



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



VA AWARDS \$300 MILLION MORE IN GRANTS TO HELP END VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has awarded approximately \$300 million more in grants under the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program to help thousands of very low-income veteran families around the nation who are permanently housed or transitioning to permanent housing. The SSVF grant program provides access to crucial services to prevent homelessness for veterans and their families.

SSVF funding, which supports outreach, case management and other flexible assistance to prevent veteran homelessness or rapidly re-house veterans who become homeless, has been awarded to 275 non-profit organizations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. These grants, key elements of VA's implementation of the Housing First Strategy, enable vulnerable veterans to secure or remain in permanent housing. A list of SSVF grantees is located at www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp.

Grantees will continue to provide eligible veteran families with outreach, case management, and assistance obtaining VA and other benefits, which may include health care, income support services, financial planning, child care, legal services, transportation, housing counseling, among other services.

Grantees are expected to leverage supportive services grant funds to enhance the housing stability of very low-income veteran families who are occupying permanent housing. In doing so, grantees are required to establish relationships with local community resources.

The Cornerstone Rescue Mission in Rapid City received a grant of \$769,050.



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STATE OF WOMEN VETERANS SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is partnering with Women Veterans Interactive (WVI) to launch a State of Women Veterans' social media campaign. The goal of the campaign is to raise awareness of women veterans' military and societal contributions and provide an avenue for informing women veterans about the VA benefits they have earned.

"This campaign is a collaborative effort to establish partnerships with nonprofit organizations that advocate and provide assistance on behalf of women veterans," said Kayla Williams, Director of VA's Center for Women Veterans. "We are elated to be partnering with WVI in this important initiative. The new State of Women Veterans' social media campaign offers another way to connect with women veterans to raise awareness about VA care and benefits and to encourage collaborative partnerships."

The campaign will conclude over the Veterans Day weekend and will be recognized and featured during a WVI- sponsored event in November.

For more information or to join in the conversation, follow @DeptVetAffairs on Twitter, like the U. D. Department of Veterans Affairs Facebook page and use the hashtag State of #WomenVets.



SD VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION SELECTS LEADERSHIP

Last week during the annual SDDVA Benefits school, the South Dakota Veterans Service Officers Association (SDVSOA) met and selected their leadership for the year. Officers are listed below along with their contact information. SDVSO is an organization consisting of County and Tribal Veterans Service Officers across the state. The primary purpose of the SDVSOA is to promote and further the work of all Tribal and County Veterans Service Officers in the State of South Dakota.

Board Members	Name	Office Phone
President	Gordon Richard (Spink County)	605.472.4589
Secretary/Treasurer	Susan Irons (Lincoln and Unin Counties)	605.764.5571
Vice President	Doug Huntrods (Lake County)	605.256.7611
Judge Advocate	Dennis Evenson (Deuel County)	605.874.2111
District I Representative	Aaron Walberg (Brown County)	605.626.7129
District II Representative	Ron Hoffer (Edmunds County)	605.287.4629
District III Representative	Michael McDonald (Yankton County)	605.260.4420
District IV Representative	Angella Sutton (Meade County)	605.347.7623
District V Representative	Jerlene Arredondo (Oglala Sioux Tribe)	605.867.5577

SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

Today marks the start of Suicide Prevention Month and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is asking for the entire nation's help in reducing veteran suicide. The VA is calling on community leaders, supervisors, colleagues, friends, and family members to [Be There](#) for veterans and service members starting with a simple act, which can play a pivotal role in preventing suicide.

"You don't have to be a trained professional to support someone who may be going through a difficult time," said Dr. Caitlin Thompson, Director of the VA Office of Suicide Prevention. "We want to let people know that things they do every day, like calling an old friend or checking in with a neighbor, are strong preventive factors for suicide because they help people feel less alone. That's what this campaign is about - encouraging people to be there for each other."

The campaign also highlights VA resources that are available to support veterans and service members who are coping with mental health challenges or are at risk for suicide, and it encourages everyone to share these resources with someone in their life.

"We hope our Suicide Prevention Month efforts help educate people about the VA and community resources available nationwide," said VA Under Secretary for Health David J. Shulkin, M.D.

"We're committed to working with experts and organizations across the country to identify ways we can help veterans and service members get the care they deserve and to expand the network of mental health support."

Be There
for someone in your life.



Veteran suicide data released by the VA Office of Suicide Prevention in early August 2016 serves as a foundation for informing and evaluating suicide prevention efforts inside the VA health care system and for developing lifesaving collaborations with community-based health care partners. The VA plans to host a series of roundtable discussions with key stakeholder groups in the coming months as part of its plan to develop a public health strategy for preventing veteran suicide. In August, the VA hosted its first roundtable discussion, "Suicide Prevention is Everyone's Business," with corporate sector partners. In September, the VA will host the Veterans Affairs Suicide Prevention Innovations event, which will bring together a community of experts from business, industry, academia, and government agencies to collaboratively identify solutions for reducing suicide rates among veterans and service members. In addition, new programs such as REACH VET are being launched nationwide in September to identify veterans in VHA care who may be vulnerable, in order to provide the care they need before a crisis occurs.

For more information about the VA's suicide prevention efforts:

Suicide Prevention Month website: VeteransCrisisLine.net/BeThere

Suicide Prevention Month toolkit: VeteransCrisisLine.net/SpreadTheWord

[Suicide Prevention Fact Sheet](#)

VA's Veterans Crisis Line: Call **1-800-273-8255** and Press 1; chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat or text to **838255** — even if a Veteran is not registered with VA or enrolled in VA health care.

Make the Connection website: <http://maketheconnection.net>

VA Mental Health website: <http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov>

SDDVA TEAM PARTICIPATES IN YELLOW RIBBON EVENT FOR 155TH

SDDVA's Caitlyn Zylstra and Michael Maske participated in the Yellow Ribbon event held in Sioux Falls last weekend for the 155th VERT EN from Wagner & Rapid City.

Other vendors included: Tricare/Metlife, SDNG, Transition Assistance, VA, Vet Centers, ESGR, SD Department of Labor, Small Business Association, 211 Helpline, NGASD Insurance, Red Cross and EFT Team.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) is a Department of Defense (DoD) effort helping National Guard and Reserve service members and their families connect with local resources before, during, and after deployments. Service members and their families attend Yellow

Ribbon events, where they access information on health care, education and training opportunities, financial services, and legal benefits. The DoD works in conjunction with federal partners, including the Small Business Administration and Departments of Labor and Veterans Affairs, to provide up-to-date and relevant information to National Guard and Reserve service members and their families.



WHITEBIRD FAMILY DONATES MEDAL

SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman and Deputy Secretary Pollard attended a special ceremony last week in Pierre where the family of Noah Whitebird donated his Congressional Code Talker Medal to the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center.

Rosebud Sioux tribal member Noah Whitebird, Sr. earned the medal for his service during World War II as a Code Talker. Whitebird, from the Rosebud Sioux tribe, served in the 9th Army Air Corps and 900 Signal Depot Company with distinction.

The Code Talkers 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.

In his remarks at the ceremony, Secretary Zimmerman highlighted the role of the code talkers and the legacy they have left and thanked the Whitebird family for this generous gift to South Dakota.



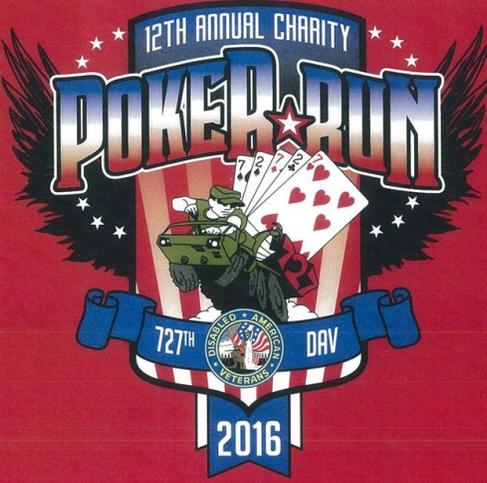
DAV POKER RUN

The DAV Brookings Chapter No. 22 and the 727th Transportation U.S. Army National Guard Unit will be hosting the "12th ANNUAL DAV/727TH CHARITY POKER RUN" on September 3rd at the Brookings Armory.

Registration starts at 10:00 a.m. with the "BIG RUN" departing with a "Parade at HIGH NOON." There is a \$20 registration fee.

The event will be held rain or shine with a \$500 BEST HAND and many other prizes. All proceeds go to the DAV Hospital Transportation Network. The 727th donated \$23,500 last year to the DAV Hospital Transportation Network.

The DAV invites **ALL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS** to this outstanding Poker Run. If questions, please contact CSM Robert Foster at (605) 873-2566.



12TH ANNUAL CHARITY POKER RUN
2016
727th DAV

REGISTRATION
 \$20 PER PERSON
 BEGINS AT 10AM
 PARADE DEPARTS AT HIGH NOON
 DOWN BROOKINGS MAIN AVENUE

\$500 BEST HAND
 PLUS OTHER GREAT PRIZES

RAIN OR SHINE
 ALL VEHICLES WELCOME

PROCEEDS
 BENEFIT DAV HOSPITAL
 TRANSPORTATION FUND

QUESTIONS
 CSM (RETIRED) ROBERT FOSTER
 [605] 873-2566

SFC ERIC KINSLow
 [605] 415-1759

Facebook.com/727DAVPokerRun

SEPTEMBER 3, 2016
NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY
300 5TH ST. S., BROOKINGS, SD

SDDVA HELPS VETERAN CELEBRATE HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

As most of the CTVSOs and SDDVA staff were traveling home from the Benefit School held in Pierre last week, some members of the SDDVA team helped Palmer Strom celebrate his 100th birthday.

Palmer is a World War II Veteran that served as a medic in the Army. He served all over in Europe and then trained soldiers in Tennessee, California and Michigan.



Strom received campaign medals from Europe and the Middle East and he was awarded the Bronze Star.

SDDVA's Secretary Zimmerman, Deputy Secretary Pollard, Field Officers Bowen and Swanson and PIO Ricketts helped wish Palmer a very Happy Birthday, along with Sheila Carpenter, assistant in the Hughes County Veterans Service Office.



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. 16—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. 23-24—Vietnam Veterans Memorial 10th Anniversary Celebration Pierre
 23—Main Street Block Party—Longbranch—Pierre—5:00 pm (CT)
 24—Parade (starts at Stanley Co. Fairgrounds and ends at Capitol Lake Visitors Center) - 9:30 am (CT)
 24—Dedication Ceremony—Capitol Lake Visitors Center—12:00 noon (CT)
 Sept. 23-25—VFW Fall Council of Administration and State Commander and Auxiliary President Homecoming—Ramkota Hotel—Pierre
 Sept. 29 Veterans Town Hall Meeting—Brookings City and County Government Building—5:00 pm (CT)
 Oct. 3—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
 Oct. 8—DAV Fall Conference—DAV—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
 Oct. 18-19—SD Veterans Commission Meeting—Post 8 American Legion—Pierre—1:00 pm (CT)
 Nov. 11—Veterans Day

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

Audry Ricketts, Public Information Officer
 South Dakota Department of the Military <http://military.sd.gov>
 South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs <http://vetaffairs.sd.gov>
 Soldiers and Sailors Building - 425 E Capitol Avenue
 Pierre, SD 57501
 Phone: 605-773-8242
 E-mail address: audry.ricketts@state.sd.us

