

FEBRUARY 2011



Last chance this year!

2011 GEORGE H. SEAL MEMORIAL AWARDS

2011 JESSE BROWN MEMORIAL YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The 2011 George H. Seal Memorial Awards and the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program announcements were mailed in December to all DAV Department Commanders and Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Program Managers across the country. These awards are presented annually by the Disabled American Veterans in recognition of the extraordinary dedication of DAV and DAV Auxiliary and the outstanding young volunteers serving disabled veterans through the VAVS program.

There is still plenty of time to submit nominations for these awards. *You know that special person that is dedicated and unselfish in their generosity towards others? Don't give it another thought – just do it!* Nominate that special volunteer who fits this description. Receive the satisfaction of acknowledging another's accomplishments. Send in your submission today.

Only DAV and DAV Auxiliary members enrolled as accredited VAVS volunteers are eligible for this prestigious award that will be presented to the two winners at the DAV National Convention. Each winner receives a trophy replica, and their names are engraved on the George H. Seal Memorial Trophy, which is permanently displayed at DAV National Headquarters in Cold Spring, Kentucky. In addition, the VA medical facility represented by each winner is awarded a plaque, and all individual nominees receive an attractive Honorable Mention Certificate.

The award honors the memory and accomplishments of the late George H. Seal, a World War II combat-disabled paratrooper who made many significant contributions during his lengthy career as National Director of Membership and Voluntary Services and as DAV's National VAVS Representative and a member of the VAVS National Advisory Committee.

You are a strong influence on volunteer nominations because of your close contact with the many fellow DAVers you serve with. Therefore, DAV Department Commanders may submit nominations for these awards. Submittal of nominations of a DAV or DAV Auxiliary volunteer must first be signed and certified by the Voluntary Service Program Manager at the facility where the candidate volunteers. Nominations must be received no later than February 26, 2011.

Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program

The Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program was created to honor outstanding young volunteers who are active participants in the VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) program. The scholarships are awarded to deserving young men and women who have generously donated their time and compassion to sick and disabled veterans in their communities. The DAV is deeply appreciative of Ford Motor Company for helping DAV recognize the thousands of hours these outstanding students have donated to care for and comfort disabled veterans.

Some of the benefits of volunteering at a local VA medical center may include: scholarships for college, job experience, healthcare career possibilities, providing assistance to hospitalized veterans, completing high school volunteerism requirements and community involvement.

ELIGIBILITY

- Scholarships can be awarded to any volunteer who is age 21 or younger and has volunteered for a minimum of 100 hours at a VA medical center during the previous calendar year. All volunteer hours must be credited to the Disabled American Veterans.
- Scholarships can be used at any accredited institution of higher learning; to include universities, colleges, community colleges, vocational schools, etc.
- Scholarships must be utilized in full prior to the recipient attaining the age of 25, or within 6 years of receiving the scholarship, whichever is later.
- Immediate family members of the DAV national organization are eligible to receive a scholarship.
- Nominations for this award may be submitted by the Voluntary Services Program Manager at the VA Medical Center, DAV Department Commander, or the student may complete a self-nomination form which is available on-line. If you are submitting your own nomination, please include an essay discussing "What volunteering at a VA medical center means to you." (Essay should be 750 words or less).
- All nomination packets should include a nomination form, essay, and any supporting documentation which you would like to have considered by the Selection Committee.
- Applications for the 2011 Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship program will be accepted through February 26, 2011.
- Know a youth that is interested in volunteering? Our Volunteer Registration Form, Nomination Form, or Essay Form, which can be accessed on

http://www.dav.org/volunteers/jesse_brown_scholarship.html should be completed and mailed to: Disabled American Veterans, National Headquarters, Voluntary Services Department, 3725 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, Kentucky 41076.

NATIONAL SALUTE TO VETERAN PATIENTS

The week of February 14 each year is your opportunity to say thank you to a special group of men and women, more than 98,000 Veterans of the U.S. armed services who are cared for every day in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers, outpatient clinics, domiciliaries, and nursing homes. The 2011 National Salute program is scheduled for February 13 - 19. This year, National Salute to Veteran Patients will have Co-Chairmen:



Daytime Actor and Emmy Nominee -- James Reynolds

Once again, daytime actor and Emmy nominee James Reynolds is Co-Chairman of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) 2011 National Salute to Veteran Patients. Mr. Reynold's requested to serve again and continue his visits to VA medical centers and VA Voluntary Service programs.

Reynolds, best known for his long running performance as police officer Abe Carver on the popular "Days of Our Lives" will lead VA's annual patient recognition program inviting the public to visit and honor hospitalized veterans during National Salute Week, February 13-19. He serves as the national spokesperson for more than 131,000 volunteers serving veterans at VA facilities across the nation.

Reynolds was born and raised in the small farming community of Oskaloosa, Kansas. During high school, he performed in many school plays and played football, basketball and track. Following graduation, he joined the Marines and was assigned to an information service office in Hawaii as a reporter. He was sent to Vietnam and served for almost a year with a variety of units in and around Chu Lai, adding battlefield reporting to his combat duties. A wound ended his military service.

Reynolds enrolled in Topeka's Washburn University, majoring in pre-law and journalism. Advised that the best place on campus to meet girls was the theatre department, he began auditioning and performing in plays – discovering a passion for acting.

He used his journalism background to land jobs with newspapers such as the Topeka Daily Capitol and the Colorado Springs Sun where he wrote about theatre, film and music. That allowed him to report on his passion while pursuing acting as a career.

In 1974, he landed his first television commercial and a featured role in "Mr. Majestyk," with Charles Bronson. He moved to Los Angeles, amassed an impressive list of primetime television and motion picture credits, and became one of the foundation blocks of "Days of our Lives." He has logged

more hours on television than any other African-American actor in the U.S. – averaging over a 100 hours of airtime each year for 25 consecutive years.

Reynolds received an Emmy nomination for Best Supporting Actor in a Drama Series for his role as Carver, as well as NAACP Image Award nominations for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Daytime Drama Series. He was also nominated for an NAACP Theatre Award for his work in the theatrical production "Buffalo Soldier."

Reynolds is deeply committed to charitable works such as the Ronald McDonald's House and touring with the USO. He has been to Cuba, the Mediterranean, Kuwait and Afghanistan to meet and show support for troops overseas. In 2007, Reynolds was honored by the Beverly Hills/Hollywood NAACP Veteran Affairs and Armed Services Committee for his contributions to the United States Armed Forces.



Stephen Cochran -- Country Music Artist

Born in rural Pikeville, Kentucky and raised in the creative heart of Nashville, Cochran started his country music career. With his career just getting off the ground, Cochran did an about face following the tragic events of 9/11 — joining the Marines' elite reconnaissance division and headed straight to Iraq. He returned safely, but wasn't so lucky on his next overseas tour -- to Afghanistan.

During his second tour, Cochran's convoy security patrol was hit just outside of Kandahar by a road-side bomb - he awoke a month later to find himself in the Bethesda, Maryland, military hospital with his back broken in six places.

Cochran was facing living the rest of his life in a wheelchair as doctors of Walter Reed and Bethesda were planning to fuse his fragmented spine back together. A nurse had suggested using an experimental procedure called kyphoplasty, but the military doctors refused to attempt the procedure. Pursuing the suggested option, Cochran's mother contacted the Nashville VAMC for a second opinion. Doctors at the VAMC, in partnership with Vanderbilt University Medical Center, performed the experimental procedure.

The procedure was a success and Cochran began walking the road of recovery. "I can say that I am walking VA research and development," said Cochran. "What VA had to do was put together a team, just for me. They realize that every veteran is different. They looked at my situation and made an attack plan for it. And we are still fighting together today. My development and progress has been amazing and I owe it to the great team I have in Nashville."

Back on his feet, Cochran exploded onto the country music scene in 2007 with a critically acclaimed, self-titled debut album that captured the hearts of fans, critics, and a lot of everyday heroes.

In October 2009, he and his band, the New Country Outlaws, recorded the song "Hope." Shortly thereafter, they recorded a video featuring a choir of veterans performing the song at various VA locations. At every turn Cochran has taken time and leveraged his newfound celebrity status to benefit his fellow veterans including the Coalition to Salute Heroes.

During the National Salute, VA invites individuals, veterans groups, military personnel, civic organizations, businesses, schools, local media, celebrities and sports stars to participate in a variety of activities at the VA medical centers. The activities and events include special ward visits and valentine distributions; photo opportunities; school essay contests; special recreation activities and veteran recognition programs.

The week also provides an opportunity for the community to become acquainted with the volunteer opportunities within VAVS and Local Veterans Assistance Programs.

Contact your nearest VA Medical Center and ask for Voluntary Service to discover the wonderful things you, your group or organization can do to salute America's Heroes. Locate the facility nearest you.

2011 MID-WINTER CONFERENCE Voluntary Services Workshop

This year's conference will be held at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Virginia, February 27 – March 2.

The Voluntary Services Workshop will take place on Monday, February 28, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Important issues surrounding the DAV Transportation Network, Hospital Service Coordinators, Local Veterans Assistance Program and volunteerism will be presented.

2011 DAV TRANSPORTATION NETWORK VAN GRANT PROGRAM

The 2011 van grant applications have all been evaluated. This year we will be purchasing 101 Ford Explorers, E-350 and Ford Flex vehicles that will provide needed transportation services to disabled veterans unable to get to VA medical centers and clinics for medical care. As in the past, the National Organization, in partnership with the DAV National Service Foundation's Columbia Trust fund, and the generous support of many Departments and Chapters, will be donating these vehicles to the VA to be used in the DAV Volunteer Transportation Network.

The Departments will soon be receiving notices advising when the vehicles will be available for pick up from National Headquarters. We expect delivery to begin in April and to be concluded by June. Those Departments who have a balance due on their van grant requests should forward it to Nancy O'Brien, Director of Foundation and Workplace Giving. No vehicle will be released to Departments until the balance is paid. If you are not sure of the amount of any balance please feel free to contact me here at National Headquarters.

On behalf of those who use the transportation network and those who drive the vans, I thank you for your support of this valuable program.

MAJOR LEAGUE UMPIRE VISITS VA MEDICAL CENTERS

Retired Major League Umpire Larry Barnett visited the following VA medical centers in February: Lake City, Gainesville, Orlando, Bay Pines and Tampa, Florida.

VAVS NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Save the date!

The 65th Annual VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee meeting will be held in Cincinnati, Ohio, April 27 - 29, 2011. The host hotel for the meeting is the Hyatt Regency Cincinnati located at 151 West 5th Street. The deadline for hotel reservations is March 28, 2011. Please contact the hotel directly at (513) 579-1234 or toll free (888) 421-1442 to make reservations under the Department of Veterans Affairs -- VAVS National Advisory Committee Meeting room block.

To register for the meeting please print the appropriate VAVS NAC Registration below and follow the instructions at the bottom of the form. [General Attendance Registration Form](#) (for use by general public, local facility VAVS Representatives/Deputies, other VAVS volunteers and VA staff). For additional information on the VAVS NAC meeting contact the VA Voluntary Service program office at (202) 461-7300.

As your National Representative, I look forward to seeing many DAV VAVS Chairman, Representative and Deputy Representative, and volunteers in attendance.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you should have any questions about the information in this bulletin.



MICHAEL J. WALSH
National Director of Voluntary Services

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