

Detroit Excellence

A Monthly Newsletter for Employees, Volunteers and Patients of the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center



VA
HEALTH
CARE

Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century

September 2011

Be a Detroit Excellence Contributor!

Detroit Excellence wants to feature the news YOU want to read! If you have a story to contribute, please email:

alyse.mengason@va.gov or lisa.olney@va.gov

Detroit VAMC Welcomes Congressional Liaisons to Facility

Engaging and informative.

That's how the August 30th Detroit VA Medical Center's Congressional 'Open House and Meet and Greet' was described by all of those who attended.

The purpose of the meeting was to make sure that the medical center's Congressional contacts have the most current and up-to-date information on our growth, our programs and our services.

Attendees were given a tour of the medical center and briefed on a variety of programs including Women's Health, OEF/OIF Outreach, Research, My-HealthVet, Systems Redesign, Operative Expansion, construction projects and the Homeless Veterans Program.

Attendees also had the chance to meet and speak with medical center leadership. "I truly appreciated the invitation and it was great to tour the facility," said Dion Williams, Executive Assistant to Detroit Mayor Dave Bing. "You are doing a phenomenal job in reaching our Veterans here in Detroit, and we want to do everything we can to assist you in this process."



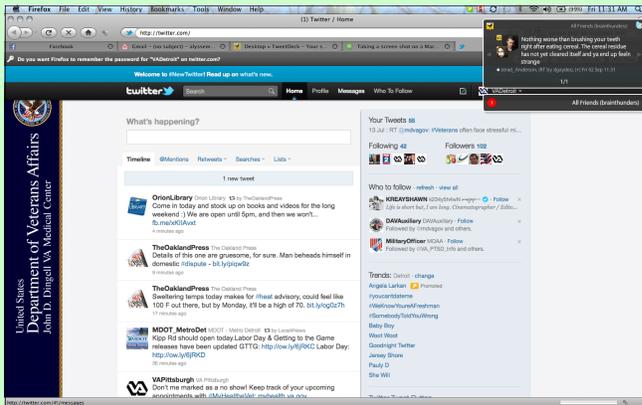
Let's Get Social! VA Publishes a Social Media Policy

The VA...on Facebook AND Twitter?!

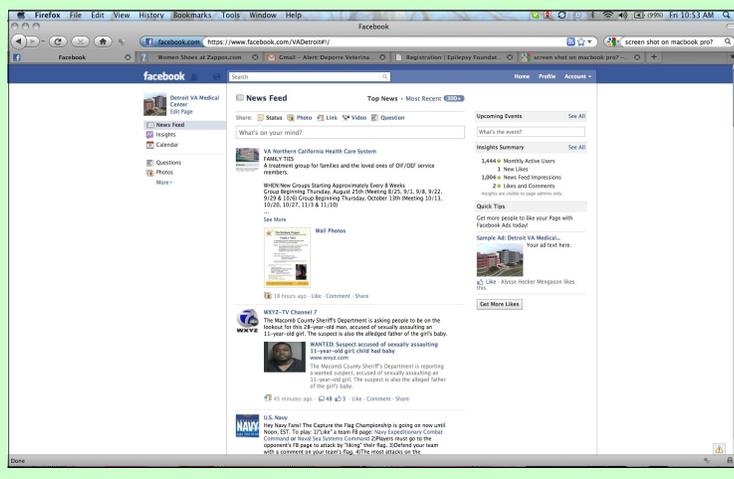
Yes! In fact, the Detroit VA Medical Center launched its Facebook and Twitter pages in late spring, and both have become quite popular with staff and patients.

"Veterans should have consistent and convenient access to reliable VA information real time, using social media—whether on a smartphone or a computer," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Eric K. Shinseki. "they also should be able to communicate directly with appropriate VA employees electronically.

Here in Detroit, you can rely on our Facebook and Twitter pages for valuable information on VA programs, both local and national. It's also a great way to share information on what other VA medical centers around the country are doing. If you haven't done so yet, give the pages a look!



Social media is about engaging people, and that's exactly what we are doing with the Detroit Twitter and Facebook pages! We want our social media pages to be a snapshot of life in the Detroit VAMC, complete with photos, quotes, stories on upcoming events and important visits.



Detroit VAMC Employee of the Month

Donald Allen is the Detroit VAMC Employee of the Month for August 2011.

Donald has been an Addiction Therapist with the medical center since September 2010. As one of his fellow employees said, "Mr. Allen has volunteered in addition to his regular duties, to help with referrals and smooth transitions of substance dependence patients. He has been extremely valuable. He is very motivated, pleasant, and always willing to help. Mr. Allen has made great effort to continuity of care with our Psychiatric patients. It is a pleasure to have him as part of our Treatment Team."

Great job Donald, and thanks for being such a great asset to the Detroit VAMC team!



Donald Allen, pictured with Dr. Pamela Reeves, Medical Center Director, and Dr. Scott Gruber, Chief of Staff.

Follow the Detroit VA Medical Center on Facebook and Twitter!

We are reaching out to our Veterans, their families, our volunteers and our staff, providing them with good information on programs and services.

Have you visited our pages?
Make sure you tell friends and family!



Detroit VAMC Veteran Wins a Gold Medal at National Wheelchair Games

A trip to Pittsburgh was a 'Golden' experience for one Detroit VAMC Veteran patient.

This was the 3rd year Army Veteran George Coward participated in the National Veterans Wheelchair games. This year's games were held in Pittsburgh. Coward, an amputee who served in Vietnam, took home the Gold Medal in Trap Shooting and a Bronze Medal in both Air Rifles and Archery.

"The competition is fun and the camaraderie is great," said Coward. "The games are good for the Veterans' self-esteem, and we really need a boost of self esteem, especially the new guys coming home."

Any honorably discharged Veteran who uses a wheelchair to compete in sports and is eligible for healthcare in the VA system can register to compete in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games.

There are 17 different types of sports, plus a variety of exhibition or demonstration sports that vary each year. Competitive sports include: air guns, archery, basketball, bowling, field, handcycling, nine-ball, power soccer, quad rugby, slalom, softball and swimming.

For more information on the National Wheelchair Games, including photo albums from this year's event, please visit the website, <http://www.va.gov/opa/speceven/wcg/index.asp>.



Suicide Prevention Awareness Week, September 4—10, 2011

Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death for all ages in the U.S. Prevention of suicide requires knowledge of the variables and factors that increase the risk. Join the Detroit VAMC's Suicide Prevention Team in our efforts to educate and increase awareness.

**Tuesday, September 6, 2011, Room B1290
12:00 p.m.—2:00 p.m.**

Speakers: Mr. and Mrs. Standifer, parents of an OEF/OIF Veteran who died by suicide; Mr. Delee Grimes, United States Air Force; Mr. Robert Calhoun, United States Navy; Ulysses Spencer, United States Air Force

Thursday, September 8m 2011, Lower Level Auditorium

**12:00 p.m.—1:00 p.m.
SW CEUs will be provided**

A Parking Reminder

The parking situation at the medical center is very structured and designed to accommodate our staff, patients and visitors. It's important to remember the following:

- Veterans – may be validated at Blue and Yellow Information Desks during the hours of 8am-8pm, Monday through Friday and 8am – 4pm on Weekends; during off-tour, Veterans may have their tickets validated by the Police unit near ER/UC; A valid VA ID card is required
- Volunteers – tickets are validated in Voluntary Services; A valid Detroit VAMC volunteer ID card is required
- Students working through an affiliated academic program with the John D. Dingell VAMC will be provided validated parking through Facility Education. A valid Detroit VAMC Student ID card is required.
- Students working through a non-paid or compensated program through Human Resources may have their parking validated by the Police unit near ER/UC. A valid Detroit VAMC Student ID card is required.
- All other students, vendors, contractors not covered by any the programs listed above are not eligible to have their parking validated and are expected to pay the \$3 parking fee.



August Photo Album



(Above, below and right) On Thursday, August 25th, a flag raising was held at the Yale CBOC. The POW-MIA flag was donated by the VFW Post #2945, and many of their members were in attendance when the flag was raised.



On July 30th, MLB Umpire Jerry Layne visited the Detroit VAMC. Layne talked with Veterans and their families, and gave away one of his fabulous jackets to one lucky recipient (below right).



I CARE Corner

This is an area where we pass along examples of the kindness and advocacy of our employees. We want to make sure all of our Veterans know our commitment to I CARE.

“One August 9th, Robert had a procedure done. He had to spend the night due to a complication. It was a very scary time for me and the VA Police Unit made it less stressful. I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. You went above and beyond the call. Your unit took me back to my hotel that evening and another picked me up at 8 a.m. the next morning. I will never forget the service you did for me!” Lynda Treiber, spouse of patient.

“Dr. Ghali's obvious medical expertise in exploring the cause(s) and course of treatment(s) of my medical condition is only surpassed by her true spirit of humanitarianism and compassion.”



How Can I Help our Veterans?

It’s a question we are often asked...”How can I help our Veterans and what exactly do they need?”

Volunteers serve a variety of functions and help to make our patients’ stay much more enjoyable.

If you or any of your friends and family would like to donate time, items or funds, you can click [here](#) for more information, or contact [Voluntary Services](#) at 313-576-3332.

Food Drive Becomes Friendly Competition Amongst Detroit VAMC Employees

The announcement of the VA’s National Food Drive this summer, was a call to action for many employees of the Detroit VA Medical Center.

For one area, the call to help others became quite a challenge!

“It started out as just asking the employees in Business Practice to donate some food for the drive,” said Camelle Lunger. “At first, we didn’t have too much success, but we really wanted to help.”

Camelle said the idea surfaced about having a competition between these areas: File Unit/ROI (404) and Coding/Transcription (251). The area that brought in the most food would each receive 59 minutes of leave per person.

“The food began to come in faster than we could put it in the boxes!” said Camelle.

“The teams knew when we would cut off the collection and gather to count and declare a winner. As of August 30th at 1:00 p.m., we had collected more than 600 items and the winner...File Unit/ROI area.”

Our heartfelt thanks and congratulations to the entire Business Practice team!



Calendar of Events

- September 1, 1939 WWII Begins
- September 2, 1945 VJ Day
- September 5 Labor Day
- September 4—10 National Suicide Prevention Week
- September 16 POW/MIA Recognition Day
- September 17, 1914 VFW Ladies Auxiliary Organized
- September 18—23 National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic
- September 18, 1947 U.S. Air Force Established
- September 21 World Alzheimer's Day
- September 23 Autumn Begins
- September 25, 1920 Disabled American Veterans Established
- September 29, 1899 Veterans of Foreign Wars Day

Give this a look! It's VA's new blog, [VA Careers](#).



Now is the Time to Try My HealtheVet

What's new on [My HealtheVet](#)?
VA patients can now see their VA Appointments on [My HealtheVet](#).

If you are a Veteran enrolled at a VA health care facility, are registered on [My HealtheVet](#) and have an upgraded account, you have the option to see your VA Appointments. It's quick, easy and it's free!



The **Telephone Call Center** here at the Detroit VAMC can assist with appointment management, prescription refills and medical questions or concerns.

Members of our call center staff are available Monday—Friday, 8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m., 313-576-1051 or 800-511-8056.

A Message from your GEMS Coordinator

What do you do with old and expired medications? Here's a tip...The Michigan Pharmacists Association (MPA) is hosting the second Medication Disposal Event at the state capitol on Tuesday, Sept. 13, 2011, from 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. on the south Capitol lawn in Lansing.

This event will allow the general public to safely and responsibly dispose of any medications, including controlled substance medications/narcotics. Those dropping by will also learn about properly disposing unused, unwanted or expired medications and the valuable role pharmacists play in patient safety.

This event is being held in conjunction with MPA's annual [Pharmacy Day at the Capitol](#), an event designed to educate government officials on the vital role pharmacists play on the health care team. Lawmakers will receive blood glucose and blood pressure screenings, as well as influenza immunizations administered by pharmacists. They will also learn how pharmacists can help patients get the most from their medications and manage their overall health.

Do you know that many prescription drugs make their way into the environment when disposed of improperly?

This is your chance to clean out your medicine cabinets and bring your unused medications to the State Capitol for disposal on Sept. 13.

