

Establishing Collaborative Community Networks to Improve Veteran Outcomes

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VA Veterans Experience Office: Purpose and Mission

Align VA operations with the needs and expectations of those we serve.





- Office established January 2015, Presently reorganizing to a Project Execution based model to align with Secretary Shulkin's priorities
- Direct reporting line to VA Secretary
- Local field and DC components

VEO mission: "Listening and responding to the voice of the Veteran, their families, caregivers, and survivors using industry best practices in customer service to improve their care and benefits experience through accountable process improvements"

Veterans Experience Office: Centers of Excellence



To fulfill the mission, the Veterans Experience Office is a **Center of Excellence for four enterprise goals:**

Insight & Design	Customer Experience Measurement	Enterprise Operations	Community Engagement
 <p>Using Human Centered Design (HCD) to understand Veteran needs from Veterans themselves and to co-design better end-to-end customer journeys</p>	 <p>Measuring Veteran customer experience and VA performance, both at an Enterprise level as well as a transactional level in real time</p>	 <p>Developing and deploying integrated Enterprise solutions aligned across channels (digital, phone, etc.) for a unified Veteran experience</p>	 <p>Supporting Veterans in their communities to get care and benefits and to navigate local organizations that serve Veterans</p>

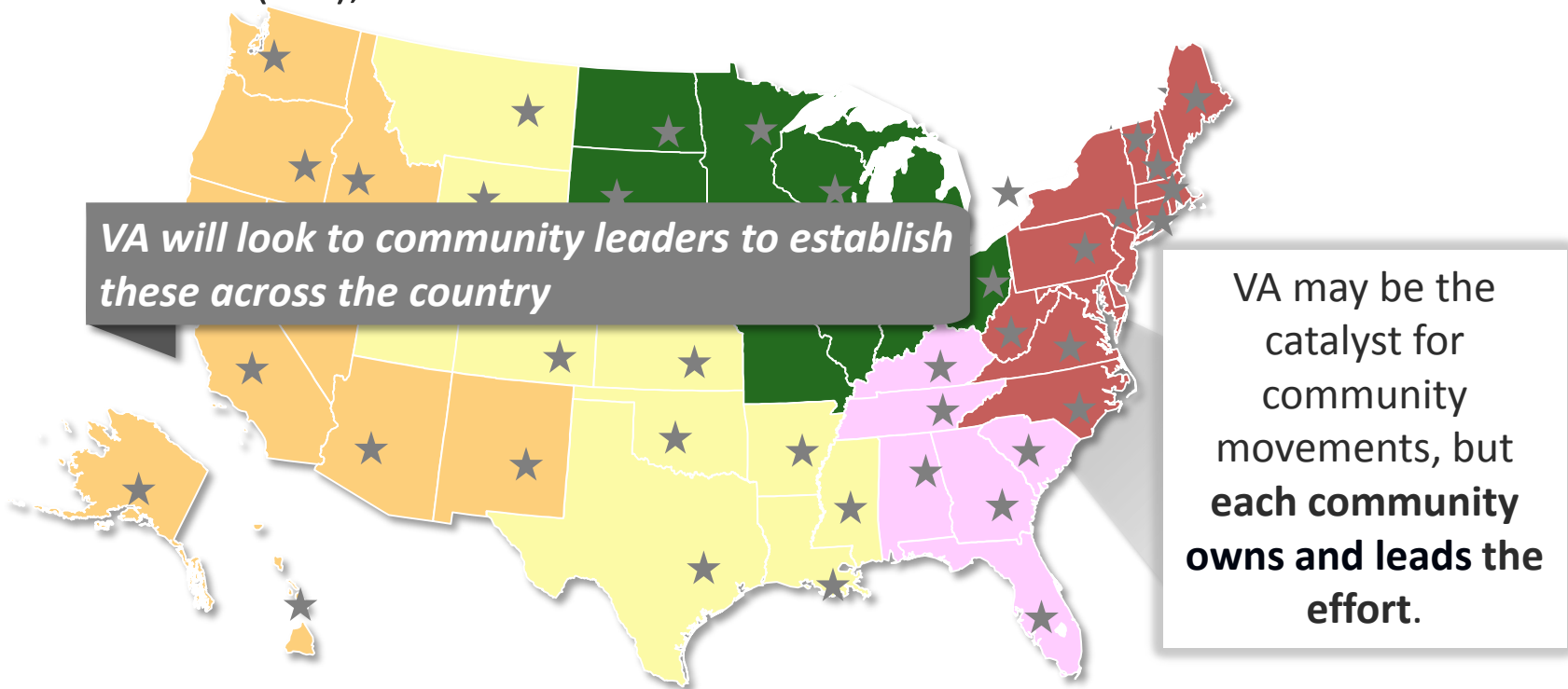
By leveraging industry best practices and Human Centered Design, VEO seeks to understand, measure, and optimize Veterans experiences across the Enterprise and in the community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Supporting organizations — government and non-government alike — to best help Veterans in their communities get what they need to achieve their goals.

MyVA Communities are a collaborative network of Veterans, advocates, resources, and other stakeholders who organize through **Community Veteran Engagement Boards (CVEBS)** to improve outcomes for Veterans, Service members (SM), and their communities.



Inclusive Accessible Community-Driven Flexible Integrated

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MyVA Community Framework

<i>Inclusive</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A connected, comprehensive network of stakeholders, resources, Veterans, and advocates• <i>MyVA Communities</i> are inclusive of all local Veteran-focused resources• <i>MyVA Communities</i> hold public forums in geographically diverse locations
<i>Accessible</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>MyVA Communities</i> hold public forums regularly throughout the year• Forums are held in geographically diverse public venues to encourage broader participation• Forums are actively promoted to involve the public on local Veteran issues
<i>Community Driven</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Led by community veterans engagement boards that shape the broader community efforts• Chaired by two respected community leaders and includes identified local stakeholders• Local VA leaders serve on the board but do not form a majority of the board's membership
<i>Flexible</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Charters define term appointments for board members to allow for flexibility• Customized to reflect the unique characteristics of the community• Community demographics inform geographic boundaries
<i>Integrated</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• VHA, VBA, and NCA leaders participate and actively engage in meetings and public forums• <i>MyVA Community</i> promotes and leverages local capabilities and resources for Veterans• Local and District VA leaders network across communities to share best practices

The *MyVA Community Framework* delivers an overall structure for how Communities operate and succeed.

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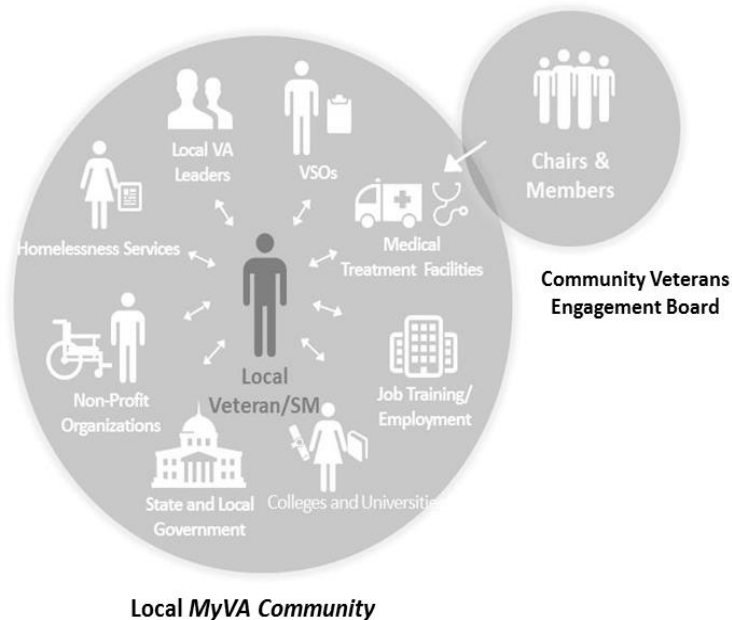
Purpose

- Coordination across outside stakeholders, i.e. Community Veteran Engagement Boards
- Provide on the ground support to implement national initiatives
- Communicate and facilitate implementation of VE design and service improvements leveraging the Voice of the Veteran
- Understand impact of national initiatives at local levels and local customization requirements

Current Initiatives

- Improve the capabilities & reach of 125+ Community Veterans Engagement Boards (CVEB)
- Leverage national network & coordinate initiatives such as homelessness, suicide prevention, public private partnerships, etc.
- Coordinate efforts to support Veterans with local capabilities of the CVEBs
- Promote and support the implementation of VE initiatives in local VA facilities

What Does a Community Veteran Engagement Board (CVEB) Do?



- ❖ Enhance the Veterans' experience
- ❖ Improve outcomes
- ❖ Develop local solutions
- ❖ Enable Veterans, Service members, and their families the opportunity to voice their opinions and provide feedback
- ❖ Ease access to all the resources available to Veterans

Why are CVEBs important?

CVEBs provide a forum for local collaboration among public and private resources, services, and advocates. United around common goals, objectives, and actions, these communities will...



Improve Veteran outcomes by connecting public and private resources and capabilities



Create forums where public and private efforts can learn about each other and work together to enhance their effectiveness and improve Veteran outcomes



Enable Veterans to easily identify and reach all of the resources available to them, voice their opinions, and provide valuable input



Create direct and open lines of communication within the community to serve as an early warning system and enable local responsiveness to issues

Tools and Support

Veterans Experience Office developed a framework for communities to use with tools to build a board, access lessons learned and best practices, and connect local resources.

MyVA Community Toolkit: <http://www.va.gov/nace/myVA/index.asp>

Across Wisconsin, there are several existing community engagement boards you could become involved with. If there is not one in your area, consider taking on a leadership role or supporting and encouraging other leaders in your community to help get one started!

Southeast Wisconsin Veterans and Families Alliance (Example)

- Started April 2017. Meet monthly for first three months, then bi-monthly. Meets in Milwaukee area.
- Approximately 20 members, including VA leadership
- Identifying top issues for Veterans and families to identify ways to make a positive impact
- Include community partners that are not just Veteran-specific, but are aware of their Veteran clients/patrons/employees. (Raise community awareness!)

Southeast Wisconsin Veterans and Families Alliance (Membership)

- Non-Profit organizations (Red Cross, Fisher House, NAMI, CVI)
- Local Government (county, city, etc. including County and Tribal Veterans Service Officers), Federal Government, State Government Wisconsin Dept. of Veterans Affairs
- College/University representatives
- Veteran Service Organizations (VSO)-VFW, DAV, American Legion, etc.
- Employer Support Groups, Veteran Affinity Groups within corporations (MillerCoors, Charter, Northwestern Mutual)

Marathon County Veterans Resource Coalition (Example)

- Started 2016 with a focus on Veteran homelessness. Hold monthly meetings and monthly sub-committee meetings in Wausau. Include resources like local landlords to partner for solutions-focused group.
- Branched out to form four sub-committees. (Service coordination, Community Awareness and Education, Homelessness, and Veterans Outreach)
- Create and maintain a local Veterans Resource Guide
- Continue to branch out invitations to expand participation

Marathon County Veterans Resource Coalition (Membership)

- VSO and auxiliary members, CVSO
- VA, Vet Center, HUD-VASH, Congressional representative, Workforce Development,
- Housing and Homelessness Coalition, Landlords, Shelters and transitional housing, SSVF grantee/CVI, Salvation Army, Veteran Outreach and Recovery Program (VORP),
- Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)
- Local college representatives (NWTC)

Concordia GB- NEWI Veterans Resource Group (Example)

- Meet once per quarter at Concordia University - Green Bay
- Over 150+ invitees across seven counties
- Round-robin to allow each attendee to share information about services, upcoming events, etc.
- Networking opportunity
- Include community partners that are not just Veteran-specific, but are aware of their Veteran clients/patrons. (Raise community awareness!)

Concordia GB- NEWI Veterans Resource Group (Attendees)

VSOs CVSOs, Police Department – Crisis Intervention Trained officers, Veteran-owned businesses, Congressional liaisons, recruiters, Military One-Source, Soldier for Life, VA (representatives from various programs-Vet Center, Social Work, etc.), Other local college and university representatives, Employers/Corporations, Military and Veteran Affinity Groups, Banks/Financial advisors/Credit counseling, Veterans Treatment Court and Veterans Justice Outreach, SBA-Veteran Business Outreach Center, etc....

A few words from Elaina Koltz, UW-GB on her experience attending.

Other ways you can get involved

- Inter-services Family Assistance Commission (ISFAC)
 - Dianne.L.Sommers.civ@mail.mil , Kevin.J.Herman.civ@mail.mil
 - Quarterly meetings across the state, 1st Thursday of each quarter. Next meeting in Madison in September.
 - Email distribution list (send / receive)
- Start a community engagement group focusing on a specific topic for Veterans and/or their families (i.e. Housing, Transportation) that you have a passion for. Bring in staff from programs throughout your facility who can assist. Get leadership support!

Other ways you can get involved

- Educate yourself. Partner with local County Veteran Service Officer to identify key issues and resources. <http://wicvso.org/> Reach out to community providers to inquire about resources and services.
- Invite speakers/trainers on Veterans issues to provide training sessions to the staff at your facility. For example, bring in the ESGR to assist with development or expansion of training programs for staff <http://www.esgr.mil/About-ESGR/Contact/Local-State-Pages/Wisconsin> or work with local VA program offices to provide training on Veteran-specific issues.

Other ways you can get involved

- Host a Veterans/Military Benefits Resource Fair or Career Fair
- Partner with area housing providers to assist with property management issues for Guard and Reservists called for active duty.
- Family and Caregiver focus- Businesses and other community providers that service to assist such as ADRC, transit providers, respite retreats/camps, Services for Children of Active duty (USO), Education and benefit fair
- Other suggestions?
- Questions?