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**FOR RELEASE:** Tuesday, August 17, 2021

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### **Aaron Pollard Receives 2021 SDDVA Outstanding Leader, Mentor, Advocate of the Year Award**

PIERRE, S.D. – Aaron Pollard of Sioux Falls has been named the 2021 South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs Outstanding Leader, Mentor, Advocate of the Year. Pollard was recognized by his peers at SDDVA's annual benefit conference Monday, Aug. 16, in Pierre.

Pollard joined the SDDVA team in 2006 and currently serves as the Department's deputy secretary.

“Aaron was instrumental in securing funding and constructing the new South Dakota Veterans Cemetery, along with his numerous other duties,” said Greg Whitlock, secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. “Some of his most important qualities are his sense of responsibility, ownership, and his dependability. He was instrumental in creating the vision for the cemetery and executed the project from start to finish. Even with a few bumps in the road, he still persisted and delivered a beautiful veterans cemetery that the state can be very proud of.”

The South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs and its partners assist South Dakota veterans in receiving over \$842 million in annual benefits. The Department's mission is to provide comprehensive care to veterans and their families regarding healthcare, education, disability benefits, long-term care, and burial honors. Visit the Department online at: <https://vetaffairs.sd.gov> or find us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

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(Photos available upon request.)