



Feb. | Mar. 2015



Veteran Newsletter



Welcome to the Ohio Dept. Department of Veterans Services e-newsletter, a key source of info about issues of interest to our community of veterans in Ohio!

To learn about the benefits you've earned, visit your County Veterans Service Office. Find yours via the map on our website, www.ohiovet.gov, by calling 1-877-OHIO-VET or via our free mobile app at <http://dvs.ohio.gov/HOME/Welcome>.

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Good News for Veterans...



BLUEPRINT FOR A NEW OHIO

GOV. JOHN R. KASICH'S FISCAL YEARS 2016-2017 BUDGET

We are excited to see Ohio continuing the tradition of caring for Ohio's war orphans with the Governor's budget proposal to increase the state's investment in the Ohio War Orphans Scholarship.

We welcome the move of the Military Injury Relief Fund to DVS so we can administer the program to best benefit veterans and their families.

Behavioral Health and Traumatic Brain Injury is a concern for the Veteran Community. We are pleased to see Governor Kasich's budget appropriating funding that will help strengthen military-specific behavioral health and traumatic brain injury knowledge for non-VA providers across the state. The goal is to establish a registry of community-based Behavioral Health Professionals with military-specific training. More than 400 providers have already signed up for the first tier of this training.

We believe this budget will help us continue to seize the opportunity to ensure veterans are connected with their benefits and they can capitalize on their military experience in a civilian job market. We will continue to reach out, support and lift up the Veterans who are in the shadows because of injuries or conditions related to their military service.

From healthcare to benefits, bonuses, education and jobs, DVS is here to make sure that every generation of Ohio veterans is connected to the resources and benefits they have earned.

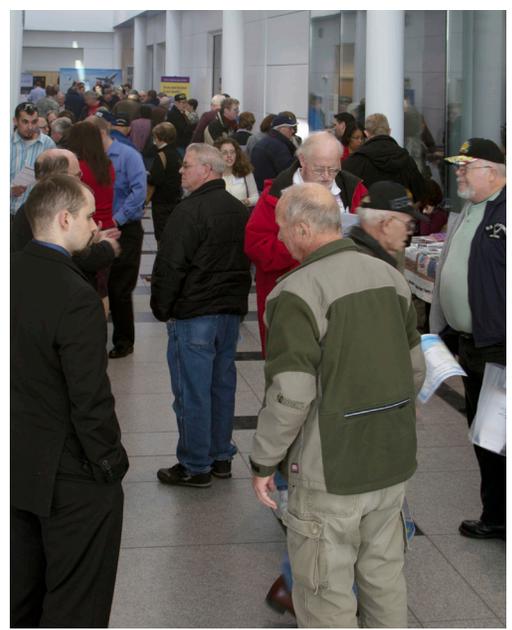
Have questions about veterans benefits? Call 1-877-OHIOVET (1-877-644-6838)



500 Veterans and their Guests attended Wilmington Job Fair

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services joined forces with the Ohio National Guard and Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to host a Veterans Resource Fair at the Wilmington Air Park on February 24th.

More than 500 veterans and guests attended the fair, where they had an opportunity to meet with 44 exhibitors, including 18 employers. Veterans were able to connect with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, DVS' Ohio Veterans Homes and the Ohio Veterans Bonus, the Ohio National Guard, OhioMeansJobs and the Clinton County Veterans Service Commission, just to name a few.



A video of the event can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LRWqnv3dhZE>

Ohio Awarded for Expediting VA Claims

On Feb. 24, VA Secretary Bob McDonald announced the 2015 Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence Awards at the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA) winter conference in Alexandria, Va.

The VA and NASDVA worked together to establish the Pillars of Excellence Awards to identify and formally recognize outstanding state programs that support or exemplify the VA's strategic goals and priorities. Awards were presented for programs in three categories: Elimination of the Disability Claims Backlog, Improving Veteran Access to VA Benefits and Services, and Outstanding State Programs.



VA Secretary McDonald with representatives from the 7 State Award winners.



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The Ohio Department of Veterans Services was awarded the VA Pillar of Excellence for being the first state in the nation to propose and secure electronic access to Department of Defense military personnel records, thus increasing the speed and efficiency of benefits claims. Thanks to Ohio's innovation and leadership the program was rolled out to all 50 states this year, aiding in the quest to eliminate the national VA claims backlog.

DVS Celebrates Black History Month

DVS Director Tim Gorrell served as guest speaker at an event honoring the Tuskegee Airmen which was held at the Ohio Statehouse Museum Gallery in early February. Director Gorrell spoke with school students about the significance of the efforts of the African-American men who served as fighter and bomber pilots during World War II.

First Sgt. Robert Pinn,
of Company I, 5th United States Colored Troops,
who was one of only four black Soldiers from Ohio
to receive the Medal of Honor during the Civil War.
In 1974, the newly-built armory in Stow, Ohio
was named in honor of Pinn.



In celebration of
African American/Black History Month
PINN

We salute all African-American veterans who have faithfully served our great nation. Read about a select group of brave men (like First Sgt. Robert Pinn above) who are highlighted on the Ohio National Guard's website here:

<http://www.ong.ohio.gov/images/PhotoGallery/2015-Feb.html>

Ohio Women Veterans' Conference set for September 12

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend the largest Women Veterans Conference in the nation. The Ohio Women Veterans Conference will kick off Saturday, September 12 at the Aladdin Shrine Center in Columbus. Check-in is from 8-9 a.m., and the conference runs from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Organizers say the event will live up to the theme, "What empowers you? Pass it on!"



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The keynote speaker will be Amanda Wirtz. Amanda served in the United States Navy in military counternarcotics and search and rescue operations for six years with a tour in Iraq. She has contributed more than 3,000 hours of humanitarian service and affected more than 53,000 lives around the world. Amanda is also a nationally-renowned violinist and speaker who continues to share her story of hope, inspiring others to 'Ask The Right Questions.'

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services maintains an active Women Veterans Advisory Committee (http://dvs.ohio.gov/HOME/Committees/Women_Veterans_Advisory_Committee), which hosts the conference in partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Healthcare System of Ohio. The event provides a vital forum to network with veterans of today's conflicts and all eras dating back to World War II. It also provides women veterans the opportunity to not only learn about challenges, but to access the resources and strategies available to overcome them.



The last conference in 2013 drew more than 700 women veterans, so advance registration is advisable. For more information, visit http://dvs.ohio.gov/HOME/Committees/Women_Veterans_Advisory_Committee/Ohio_Women_Veterans_Conference.

Ohioan named to DOD Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

Dr. Kristy E. Anderson of Beavercreek, Ohio was just announced as one of the new members to the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS).

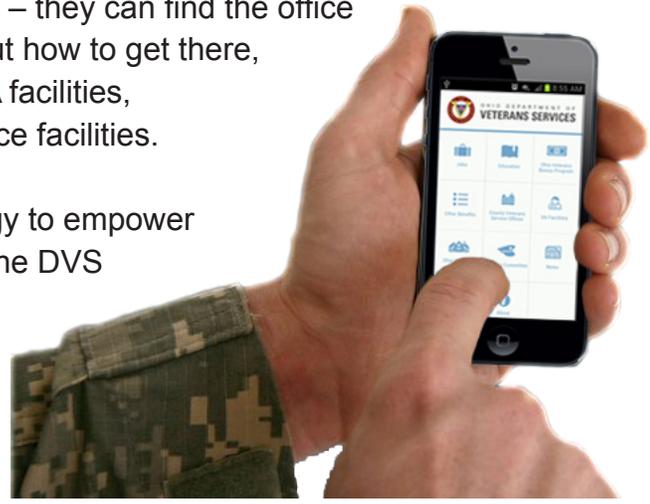


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The committee, established during the Korean War in 1951 by Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall, is an independent advisory committee that provides the department with advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to the recruitment and retention, treatment, employment, integration, and well-being of highly qualified professional women in the Armed Forces. Previously comprised of 16 members, the 2015 charter authorizes a total of 20 committee members. More information about DACOWITS can be found at <http://dacowits.defense.gov/>.

DVS Mobile App has 10,000 users and continues to Grow in Popularity

From anywhere in the state—or the world for that matter—a veteran can get an overview of what is available to them in Ohio. But more importantly, the access provided to County Veteran Service Offices enables veterans to connect almost directly to their benefits – they can find the office closest to them, call or email for an appointment and find out how to get there, all on their personal device. They can also get access to VA facilities, job centers and student veteran centers, among other service facilities.



The DVS mobile app truly leverages 21st-century technology to empower 21st-century veterans. The most effective way to evaluate the DVS app is to download it and see the benefits it provides. But short of downloading it on a mobile device, it can be viewed and navigated in a web version at: <https://apps.dvs.ohio.gov/mobile/www/index.html>

Register by March 24 to Participate in the Women Veterans 5k



Are you an avid runner? Join us at the Inaugural Women Veteran 5k in Dublin. This event will celebrate the service of all women who have served or currently serve in the U.S. military. Come out and participate, or stand in support of Ohio women veterans.

The race is limited to 350 participants and registration will close on March 24—no race day registration—so don't wait! Click here to register now: <https://shewearsboots5k.itsyourrace.com/event.aspx?id=4914>



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Increasing Opportunities for Military Service Members and their Families to Secure Ohio’s In-Demand Jobs

Our agency is working closely with the Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation and Ohio’s workforce system to prioritize and increase the number of military service members and their families living and working in Ohio. The state has developed four key strategies to assist military members in accessing the information and skills training needed to compete for in-demand jobs.

Those strategies are:

- 1) Awarding credit for military experience, education and training;
- 2) Linking employers to veterans;
- 3) Attracting and retaining veterans;
- 4) Supporting transitioning veterans and current veteran residents.

Ohio
MEANS
Jobs



For individuals, the state is now able to better connect Ohio’s veterans with the job training and tools they need to compete for today’s in-demand jobs.

Because, as Governor Kasich said, “if you can drive a truck from Kabul to Kandahar, we want you to drive a truck from Columbus to Cleveland.”

Our veterans have world-class training and practice medicine in life or death situations. We want military medics, nurses and medical professionals to help take care of the sick here at home and we need to help them make the transition to civilian service quickly.

DVS partnered with the Higher Education Military Implementation Team to put House Bill 488 into effect, including translating military experience into FREE college credit and improving on-campus services for veterans and their families.

State Approving Agency assisted Ohio’s 29 licensing authorities in determining how veterans can utilize their GI Bill benefits in obtaining credentials in 51 professional areas.



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For employers, Ohio is now better positioned to assist businesses in identifying and connecting with qualified job-seeking veterans through the ODJFS Veteran Business Support Center. OhioMeansJobs.com now provides a military skills translator that populates veterans resumes with the civilian equivalent to their military skills and training. And, when a veteran posts their resume to OhioMeansJobs.com, the veterans' resume rises to the top of the list of resumes that employers receive.

Together, these reforms are helping more Ohio veterans find rewarding careers, providing for themselves and their families.

OhioMeansJobs.com, Ohio's Premier Job Board and Resume Bank, is now a Full-fledged Online Career Center



Join
Ohio
MEANS
Jobs
at our upcoming
job fairs

The website gives Ohio-based employers free access to the human resource tools available on Monster.com.

The OhioMeansJobs.com Business Support Center provides live support and can pre-screen resumes for employers with hard-to-fill openings.

Job seekers can search tens of thousands of help wanted ads, get help writing a resume, take free skills assessments and learn about training and apprenticeship opportunities. OhioMeansJobs.com also has specialized employment services for students, veterans and individuals with disabilities.

Cleveland	April 17th, Cuyahoga Community College - Eastern Campus
Toledo	April 28th, Owens Community College
Athens	May 20th, Athens Community Center
Columbus	May 27th, Columbus State Community College
Cincinnati	June 18th, Great Oaks Career Development Campuses
Dayton	June 26th, Sinclair Community College



Monthly Update

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Vietnam Veterans Day

The Ohio General Assembly and Governor John Kasich officially designated March 30 as Vietnam Veterans Day. The date of March 30 signifies the first date that troops would have returned home from Vietnam after leaving the country on March 29, 1973. Vietnam Veteran's Day was established so the people of Ohio can unite in voice and say 'welcome home' and we are grateful and proud of Vietnam veterans.



The second annual "Vietnam Era Veteran Commemoration Celebration" will be on Saturday, March 28, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Camp Perry Clubhouse, 1000 Lawrence Road, Port Clinton. The day will include an opening ceremony, guest speaker, lunch, The Agent Orange Quilts of Tears, an Ohio POW/ MIA memorial program, as well as many vendors. The event is organized by the Vietnam Era Veterans Commemoration Committee and the Ottawa County Veterans Service Office.

Happy 100th Birthday to the United States Navy Reserve

The Reserve was established on March 3, 1915 by then Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels and Asst. Secretary of the Navy Franklin D. Roosevelt.

To the more than 100,000 members of the Ready Reserve and the 2628 currently mobilized Reserves, and to all who have retired from active service with the Reserves: We thank you for your service, your dedication and your courageous efforts to help preserve the freedoms of our great nation.



Learn more about the Navy Reserve at <http://navyreservecentennial.com>.