

SPIRIT ONLINE

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VA Connecticut Healthcare System

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“SHINING STAR” INSTANT AWARD PROGRAM

The healthcare system’s newest award program got off to a great start with several staff members receiving awards on Tuesday, Feb. 10. The first recipients of this instant award were Margaret Kauffman, Kara Gagnon and William Sherrod. Shining Stars recognize employees for their dedication to our mission and for the embodiment of customer service and teamwork into their daily work. All paid employees are eligible to receive a Shining Star and may be nominated by fellow employees, volunteers, patients and visitors

Award criteria includes: (1) providing exceptional courtesy to fellow employees, patients, visitors and volunteers (2) enthusiasm and willingness to “go the extra mile” (3) loyalty and integrity as demonstrated by actions to fellow employees and the VA (4) incorporating successful teamwork practices into their work (5) and demonstrated reliability and flexibility. Winners may choose \$50 or a \$50 gift certificate from Simply Certificates, redeemable at hundreds of participating restaurants. Employees are eligible to receive a Shining Star only once per quarter.

Nomination forms are available in Human Resources, on the VA Connecticut Common Forms folder on the “M” drive, in the canteen and on the intranet under “Human Resources.”



Director Roger Johnson presents **Peg Kauffman**, IRM, with a \$50 gift certificate. Peg was the first employee to receive the Shining Star.

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Events

New TB Screening Program for Employees

Black History Month

Food-a-Rama
Staff Dining Room
West Haven
Feb. 27

National Salute to Veterans Week
Feb. 8-14

“Healing Through the Arts”
Willoughby Wallace Library
Stony Creek
Feb. 29

For more information on these and other events please see *Good Morning VA Connecticut*.

Note: “Good Morning” is now available on Outlook. Look for new editions every Friday.



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

This month, we observe the Department of Veterans Affairs National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans. This is a community-wide event that encourages citizens of all ages to show their appreciation to our veterans by sending in Valentine's Day cards and letters. Connecticut residents have responded generously to National Salute by sending in thousands of valentines each year. Officially observed the week of Feb. 8-14, VA Connecticut has planned numerous activities at both campuses to recognize the men and women we are so proud to serve.

With our nation once again at war, this year's observance takes on special meaning. While we hail the sacrifices of servicemen and women in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, we must not forget that we also serve the men and women of generations past who took up the call to arms.

During National Salute, I invite each of you to take the time to say "thank you" to our veterans and to take part in some of our National Salute activities.

To our staff members who are also veterans, I say "thank you" for your service to our country and for your commitment to our healthcare system.

Roger Johnson,
Director



Members of VFW Post 10466 John Formanek, Richard Michael Monte, Dino Piagneri, Adrian A. St. Pierre and Guy Beardsley presented healthcare system director Roger Johnson with a \$1,000 check. The presentation took place at the West Haven campus on January 8. Also pictured is VAVS Chief, Voluntary Service, Gloria Jorel.

MEET YOUR EEO COMMITTEE



Members of the EEO Committee include (left to right): Jose Torres, Allen Liao, Michele Avery, Joe Purcell, Mabel Carroll, Chistine Covington (EEO Manager), Roger Johnson (director), Vera Williams, Ted Jones, Ardie Gooch, Annette Logan, Mirta Rosa, Judy Molstre, Pamela Redmond and Demetrius Files.

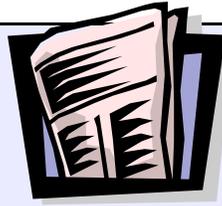
The Equal Employment Opportunity program (EEO) and committee seek to eliminate any disparity and promote affirmative action programs and observances that highlight the capabilities of women, minorities and handicapped individuals. The program creates an awareness of the diverse ethnic and cultural history of designated groups in the work force and emphasizes the unique contributions which they have made to the development of America.

At VA Connecticut, the following EEO special observances are held each year to enhance employee awareness and to present topics of special interest to employees:

January - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday
February - Black History Month (Food-a-Rama)
March - Women's History Month
April - Take Your Children to Work Day
May - Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month

August - Women's Equality Day (Aug. 26)
September - Hispanic Heritage Month
October - National Disability Employment Awareness Month/White Cane Day
November - Native American-Indian Heritage Month

in the **NEWS...**



- Newly funded VA Health Services Research & Development (HSR&D) research projects:

Investigator-Initiated Research

Quality Evaluation in Stroke and TIA (QUEST) Project
Dawn Bravata, MD

Honoring Treatment Preferences at the End of Life
Terri Fried, MD

Patient Preferences for Treatment of Hepatitis C
Liana Fraenkel, MD, MPH

- Infection Control Manager, **Timothea Cooper**, has been elected to the *Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology—New England Chapter* (APIC-NE) Board of Directors. APIC-NE, the first infection control chapter in the nation, is a non-profit organization that provides infection control education and professional services to more than 400 members throughout the six New England states.
- **Black History Month**
VA proudly joins the Nation in celebrating Black History Month during February. The national theme selected by the Carter G. Woodson Foundation for this year's observance is "Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka 50th Anniversary." In 1915, educator and historian Dr. Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, later renamed the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History. It was through this organization that Negro History Week was born in 1926 and Black History Month was established in 1976. African Americans comprise 24.04 percent of the VA work force. Black History Month offers an opportunity for all VA employees to learn more about the cultural heritage and history of our fellow employees. For more information on Black History Month, visit www.asalh.com <<http://www.asalh.com/>> and contact National Program Manager Wanda J. Jones at 202-273-7388 for information on VA's Black Special Emphasis Program.

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Director
Roger Johnson

Associate Director
Karen Waghorn

Chief of Staff
Michael Ebert, M.D.

Associate Director for Patient/
Nursing Services
Margo Veazey, MSN, RN

Chief Information Officer
Joseph Erdos, M.D., Ph.D.

Chief Financial Officer
Karen Meffert

Public Affairs Specialist
Pamela R. Redmond

Editor:
Visual Information Specialist
Richard G. Thompson



VA Connecticut
Healthcare System
950 Campbell Ave.
West Haven, CT 06516
(203) 932-3824