



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration
Washington DC 20420

JUN - 1 2016

**MEMORANDUM FOR UNDER SECRETARIES, ASSISTANT SECRETARIES, AND
OTHER KEY OFFICIALS**

SUBJECT: 2016 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is proud to observe the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month during its traditionally recognized month of June. This year's theme is "TRANSforming the VA." LGBT Pride Month is observed to recognize the impact and contributions LGBT individuals have made and continue to make in society and in the workplace.

VA is committed to a diverse workforce and an inclusive workplace. We understand that diversity and inclusion are essential for a high performing organization that delivers the best service to our Veterans. The LGBT community is an integral aspect of our human capital. To that end, VA has implemented several policies and programs that support our LGBT employees and Veterans. VA includes equal employment opportunity protections for employees on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in the Secretary's Annual EEO, Diversity, and No FEAR Policy Statement.

VA must have a workforce reflective of society, where all persons are valued and respected, so that VA maintains the highest quality of care to our Veterans, including LGBT Veterans. This very sentiment was recently acknowledged by President Obama in his Presidential Proclamation, dated May 29, 2015 (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/05/29/presidential-proclamation-lgbt-pride-month-2015>).

The LGBT Pride Month committee will observe Pride Month on Thursday, June 16, 2016, in the G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Veterans Conference Center, Room 230 at Noon. This year's event, sponsored by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI), will feature a panel discussion on the subject of transgender and related topics.

All managers and supervisors are encouraged to support attendance at events and activities to recognize and honor the contributions of members of the LGBT community. We need the support of each employee, if we are to create an organization that fosters diversity and practices inclusion.

For more information about VA LGBT Program, please contact Mr. Sterling Akins, LGBT Program Manager, ODI, at (202) 461-4145 or Sterling.Akins@va.gov.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meghan Flanz".

Meghan Flanz
Acting