

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

News Release

Minneapolis VA
Health Care System

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 26, 2015

VA Begins “Summer of Service” to Bolster Volunteer Assistance for Veterans

Calls Upon Individuals, Organizations and Communities to Serve Veterans in Nationwide Effort

(Minneapolis, MN) — A new nationwide initiative – a “Summer of Service” – seeks the help of citizens to create and build partnerships to grow the number of individuals and organizations serving Veterans.

The Minneapolis VA Health Care System (Minneapolis VA) is renewing its commitment to Veterans by inviting the community to visit and explore opportunities to serve during an open house the week of June 28.

“We have made progress over the past year addressing the challenges we face in delivering care and benefits to millions of Veterans and their families,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald. “While there is more work to do to honor our commitment to Veterans, we also recognize that VA cannot do it alone. We are asking Americans everywhere to join the Summer of Service and help us give back to those who have given so much to our nation.”

In the coming weeks, the Minneapolis VA will be working closely with Congressional partners, Veterans service organizations, mayors and local communities, private sector and non-profit organizations, and VA employees to identify new and innovative ways to support VA’s commitment to care for those who “have borne the battle” and their families.

As part of VA’s Summer of Service, the Minneapolis VA will host an open house during the week of June 28 to spur increased local engagement and welcome members of the community interested in supporting the needs of veterans. Details of the event will be posted on the Minneapolis VA website at: <http://www.minneapolis.va.gov/>

VA has also established the following goals to achieve by Labor Day:

- Increasing the number of volunteers: Committed to engaging with 100,000 volunteers nationwide to support care and benefits programs and local events
- Increasing Community Partners: Committed to expanding current agreements to provide services and support reaching more than 15,000 Veterans and family.
- Recruiting Medical Professionals: Hiring clinicians and support staff to expand access to care and homelessness.
- Congress: Host Congressional Members and Staffs at VA facilities across the country.

The VA has an outstanding volunteer program, which will be highlighted throughout the country this summer. VA will build upon the ongoing work of its more than 350,000 employees and 76,000 volunteers around the nation – and the more than 1,000 volunteers at the Minneapolis VA.

While the central focus of the campaign will be increasing volunteerism and partnerships, it will also provide individuals and communities an opportunity to support other important priorities. Despite a hiring effort that brought more than 11,000 net-new employees onboard over the past year, VA still needs more health care providers, claims specialists, medical support assistants, and cemetery directors to continue to expand needed services. VA's partners can help by getting the word out this summer.

In an effort to improve the veteran's customer service experience, VA has begun the most comprehensive reorganization in its history. The initiative, called MyVA, has been guided by ideas and recommendations from veterans, employees and stakeholders.

"There is no mission more noble than serving Veterans and their families. At VA, we constantly strive to improve the way we do our job," said McDonald. "State by state, community by community, person by person, there are a number of ways we can all come together to serve veterans. From expanded partnerships with the private sector and non-profit organizations, to accelerating hiring, to celebrating the commitment of VA employees and volunteers – we need the help of communities everywhere to succeed."

Volunteers can help serve Veterans by visiting <http://www.volunteer.va.gov/> to find out the needs of your local VA facility. Follow #VASummerOfService on [Vantage Point](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), and join VA in caring for America's Veterans.