Commemorate
Women’s History Month

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) joins the Nation in commemorating Women’s History Month this March by acknowledging past and present achievements of women along with their ongoing work in bringing about a brighter future for us all.

This year’s Women’s History Month theme, as established by the National Women’s History Alliance (NWHA), honors “Visionary Women: Champions of Peace and Non-Violence.” The NWHA celebrates women who have worked to resolve conflicts on inequality, war, and social injustices. These women worked to build a new vision on issues such as women’s rights and racial justice. Their bravery and determination have helped women throughout the country realize their human rights and work for full inclusion in society and the workplace.

In 2019, NWHA will honor eleven extraordinary women who have impacted the world in unique ways. One of the women being honored this year is Deborah Tucker who dedicated her work to ending violence at the local, state, national, and international levels through founding and leading several organizations. She co-chaired the Defense Task Force on Domestic Violence which examined the military’s response to domestic and sexual violence and is the current President of the Board of Directors of the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence.

This March, VA encourages organizations and facilities to recognize achievements of women by organizing activities targeted at raising awareness, increasing knowledge, and addressing any identified barriers to the full employment and inclusion of women in the VA.

For more information about Women’s History Month, contact your local EEO or Federal Women’s Program Manager or Ms. Sehar Minhas, VA’s National Federal Women’s Program Manager, at (202) 461-4036 or Sehar.Minhas@va.gov. For more information on VA’s Federal Women’s Program, visit the ODI Web page at https://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/women.aspx.
2019 Women Veteran Trailblazer Initiative
Join VA in Celebrating the Accomplishments of Numerous Women Veterans from Across the Nation

The Center for Women Veterans (CWV) announces its 2019 Women Veteran Trailblazer Initiative. CWV recognizes 16 women Veterans selected from across the Nation. These phenomenal women blazed the trail for others to follow and continue to give back to their communities.

Join VA as the Department celebrates their accomplishments at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial (WIMSA) on Wednesday, March 6, 2019 at 2 pm.

You are also invited to attend a ceremony and view a documentary featuring these amazing women on Thursday, March 7, at noon, at VA Central Office, Room 230, in the G.V (Sonny) Montgomery Veterans Conference Center.

For more information, email 00W@va.gov.

The documentary will be available online after March 7 at https://www.va.gov/womenvet.

VA Launches Self-Reporting of Disabilities Resurvey Campaign
I Report Because I CARE About People with Disabilities

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is proud to launch the “I Report Because I CARE About People with Disabilities Campaign,” a resurvey campaign to encourage self-reporting of disabilities through Standard Form 256 during fiscal years 2019 and 2020. This campaign will enable VA to identify needed resources and aid VA in the attainment of a Model Equal Employment Opportunity Program in relation to the Recruiting, Hiring, Advancement, Promotion, and Advancement of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and Persons with Targeted Disabilities (PWTDs). As such, VA must be able to accurately capture the participation of PWDs and PWTDs within its current workforce. The memorandum, plan, and resources are for implementation at all VA organizational levels. Face to face and virtual resurvey efforts are highly encouraged. To see the full package, please visit VA’s Individuals with Disabilities Employment Program webpage at https://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/pwd.aspx.

Training
Blacks In Government (BIG) VA Headquarters Chapter/Federally Employed Women (FEW) Real Talk Series

Participate in the Blacks In Government (BIG) VA Headquarters Chapter/Federally Employed Women (FEW) Real Talk Series on Thursday, March 14, 2019, from noon to 1 pm in VA Central Office (810 Vermont Ave. NW), Room 530, featuring special guest Ms. Lucille B. Beck, PhD, Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Policy and Services, at VA.

“Real Talk” is a fun, interactive series that allows senior leadership to discuss their career progression in the government and provide (Real Talk) tips that are essential to succeed and reach their full potential. As time permits, there will be a discussion of the importance of employee engagement within the workplace. This session is open to ALL VA EMPLOYEES.

Join the meeting on Skype or join by phone:
844-376-0278, access code: 471023106 (East)
844-815-1331, access code: 471023106 (East)
844-770-5400, access code: 471023106 (East)

Light refreshments will be served, and space is limited; please RSVP if planning to attend in person.

For more information, contact Mr. Dwayne Mitchell, President of BIG VA Headquarters Chapter, at Dwayne.Mitchell@va.gov or Ms. Ethel Sligh, Interim President of FEW, at Ethel.Sligh@va.gov.
LET’S TALK!
Sexual orientation and gender identity matter in health care.

LGBT Health Awareness Week
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Program
Office of Primary Care Services
LGBTProgram@va.gov
Commemorate

Irish-American Heritage Month
VA joins the Nation in observing Irish-American Heritage Month this March. Taken from the 2018 Presidential Proclamation (https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/president-donald-j-trump-proclaims-march-2018-irish-american-heritage-month):

*During the month of St. Patrick’s Day, we celebrate Irish-American Heritage Month and the tremendous role Irish immigrants and their descendants have played in the development of our great Nation. Irish-American Heritage Month is a great opportunity to celebrate the nearly 33 million Americans with Irish ancestry and their tremendous contributions to the betterment of our country. This month, and every month, we appreciate their efforts in helping usher in a new era of American prosperity.*

*Irish Americans have distinguished themselves in every sector of American life. Many have been among the key architects of our country’s greatness. Nine of the men who signed our Declaration of Independence were of Irish origin. Presidents Andrew Jackson, John F. Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, and many others have traced their roots to the Emerald Isle. Businessman Henry Ford, founder of one of America’s most iconic companies, was the son of an Irish immigrant.*

*For centuries, the tenacious Irish spirit, paired with American self-reliance, has helped Irish immigrants and their descendants realize incredible dreams. With religious devotion, strength rooted in the love of family, and confidence in the promise of America, Irish Americans have engaged in the American experience in robust and meaningful ways. Their neighborhoods, schools, churches, and workplaces have affirmed the importance of faith, industry, and learning. It is, therefore, no wonder that American art, business, and public life are marked by Irish names and symbols.*

*This month, Americans across the country will don the traditional green garb as we celebrate the patron saint of Ireland in an annual tribute to our shared and cherished heritage with that great country. As we spend this month honoring Irish Americans, we also pledge to further strengthen our relationship with the Emerald Isle itself, as we look forward to a bright future of greater friendship, cooperation, and commerce for centuries to come.*

LGBT Health Awareness Week
VA joins the Nation in observing March 25-29, 2019, as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Health Awareness Week. To mark the event, facilities can display the commemorative poster on the previous page and help make Veterans with LGBT and related identities feel welcome. Veterans may have other ways of describing themselves, so the term “LGBT and related identities” is used to inclusively recognize the full range of sexual orientation and gender identity minorities.

All Veterans are welcome at VA, including those who identify as a sexual or gender minority. Sexual and gender minority Veterans have faced stigma and discrimination, which can affect health. As a healthcare institution, VA must work to make sure that Veterans with LGBT and related identities know that they are welcome at VA. Research shows that LGBT Veterans expect to experience discrimination in VHA facilities which may prevent engagement in care. Research also shows that due to stigma, stress, and discrimination, LGBT Veterans as a group experience higher rates of several health conditions compared to non-LGBT Veterans, including higher risk for suicide. Therefore, VA is working to reduce their stress and to engage sexual and gender minority Veterans in order to provide health care that addresses their needs.

VA is working toward becoming a national leader in health care for all Veterans, including LGBT Veterans, and strives to provide high-quality care in sensitive, respectful environments nationwide. For more information about VA’s LGBT Health Program, visit https://www.patientcare.va.gov/LGBT. For access to the LGBT Health Awareness Week SharePoint site, email VA’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Health Program, Population Health at VA Central Office, at LGBTProgram@va.gov.