



Department of Veterans Affairs Expands Access to Care for Rural Hawaii Veterans

Establishment of new Choice Program partnerships

Honolulu, HI – The Veterans Administration Pacific Islands Health Care System (VAPIHCS) today announced agreements with Native Hawaiian Health Care (NHHC) systems that will greatly expand access to health care for Veterans living on the islands of Hawaii using expanded authorities from the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act (VACAA). This is the latest in a series of VA actions to expand access to care through the implementation of VACAA.

Four NHHC systems have signed

agreements which will allow Veterans to seek care from these providers through the Veterans Choice Program. Hui No Ke Ola Pono on the island of Mau'i; Na Pu'uwai on the island of Moloka'i / Lanai; Ke Ola Mamo O'ahu on the island of Oahu; and Ho'ola Lahui Hawai'i on the island of Kaua'i are now able to care for Veteran patients through the Choice Program.

“VAPIHCS is extremely appreciative of the dedicated support of the NHHC Systems and the Hawaii Congressional delegation as we worked together to expand access to care for our Hawaii Veterans through the Veterans Choice Program. We encourage our rural

Hawaii Veterans to take advantage of this opportunity to receive care closer to home through these Choice Program partnerships,” said Director Wayne Pfeffer.

VA looks forward to ongoing collaboration with NHHC Systems to ensure Veterans receive the timely, high-quality health care they've earned and deserve.

To learn more about the NHHC Agreements visit: <http://www.hawaii.va.gov/> To learn more about the Veterans Choice Program visit www.va.gov/opa/choiceact.

Veterans Choice Program

The Veterans Choice Program (VCP) is a VA program to help improve Veteran's access to health care by allowing Vets to use approved health care providers outside of the VA.

Call the number below for eligibility and to make an appointment:
866-606-8198
 For more information, visit www.va.gov/opa/choiceact

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA

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Veterans Choice Card
 Name: JOHN DOE
 Member ID: 1234567890
 Date of Issuance: December 2015
 Call 1-866-606-8198 for information or to make an appointment
 This card does not provide pre-approval. Veterans may be liable for the cost of care that is not pre-approved.

For further information on VA Pacific Islands Health Care System Contact

Amy Rohlfs
Public Affairs Officer
gloria.rohlfs@va.gov

Website:
<http://www.hawaii.va.gov>

Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/VAPacificIslands>

First Women Veterans Conference in Hawaii

News release and photos by VA Pacific Islands Health Care System

HONOLULU — More than 170 women veterans from across the state gathered at Tripler Army Medical Center (TAMC), here, for the first Hawaii Women Veterans Conference, Nov. 14, 2015.

Co-sponsored by the Hawaii State Office of Veterans' Services, Veterans Affairs Pacific Islands Health Care System (VAPIHCS), and TAMC, the conference was organized by the sub-committee of women veterans under the Governor's Advisory Board on Veterans' Services.

"The conference is the beginning of a conversation and networking effort to reach out to Hawaii's women veterans," said Ann Greenlee, State Director, Hawaii & Guam Veterans' Employment & Training Service.

"Our goals are to provide information and assistance on Veterans Affairs (VA) health services, starting your own

business, succeeding in the civilian business world, financial planning and veteran benefits both from the VA and community service providers," she added.

"We want Hawaii's women veterans to know about the benefits they have earned and to also understand that there is a network available to assist where

and when needed," Greenlee continued.

A highlight of the conference was a proclamation from Gov. David Ige making Nov. 14, 2015 Hawaii Women Veterans Day.

Sen. Mazie Hirono and a representative for Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell also provided opening comments, and Rep. Tulsi Gabbard, an Army veteran, was the keynote speaker.

VAPIHCS

Nationwide, women veterans totaled approximately 2.02 million. In Hawaii, there are more than 14,000 women veterans; however, only 4,300 access their benefits and health care through the VA Pacific Island Health Care.

For information on Women's Health Care, call 855-VAWOMEN (855-829-6636) or visit www.womenshealth.va.gov/



Participants enjoyed lunch provided by VAPIHCS as they visited more than 50 exhibits featuring information and resources specifically for women veterans. Other topics included mammograms, flu shots and yoga which were available in the morning before the afternoon workshops at TAMC.

Update your information for the Hawaii Veteran Newsletter

Cut out and mail responses in a stamped envelope to:

Office of Veterans' Services
ATTN: HI VETERAN NEWSLETTER
459 Patterson Road
E-Wing, Room 1-A103
Honolulu, HI 96819-1522

Or email us at:
jayne.e.nagamine@hawaii.gov

Yes, I would enjoy a FREE copy of the Hawaii Veteran Newsletter. Please add me to your mailing list. *You do not need to send this portion in if you are currently receiving the newsletter.*

Update information, change my old address to my new address

No thanks, Please remove me from your mailing list.

Old Address

New Address

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Choice Program Agreements with Native Hawaiian Health Care System

BACKGROUND

On August 7, 2014, President Obama signed into law the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 ("VACAA"). Section 103 of the Choice Act directed the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) to enter into contracts or agreements with Native Hawaiian Health Care systems for the reimbursement of direct care services provided to eligible veterans as specified in such contracts or agreements.

SUMMARY

As of September 1, 2015, VA has entered into agreements with Native Hawaiian Health Care (NHHC) systems that will greatly expand access to health care for Veterans living on the islands of Hawaii using expanded authorities in Section 103 of VACAA. Hui No Ke Ola Pono on the island of Maui; Na Pu'uwai on the island of Moloka'i / Lanai; Ke Ola Mamo O'ahu on the island of Oahu; and Ho'ola Lahui Hawai'i

on the island of Kaua'i are now eligible Choice Program providers. Veterans in Hawaii can choose to use the Choice Program to see providers in these 4 systems. Veterans must obtain preauthorization for care through the Program by calling 1-866-606-8198.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: How do these agreements with NHHC expand access to care for Veterans?

A: These agreements allow Veterans to seek health care from providers at these four NHHC systems through the Veterans Choice Program.

Q: Which NCCH systems have agreements with VA?

A: The four systems are: Hui No Ke Ola Pono on the island of Maui; Na Pu'uwai on the island of Moloka'i / Lanai; Ke Ola Mamo O'ahu on the

island of Oahu; and Ho'ola Lahui Hawai'i on the island of Kaua'i.

Q: Are all Veterans who live in Hawaii eligible for the Veterans Choice Program?

A: All Veterans who are enrolled in VA health care and live in Hawaii are eligible for the Veterans Choice Program.

Q: How do Veterans access the Veterans Choice Program?

A: Veterans must call the Choice Program Call Center at 866-606-8198 to confirm eligibility and make an appointment for care.

For more information including Frequently Asked Questions visit www.va.gov/opa/choiceact.



Photo from Edward Kawamura

Kauai Veteran's Day 2015

Gabriel Cataluna, 102 years old and Monte Nishie, 100 years old WWII Veterans with Major Tulsi Gabbard, Afganistan Veteran and Keynote Speaker at the Kauai Veterans Cemetery.



Photo by Stephen Lum

The Neal S. Blaisdell Center War Memorial, honoring those who served in WWII and the Korean War was rededicated Nov. 10, 2015, on the grounds of the center fronting the concert hall.



Photo from Lyndie Michioka

On Nov. 1, 2015, Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin Inter-Faith Service had a Veterans Appreciation Service. The service honored all veterans and their families. Veterans were recognized and enjoyed a free lunch. Delbert Nishimoto was the keynote speaker. There were about 200 people in attendance.



Christmas Candlelight Vigil on Dec 24, 2015

A solemn and memorable gathering of veterans to remember and honor comrades who died in Vietnam so many years ago. We also remember those who brought their injuries home, to begin lives anew, to help build our communities and Nation, and who walk among us as brothers and sisters. It was a moving moment for many especially for those who had never attended this gathering before. Grateful comments were expressed and hugs were plentifully shared.

Lt. Gov. Tsutsui at HSVC Veterans Day Ceremony



Lieutenant Governor Shan Tsutsui giving the Veterans Day Address



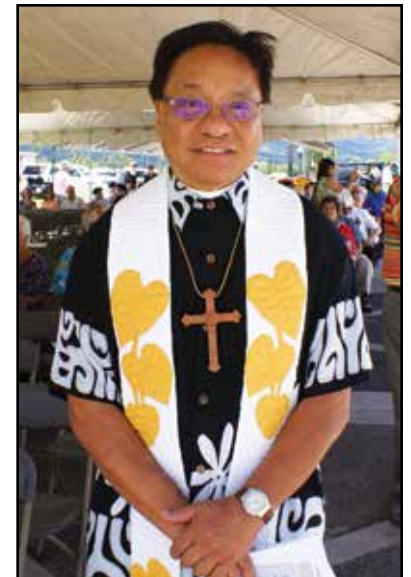
U.S. Military Leaders



Girl Scout Ms. Mia Shelbourne sang the National Anthem, Hawai'i Pono'i and America, by Dustin James.



Kahu Manu Mook



Kahu Kekapa Lee

This past Veterans Day theme was “Veterans: A Lifetime of Service.” Therefore, we featured all of the veterans who volunteer their time to our Veterans and Memorial Day Ceremonies and their work in communities across the state. Kahu Kekapa Lee, Kahu Manu Mook and the Fleet Reserve Association, Branch & Unit #46 provided exceptional support to our veterans.



Senator Brian Schatz, Wreath Bearer, Lt. Gov. Shan Tsutsui, the Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Arthur J. Logan.



Fleet Reserve Association, Branch & Unit #46
Photos by Jayme Nagamine

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Commander in Chief

Maj. Gen. Arthur J. Logan
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New OVS office location at Diamond Head

OVS has a new Diamond Head office in the Hawaii National Guard Armory/gym building. Our new office has plenty of open parking spaces, is handicap accessible and in a secure building.

The Diamond Head office takes appointments only. Veterans can call the Tripler office at 433-0420 to make an appointment to see a counselor.

For driving directions, veterans may Google map this address 424 22nd Ave, Honolulu HI 96816. Do not use this address to mail letters, only use this address for location purposes.

There are two counselors currently at this office, Rock Orozco and Terri Pule. Both counselors have experience in assisting veterans to file and process disability compensation claims and they are able to provide resources on other veteran benefits.



Rock Orozco retired from the Army as a Command Sergeant Major in late 2007. He previously served as a Veterans Service Representative with the Dept. of Veterans Affairs. With his music and business degree, he partnered with Kapena De Lima of Kapena fame, to form Bu Roc Music Publishing, LLP. You can contact Rock at 808-733-4336.



Terri Pule was previously the Store Dir. at the Pacific Aviation Museum on Ford Island. She also assisted veterans at the VBA developing claims and did a school practicum at the Honolulu Vet Center. Ms. Pule is a UH Manoa graduate in Social Work and comes from a family of veterans, her father, father-in-law and uncles respectively served in previous eras of conflict (WWII, Vietnam and Gulf Wars). You can contact Terri at 808-733-4336.

Photos by Rock Orozco & Terri Pule