their families and their survivors.

The National Association of County Veterans Service Officers⁴ summarizes the dedication and service trained VSOs provide, free of charge, outlined below. A VSO:

2017 VAST Programs and Services Data

- ◆ Current Staffing: 14.5 VSOs
- ◆ New Clients: 828
- ◆ Total Vets Served: 4,201
- ◆ Records or Forms Submitted: 28,100
- ◆ Phone Calls: 7,375
- ◆ Office Visits: 4,173
- ◆ Emails: 2,261
- ◆ Pieces of Correspondence: 4,701
- ◆ Other Communications: 7,890
- ◆ Wait Times in 2017: decreased to 2.6 weeks from 3.6 weeks in FY2016.
- ◆ NVA Certified: 295 in FY2017 vs. 154 in FY2016

- ◆ Has a compassionate understanding of the problems, which confront veterans, widows, widowers, and children;
- ◆ Knows the extent, meaning and the application of laws, that have been passed by the U.S. Congress in the interests of veterans and their dependents;
- ◆ Knows the rules and regulations adopted by the Department of Veterans Affairs to clarify and implement those laws; and
- ◆ Will apply specialized knowledge in the best way suited for the needs of every individual veteran or other beneficiary who comes to the office for assistance.

VAST Locations in Nevada:

VAST Las Vegas
VAST Reno
VAST Fallon
VAST Elko
VAST Pahrump

“Our servicemen and women have given us all and we will do nothing less for them.”

Governor Brian Sandoval

VSOs conduct an average of 15 face-to-face interviews and 100 telephone contacts weekly and have an average active workload of 400 cases. Each VSO annually generates about \$16.4 million dollars in benefits that improve the lives of Nevada veterans⁵.

⁴NACVSO Homepage <http://nacvso.org/>

⁵<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/InterimCommittee/REL/Document/3514>

Women Veterans Program

In 2017, NDVS expanded services under the Women Veterans Program to include Military Sexual Trauma (MST) training and information programs. These services are designed to assist veterans who suffered sexual trauma while on active-duty or during other military training. The program involves forums, trainings and workshops for veterans and health care providers. It was developed by NDVS in partnership with the VA and the Perry Foundation.

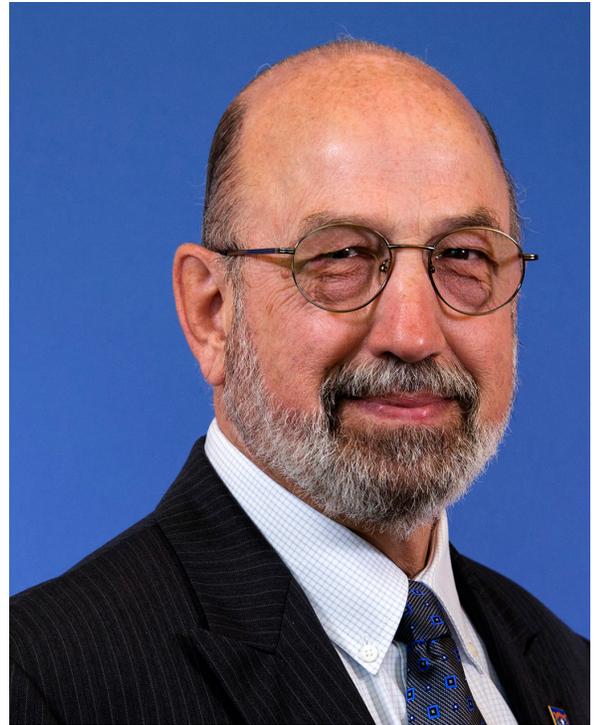
2017 MST Program Events

May 13, 2017 – Reno, NV

A half-day MST Workshop was held at the Reno Vet Center to help educate those who either take care of MST victims, live with MST victims, or want to learn more about MST. The focus was to educate participants about the resources and support available to address the behavioral and mental health needs of military service members, veterans, their families and loved ones who have experienced MST. Additionally, the training targeted victims and their support group(s).

June 16, 2017 – Las Vegas, NV

In partnership with the Perry Foundation, a half-day MST Forum was held for health care professionals from around the State, licensed administrators, nurses and social workers. The focus was on educating healthcare professionals on the identification and treatment of sexual trauma as it relates to the military and outlined the counseling, treatments and additional resources available.



**Fred Wagar, Deputy Director
of Programs and Services**

Women Veteran Statistics⁶

- ❖ Women veterans compose 9.18% of total veteran population.
- ❖ 5.16% of Nevada's veterans are women.
- ❖ Women make up 20% of new recruits.
- ❖ 14.5% of the 1.4 million active duty component are women.

The Women Veterans Advisory Committee (WVAC) submitted their annual report to the Governor in February 2017. Their recommendations included:

- A member of the WVAC should serve as a member of the VSC. This recommendation was codified during the 79th Legislative Session.
- NDVS should continue efforts to develop a Veterans Information System to identify veterans (including women veterans) within the State.
- Changing the wording on any State documents from "Are you a veteran?" to "Have you ever served in the military?" as some women do not identify as veterans. This recommendation was codified during the 79th Legislative Session.
- The development of a white paper to inform legislators and State agencies of facts regarding
- women veterans in Nevada to help reduce misinformation and improve support of women veterans.

⁶VA's Veteran Population Projection Model (VetPop) & Disabled American Veterans, "Women Veterans: The Long Journey Home," 2016, <https://www.dav.org/wp-content/uploads/women-veterans-study.pdf>.

Incarcerated Veterans Program

There are more than 700,000 veterans incarcerated across the country, with an estimated 1,300 of those veterans incarcerated in Nevada (as of end of fiscal year 2016)⁷ NDVS is working closely with Department of Corrections (DOC), the VA, and Nevada's Veterans Specialty Courts to reach out to veterans in the correctional system to help prepare them for successful reintegration into Nevada communities on release. We have made Veteran Service Officers available to inmates, both in person and via teleconference, to support claims and counseling on programs and services. In 2017, we partnered with DOC and provided them with an AmeriCorps member to assist in successful veteran re-entry.



During 2017 an NDVS AmeriCorps member assisted the High Desert State Correctional Facility to create the first Incarcerated Veterans Unit in southern Nevada. The program included presentations and information from community organizations tailored for incarcerated veterans. This helped to bridge the gap between prison and community release through increasing veteran awareness of resources such as veteran benefits, employment, housing, military education benefits and health care benefits. The first class graduated in August 2017.

Native American Veterans Program

In June 2017, a two-day Native American Veterans Workshop was held in Reno to bring Native American veterans and their supporters together to discuss challenges and to identify resources required to meet those challenges. The workshop was co-sponsored by NDVS and the VA's Office of Tribal Government Relations (OTGR). The following Tribal Councils were represented with 72 tribal members attending:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Duck Valley Sho-Pai Tribes | Pacific District Tribal Councils: |
| Duckwater Shoshone Tribe | Alaska/ADSD |
| Ely Shoshone Council | Blackfeet Tribe |
| Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe | Calville Tribe (WA) |
| Ft. McDermitt Pai-Sho Tribes | Lower Elwha Tribe (OR) |
| Moapa Paiute & Business Council | Nooksack Tribe (WA) |
| Northern Paiute | Samish Indian Nation |
| Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe | Suquamish Tribe (WA) |
| Reno-Sparks Indian Colony | |
| Te-Moak Tribal Council | |
| Walker River Paiute Tribe | |
| Washoe Tribal Council | |
| Woodland Metis Tribe | |



⁷Las Vegas Veterans Treatment Court, found at <http://lasvegasvtc.com>.

Cemeteries and Memorials

Nevada is home to two state-operated veterans' cemeteries - the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (SNVMC) and the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (NNVMC). Established in 1990, the cemeteries honor veterans, eligible family members, and Gold Star Parents with dignified burials and final resting places that commemorate their service and sacrifice to our Nation. The cemeteries are the final resting place for more than 49,000 Nevada veterans and their family members.

Services Offered

- Grave Sites
- Cremation In-ground
- Cremation Columbarium
- Open / Closed Graves
- Interment Site
- Markers and Headstones
- Assist with Qualifying
- Assist with Arrangements
- Committal Services
- Military Honor Service
- Perpetual Care
- Grave Site Locator Services

OVERVIEW		
CEMETERIES	SOUTHERN NEVADA	NORTHERN NEVADA
Total Acres	79	43
Total Acres Developed	41	18
Established	1990	1990
Staff Size	14	5
FACILITIES		
	SOUTHERN NEVADA	NORTHERN NEVADA
Administration Building	✓	✓
Service Area	✓	✓
Committal Area	✓	✓
Outdoor Assembly Area	✓	✓
Columbarium	✓	✓
Parking	✓	✓
Walking Paths	✓	✓
Maintenance Building	✓	✓

Ceremonies

Each year, the Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemeteries (NVMC) hold events to promote unending gratitude to those Nevada veterans who served our country. These ceremonies include:

- ◆ Memorial Day ceremonies were held on Monday, May 29, 2017. A key recognition element this year was the acknowledgement of the contributions and sacrifices of the United States Merchant Marines. Almost 4,000 people attended the ceremony at the NNVMC and about 1,500 attended the SNVMC ceremony where Governor Sandoval was the guest speaker and signed several veterans bills.
- ◆ 9/11 ceremony was held on September 11, 2017, at both cemeteries.
- ◆ Wreaths Across America events were conducted at both cemeteries, involving hundreds of community supporters who placed wreaths on gravesites.
- ◆ Unaccompanied ceremonies were conducted weekly at the SNVMC and monthly at the NNVMC to honor deceased service members who do not have family present. The solemn service includes a live bugle rendition of "Taps", a three volley salute, and a flag folding ceremony.
- ◆ The Trooper statue dedication was conducted by the Nevada Veterans Coalition on June 18,

2016, at the NNVMC. The statue honors the Civil War Union Army's 1st Battalion Volunteer Cavalry/Nevada Territory Cavalry Volunteers, which was a unit raised for the Union Army during the Civil War.

- ♦ The WWI 100th Year Commemoration Ceremony was held at the NNVMC on April 8, 2017. Hundreds attended to pay respects to the Nevadans who fought and died in WWI.



Army Pfc. Manuel M. Quintana was missing in action following the Korean War. After 67 years, his remains were brought back to the US where he was identified and finally laid to rest after receiving a military burial at Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery.

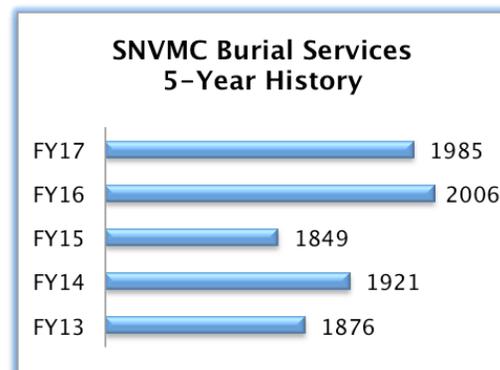
Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (SNVMC)

The SNVMC is the second busiest state veterans' cemetery in the Nation with more than 1,900 burials per year. SNVMC has performed more than 39,000 burials since opening in 1990. The cemetery is located in Boulder City, 25 miles southeast of Las Vegas.

The SNVMC's VA Operations and Maintenance Grant, which was undertaken to raise and realign markers at the cemetery, progressed on schedule with 14 of 19 cemetery interment sections completed in 2017. In addition, SNVMC completed two capital improvements in 2017:

- A 600-foot sidewalk was completed, improving visitor access to six different burial sections.
- Drainage improvements were completed in the southeast corner of the cemetery property, reducing the possibility of soil erosion during heavy rainfall.

SNVMC BURIAL SERVICES FY2017	
BURIAL SERVICES	
Veterans	1,349
Dependents/Spouses	636

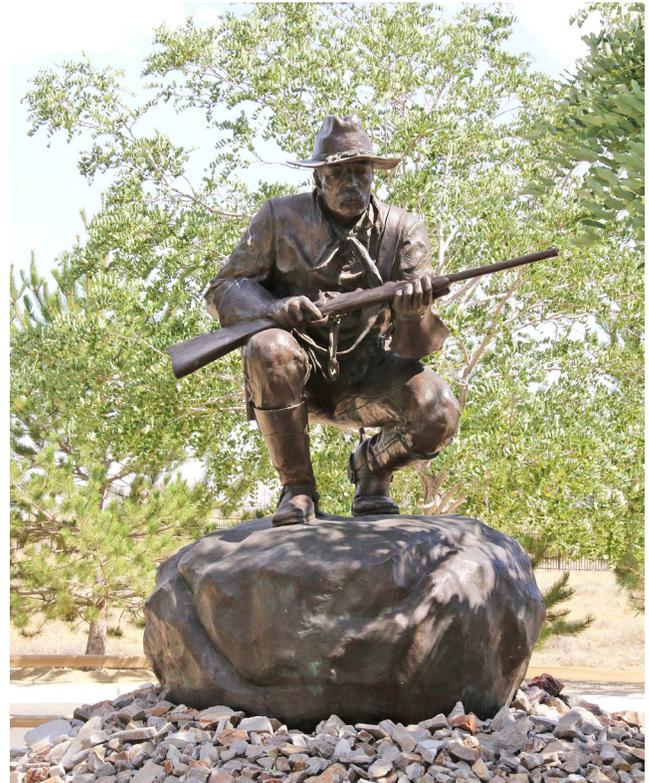
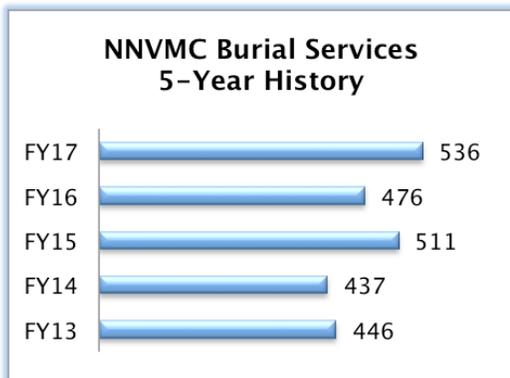




Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (NNVMC)

The NNVMC is located in Fernley, Nevada, 40 minutes from downtown Reno. Since opening in 1990, more than 9,600 veterans and family members of veterans have been placed to rest at the cemetery.

NNVMC received high marks at the Triennial On-site Review completed by the VA National Cemetery Administration in August 2016 noting, “Cemetery staff has done an outstanding job of landscaping the cemetery, which is impressive with three grounds staff and the director actively involved with landscaping throughout the cemetery.”



NNVMC BURIAL SERVICES FY2017	
BURIAL SERVICES	
Veterans	394
Dependents/Spouses	142



State Veterans Memorials

Nevada has three State Veterans Memorials, with a fourth under development, dedicated to those who served. NDVS supports the maintenance of these Memorials. There are many other veterans memorials throughout Nevada that were created by local governments and private organizations, attesting to the respect and appreciation the people of Nevada have for their veterans. The State memorials are:

Nevada State Veterans Memorial, Grant Sawyer Grounds, Las Vegas

The Nevada State Veterans Memorial, a two-acre memorial located on the grounds of the Grant Sawyer State Building, features 18 larger-than-life statues depicting soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines and commemorates veterans from every generation and every conflict. In partnership with the Department of Administration, an on-line Memorial Buy-A-Brick program was created to support future maintenance.

Nevada Veterans Memorial Wall, Nevada State Capitol Grounds, Carson City

The Nevada Veterans Memorial Wall is carved of cream-colored stone and is dedicated to Nevada Veterans of all eras. It is situated in a plaza located immediately behind the State Capitol Building.

Mustang 22 Memorial, Reno Stead Airport, Stead

The Mustang 22 Memorial is located at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Reno and is dedicated to Mustang 22, a CH-47 Chinook Helicopter that was shot down in Afghanistan on September 25, 2005.

Battle Born Memorial, Carson City

This new State memorial is under development with final funding approved by the State of Nevada Board of Examiners on December 18, 2017. The design was recommended by the Nevada Veterans Services Commission and the memorial is slated for completion in late 2018. It will be located in Carson City on the Capitol Complex. The memorial will honor all of Nevada's fallen warriors; from the Civil War through current conflicts and beyond.

Nevada Veterans Educational Attainment

	2015-16	2014-15
Less than high school	5.1%	5.6%
High school graduate (includes GED)	26.2%	26.9%
Some college or associate degree	43.7%	43.5%
Bachelor's degree or higher	25.0%	24.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Education, Employment and Financial Stability

Education

According to the 2015-2016 NSHE Veterans Enrollment Report, more than 5,200 veterans were enrolled in NSHE institutions during the academic year, with nearly 70% receiving educational benefits. The majority of veteran students were enrolled in three instructional program categories: Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services; Health Professions and Related Programs; and Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies, and Humanities.



NDVS' veteran education objective states: "Servicemembers, veterans, their families, and the families of the fallen have access to high quality higher education programs, and have the financial means to attend Nevada's colleges, universities, and other degree-producing institutions of higher learning."

Veteran Enrollment in NSHE Institutions

	2015-16	2014-15
Student veterans	5,259	6,098
Number of student veterans receiving payments from VA	3,624	2,937
Percent of student veterans by gender	Male 66.8%	Male 67.2%
	Female 33.2%	Female 24.0%
Average age of enrolled veteran students	30 years old	30 years old
Number of student veterans who graduated during 2014-15 academic year	586	586

Source: 2015-16 Veterans Enrollment Report; 2014-15 Veterans Enrollment Report

	NSHE Programs • 8 Licensed Institutions
	Non-NSHE Programs • 21 Licensed Institutions
	Non-Degree Programs • 37 Licensed Institutions
	OJT/Apprenticeships • 42 Licensed Programs
	Flight School • 1 Licensed Program

2017 NDVS Education Highlights

- ❖ Created a new contract position, the Veterans Employment and Education Program Manager. The manager is responsible for planning, coordinating and directing programs designed to improve outcomes for student veterans.
- ❖ Worked with student veteran resource centers to determine gaps in services and programs needed. Also collaborated on engagement and strategy to improve veteran education outcomes.
- ❖ Created meaningful partnerships with the State Approving Authority, Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) postsecondary institutions and Non-NSHE institutions to share best practices, improve links and pool resources. These collaborations are strengthening the provision of veteran support programs within the State of Nevada.
- ❖ Collaborated with the Nevada Commission on Postsecondary Education State Approving Agency to identify each licensed program in the State of Nevada. There are more than 100 approved Nevada institutions where veterans/dependents are able to use the Post 9/11 GI Bill educational benefits.
- ❖ Commenced statewide initiative to reach out to and support the student veteran populations within post-secondary and licensed training institutions (NSHE & Non-NSHE, Non-college degree, OJT/Apprenticeship programs).
- ❖ Toured 15 campuses across the State to meet with staff and faculty to discuss veteran enrollment, transitional challenges and best practices to improve programs and services, increase student veteran engagement and positively influence and support student veterans.

Employment

An element of successful veteran transition back to community life from active duty is securing gainful employment. Not only is employment crucial to creating financial stability, but it also has secondary social benefits for the veteran and the community. Employment gives veterans a sense of purpose and meaning, provides income, allows participation in community and a sense of belonging, and being unemployed is a factor leading to homelessness.

NDVS is keenly aware of the obstacles that persist in preparing veterans for careers outside the military and educating civilian employers about the strengths and challenges facing veteran workers. We are working with partners to increase the employment rate among veterans.

Nevada Unemployment Rates 2016 Annual Averages

	Nevada	U.S.
Veteran Unemployment	4.0%	4.3%
Unemployment Rate	5.7%	4.7%

Source: Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Situation of Veterans - 2016





Patriot Employer Program

The Governor's Patriot Employer Program (PeP) on-line training course is now available on the NDVS website. The course provides free training for employers to help increase veteran employment and connect employers to information and tools that make their organizations and businesses more veteran friendly. The course includes information on:

- The benefits of hiring a veteran;
- How to find and recruit qualified veterans;
- How to help veterans succeed in the workplace; and
- Federal and State financial incentives for hiring veterans.

PeP Outreach

NDVS conducted outreach to more than 200 employers to promote the Patriot Employer Program, strengthen relationships, and improve access to employment opportunities for veterans, service members, and their families.



This program provides a veteran friendly designation to employers who demonstrate their commitment to hiring and retaining Nevada veterans. Employers throughout the State are encouraged to take the course. Employers that have completed the course will receive a certificate and a PeP window decal that can be displayed in their place of business.

NDVS has built strong relationships with our State and local workforce and employment partners to help improve employment outcomes for veterans and to provide resources for employers. We will continue to work together to promote priority service to military members and veterans living and working in Nevada.



Community Outreach

During 2017, NDVS staff, volunteers, and VSOs dramatically increased outreach to approximately 400 different community and outreach events that were held throughout the State of Nevada, including:

- Outreach to veterans in outlying areas through the “Rural Outreach for Enrichment and Resources Program” also known as “ROVER”;
- Outreach to veterans in Native American communities by attending powwows;
- Attendance at Town Halls and hosting Legislative Summits where veterans learned about legislative issues impacting them or their families; and
- Outreach to Nevada’s senior living, skilled-care and assisted living facilities through the program “Veterans in Care” to identify elderly veterans and their families so they can be recognized and honored for their service and connected to benefits during this important phase in their lives.

Monthly Partner Outreach Examples

MONTH	EVENT
July	Gerlach Health Fair, Washoe County Senior Services - Gerlach, NV Office of Military Legal Assistance, Office of the Attorney General - Free legal counsel - Pahrump, NV
August	Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting - Veterans Transition Resource Center - North Las Vegas, NV Nevada State Veterans Home , Open House - Boulder City, NV.
September	NV Coalition for Suicide Prevention 10th Annual Walk in Memory, Walk for Hope in 14 NV communities POW/MIA Recognition Day, Nevada Veterans Memorial Capitol Grounds Plaza - Carson City, NV
October	Free Nevada Veterans Advocate Training, two day workshop to become certified as an NVA - Reno, NV
November	Veterans in Care Ceremony, Nevada State Veterans Home - Boulder City, NV
December	Wreaths Across America, Northern Nevada State Veterans Memorial Cemetery (Fernley, NV) and Southern Nevada State Veterans Memorial Cemetery (Boulder City, NV)
January	Two Legislative Summits, Las Vegas and Carson City, NV
February	ROVER Outreach - Ely, Austin, Winnemucca, Gardnerville, Laughlin, Hawthorne, Pahrump
March	Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature - Veteran of the Month, Veteran Supporter of the Month, Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Recognition, Purple Heart Recipient Recognition
April	Women Veterans Art Exhibit - Reno, NV
May	MST Workshop - Reno, NV Free Nevada Veterans Advocate Training, two day workshop to become certified as an NVA - Las Vegas, NV
June	Native American Veteran Summit - Reno, NV



Statewide Veterans Community Councils

NDVS supports local Veterans Community Councils (VCCs) to develop charters, define their mission and begin their work. The purpose of the VCCs is to prioritize local objectives and formalize coordination between service organizations and providers at the community level. NDVS supports the VCCs by taking their policy recommendations to the Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs.

Veterans Community Council	Outreach	Other Targeted Communities for VCCs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Las Vegas Veterans Community Commission • Las Vegas UNLV Military and Veteran Services Center • Truckee Meadows Veterans Community Collaborative • Carson City Veterans Community Council • Welcome All Vets Everywhere (WAVE) • TMCC Upward Bound • Northeastern Nevada Veterans Resource Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach to Greater Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Nellis AFB • Outreach to North Las Vegas, Las Vegas • Outreach to Reno, Sparks and outlying communities • Outreach to Carson City community • Outreach to Douglas County communities of Gardnerville and Minden • Outreach to student veterans • Outreach to city/county communities of Elko, Elko County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laughlin • Mesquite • Tonopah • Pahrump • Winnemucca • Ely • Hawthorne • Henderson

Nevada Veterans Advocacy Program

Nevada Veterans Advocates (NVAs) are educated and certified through The Nevada Veterans Advocate Program (NVAP), which has been recognized as a national best practice for effectively connecting veterans and their families with benefits and services. NVAs impart information learned from the NVA course regarding State and Federal VA benefits available to Nevada's active-duty military, veterans and their dependents. NVA volunteers help support the work of Nevada's VSOs, who are challenged to support the many thousands of veterans who call Nevada home.

In October 2016 and March 2017, hundreds of people attended NVA workshops in Reno and Las Vegas. These free two-day workshops were hosted by NDVS and included 10 of the 20 classes required to receive NVA certification. Director Kat Miller explained to the attendees that even if she had a hundred VSOs working to connect veterans to benefits, it would still not be enough. She stated, "Imagine, with all of you helping and assisting in places we could only dream of reaching. That is why NVA's are so important."



"I work with veterans or their spouses all the time who probably have benefits they should be getting, but they just aren't aware or even know about this."

Tamie Keller, Hospice Caregiver

"I want to get all the training I can and this is free."

Ray White, Northern Nevada Veterans Resource Center
Wants to become a VSO

"The gal explained what the course was about so my wife and I thought, we want to help out, so we're here to learn."

Rick Begley, Veteran, with Wife, Roberta

Nevada Vet Corps

The Nevada Vet Corps was created through an AmeriCorps Operation Grant and provided seven AmeriCorps members who helped improve the quality of life for low-income veterans, veterans with disabilities, individuals and families experiencing homelessness, unemployed individuals, and low-income military families by connecting them to benefits and services. Some members were managed directly by NDVS; others were placed with the Department of Corrections, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Office of the Attorney General.

NDVS Website

NDVS made following modifications and enhancements to our virtual outreach programs:

- “NVVetNet” was created to improve user experience and to better reach target audiences. In addition to improving functionality, the new site has an online page offering one-stop searching for hundreds of veterans’ benefits and services. The number of users has tripled, with hundreds of new participants.
- An “Ask a VSO” tab was included on the NDVS website to increase VAST outreach. During 2017, 223 requests (an average of nearly 19 requests per month) were submitted by veterans, military personnel, family members, and support providers. The majority of the requests were inquiries concerning assistance with claims or increasing pensions.

Health and Wellness

State Veterans Homes

State veterans homes have a long-standing tradition of providing quality domiciliary, nursing home care, and/or adult day health care. State homes are approved by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and honor the tremendous sacrifice our veterans have made, recognize their service to our Nation, and fill an important need for veterans who desire to spend their last years with “comrades.”

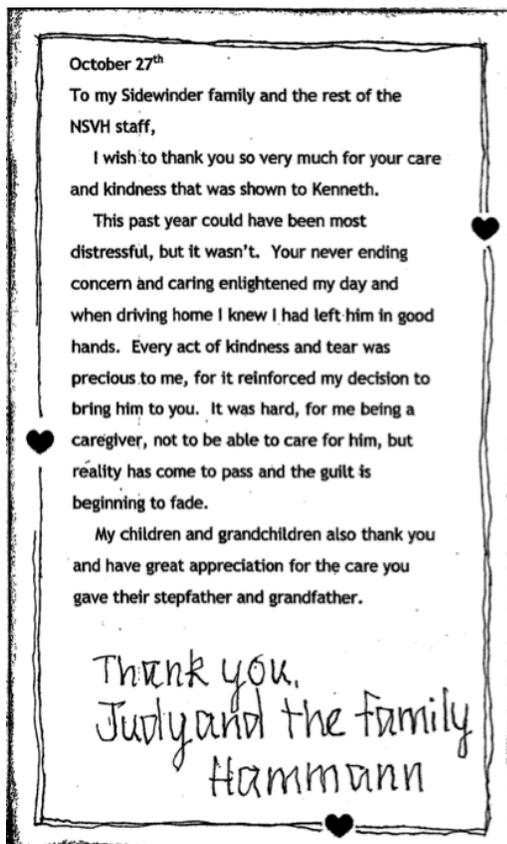
Nevada State Veterans Home

Located in historic Boulder City, the 180-bed Nevada State Veterans Home (NSVH) was established in 2002 and has served thousands of veterans and their families. NSVH is state-owned and operated, Medicare/Medicaid certified, and licensed by the State of Nevada. NSVH provides 24-hour skilled care to qualified veterans, veterans’ spouses, and Gold Star parents.



Nevada State Veterans Home Recognition/Accomplishments

- For five years in a row, NSVH has received the HealthInsight Quality Award for excellence and exceptional quality care. This award recognizes nursing homes for exceeding and excelling in a number of quality care measures. According to HealthInsight, only five Nevada nursing homes received the award in 2017.
- NSVH maintains a 5-star rating by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS), the highest rating possible.
- NSVH received a deficiency-free rating during its annual VA survey conducted May 16-18, 2017. Receiving a deficiency-free rating is rare and uncommon as the rigorous VA survey occurs unannounced and reviews as well as measures 158 standards. The survey report found NSVH was in compliance with all 158 standards and was granted full certification with this distinction for 2017.
- On April 26, 2017, the NSVH Administrator, Linda Gelinger, was honored at the American College of Health Care Administrators for the Eli Pick Facility Leadership award.
- Two staff members of NSVH received recognition in the Endeavor Awards Program of the Perry Foundation - Corrine Watson, RN, received “Nurse Leader of the Year”, and Sally Gray, RN, received “Distinguished Nurse Educator of the Year” for all southern Nevada skilled nursing facilities.
- NSVH continues to maintain high rankings (in the top 95th percentile) in the Pinnacle Customer Experience program.
- NSVH obtained certification in the Music and Memory program. Music and Memory is a national study that is grant funded through the Perry Foundation. The program is grounded in extensive neuroscience research with the purpose of enhancing quality of life.
- NSVH received the Eli Pick Facility Leadership Award on April 4, 2017. Fewer than 9% of the facilities nationwide qualify.



Wendy Simons
Deputy Director of Health and Wellness

**NEVADA STATE VETERANS HOME
FY 2017 PROFILE**

RESIDENTS Male Female Non-Vet Spouse	TOTAL SERVED 199 11 45	STAFF OVERVIEW Full-Time Employees Part-Time Employees Contracted Employees	183 1 118
SERVICE ERA* WWII Korean War Vietnam War Gulf War Lebanon Afghanistan Peacetime *Many have served in more than one war or peacetime.	TOTAL SERVED 64 67 72 1 2 1 21		
MILITARY BRANCH Army Air Force Navy Marines Coast Guard	TOTAL SERVED 89 52 51 17 1	SERVICES Medical Care Dementia Care Unit Occupational, Physical, Speech Therapy Fitness Services Recreational Therapy Vocational & Recovery Support Mental & Behavioral Health Services Dental Care Optometry Care Nutrition Services Pharmaceutical Services Social Services Chaplain/Spiritual Care Spouse Support Group Transportation Barber Beauty Shop Cashier/Banking Volunteer Programs Outings & Events End of Life Care	PRIMARY DIAGNOSES Diabetes Dementia with Behaviors Dementia without Behaviors Alzheimer's Hypertension Coronary Artery Disease Atrial Fibrillation Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Congestive Heart Failure Pneumonia Urinary Tract Infection
OCCUPANCY Total Beds 2016 Admissions 2016 Discharges % Occupancy Avg. Wait Time	TOTAL SERVED 180 137 total; 11.41/mo. 83 total; 6.91/mo. 96.8% or 174.3 Men: 2 weeks to 2 months Women: 2 to 6 months In both cases, it could be more than 6 months if there are problems getting the completed application and associated records.		

NEVADA STATE VETERANS HOME
100 Veterans Memorial Drive
Boulder City, NV 89005
(702) 332-6717





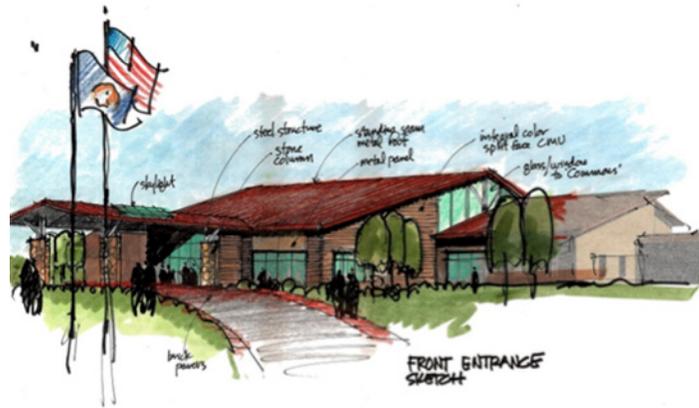
Northern Nevada Veterans Home

During the 79th Legislative Session, Governor Sandoval recommended and the Legislature passed SB 546, the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Bill, which added \$33.5 million to the \$14.2 million already approved in the 2015 CIP Bill. With this action, the State of Nevada was able to break ground for a new Northern Nevada Veterans Home on July 17, 2017, on state-owned property near the northern Nevada Mental Health facilities, at the intersection of Kietzke Lane and Galletti Way, Sparks.

At the groundbreaking ceremony, Governor Sandoval spoke about the speed at which the new home would be built adding, “From ‘sagebrush to service’ in just 18 months!” The new home is slated for ribbon cutting in December 2018.

This skilled nursing home will include 96-beds for veterans and their spouses, as well as Gold Star Parents. The home will consist of 12, eight-bed clustered residential units in three, 32-room neighborhoods, a design based on the community living center concept embraced by the VA. Amenities of the Northern Nevada Veterans Home will include:

- Living units consisting of eight private rooms with shared community space for up to 16 total residents
- Community space including a living room, den, dining room and country kitchen
- Community Living Concept promoting feeling of “home” and “community”
- Town Center as a gathering place for the veteran community
- Gym to support physical therapy needs
- Dining Hall
- Conservatory
- Beauty and Barber Shop
- Convenience Store
- Bistro-Style Coffee Shop
- Chapel
- Activity Center
- Outdoor parade grounds for ceremonies and events



Architect Rendition of the new Northern Nevada Veterans Home

Northern Nevada Veterans Home Project Background

- ❖ In 2006, Nevada applied for and received approval for a federal VA grant to construct a Veterans Home in northern Nevada, which required a one-third funding match from the State.
- ❖ During the 2015 Legislative Session, \$14,139,883 was approved for construction of the new home. With this one-third State match, the project was placed on the VA's Priority 1 funding group, eligible for funding once the project reached the #1 position on the list.
- ❖ In 2017, \$33.5 million in State funding was appropriated at Governor Sandoval's request allowing us to build the new Northern Nevada Veterans Home in advance of Congressional appropriation of matching Federal funds. This will prevent inflationary building cost impacts while awaiting the Federal appropriation.

Local Economic Impact

The Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) estimates the benefits of the Northern Nevada Veterans Home will extend beyond the veterans' community. The economic impact to Sparks and outlying community includes:

- 168 direct and indirect new jobs
- \$7,557,416 annual local payroll
- \$14,393,957 in an annual output benefit into the local economy



The new home will use products and services of more than 20 local merchants and vendors, including:

- ◆ Fire/safety systems monitoring and service
- ◆ Medical equipment and supplies
- ◆ Food suppliers and vendors
- ◆ Landscaping services
- ◆ Clinical care physicians
- ◆ Nurse practitioners
- ◆ Pharmacy
- ◆ Laboratory and diagnostic services
- ◆ Beautician/barber
- ◆ Pest control
- ◆ Electrical service
- ◆ Furniture
- ◆ Finish contractors
- ◆ Painting
- ◆ Maintenance

"I included in my budget \$43 million to build and open a veterans home in northern Nevada. It's time to stop talking and get this done in tribute to our Nation's heroes."

Governor Sandoval



Honoring Nevada's Veterans

Veterans in Care Program

The Veterans in Care (VIC) Program was launched in April 2016 to improve the quality of care and quality of life for all Nevada veterans living in care facilities – not just those that live in our State veterans' homes. There are 566 licensed long-term care facilities in Nevada, totaling 15,535 beds. VIC has four specific elements:

- ❖ Claim Filing Assistance - offers veterans benefit counseling and claims services, which can result in financial benefits that improve a veteran's quality of life;
- ❖ Military Culture Training - training for facility staff to enhance understanding of how military experience affects aging veterans, especially those with cognitive impairment;
- ❖ Honor Ceremonies - honors the military service of resident veterans through a formal ceremony, complete with honor guard, music, certificates and Nevada Hero Pins; and
- ❖ Partnership Development - provides a unique opportunity to collaborate with health care providers, veterans' organizations, community members, and nonprofits that join together to support aging veterans and their families through special recognition events.



“While there are many forms of public service, I want to pay special attention to the servicemen and women who have devoted their strength, talent, and lives to defending our freedom.”

Governor Sandoval

VIC 2017 Highlights

- ◆ Governor Sandoval, Carson City Mayor Robert L. Crowell, and Robert Kidd, President/CEO of the Perry Foundation, among others, have endorsed the VIC Program for the National Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence Award.
- ◆ VIC is currently partnering with more than 400 providers across the State and continues to expand its recognition program statewide.
- ◆ Of the estimated 2,330 Nevada veterans living in care communities, NDVS has recognized more than 1,300 veterans, a 56% penetration rate. Among those honored was 107-year-old Margaret Allen, one of the oldest living veterans in the U.S.
- ◆ VIC has provided over 2,000 veterans and their family's access to benefit information. An estimated 10% or 200 have filed claims.
- ◆ An average of four VIC ceremonies are scheduled per month throughout the State until every nursing home is visited. Elko, Yerington, Carson City, Gardnerville, Fernley, Henderson and Las Vegas facilities with veterans in residence have been part of the ceremonies to date.
- ◆ In May 2017, NDVS Deputy Director of Health and Wellness Wendy Simons was selected as one of this year's Healthcare Heroes in Northern Nevada by the Nevada Business Magazine for her innovative VIC Program.
- ◆ Small group home facilities have held recognition programs, for those more frail residents, conducted by NDVS volunteers from the Women Veterans of Nevada Organization.
- ◆ Ten workshops on military culture training have been presented and attended by 355 health care professionals and others working with geriatric populations.

The "Welcome Home" Campaign

The "Welcome Home" campaign was created to provide returning veterans with information regarding Nevada's Wellness, Employment, and Education Programs. These transitioning veterans are encouraged to create a profile on NVVetNet to receive information on benefits and opportunities. Letters are sent to every returning veteran and those who indicate on Department of Defense discharge documents that he/she intends to relocate to Nevada. A total of 2,063 letters have been sent since program inception, which is an average of 172 letters per month for 12 months.



Veteran Supporter of the Month Program

The Governor approved the NDVS recommendation for a new Veteran Supporter of the Month Program to recognize non-veterans or organizations that spend their time, talent, and treasure

helping our military, veterans, and their families. Organizations such as the Southern Nevada Patriot Guard, the Adopt-A-Vet Dental Program, Nevada Honor Flight, and the UNR Veterans Alumni Chapter received recognition for their service to Nevada's heroes. This program complements the existing Veteran of the Month program which recognizes veterans for their support to the military, their fellow veterans, and their community. To nominate a person or organization for these awards, go to: <http://www.veterans.nv.gov/page/veteran-appreciation>



Special Wellness Programs

Aligned with Governor Sandoval's strategic priorities, NDVS focuses on special wellness programs to ensure servicemembers, veterans, their families, and the families of the fallen have access to healthcare, mental health services, prevention services, benefits information, wellness programs, and community support.

Disabled Veterans Sports Program

Thousands of disabled veterans participate in adaptive sports in communities across Nevada. Participating in adaptive sports allows veterans to redefine themselves and live an active, healthy and fun lifestyle supporting overall wellness. NDVS partners with the City of Las Vegas, the City of Reno and the Sky Tavern Youth Program to provide adaptive sports programs at no cost to hundreds of disabled veterans and their families.



Suicide Prevention Program

Suicide prevention has long been a concern for the Nevada veteran's community and for NDVS. However, even with all the efforts made over the past five years, the veteran suicide rate in Nevada remains higher than the national veteran suicide rate. Data from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs shows in 2014, the most recent year on file, 127 veterans in Nevada died by suicide, a rate of 60 per 100,000 veterans, significantly higher than the national average of 38 per 100,000.

Prior to this year's Legislative Session, veterans across Nevada rated the action to prevent veteran suicide as their #1 priority. NDVS is working hard to help ensure Nevada veterans are connected with services—and people—that can offer the help they need when they need it.

Current and planned efforts include:

- VSOs receive safeTALK training, a community-oriented suicide alertness workshop that gives participants the ability to recognize the warning signs of a person at risk for suicide, identify risk and protective factors, intervene by connecting them with a person trained in suicide first aid intervention or similar resources to keep the individual safe.
- NDVS assists the Nevada Office of Suicide Prevention fund safeTALK training for other participants (in addition to VSOs). Last year, we provided funding that allowed more than 500 people to attend safeTALK training.
- NDVS serves as a “bridge” between the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and community partners such as the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health and the Nevada Coalition for Suicide Prevention, sharing best practices and information about available resources.
- NDVS created a training course called “Bravo Zulu: Achieving Excellence in Relationship Centered Care” that offers Continuing Education Unit (CEU) workshops to help health care providers understand the military experience’s effect on mental health in the aging process.
- NDVS has trained Nevada Veterans Advocates (NVAs) across the State to help at-risk veterans connect with services that can improve their lives and hopefully reduce the stress and depression that can lead to suicide. We have also coordinated participation by NVAs in activities that increase public awareness of the scourge of suicide, to include the Walk in Memory and Walk for Hope events in Carson, Yerington, Winnemucca, Henderson and Pahrump.
- NDVS funds safeTALK training for any NVA who wishes to participate. With the assistance of NVAs, we offer speakers, on request, to veteran’s organizations that wish to learn more about the resources and tools available to assist at-risk veterans.
- NDVS is continually improving and updating the Suicide Prevention section on our website. It is one of the most frequently accessed sections. NDVS is committed to ensuring Nevada veterans or others seeking information on suicide prevention have access to resources available to them with speed and ease.



NDVS, along with other State Departments of Veterans Services from across the nation, signed and committed to the tenets of the VA's suicide prevention declaration.

Veterans Legislative Overview

2017 Legislative Summary

Prior to the 79th Session of the Legislature, NDVS participated in three key events - the Veterans Legislative Symposia, the Veterans Legislative Summits, and Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature to (1) ensure the veteran community's legislative priorities were identified and (2) to educate veterans, their families, and their supporters so they might fully participate in the legislative process.

Veterans Legislative Symposia

March 26, 2016 (Reno); April 16, 2016 (Las Vegas)

- Hosted by NDVS and the United Veteran Legislative Council (UVLC), the Veterans Legislative Symposia take place in even years and serve as an opportunity to bring together various perspectives from the veteran community and to develop a list of prioritized legislative recommendations. The 2016 Reno Symposium resulted in 17 recommendations and the Las Vegas Symposium resulted in 20 recommendations. In addition, 27 items were suggested for U.S. Congressional consideration; these issues were sent to Nevada's Congressional Delegation for consideration.

Common Themes

- Take action to prevent veteran suicide;
- Take care of family survivors (especially children) and caregivers of veterans; and
- Improve the State's ability to connect veterans to benefits, focusing on rural, student, Native American, women, and elder veterans.

Common Statewide Priorities

PRIORITY 1	Mandate suicide prevention/awareness training for those who may commonly come in contact with at-risk veterans (medical professionals, first responders, veteran service officers, etc.).
PRIORITY 2	Create a Veterans Service Organization Registry to help veterans connect to helpful veterans support organizations providing benefits and services.
PRIORITY 3	Extend the eligibility period for the Fry Scholarship to ensure all children of those killed in combat are able to use these benefits.
PRIORITY 4	Increase the number of Veterans Service Officers in rural Nevada.
PRIORITY 5	Increase presence and support of Nevada Veterans' Courts.

Veterans Legislative Summits

January 7, 2017 (Las Vegas); January 28, 2017 (Carson City)

NDVS and the United Veteran Legislative Council (UVLC) and NDVS sponsored two Legislative Summits to inform the veteran's community about veteran-related bills and bill draft requests for the 79th Legislative Session. Speakers included State Senators Joe Hardy and Mark Manendo, as well as Assemblymen Mike Sprinkle and Chris Edwards.

Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature (VAMDAL)

March 15, 2017

Hosted jointly by NDVS, the UVLC, and the Nevada National Guard, VAMDAL took place on the Capitol grounds in Carson City. The opening ceremony featured Governor Brian Sandoval. Immediately following the ceremony, the Governor signed three bills into law designed to benefit veterans and servicemembers. Other speakers included Senate Majority Leader Aaron Ford, Senate Minority Leader Michael Roberson, and Assembly Speaker Jason Frierson. More than 300 active duty military and veterans, their families and supporters attended the ceremony.

The 79th Legislative Session

During the 79th Legislative Session, 26 veteran and military bills were signed (see highlights of legislation passed on pages 38-39). Additionally, each one of the statewide priorities identified in the Legislative Symposia was accomplished.

PRIORITY 1	Suicide prevention/awareness training was accomplished by AB 105, sponsored by Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, which mandated suicide awareness training for health care providers for each license renewal period.
PRIORITY 2	Create a Veterans Service Organization Registry was accomplished through the passage of AB 22, a Governor's bill, which authorized NDVS to create a veterans registry.
PRIORITY 3	Extend the eligibility period for the Fry Scholarship was accomplished by the passage of AB 24, a Governor's bill.
PRIORITY 4	Increase the number of Veterans Service Officers in rural Nevada was accomplished through the passage of the Governor's budget bill.
PRIORITY 5	Increase the presence and support of Nevada veterans' courts was accomplished by the passage of AB 286 from Assemblyman Elliot Anderson. This bill also included language from SB 445 from Senator Nicole Cannizzaro, which was folded into AB 286. Additionally, SB 445 from Senator David Parks added \$98,000 for a Vet Court coordinator for the Eighth Judicial District Court of the State of Nevada.

"For Gold Star families in the United States, I have submitted legislation which permanently removes the out-of-state tuition fees a Gold Star student IS REQUIRED TO pay to attend a Nevada university or community college."

Governor Sandoval

Highlights of Legislation Passed

Bill	Description
AB 2	Addresses several issues related to the Nevada National Guard. Existing law authorizes payment of various benefits to members of the Guard from the Patriot Relief Account, including a member called into active service who is experiencing economic hardship. This bill: (1) limits the payment of benefits from the Patriot Relief Account to the extent money is available in the account; and (2) removes the requirement that monetary relief may be paid for economic hardship only to those members called into active service, thereby expanding eligibility to all members experiencing economic hardship
AB 24	Expands exemption of tuition through Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). This bill expands the group of students against whom tuition charges must not be assessed.
AB 77	Allows the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) to waive any licensure fees for veterans, active-duty members of the military, and spouses of military members.
AB 105	Requires two hours of continuing education instruction on evidence-based suicide prevention and awareness at regular intervals.
AB 337	Prevents unlawful termination of a National Guard member. The bill expands existing law by prohibiting the employer of a member of the National Guard of another state who is employed in this State from terminating the member's employment because he or she is ordered to active service or otherwise required by the law of that state to perform duties as a member of the National Guard of that state.
AB 521	Establishes a program to provide financial assistance for the disinterment and relocation of a veteran to any veterans' cemetery. This bill also requires the Director of the Department of Veterans Services to adopt regulations prescribing the application process and the criteria for the award of such financial assistance. Finally, this bill makes an appropriation of \$100,000 to fund the program.
SB 33	Prohibits the foreclosure of a military servicemember's residential mortgage loan, including the foreclosure of a lien against a unit in a common-interest community, while the member is on active duty, and for one year immediately following active duty, without a court order, so long as the loan was entered into before the servicemember was called to active duty or deployed.
SB 148	Requires the Director of the Department of Veterans Services to provide assistance and information relating to aid, benefits and services to veterans and members of the military who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender and their spouses and dependents; further requires NDVS to assist lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender veterans apply for an upgrade to the character of the veteran's discharge from service or a change in the narrative reason for the veteran's discharge from service.

Bill	Description
SB 445	Proposes to appropriate from the State General Fund to the Eighth Judicial District Court of the State of Nevada the sum of \$98,356 for the salary of a Veterans Court Coordinator.
SB 546	Capital Improvements Project (CIP) Bill - For many veterans, the highlight of the 79th Legislative Session was the passage of the SB 546, which added \$33.5 million to the \$14.2 million already approved by Governor Sandoval in the 2015 CIP Bill for building the Northern Nevada Veterans Home (NNVH). With this action, the State of Nevada was able to break ground for the NNVH on July 17, 2017.



Moving Forward

The Way Ahead...

The next year is shaping up to be an incredibly busy one! Over the past four years, Governor Sandoval and an amazingly supportive Nevada Legislature have given NDVS the resources to expand our support to Nevada’s veterans and their families. As you have read in this report, in 2017, we were able to make great strides, especially in the area of outreach.



Nevada veterans are more aware of their benefits than ever before. In 2018, we will continue outreach efforts to ensure that every Nevada veteran understands, and has access to, needed benefits and services. We will accomplish this with new technologies, new partnerships, and of course, with the help of Nevada Veterans Advocates (NVAs).

One of the exciting new technological developments on the horizon is the planned 2018 roll-out of the Veterans Information System. This web-based IT system imports electronic data from State and Federal agencies, giving us---for the first time ever---a comprehensive way to locate and connect to Nevada veterans.

But that’s not the only technology emerging to help us reach more veterans. We will see the use of compact, secure video-teleconferencing units in 2018. These devices will open new doors to for our Veteran Service Officer to travel to see these veterans. Right now, it’s time-consuming and expensive for our Veteran Service Officers to travel to see these veterans, but with the help of these new units, we will be able to bring our Veteran Services Officers “virtually,” to their home or facility.

Speaking of hard-to-reach veterans, we will increase our outreach to homebound veterans and their caregivers. It is important we ensure that they are connected to the benefits they’ve earned and that they are recognized, honored and thanked for their service during their final phase of life. This outreach expands on our work in 2017 where we connected to elderly veterans living in skilled or assisted care facilities in Nevada through our Veterans in Care program.

As you have read in this report, our partnerships are key to almost every achievement. In 2018, we will expand our support of partners who are doing tremendous work addressing the needs of Nevada veterans. This will include providing free training for partner veterans service organization service officers; using our communication tools and network to promote partner activities; helping apply for and administer state grants supporting veterans services and programs—whatever we can do to assist these front-line supporters.

Vital to our efforts are the NVAs. In 2017, NVAs let us know they wanted to do more—to step up their contributions. We listened and took action. Now, this powerful force is providing NDVS with more “boots on the ground” in our outreach efforts by attending veteran and community events. The early results are promising. In just this past quarter, NVA-led outreach events have tripled. In 2018, we will work even harder to provide more opportunities for them, including offering them safeTALK training, aimed at preventing veteran suicide.

Finally, with the ongoing construction of the Northern Nevada State Veterans Home, we will see

a tremendous need addressed and a promise kept. Over the next 12 months, the construction, equipping, and staffing of the new Home in Sparks will be a big focus for us. We have a very strong team, and they are working tirelessly to ensure that when the home opens in early 2019, it will be everything the veterans' community has been asking for, and more!

In closing, I want to thank our partners and our supporters for your assistance this past year. With your help, I am confident that we will meet every challenge in the coming year as we continue to Serve Nevada's Heroes.

Respectfully,
Kat Miller, Director

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NDVS Annual Report SFY 2017 overseen by NDVS Communications Director, Terri Hendry, authored by Cyndy Ortiz Gustafson, MA, and Paula Cassino with Strategic Progress, LLC. Creative by Emire Still, DP Video Productions.

