



VA Heartland Network

Maximum
Veteran
Benefit

Truman VA BULLETIN

March 9, 2007

< WELCOME >

Sarah Froese, Social Worker (BH)
Jimmie Kendrick, LPN (PS)
Beth Sjoblom, MD, Staff Physician (PC)
Sandra Sterling, RNP (PC)

< FAREWELL >

Patricia Goen, Nursing Assistant (PS)
Gina Jensen, RN (PS)
Dennis Mueller, Program Support Assistant (BUS)
L. Carol Ward, RN (PS)
Kristen Webb, RN (PS)
Dale Wetrich, Food Service Worker (BUS)

establishing polytrauma support clinic teams to further improve case management for veterans with TBI as they return home from the hospital and to help them in their transition to their communities.

VA's innovations in the diagnosis and treatment of TBI patients began in 1992, when four VA medical centers dedicated special facilities to treatment, rehabilitation, professional education and research regarding brain injuries. In March 2003, those facilities received their first patients from the Global War on Terror and, in April 2005, they were officially designated as polytrauma centers. Among the special adaptations VA is providing for the care of TBI and polytrauma patients are case managers assigned to each patient, a greater emphasis and understanding of the problems of families during the initial care and long-term recovery as well as state-of-the-art video-conferencing that permits top specialists to take an active role in the treatment of remote patients.

VA LEADS WAY IN TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY CARE

The Department of Veterans Affairs, long a leader in the treatment and rehabilitation of veterans with brain injuries, is continuing to adapt its programs to meet the needs of veterans from Afghanistan and Iraq. The latest innovations for treating traumatic brain injury (TBI) in the newest generation of combat veterans includes mandatory TBI training for all VA health care professionals, screening all recent combat veterans for TBI and creating an outside panel of experts to review VA's TBI services.

TBI can be caused without any visible injuries when explosives jar the brain inside the skull. Symptoms can range from headaches, irritability and sleep disorders to memory problems and depression. VA has developed a TBI course that teaches primary care providers ways to diagnose TBI in patients who might not otherwise be aware they suffer from it. Also, a program to screen all patients that served in the combat theaters of Iraq or Afghanistan for TBI will be offered at all VA medical centers this spring.

VA operates four major polytrauma centers – in Minneapolis; Tampa, Fla.; Richmond, Va.; and Palo Alto, Calif. – that have interdisciplinary teams of specialists working together on the complex medical needs of each patient. VA also has 17 regionally-based polytrauma facilities that provide specialized care closer to veterans' homes. Each of VA's 21 VISNs is



March Service Pin Recipients

✦ 35-Years ✦

Josephine J. Kelly (PS)

✦ 30-Years ✦

Betty J. "Jeannie" Hill (BUS)

✦ 25-Years ✦

Dixie M. Wyatt, RN (PS)

✦ 20-Years ✦

Donna M. Leezy (PS)
Joseph T. Palazzo (BH)

✦ 15-Years ✦

Else R. Fox, LPN (PS)

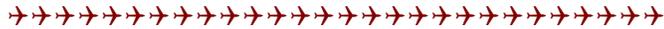
✦ 10-Years ✦

Raymond E. Pfaff (FM)

✦ 5-Years ✦

Kathleen A. Neason, RN (PS)

AIR FORCE RECOGNIZES NURSE MANAGER



Marie Hulett, RN, Nurse Manager of the Operating Room, Post-Anesthesia Recovery Unit and Sterile Processing, was recently named the Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) of the Year for 2007 for the U.S. Air Force. A captain in the U.S. Air Force Reserves, Marie distinguished herself in the performance of outstanding service as Deputy Chief, Aeromedical Evacuation Mission Support Branch, Global Readiness Directorate, Tanker Airlift Control Center, Air Mobility Command at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, throughout calendar year 2006. She expertly supported more than 1,900 Aeromedical Evacuation airlift missions that included more than 2,000 patients classified as urgent and priority. Marie spearheaded an initiative to maximize aeromedical crews for missions for the European command as well as the continental U.S. command that resulted in a 50 percent reduction in personnel taskings. The prestigious award cited several other initiatives that enhanced the overall operation of the aeromedical evacuation missions. She joined the Truman VA nursing staff in January 2007. Congratulations, Marie!

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

In 1981, the U.S. Congress passed a resolution establishing National Women's History Week. The week was chosen to coincide with International Women's Day on March 8. In 1987, Congress expanded the week to a month. Every year since, Congress has passed a resolution for Women's History Month in March. The theme for this year's recognition month is "Generations of Women Moving History Forward." The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) proudly joins the nation in this month-long celebration. Today, VA salutes all women currently serving in our military, our women veterans and the many women employed by VA that provide excellent health care and benefits delivery to the nation's veterans. More than 58 percent of VA employees are women.



Information about events and programs can be found on the following Web site:

http://www.nps.gov/ncro/PublicAffairs/Womens_History_Month.html.

Educational resources on women's history can be found on another Web site: <http://www.ed.gov/free/w-history.html>.

RECENT EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARDS

Employee of the Month (March) –

◆ **Jimmy Powell**, Human Resources Specialist (HR)
Customer Service Star Award (January) –

◆ **Ruth Douglass**, Medical Support Assistant (BH)

NURSING MANAGEMENT NOTE

Jennifer Bechtel, RN, has been selected as the Nurse Manager for the new surgically-focused inpatient unit that will be created with the restructuring of the 4th floor inpatient unit. She brings a wealth of surgical nursing experience to the position, having worked in the SICU, the Operating Room, Same Day Surgery and the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit at Truman VA. Congratulations, Jennifer!

ORGANIZATIONAL REALIGNMENT

Effective March 5, the Hospital Safety Program and the Biomedical Engineering Section were reassigned to the Facilities Management Service Line.

NATIONAL SALUTE DONATION

As part of Truman VA's National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans activities in February, the Kansas Braille Transcription Institute (KBTI) donated four tactile Braille flags. The 8" X 9" framed flags will be displayed in a public location adjacent to the main lobby.

EMPLOYEES ASSIST CHAMBER CAREER DAYS

The Education Committee of the Columbia Chamber of Commerce sponsored "Career Days" in February at all three middle schools in the Columbia Public School District. Several Truman VA employees participated in the annual event in which brief informative presentations about various careers in six different career paths, including health services, are presented to 7th grade students at Gentry, Lange and Smithton Middle Schools. Truman VA employees that participated included **Heidi Erickson, Stephen Gaither, Kim Hickey, Laura Jacobs, Kristy Kruse, Marcia Muskrat, Veronica Ramnarine, Laura Speckhals, Marilyn Thomas, Bob Van Arsdale** and **Paula Williams**. More than 80 individuals in the community participated in the three "Career Days."

HEALTHCARE EXECUTIVES ADVANCE

Three Truman VA managers will be formally recognized by the American College of Healthcare Executives at a convocation ceremony on March 18 for their advancement to the status of "Fellow." Congratulations to **Sallie Houser-Hanfelder**, Director; **Jan Driskill**, Acting Associate Director; and **Teresa Jacobs**, Clinical Support Operations Manager. With this advancement, they are entitled to use the FACHE designation.