Message from the DAS

I would like to start the beginning of this new fiscal year with a reminder that all VA facilities should now be displaying in a public setting and at all VA personnel and EEO offices three posters from the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC). These posters are regarding Whistleblowing, Whistleblower Retaliation, and Prohibited Personnel Practices. If you have not yet seen these posted in your VA facility, please inform my office via email (odi@va.gov) and go directly to the VA Whistleblower Rights and Protections web page at http://www.diversity.va.gov/whistleblower.aspx to download and print copies.

There are also two OSC publications that should now be provided to all new VA hires: “Know Your Rights When Reporting Wrongs” and “Your Rights as a Federal Employee.” Those documents are also available on the VA Whistleblower Rights and Protections web page.

Finally, all VA executives, managers, and supervisors should have completed by September 30, 2014, mandatory training on "Whistleblower Rights and Protection and Prohibited Personnel Practices." If the course is not already in your individual learning plan in the Talent Management System (TMS), your organization’s TMS administrator can assist you by assigning curriculum DVA-034.

Each of these actions is a part of the Department’s resolute commitment to adhere to the requirements of OSC’s Section 2302(c) Certification Program. This program assists Federal agencies in meeting their statutory obligation to inform their workforces about prohibited personnel practices and their rights and remedies available to them under the whistleblower retaliation protection provisions of section 2302 of title 5 of the United States Code. You can learn more at http://osc.gov. Continued on the next page.

Commemorate National Disability Employment Awareness Month

VA joins the Nation in commemorating National Disability Employment Awareness Month observed during the month of October.

Each October, National Disability Employment Awareness Month, or NDEAM as it has become known, is a time to celebrate the many and varied contributions of America’s workers with disabilities. This year’s theme: "Expect. Employ. Empower." focuses on increasing opportunities for meaningful employment for individuals with disabilities. Continued on page 6.
DAS Message

Continued from Page 1

VA joins the Nation in commemorating numerous observances this month including Hispanic Heritage Month through October 15 as well as National Disability Employment Awareness Month, or NDEAM. Held each October, NDEAM offers VA an opportunity to raise awareness about disability employment issues and also commemorate the many and varied contributions of America’s workers with disabilities, particularly VA employees with disabilities, including Disabled Veterans.

October also marks National Domestic Violence Awareness Month and National Work and Family Month. You can read about these and other observances that occur during the month of October including Mental Illness Awareness Week, German-American Day, Leif Erikson Day, General Pulaski Memorial Day, Columbus Day, and Blind Americans Equality Day beginning on page 1. ~Georgia Coffey, VA Deputy Assistant Secretary for Diversity and Inclusion

Field Notes

Section 508 Guidance on Watermarks/Background Images

VA’s Section 508 Program Office (http://www.section508.va.gov) advises employees to avoid using background images and watermarks in documents. Although these elements can be hidden from screen readers, they may be problematic for people with low vision, or for people using screen magnification, who might have trouble distinguishing the foreground text from the background/watermark. As an alternative, if you need to make information prominent in documents (such as those designated DRAFT or FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY), place that kind of material only in either the document header or footer.

2014 National Veterans Day Poster

The 2014 National Veterans Day Poster is now available online at http://www.va.gov/opa/vetsday/gallery.asp. For questions, contact Micheal Migliara at 202-464-5386 or Micheal.Migliara@va.gov.

Training

Virtual Whistleblower Training for Supervisors and Managers

Join Office of General Counsel (OGC) Subject Matter Expert Shelley Cutts as she offers timely training on whistleblower protections in the workplace. The discussion features real life scenarios in the federal workplace. Bring your questions as well as your clients, they are all welcome at this valuable training session. This training will be held on Thursday, October 2, 2014, from 1 to 3 pm (EST) via Lync. Dial 1-855-767-1051, Conference ID: 66685651#. For questions or information on using Lync to attend, contact OGC’s Knowledge Management Professional Development Division at ogcknowledgemanagementProfessionalDevelopment@va.gov.

Diversity News

Like many VA employees, you may have some specific developmental goals that you want to include in your individual development plan (IDP) this fall. Did you know that there is a way to write your goals that can make you more likely to be successful? By using the SMART goal method, you can create tangible, action-oriented goals you can really achieve.

What is a SMART goal?

A SMART goal is one that is **Specific**, **Measurable**, **Attainable**, **Relevant**, and **Time-Bound**. Here’s how SMART goals work:

**Specific**

To be specific, your goal should be concrete and well-defined. It should identify what you are trying to achieve and who is responsible for completing each component of the goal. Start by asking yourself questions like:

- What exactly do I want to do?
- Are there certain steps I should take?
- Will I be using specific resources to reach my goal?
- Will I need to work with someone else?

So, for example, if your overarching goal is to improve your leadership skills, you can make that goal **specific** by saying:

*I am going to register for and take online training courses to improve my leadership skills.*

Note that this goal is still pretty vague. Keep reading to make it SMART.

**Measurable**

A goal should also have criteria you can use to track your progress and determine when you’ve been successful in reaching your goal. To make your goal measurable, it can help to think about the following questions:

- How will I know when I’ve accomplished my goal?
- Is there quantitative information I can include to make it easier to measure my progress?

Using the leadership training example, you can make your goal **measurable** by listing the number of courses you will take:

*I will complete four leadership courses.*

**Attainable**

Your goal can be a challenging one, but it should still be attainable. Make sure you have the time and resources needed to realistically reach your goal by considering these factors:

- How much time out of my regular schedule will it take to complete my goal?
- Will I reasonably be able to dedicate this amount of time?
- Will any funding be required to complete my goal, and if so, will I be able to obtain it?

In the leadership training example, you can make your goal **attainable** by planning to schedule a reasonable amount of time to train:

*I will dedicate one hour outside of my normal work schedule per week to complete leadership training.*

**Relevant**

To keep your goals relevant, make sure they are focused in the direction you want to go in your career. For example, if you are a nurse, you may set a goal to develop your therapeutic communication skills to improve your patient service. *Continued on the next page.*
To find activities that are relevant to your career, review the recommended training and development experiences for your job in the VA Career Guides (http://go.usa.gov/yNcJ), or review VA’s All Employee Competencies (http://go.usa.gov/yNxe) and Leadership Competencies (http://go.usa.gov/yNax) for the skills VA values in all of its employees and leaders. Then, consider questions like the following:

- Is this a reasonable goal for me in my current job?
- Will this goal help me move forward in my career?
- Does this goal support VA’s mission?

You can make the leadership training goal relevant by choosing the right level of leadership training:

I will take the TMS training course “Transitioning from Technical Professional to Management” (http://go.usa.gov/yNrC) to help me prepare for the transition to a management position.

**Time-Bound**

Finally, your goal needs a deadline to help you stay motivated. Think about how long it will take to complete your goal. Then, ask yourself questions like:

- Are there outside factors that will affect my timeline, such as objectives I’ll need to complete first?
- Are there things I should be doing along the way to keep myself on track?
- Are there any upcoming events that would influence my deadline?

To make the leadership training example time-bound, you can include a timeline for reminders and the goal’s completion date:

I will complete my goal before my IDP check-in with my supervisor at the end of January, and I will set a calendar reminder to check my progress on the 15th of each month.

**Putting it all together**

Once you’ve worked through the SMART method for each piece of your goal, you are ready to combine them into a SMART goal. For the leadership training example, the final SMART goal would look like this:

I am going to register for and take four online training courses to improve my leadership skills, including the TMS training course “Transitioning from Technical Professional to Management” (http://go.usa.gov/yNrC) to help me prepare for the transition to a management position. I will dedicate one hour outside of my normal work schedule per week to complete leadership training, so that I complete this goal before my IDP check-in with my supervisor at the end of January. I will also set a calendar reminder to check my progress on the 15th of each month.

**After you finish**

Now that you know how to use the SMART method, be sure to record your SMART goals in your IDP.

Want more help creating an IDP? Check out MyCareer@VA’s Tips for Creating Your IDP (http://go.usa.gov/yNrF) to get a good foundation. Also, if you are a supervisor, you may like MyCareer@VA’s course on Having Developmental Conversations (http://go.usa.gov/yNYT), which offers tips for talking with employees about SMART goals and IDPs. And as always, visit MyCareer@VA (http://go.usa.gov/yNY9) and the VA Learning University (http://go.usa.gov/yNrr) for more training and career development information.
Hope for Paralyzed Veterans

Two VA Scientists Honored with Awards for Groundbreaking Work on Spinal Cord Injuries

Thanks to the work of two VA scientists and researchers, many paralyzed Veterans now have a reason for hope. And a way to live. William A. Bauman, M.D., and Ann M. Spungen, Ph.D., Director and Associate Director of VA’s Rehabilitation Research & Development National Center of Excellence for the Medical Consequences of Spinal Cord Injury, were awarded the prestigious Samuel J. Heyman Science and Environment Medal, also known as the “Sammies.” The Science and Environment Medal is awarded to Federal employees who have made a significant contribution to the nation. The pair of VA researchers, who have been working together for a quarter of a century, were recognized in a ceremony in the Andrew Mellon Auditorium in Washington, D.C. VA Secretary Robert McDonald presented Bauman and Spungen their awards.

In 2001, Bauman and Spungen established the VA’s Rehabilitation Research & Development National Center of Excellence for the Medical Consequences of Spinal Cord Injury in Bronx, NY, where Spungen most recently tested a new bionic walking assistance system that enables individuals with paralysis to stand, walk, and climb stairs. As part of their collaboration, Bauman and Spungen have made great progress in understanding the effects of spinal cord injury on the body. Their work led to the conclusion that persons with spinal cord injury are at a markedly increased risk for heart disease. They were also the first to describe, and then treat, an asthma-like lung condition common in those with higher levels of paralysis. They have developed approaches to make it easier for paralyzed patients to undergo successful colonoscopies. With other researchers in their unit, Bauman and Spungen formulated novel drug combinations to raise low blood pressure, and they have overseen the development of treatments to reduce bone loss shortly after spinal cord injury. Their work has advanced the understanding and treatment of chronic, non-healing pressure ulcers. Researchers under their direction also are making strides toward improving understanding of body temperature regulation and the effect of swings in body temperature on one’s ability to think.

Bauman has worked at the Bronx VA hospital for 35 years, starting in the laboratory of the late Rosalyn Sussman Yalow, VA physicist and Nobel Prize winner. Bauman said he made up his mind from the start to devote himself to patients with spinal cord injury who, at the time, were largely marginalized and overlooked by physicians with training in general medicine. Spungen said she can recall being captivated by the sense of civic duty pervading Bauman’s energetic sphere of medical research activity at the hospital.

The Service to America Medals are presented by the Partnership for Public Service. This year, eight award winners were chosen from 33 finalists and almost 400 nominees. This article originally appeared online at http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2633.

The Center for Minority Veterans

CMV Celebrates 20th Anniversary

Minority Veterans have served the Nation from the Revolutionary War to Operation Enduring Freedom. VA’s Center for Minority Veterans (CMV) held a national 20th Anniversary celebration during the week of September 22, 2014, honoring the sacrifices minority Veterans have made and celebrating their successes in multiple sectors of society including the private sector, nonprofits, government, and within their communities. The celebration theme was “Making A Difference—Serving All Minority Veterans Who Served Our Nation.”

In 1994, CMV was created under Section 509 of Public Law 103-446 authorizing the VA Secretary to establish the Center to advise VA leadership on the adoption and implementation of policies and programs affecting minority Veterans and an Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans to supplement the program responsibility of the Center. For more information about CMV and the 20th anniversary celebration, visit http://www.va.gov/centerforminorityveterans/20years.asp.
Commemorate

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This theme emphasizes the dividend we all gain by increasing employment opportunities for workers with disabilities.

When a workplace is welcoming of people with disabilities, employers gain needed skills and new perspectives on ways to confront challenges and achieve organizational success. Employees with disabilities gain dignity, respect and self-determination. And, most importantly, society as a whole benefits from a more inclusive culture where every person is valued for his or her contributions.

NDEAM represents early efforts to affirm the intrinsic value of work for those with disabilities. Its roots go back to 1945 when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. In 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to "National Disability Employment Awareness Month."

On Thursday, October 16, 2014, VA’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) will sponsor the VA Central Office (VACO) National Disability Employment Awareness Month program in the G.V. “Sonny” Montgomery Veterans Conference Center, Room 230, from noon to 1:00 pm.

Download the NDEAM poster and read about the history of NDEAM at http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/ndeam/index-2014.htm.


For information on VA’s Individuals with Disabilities (IWD) Employment Program, contact Melissa Gibson, VA’s National Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator, at Melissa.Gibson@va.gov; Mr. Sterling Akins, Reasonable Accommodation Specialist, at Sterling.Akins@va.gov; or visit the IWD Employment Program web page at http://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/pwd.aspx. For information on VACO’s National Disability Employment Awareness Month event, contact Tynnetta Lee, Special Emphasis Observance Coordinator, ODI, at (202) 461-7968 or Tynnetta.Lee@va.gov.

National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

VA joins the Nation in observing National Domestic Violence Awareness Month this October. From the 2013 Presidential Proclamation (http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/09/30/presidential-proclamation-national-domestic-violence-awareness-month-201): Since the passage of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) nearly 20 years ago, our Nation’s response to domestic violence has greatly improved. What was too often seen as a private matter best hidden behind closed doors is now an established issue of national concern. We have changed our laws, transformed our culture, and improved support services for survivors. We have seen a significant drop in domestic violence homicides and improved training for police, prosecutors, and advocates. Yet we must do more to provide protection and justice for survivors and to prevent violence from occurring. During National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we stand with domestic abuse survivors, celebrate our Nation’s progress in combatting these despicable crimes, and resolve to carry on until domestic violence is no more.

Although we have made substantial progress in reducing domestic violence, one in four women and one in seven men in the United States still suffer serious physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner at least once during their lifetimes. Every day, three women lose their lives in this country as a result of domestic violence. Millions of Americans live in daily, silent fear within their own homes...Ending violence in the home is a national imperative that requires vigilance and dedication from every sector of our society. Continued on the next page.
Commemorate

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We must continue to stand alongside advocates, victim service providers, law enforcement, and our criminal justice system as they hold offenders accountable and provide care and support to survivors. But our efforts must extend beyond the criminal justice system to include housing and economic advocacy for survivors. We must work with young people to stop violence before it starts. We must also reach out to friends and loved ones who have suffered from domestic violence, and we must tell them they are not alone. I encourage victims, their loved ones, and concerned citizens to learn more by calling the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE, or by visiting www.TheHotline.org.

This October, let us honor National Domestic Violence Awareness Month by promoting peace in our own families, homes, and communities. Let us renew our commitment to end domestic violence—in every city, every town, and every corner of America.

German-American Day

VA joins the Nation in observing German-American Day on October 6. From the 2013 Presidential Proclamation (http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/10/04/presidential-proclamation-german-american-day-2013): Since the first German settlers joined the Jamestown colony in 1608, German Americans have helped shape our identity—the small band of families who left the banks of the Rhine to found Germantown, Pennsylvania; the men, women, and children who fled the tyranny of fascism; the multitudes who sailed across the Atlantic to seek liberty and opportunity on our shores. On German-American Day, we celebrate the vibrant threads of German heritage woven into our national fabric.

Over the centuries, German Americans have participated in every sector of our society. They have helped steer our Nation’s journey—as artists and scientists, as journalists who tested the limits of a free press, as titans of industry, and as workers who turned the gears of industrial revolution. Today, nearly one in four Americans can trace their ancestry to Germany, and all of us are inheritors to the values and traditions handed down through generations of German Americans. As close partners in the global community, the United States and Germany work side-by-side to advance our common interests and common ideals: freer societies, cleaner skies, peoples empowered to choose their own destinies, greater prosperity for our two nations and for the world. Today, as we celebrate the contributions of German Americans across a wide breadth of history, let us renew the bonds of friendship between our two peoples.

Leif Erikson Day

VA joins the Nation observing Leif Erikson Day on October 9. From the 2013 Presidential Proclamation (http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/10/08/presidential-proclamation-leif-erikson-day-2013): More than a millennium ago, Leif Erikson, a son of Iceland and grandson of Norway, cast off from Norway’s familiar shores and set sail for Greenland. Erikson and his crew were not aiming to make history. But their ship drifted off course in the North Atlantic, and they landed in present-day Canada, making them the first Europeans known to visit North America. Their settlement, Vinland, sustained them in the following months. And when the seafarers returned to Greenland, they brought stories of discovery with them and forged the first link in a chain that has connected our continents ever since.

Today, we commemorate Leif Erikson’s journey. We also honor a group of Norwegian immigrants who summoned that same striving spirit centuries later. Together, in 1825, they braved uncertain waters with hope in their hearts, confident that greater opportunity and brighter horizons awaited them on American shores. The travelers were among the first to complete the voyage from Norway to New York City. And just as Leif Erikson had, they lit the way for generations to follow.

These stories reaffirm that America has always been a place of unbounded promise. Continued on the next page.
Commemorate

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We are home to explorers and entrepreneurs, immigrants and innovators. We endeavor to be a country where anyone who is willing to work hard and take risks can turn even the most improbable idea into something great. On Leif Erikson Day, we celebrate that legacy and the countless Norwegian Americans who have lived it, and we carry it forward in the years ahead.

To honor Leif Erikson and celebrate our Nordic-American heritage, the Congress, by joint resolution (Public Law 88-566) approved on September 2, 1964, has authorized the President of the United States to proclaim October 9 of each year as "Leif Erikson Day."

General Pulaski Memorial Day

VA joins the Nation in observing General Pulaski Memorial Day on October 11. From the 2013 Presidential Proclamation (http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/10/10/presidential-proclamation-general-pulaski-memorial-day-2013): Today, we honor the memory of Brigadier General Casimir Pulaski, the Polish-born hero of the American Revolutionary War. General Pulaski's devotion to liberty knew no boundaries, and his bravery on the battlefield helped secure our independence. He sacrificed his life in defense of our freedom, and each year on October 11—the anniversary of his death—we honor his sacrifice and service and reflect on the contributions made by so many Polish-Americans throughout our Nation's history.

A skilled cavalryman even as a youth, Casimir Pulaski spent years defending his native Poland from foreign domination. Unable to win Polish sovereignty, Pulaski found a kindred cause in the fledgling American Nation. Encouraged by Benjamin Franklin, he set sail across the Atlantic in 1777 to join the Revolutionary forces. "I could not submit to stoop before the sovereigns of Europe," he later wrote to Congress, "So I came to hazard all for the freedom of America."

Casimir Pulaski quickly distinguished himself at the Battle of Brandywine, where his courageous charge covered General George Washington's retreat, saving Washington's life. The Continental Congress promoted him to Brigadier General, and for his command on horseback, he became known as the "Father of the American Cavalry." Pulaski went on to form an independent cavalry legion, comprised of men from across Europe and America. While leading this unit, General Pulaski was mortally wounded. He did not live to see the Revolution's end, but he died with hope that our Nation would be free.

On General Pulaski Memorial Day, we celebrate the rights and freedoms Pulaski fought for, and we honor the generations of Polish-Americans who have contributed to our society and defended our Nation since its founding. We also reflect on the steadfast, enduring friendship between the United States and Poland, which have long shared the ideals of freedom and democracy. Through this alliance, and our proud Polish heritage, Casimir Pulaski's legacy lives on.

Columbus Day

VA joins the Nation in commemorating the contributions of Italian Americans by observing Columbus Day on October 13. From the 2013 Presidential Proclamation (http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/10/11/presidential-proclamation-columbus-day-2013): Late in the summer of 1492, Christopher Columbus, a renowned navigator and fearless adventurer, set out with three ships into uncharted waters. He hoped to discover a new route to the east—opening trade routes for precious spices and paving the way for his patrons, Ferdinand II and Isabella I, to expand their empire. Instead, more than two months later, his crew spotted the Bahamas, and our world was changed forever.

A son of Genoa, Italy, Columbus blazed a trail for generations of Italians who followed his path across the Atlantic. As we mark the anniversary of his voyage, our Nation embraces the many ways Italian Americans have enriched our culture and our communities—as soldiers who defend our Nation in times of war, as leaders and laborers, as educators and entrepreneurs. Continued on the next page.
This deep-rooted heritage has come to define who we are as a Nation, and it has helped us forge an extraordinary transatlantic partnership with the people of Italy.

As Christopher Columbus and his crew made landfall, they could not have foreseen the ways in which their journey would shake contemporary understanding of the world, or the lasting mark their arrival would leave on the Native American societies they encountered. So as we celebrate the bold legacy of Christopher Columbus, we also pay tribute to the honorable yet arduous history of Native Americans, with whom the United States will always maintain strong nation-to-nation relationships.

As today’s dreamers, explorers, scientists, and engineers set their sights on the next great discovery, may they be inspired by Christopher Columbus’s tale of unbounded courage and unwavering spirit. And as we pursue knowledge and progress, may we never lose sight of our shared humanity.

In commemoration of Christopher Columbus’s historic voyage 521 years ago, the Congress, by joint resolution of April 30, 1934, and modified in 1968 (36 U.S.C. 107), as amended, has requested the President proclaim the second Monday of October of each year as “Columbus Day.”

Blind Americans Equality Day

VA joins the Nation in observing Blind Americans Equality Day on October 15. From the 2013 Presidential Proclamation (http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/10/11/presidential-proclamation-blind-americans-equality-day-2013): Blind and visually impaired persons have always played an important role in American life and culture, and today we recommit to our goals of full access and opportunity. Whether sprinting across finish lines, leading innovation in business and government, or creating powerful music and art, blind and visually impaired Americans imagine and pursue ideas and goals that move our country forward. As a Nation, it is our task to ensure they can always access the tools and support they need to turn those ideas and goals into realities...In June of this year, the United States joined with over 150 countries in approving a landmark treaty that aims to expand access for visually impaired persons and other persons with print disabilities to information, culture, and education. By facilitating access to books and other printed material, the treaty holds the potential to open up worlds of knowledge. If the United States becomes a party to this treaty, we can reduce the book famine that confronts the blind community while maintaining the integrity of the international copyright framework.

The United States was also proud to join 141 other countries in signing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2009, and we are working toward its ratification. Americans with Disabilities, including those who are blind or visually impaired, should have the same opportunities to work, study, and travel in other countries as any other American, and the Convention can help us realize that goal.

To create a more level playing field and ensure students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum, the Department of Education issued new guidance in June for the use of Braille as a literacy tool under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act...We have come a long way in our journey toward a more perfect Union, but we still have work ahead. We must fulfill the promise of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and expand the freedom to make of our lives what we will. On this day, we celebrate the accomplishments of our blind and visually impaired citizens, and we recommit to building a Nation where all Americans, including those who are blind or visually impaired, live with the assurance of equal opportunity and equal respect.

By joint resolution approved on October 6, 1964 (Public Law 88-628, as amended), the Congress designated October 15 of each year as “White Cane Safety Day” to recognize the contributions of Americans who are blind or have low vision. Today, let us recommit to ensuring we remain a Nation where all our people, including those with disabilities, have every opportunity to achieve their dreams.
VA's workforce diversity remains relatively steady through August 2014. Although the VA workforce increased by 9,087 employees since the beginning of the fiscal year, the changes in representation for all groups in VA's permanent and temporary workforce were negligible.

Comparing the demographic characteristics of VA's workforce against the Relevant Civilian Labor Force (RCLF)*, the representation of White women, Hispanic men and women, and Asian men are lower than expected. White women representation is currently at 77 percent of its respective RCLF, Hispanic men are at 80 percent, Hispanic women are at 62 percent, and Asian men are at 95 percent of their respective RCLF.

Diversity Index

The Diversity Index is a single measure of workforce diversity that measures the convergence of VA's aggregate workforce distribution by race, ethnicity, and gender to the Civilian Labor Force (CLF)** or RCLF. Since September 2013, the RCLF-based diversity index increased 0.56 percent and the CLF-based diversity index increased 0.56 percent.

Individuals with Targeted Disabilities

The proportion of individuals with targeted disabilities in VA's workforce has increased by 0.10 percentage points since the beginning of the fiscal year. We continue to exceed the Secretary's 2 percent onboard goal.

The hiring of individuals with targeted disabilities also increased since the start of the fiscal year. Among all hires, individuals with targeted disabilities represent 3.31 percent, 0.31 percentage points above the Secretary's 3 percent hiring goal. Let's keep up the good work, VA!

For more information, contact ODI's Workforce Analysis Team at odi@va.gov.

*Relevant Civilian Labor Force (RCLF) reflects all U.S. Citizens 16 years of age or over, excluding those in Armed Forces, who are employed in or actively seeking employment in VA specific occupations. This is based on the 2010 Census and does include Puerto Rico. The RCLF seen here is based on the end of FY13.

**Civilian Labor Force (CLF) consists of all U.S. Citizens 16 years of age or over, excluding those in Armed Forces, who are employed or seeking employment. The CLF contains all occupations and is an accurate comparative basis for Federal Government-wide comparison, the largest employer in the U.S. with all occupations represented. This is based on the 2010 Census which is shown to be a higher benchmark compared with the 2000 Census. The CLF does not include Puerto Rico.
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](http://www.diversity.va.gov) that can help leverage diversity and build inclusion:

- National Disability Employment Awareness 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](mailto: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](http://www.diversity.va.gov/products/newslink.aspx).

D&I on Your TV or PC


October 2014 Calendar

[http://www.diversity.va.gov/calendar](http://www.diversity.va.gov/calendar)

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