Message from the DAS

As November ushers in the holiday season for many of us, I’d like to be among the first to wish everyone happy holidays, including a bountiful Thanksgiving Day! With that, I’d like to remind all our employees to be respectful and sensitive to the diverse holiday observances of our VA coworkers. Supervisors, please note that in accordance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, we must reasonably accommodate an employee’s religious practices, including absence from work to observe religious holidays when practicable, unless doing so would cause undue hardship on the conduct of business. For more information, contact your local human resources officer.

Please also join me in commemorating National Native American Heritage Month and of course Veterans Day this month. Among other observances, November also commemorates National Family Caregivers Month, Military Family Month, International Day of Tolerance and Transgender Day of Remembrance. You can read more about some of these observances below.

Recently, I was honored to lead an interagency work group of senior executives that completed a Government Performance Project (GPP) under the 2013 Leading Edge Program. Our project was to create a framework for a Federal Government Diversity and Inclusion Council. On Wednesday, October 16, 2013, our presentation was videotaped at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in Alexandria, Virginia. Continued on the next page.

Have a dispute?
VA’s Alternative Dispute Resolution program can help: http://www.va.gov/adr.

Have an EEO complaint?
Contact the Office of Resolution Management at (888) 737-3361 within 45 calendar days of the alleged incident.

Commemorate
Veterans Day

VA joins the Nation in proudly saluting those who have served our Nation on Veterans Day, November 11. About 32 percent of VA’s employees are Veterans, and approximately one-third of VA’s Veteran population have a service-related disability.

This Veterans Day marks the second anniversary of the establishment of VA for Vets. Launched on Veterans Day of 2011, VA for Vets facilitates the reintegration, retention and hiring of Veteran employees at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). VA for Vets offers career-search tools for Veterans seeking employment at VA, career development services for current Veteran employees, and coaching and reintegration support for military service members. Continued on page 3.
Message from the DAS

Continued from the previous page.

The video presentation will be available on the Leading Edge max.omb.gov portal on November 1 and on ODI’s Web site soon after.

Finally, I would like to remind all that it is time for VA Administrations and Staff Offices to submit their accomplishments for VA’s Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report (http://www.diversity.va.gov/products/diar.aspx). Please be sure that your office’s accomplishments are captured. Contact your VA Diversity Council representative to find out how to submit information for the report. Visit http://www.diversity.va.gov/council for the list of current members. Again, Happy Thanksgiving to all! ~Georgia Coffey, VA Deputy Assistant Secretary for Diversity and Inclusion

VACO/Field Notes

Farewell!

ODI wishes a fond farewell to Christy Compton, VA’s National People with Disabilities Employment Program Manager on ODI’s Outreach and Retention Team, who is retiring. Congratulations, Ms. Compton!

For information on VA’s National People with Disabilities Employment Program, contact Melissa Gibson at Melissa.Gibson@va.gov.

VA WIN Employee Health & Wellness Program: Back and Better Than Ever

The VA WIN Employee Health & Wellness Program is back and better than ever! There are many new “Kool tools,” an updated resource section, WIN Wizard, newsletter, VA WINners section, VCS section with menu items and recipes, monthly health observances, and more! Complete or update the Health Risk Assessment (HRA) and collect an incentive item (first-time users) or points for the incentive program (for anyone who has already taken his or her initial HRA). Let us help you in finding that healthy, productive and happy work-life balance.

To check out all the new WIN program items, visit http://www.vawin.foh.hhs.gov. Please direct all questions to vacohwteam@va.gov.

American Journal of Public Health Calls for Papers: VA Health Equity

The American Journal of Public Health (AJPH), in collaboration with the VHA Office of Health Equity, intends to publish an open access, online-only supplemental issue on VA Health Equity. Original papers are invited that focus on improving the understanding of the root causes of health and health care disparities or on reducing or eliminating such disparities among vulnerable Veteran populations and patients treated within the VA Healthcare System. Vulnerable populations are groups of people who have systematically experienced greater social and/or economic obstacles to health and/or a clean environment based on their race or ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, sexual orientation, geographic location of residence, medical or psychiatric illness, or other characteristics historically linked to discrimination or exclusion.

Potential authors should visit the AJPH website (http://www.ajph.org) to review the Instructions for Authors and specific guidelines for the various types of manuscripts. Research papers (3,500 words) and Briefs (800 words) are encouraged. All manuscripts will undergo standard peer review by the AJPH editors and peer referees as defined by the AJPH policy. To be considered for inclusion in this supplement, papers must be submitted by January 10, 2014, using the online submission system at http://www.editorialmanager.com/ajph. For additional information about this supplement, e-mail Eunice.Andrews2@va.gov.
Commemorate

Continued from page 1.

For more information on VA for Vets, visit http://vaforvets.va.gov. Information, activities, and resources concerning VA’s Veterans Day celebration can be found at http://www.va.gov/opa/vetsday. From the 2012 Presidential Proclamation (http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/11/07/presidential-proclamation-veterans-day-2012): Whether they fought in Salerno or Samarra, Heartbreak Ridge or Helmand, Khe Sanh or the Korengal, our Veterans are part of an unbroken chain of men and women who have served our country with honor and distinction. On Veterans Day, we show them our deepest thanks. Their sacrifices have helped secure more than two centuries of American progress, and their legacy affirms that no matter what confronts us or what trials we face, there is no challenge we cannot overcome, and our best days are still ahead.

This year, we marked the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812. We began to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. We welcomed our Veterans back home from Iraq, and we continued to wind down operations in Afghanistan. These milestones remind us that, though much has changed since Americans first took up arms to advance freedom’s cause, the spirit that moved our forebears is the same spirit that has defined each generation of our service members. Our men and women in uniform have taught us about strength, duty, devotion, resolve—cornerstones of a commitment to protect and defend that has kept our country safe for over 200 years. In war and in peace, their service has been selfless and their accomplishments have been extraordinary.

Even after our Veterans take off the uniform, they never stop serving. Many apply the skills and experience they developed on the battlefield to a life of service here at home. They take on roles in their communities as doctors and police officers, engineers and entrepreneurs, mothers and fathers. As a grateful Nation, it is our task to make that transition possible—to ensure our returning heroes can share in the opportunities they have given so much to defend. The freedoms we cherish endure because of their service and sacrifice, and our country must strive to honor our Veterans by fulfilling our responsibilities to them and upholding the sacred trust we share with all who have served.

On days like this, we are called to reflect on immeasurable burdens that have been borne by so few. We pay tribute to our wounded, our missing, our fallen, and their families—men and women who have known the true costs of conflict and deserve our deepest respect, now and forever. We also remember that our commitments to those who have served are commitments we must honor not only on Veterans Day, but every day. As we do so, let us reaffirm our promise that when our troops finish their tours of duty, they come home to an America that gives them the benefits they have earned, the care they deserve, and the fullest opportunity to keep their families strong and our country moving forward.

With respect for and in recognition of the contributions our service members have made to the cause of peace and freedom around the world, the Congress has provided (5 U.S.C. 6103(a)) that November 11 of each year shall be set aside as a legal public holiday to honor our Nation’s Veterans.

National Native American Heritage Month

VA joins the Nation in commemorating National Native American Heritage Month during the month of November. This year’s theme is “Guiding our Destiny with Heritage and Traditions.” Throughout history, Native Americans have made unique contributions to our country and to the world, in many fields, including the arts, medicine, literature, agriculture, music, language, and American history. Native Americans have distinguished themselves as artists, scholars, leaders, and entrepreneurs. They also have served and continue to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces with valor, honor, and distinction, defending the security of our Nation with their lives. VA commends those Native American servicemen, women, and Veterans and thanks its VA employees, including those Native American employees, for their commitment and dedicated service in caring for our Nation’s Veterans, their families, and beneficiaries. All employees are encouraged to participate in activities that recognize the vast contributions Native Americans have made to America. For more information, contact Aurelia Waters, VA’s National AIAN Employment Program Manager, ODI, at (202) 461-4124 or Aurelia.Waters@va.gov. Continued on page 5.
Training

Section 508 Training

The Section 508 Program Office currently offers six training classes to help you understand Section 508. Everyone has a responsibility to create information that meets the Federal Section 508 standards. Section 508 is a Federal law that applies to you. All meetings will be held via Microsoft Lync. All times are EST:

Introduction to Section 508
- November 4, 1 to 3 p.m.
- November 19, 10 a.m. to noon
- December 2, 1 to 3 p.m.
- December 11, 10 a.m. to noon

Creating Accessible Microsoft Word Documents and Converting to Accessible PDF
- November 6, 10 a.m. to noon
- December 3, 1 to 3 p.m.

Converting Scanned PDF Documents to Accessible PDF
- November 12, 1 to 3 p.m.
- December 17, 1 to 3 p.m.

Introduction to JAWS
- November 18, 10 to 11 a.m.
- December 9, 10 to 11 a.m.

Creating Accessible PowerPoint Presentations
- November 14, 10 to 11 a.m.
- December 5, 2 to 3 p.m.

Creating Accessible Excel Files
- November 5, 2 to 3 p.m.
- December 10, 2 to 3 p.m.

To enroll or for more information, send an e-mail to the Section 508 Program Office at section508@va.gov.

Healthcare Provider Workshop on Gender and Orientation

The VISN 8 Healthcare Provider Workshop on Gender and Orientation will be held virtually VISN-Wide on Tuesday, November 5, 2013, from 10 a.m. to noon.

During this workshop attendees will build cultural competency awareness by hearing personal experiences from guest speakers, engaging in open dialogue about health and mental health inequities facing gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender populations, and critically examining practices in the healthcare environment.

This event is targeting physicians, pharmacists, nurses, psychologists, dieticians, OT/PT, and social workers.

To register, visit https://www.tms.va.gov/learning/user/deeplink_redirect.jsp?linkId=SCHEDULED_OFFERING_DETAILS&schedul eid=2609869. The training has been approved for CEU credit.

Diversity News: An Online Training Resource


Continued on page 6.
Commemorate

Continued from page 3.

The National Cemetery Administration and the VA Central Office (VACO) Native American Heritage Month Committee invite you to a presentation by Dr. Robert Sutton, Chief Historian, National Park Service, on “American Indians and the Civil War” on November 7 in the G.V. “Sonny” Montgomery Veterans Conference Center, room 230, from noon to 1:00 p.m. A second VACO event will be held on November 21. VA is committed to providing equal access to this event for all participants. A sign language interpreter will be provided. If you need alternative formats or services because of a disability, contact Tynnetta Lee at (202) 461-7968 or Tynnetta.Lee@va.gov.

Military Family Month

VA joins the Nation in observing Military Family Month this November. From the 2012 Presidential Proclamation (http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/11/01/presidential-proclamation-military-family-month-2012):

Since our Nation’s earliest days, courageous men and women of all backgrounds and beliefs have banded together to fight for the freedoms we cherish. Behind each of them stands a parent, a sibling, a child, a spouse—proud family members who share the weight of deployment and make profound sacrifices on behalf of our country. During Military Family Month, we honor our military families and recommit to showing them the fullest care and respect of a grateful Nation.

In our military families, we see the best our country has to offer. They demonstrate the virtues that have made America great for more than two centuries and the values that will preserve our greatness for centuries to come. With loved ones serving far from home, military spouses take on the work of two. Their children show courage and resilience as they move from base to base, school to school, home to home. And even through the strain of deployment, military families strengthen the fabric of each community they touch and enrich our national life as shining examples of patriotism.

We each have a solemn duty to serve our Armed Forces and their families as well as they serve us. Through First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden’s Joining Forces initiative, we have worked to fulfill this obligation by mobilizing all Americans to give service members and their families the opportunities and support they have earned. Last year, we challenged American businesses to hire or train 100,000 Veterans and military spouses by the end of 2013. To date, they have already exceeded that challenge, hiring over 125,000 Veterans and military spouses. From helping military children succeed in the classroom to increasing support for those who care for our wounded warriors, Joining Forces will keep fighting to ensure the well-being of our troops and their families.

When a young woman signs up to defend our Nation, her parents are enlisted as well. When a father deploys to a combat zone, his children are called to serve on the home front. And when the men and women of our military serve far from home, their families feel the strain of their absence. In that absence, let us stand together as one American family. Let us honor the brave patriots who keep our country safe, and let us forever hold close the memories of those who have perished in the line of duty. This month, we reaffirm that we will always lift up our military families—not just when their loved ones are away, but also long after the welcome home ceremonies are over.

National Family Caregivers Month

VA joins the Nation in observing National Family Caregivers Month this November. From the 2012 Presidential Proclamation (http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/11/01/presidential-proclamation-national-family-caregivers-month-2012): Our Nation’s health care professionals provide essential medical services to millions of Americans, yet they do not shoulder their responsibilities alone. Family members, friends, and neighbors devote countless hours to providing care to their relatives or loved ones. During National Family Caregivers Month, we recognize and thank the humble heroes who do so much to keep our families and communities strong.

Across America, daughters and sons balance the work of caring for aging parents with the demands of their careers and raising their own children. Spouses and partners become caregivers to the ones they love even as they navigate their own health challenges. Continued on page 7.
Training
Continued from page 4.

EEO, Diversity and Conflict Management Training for SES/Title38 Equivalents, Managers and Supervisors

The due date for completion of the biennial mandatory online Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Diversity and Conflict Management training module for supervisors and managers has been extended to December 31, 2013, for the current biennial training cycle. SES/Title 38, managers and supervisors have until December 31, 2013, to complete this course to meet the biennial requirement as directed in Secretary Shinseki’s EEO, Diversity, and No FEAR Policy Statement issued May 31, 2013. Completing this online course (VA TMS Item Number 1328672 – #DVA017), “EEO, Diversity, and Conflict Management Training for Managers and Supervisors,” is the only method to fulfill this mandatory requirement. If this course does not already appear as a recurring training event in TMS on the individual supervisor’s or manager’s learning plan, contact your respective TMS administrators to ensure they assign course #DVA017. For more information, contact Carolyn Williams, Diversity Training Specialist, ODI, at Carolyn.Williams12@va.gov.

New Virtual Barrier Analysis Training

Barrier elimination is an important step in VA becoming a model employer. To achieve this status, VA has to create a barrier-free environment where all applicants and employees have the opportunity to compete and work to their fullest potential. This training course covers all aspects of the barrier analysis process under Management Directive 715 (MD-715) to include: analysis and interpretation of workforce statistics, trigger identification, barrier analysis investigation, preparing action plans, and following up on the action plan. Each VA facility has to identify barriers and create action plans on eliminating those identified barriers. This training is intended for employees who work with MD-715 and for all managers. Training classes will be offered on the following dates from 1 to 4 p.m. (EST):
- Thursday, December 12, 2013
- Thursday, February 20, 2014
- Thursday, April 24, 2014
- Thursday, June 26, 2014
- Thursday, August 21, 2014

Each session will be conducted via Microsoft Lync. Register at https://www.tms.va.gov/learning/user/deeplink_redirect.jsp?linkId=ITEM_DETAILS&componentID=3844925&componentTypeID=VA&revisionDate=1368106800000. Sign into TMS, click on “view offerings”, and register for the class you want. Spaces are available on first-come, first-served basis. If you have any questions, concerns, or require specific training for your facility, contact Ryan Pugh at (202) 461-4155 or Ryan.Pugh2@va.gov or Nanese Loza at (202) 461-4049 or Nanese.Loza@va.gov.

VSSC HR Reporting and Workforce Analysis Tools Training

The fiscal year (FY) 2014 training schedule for the VHA Support Service Center (VSSC) Human Resources (HR) Reporting Tools is now available. VA uses VSSC to store HR data for all of VA in an easy to use reporting format. This interactive training is designed to alert a wide range of managers, HR, equal employment opportunity (EEO) and diversity specialists to VSSC’s HR query applications. All managers have a duty to ensure there is equal opportunity in the workplace with regard to hiring, promotions, and other terms and conditions of employment. This training provides guidance on how to properly use the applications to conduct various workforce analyses, identify triggers, and define and distinguish between Relevant Civilian Labor Force vs. Civilian Labor Force. Training classes will be offered on the following dates from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (EST):
- Tuesday, November 12, 2013
- Thursday, January 16, 2014
- Wednesday, March 12, 2014
- Tuesday, May 13, 2014
- Wednesday, July 16, 2014
- Thursday, September 25, 2014

Each session will be conducted via Microsoft Lync. Register at https://www.tms.va.gov/learning/user/deeplink_redirect.jsp?linkId=ITEM_DETAILS&componentID=3823179&componentTypeID=VA&revisionDate=1352313600000. Sign into TMS, click on “view offerings”, and register for the class you want. Spaces are available on first-come, first-served basis. Contact Ryan Pugh at (202) 461-4155 or Ryan.Pugh2@va.gov for more information.
Mothers and fathers resume care for children returning home as wounded warriors. Friends and relatives form networks to support loved ones with disabilities. All of them give selflessly to bring comfort, social engagement, and stability to those they love.

Family caregivers have an immeasurable impact on the lives of those they assist, but their hours are long and their work is hard. Many put their own lives on hold to lift up someone close to them...National Family Caregivers Month is a time to reflect on the compassion and dedication that family caregivers embody every day. As we offer our appreciation and admiration for their difficult work, let us also extend our own offers of support to them and their loved ones.

**National Family Week**

VA joins the Nation in observing National Family Week November 24 through 30. From the 2012 Presidential Proclamation ([http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/11/16/presidential-proclamation-national-family-week-2012](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/11/16/presidential-proclamation-national-family-week-2012)): The bonds that tie us to our loved ones have always played an important role in the American story. Families of every makeup continue to guide our country’s progress by supporting one another with unshakable devotion and instilling strength of character in their children. This week, we celebrate the unity and compassion that keep our families strong.

America’s prosperity has always come from an economy that is built on a strong and growing middle class—families who can own homes, send their kids to college, and save enough for retirement. As our economic recovery continues, we must keep working to give them the security they deserve, and to widen the circle of opportunity for all who are working hard to get ahead. During National Family Week, let us recommit to keeping America’s promise alive for every family.

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**MyCareer@VA**

*Four Steps for Creating a Great IDP*

Given the incredible diversity of the VA workforce, occupational and developmental needs vary from person to person. So, how do you figure out how to make the best choices to move your career ahead? No matter what your occupational background is, your Individual Development Plan (IDP) is one of your best tools for choosing and getting the developmental experience you need to move forward in your career. This fall, as you write your own IDP or help others with theirs, follow these four steps to create an effective plan.

**Step 1: Brainstorm areas where you can develop**

Your IDP will usually consist of three parts: a clear statement of your short-term career goals (within 1–3 years), a clear statement of your long-term career goals (5–10 years), and a specific action plan for the next year designed to help you move closer to achieving those goals. To begin writing these parts of your plan, ask yourself these questions and jot down your thoughts:

- How are you doing in your current job? In what areas do you excel? In what areas do you fall short, and what can you do to improve? Do you have all of the skills necessary to succeed?
- What are your short-term career goals and development needs?
- What development activities in your current job could build your skills and knowledge to help you work toward your target job?
- Are there formal learning opportunities (conferences, virtual trainings, classes) that you would like to participate in?

**Step 2: Choose your goals**

Now you are ready to start organizing and choosing which goals you want to focus on and writing them down. If you don’t have access to a standard form, you might consider capturing your career goals in the MyCareer@VA Workbook ([http://go.usa.gov/Wqx4](http://go.usa.gov/Wqx4)). Continued on the next page.
Work hard to set goals that will challenge you to be your best. For more guidance on writing strong goals, check out the “Creating Strong Goals” section of our IDP tips page (http://go.usa.gov/WqxP).

Step 3: Choose your developmental activities
As you draft your IDP, be sure to also identify the developmental activities that will help you reach your goals. Consider these learning and development resources available to you:

- **VA’s Talent Management System (TMS):** The TMS offers many courses (both online and classroom-based). Use the VA Career Guides (http://go.usa.gov/Wqxz) to find trainings that build skills for the job you have now and the job you want to have in the future.

- **On-the-job learning:** Studies suggest that 70% of learning happens while an employee is working on the job. Is there a challenging project, job rotation, or stretch assignment you could take on in the coming year?

- **Learning from others:** You can get valuable learning experiences by getting feedback from others. Job shadowing, mentorship, and peer feedback are just a few ways to get feedback that can help you in your development.

- **Learning through education:** Formal learning is another way to gain skills and knowledge. Some options include continued education classes, reading and research, or joining industry groups or communities of practice.

For more help writing goals and choosing developmental activities, see MyCareer@VA’s IDP tips at http://go.usa.gov/WqaW.

Step 4: Formalize your plan with your supervisor
Your supervisor is one of your most helpful resources in creating a successful IDP, so before your meeting, get ready by reviewing MyCareer@VA’s IDP conversation tips (http://go.usa.gov/Wqad). Or, if you are a supervisor, check out MyCareer@VA’s strategies for giving great advice to employees you supervise (http://go.usa.gov/WqaF).

With these four steps, you can create a plan for your next move that will help you all year long. Best of luck!

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**The Challenge Team Program**

**VA Employee Selected by White House to Participate in New Program**

Several months ago, VA employee Thomas Szymanek was asked by Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) representatives to apply for a brand new program designed by the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) White House Initiative and presented at the White House Initiative Federal Employee Conference entitled “The Challenge Team Program.” The Challenge Team Program is a new project-oriented, experiential training-based program targeted at developing skills for emerging Federal employee leaders while working to solve the dilemmas facing the Federal Government when addressing the needs of AAPI Federal employees and communities.

In early September, Mr. Szymanek received a notice from FAPAC and the White House that he was one of 24 individuals accepted to the program and the only individual representing VA (out of the 16 agencies/sub-agencies selected). In total, over 120 applicants applied representing over 40 different agencies. During the next six months, Mr. Szymanek will serve as the Team Lead of the Data Disaggregation Work Group/Think Tank to solve challenging issues facing the Federal Government when addressing the needs of AAPI communities.

Mr. Szymanek received the 2012 FAPAC Civilian Award for Outstanding Individual Leadership in the GS 1–10 category. The award, presented at FAPAC’s 27th Annual National Leadership Training Conference, was given in recognition of Mr. Szymanek’s significant contributions to the advancement of AAPI in VA. For more information on the VA FAPAC Chapter, visit http://www.vafapac.org.
Compliance Corner

Female Sexual Harassers: Is There a Difference?

Most managers recognize that inappropriate touching, lewd comments, stalking, and quid pro quo activities in the workplace cannot be tolerated and must be promptly and effectively addressed. When sexual harassment allegations are not timely or thoroughly investigated, employers will be held liable, through agency principles, for the actions of their employees, contractors, and volunteers. But what happens when the harasser is female and her victims are other female or male subordinates or co-workers? Are such cases handled differently because we normally view sexual harassment as involving women as victims and not perpetrators? Do cultural stereotypes about gender roles make it more difficult for employees who have been sexually harassed by women to come forward, and if sexual harassment is found, is the female harasser treated more leniently than a male harasser who engaged in similar conduct? Two recent cases involving VA employees illustrate these points.

While at a government conference, two events occurred which the Complainant, a male, found sexually offensive. The first incident involved the facility EEO Manager, who while extremely intoxicated, made sexually explicit gestures and comments to the Complainant. The next morning, the Complainant’s male supervisor called him over to his table at breakfast and also made sexually explicit gestures and comments to the Complainant. The Complainant testified that not only were these incidents humiliating and embarrassing, but they also made him feel so uncomfortable that he transferred to a lower paying position in a different department.

The EEO Manager was verbally counseled about her behavior and she offered to apologize to the Complainant. According to management officials, an oral counseling was sufficient discipline because they viewed the EEO Manager’s conduct as isolated and resulted from her intoxication. No discipline was given to the Complainant’s supervisor. Also, no investigation was conducted because management officials did not want to further embarrass the Complainant.

An EEOC administrative judge found that the Complainant was subjected to sexual harassment by both the EEO Manager and his supervisor. Although the EEO Manager’s sexual harassment of the Complainant occurred only once, the judge determined it was blatant and would be viewed as severe by a reasonable person. The judge further concluded that Complainant’s supervisor did nothing to remedy the situation, and instead made dismissive comments in public about what happened to the Complainant the night before. The judge concluded that VA was liable for the sexual harassment because agency managers knew about the conduct and failed to take prompt corrective action. And the action that was taken, an oral counseling, was an inadequate response to Complainant’s sexual harassment allegations. Complainant’s supervisor’s comments, while less severe, were insensitive, dismissive, and indicative of management’s view that the EEO Manager’s conduct was not to be taken seriously.

In the second case, the Complainant, a female, was the subject of sexual harassment by a female co-worker. The harassment included frequent phone calls, stalking, invitations for an intimate relationship, and arranging business travel and logistics to coordinate with those of the Complainant. After the Complainant told the co-worker that her conduct was unwelcome, she continued to call the Complainant excessively (15-20 times within 3 days) and again expressed interest in having a sexual relationship. Also, during a business conference the Complainant was forced to change hotels due to the co-worker’s stalking of her. The Complainant reported these incidents to management officials, but they failed to take prompt effective action to address the harassing behavior. It took management officials four months to counsel the harasser and over a year to finally remove the co-worker from her supervisory position. She was ultimately issued a letter of reprimand and required to undergo sexual harassment training. ~Maxanne R. Witkin, Director, VA’s Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication

For more information about OEDCA, visit http://www.oedca.va.gov.
Diversity@Work is published by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA’s) Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI), a program office within the Office of Human Resources and Administration (HR&A).

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OTHER USEFUL LINKS
HR&A http://www.va.gov/employee
VA’s Office of Human Resources Management http://www.va.gov/ohrm
VA’s Office of Resolution Management http://www.va.gov/orm
Resolution Support Center http://www.va.gov/ORM/RSC.asp
Veterans Health Administration’s Diversity and Inclusion Community of Practice Michael.Youngblood@va.gov

GOT NEWS?
We want to hear from you! If you’d like to share your story ideas, comments, or suggestions, e-mail us at odi@va.gov.

D&I Online

The mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs’ diversity and inclusion program is to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated, and strategic focus on diversity and inclusion as key components of the Department’s human resources strategies. Here's a sampling of online tools available at http://www.diversity.va.gov that can help leverage diversity and build inclusion:

► National Native American Heritage Month and other observance resources.
► Training resources, guides, and reports.
► Links to professional and community organizations.
► Best practices for diversity management.

D&I In Your E-mail Inbox

ODI sends out NewsLink, an e-mail message with annotated links to current news items and other information related to leveraging diversity and building inclusion. For a FREE subscription to this electronic news service, e-mail odi@va.gov with the words SUBSCRIBE NEWSLINK in the subject line. Find a sample of NewsLink at http://www.diversity.va.gov/products/newslink.aspx.

D&I on Your TV or PC

Diversity News is a video program co-produced by ODI and the VA Central Office Broadcast Center for you. Diversity News follows VA News on the VA Knowledge Network, Content Distribution Network, channel 2. Programs are also available at http://www.diversity.va.gov/products/dn.aspx.

November 2013 Calendar

http://www.diversity.va.gov/calendar

National Native American Heritage Month
National Family Caregivers Month
Military Family Month
National Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness Month
National Adoption Month
National Entrepreneurship Month

American Indian Science and Engineering Society National Conference
October 31–November 2; Denver, CO
http://www.aises.org

DeafNation Expo
November 2; Chicago, IL
http://deafnation.com

National Veterans Day Ceremony
November 11; Arlington National Cemetery
http://www.va.gov/opa/vetsday

Federal Interagency Diversity Partnership Annual Training Day
November 13; Washington, DC
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FIDP_Training_Day-2013

International Day of Tolerance
November 16

Native Youth Alliance’s 18th Annual Pipe Ceremony To Honor Veterans
November 17; Arlington National Cemetery
http://nativeyouthalliance.blogspot.com

Transgender Day of Remembrance
November 20

CAREERS & the disABLED Magazine’s Career Expo for People with Disabilities
November 22; Washington, DC
http://www.eop.com/expos.php

National Family Week
November 24–30

Thanksgiving Day
November 28