

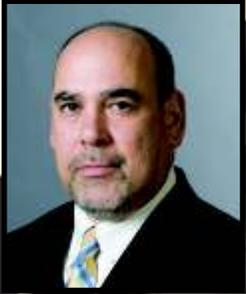


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2008 ANNUAL REPORT



Medical Center Director's Message



"I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I do know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve."

- Albert Schweitzer

Of the many meanings of service, undoubtedly the one that stands out is military service in defense of our nation's democracy and its citizenry. That's why it's such a privilege to work each day in service to those who served – America's veterans.

In 2008, the "Flagship of VA Health Care" served in a manner that brought pride to our staff and volunteers - and to VA. This annual report reflects that pride by presenting the milestones of this year's operations; enhancements in the use of electronic technology to improve patient care, management policies that ensure timely access to care, patient safety and satisfaction, and business practices that reflect quality care delivered efficiently, making the most effective use of resources and funds.

We have accomplished this in a year when we expanded services for OEF/OIF veterans, blinded veterans, homeless veterans and female veterans, initiated necessary construction improvements and strengthened our workforce to better serve all of our patients.

This year, the staff and volunteers of the Washington DC VA Medical Center sought and found a new way of defining our service to veterans of the capital city. We've joined together all of our many jobs into just one. By unifying our service, we've strengthened it. And, we intend to carry this strength of purpose into 2009. We have a challenging and complex task, but no matter what our roles – clinical or administrative – we all have one job, "We take care of veterans!"

new executive leaders

Odeal Scott-Bedford Chief, Facility Management and Engineering Service

Ms. Scott-Bedford joins "The Flagship of VA Health Care" from the VA Medical Center in Fayetteville, N.C.. She is responsible for construction, equipment repair and upgrades to the facility. Ms. Scott-Bedford holds a B. A. in Biomedical Engineering from Louisiana Tech University.



Thomas E. Ross Sr. Chief, Environmental Management Service (EMS)

Mr. Ross is responsible for planning and directing sanitation services, interior design, hazardous waste management and linen management operations. He received his B.S. in Health Care Services from Southern Illinois University and a M.A. in Management and Supervision and Health Care Administration from Central Michigan University.



Nancy Lansing Safety Officer

Ms. Lansing is responsible for oversight of all safety programs including industrial hygiene, emergency management and Green Environmental Management Services (GEMS). She previously served as a Navy Nurse Corps officer. She received her B.S. in Nursing from Russell Sage College and her M.S. in Management from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.



employee highlights

Employee of the year



Housekeeping Aide, **Carlos Moore**, was named the Washington DC VA Medical Center Employee-of-the-Year at a ceremony on April 25. Mr. Moore was selected due to his "relentless efforts to achieve high standards and his extraordinary positive attitude," according to Medical Center Director Fernando O. Rivera.

Employee Appreciation Day



DCVAMC employees are appreciated and rewarded for their dedication to service. Significant reductions in staff turnover confirm their commitment to the mission of serving our nation's veterans. Each and every employee and volunteer was recognized for our year of achievement at a series of Employee Appreciation Holiday Celebrations held on December 15.

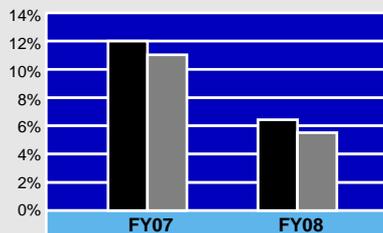
Executive Leadership Training



In 2008, the DCVAMC Office of Diversity and Inclusion, formerly the Equal Employment Opportunity Office (EEO), developed the Executive Leadership Training Series, which offers four training sessions for supervisors and managers. The first session focused on the

Federal-sector EEO process and included topics on EEO counseling, investigations and Alternative Dispute Resolution. Session two dealt with Human Relations. The third session on Crisis Communications included an expert panel discussion featuring WUSA9 TV co-anchor Derek McGinty, Matt Smith, then Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, VACO; and Daniel C. Devine, Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary and Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional & Legislative Affairs. The fourth session highlighted Cultural Diversity and featured Georgia Coffey, VA Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Diversity and Inclusion. The videotaped session was presented to a national audience and is considered a VA "Best Practice".

Employee Turnover rate



30% Decrease

■ All Employee Turnover Rate
■ RN Turnover Rate

Hired an additional 172.8 FTEE since October 2007!

50 years of service



Dr. George White, Chief of General Surgery, has more than 50 years of government service. White, a veteran himself, has achieved many milestones during his tenure at the Medical Center, including starting one of the first VA Breast Clinics in 1986, and performing the first laparoscopic surgery at the DCVAMC in 1992. White says, "I love my work too much to stop."

community of caring

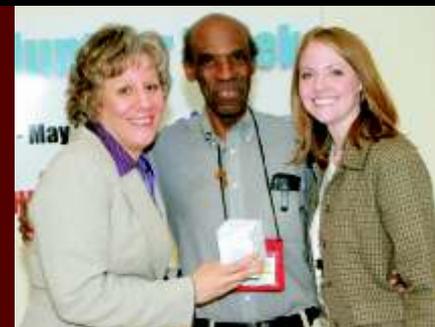
Voluntary Service

(administers donations and manages volunteer staff)

Cash donations: \$ 169,982
Activity donations: \$ 37,146

Regular volunteers: 875
Volunteer man- hours: 77,676

Participating VSOs: 33



DCVAMC volunteers and Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) complement the care provided at DCVAMC by giving their time, talent and donations to support veterans receiving treatment. Additionally, VSOs provide vehicles and volunteer drivers and support special events and projects of the Medical Center.

Medical Program Highlights



A Medical Technology Leader – DCVAMC clinicians take great pride in creating innovative and enhanced uses for technology that advance patient care. Once such innovation, a first for VA and the nation, is the use of technology to send EKGs from the emergency department directly to physicians' Blackberry devices. EKGs help cardiologists determine if a patient is having a heart attack. When minutes count, having the ability to email EKGs to an on-call cardiologist can be the difference between life and death. The American Heart Association recognized this DCVAMC initiative as a first at a scientific conference held in November in New Orleans.

Working Hand-in-Hand with the Department of Defense – DCVAMC is the pilot site for the joint DOD/VA Disability Evaluation System (DES) all-in-one examination for active duty personnel on referral from their military disability board. This exam determines both fitness to return to duty and provides the soldier a rating for his/her VA benefits. Over 800 service members participated in the DES pilot at the Medical Center. It was so successful that the program will now roll-out to 20 other military bases and VHA facilities. Additionally, DCVAMC and Walter Reed Army Medical Center are working together under a two-year grant to provide renal transplants to veterans. Renal transplant offers the best survival rate and quality of life to patients with end-stage kidney disease. This cooperative agreement helps veterans expedite transplant services.



OEF/OIF Services – DCVAMC's new Polytrauma Rehabilitation unit with expanded space and equipment will be a center of state-of-the-art treatment and rehabilitation for returning combat veterans. The facility provides occupational and physical therapy, aquatic therapy, acupuncture, yoga and massage, Wii Therapy and has a driver simulation unit.



Spearheading Communications – DCVAMC has many programs to improve patient-clinician communications. As a leading pilot site for the web-based health management portal, My HealtheVet, the facility engages veterans to take charge of their well-being by using this tool. Veterans who register can track their health care (vital signs, appointments, prescriptions) and share information with providers. Additionally, DCVAMC is one of four VA hospitals testing new software that will allow for secure patient-clinician communications via the Internet. To date, twenty-four patients and six primary care providers participate in the test. Current plans are to further expand this program in 2009.



Enhancements in Equipment – DCVAMC now has a computer-controlled rotary chair for testing patients with dizziness and balance problems. By using infrared video goggles, the chair tests inner ear functioning. Clinicians believe rotary chair testing improve diagnosis of balance problems that trouble returning combat veterans with mild traumatic brain injury.



Expanding Services and Saving Dollars – DCVAMC Dermatology Service established a surgery center that has saved the facility \$2,200 per patient. Additionally, Dermatology Service utilizes technology to offer "telemedicine exams" to patients at the facility's four Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC). And, through the use of telemedicine, DCVAMC's Mental Health Service is able to provide psychiatric counseling in CBOCs closer to veterans' homes.

Blind Rehabilitation – In September an in-house training program for legally blind veterans was established. It includes comprehensive vision exams to determine the level of impairment and the life-skills training needed to lead independent lives. To date 55 visually impaired veterans have received the exams and 13 have completed the training program. Program staff has been expanded to include three Low-Vision Therapists, a Low-Vision Optometrist and administrative personnel.



performance measures

DISEASE MANAGEMENT

	FY08
Hypertension Well Controlled	
Veterans Health Administration	75.00%
Washington DC VA Medical Center	78.70%
Diabetes Mellitus, Hypertension Well Controlled	
Veterans Health Administration	78.00%
Washington DC VA Medical Center	84.60%
Cholesterol, After Heart Attack Well Controlled	
Veterans Health Administration	66.00%
Washington DC VA Medical Center	70.80%
Community Acquired Pneumonia, Timely Treated with Antibiotics	
Veterans Health Administration	93.00%
Washington DC VA Medical Center	93.20%

RECOGNIZED IMPROVEMENTS

	FY08
Offered Medication to Assist with smoking cessation	
Veterans Health Administration	92.00%
Washington DC VA Medical Center	93.20%
Pneumococcal Vaccination _Outpatient	
Veterans Health Administration	94.00%
Washington DC VA Medical Center	95.00%
Screened for at risk alcohol usage	
Veterans Health Administration	91.00%
Washington DC VA Medical Center	96.00%

ACCESS TO CARE

Patients (New) Seen Within 30 Days of Request	
Audiology -Veterans Health Administration	90.00%
Audiology - Washington DC VAMC	99.80%
Cardiology - Veterans Health Administration	91.00%
Cardiology - Washington DC VAMC	97.50%
GI -Veterans Health Administration	87.00%
GI - Washington DC VAMC	97.60%
Primary Care -Veterans Health Administration	94.00%
Primary Care -Washington DC VAMC	98.30%
Urology -Veterans Health Administration	89.00%
Urology - Washington DC VAMC	94.80%

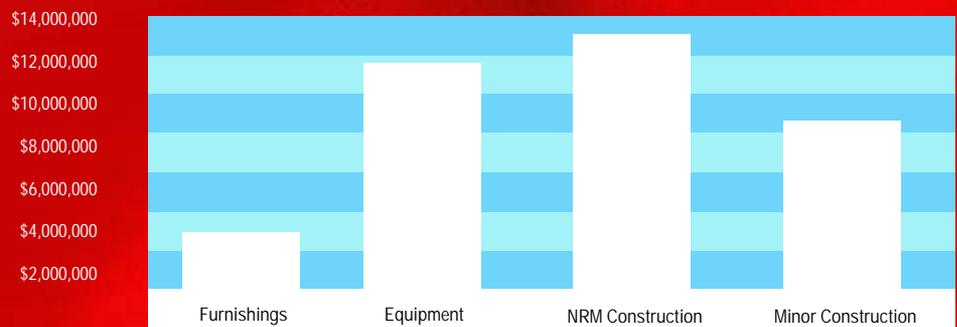


capital asset expenditures in 2008

Our Driver Rehabilitation Simulation System is an example of DCVAMC's investment in emerging technology to better care for our veterans. Driver Rehabilitation helps veterans who have suffered strokes or have other medical conditions. The therapy also helps newly returned combat veterans with Traumatic Brain Injury regain their independence.



Furnishings	\$3,544,555	NRM Construction	\$13,274,033
Equipment	\$11,649,168	Minor Construction	\$8,790,090



medical center workload

MEDICAL CENTER WORKLOAD	FY2008	FY2007
Outpatient Visits	600,658	569,235
Inpatient Visits	6,772	6,557
Unique Patients	55,426	54,704



milestones

DCVAMC 2008 Achievements



Research Service, led by highly-regarded endocrinologist and gerontologist Dr. Marc R. Blackman, conducts a variety of studies including; HIV/AIDS, vascular disease, mental health, Traumatic Brain Injury, substance abuse, endocrinology, and rehabilitative medicine. DCVAMC is developing numerous new, interdisciplinary research programs with local, regional, national and international partners in academic hospitals, the Department of Defense, the National Institutes of Health and industry. Research grant income in FY08 was approximately \$14.6 million.



The Medical Center had a very successful year in accreditation surveys by the Joint Commission, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, the College of American Pathologists, the US Food and Drug Administration, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the American Association of Blood Banks, the Accreditation of Human Research Protection and the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care.

In July, DCVAMC was recognized as a "100 Most Wired" hospital by the American Health Association's (AHA) *Hospitals and Health Networks* magazine, the only Washington, DC hospital included on the list. In addition we earned a finalist award in the AHA "Innovators Award" category.



In August, our hospital's Public Affairs program won VHA's premiere communications award, "Visionary for Communications" and two honorable mention awards – for the 2007 Annual Report, and for the Welcome Home Celebration.



September saw our Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom Task Force on the podium to receive the VA's **Olin E. Teague Award** for excellence in rehabilitative care.



In October, the Medical Center was named a 2008 winner of the **Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Award** for management and business processes that ensure consistent service and quality care for veterans.

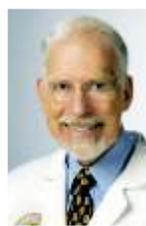


We ended the year with the top award from the National Capital Area Health Care Council. The **Matthew F. McNulty, Jr. Award** was given to Medical Center Director Fernando O. Rivera and the Medical Center for leadership in quality care. This honor marked the first time a federal facility was recognized.

CLINICAL Leaders At DCVAMC, we think our medical staff is among the best in the nation. It's wonderful that the broader health care community agrees.



Dr. Anton Sidawy, Chief of Surgical Service, appreciated a youthful dream fulfilled when he was named Editor in Chief of the prestigious *Journal of Vascular Surgery*.



Dr. Ross D. Fletcher, Chief of Staff, received wide acclaim for his study of seasonal variation in blood pressure (BP). Using a database of over 500,000 veterans, Fletcher

showed BP goes down in the summer and up in the winter, despite geographic area. VA leads the nation in controlling BP. Nearly 80% of DCVAMC's patients have BP's in the normal range.



Dr. Gregory Trachiotis was named a "Top Thoracic Surgeon of 2008" by *Washingtonian* magazine. **Dr. Mitchell Wallin** was named a best neurologist and **Dr. Elizabeth Cobbs** was selected in the geriatric medicine category. The publication randomly polls over 6500 area physicians to make selections. Dr. Wallin was also chosen for membership in the highly selective American Neurological Association. Only 1,000 neurologists out of 30,000 in the U.S. are members.



A study by **Peter Kokkinos, Ph.D.**, Director of the DCVAMC Exercise Testing and Research Lab, made headlines when the results were published in the January issue of *Circulation: The Journal of the American Heart Association*. The study found that even modest exercise improves health and extends life. Over 15,000 patients participated in the seven-year study. The study was among the first to provide data on physical activity and death rates in African-American men. The study results suggested that moderate exercise (20 minutes, 3 times per week) improves health and extends life.



The Medical Center successfully recruited more than 128 nursing staff in 2008. DCVAMC attracts some of the best and brightest nurses in the nation's capital and twenty-two of them made the "Top 100 Extraordinary Nurses" of the Washington, DC metropolitan area in 2008. The largest nursing sorority in the country, Sigma Theta Tau International Inc., sponsors the award.



Dr. Richard Rosse, Chief, Psychiatry Service, was selected as one of America's Top Doctors for 2008 by Castle Connolly

Medical Ltd., publishers of the *Guide to America's Top Doctors* and *Northern Virginia Magazine*.

January



01/12/08 Winterhaven Homeless Veterans Stand Down - The Medical Center brought health care, employment services, and housing support to nearly 300 homeless veterans in the Washington, DC metropolitan area on January 12. The day-long program was successful in reaching veterans who had not used VA, in screening veterans for HIV/AIDS, and in matching veterans with services to help them lead independent lives. Over 150 veterans took advantage of the services of IRS consultants. Forty veterans were surprised to find out they were due income tax refund checks.

February



02/2008 Black History Month - DCVAMC hosted special presentations celebrating Black History Month with music, movies, poetry and guest speakers. Washington, DC city Councilman-At-Large, Mr. Kwame R. Brown and World War II Tuskegee Airman, Curtis Robinson, author of *A Pilot's Journey*, were special guests.



02/10/08 Spinal Cord Injury Symposium - DCVAMC partnered with the Christopher Reeve Foundation in February to host a Spinal Cord Injury Symposium. The day-long event featured a panel of experts from the Christopher Reeve Foundation, Department of Defense and DCVAMC as well as guest speaker, actor Daryl "Chill" Mitchell.



02/21/08 Salute To Hospitalized Veterans - The USO and DCVAMC paid tribute to hospitalized veterans. The 21st annual week-long Salute to Hospitalized Veterans included a musical salute by young recording artist Ryan Holland and a performance by the Washington Wizards Dance Team. The salute also included special appearances by Ms. Amanda Lewis, Miss Washington D.C., Wilbert Forbes, Maryland's Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Cheryl Lasker-Hall, USO Chief Executive Officer, as well as a host of visitors from local military bases, civic organizations, and businesses. The event concluded with the presentation of the USO's Miles of Smiles - the World's Longest Valentine.

May



05/21/08 Fisher House Ground Breaking - Medical Center and Fisher House Foundation officials broke ground for the new 20-suite Fisher House adjacent to the Medical Center. Once completed, the Fisher House will provide free lodging for families of hospitalized veterans who are undergoing lengthy treatment at the Medical Center. The involvement of family and friends is an important part of recovery and rehabilitation for many veterans with war-related injuries and illnesses.

June



06/14/08 Welcome Home - The Medical Center sponsored a day-long outreach event to formally welcome home and honor returning combat veterans who recently served in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF/OIF), and the Global War on Terror. Family members were welcomed too. A wide variety of services were offered from health screenings, to job, education and housing support. Entertainment and a barbecue were enjoyed by the more than 500 active duty military personnel who participated.

September



09/10/08 Suicide Prevention Awareness Rally - The Office of Veterans Health Communications sponsored a Suicide Prevention Awareness Rally hosted by DCVAMC. The standing-room-only crowd learned about VA initiatives to support veterans in need, like VA's toll-free Suicide Prevention Hotline. Featured guests included Miss America 2000, Heather French Henry, Former Redskin Defensive End Charles Mann and the Washington Redskins Cheerleaders.



09/17/08 Rock the Vote - Crew members from Rock the Vote assisted veterans and employees at the DCVAMC Medical Center with voter registration. Rock the Vote is a non-partisan program which uses music, popular culture and new technologies to engage and excite young people to register and vote in every election. In one hour, the crew registered 59 new voters—14 patients and 45 employees.

October



10/10/08 Chapel Renovations - DCVAMC celebrated its newly-renovated All Faiths Chapel in October. Renovations include a new sound system, ceiling, lighting, altar, pulpit, carpet and seating. Commemorative plaques on the new cherry wood pews honor those who contributed to the renovations.

November



11/11/08 - DCVAMC sponsored a one-hour news talk program on WUSA 9, the CBS affiliate, on Veterans Day, November 11. The show included on-air interviews with representatives from the Medical Center, the Veterans Benefits Administration and local veterans' organizations. A manned phone bank took calls from veterans during the program. Nearly 90 calls from the public were received on subjects relating to general veterans' benefits, claims, clinical appointments, employment and interest in Medical Center Programs. WUSA9 collaborated with DCVAMC, providing televised advertisements for the 2008 Welcome Home event.

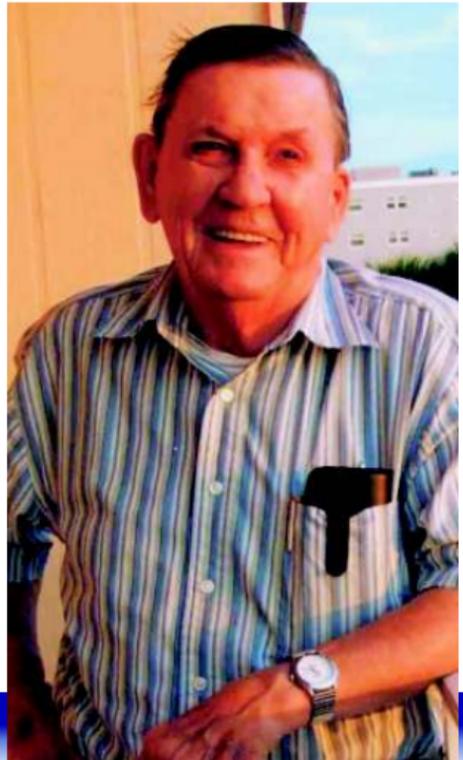
1. Alyce Dixon

Ms. Alyce Dixon, 101 years young, is a World War II veteran, currently residing at the Capitol View Living Center in the Medical Center. She was among the first in the Women's Army Corps, entering the service in April 1943. Ms. Dixon's intelligence, humor and spirit are an inspiration to her co-residents and DCVAMC staff.



2. Frank Stultz

Frank Stultz served on the U.S.S. Biloxi near Hiroshima during WWII. Now, he volunteers at DCVAMC putting together and delivering "comfort packages" for new patients admitted to the hospital. He says he enjoys his work because it gives him a chance to talk with other veterans and it keeps him active and involved.



3. Johnnie Collins

Johnnie Collins served 21 years in the U.S. Army, two tours in Vietnam and three tours in Korea. In 1998, he became the National 1st Vice Commander of AMVETS and continues to serve America's veterans as the AMVETS' State Executive Director for the Washington, DC area.



4. Chuck Gallina

Colonel Charles "Chuck" Gallina (USM-Ret.) spent 30 years in the U.S. Marines during Vietnam and the Gulf War. Col. Gallina now serves his nation as the National VAVS Representative for the Knights of Columbus. Through his efforts and the support of the Knights, veterans enjoy a new coffee bar located in the Pharmacy waiting area.



5. Susan Kohut

Susan Kohut volunteers in the DCVAMC's Business Office. Her work keeps her connected to veterans and she enjoys the friendly environment. She praises VA health care, calling it convenient and comprehensive.



6. Craig Carpenter

Craig Carpenter served approximately ten years as a U.S. Army Combat Medic. His military career took him to Panama, Somalia, Haiti and the Persian Gulf. Now he serves his fellow veterans by volunteering at the Medical Center's Outpatient Laboratory, Neurology Clinic, Capitol View Living Center and Public Affairs Office.



7. Marcus Adolphus

Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran, **Marcus Adolphus**, is a former Transitional Patient Advocate with extensive experience working with returning combat veterans and their families. As a veteran and a social worker, he brings compassion, experience, and dedication to his new position as Case Manager.



8. Jacob Gadd

Volunteering gives **Jacob Gadd** "a chance to give back". After serving five years as a U.S. Navy Hospital Corpsman during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, Gadd volunteers at the DCVAMC as a service representative for the American Legion. "It's given me a chance to meet some outstanding heroes and gain experience in a specialized field".

