



South Dakota Department of the Military
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



SDDVA HOSTS ANNUAL BENEFIT SCHOOL

The South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs held their annual benefit school this week in Pierre. The school provides training to all County and Tribal Veterans Service officers and their staff.

During the four-day conference, participants were presented updates and briefings from the Department staff, VA officials, SD Survivor's Outreach Services, Small Business Administration, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, ESGR, Troops to Teachers, the Vet Centers and Senator Rounds.

Special thanks to our vendors that displayed and provided information to our network. Vendors included: Transition Assistance Advisor, Survivors Outreach Services, Department of Human Services, USDA Housing, South Dakota Joining Forces, Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home and the Mobile Vet Centers.

Ken Lantgen, Adjutant of the South Dakota DAV, and Helen Parr, member of the South Dakota Veterans Commission and the South Dakota Veterans Council, attended the Monday afternoon portion of the conference.

Sen. Mike Rounds, a member of the United States Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs, joined the CTVSOs and the SDDVA staff Tuesday morning. Rounds thanked this team of leaders for the job they do and for communicating with him and his team regarding the challenges they are facing with



in the VA footprint. Sen. Rounds' staffers Mike Bekaert and Jeff Marlette and Rep. Noem's staffers Rick Vallery and Greg Whitlock attended the conference as well and visited one-on-one with many of the CTVSOs.

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LEADERS RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR SERVICE TO SOUTH DAKOTA'S VETERANS

County and tribal veterans' service officers (CTVSO) and staff from the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs (SDDVA) were recognized for their dedication to serving veterans and veterans' families at an awards program Tuesday, Aug. 23, in Pierre.

The annual event, organized by the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, was held in conjunction with the veterans' benefits training conference for CTVSOs.

"The South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs and our CTVSOs are here to serve all veterans from every conflict and every generation who have defended our nation and the American way of life," said Larry Zimmerman, SDDVA secretary. "It is important to recognize individuals who provide outstanding service. These leaders enhance the lives of our veterans and their families and they carry out our mission to be the voice for our veterans. Their recognition is the culmination of hard work, caring and being the best of the best."

"The SDDVA staff and the county and tribal veterans' service officers network labor tirelessly to make certain our veterans receive their benefits," said Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard. "I'm very proud of this year's award recipients for their personal dedication and contributions to our team and to our veterans." Pollard noted that with so much talent and dedication within this network it is challenging to select just one winner each year.

Secretary Zimmerman took great honor in presenting these awards.

Dan Cullen, veterans service officer for Fall River County in Hot Springs, received the 2016 County Veterans Service Officer of the Year award. Dan was recognized for his outstanding commitment to veterans, submission and completion of accurate forms, his communication skills and his compassion to enhance the lives of our veterans by securing their benefits in a timely fashion.

David Schaefer of Hamlin County in Hayti received the 2016 Outreach of the Year award. David was instrumental in developing a new program in his county to increase community awareness about hiring veterans. "We Didn't Forget....We Hired a Vet," was a campaign vision of Schaefer's to build strong relations between employers and veterans. Schaefer recognizes businesses that hire and employ veterans.

Peg Raml, assistant CVSO for Codington County, was awarded the 2016 Partner of the Year award. Raml was recognized for her compassion, commitment, knowledge and professionalism when assisting

South Dakota's veterans. Peg was unable to attend the conference. Her award will be presented to her at a later date by SDDVA staff.

Jeri Smith, SDDVA executive secretary, was awarded the SDDVA 2016 Employee of the Year award. Smith was recognized for her commitment to the Department's partners. "Jeri has been an asset to our team as we branched out on new projects and programs," said SDDVA Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard. "She has a unique drive to take on more responsibility and continues to demonstrate her strengths as a leader within our Department and our network."



Dan
Cullen



David
Schaefer



Jeri
Smith

GOVERNOR RECOGNIZES SOUTH DAKOTA VA DIRECTORS GOODSPEED AND HORSMAN

At the request of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs and the South Dakota Veterans Service Officers Association, Governor Daugaard proclaimed August 22, 2016, as "Darwin Goodspeed and Sandra Horsman Day" in South Dakota.

The Governor highlighted these attributes:

- Darwin Goodspeed and Sandra Horsman, serving as Directors of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs Healthcare Centers in South Dakota, are outstanding leaders in this great State.
- South Dakota was founded with hard work, perseverance, dedication to duty, and concern for others, and each of these attributes can be ascribed to Darwin and Sandra.
- We have very few occasions to recognize these devoted individuals for their service to this state and country.
- Their support of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs staff, their mission, and South Dakota's Veterans Service Officers is unending and very much valued.
- Their commitment to communicate with their stakeholders and their open-door policy are valued traits that enhance the services provided to our veterans.
- Their loyalty and leadership have made them a cornerstone of this country and it is a privilege to honor their successes, their sacrifices, and their service.



Gordon Richard, Darwin Goodspeed, Larry Zimmerman and Sandra Horsman

SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman and Deputy Secretary Pollard echoed these characteristics and stated, "South Dakota is fortunate to have both of these leaders and their staff in our network. We

RETIRED CVSOS RECOGNIZED

This week, during the annual SDDVA Benefits School, former Veterans Service Officers Roy Farabee (Gregory and Charles Mix County) and Neal Lutke (Pennington County) were recognized by the South Dakota Veterans Service Officers Association for their years of service to South Dakota's veterans.

SDVSOA President Gordon Richard presented the awards to both retirees.



Roy Farabee



Neal Lutke

FORT MEADE-BASED NATIONAL GUARD BATTALION CHANGES COMMAND

A Spearfish man took command of the South Dakota Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute), during an Aug. 21 ceremony at Fort Meade.

Lt. Col. Wyatt Hansen assumed command from Lt. Col. Deb Bartunek, of Rapid City, who commanded the unit since September 2013.

As the commander of the 1-196th, Hansen is now responsible for the planning, execution and support of the federal officer candidate school program and their eight subordinate OCS companies, as well as warrant officer candidate school.

Hansen works full time for the SDARNG at Fort Meade as the administrative officer for the RTI.

Bartunek, the departing commander, will be assigned to the 109th Regional Support Group in Rapid City as the executive officer.



SAVE THE DATE! | 16th SEPTEMBER

FREE LEGAL CLINIC

Friday, September 16, 2016, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
VA Black Hills, Hot Springs Domiciliary Auditorium
500 North 5th Street, Hot Springs, SD 57747

Join the South Dakota Military Legal Alliance for a FREE LEGAL CLINIC. Legal professionals will be onsite to address and support the Military community with their legal questions and needs.

FREE FOR ALL SERVICE MEMBERS, THEIR FAMILIES AND VETERANS!

Supported by:

Army One Source, South Dakota Young Lawyers Division, University of South Dakota School of Law and the VA Black Hills Veterans Justice Outreach



ARMY OneSource



State Bar of South Dakota

Event Contact:

Jason Krause
SD Young Lawyers Section
Veterans Legal Clinic Chair
(605) 335-5740 | jason@dorothykrause.com



TRI-AGENCY PARTNERSHIP WORKING TO TAILOR CANCER CARE BASED ON GENES, PROTEINS

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced it will be one of three agencies working together as part of APOLLO consortium, one of the Cancer Moonshot initiatives dedicated to doubling the rate of progress to curing cancer by tailoring cancer care to the individual.

This moonshot initiative was first announced in the President's final State of the Union address and then expanded on this summer during a summit hosted by the Vice President.

While the name APOLLO is reminiscent of the Space Race of the 1950's and 60's, it will focus on a health issue that has affected and is affecting the lives of millions of Americans.

The VA believes this collaboration will leverage partnerships and technology. But it also requires the participation of a large group volunteers to donate their medical and genomic information for researchers to study and understand how genes affect health. Veterans can support this cancer-fighting effort by volunteering to be part of the Million Veteran Program (MVP) – the now largest genomic database in the world. The VA has over 500,000 volunteers and is seeking more.

Cancer Moonshot website and how to get involved or share your own story is at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/CancerMoonshot>

Fact sheet about the Cancer Moonshot is available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/06/28/fact-sheet-cancer-moonshot-summit-vice-president-biden-announces-new>

For Veterans who want to volunteer for the Million Veteran Program: <http://www.research.va.gov/mvp/>

PROFESSOR HAN TRAVELS SOUTH DAKOTA AND INTERVIEWS KOREAN WAR VETERANS

Jongwoo Han, President of the Korean War Legacy Foundation, traveled South Dakota this week with his daughter Debra, interviewing South Dakota Korean War Veterans.

The goal of the foundation is to digitalize the history of the Korean War from the eyes of the veterans who fought this great war. They are collecting both oral and artefactual histories of KWWs. The ultimate goal of KWWYC is to maintain the KWW community beyond their own generations, and contribute to the Korean War Legacy Foundation in its effort to create enduring educational infrastructure for the Korean War legacy for future generations to come.



SDNG WELCOMES 11 NEW SECOND LIEUTENANTS

The South Dakota Army National Guard welcomed 11 new second lieutenants to its ranks following a commissioning ceremony at Camp Rapid, Aug. 19. The ceremony marks the end of Officer Candidate School - the first step in officer training and development - and the beginning of their careers as commissioned officers.

OCS is taught in a high-stress environment, where candidates are tested academically and physically, both in the classroom and in field environments. Training consisted of 16-18 months of drill weekends and two two-week training periods for 10 of the new officers who completed the traditional program, while the eleventh completed the accelerated program of eight straight weeks.

The second lieutenants of OCS Class 60 are now assigned to National Guard units across South Dakota.

The newly commissioned seconds lieutenants are:

Garret Gibbs, Sioux City, Iowa
Drew Gillogly, Dell Rapids
Amber Gustafson, Rapid City
Andrew Hanson, Sioux Falls
Patrick Jones, Sioux Falls
Tyler Kanaly, Johnston, Iowa
Devan Kinser, Rapid City
Kevin Lancial, Council Bluffs, Iowa
Kasey Lanning, Sioux Falls
Brian Roehrlich, Milbank
Michael Wollman, Bonesteel



In addition to the commissioning ceremony customs and traditions, several awards were presented to include:

- * Second Lt. Lancial received the Endeavor Award for demonstrating the highest degree of consistent advancement, perseverance and devotion to duty during the training year.
- * Second Lt. Jones earned the Academic Excellence Award by attaining the highest academic rating for the school year as well as the Leadership Excellence Award for attaining the highest leadership evaluations during the training year.
- * Second Lt. Wollman earned the Army Physical Fitness Award for scoring the highest on the Army Physical Fitness Test with a score of 317 as well as the Erickson Trophy, awarded to the OCS graduate with the highest combined overall standing in leadership evaluations, academics, physical fitness and peer evaluations.
- * The Battalion Leadership Award was presented to SDARNG's 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery for the greatest number of officers commissioning from Officer Candidate School.

SD GUARD, SURINAME SOLDIERS PARTNER TO RENOVATE SCHOOL

Soldiers from the South Dakota National Guard and members of Suriname's Armed Forces partnered together to renovate some of the infrastructure at the O.S. 1 Santo Dorp School in Wanica, Suriname, Aug. 8-16.

The renovation project was conducted as part of the Suriname and South Dakota State Partnership Program to provide training for military construction personnel while simultaneously assisting in a worthy community need.

A team of eight soldiers from the SDNG's 155th Engineer Company and 211th Engineer Company worked alongside about a dozen Suriname Defense Force engineers on the renovation. Renovations consisted of tiling, door construction and installation, painting, electrical and lighting installation, sink and toilet installation, waterline plumbing, septic tank venting, drainage installation and installing a boundary fence.

The renovations will not only create a better learning and teaching environment, but the Surinamese soldiers and the members of the SDNG will know that their effort and hard work has made our children very happy and will set conditions for them to enjoy going to school, said Antonius.

The project first began in March, when SDNG and Suriname soldiers specializing in construction visited 14 public schools accompanied by representatives from the Suriname Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education chose the Santo Dorp School, which serves approximately 850 students from the local area.

Funding for the project was provided by U.S. Southern Command and all materials and supplies were purchased in Suriname.

For the past 10 years, the SDNG and SDF have successfully partnered together to establish a security cooperation relationship in coordination with USSOUTHCOM under the National Guard Bureau's State Partnership Program. The partnership has flourished during the past decade becoming a model for mutual security cooperation.

Since 2006, soldiers from both countries have conducted over 100 subject matter exchanges through the program, which have benefitted men and women from both organizations to gain knowledge and experience in both military operations and civilian culture.

Suriname and the SDNG conduct about 10 subject matter expert exchanges a year on a variety of military related topics to include: field leadership and NCO development; logistics operations; military police procedures; medical and communications training; and women serving in the military, to name a few.

The renovation project at Santo Dorp is just one of several construction projects that the partner nations have completed at schools and clinics throughout Suriname in the past 10-years.

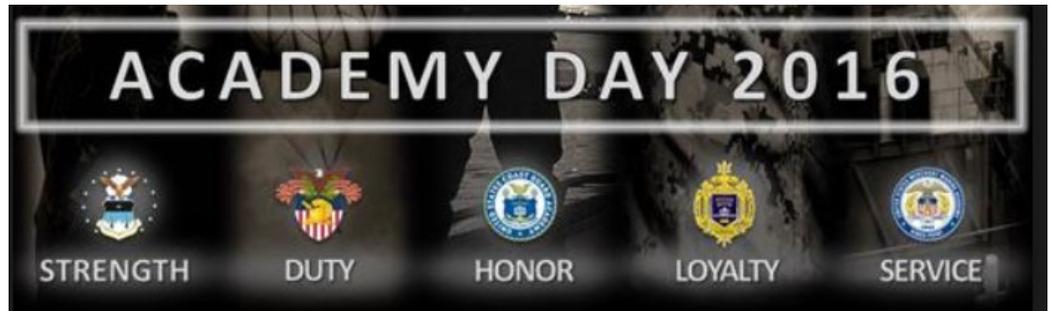


ROUNDS HOSTING SERVICE ACADEMY DAY

U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds has announced that his office is hosting a Service Academy Day in Rapid City so students and parents can learn more about the academy enrollment process at our nation's service academies.

The Service Academy Day will be held Saturday, September 10, 2016, at the Surbeck Center on the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology Campus (501 E. Joseph Street) in Rapid City from 2:00 pm—4:00 pm (MT).

"Our nation's academies offer an opportunity to serve our nation while receiving a top-notch education," said Rounds. "The purpose of Service Academy Day is to provide students a one-stop opportunity to learn more about each of the academies and the application process. I encourage interested students and their families to attend."



Service Academy Day is an informational seminar for students and their parents interested in attending one of the service academies that require nominations: U.S. Military Academy at West Point, U.S. Naval Academy, U.S. Air Force Academy and U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

For more information about Service Academy Day or the academy nominations process, contact Michele Mustain at michele_mustain@rounds.senate.gov or at (605) 336-0486.

WHITEBIRD FAMILY TO DONATE MEDAL TO SOUTH DAKOTA CULTURAL HERITAGE CENTER

On Friday, August 26, 2016, the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre will be hosting an Open House with light refreshments from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. CDT with a special ceremony at 2:00 p.m. featuring the donation of a Congressional Code Talker Medal earned by Rosebud Sioux tribal member Noah Whitebird, Sr. for his service during World War II as a Code Talker.

The Code Talkers were a group of Indians who served the United States military in both World War I and World War II in communications, using native language to create a code that was unbreakable by enemy forces. Sixty-nine Lakota, Dakota and Nakota Indians from South Dakota served in this capacity. Noah Whitebird, Sr. from the Rosebud Sioux tribe, served in the 9th Army Air Corps and 900 Signal Depot Company with distinction.

SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman will be one of the speakers for this ceremony.

SD COUPLE ENLIST, GRADUATE BCT TOGETHER

When married science teachers from Spearfish, South Dakota, started their summer vacation, they didn't anticipate their trip would bring them both to Fort Leonard Wood.

Spcs. Josh and Leslie Wangeman left Spearfish to join the United States Army National Guard, and only expected they would complete Basic Combat Training at the same time, but not the same place.

When they both ended up at Fort Leonard Wood at the 43rd Adjutant General Battalion and then with Company D, 3rd Battalion, 10th Infantry Regiment, they were surprised. As were their drill sergeants. Having a married couple in the ranks is something Staff Sgt. Jonathon Weischedel, 3rd platoon drill sergeant, said he has never seen before. The Wangeman's both joined the Army for the benefits it could bring to their lives, Josh said. Leslie added that it was a way to give back.



It didn't hurt that the Army matches their lifestyle and provided an opportunity for them both to be a part of the South Dakota National Guard Biathlon Team. Wanting a different experience played well in to how the drill sergeants treated the married couple during training.

Both Josh and Leslie stood out to their drill sergeants as mature, natural leaders and both served in leadership positions throughout training.

Josh was awarded a platoon leadership award because he stood out among his platoon and Leslie was awarded the Commanding General's Award of Excellence for being the top Soldier in the company.

Leslie was also recognized for having the highest PT score in the company.

Following graduation from BCT Thursday, the Wangemans returned to Spearfish to resume preparations for the upcoming school year.

Both Josh and Leslie will also begin the process to commission as officers through the South Dakota National Guard Officer Candidate School in January.

SDDVA'S BOWEN RECEIVES SELFIE AWARD

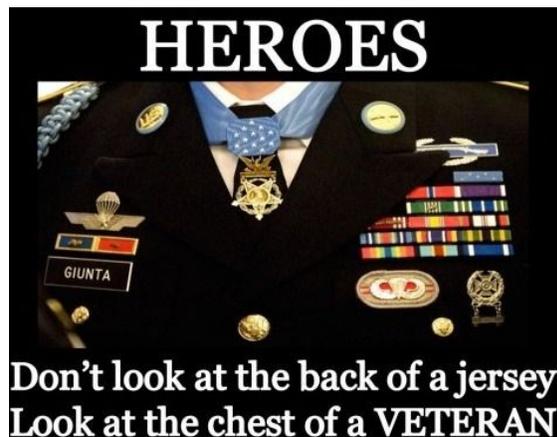
SDDVA's Kevin Bowen was awarded an honorable mention award this week during the Department's annual Benefit School. Bowen is notorious for always taking selfies and group selfies at all of the Department's outreach events.

He was presented a golden "selfie stick" for his camera. Look out world — we'll be flooded with pictures now!!!!



Upcoming Events

- Sep. 1—Veterans Day at the State Fair—Huron - Program at 10:30 at the Freedom Stage
 Sep. 2—Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Game— Sioux Falls Stadium (1001 North West Avenue) - 6:00 pm (CT)
 Sep. 3—DAV Brookings Chapter 22 and 727 Transportation Unit Poker Run—Brookings National Guard Armory—10:00 am (CT)
 Sep. 9—Veterans Stand Down—Wagner Armory—9:00 am—1:00 pm (CT)
 Sep. 14—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—PVA Headquarters—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
 Sept. 15—Veterans/First Responders Appreciation Day—Watertown City Park—5:00 pm—9:00 pm (CT)
 Sept. 15—VA Black Hills Military Legal Clinic—VA Black Hills Domiciliary Auditorium—Hot Springs—9:00 am—3:00 pm (MT)
 Sep. 16—National POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony—Sioux Falls Veterans Memorial Park—6:30 pm (CT)
 Sep. 23—Veterans Stand Down—VFW—Sioux Falls (3601 S. Minnesota Avenue) - 9:00 am—2:00 pm (CT)
 Sept. 23-25—VFW Fall Council of Administration and State Commander and Auxiliary President Homecoming—Ramkota Hotel—Pierre
 Oct. 3—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
 Oct. 8—DAV Fall Conference—DAV—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
- 2017**
- Feb. 4—Valentines for Veterans Concert—Sioux Falls Washington Pavilion—3:00 pm (CT)
 Feb 10-12—SD American Legion Mid Winter Conference—Oacoma
 Jun 15-18—SD American Legion State Conference—Watertown



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