



NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY



SANDAU AND VANDERZEE JOIN CTVSO TEAM

Turner County has hired Craig VanderZee as their new county veterans service officer. VanderZee replaces Tom Sparrow who retired earlier this year.

Craig will be working out of the Parker office on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9:00 am—4:00 pm. He can be reached at 605.297.3431 or cvanderzee@turnercountysd.org.

Craig has 36 years in with the South Dakota Air National Guard. He served as an administration clerk for six years, then transitioned to an egress mechanic working on F-16 ejections systems a little over nine years, obtaining the rank of E-7, Master Sergeant. In 2003, he was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant, and served as a Logistics Officer for 17 years. In 2015 he became the 114th Logistics Readiness Squadron Commander and in 2021 was promoted to the 114th Maintenance Group Deputy Commander, overseeing F-16 Aircraft Maintenance once again. Craig retired from the 114th Fighter Wing in December of 2023.

Craig enjoys family, camping, fishing and hunting.

Rachel Sandau will serve as the new Hutchinson County Veterans Service officer. She replaces Glenn Hartman who also retired earlier this year. Rachel will be working out of the Olivet office Monday through Thursday from 8:00 am—4:30 pm and can be reached at 605.387.4204 or rsandau@hutchinsoncounty.org.

Rachel served in the Navy for eight years as a Hospital Corpsman. Her duty stations included Naval Hospital Yokosuka, Japan, Naval Hospital Bremerton, Washington, and Branch Health Clinic Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay.

When she's not at work, you will find Rachel with her family camping.

Please join SDDVA in welcoming Craig and Rachel to our network. We look forward to working with both of them.

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VA MAKES HISTORIC COMMITMENTS TO HIRE AND SUPPORT MILITARY SPOUSES

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs signed the [4+1 Commitment](#) – a partnership between government and private employers developed by Blue Star Families, Hiring Our Heroes, and Department of Defense’s Military Spouse Employment Partnership to hire and support military spouses.

This commitment is a voluntary commitment by employers to adopt at least one of the following military spouse employment policies that could expand employment and career opportunities for military spouses: 1) facilitate job transferability; 2) offer remote or telework; 3) offer flexible work hours; 4) provide paid or permissive Permanent Change of Station (PCS) leave. The VA has committed to all four of those policies, as well as extending Leave Without Pay status to military spouses whose active-duty military members receive PCS orders.

“To build the strongest possible workforce to serve our nation’s heroes, we need to hire and support military spouses – many of whom are veterans themselves,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “We at the VA are proud to make these commitments and support our nation’s military spouses every way we can.”

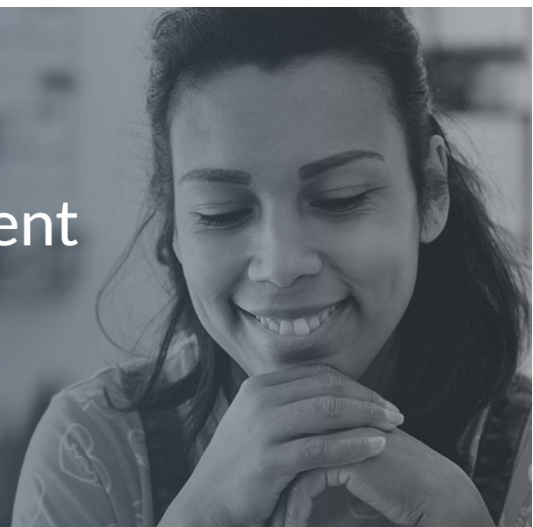
“As a military spouse, I know firsthand that these commitments will make a real difference,” said VA Chief of Staff Kimberly Jackson. “Military spouses are some of the most talented and dedicated professionals in the public and private sector, and by making these commitments, VA will be better positioned to recruit and retain these public servants as we execute our nation’s most sacred obligation: caring for Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.”



The 4+1 Commitment

The Formula for
Military Spouse Success

Adopt the Commitment



SDDVA OUTREACH

SDDVA State Veterans Service Officer Shannon Phillips and Sioux Falls VA Social Worker Machel Kocer hosted a booth at the “Building Assets for Brookings—A Day of Suicide Prevention” program.

The program afforded attendees with a better understanding on how we can all help increase concrete supports to instill hope, safety, and healing.



This past weekend SDDVA Appeals and Training Manager David Huntimer and Field Service Officer DJ Montreal manned a booth with representatives of the VFW at the Pheasant Fest in Sioux Falls. They assisted over 100 veterans and family members.





SAVE THE
date

April 24, 2024
4:00pm - 7:00pm
Vermillion Eagles Club
114 West Main St.

- **FREE Meal for Military-Connected People**
- **Meet with Vital Resources and Service Providers**
- **Service Members, Veterans, and their Families have the chance to receive up to \$250 in Grocery Gift Cards**



Contact: Joseph Knoer, Student Veteran Resource Coordinator, USD; Joseph.Knoer01@usd.edu; 605-658-3570

Eliminating food insecurity among veteran and military families living in rural South Dakota



SUPPORT OUR ARMY RESERVE FAMILIES

April 27, 2024
11:00am-1:00pm
Vern Eide Marine
4501 E Arrowhead Pkwy, Sioux Falls

- **FREE Meal for U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers and their Spouses**
- **Meet with Vital Resources and Service Providers**
- **Launch of the Ready to Serve Food Pantry for Reservists and their families**

**Contact: SSG Zachary Cosens; Zach.Cosens1992@gmail.com;
(417) 459-7500 or Jill Baker at Jill@sdvets.org**

Eliminating food insecurity among veteran and military families living in rural South Dakota



SAVE THE
date

May 9, 2024

4:00pm – 7:00pm

4-H Grounds

3200 W. Havens Ave., Mitchell

- **FREE Meal for Military-Connected People**
- **Meet with Vital Resources and Service Providers**
- **Service Members, Veterans, and their Families have the chance to receive up to \$250 in Grocery Gift Cards**



**Contact: Courtney Ditter, Davison County VSO;
Courtneyd@davisoncounty.org; (605) 995-8619**

Eliminating food insecurity among veteran and military families living in rural South Dakota

FREE DROP-IN LEGAL CLINIC



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA
KNUDSON SCHOOL OF LAW

March 22nd, 2024

9:00AM - 4:00PM

THE MILITARY HERITAGE ALLIANCE
1600 W. RUSSELL STREET
SIOUX FALLS, SD

March 23rd, 2024

9:00AM - 4:00PM

VFW POST #2118
520 MAIN AVE,
BROOKINGS, SD

Join the University of South
Dakota Knudson School of
Law's Veterans Legal Education
Group (VLEG) For a FREE
legal clinic

**FREE FOR ALL SERVICE MEMBERS, THEIR
FAMILIES, AND VETERANS!**



Legal Professionals, along with law students, will be on site to address and support the Military community (and their families) with legal questions and needs.

If you would like to call ahead to reserve a time slot, as space and availability may be limited:

- call USD Knudson School of Law's VLEG at: 605-658-3547
- email vleg@usd.edu **OR** travis.hindt@usd.edu
- sign-up online by clicking [here](#) or scan the QR Code.



Event Contact: Travis Hindt | 605-658-3547 | travis.hindt@usd.edu |



EVENT AGENDA

MARCH 23, 2024

8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

AMPLIFY YOUR SPARKLE

8:00 AM Light Breakfast
Making Connections

9:30AM Opening Ceremony
Warm Up Presentation

10:30AM Healthy Strategies to Help
You Be Your Best Self

11:30AM What Does Your Vision
Board Look Like?

12:30PM Lunch
Making Connections

PRESENTERS

Karen Cordie MSW, CSW-PIP
Director | Sioux Falls Vet
Center

Dr. Laurie Landeen, MD
Sanford Health
U.S. Air Force Veteran

Sadie Swier, Director
SD CEO East Women's
Business Center

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!




✉ Jill@sdvets.org

☎ 605-910-4045

🌐 www.sdvets.org

This event will be held at Our Savior's Lutheran Church at 909 W. 33rd Street in Sioux Falls.



PROSTHETICS UNIT OPEN HOUSE

*Building a future through advanced technology;
life goes on with prosthetics.*

MARCH 12, 2024
3:00 - 5:00 P.M.

4th Floor
2501 W. 22nd Street, Sioux Falls, SD 57105

Veterans, their families, Veteran Service Officers, community residents, and anyone interested in Veterans or VA are invited to attend. VA Staff will provide tours of the new clinic, and info will be available about Veterans' healthcare.

Veterans who are not enrolled for care are encouraged to visit to learn what's available for them.

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Sioux Falls VA Health Care System

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mar 12—SFVAHCS Prosthetics Unit Open House—SFVAHCS 4th Floor—(2501 W. 22nd St)—Sioux Falls—3:00—5:00 pm (CT)

Mar 22—USD Veteran Legal Clinic—South Dakota Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell St)—Sioux Falls—9:00 am—4:00 pm (CT)

Mar 23—Stand Up for Women Veterans—Our Savior's Lutheran Church—(909 W. 33rd St)—Sioux Falls—8:00 am—2:00 pm (CT)

Mar 23—USD Veteran Legal Clinic—VFW Post #2118—(520 Main Ave)—Brookings—9:00 am—4:00 pm (CT)

Mar 25—Midwest Honor Flight Fundraiser—Drive to Fly @ Great Shots—(2505 W. Benson Road)—Sioux Falls—2:00—5:00 pm (CT)

Mar 26—Yankton County What's Brewing—VFW Post 791—(209 Cedar St)—Yankton—10:00 am (CT)

Mar 29—April 1—State Offices Closed

Apr 4—Brule County What's Brewing—Community Center—(112 N. Main St)—Chamberlain—1:00 pm (CT)

Apr 5—Melissa Stockwell Program—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell St)—Sioux Falls

Apr 12—Day County What's Brewing—VFW Post—(521 First St West)—Webster—6:00 pm (CT)

Apr 16—McPherson County What's Brewing—School Multi Purpose Room—(805 10th St)—Eureka—1:00 pm (CT)

Apr 17—SD Veterans Council Meeting—VFW Post 1273—Rapid City—9:00 am (MT)

Apr 19—American Legion Post 215 Mogen's Heroes Dance—El Riad Shrine—(510 S. Phillips)—Sioux Falls—6:00 pm (CT)

Apr 24—Operation Chow Line—Vermillion Eagles Club—(114 W. Main St)—Vermillion—4:00—7:00 pm (CT)

Apr 26-27—DAV State Convention—Deadwood Lodge

Apr 27—Operation Chow Line—Vern Eide Marine—(4501 E. Arrowhead Pkw)—Sioux Falls—11:00 am—1:00 pm (CT)

May 7—Corson County What's Brewing—Pavilion—(Main and First Ave)—McIntosh—10:00 am (MT)

May 7—Midwest Honor Flight Mission 18—Welcome Home Ceremony—Sioux Falls Convention Center—(1201 N. West Ave)—Sioux Falls—9:30 pm (CT)

May 9—Operation Chow Line—4-H Grounds—(3200 W. Havens)—Mitchell—4:00—7:00 pm (CT)

May 6-18—Fareway Round Up Campaign at participating stores

May 21—Midwest Honor Flight Mission 19—Welcome Home Ceremony—Convention Center—(1201 N. West Ave)—Sioux Falls—9:30 pm (CT)

May 27—SDDVA Memorial Day Program—SD Veterans Cemetery—12:00 noon (CT)

Jun 5—Midwest Honor Flight Mission 20—Welcome Home Ceremony—Convention Center—(1201 N. West Ave)—Sioux Falls—9:30 pm (CT)

Jun 7—8—VFW State Conference—Holiday Inn—Spearfish

Jun 14—Midwest Honor Flight Day of Sweetness—Chick-fil-A—(4005 W. 41st St)—Sioux Falls—7:00 am—10:00 pm (CT)

Jun 20—23—American Legion State Conference—Pierre

Jun 30—Midwest Honor Flight Honor Ride—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell St)—Sioux Falls—Registration—1:00 pm/Ride Begins at 2:30 pm (CT)

Jul 15—6th Annual Tee it up for the Troops Midwest Honor Flight Fundraiser—Arrowhead Country Club—(3675 Sheridan Lake Road)—Rapid City—7:15 am (MT)

Jul 17—SD Veterans Council Meeting—Aberdeen

(Continued)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug 1—2—South Dakota Suicide Prevention Conference—Convention Center—(1201 N. West Ave)—Sioux Falls

Aug 21—SD Veterans Council Meeting—Yankton

Aug 26—Midwest Honor Flight Fundraiser—The Barrel House—(4701 E. 54th St)—Sioux Falls—11:00 am—8:00 pm (CT)

Aug 29—Veterans Day at the SD State Fair—Northwest Energy Freedom Stage—Huron

Aug 29—Sep 2—SD State Fair—Huron

Sep 3—5—SDDVA Annual CTVSO Benefit School—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell St)—Sioux Falls

Sep 18—SD Veterans Council Meeting—Rapid City

Oct 12—Midwest Honor Flight Third Annual Elvis Night—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell St)—Sioux Falls

Oct 16—SD Veterans Council Meeting—Brookings

Nov 9—Fifth Annual Northern Hills Veterans Appreciation Fair We've Got Your Six—Sturgis

Nov 18—Wreaths Across America Fundraiser—The Barrel House—(4701 E. 54th St)—Sioux Falls—11:00 am—8:00 pm (CT)

Nov 20—SD Veterans Council Meeting—Sioux Falls

Nov 20—SD Veterans Council Legislative Round Table—Sioux Falls

Nov 21—SD Veterans Council Legislative Round Table—Watertown

Nov 22—SD Veterans Council Legislative Round Table—Rapid City

Nov 23—SD Veterans Council Legislative Round Table—Pierre

Dec 3—Governor's Budget Address—1:00 pm

Dec 14—Wreaths Across America Wreath Laying Ceremony at South Dakota Veterans Cemetery—Sioux Falls—11:00 am (CT)

2025 Events

Jan 14—Governor's State of the State Address—1:00 pm

Jan 14—Legislative Session starts

Jan 15—SD Veterans Council Meeting—Pierre

Feb 14—16—American Legion Mid-Winter Conference—Oacoma

Jun 12—15—VFW State Convention—Ramkota—Pierre

Jun 19—22—American Legion State Conference—Huron

Dec 13—Wreaths Across America Wreath Laying Ceremony at South Dakota Veterans Cemetery—Sioux Falls 11:00 am (CT)

Audry Ricketts, Public Information Officer

South Dakota Department of the Military <https://military.sd.gov/>

South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs <https://vetaffairs.sd.gov>

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