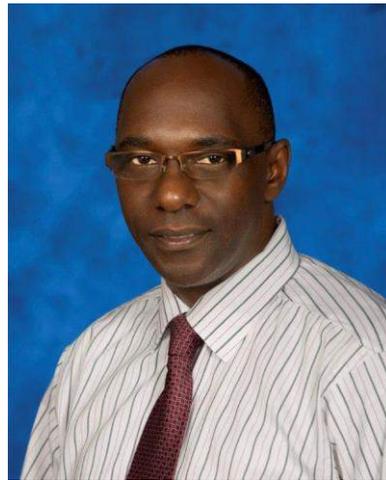


# LGBT Pride Observance Planning Meeting



VACO LGBT Workgroup, Public Relations Subgroup

Heliana Ramirez, LISW

Marko Ashley

Victoria Green

May 22, 2014

# Special Thanks

For Organizing this Meeting:

Heliana Ramirez, LISW, LGBT WG PR SG Member

Marko Ashley, LGBT WG PR SG Chair

Victoria Green, LGBT WG PR SG Member

Richelle Taylor, LGBT WG PR SG Member

For Information about the 2014 VACO Pride Observance:

Ryan Fiacco, VACO Pride Observance Co-Chair

For Information on Best Practices:

Matthew Bessel

Jeffrey Cook

Sarah Sanders

Trevor Seela

Tonya Wieck

Steve Zeiger

# Overview

1. Welcome and Logistics
2. Meeting Prep Responses
3. VA LGBT Pride Observance Leadership Support
4. VACO Pride Observances
5. Best Practices for organizing Pride Observances: St. Louis, Phoenix, & Palo Alto
6. Examples of Pride Observance Tips and Resources
  - Pride Posters (slide 19)
  - Pride Displays (slide 27)
  - Clinical Care Education, Program & Brochures (slide 30)
  - LGBT Military-Related Films (slide 43)
  - LGBT Veteran Speakers Panel & Organizations (slide 48)
  - LGBT VA Employee Outreach (slide 50)
  - Pride Parade Contingent & Signage (slide 55)
  - Pride Booth Materials (slide 59)
  - LGBT VA Fact Sheet (slide 64)
  - LGBT Training Resources (slide 66)
7. Q & A from You
8. Close

# Welcome

Goal: Provide support to VA Health Care Systems throughout the Nation in planning Pride Observances

Objective: Share concrete public relations resources for effective Pride Observances hosted by committees in various stages of development

Please note that VA Pride Observances throughout the nation are determined by local VA Health Care System Leadership and the forgoing information is provided as examples for you to consider with your local leadership.



# Logistics

Please email your questions and comments during this call to [LGBTPRsubgroup@va.gov](mailto:LGBTPRsubgroup@va.gov).

Your emails will be read aloud and responded to during this call.

# Meeting Prep Responses

If you are planning a Pride  Observance, please select all of the the activities you are doing and write in any additional activities not listed below.

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Marching in Pride Parade in the community			<a href="#">21</a>	39.6%
Organizing an LGBT Educational Event at the VA			<a href="#">34</a>	64.1%
Hosting a panel of LGBT Veteran Speakers			<a href="#">11</a>	20.7%
Creating an LGBT Pride Visual Display			<a href="#">25</a>	47.1%
Sending an LGBT Pride Observance email to the entire healthcare system			<a href="#">23</a>	43.3%
Screening an LGBT Movie at the VA			<a href="#">6</a>	11.3%
Co-sponsoring an event with local LGBT Organizations			<a href="#">6</a>	11.3%
Posting LGBT-related posters or flyers throughout VA			<a href="#">36</a>	67.9%
Decorating VA in Pride flags, banners or other visual materials			<a href="#">13</a>	24.5%
Training staff in LGBT Clinical Care			<a href="#">20</a>	37.7%
Other <a href="#">(View all)</a>			<a href="#">8</a>	15.0%
		<b>Totals</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Meeting Prep Responses cont.

What are you hoping to learn about on the 5/22/2014 National LGBT Pride Observance Preparation Call? (Please select all that apply and add anything we did not list below).

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Where to order Pride bracelets, pins etc.			<a href="#">33</a>	62.2%
Ideas for Pride Observance Activities			<a href="#">46</a>	86.7%
Best Practices for marching in Pride Parades in the community			<a href="#">22</a>	41.5%
Suggestions for Pride brochures, flyers, etc.			<a href="#">33</a>	62.2%
Examples of Pride Displays			<a href="#">33</a>	62.2%
Other <a href="#">(View all)</a>			<a href="#">2</a>	3.7%
		Totals	53	100%

# VA Leadership Support for Pride Observances



**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
**ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HUMAN RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION**  
**WASHINGTON DC 20420**

NOV - 8 2013

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

**SUBJECT: Special Emphasis Program Observances for Fiscal Year 2014**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) observes special days, weeks, and months as reflected in the attached VA schedule of special program observances for fiscal year (FY) 2014. Observances are held annually in compliance with Executive Order 11478, 29 CFR Part 1614.102(b)(4), joint Congressional Resolutions, Presidential Proclamations, and VA's Diversity and Inclusion goals as articulated in VA's Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan for FY 2012-2016.

I ask that you engage managers and supervisors in planning and implementing initiatives that promote employment, training, and career advancement opportunities in order to sustain a productive, diverse, and inclusive VA workforce to best serve our Nation's Veterans and their families. Showing our support as senior leaders and making a concerted effort to attend and participate in these observances is crucial in communicating the value each employee brings to the Department.

Information about special observances is attached and may also be found on the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) Web site at: <http://www.diversity.va.gov/calendar/default.aspx>. ODI national program managers are available to address questions and may be reached at (202) 461-4131.

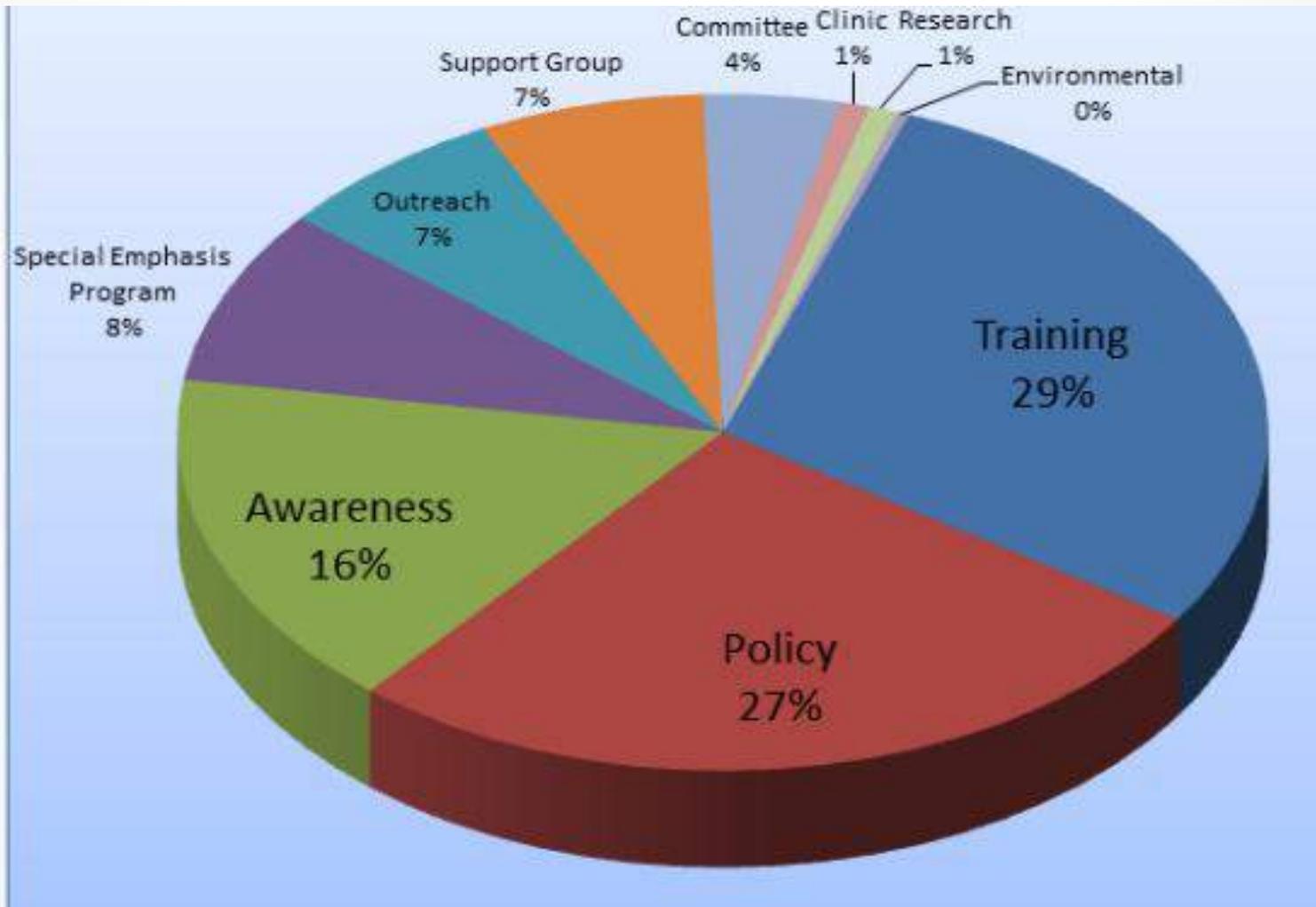
Thank you for your continued commitment in support of these Special Emphasis Program Observances.

  
Gina S. Farrisee

MONTH/DATE OF OBSERVANCE	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Special Observances for 2014
January 20	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
February	Black History Month
March	Women's History Month
May	Asian Pacific American Heritage Month
June	LGBT Pride Month
August 26	Women's Equality Day
September 15 – October 15	Hispanic Heritage Month
September	Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week
October	Disability Employment Awareness Month
November	Native American Heritage Month

# OHE LGBT Initiatives

<http://vaww.vha.vaco.portal.va.gov/sites/OHE/Pages/LGBT.aspx>





2013 VACO Lesbian, Gay,  
Bisexual and Transgender  
Pride Month Observance



One VA  
*We Serve With Pride*

June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013  
12 pm - 1 pm

G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Conference Room



**VA**

U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# VACO Pride Observances

**Marko Ashley**

VACO LGBT Workgroup, Public Relations  
Subgroup Chair



VA Central Office  
LGBT Pride Month Celebration

**“One VA ~ We Serve with Pride”**

**Panel Discussion:**

Working toward LGBT full inclusion within  
the Department of Veterans Affairs

**Performance by:**

DC Different Drummer's,  
Saxophone Quintet,  
“Sax in the City”

**Thursday**

**June 12th, Noon-1:00PM**

G.V. “Sonny Montgomery”

Veterans Conference Center, Room 230

# 2014 VACO Pride Observance

**Ryan Fiacco**  
Co-Chair of the  
2014 VACO Pride  
Observance  
Committee

# Best Practices for Local Observances



## Phoenix VA

### Pride Notes

A round-up of Phoenix Pride

#### Brittney Griner makes the rounds at Pride

Phoenix Mercury star player Brittney Griner made the rounds at the Pride festival after serving as celebrity grand marshal at the parade. During a stop at the Echo Magazine booth Griner broke into a line dance with others to music emanating from the Main Stage. Another out sports star, Olympic speed skater Blake Skjellerup, rode in the parade and made appearances at the festival, which he said was the first time he had attended a Pride as an LGBT advocate.

#### Politicos flock to Pride

Kyrsten Sinema rode in the Pride parade for the second year as a member of the U.S. Congress. Other LGBT-friendly politicians in the parade included Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton and his wife Nicole and Phoenix City Council members Daniel Valenzuela and Kate Gallego. Candidates for office included Fred DuVal, running for governor, and Terry Goddard, running for Arizona secretary of state. Newly out state Rep. Steve Gallardo, who is running for Congress, issued a statement of support.

#### VA marches in parade

A delegation from the Phoenix Veterans Administration was among the first time entries in this year's parade. Between 50 and 100 veterans — including two in electric wheelchairs — from all five branches of the military participated. The VA conducted a celebration the day before the festival by raising the Rainbow Flag at the Phoenix medical center. "I've been working on this since going to San Diego Pride last year and saw the Veterans Hospital there marching in their parade," said Jeffrey A. Cook, VA Medical Center's LGBT program manager. Cook said once the hospital's director gave her blessing to the idea, rounding up veterans to march wasn't difficult.



Marched in Pride and established permanent flag display shared by all SEPs year-round.

Unveiling ceremony is posted on the VA Employee LGBT Pride Facebook Page, 5/3/14.

Local news coverage.

# Best Practices for Local Observances

## St. Louis VA

LGBT Diversity Committee of VA employees, veterans receiving VA care and LGBT community members.

Marched in St. Louis Pride, Veterans Day Parade and supported a veteran in the Laying of the Wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier



# Best Practices for Local Observances

Captain James A Lovell  
Federal Health Care Center



Avenue of Flags  
and  
Pride Display

# Best Practices

Alaska VA

One person SEP utilized key leadership support and volunteers to organize a successful Pride Observance which included marching the local Pride Parade.



# Best Practices for Local Observances

## LGBTSA Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 4

June 18, 2013



## Palo Alto

Marched in San Francisco Pride and hosted booth at San Jose Pride, LGBT SEP Newsletter, VA-wide email, LGBT Film Screening of *The Camouflage Closet*

<http://www.paloalto.va.gov/services/lgbt.asp>



### VAPAHCs Observes LGBT Pride 2013!

VAPAHCs joins hundreds of VAs from across the country in observing LGBT Pride Month through a variety of events in the community and on VA campuses. Staff and veterans are marching for the second year in the [San Francisco Pride Parade](#) and hosting an outreach booth at the [San Jose Pride Event](#).

In addition, VAPAHCs veterans and staff have produced a groundbreaking documentary film entitled "[The Camouflage Closet](#)," which highlights LGBT Veterans' experiences with trauma and recovery. This film is premiering in the community and at VAPAHCs as well as a variety of VA's nationwide and professional conferences such as the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association. Additionally, VAPAHCs continues to host local programs for Veterans and Staff which can be found at the [VAPAHCs LGBT Program Webpage](#) including an LGBT Veteran Support Group, LGBT Staff and Allies Special Empha-

sis Program and links to a variety of community resources for LGBT Veterans.

On a national level, VAPAHCs participates in the national LGBT Research Workgroup and the [LGBT Employee Resource Workgroup](#). The LGBT Research Workgroup is a group of VA researchers from throughout the country who meet monthly to share LGBT Veteran-related research. The Employee Resource Group recently published an LGBT SEP flyer that will be used in VA's across the nation and features three VAPAHCs staff (see page 2 of this newsletter)!

VAPAHCs Staff are encouraged to check out the work of the new Office of Health Equity that spearheaded the Health Equality Index and [LGBT Inclusion Initiatives](#). Another great resource for VA staff is the [Transgender Education Resources SharePoint](#).

VAPAHCs' 2013 LGBT Pride Month observance also includes ongoing commitment to a variety of LGBT-related policies regarding



1. [VHA Directive 2013-003: Providing Health Care for Transgender and Intersex Veterans](#)
2. [Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement](#)
3. [Rights and Responsibilities of VA Patients and Residents of Community Living Centers](#).

To participate in the San Francisco and San Jose Pride Events, please contact Meliana at (650) 444-8586 for VAPAHCs meet-up locations and schedules.

# Resources for You

Please recall that VA funds are not allowed to be used as “Giveaways.” Items used with educational programs such as LGBT Safe Space Campaigns may be eligible for purchase as determined on a local basis. Any items purchased by employees should be approved by local EEO, Public Relations and General Council before being distributed.

It is critical to remember that the Hatch Act restricts federal employees from communicating political information- which could be construed by items given at Pride Observance Activities. We can lose our jobs for violating the Hatch Act which covers a wider breadth of items and discussions than might be assumed.

Ordering Pride Pins and Bracelets (This vendor is in SAM VA Vendor System)

<http://adsonthings.com/:quicksearch.htm?quicksearchbox=rainbow+pin&submit.x=0&submit.y=0>

Flags can be purchased through GSA (an assortment can be found here)

<https://www.gsaadvantage.gov/advantage/s/search.do?q=0:2rainbow+flag&db=0&searchType=0>

Printing Posters: The LGBT SEP Poster is approved VA literature by the Department’s Chief Diversity Officer, VA Deputy Assistant Secretary for Diversity and Inclusion. You may request color copies from Medical Media.



# Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Special Emphasis Program

The goal of the VA LGBT Special Emphasis Program (SEP) is to increase awareness of the important role LGBT employees and Veterans play in making up our rich diversity, to address employee concerns and to ensure the VA has an inclusive work environment. The Central Office SEP has taken the lead on coordinating VACO pride observances and responds to hundreds of employee inquiries. We continue to work to promote LGBT employee inclusiveness. The LGBT SEP is made up of a diverse group of VA employees from throughout the country. To find out more, visit us at:

[www.diversity.va.gov/programs/lgbt.aspx](http://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/lgbt.aspx) or contact us at [LGBTworkgroup@va.gov](mailto:LGBTworkgroup@va.gov).



**VA**

U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Examples: Pride Posters



Proudly sponsored by the Stratton VAMC LGBTSA Committee



# Stratton VA Medical Center Salutes our LGBT Veterans and Employees!

**L**esbian  
**G**ay  
**B**isexual  
**T**ransgendered

The Meaning of the Colors of the LGBT Pride Flag:

**RED = Life**

**ORANGE = Healing**

**YELLOW = The Sun**

**GREEN = Nature**

**BLUE = Serenity**

**PURPLE = Spirit**

## June is National LGBT Awareness Month!

# ALL HAVE SERVED – ALL ARE WELCOME

*Army  
Navy  
Marines  
Air Force  
Coast Guard  
National Guard  
Reserves  
WWI  
WWII  
Korea  
Vietnam  
Gulf War  
OEF, OIF, OND*

*African American – Hispanic – Caucasian – American Indian –  
Alaska Native – Asian American – Pacific Islander*

*Men – Women – Veterans with Disabilities – Gay – Lesbian – Bisexual –  
Transgender – Veterans of all Religions, Faiths and Beliefs –  
Regardless of Race, Color, Religion, National Origin, Sex,  
Pregnancy, Gender Identity, Marital Status, Sexual  
Orientation, Age, Disability, or Political Affiliation.*

# We Serve All Who Served



**Excellent care has no boundaries. VHA is committed to serving Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Veterans.**



**VA** | Defining  
**HEALTH CARE** | **EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century



# Defense Equal Opportunity Pride Posters

<http://www.deomi.org/SpecialObservance/posters.cfm?CatID=14>



# DEOMI

DEFENSE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE



- » HOME
- » FAQs
- » CONTACT US
- » DEOCS SUPPORT

## Honoring 42 Years of Mission Readiness

16 May 2014

Search:

Go

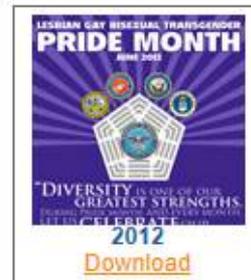
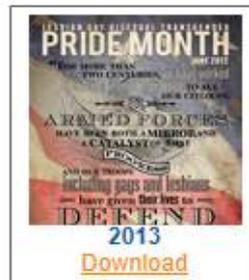
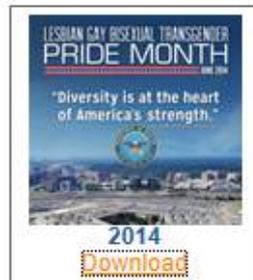
- About DEOMI
- Education & Training Programs
- Incoming Registered Students
- Research & Development Programs
- Library Resources
- DEOMI Resource Network (DRN)
- EO/EEO Resources
- Organizational Assessment
- Special Observances
- Training Media
- Culture Ready
- Diversity Management
- Public Affairs
- Employment / Assignment Opportunities
- Service Liaisons
- Transcript Information

## Observance Posters

DEOMI is proud to make available original artwork for our customers. All of these files are in the public domain unless otherwise indicated. We request you credit the illustrator or simply, Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute.

For more information regarding each of our DEOMI Special Observance posters and a description of the artist's conception, please visit our [Public Affairs](#) News Release page.

## Pride Month



# LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL TRANSGENDER PRIDE MONTH

JUNE 2014

“Diversity is at the heart  
of America’s strength.”

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel



LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL TRANSGENDER  
**PRIDE MONTH**

JUNE 2013

“FOR MORE THAN  
TWO CENTURIES, we have worked  
to extend America’s promise TO ALL  
OUR CITIZENS.



**ARMED FORCES**  
HAVE BEEN BOTH A MIRROR AND  
A CATALYST OF THAT

**PROGRESS**

AND OUR TROOPS  
including gays and lesbians  
have given their lives to

**DEFEND**  
THE freedoms & liberties  
that we cherish as

**AMERICANS”**

President Barack Obama  
September 20, 2011

# LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL TRANSGENDER PRIDE MONTH

JUNE 2012

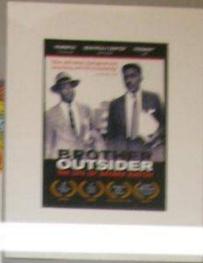
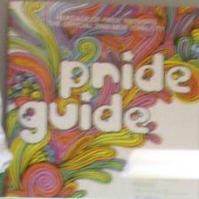
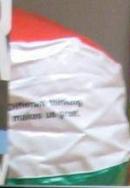


“DIVERSITY IS ONE OF OUR  
GREATEST STRENGTHS.  
DURING PRIDE MONTH, AND EVERY MONTH,  
LET US CELEBRATE OUR  
RICH DIVERSITY  
AND RENEW OUR ENDURING  
COMMITMENT  
TO EQUALITY FOR ALL.”

Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta

# Examples: Pride Displays

ANNOUNCE  
YOUR  
QUALITY



Small white card with text, likely a bio or testimonial.

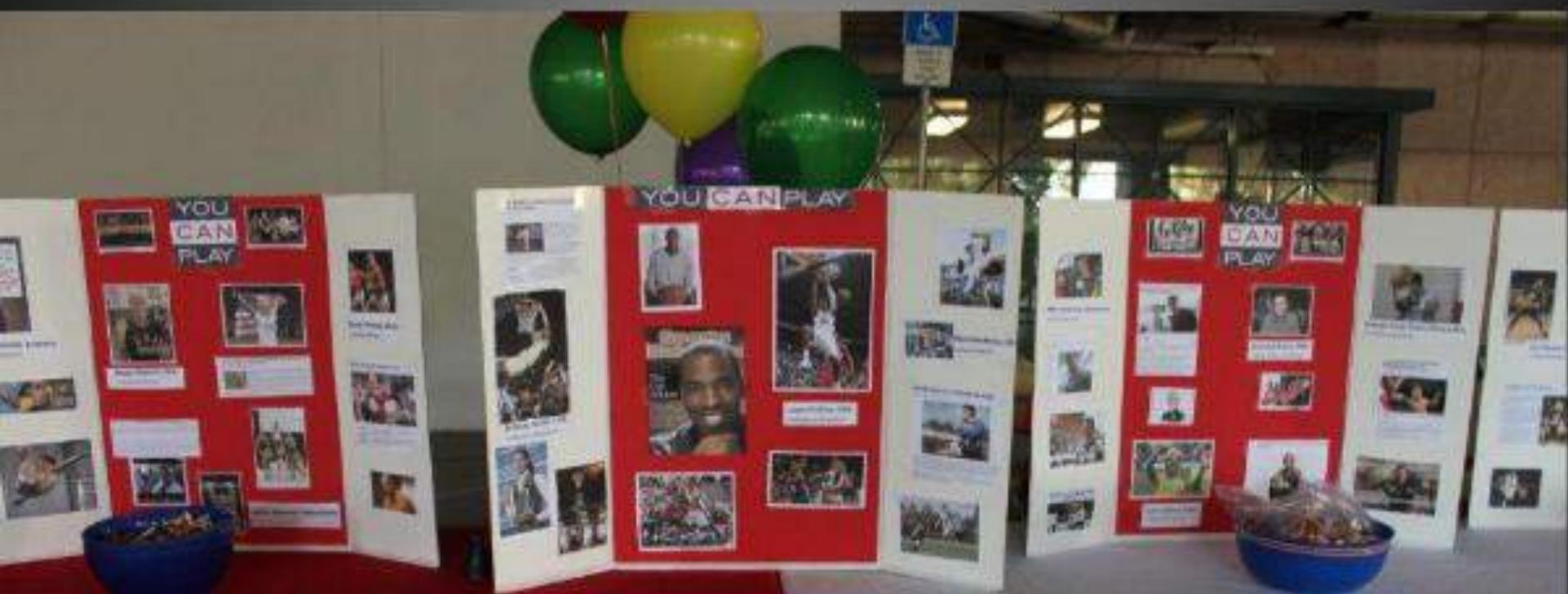


Small white card with text, likely a bio or testimonial.



Small white card with text, likely a bio or testimonial.





**LGBT**  
*lesbian* *gay* *sexual* *transgender*



*Special Emphasis Committee*

# Examples: LGBT Clinical Care Education Programs and Brochures

# OPERATION: DO ASK, DO TELL

## Keeping Veterans and Service Members Healthy

**Date: Saturday, October 20, 2012**

**Time: 9am - 4pm**

**Location: Northeastern Illinois University**

Organized by  
Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital:



In partnership with:



**OPERATION: DO ASK, DO TELL**

**KEEPING VETERANS AND SERVICE MEMBERS HEALTHY**

Welcome  
October 20, 2012

Dear Operation: Do Ask, Do Tell Program Attendee:

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to Operation: Do Ask, Do Tell – Keeping Veterans and Service Members Healthy. We are so glad that you are able to join us for this groundbreaking event.

We have a full agenda today, so please take a few minutes to read through the information in this packet. It includes the itinerary for the day, as well as information about our speakers, exhibitors and local resources.

We look forward to spending this time together as we learn about fulfilling the needs of LGBT Veterans and Service Members. If we can do anything to make your stay more pleasant, please let us know. Thank you for joining Operation: Do Ask, Do Tell.

Sincerely,

Lory Lusori, MPH, CPH, RD, LDN  
Health Promotion Disease Prevention Program Manager  
Co-Manager, Hines VA LGBT/A Special Emphasis Program  
Co-Manager, Health Promotion Disease Prevention LGBT and Minority Veteran Health Subcommittee  
Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital

Mandi Evanson, LCSW, TTS, C-SWHC  
Primary Care Behavioral Health Social Worker  
Lead Clinician for Tobacco Use Cessation  
Secretary, Hines VA LGBT/A Special Emphasis Program  
Co-Manager, Health Promotion Disease Prevention LGBT and Minority Veteran Health Subcommittee  
Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital





# **Serving LGBT Service Members and Veterans in a Post-DADT World**

A Lambda Leaders Program Series Event

**Thursday, November 14, 2013 at 5:30pm**  
**Azalea Coast Room A in the Fisher University Union**

## **Featured Speakers:**

**Amanda Parkstone, Coordinator of Military Admissions, UNCW**

*Discussing current resources at UNCW for Military-Affiliated students*

**Mark Mazzone, Director of Communications, SPARTA (An LGBT Military Organization)**

*Discussing current resources for active duty military*

**Otha Kimbrough, EEO Program Manager, Fayetteville VA Medical Center**

**Ben Mescuis, EEO Assistant**

**Vanessa Lech, EEO Intern**

*Discussing current resources for military veterans through the Veterans Administration*

**Josh Kinchen, President, Q-MAGNoT**

**Bethany Tap, Vice President, Q-MAGNoT**

*Discussing the new UNCW student organization for Queer Military-Affiliated,*

*Graduate, and Non-Traditional students*





## June LGBT Month

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT)



The Dayton VA Medical Center Presents:

### "Caring for LGBT Veterans"

Friday, June 21, 2013

Building 307, Room 118

Session #1: 9:00 AM -10:00 AM

This session will be repeated at 10:15 AM.

VA's Office of Diversity & Inclusion 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 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community is an integral aspect of our human diversity. To that end, VA has implemented several policies and programs over the last few years that specifically address the needs and concerns of the LGBT community and LGBT Veterans.

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and the Dayton VAMC are committed to a patient-centered approach to health care delivery that organizes services around the needs and values of the LGBT Veterans. To better serve our Veteran population, cultural competency training on LGBT issues is being offered as indicated above. Each session will provide an introduction to LGBT health concerns and cultural competency issues. While specifically geared for clinicians, patient advocates, and care providers, employees are welcome to participate. Sign in sheets will be provided and TMS credit will be given.



For additional information, contact Ms. Carol Courtney  
Manager, LGBTSA Special Emphasis Program at Ext. 2864.

# LGBT Safe Space Training Certificate

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\_\_\_\_\_

is certified as having completed the  
VA Palo Alto Health Care System's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)  
**Safe Space Campaign Training**

---

Safe Space Trainer

---

Date





### **VA HEALTH CARE OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, & TRANSGENDER PATIENTS**

The VA has established guidelines for providing safe, ethical, and appropriate care for LGBT veterans. Research suggests that LGBT people have both physical & mental disparities when it comes to healthcare. LGBT people have a greater risk of obesity, certain types of cancers, smoking, suicidal ideation, and mood disorders.

The Iowa City VA Health Care System is committed to addressing these disparities and providing excellent treatment to all Veterans.

The VA is working to provide welcoming, equitable, and discrimination-free treatment for LGBT Veterans as well as those perceived to be LGBT.



### **IOWA CITY VAHCS LGBT COMMITTEE**

**WECOMES ALL PEOPLE!**

For more information contact

Eric Solomon, EEO Special Emphasis  
Project Manager for LGBT  
[eric.solomon@va.gov](mailto:eric.solomon@va.gov)

or contact the EEO Office @ VA  
extension 6203

IOWA CITY VA  
LGBT Committee

**LGBT  
HEALTH  
CARE**

**The Closet  
Is A Health  
Hazard**



**VA**  
HEALTH  
CARE | Defining  
**EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century

## VISITATION

The VA defines "Family" as a "group of two or more persons united by blood, adoptive, marital, domestic partnership, or other legal ties" furthermore "a family member may be a significant other, friend, or caregiver".

The VA allows family to be present with the Veteran for emotional support during the course of stay. The Veteran has the say in who he or she considers family.

Health care providers will not permit a Veteran's parents or blood family who disapprove of the Veteran's same-sex relationship to exclude the Veteran's partner against the Veteran's wishes. In addition, Veterans may designate same-sex partners as surrogate decision makers, including in advanced directives.

VA health care providers are encouraged to use gender neutral language when taking a sexual history. Facility staff are responsible for the safety of all Veterans and will respond to negative reactions of Veterans or staff toward LGBT Veterans as they would any other instance of discriminatory behavior.

**The VA has a zero tolerance for discriminatory behavior by Veterans or staff on VA grounds.**

### Resources for LGBT Health

**Iowa City LGBT Health Clinic @ UIHC** –  
(319) 384-7444

**Johnson County Public Health** Iowa  
City, IA – (319) 356-6040

**Iowa City GLBT Health website**  
[www.iowacityglbthealth.com](http://www.iowacityglbthealth.com) –  
Dedicated to educating local GLBT people on  
gay-friendly resources in the community.

### Resources for LGBT Information

**Human Rights Campaign (HRC)**  
[www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org) – The largest LGBT civil rights  
organization.

**Parent, Families, & Friends of Lesbians  
& Gays (PFLAG)** [www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org) – Promotes  
health & well-being for LGBT, family, and  
friends.

**Queer Resources Directory** [www.qrd.org](http://www.qrd.org)  
– Electronic library for LGBT news &  
information.

**Services & Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian,  
& Transgender Adults** [www.sageusa.org](http://www.sageusa.org) –  
The country's largest & oldest organization for  
improving older LGBT adults.

**Resources for Bisexual People**  
[www.binetusa.org](http://www.binetusa.org) &  
[www.birewsource.org](http://www.birewsource.org) – Umbrella  
organizations providing support and  
voice for bisexuals.

## ELEVATED RISK

- LGBT adults have 1.5 times higher risk for depression, 2 times for anxiety disorders
- LGBT adolescents have elevated risk for suicide attempts, depression, substance abuse, violence, homelessness, & HIV

## BARRIERS TO HEALTH CARE FOR LGBT PEOPLE

- Not enough culturally competent providers
- Lack of counselors who can address LGBT issues
- Community fear or dislike of LGBT people
- Older LGBT patients fear of being rejected by care givers

## WHAT HELPS

- Validation of identity
- Health Care Provider's LGBT-specific knowledge
- Sensitivity to area of concern for sexual and gender minorities
- Competency of care

## ABOUT

“LGBT” is a convenient acronym and umbrella term for all of those who may experience stigma and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity; however, lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender individuals are different populations each with different health concerns and risks. Informing your doctor of your sexual orientation and gender identity helps the doctor provide you with optimal healthcare, including appropriate health screening examinations.

LGBT individuals have higher rates of tobacco, alcohol and other substance use, possibly because of stress from homophobia and discrimination. If your substance use is interfering with work, school or relationships, your doctor can connect you to help.

Other specific suggestions of topics to discuss with your medical provider (including but not limited to prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases), are available on the website of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association.

## QUESTIONS & CONTACT

### VA Contact Numbers

VA Benefits  
1-800-827-1000

Health Benefits  
1-800-222-8387

Education Benefits  
1-888-442-4551

Life Insurance  
1-800-669-8477

Gulf War & Agent Orange  
1-800-749-8387

Headstone & Markers  
1-800-749-8387

### For further info, contact your local Minority Veterans Coordinator

**Michael G. Williams, MSW**  
VA Medical Center  
130 West Kingsbridge Road  
Bronx, New York 10468  
(718) 584-9000 x6656



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**We Serve All  
Who Served**



**James J. Peters VA Medical Center**

## COURSE OVERVIEW

In 2013, the James J Peters VAMC was one of 464 medical facilities nationwide designated as a Leader in LGBT Health Equality after participating in the Health Equality Index Survey.

To learn what it means to qualify for this designation and see a list of VA and other facilities that have qualified, visit the Human Rights Campaign website:

<http://www.hrc.org/hei/about-the-healthcare-equality-index#>

UwQJYXMeRM



## VA IS COMMITTED TO A DIVERSE WORKFORCE AND AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

### Did you know?

VA is committed to a diverse workforce and an inclusive workplace. Since 2009, VA policy has specified that sexual orientation is one of the categories protected by laws governing equality of opportunity in employment. More recently, gender identity and parental status have been specified as well.

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is committed to patient-centered healthcare, in which services are organized around the needs and values of Veterans, including LGBT Veterans. For example, VA protects the patient visitation rights of LGBT family members. In-service education for VA healthcare professionals includes training on culturally sensitive and clinically appropriate care for Veteran members of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender populations. VA policy specifically requires that transgender and intersex individuals be treated with respect.



The VA medical benefits package includes care for transgender and intersex individuals. Though sex-reassignment surgery is not provided, non-surgical, supportive care for complications of sex-reassignment surgery is. Other examples of covered services include hormonal therapy, mental health care, preoperative evaluation, and medically necessary post-operative and long-term care following sex reassignment surgery when care is needed to promote, preserve or restore the health of the individual and is in accord with generally-accepted standards of medical practice.

James J. Peters VA Medical Center

## ACCESS TO CARE AND RESOURCES

There are many resources for LGBT patients seeking medical care and advice. Here are a few you may be interested in.

**Want more information about LGBT health care?** The National LGBT Health Education Center has publications and resources for patients and providers: [www.lgbthealtheducation.org](http://www.lgbthealtheducation.org)

**Want more information about transgender health issues?** The Center of Excellence for Transgender Health has many resources: [www.transhealth.ucsf.edu](http://www.transhealth.ucsf.edu)

**Want information about health care organizations that demonstrate a commitment to LGBT health care?** The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) publishes a Health Equality Index yearly: [www.hrc.org/hei](http://www.hrc.org/hei)

**Want additional support for your friends or family?** Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) publishes lists of organizations it partners with and local groups for support, education, and advocacy: [www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**I don't want anyone besides my provider to know that I'm gay/lesbian/bi/trans.**

**Will this information be shared?**

Your provider will keep conversations you have confidential. Your health care provider is bound by laws and policies to keep your information private. If you are under 18, these laws will vary by state and policies may vary by medical practice. You can also ask your provider not to enter this information into your medical record.

**What if my provider uses the wrong terms or pronouns when referring to me or my spouse/partner?**

Providers may not always know what terms you prefer to use. Let them know how you describe yourself and your partner(s), and they should start to use those words.

**What if I still don't feel comfortable coming out to my current provider?**

There are several ways to find a provider you connect with. To start, you can talk to friends or use the resources in this brochure. Finding a provider you are comfortable with is essential to your all-around health and wellness.

This publication was produced by the National LGBT Health Education Center, The Fenway Institute, Fenway Health with funding under cooperative agreement #U30CS22742 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Primary Health Care. The contents of this publication are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of HHS or HRSA.

 NATIONAL LGBT HEALTH  
EDUCATION CENTER  
A PROGRAM OF THE FENWAY INSTITUTE

COM.13.067

## Do Ask, Do Tell: Talking to your health care provider about being LGBT



## COMING OUT TO YOUR PROVIDER

Coming out to your health care provider is an important step to being healthy. Many people are not aware that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people face unique health risks, such as higher smoking rates, a greater risk of suicide attempts, and a higher chance of getting certain sexually transmitted diseases. Talking with your provider can help you overcome these issues and access the care you need most. Being open about your sexual orientation, sexual behavior, and gender identity not only helps your provider, it helps you!

### Reasons to come out:

- Your provider can offer care that is personalized and most relevant to you.
- Your provider can offer referrals to specialists, like behavioral health providers and other wellness providers, who are welcoming to LGBT people.
- Your provider can be sensitive to current health trends that affect LGBT people.
- Health care is about the whole person. By being open with your provider, you allow him/her to provide you with comprehensive care that supports your mind, body and spirit.



## BEHAVIORAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

LGBT people often experience prejudice, stereotyping, and harassment or bullying by others. This kind of discrimination can be very stressful, which can put you at risk for depression, anxiety, substance abuse, feelings of loneliness, and even suicide. Being open not only about your sexual orientation and gender identity, but also about any substance use or mental health needs, allows your provider to give you the best possible care.

Exercise and healthy eating are important components of wellness for everyone. Physical health plays an important role in feeling emotionally healthy, too! Research has shown that LGBT people are more likely to smoke, lesbians are at higher risk for obesity, and some gay men struggle with poor body image. If you discuss these issues with your health care providers, they can advise you on healthy diets and self-image, smoking cessation, and exercise routines.

Lesbians, bisexual women, and some transgender people should also make sure they are getting routine gynecologic screenings, including Pap smears, and routine breast cancer screening.

## SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Talking to your provider about your sexual health isn't easy. However, there are many benefits to discussing your sexual function and behaviors with a provider. Each person's needs will differ, but some of the sexual health issues that may be important to discuss are:

- Screening for STDs and HIV
- Getting vaccinated for HPV and hepatitis A and B
- Using condoms or other barrier methods
- Safer sex education and counseling
- Problems with sexual function or satisfaction
- Plans to adopt or conceive children

All LGBT people should feel comfortable talking to providers about family life issues, such as partner abuse (feeling safe at home), and living wills.





***Social Work Service Celebrates Diversity and Inclusion***

Lesbian, Bi-Sexual, Gay, Transgender, Questioning (LGBTQ)

June 2012

Submitted by: C. Lloyd

Social Workers did you know that the month of June is Nationally recognized as LGBTQ month?

**Cultural competence**, at the provider level and at the institutional level, is a key goal of education on LGBTQ health issues. A provider's lack of cultural competence has been shown to negatively affect not only provider-patient interaction and care-giving, but also the patient's care seeking behavior. Everyone who works in healthcare facilities should receive training on LGBTQ cultural competence because an individual's experience while accessing healthcare is influenced by everyone they interact with in the process. Creating a nonjudgmental and secure environment through training on LGBTQ-specific, basic skills and competencies will ensure patients feel welcome and relieve anxiety or confusion among employees.

VA social workers often come into contact with Veteran's who may be open or closeted about the sexuality. Older Veterans may not feel comfortable disclosing issues or concerns with their provider due to challenges with stigma and prejudice based on their sexual orientation, gender identity or dealing with societal bias. The effects of this can be a double stigma can be harmful, especially for those that seek treatment. LGBTQ stereotypes can also be misleading and can affect a providers assessment.

**Reasons LGBTQ may hide their sexual orientation or gender identity:**

- Fear of being ridiculed, rejected or subjected to physical and/or verbal violence
- Agencies that work with LGBTQ may not always be educated or knowledgeable
- May not have family or friend support; may be disowned and kicked out of their homes (become homeless)
- Unusual high substance abuse or other high risk behavior may disguise internal struggles dealing with sexuality
- Fear may lead to lack of regular check-up or feeling comfortable to request HIV testing

**On-going competencies for social work practice:**

- Self awareness of own biases
- Do not assume you know someone's sexual orientation or gender identity
- Do not assume you know what their treatment needs are based on stereotypes of either LGBTQ
- Empathize, validate their experiences and help to build coping skills
- Recognize discrimination exists and affect access to resources
- Provide a Veteran-centered cultural and diversity environment
- Expand clinical knowledge and understanding.



**HOPEFUL**

**INTEGRATIVE**

**HOLISTIC**

# PTSD-MST TREATMENT



## Programs for Male, Female & LGBT-QI

**What :** Inpatient PTSD Treatment Programs in 2014

**Who:** Veterans with PTSD related to military service

**Where:** Specialized Inpatient PTSD Unit  
Dept. of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Salem, Virginia

**Details:** Groups are 6.5 week closed cohorts. Application and evaluation process required. Must meet criteria before acceptance.

**2014 Start Dates:** LGBT-QI – 5/5      Male Combat - 7/7  
Male MST– 8/25      Female – PTSD/MST – 10/14

\*\*Our program is being restructured to follow a residential model of care, and this may affect the timelines above.

\*\*\*Gender/Focus/Start Dates are tentative and may change as applications arrive & demand changes.

**EMPOWERING**

**CREATIVE**



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in the 21st Century

### Questions:

Contact Kay Montgomery, LCSW

540-982-2463, Ext. 2548

[www.salem.va.gov](http://www.salem.va.gov)

# Examples: LGBT-related Films

# LGB Military Pride Film

- <http://militarypartners.org/2014-military-pride-month-planning/>

THE AMERICAN MILITARY PARTNER ASSOCIATION

LIKE US ON **facebook** FOLLOW US **twitter**

HOME ABOUT RESOURCES BLOG NETWORKS EVENTS MEDIA CONTACT US DONATE TO AMPA JOIN AMPA MAY 16, 2014

You are here: [Home](#) / [Blog](#) / 2014 Military PRIDE Month Planning

## 2014 Military PRIDE Month Planning

FEBRUARY 22, 2014 BY DWAYNE BEEBE-FRANQUT 1 COMMENT



[View on davidshub.net](#)

### AMPA LEADERSHIP

The American Military Partner Association (AMPA) is the nation's premier resource and support network for the partners and spouses of LGBT troops and veterans. As a non-partisan, non-profit 501(c)3 organization, AMPA is directed and led by a 100% volunteer team of modern military spouses. [Read more about AMPA's leadership team.](#)

### FOLLOW AMPA ON TWITTER @LGBTMILPARTNERS

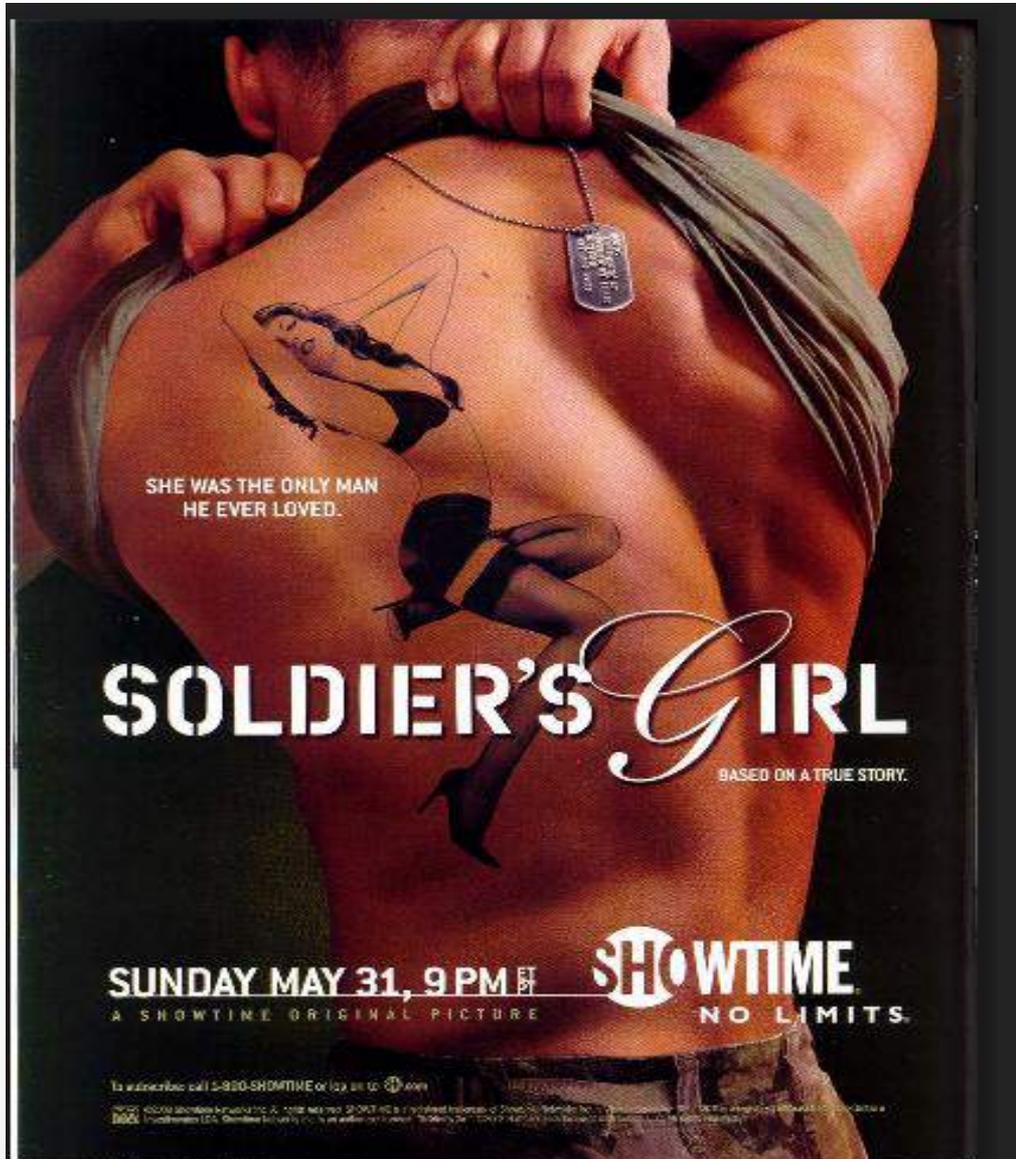
What's Really Wrong With Pentagon's Proposed Pay Cuts  
<http://huff.to/119v2OL> via @HuffPostPol #Military #KeepYourPromise #BudgetBattle  
Posted on 15 May

Ticket sales for @LGBTMilPartners #AMPAGala2014 end at 7p EDT tonight! <http://ow.ly/wUZZ1>  
Posted 4 hours ago

Thank you to our #AMPAGala2014

As a service member, you can be a leader in the first military-wide pride month observance

# Soldier's Girl



SHE WAS THE ONLY MAN  
HE EVER LOVED.

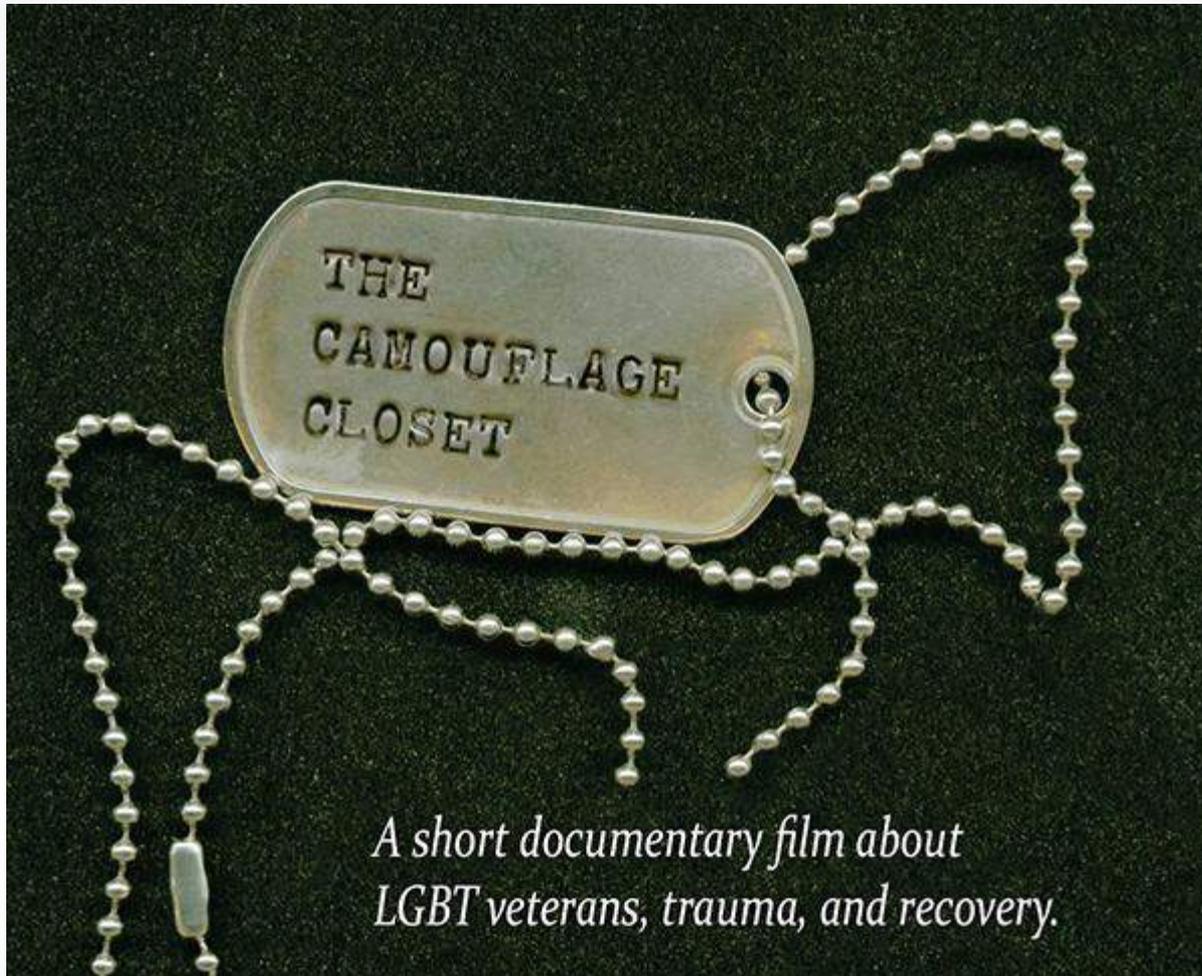
**SOLDIER'S** *GIRL*

BASED ON A TRUE STORY.

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*A short documentary film about  
LGBT veterans, trauma, and recovery.*

[www.camouflagecloset.com](http://www.camouflagecloset.com)

# GENSilent

[http://stumaddux.com/GEN\\_SILENT.html](http://stumaddux.com/GEN_SILENT.html)

Home About Screenings Use GS Home Viewing The People  
Video Extras LGBT Aging Resources Screening Tools  
Press Room The Filmmakers Director's Blog Contact

## GEN SILENT



03:58 HD

WATCH AT HOME

DVD

GROUP RENTAL

TRAINING

# Examples: LGBT Veteran Speakers Panels

# LGBT Military and Veteran Advocacy Organizations

1. American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER)  
*<http://aver.us/>*
2. OUTServe/ Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN)  
*<http://www.sldn.org/>*
3. Knights Out (LGBT West Point Alumni)  
*<http://knightsout.org/>*
4. USNA OUT (UC Naval Academy Alumni)  
*<http://usnaout.org/>*
5. Blue Alliance (LGBT Alumni US Air Force)  
*<http://blue-alliance.org/>*
6. The American Military Partner Association  
*<http://militarypartners.org/>*
7. Service Women's Action Network  
*<http://servicewomen.org/>*
8. The Gay Military Signal  
*<http://www.gaymilitarysignal.com/>*

# Examples: LGBT Employment Outreach

## Diversity Is Our Strength

VAPAHCS values a diverse and culturally competent workforce. Diversity in employees' race/ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, military status, and disability all contribute to a dynamic workforce that is rich in creativity, experience, skill set and possibility. By reflecting the great diversity among Veterans who seek care at VAPAHCS, a diverse workforce is a significant resource for the men and women who earned VA care through their military service.



VAPAHCS is committed to serving all who served in the US Military including LGBT Veterans and their families and is one of 15 VA Medical Centers nationwide that provides an LGBT Veteran Support Group. Additionally, VAPAHCS hosts an LGBT Programs webpage ([www.paloalto.va.gov/lgbt.asp](http://www.paloalto.va.gov/lgbt.asp)) including a groundbreaking film project "The Camouflage Closet" about LGBT Veterans' experiences with trauma and recovery, produced in collaboration with the Stanford Medical School.

Our LGBT Programs combined with LGBT inclusive hospital visitation and anti-discrimination policies earned VAPAHCS the coveted award of Leadership Status for LGBT Healthcare Equality by the Human Rights Campaign in 2013.

The Department of Veterans Affairs offers a variety of career options from student and internship program to experienced professionals and transitioning military.

Learn more about a career with VA at

<http://www.vacareers.va.gov/>

For more information about jobs at VA Palo Alto Health Care System and with VA, visit

[www.paloalto.va.gov/careers/index.asp](http://www.paloalto.va.gov/careers/index.asp)

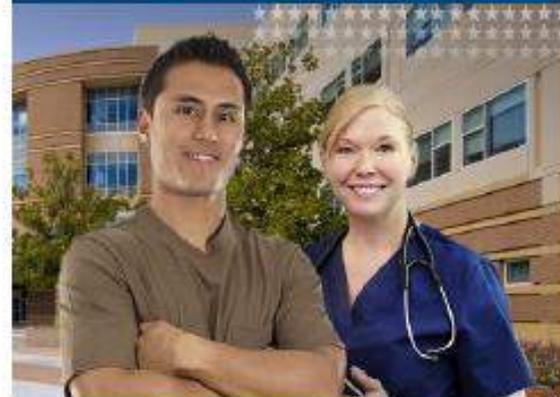
or contact

**Human Resources  
Recruitment and Placement Office  
(650) 493-5000 x63951**



3801 Miranda Ave • Palo Alto, CA 94304-1290  
(650) 493-5000 • [www.paloalto.va.gov](http://www.paloalto.va.gov)

[facebook.com/VAPAHCS](https://www.facebook.com/VAPAHCS)  
[twitter.com/VAPaloAlto](https://twitter.com/VAPaloAlto)



## Work for VA!

Seeking Qualified LGBT  
Employees to help with

*Serving Those Who Served*





## A Unique Employer

At VA Palo Alto Health Care System, we strive to hire only the best! Working with and for America's Veterans is a privilege, and we pride ourselves on the quality of care we provide. If you would like to contribute to our dynamic and committed workforce, please consider applying for one of our positions.

By working for the largest, most technologically advanced integrated health care system in the Nation, you'll have access to a wide range of opportunities and leadership positions at your fingertips.

VAPAHCS consists of three inpatient facilities located at Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Livermore, plus seven outpatient clinics in San Jose, Fremont, Capitola, Monterey, Stockton, Modesto and Sonora. These facilities provide some of the world's finest medical care and cutting-edge technology.

Comprehensive health care is provided in areas of medicine, surgery, psychiatry, rehabilitation, neurology, oncology, dentistry, geriatrics, social work services and extended care. VAPAHCS operates nearly 900 beds, including three nursing homes and a 100-bed homeless domiciliary—all to serve more than 85,000 enrolled Veterans.

## Same-sex Employee Benefits

With the repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act, VAPAHCS employees married to same-sex spouses are entitled to all of the medical and retirement benefits available to employees in opposite sex marriages.

These benefits include medical and dental insurance for same-sex spouses and children raised by same-sex parents. In addition, legally married same-sex spouses are also eligible for Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (these benefits are not available to people in Civil Unions or Domestic Partnerships).

## LGBT Employee Equality

On May 31, 2013, the Department of Veterans Affairs reaffirmed its commitment to equal opportunity, diversity and inclusion with the "No Fear Act"<sup>1</sup>, which prohibits discrimination toward employees based on sexual orientation and gender identity as well as race/ethnicity, religion, disability and a variety of other social identities.

This document states "In order to be a high performing organization in the 21st Century, VA must cultivate an inclusive work culture and create an environment that reflects the diversity of our increasingly global community" (p. 6).

Additionally, VAPAHCS has also signed a local EEO policy<sup>2</sup> protecting employees against discrimination based on sexual orientation

<sup>1</sup>[www.diversity.va.gov/policy/files/EEO\\_Policy\\_Statement.pdf](http://www.diversity.va.gov/policy/files/EEO_Policy_Statement.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>[http://www.paloalto.va.gov/docs/EEO\\_Policy\\_Statement.pdf](http://www.paloalto.va.gov/docs/EEO_Policy_Statement.pdf)

and gender identity and protects equal opportunity of "all personnel/employment programs, management practices, and decisions including, but not limited to, recruitment/hiring, merit promotion, transfer, reassignments, training and career development, benefits, and separations" (p. 1).

## LGBT Employee Resource Group

VAPAHCS Equal Employment Opportunity Office is the proud sponsor of the LGBT Staff and Allies Special Emphasis Program. Established April 2012, the LGBTSA is a group of over 30 VA employees who work together to raise awareness about LGBT Veteran and employee experiences at VAPAHCS through public relations campaigns, staff training and resource development. Through community outreach, LGBTSA strives to increase VA enrollment among LGBT Veteran patients and encourage employment applications from LGBT civilians and Veterans.

LGBTSA members work in a variety of departments across VAPAHCS including Social Work, Psychology, Medicine, Recreation Therapy, Engineering, and Housekeeping to name a few. Members identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and as allies to the LGBT community. LGBTSA welcomes anyone who is interested in making VAPAHCS the choice for LGBT Veterans seeking care and LGBT people seeking employment.

## The Closet is a Health Hazard!



### What does LGBT mean?

**L** – Lesbian – Term given to females who are attracted sexually & emotionally to other females.

**G** – Gay – Term given to people of the same gender who are attracted sexually & emotionally to each other, more commonly used to describe male homosexuals.

**B** – Bisexual – Term given to people who are attracted sexually & emotionally to males & females, although not necessarily equally.

**T** – Transgendered – A general umbrella term given to people whose gender expression may run contrary to what others in the same culture would normally expect.

### What does the rainbow mean?

As a symbol of LGBT Pride the rainbow was first used by artist Gilbert Baker of San Francisco in 1978. The Rainbow symbolizes the diversity of the entire gay community.

**RED = LIFE**

**ORANGE = HEALING**

**YELLOW = THE SUN**

**GREEN = NATURE**

**BLUE = SERENITY**

**PURPLE = SPIRIT**

## IOWA CITY VAHCS LGBT COMMITTEE

### WELCOMES ALL PEOPLE!

For more information contact  
Eric Solomon, EEO Special  
Emphasis Project Manager for  
LGBT [eric.solomon@va.gov](mailto:eric.solomon@va.gov) or  
contact the EEO Office @  
VA extension 6203



IOWA CITY VA  
LGBT COMMITTEE

# EVERYONE WELCOME!



**VA**  
HEALTH  
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in the 21st Century

## History of Gays in the Federal Workforce

- April 27, 1953 President Eisenhower signed Executive Order 10450 requiring the investigation of all current and potential Federal employees for among other things "sexual perversion." At that time that meant homosexuals. Over the next 20 years thousands of homosexuals were terminated from Federal service and prevented from applying for Federal appointments.

- September 20, 1974 President Ford issued a memorandum informing the Civil Service Commission to maintain a system where "men and women can be accepted in the first place on their ability and promoted based on their merit."

- In 1975 the Civil Service Commission did away with their prohibition of hiring homosexuals.

- September 21, 1996 the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) was passed. This prohibited to extension of health benefits and other benefits to same-sex partners of Federal employees- even if legally married by a state.

- May 28, 1998 President Clinton signed Executive Order 11478 prohibiting the Federal government from discrimination based on sexual orientation. This Executive Order did not include members of the military. It did not repeal DOMA.

- January 2010, OPM added gender identity to the equal employment opportunity policy governing all federal jobs

- December, 2010 the ban on homosexuals serving in the military was repealed, full implementation occurred on September 20, 2011.

- Section 3 of DOMA has been found unconstitutional by 8 different federal courts. In March of 2013 The United States Supreme Court heard oral arguments in one of those cases for DOMA repeal. The court was set to rule in June of 2013.

## Who We Are

The Iowa City VAHCS LGBT Committee's purpose is to increase awareness about LGBT employment experiences through public relations, staff training and resource development, and community outreach.

- Reach out to us when you need help with staff concerns
- Call us when you don't know what to say or to clarify a policy
- Call us any time

## Meeting the needs of the LGBT Workplace

- In 2009 the VA included sexual orientation as a protected basis in the Secretary's EEO, Diversity, and NO FEAR Policy Statement.

- In 2010 the VA implemented an internal complaint process to provide formal redress for complaints based on sexual orientation.

- In June 2012, the Iowa City VAHCS held the first LGTB Pride event in its history.

- In 2013 the ODI is adding a survey item in VA's Voice of VA Survey to assess perceptions of fairness & treatment of our LGBT employees.

## Meeting the needs of the LGBT Community

- The VA continues to engage the LGBT community on issues such as health care disparities & adoption. With the input from all our LGBT employees the VA will continue to take the lead addressing many emerging issues involving the LGBT community, especially in light of the repeal of "Don't Ask Don't Tell" as well as the possible repeal of the so-called "Defense of Marriage Act" and other legislative matters.

## PRIDE IN OUR FUTURE!

With the recent repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and federal agencies from the VA to the Pentagon observing Gay Pride Month, the future promises new opportunities to engage our LGBT employees. The Iowa City VA LGBT committee's future will be determined by YOU! Join us to help set the agenda for the future of the LGBT Committee.

## LGBT & STRAIGHT ALLIES

The Iowa City LGBT Committee believes that creating an inclusive environment for our LGBT employees depends in large part on the active involvement of straight allies. We welcome and encourage all employees who share our vision of creating a work environment that is responsive to the needs of both the straight & LGBT community.

One thing to keep in mind about your fellow LGBT coworkers, they don't just come out of the closet once, they come out to new people every day for the rest of their lives. Thanks for being an ally!

## Important Numbers

Veteran Suicide Prevention Hotline  
(800) 273-8255

LGBT National Crisis Line  
(800) 843-4564

Iowa City LGBT Health Clinic @ UIHC  
(319) 384-7444

Iowa City EEO Office - x6203

# Examples: Pride Parades Marching Contingents and Signs

# Pride Parade Best Practices

1. Seek approval from your local VA leadership to march in the Pride Parade as a VA contingent (i.e. EEO, Facility Director, Public Relations Department etc.)
2. Consider printing a banner and/or homemade signs, wear matching t-shirts or rainbow leis etc.
3. Invite VA staff to bring their families.
4. If you have veterans and staff marching together, may want to review behavioral expectations (i.e. no hitting on staff, no alcohol during parade and take off VA shirts if drinking after parade) also may want to discuss triggers for PTSD and self care/buddy system plan given crowds, backfiring of motorcycles etc.
5. Set a meeting place before and after the march.
6. Bring water and hats, wheel chair as needed.
7. Know where bathrooms are located throughout march and whether or not you will be able to exit and enter parade in motion.
8. If media approach your group- its important to have previously spoken with your Public Relations Department about messaging or if you should give the PR contact info and not speak to media. Do you need ROIs signed by staff and veterans?
9. Get cards/contact info from media covering your VA participation.
10. Learn if you are allowed to throw things into the crowd (bracelets etc.) and remember that VA does not pay for "Give Aways."
11. Exchange cell phone numbers in case you are separated.

Veterans Administration  
Canandaigua VA Medical Center & ROPC Participation in the Rochester  
Pride Parade 2014



Join us as we celebrate our 5<sup>th</sup> year marching at the Rochester, NY Pride Parade

Saturday - July 19, 2014

Line Up at 2:00 PM – Step off at 3:00 PM  
(Park Avenue Area Rochester)

Contact Wanda Martinez / Dawn Smith

For information and to sign up

585-205-3360

[Wanda.Martinez3@va.gov](mailto:Wanda.Martinez3@va.gov) / [Dawn.Smith8@va.gov](mailto:Dawn.Smith8@va.gov)

Rochester  
Pride  
Parade  
2012



Rochester  
Pride  
Parade  
2011

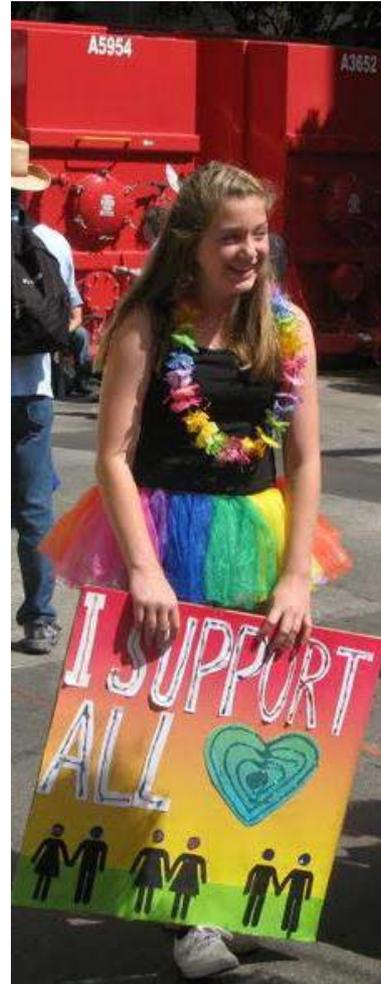
Rochester  
Pride Parade  
2010



Rochester Pride Parade 2013

# Examples of Pride Parade Signage

VA Palo Alto staff and children



# Examples: Pride Booth Materials

# LGB Discharge Upgrade

<http://www.sldn.org/page/s/vetdischargechanges>



FREE LEGAL HOTLINE 1-800-538-7418

E-mail

Zip

[SERVICE MEMBERS](#) [VETERANS](#) [FAMILIES](#) [CURRENT ISSUES](#) [ABOUT US](#)

## SEEK TO CHANGE YOUR DISCHARGE? GET STARTED HERE.

Were you discharged from the military under "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT) or under the prior regulations regarding sexual orientation? Would you like to make changes to your discharge paperwork?

OutServe-SLDN may be able to help you challenge your discharge characterization, change your narrative reason for discharge or upgrade your re-entry code. The standard for changing discharge paperwork is high, and changes are not guaranteed. But SLDN is prepared to help you navigate the process and achieve results.

To schedule a phone consultation with an attorney, please use the form below.

Please be aware that if you are using a government computer or server, the information you provide may be monitored.



**STEP 1 - ASSEMBLING APPROPRIATE SERVICE DOCUMENTS**

# Same Sex Marriage Military Benefits

<http://www.sldn.org/pages/benefits-and-pay>



FREE LEGAL HOTLINE 1-800-538-7418

E-mail

Zip

[SERVICE MEMBERS](#) [VETERANS](#) [FAMILIES](#) [CURRENT ISSUES](#) [ABOUT US](#)

## BENEFITS AND PAY

We are working to update *Freedom to Serve: The Definitive Guide to LGBT Military Service*.

In the meantime, we will use this page to provide information and links to information regarding same sex spouse benefits. If you have further information not listed here please [contact us](#).

### DoD Guidance

- ▶ [SECDEF MEMO: Extending Benefits to the Same Sex-Spouses of Military Members, 13 Aug 13](#)
- ▶ [DoD MEMO: Further Guidance on Extending Benefits to Same-Sex Spouses of Military Members, 13 Aug 13](#)
- ▶ [JFTR U10404 Update: Acquired Dependents](#)
- ▶ [JFTR U10404 Update: Family Separation Housing \(FSH\) Allowance](#)

### Service Specific Guidance

- ▶ [Navy Guidance, 29 Aug 13](#)
- ▶ [Coast Guard Guidance, 27 Aug 13](#)

### International Guidance

- ▶ [Japan Status of Forces Agreement \(SOFA\)](#)

LEGAL SERVICES 

CHAPTERS 

UPCOMING EVENTS 

NEWSROOM 

CONTRIBUTE 

OutServe-SLDN Partners

Brand 

# Same Sex Marriage Veteran Benefits

<http://www.sldn.org/pages/veterans>



FREE LEGAL HOTLINE 1-800-538-7418

E-mail

Zip

[GET UPDATES](#)

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## VETERANS BENEFITS

THIS INFORMATION IS EXCERPTED FROM *FREEDOM TO SERVE: THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO LGBT MILITARY SERVICE*. TO DOWNLOAD THE FULL GUIDE, [CLICK HERE](#).

The repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" does not change whether or not someone is eligible for VA benefits. The VA will continue to determine a service member's eligibility for benefits based on factors such as time served, discharge characterization, and disability rating. For a more thorough discussion of Veterans' Benefits and eligibility requirements, refer to the "Veterans' Benefits" section of this Guide.

Gay veterans can be open about their sexual orientation without risking loss of benefits or retirement pay. The section below contains information about select benefits of interest to LGBT veterans and their families. If you have questions about your eligibility for any veterans' benefits, please contact SLDN for assistance.

Until the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is repealed or declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, benefits based on marital status are unavailable to legally married gay veterans and their same-sex spouses.

**GI Bill:** Under the Montgomery GI Bill (Chapter 30), service members had to serve a minimum of two years active duty, receive an honorable discharge and contribute \$1200 toward the program to qualify for benefits. Veterans who were discharged under DADT might have been unable to meet these requirements.

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# Status of Same Sex Benefits

<http://www.sldn.org/page/-/Website/Fact%20Sheets/Advocacy%20and%20Policy%20Committee%20Report.pdf>

Status of Benefits

CATEGORY	ISSUE	POST-REPEAL ACTION	DISCUSSION
ENLISTMENT, APPOINTMENT, & COMMISSIONING	Open LGBT Persons allowed to join the military	NOT EQUAL UNTIL TRANSGENDER SERVICE IS PERMITTED	
	Revise DoD Instruction 6130.03 (Medical Standards for Appointment, Enlistment, or Induction in the Military Services) to conform to Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)/International Classification of Diseases (ICD) with respect to accession of transgender Service members.	NOT EQUAL	
	Allow post-operative transgender personnel and personnel previously diagnosed with gender dysphoria to apply for/receiver waivers to accession standards.	NOT EQUAL	
ASSIGNMENTS	Joint military spouse assignments for dual military career married same sex couples and exemption from hostile fire areas	PARTIAL EQUALITY	Foreign assignments remain restricted
	Command Sponsorship (Accompanied assignments in foreign countries.)	NOT EQUAL	DoD studying Status of Forces Agreements to see if these benefits can be provided.
	Status of Forces Agreements	NOT EQUAL	DoD studying Status of Forces Agreements to see if these benefits can be provided
	No-Fee Official Passports for Dependents	NOT EQUAL	This is tied into the SOFA issue.

# Examples: LGBT Fact Sheets



## LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDER (LGBT) VETERANS INTERNAL HEALTH CARE FACT SHEET

The Veterans Health Administration is committed to addressing the special health needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Veterans and reducing health disparities for them and members of other vulnerable communities.

VHA's commitment to LGBT Veterans includes:

- Providing information, guidance and education to VHA providers about LGBT health issues.
- Promoting a welcoming health and work environment that is inclusive of LGBT Veterans and employees.

### 1) ABOUT LGBT HEALTH CARE

According to The Joint Commission, "Like many other populations identified as at-risk or disadvantaged, research has demonstrated that LGBT individuals experience disparities not only in the prevalence of certain physical and mental health concerns, but also in care due to a variety of factors, including experiences of stigma, lack of awareness, and insensitivity to their unique needs. These disparities include the following:

- Less access to insurance and health care services, including preventive care (such as cancer screenings)
- Lower overall health status
- Higher rates of smoking, alcohol, and substance abuse
- Higher risk for mental health illnesses, such as anxiety and depression
- Higher rates of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection
- Increased incidence of some cancers

In addition, LGBT patients face other barriers to equitable care, such as refusals of care, delayed or substandard care, mistreatment, inequitable policies and practices, little or no inclusion in health outreach or education, and inappropriate restrictions or limits on visitation. These inequalities may be even more pronounced for LGBT people from racial/ethnic minorities or due to other characteristics such as education level, income, geographic location, language, immigration status and cultural beliefs. Experiences of discrimination and mistreatment have, in many cases, contributed to a long-standing distrust of the health care system by many in the LGBT community and have affected their health in profound ways.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Joint Commission: Advancing Effective Communication, Cultural Competence, and Patient- and Family-Centered Care for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Community: A Field Guide. Oak Brook, IL, Oct. 2011. LGBTFieldGuide.pdf



# Examples: LGBT Training Resources



## **LGBT Education and Training Resources (Courtesy of the Office of Health Equity)**

The following is a selection of articles, studies and web sites that have been compiled to provide further exploration of the topic of the LGBT population.

The Joint Commission. *Advancing Effective Communication, Cultural Competence, and Patient- and Family-Centered Care for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Community: A Field Guide*. Oakbrook Terrace, IL; 2011. The Field Guide provides strategies, practices and examples. Available at <http://www.jointcommission.org/lgbt/>

The Joint Commission. *Advancing Effective Communication, Cultural Competence, and Patient- and Family-Centered Care: A Roadmap for Hospitals*. Oakbrook Terrace, IL; 2010. Three effective documents on how to advance communication and the site also provides a useful video on how to promote health equity and patient-centered care. Available at [http://www.jointcommission.org/Advancing\\_Effective\\_Communication/](http://www.jointcommission.org/Advancing_Effective_Communication/)

Human Rights Campaign. Healthcare Equality Index; Provides general information about the Healthcare Equality Index and how a facility may participate in the survey. Available at <http://www.hrc.org/hei>

Human Rights Campaign. Healthcare Equality Index Report; 2012. A self-reporting survey on health care facilities' policies and practices related to LGBT patients and families; it is marketed as an indicator of an LGBT-positive health care environment. Available at <http://www.hrc.org/hei/about-the-healthcare-equality-index>

Human Rights Campaign. Healthcare Equality Index Visitation Policies; the site provides guidance on implementing LGBT inclusive visitation policies. Available at [www.hrc.org/visitation](http://www.hrc.org/visitation)

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. Web site provides recommendations for future action. Available at <http://www.hhs.gov/secretary/about/lgbthealth.html>

VHA Directive 2011-024, *Providing Health Care for Transgender and Intersex Veterans*. Available at [http://www1.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub\\_ID=2416](http://www1.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=2416)

VA Transgender Education Resources SharePoint; SharePoint repository of resource materials and an educational consultation system designed to facilitate the growth of knowledgeable providers at every medical center. Available at <http://vaww.infoshare.va.gov/sites/pcsclipro/trer/default.aspx>

VA's Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI); ODI provides VA policies and programs addressing the needs and concerns of the LGBT community. Available at <http://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/lgbt.aspx>

The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Health Access Project's *Community Standards of Practice for the Provision of Quality Health Care Services to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Clients* is a framework that addresses personnel, client's rights, intake and assessment, service planning and delivery, confidentiality, and community outreach and health promotion. Available at <http://www.glbthealth.org/CommunityStandardsofPractice.htm>

The Fenway Institute Web site contains information and numerous resources about health care, education, research and advocacy. Available at <http://www.fenwayhealth.org>

*The National LGBT Health Education Center; Learning Modules on LGBT Health* for health professionals and students contain information slides, handouts, and information on LGBT health topics and can be used alone or in conjunction with the more comprehensive *Fenway Guide to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Health*. Available at <http://www.lgbthealtheducation.org/training/learning-modules/>

The National LGBT Health Education Center, The Fenway Institute, Fenway Health; *Improving the Health Care of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) People: Understanding and Eliminating Health Disparities; 2012*; The report offers a brief but comprehensive overview of the major issues relevant to the health and health care of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Available at <http://www.lgbthealtheducation.org/publications/fenway-guide-to-lgbt-health/>

National Coalition for LGBT Health. The Coalition is committed to improving the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals through federal advocacy that is focused on research, policy, education, and training. Available at <http://lgbthealth.webolutionary.com/content/resources>

Institute of Medicine. *The Health of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People: Building a Foundation for Better Understanding*; March 2011 The report evaluates the current knowledge of the health status of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender populations; to identify research gaps and opportunities; and outlines a research agenda to help National Institute of Health (NIH) focus its research in this area. Available at <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2011/The-Health-of-Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-and-Transgender-People.aspx>

The American Psychological Association (APA) Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns Office (LGBTCO) Web site includes programs and services, publications, news articles, publications and other resources regarding LGBT health Information. Available at <http://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/index.aspx>

The Gay and Lesbian Medical Association's (GLMA) Transgender Health Resources web site. <http://www.glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=532>

The National LGBT Health Education Center. The health education center provides continuing education. The site contains upcoming training events, programs offering CME/ CEU credits, webinars, online courses and information on presenting lectures to hospital Grand Rounds. Available at <http://www.lgbthealtheducation.org/training/about-continuing-education/>

National Center for Transgender Equality. The center is dedicated to advancing the equality of transgender people through advocacy, collaboration and empowerment. Site provides resources, training events and news. Available at <http://transequality.org/Resources/index.html>

Resources for health care providers and patients about transgender health issues. Available at

<http://www.glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=948&grandparentID=534&parentID=938&nodeID=1>

Resources on Cultural Competency for LGBT Providers

<http://www.glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=1025&grandparentID=534&parentID=940>

Lambda Legal; Guide to transgender rights, covering access to public. Available at [http://www.lambdalegal.org/publications/trans-toolkit/trt\\_equal-access-to-public-restrooms.html](http://www.lambdalegal.org/publications/trans-toolkit/trt_equal-access-to-public-restrooms.html) and When Health care Isn't Caring <http://www.lambdalegal.org/publications/when-health-care-isnt-caring>

# Questions from the Field

Please email [LGBTPRSubgroup@va.gov](mailto:LGBTPRSubgroup@va.gov)

# Conclusion

Thank you for participating in this meeting!  
Please help us plan future meetings for LGBT  
SEP Managers by completing our feedback  
form at

<http://survey.constantcontact.com/survey/a07e9c71ixfhvgysz02/start>.

For More Information email  
LGBTPRSubgroup@va.gov