

# SPIRIT ONLINE

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VA Connecticut Healthcare System

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## EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNMENT AWARDS

**V**A Connecticut staff members came away winners at the annual Connecticut Federal Executive Association Awards Luncheon held May 14 at the Hawthorne Inn in Berlin. CFEA represents the 20,000 federal employees who administered approximately \$26 billion in federal funds in Connecticut in 2003.

The Excellence in Government Awards included 15 categories with VA Connecticut staff taking top honors in four categories. Congratulations to **Penny L. Schuckers**, Chief of the Eastern Blind Rehabilitation Center who was named Distinguished Federal Manager. **Christine Covington**, EEO Manager, received the Outstanding Diversity Contribution Award. **David Wilson**, FMS Utilities Supervisor, was selected as the Outstanding Trade and Labor Employee. The **VA Connecticut Care Management and Telehealth Team** took the award for Creativity and Innovation. **Donna Vogel, RN**, accepted the award on behalf of the team.

**Roger Johnson**, Director and chair of the CFEA, hosted this year's event.

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*VA Connecticut Director Roger Johnson joins VA Connecticut's award winners at the Connecticut Federal Executive Association Awards Luncheon. They are left to right: Christine Covington, Penny Schuckers, Donna Vogel, RN, and David Wilson.*

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## Events

### Memorial Day Observance

Friday, May 28

11 a.m.

Newington Campus  
Ceremonial Courtyard

### Town Hall Meeting with VISN 1 Network Director Dr. Jeannette Chirico-Post

Wednesday, June 2

10 a.m.

Donaldson Education Center  
(pictel to Newington)

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



## **Federal Executive Association Awards Luncheon**

**Congratulations to the following VA Connecticut employees who were nominated for awards in the following categories...**

Award for Administrative Excellence: **Melissa Alpert**, Professional Employee of the Year-Law Enforcement/Emergency Management: **Douglas Jennings**, Professional Employee of the Year-Technical/Scientific: **Debra Finelli**, Outstanding Federal Volunteer: **Ronald**

**Capaldo**, **Joseph Coss**, **Paul Rucci**, Outstanding Customer Service Award: **Gloria Jorel**, Unsung Hero Award: **Joseph Petrini**, Distinguished Federal Manager: **Rajlakshmi Krishnamurthy**, MD, Members of the winning Care Management and Telehealth Team: **Gail Barrows**, RN, **Leo Calderone**, **Phyllis Carlson**, RN, **Luis Colon**, **David Cornwall**, RN, **Elaine DiCicco**, RN, **Susan Dicker**, RN, **Joseph Erdos**, MD, **Timothy Green**, **Margaret Kauffman**, **Anthony Lengvinis**, **William McCasland**, **Helen Noel**, Ph.D., APRN, **Catherine Smith**, RN, **Lorraine Urquhart**, RN, **Margaret Veazey**, RN, **Donna Wai**, RN, **Donna Vogel**, RN.



## **JOHN J. MCGUIRK CLINIC DEDICATION**



The John J. McGuirk Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, formerly the New London Outpatient Clinic, was officially dedicated May 7 at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London. Approximately 150 guests, including the children of John McGuirk (pictured above) attended the afternoon ceremony held at the Officer's Club. John McGuirk (1917-2001) was a local veteran's advocate in the New London area.

## VETERANS ONLY JOB FAIR

Veterans Industries, the Connecticut Department of Labor and the Southern Connecticut State University Office of Veterans Affairs hosted a Veterans Job Fair on May 18 at Pelz Gymnasium on the SCSU campus.

More than 20 local and national employers attended the event which was open to veterans state-wide who were either unemployed or interested in a career change.

**Cathy Abshire** and **Mary Lou Duggan** of Veterans Industries organized this year's event. Veteran Industries, located at the Errera Community Care Center, provides employment services to veterans. Over the past five years, Veterans Industries has assisted more than 1,000 veterans with some aspect of attaining their career goals.



## National Asian & Pacific Islander Heritage Month

VA Connecticut celebrated National Asian & Pacific Islander Month (NAPIM) with an event on May 7 in the staff dining room. The event, sponsored by the EEO Committee, featured special guests, poster exhibits, multi-media displays, educational handouts, music and samplings of Asian and Pacific Islander snacks.

Photo left: Special guest, Pei Sze Cheng of WFSB-TV (Channel 3) and **Allen Liao**, IRM, at the NAPIM celebration in the staff dining room.

in the **NEWS...**



**William McCasland**, Information Security Officer, was a panelist for the "HIPAA – Privacy vs. Security – What's the Difference?" breakfast seminar on May 13 at Bayer Corporation. Bill was one of three panelists discussing the issues and impact of HIPAA on healthcare organizations.

The Psychology Internship program at Newington received notice of its full accreditation by the American Psychological Association. The formal name of the training program is the "Greater Hartford Predoctoral Psychology Internship Consortium."

**Gary Bryson, Psy.D.**, Psychology Service, is the recipient of a 2004 Presidential Award for Early Career Scientists and Engineers. This award was commissioned by President Clinton to create an award program that would honor and support the extraordinary achievements of young professionals at the outset of their independent research careers in the fields of science and technology. The Presidential Award is the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. government on outstanding scientists and engineers beginning their independent careers. Dr. Bryson accepted the award at a White House ceremony May 4.

**Terri R. Fried, M.D.**, Research Service (geriatrics) and Yale University School of Medicine associate professor of medicine/geriatrics will be honored with the "Outstanding Scientific Achievement for Clinical Investigation Award" at the annual meeting of the American Geriatrics Society (AGS) May 17-21, 2004.

The award is designed to recognize particularly meritorious early career accomplishment by an investigator actively involved in geriatric patient care and health care problems of older adults.

Dr. Fried's research is focused on understanding the preferences for care of older persons who are acutely and terminally ill. She has studied preferences for treatment site, the goals of care in terminal illness and physician-patient communication.

Dr. Fried will give a talk titled, "A Patient-Centered Approach to Shared Decision-Making in Advanced Illness," describing her most important research accomplishments at the AGS Annual Meeting.

**Rajlakshmi Krishnamurthy, M.D.**, Director of Primary Care, was presented the Leah Lowenstein Award by the Yale University School of Medicine Office of Women in Medicine. The award is presented to the faculty member who most clearly provides positive images of women in promoting humane and egalitarian medical education. The recipient's teaching style and personal example provide a role model for the principle of equal opportunity espoused by the late physician, Leah Lowenstein, M.D. Recipients are nominated by graduating students.

## **SPIRIT ONLINE**

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