

FOOD-A-RAMA

VA Connecticut concluded the Black History Month festivities with the annual Food-A-Rama held at the West Haven campus on February 27. In celebration of our rich diversity, employees prepared ethnic dishes and served them in the staff dining room.



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*Darlene Casella, MSW, Social Work, and Joe Purcell, Human Resources, were two of dozens of staff that volunteered at this year's Black History Month Food-A-Rama. Held the last Friday in February, this annual event includes food from all ethnic groups and was once again chaired by **Ardie Gooch**, Communication.*

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Events

New On-Site TB Screening Program for Employees
thru April 2

VAVS Awards Banquet
March 28
Aqua Turf
Plantsville

VISN 1 Pain Management Conference
April 16
Newington

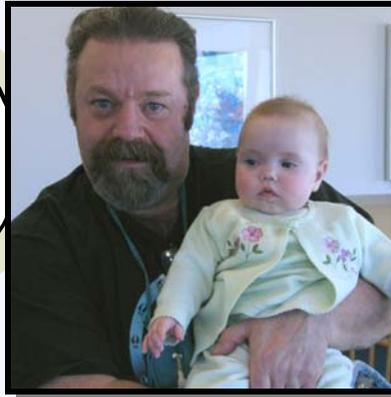
For more information on these and other events please see *Good Morning VA Connecticut*.

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



Food-A-Rama is one of several Black History Month events sponsored by the EEO Committee. The luncheon continues to grow each year and now includes entrees from various ethnic groups. Staff and family members prepare food or donate toward the preparation of dishes that allows the event to be open – free of charge – to all staff members.

A Black History luncheon was also held in the Red Room at the Newington campus on February 26.



FINANCIAL EFFICIENCY AWARD



VA Connecticut was one of six VISN 1 facilities to receive the Financial Efficiency Award for its contributions in meeting the VA FY 2003 goals for timely payment of financial invoices and achievement of savings through discounts. Connecticut's efforts resulted in the expeditious processing of 2,345 payments valued at \$14.3 million.

*Pictured is VA Connecticut's "financial team." Back row left to right: **Joe Lamadeleine, Sean Powers, Robert Falcone, Karen Meffert and Roger Johnson**, healthcare system director. Front row left to right: **Emma Ortiz, Carol Funaro and Theresa Gould**. Not pictured is **Maria Rivera**.*



Congratulations to the following employees who were recipients of the Shining Star Award from February 1- 24. The Shining Star Award is given to employees who demonstrate exceptional customer service and teamwork and who go above and beyond their normal duties. Nominations are accepted from fellow employees, patients, visitors and volunteers. Shining Star recipients will receive either a \$50 cash award or a \$50 gift certificate good at many restaurants statewide.

Newington

**Brian Riley, Fran Miller, John Berrios, Joanne Perez, Patrick Power
Mary Brooks, Carol Lucey, Gary Collier, James Depietro, Anthia
Vardoulakis, Cisalee Harell, Margaret Grant, Annette Langevin,
James Clinton, MaryAnn Solomon, June Barrett, Anna Valenti
Theresa Concatelli, William Sherrod, Clinton Crawford and
Catherine Parys.**

West Haven

**Peg Kauffman, Ronald Capaldo, Jacquelyn Wolf, Kara Gagnon,
Patricia Guardino, Maureen Porteses, Carmelo Arroyo, Edward Cor-
coran, William Green, Barbara Costin-Huggins, Kenneth Geisel,
James Hart, Laureano Contreras and Olivia Henderson.**

VAN DONATION

The Disabled American Veterans donated a five-passenger van to the health-care system transportation program. The van transports patients from southwestern Connecticut to and from the West Haven campus for appointments. Pictured are Gloria Jorel, voluntary service chief, Kurt Mischhke, transportation chief, Tim Kelly, DAV representative, Tom Donelan, DAV van driver and Roger Johnson, healthcare system director.





*AFGE Local 1674 president **Raymond Knox** (left) and healthcare system director **Roger Johnson** signed a Partnership Agreement March 1.*

in the **NEWS**...



Hilary P. Blumberg, MD, director of a VA-sponsored bipolar disorder research program at VA Connecticut, and assistant professor of psychiatry at Yale University School of Medicine, received the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology Memorial Travel Award. Dr. Blumberg uses magnetic resonance imaging to study the structure and function of the brain in bipolar disorder. This research demonstrates abnormalities in bipolar disorder in brain structures involved in emotion, such as the amygdala and orbitofrontal cortex. These brain abnormalities are being investigated as potential markers for the disorder.



***Kathy Riordan**, American Legion Auxiliary Hospital Chairperson, received a certificate of appreciation from **Gary Mike Colasuono** representing patients of the Giant Steps program. The certificate was presented for her support of the Holiday Shopping Program and for providing holiday gifts to the Giant Steps program. Giant Steps participants donated \$100 to the American Legion Auxiliary earned through proceeds from the sale of crafts made by Giant Steps veterans.*

SPIRIT ONLINE

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