Commemorate
Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

VA joins the Nation in commemorating the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 26. As of May 31, self-identified employees with disabilities represented 14.35 percent of the VA workforce. Employees with targeted disabilities represented 2.16 percent of the VA workforce, exceeding VA’s two percent onboard goal (in effect since fiscal year 2013). Veterans with service-related disabilities represented 13.44 percent of the VA workforce. (Continued on the next page.)
Commemorate

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From the 2016 Presidential Proclamation: On July 26, 1990, our Nation marked a pivotal moment in history for Americans with disabilities. Fueled by a chorus of voices who refused to accept a second-class status and driven by a movement that recognized that our country is stronger and more vibrant when we draw on the talents of all our people, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) enshrined into law the notion that Americans living with disabilities deserve to participate in our society free from discrimination. Twenty-six years later, as we mark this anniversary, we recognize all this milestone law has made possible for the disability community.

The ADA sought to guarantee that the places we share -- from schools and workplaces to stadiums and parks -- truly belong to everyone. It reflects our Nation's full commitment to the rights and independence of people with disabilities, and it has paved the way for a more inclusive and equal society. For the 6.5 million students and the approximately 50 million adults living with mental or physical disabilities, the ADA has swung open doors and empowered each of them to make of their lives what they will...As we commemorate this progress, we know our work to expand opportunity and confront the stigma that persists surrounding disabilities is not yet finished: We have to address the injustices that linger and remove the barriers that remain. Too many people with disabilities are still unemployed and lack access to skills training or are not paid fairly for their work. We must continue increasing graduation rates for students with disabilities to give them every chance to receive the education and training they need to pursue their dreams. We must make the information and communication technologies we rely on accessible for all people, and ensure their needs are considered and incorporated as we advance the tools of modern life. And we must keep fighting for more consistent and effective enforcement of the ADA in order to prevent discrimination in public services and accommodations.

At a time when so many doubted that people with disabilities could contribute to our economy or support their families, the ADA assumed they could, and guided the way forward. Today, as we reflect on the courage and commitment of all who made this achievement possible, let us renew our obligation to extend the promise of the American dream to all our people, and let us recommit to building a world free of unnecessary barriers and full of deeper understanding of those living with disabilities.

For more information on VA’s Individuals with Disabilities Employment Program, visit VA’s Individuals with Disabilities Program webpage.

Policy Alert

Transgender Employee Transition Guide

Handbook 5975.4, Transgender Employee Transition Guide, is now available on the VA Publications webpage. The Guide is meant to support VA managers, supervisors, and employees by providing information on laws, policies, and tips on facilitating a smooth and supportive transition for employees who identify as a gender different from their sex assigned at birth, and are undergoing gender transition in the workplace. For more information, contact Mr. Sterling Akins, VA’s National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Program Manager.
Training

**LULAC Convention**
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) 88th Annual National Convention and Exposition will be held July 4-8, 2017, at the Henry 8. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas. This year’s convention theme is “Our Strength: Education and Empowerment.” LULAC’s mission is to advance the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, housing, health, and civil right of the Hispanic population of the United States. The LULAC Federal Training Institute will provide attendees with workshops and plenary sessions that enable government employees and other employees to enhance their leadership skills and develop the Executive Core Qualifications required for entry to the Senior Executive Service. VA employees who plan to attend are responsible for obtaining supervisory approvals. Please note that centralized funding is not available for attendance. Registration and/or travel must be funded by the employee’s benefitting program office. Following supervisory and budget approval, attendees who wish to participate in the conference must also register through the LULAC Web site. For more information, contact Ms. Edith Perry, VA’s National Hispanic Employment Program Manager, ODI.

**FEW NTP**
Federally Employed Women (FEW) 48th Annual National Training Program (NTP) will be held July 17-20, 2016, at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside in New Orleans, Louisiana. This year’s convention theme is “Investing in Our Future.” FEW maps every training session to the guidelines of the Office of Personnel Management’s Senior Executive Service, Executive Core Qualifications (Leading Change, Leading People, Results Driven, Business Acumen, Building Coalitions) and the underlying fundamental core competencies. VA employees who plan to attend the NTP are responsible for obtaining supervisory approvals. Please note that centralized funding is not available for attendance. Registration and/or travel must be funded by the employee’s benefitting program office. Following supervisory and budget approval, attendees who wish to participate in the conference must also register through the FEW Web site. For more information, contact Ms. Mercedes N. Kirkland-Doyle, VA’s National Federal Women’s Program Manager, ODI.

**Barrier Analysis Training**
Barrier Analysis Training covers all aspects of the barrier analysis process under Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Management Directive 715 to include analysis and interpretation of workforce statistics, trigger identification, barrier analysis investigation, preparing action plans, and following up on the action plan. This training will allow participants to work through the majority of the process using VA specific workforce statistics. Attendees must register through the VA Talent Management System. The course will be offered on the following dates from 1:00 to 4:00 pm (EST):
- Thursday, July 27, 2017
- Thursday, August 17, 2017
- Thursday, September 21, 2017
For more information, contact Ms. Ryan Pugh, Management Analyst, ODI.

**VSSC Training**
VISN Support Service Center, or VSSC, training is designed to alert a wide range of managers, human resources specialists, EEO specialists, 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 validate or begin to address potential barriers to equal employment opportunities at VA. Attendees must register through the VA Talent Management System. This interactive training will be offered on the following dates from 10 to 11:30 am (EST):
- Tuesday, August 8, 2017
- Tuesday, September 26, 2017
For more information, contact Ms. Camille Whitfield, Management Analyst, ODI.

**Diversity News**
Diversity News is a 15-minute video produced by ODI and the VA Central Office Broadcast Center. Current and past episodes are available on the ODI Web site. The current edition focuses on updates to the VA Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan, training offered by ODI’s Workforce Analysis Team, the World Café concept, and the Vets to Feds program.