

June 2010



2010 GEORGE H. SEAL MEMORIAL AWARDS

These prestigious awards annually honor the remarkable volunteers who serve disabled veterans and their families through the VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) program. The awards are conferred in memory of George H. Seal, a former DAV Director of Membership and Volunteer Services and leading organizer and administrator of the DAV VAVS program from 1952 until his death in 1977. This year's winners are:

DAV – Joseph Patterson

Joe Patterson, a member of Chapter 1 in Washington, D.C., says volunteering is what he wants to do, and he's happy to do it. He's been volunteering for 23 years and has accumulated 22,825 hours.

Arriving at 6:30 a.m. and extending his services to 4:30 p.m. and later, the DAV Seal Trophy recipient has donated time in many duties, from Transportation Network driver to Hospital Service Coordinator. He even has time to deliver the newspapers to hundreds of patients every day.

Joe was instrumental in obtaining the record 400 percent growth in the DAV Transportation Network. The growth was incurred in less than a year's time thanks in part to Joe's proficiency and dedication to excellence.

His motto is, "There is no better way to honor veterans than to serve veterans." He's gotten so used to volunteering that it is second nature to him at the Washington, D.C. VA Medical Center where he directs the DAV Transportation Network program. He is an active volunteer donating day after day to the operation of the VAVS program in Washington. Joe is truly an inspiration to veterans and other volunteers.

"Volunteering isn't about me," said Patterson. "It's about my fellow veterans. I get peace of mind out of volunteering. My life on earth is to help, and as long as I can do that, I have accomplished what I have set out to do."

DAV Auxiliary – Barbara D. Centeno

Barbara D. Centeno, a member of Auxiliary Unit 3, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, has more than 44 years as a volunteer, with 16,614 hours of service. Her volunteer assignments have

directly resulted in enhanced patient morale because of her committed care and concern for veterans.

At the Albuquerque VA medical center, patients are greeted by Auxiliary Seal Trophy recipient Centeno with a big smile and a hot cup of coffee. "It makes me feel good to serve them coffee," she said. "The 'thank yous' they give me for being there is always returned with my thanks for their service. They really thank you for being a volunteer."

In addition to volunteering at the VAMC, Ms. Centeno also volunteers at various other places. She distributes wheelchair bags and lap robes to patients at the Manor Care Nursing Home and participates in Project Hand Up, which is an annual stand down for homeless veterans.

Ms. Centeno really gets a kick out of serving a home-cooked meal to her grandchildren, but for this volunteer, serving disabled veterans is her greatest joy. Being fluent in Spanish is a great comfort for patients who speak that language. While being a great organizer and a hard working volunteer Barbara showcases the mission of the Auxiliary to support disabled veterans. Because she grew up in Albuquerque, there are a lot of people at the VAMC she knows.

The truth be known, Barbara has help. "I'm slowing down and I don't know how much I more I can do," said the 84-year-old volunteer. "'My husband, who's 93, volunteers at the VA every Friday to help me."

Mr. Patterson and Ms. Centeno will be presented with their awards during the opening session of the 2010 DAV and Auxiliary National Convention in Atlanta, Georgia, July 31 – August 3, 2010.

The DAV and Auxiliary can be proud of people like Mr. Patterson and Ms. Centeno for the service and dedication they display every day. Whenever any of us wears the DAV emblem, we know that it is a symbol of greatness because of people like Joe and Barbara and all the others who each day, without fanfare or recognition, provide friendly service and compassionate support to disabled veterans. They are great people and they help make the DAV a great organization.

2010 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) and Local Veterans Assistance Program (LVAP). 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.

Candidates for the scholarships must be age 21 or younger and must have volunteered a minimum of 100 hours during the previous calendar year. The scholarship will be available for

any accredited institution of higher learning, to include universities, colleges, community colleges or vocational schools, etc. In addition, the recipient must utilize the scholarship prior to reaching age 25.

Nomination forms are mailed to each Department Commander and Voluntary Service Program Managers at all VA medical centers across the country.

The winners of the 2010 Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarships have widely divergent interests, but they have one thing in common – they honor those who defended our nation’s freedom by donating their time to assist disabled veterans.

1 st Place	Stephanie Wu, San Francisco, CA VAMC	\$15,000
2 nd Place	Solene Goycochea, San Diego, CA VAMC	\$10,000
3 rd Place	Joshua Riggins, Bay Pines, FL VAMC	\$ 7,500
	Christopher Davis, Cincinnati, OH VAMC	\$ 7,500
4 th Place	Errol Jimerson, Jackson, MS VAMC	\$ 5,000
	Reshma Muppala, Washington, DC VAMC	\$ 5,000
	Benjamin Meidinger, Reno, NV VAMC	\$ 5,000
	Amy Hansen, Muskogee, OK VAMC	\$ 5,000
	Samantha Lambert, Lexington, KY VAMC	\$ 5,000
	Janez Young, Jackson, MS VAMC	\$ 5,000
	Johnathan Schickinger, Louisville, KY	\$ 5,000
	Keyla Gammarano, Dallas, TX VAMC	\$ 5,000

The outstanding service provided by this dedicated group of young volunteers is inspiring to those veterans who are the recipients of their care and to the families of those veterans. They prove that our nation’s youth care about veterans and the service and sacrifice they made for our nation. They have proven their desire to help disabled veterans and they clearly have gained a great deal from their association with our veterans. It is a privilege to have these young men and women working to assist our sick and disabled veterans. The tremendous response we have received for the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program is growing. In the future, it will encourage increased volunteerism to help our nation’s veterans.

Ms. Stephanie Wu will be presented with her scholarship during the opening session of the 2010 DAV and Auxiliary National Convention in Atlanta, Georgia, July 31 – August 3, 2010.

The selection committee once again stated that all of the nominees are very special volunteers and it was a difficult job to choose a winner. Each nominee has been awarded a certificate of merit for outstanding volunteer performance in meeting the needs of 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.

Applications for the 2011 Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship program will be accepted between September 1, 2010 and 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, KY 41076.

FIVE WAYS TO MAKE VOLUNTEERING FUN

Are you looking for ways to make volunteering more fun for people? Here are some tried-and-tested ways to inject more fun into volunteer projects and also generate more interest and good publicity for the DAV and Auxiliary. Or perhaps you can use a few ideas on making chapter activities more interesting. The organizations noted found great success in trying something different. You should too.

1. **Ask them to step out of their normal routine.** During the holidays, volunteers for the American Lung Association of New Hampshire (Bedford, NH) are invited to wrap gifts for shoppers at area retail stores.
2. **Invite them to work together on a project.** Volunteers for Spere Memorial Hospital (Plymouth, NH) are encouraged to work together or with staff on a project for at least part of the time. Volunteers are scheduled around lunchtime so they can eat or at least have a cup of coffee together.
3. **Take them on field trips.** Squam Lakes Natural Science Center (Holderness, NH) started a volunteer field trip exchange program with other nearby facilities. They bring a group of volunteers to another site for a field trip and the other site does the same by bringing their volunteers to the science center.
4. **Send them on a scavenger hunt.** Student volunteers at Hunt Community (Nashua, NH) are often sent on mini scavenger hunts. During the holidays, for example, they may take pictures of the residents at each of the facility's many Christmas trees.
5. **Plan special events for them throughout the year.** Hunt Community also holds several events throughout the year to encourage interaction between volunteers and residents. Such events include an Easter egg hunt, pumpkin decorating contest, Christmas caroling and so forth.

DAV CELEBRITY ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAM

MAJOR LEAGUE UMPIRES VISIT VA MEDICAL CENTERS

Retired Major League Baseball Umpire Larry Barnett entertained the veteran participants at the 2010 National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic at Snowmass Village, Colorado, March 28 through April 2 and visited the following VA Medical Centers in June: Durham, Fayetteville, Salisbury and Asheville, North Carolina and Mountain Home, Tennessee.

Major League Baseball Umpire Jerry Layne visited the following VA Medical Centers in April, May and June: Washington, D.C.; W. Palm Beach, Miami, Bay Pines and Tampa, Florida; Bronx, New York; VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (Aspinwall and Oakland Divisions), Pennsylvania; Houston, Texas; Cincinnati and Cleveland Ohio, Fort Thomas, Kentucky, Detroit and Ann Arbor, Michigan; Brockton and W. Roxbury, Massachusetts; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Long Beach, California; Chicago, Illinois (Jesse Brown VAMC); and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

A PERSONAL REASON TO VOLUNTEER

We all have our reasons for volunteering our time and energies to causes that are dear to us. The following letter was received from one of our valued volunteers thanking the DAV for recognizing his achievement of more than 10,000 volunteer hours.

Dear Mr. Walsh,

Thank you for the handsome DAV wristwatch which I recently received. Be assured that I wear it with a sense of pride and appreciation for the organization it represents.

Volunteers have different reasons for what they do. The seed for my devotion to our military began when I was an eight-year-old child during World War II. My family lived on the first floor of a two-family dwelling in Arlington, Massachusetts. The second floor was occupied by the Downings, a family of Irish background like my own parents. The Downings had four sons who were ten to fifteen years older than I. They were my "big brothers" in every sense. I wanted to be like them when I grew up.

When the war began, these four brothers were quickly involved. James the oldest and a West Point graduate, became a fighter pilot; Cornelius and his twin John enlisted in the Army and Navy, respectively; Edward, the youngest, joined the Army. James and Cornelius lost their lives in the war, thus leaving John and Edward to return home to a grieving family in Arlington. The emotional agony in that household was palpable for a long time. The sacrifice was almost too much to bear, but, as you know, the passage of time provides relief but never erases the memories of the lives that were cut short.

After working 30 years as a clinical social worker at the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial VA Hospital in Bedford, Massachusetts, I made a conscious decision upon retirement to

volunteer there several times a week among the men and women I will always hold in the highest esteem.

*Sincerely,
Jack A. Johnston, M.S.W., Ed.D.
DAV Volunteer*

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael J. Walsh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MICHAEL J. WALSH
National Director of Voluntary Services

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