



Illinois Veteran News

An Update from the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs ★ June 2016

★ From the Director



Last month we announced our re-launch of the Illinois Warrior Assistance Program (IWAP). In this re-launch we set a goal to help 530 veterans by 5/30-Memorial Day. I'm proud to announce that we met and exceeded our goal. By May 29, we had assisted 835 veterans...and counting! IWAP was created by the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs to help veterans who are having difficulty with the emotional, medical or legal challenges of transitioning back to civilian life. Qualifying Illinois veterans and their caregivers can call 1-866-554-IWAP (4927) 24 hours a day for confidential assistance from a healthcare professional.

I was privileged to march with the Tilden and Corliss High School JROTC in the Chicago Memorial Day parade down State Street. The crowds were large and the respect for our service men and women who were killed in action was heartwarming. My veteran heart swelled with pride! Our Assistant Director Harry Sawyer assisted in opening our Memorial Wall in the Rotunda of the State Capitol. When in Springfield, please pause by the Memorial Wall and read about our brave heroes who gave all so we could be FREE today.



Our mission at the IDVA is very simple. To serve those who have served. In doing so, we serve not only the men and women who have worn the uniform, but also their families. It is our privilege to be able to help our veterans receive the benefits they have earned through service to our nation. Our goal is to empower our veterans and their families to thrive in all aspects of their lives.

We know there are many veterans within our great state who do not require any assistance – but we still want to encourage you to “Stand Up and Be Counted!” by registering with your local VSO. In doing so, you're helping IDVA to do a better job of planning for services, seeking federal funding and understanding the needs of our veteran communities statewide. [Click here to register.](#)

We Thank you for your service and for your sacrifice and we at the IDVA look forward to offering our services to You.

★ New Employees

Shelly Miller is the Director of Nursing at the Illinois Veterans' Home-Anna. She has been a nurse at this facility since 2014 and was temporarily assigned to DON in March 2016 and is now permanent as of June. Her background includes long term care as a staff nurse and Assistant Director of Nursing, NICU, acute care, inpatient rehab and wound care. Shelly lives in Jonesboro, IL with her husband of 25 years and they are the proud parents of one son, Josiah, who just graduated with his BSN. They love to travel and search for primitive antiques on the weekend. Shelly tells us, "I love working in long term care with the Veterans and have found my nursing niche. I am proud to be a part of the IDVA."

Beth Crissey joined the IDVA team in May of 2016 as Human Resource Specialist. She comes directly from CMS/Personnel. Beth and her husband Greg have been married for 36 years and have two children a daughter and son along with one granddaughter. Additionally they are expecting another baby girl in September 2016. Beth adds, "We also enjoy travelling on a Victory Motorcycle across the United States."

Beth comes from a strong Military family. Her sister and brother are active duty air force, her son and nephew are active duty Army, 1 brother & two nephews in the Army Reserves; and recently a nephew joined the Marines after Graduating from Glenwood High School.

William Illa is the Veterans Service Officer for Vermilion County. He was in the United States Marine Corps from 2007 to 2011 and did two tours in Iraq as part of the Second Marine Logistics group's Convoy Security Company. He graduated from the U of I in 2014 with a degree in Political Science and Global Economics. He has worked with veterans since 2011 when he took advantage of the VA's Work Study Program at Lincoln Land Community College, and would like to remind any veterans who are considering going to school about the VA's work study program and the benefits of such a program. William is a lifelong Cubs fan and having lived in Chicago during the 90's is obligated to be a Bull's fan.

Luke Runte is the Veterans Service Officer for Freeport/ Stephenson County. Not only did he start a new journey with the IDVA, he has also become a small business owner. He has four children and according to Luke, 'they all compete to see how many grey hairs they can spring.' With these duties above come no hobbies other than watching T-ball, tumbling, football, etc. Before joining the IDVA team Luke was acquiring his associates degree in political science. Prior to that he turned wrenches on F-16s while serving in the USAF.

Carla Waibel is the Veteran Service Officer in Rock Island. She served 5 years in the US Navy from 1995-2000 in Okinawa, Japan & Great Lakes Naval Hospital as a Dental Tech 3rd Class. Following service she worked at Great Lakes as a contractor at Great Lakes Recruit training center for 3 years. Carla completed her Associates degree using the GI Bill in the Quad Cities. She accepted a position at the US Army Sustainment Command as an admin assistant and was later promoted and trained to become a physical security specialist. She later returned to federal service as administrative assistant for JMTC for 4 years until leaving to join the VA medical center. She was a contractor for 8 months for ECBC before accepting her new position with IDVA. She currently resides in Moline with her Schnauzers.

Lester Robertson, who has been at the Manteno Veterans Home for the past three years has been named the Nursing Home Administrator. He will bring his 45 years of experience in long term care to good use as he leads the home. He will work with Mr. Wali Lewis, who is the Program Supervisor of the Prince Home, as he leads the IDVA home for Homeless Veterans.

The 50th Anniversary
Commemoration of the
Vietnam War

HONORING
OUR
AMERICAN
HEROES

Illinois Veterans' Home
1 Veterans' Drive
Manteno, IL
9:00 AM
July 9, 2016

JAMES DO BISSOKIA
PHOTOGRAPHY

★ Did You Know...

Matt Roberts, General Counsel for IDVA informs us about Prohibited Political Activities in the State Workplace:

As we are in an election year, it's important to take a minute to remember the rules concerning prohibited political activities in the State workplace.

The State Officials and Employee Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430) (the "Ethics Act") provides that State employees shall not perform prohibited political activity on State time, using State resources, or on State property (5 ILCS 430/5-15). The Ethics Act states that "a person is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor if that person intentionally violates any provision of Section 5-15...." Furthermore, the Ethics Act states that a State employee who intentionally violates Section 5-15 is subject to "discipline or discharge by the appropriate ultimate jurisdictional authority."

The list of prohibited political activities that employees may not engage in while on State time using State resources includes, but is not limited to:

- Campaigning or working on a campaign
- Preparing or distributing campaign literature
- Making or soliciting contributions
- Attending or organizing political events
- Preparing or circulating petitions
- Assisting at the polls

Political flyers and pamphlets cannot be posted in the work place. Any such activity has to be reported to the OEIG as a potential violation of the State Ethic's Act.

While we appreciate and welcome your individual participation in the political process, the State must ensure that whenever members of the public visit State facilities, there is no appearance of impropriety or partiality on the part of those delivering State services.

If you have any questions concerning what is or is not a prohibited political activity in the State workplace, you can always refer back to your annual ethics training materials, refer to the EEC guide at <http://www.illinois.gov/eec/Documents/PrdhibitedPolit2.pdf>, or contact your Agency Ethics Counselor, Matt Roberts. He is always available to you at Matthew.Roberts@illinois.gov. Feel free to contact him with any questions or concerns regarding this notice, or any ethics

questions that you may have. Thank for your continued hard work and compliance with the Ethics Act.

Deb Miller, the CFO for IDVA is working with a committee to streamline the State of Illinois' work system. And because of her involvement, IDVA is a pilot agency for the Enterprise Resource Planning software implementation state-wide project. ERP will deliver an integrated IT platform across finance, human capital management (HR), and procurement for all agencies within the State of Illinois.

We are currently in phase 2 of the finance and procurement implementation. IDVA will be going live on SAP, the ERP software program, October 1, 2016. User training and testing is scheduled for August and September.

Mike Putnam was named our IDVA Employee of the Quarter. Director Jeffries presented him with a certificate in front of the Central Office employees. Congratulations Mike! Well-deserved honor! If you would like to nominate someone for this quarterly award, please contact Miguel Calderon at Miguel.Calderon@illinois.gov



Veterans Day at the Illinois State Fair is Sunday, August 14, 2016. As in the past, admission for all Veterans and their families is Free. We are working hard with the various Veteran Service Organizations creating a great day for every Veteran! Our programming that day will start at 10:00 am and end with the Veteran's Day Parade. We will be announcing the ILLINOIS VETERANS' PATRIOTIC VOLUNTEER AND APPRECIATION AWARD and the ILLINOIS VETERANS' BUSINESS APPRECIATION AWARD. Go to <http://go.usa.gov/chEmV> for nomination guidelines and a nomination form. Deadline to nominate is July 29, 2016. It will be a great day to celebrate our veterans and their family members at the Fair!

★ IDVA Calendar

- 6/15 Task Force on Veterans' Suicide – Sugar Grove, IL
- 6/15 Veterans Resource Fair-Oak Park, IL
- 6/16 Task Force on Veterans' Suicide – River Grove, IL
- 6/17 VFW Convention-Springfield, IL
- 6/17 Illinois Hires Heroes Consortium-Waukegan, IL
- 6/24 DAV Convention-Springfield, IL
- 6/25 Chicago Cares' Share-a-Thon
- 6/25 Old Dogs Riders Association Cookout-Manteno, IL

- 7/07 Military Immersion Training-Marseilles, IL
- 7/09 Vietnam Veteran 50th Anniversary Commemoration-Manteno, IL
- 7/15 American Legion Convention-Springfield, IL
- 7/15 Veterans Hiring Event-Springfield, IL
- 8/05 Women and the Military Symposium-Malcolm X College-Chicago, IL



State of Illinois
Department of Veterans' Affairs

NOMINATE A BUSINESS ILLINOIS VETERANS' BUSINESS APPRECIATION AWARD THAT DESERVES THIS HONOR!

The Illinois Veterans' Business Appreciation Award highlights and honors the work of any business or organization in Illinois that has significantly helped veterans, and whose contributions to those who have served our country are documented and deserve to be recognized.

This award is designed to highlight and honor those businesses or organizations that go above and beyond the regular call of service to support veterans.

Nomination Deadline – July 29, 2016

For more information and a nomination form go to <http://go.usa.gov/chEmV>
The Veteran Volunteer of the Year will be announced on Veterans Day at the Illinois State Fair, August 14, 2016.



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Illinois Veterans' Patriotic Volunteer and Appreciation Award

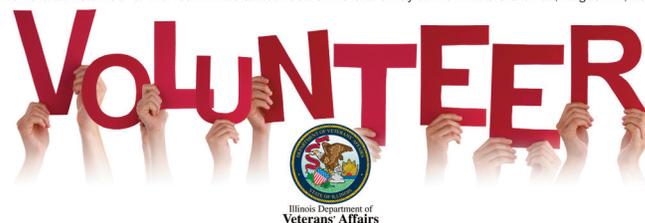
We are looking for #1!

The Illinois Veterans' Patriotic Volunteer and Appreciation Award highlights and honors the work of an Illinois veteran whose contributions in service to the veteran community and their local communities are truly above and beyond. Nominees are evaluated on the basis of their leadership, dedication, innovation, and impact in serving these communities.

Award recipients are those whose efforts add to the powerful narrative that veterans are dedicated, life-long servants whose efforts benefit all of Illinois veteran communities.

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