

We Serve All Who Served



Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month


 Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI)
http://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/lgbt.aspx


From the DAS

Georgia Coffey



Last month, I was proud to attend the inaugural meeting of the new Diversity and Inclusion in Government Council as VA's representative. The heads of the Office of Personnel Management, Office of Management and Budget, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and Presidential Personnel Office were there to kick off this momentous event. The DIG Council will serve to address the Federal government's most pressing diversity and inclusion issues and enable us to achieve high organizational performance in public service. During the meeting, we used the human capital design approach to brainstorm key initiatives the Council will focus on in the first two years. I am excited about the Council's potential and will continue to share our progress with you in this critical endeavor.

Speaking of progress, I am proud to announce the availability of [VA's Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report for Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2014](#) presenting VA's accomplishments and chronicling the measurable outcomes of the Department's efforts toward realizing the goals of the [VA Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan for FY 2012-2016](#). Please review this report and share its findings with your organizations.

VA is proud to join the Nation in commemorating Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month this June. VA Central Office's (VACO's) 6th LGBT Pride Month event will be held on June 18. Please read about it in the Commemoration article and join us. June also marks the beginning of Ramadan, the holiest month of the Islamic year. Millions of Muslims in America follow the practices of this month-long observance, which begins on June 18 and ends on July 17. The end of the Ramadan fast is celebrated as one of the important religious holidays of Islam. It is VA policy to reasonably accommodate those employees observing religious holidays. For more information, read the [Secretary's Equal Employment Opportunity, Diversity and Inclusion, No FEAR, and Whistleblower Rights and Protection Policy Statement](#) and [VA's Guidance on Religious Exercise and Expression in VA Facilities and Property Under the Charge and Control of VA](#).

I look forward to greeting VA's local summer National Diversity Internship Program (NDIP) interns at the VACO NDIP Welcome Ceremony on June 8. This year, VA welcomes over 75 interns from nonprofit organizations including the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, National Association for Equal Opportunity, and The Washington Center. The NDIP provides meaningful internship experiences to students and serves to build a diverse pipeline for future VA employment.

Finally, I want to congratulate the Federal Asian Pacific American Council's (FAPAC's) 2015 Civilian Award winners including two of our own VA employees, Vi G. Huynh and Anthony Rudy Klopfer! I was honored to provide special remarks at the opening ceremony and serve as a panelist for FAPAC's 30th National Leadership Training Program. Congratulations to our winners and please read about their accomplishments below.

Upcoming Events

June 2015

African-American Music Appreciation Month

LGBT Pride Month

National Caribbean-American Heritage Month

PTSD Awareness Month

 D-Day
June 6

 VA's NDIP Welcome Ceremony
June 8, 11 am–noon; Room 230

 AAGEN Annual Leadership Workshop
June 11; Arlington, VA

 Flag Day
June 14

 SAIGE National Training Program
June 15–18; Welch, MN

 VACO LGBT Pride Month Commemoration
June 18, noon–1 pm; Room 230

 Barrier Analysis Training
June 18, 1–4 pm

 Ramadan
June 18–July 17

 Juneteenth
June 19

 Father's Day
June 21

 PTSD Awareness Day
June 27

Commemorate

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs joins the Nation in observing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month in June. This year's theme is "Leading with Pride" and acknowledges the many contributions of VA LGBT employees who demonstrate the Department's "I CARE" values daily while providing outstanding services to our Nation's Veterans.

VA continues to demonstrate its commitment to building workforce diversity and cultivating workplace inclusion, in accordance with President Barack Obama's Executive Order 13583. On October 1, 2011, President Obama proclaimed, "Every single American—gay, straight, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender—every single American deserves to be treated equally in the eyes of the law and in the eyes of our society. It's a pretty simple proposition."

First established in December 2011 under the auspices of the VA Diversity Council as an employee resource group, the VA LGBT Workgroup is charged with establishing a Department-level framework to develop ideas and recommendations on strategies to identify and address any VA global, systemic concerns and/or needs of LGBT employees and to ensure that VA has an inclusive work environment free from discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Its continuing mission actively reflects the words of President Obama in both its goals and objectives.

VA's commitment is also evident in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) directives addressing the special needs of the LGBT Veterans and reducing health disparities for this group and members of other vulnerable communities. These directives include the provision of information, guidance, and education to VHA providers about LGBT health issues, and the promotion of a welcoming health and work environment that is inclusive of LGBT Veterans and employees. For more information, contact the [Office of Health Equity](#).

Special Emphasis Program Managers across VA continue implementing programs and services to create inclusive work and customer service environments for LGBT Veterans and employees. For information on these initiatives or on the VA LGBT Workgroup, contact [Mr. Sterling Akins](#), VA's National LGBT Special Emphasis Program Manager. SEPMs should seek local management approval, and consult the Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs and/or regional counsel as deemed necessary by local management to ensure that use of any VA resource in support of a SEPM activity is authorized. Visit [VA's LGBT Program Web page](#) for more information.

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Training

Barrier Analysis training will be offered on Thursday, June 18, 2015, from 1 to 4 pm. The Barrier Analysis course covers all aspects of the barrier analysis process under Management Directive 715 to include analysis and interpretation of workforce statistics, trigger identification, barrier analysis investigation, preparing action plans, and following up on the action plan. This training will allow the participants to work through the majority of the process using VA specific workforce statistics. Attendees must register through the [VA Talent Management System \(TMS\)](#). For more information, contact [Ms. Ryan Pugh](#).

ASIAN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVES NETWORK

Asian American Government Executives Network (AAGEN) Annual Leadership Workshop will be held June 11, 2015, at the Crystal City Doubletree Hotel in Arlington, Virginia. Attendees must follow appropriate conference attendance approval procedures established for their respective organizations. Funding associated with attending the AAGEN Annual Leadership Workshop must be authorized and provided by each employee's organization. Prior to registering through the [AAGEN Web site](#), employees must preregister through ACES. For the ACES intranet link address or more information, contact [Mr. Andy Gonzalez](#), VA's National Asian American and Pacific Islander Employment Program Manager. Additional conference information is available on the [AAGEN Web site](#).

Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) 12th Annual National Training Program (NTP), no-cost Veterans' Track Program, and youth program to encourage college students to consider careers in Federal government will be held June 15–18, 2015, at the Treasure Island Resort and Casino in Welch, Minnesota. Attendees must follow appropriate conference attendance approval procedures established for their respective organizations. Funding associated with attending the SAIGE NTP must be authorized and provided by each employee's organization. Prior to registering through the [SAIGE Web site](#), employees must preregister through ACES. For the ACES intranet link or more information, contact [Ms. Aurelia Waters](#), VA's National American Indian and Alaska Native Employment Program Manager. Additional conference information is available on the [SAIGE Web site](#).

League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) 86th National Convention and Exposition will be held July 7–11, 2015, at the Salt Palace Convention Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. Attendees must follow appropriate conference attendance approval procedures established for their respective organizations. Funding associated with attending the LULAC Convention must be authorized and provided by each employee's organization. Prior to registering through the [LULAC Web site](#), employees must preregister through ACES. For the ACES intranet link or more information, contact [Mr. Andy Gonzalez](#), VA's National Hispanic Employment Program Manager. Additional conference information is available on the [LULAC Web site](#).

Federally Employed Women (FEW) 46th NTP Veterans Forum will be held July 13–16, 2015, at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside in Louisiana. ODI is currently planning a no-cost VA Forum. Attendees must follow appropriate conference attendance approval procedures established for their respective organizations. Funding associated with attending the VA Forum and/or the FEW NTP must be authorized and provided by each employee's organization. Employees attending the VA Forum must preregister through [VA TMS](#) and ACES. Prior to registering through the [FEW Web site](#), employees attending the FEW NTP must also preregister through ACES. For the ACES intranet link or more information, contact [Ms. Mercedes Kirkland-Doyle](#), VA's National Federal Women's Program Manager. Additional conference information is available on the [FEW Web site](#).

Section 508 courses are on VA TMS. For more information, contact the [Office of Information and Technology Section 508 Program Office](#).

FAPAC Awards VA Recognized

The Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) presents Civilian Awards to employees from Federal agencies and the District of Columbia government. These annual awards are given in recognition of individuals who have made significant contribution to the promotion of equal opportunity in the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities. This year, two VA employees received this award: Vi G. Huynh from the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center who was recognized in the "Excellence in Individual Achievement" category and Anthony Rudy Klopfer, Director at the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System, who was recognized in the "Diversity Excellence" category. For more information, visit the [FAPAC Web site](#). Congratulations, VA employees!

Policy Alert Pathways

The Pathways Programs policy will establish procedures regarding the selection, appointment, and movement of Pathways Programs participants in the Internship, Recent Graduate, and Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Programs in VA. Existing PMF, Student Educational Employment, and Career Intern Program policies, guidance, and other references may be rescinded with the implementation of the new Pathways policy. The change will be incorporated into the electronic version of the VA Handbook 5005. For more information, email the [VA Title 5 Staffing Policy Team](#).

ORM Steps Toward Resolution

Alternative Dispute Resolution can help with resolving disputes.

To file a discrimination or harassment complaint, you must contact the [Office of Resolution Management](#) within 45 days of the date of the alleged discriminatory incident.

For questions or comments about *Diversity@Work* or to subscribe, contact the [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#).

Diversity News

Diversity News is a 15-minute bi-monthly video produced by ODI and the VA Central Office Broadcast Center for you. The May/June 2015 edition focuses on the State of the Agency for Fiscal Year 2014. Current and past episodes of Diversity News are available on the [ODI Web site](#).



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