

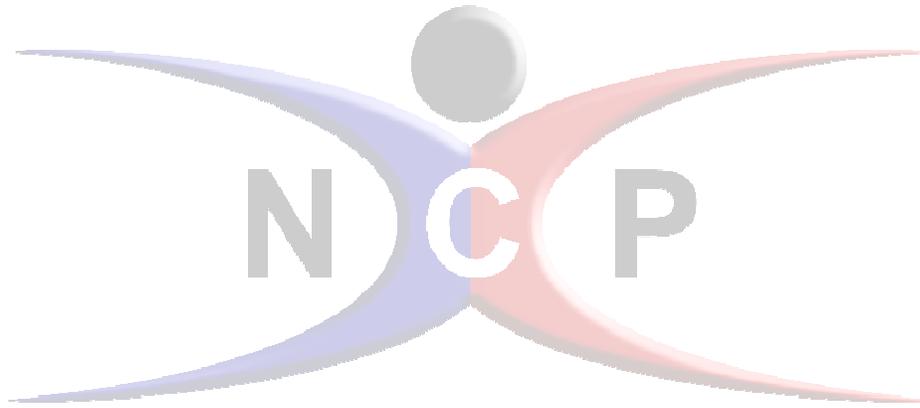
Health *POWER!*

Prevention News

Winter 2006

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Calendar of Events

NCP will be represented at the following meetings:

January 2007

OOP Meeting—Washington, DC -
1/9/2007 (Dr. Kinsinger, Dr. Jones)

QUERI Meeting—Washington, DC—
1/11-12/2007 (Dr. Kinsinger)

VA Health Care Conference— Portugal—
1/15—19/ 2007 (Dr. Kinsinger)

My HealthVet CAB Retreat—Washington, DC—
1/23-24/2007 (Dr. Kinsinger, Dr. Pries)

Wellness Conference—Orlando, FL—
1/23-25/2007 (Dr. Harvey)

February 2007

Anti-Psychotic Metabolic Panel—New York—
2/7-8/2007 (Dr. Kahwati)

Community Task Force Meeting—Atlanta, GA—
2/14-15/2007 (Dr. Kahwati)

VA HSR&D Meeting—Washington, DC—
2/21-23/2007 (Dr. Kinsinger, Dr. Kahwati)

NCP Mission Statement

The VA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP), a field-based office of the VHA Office of Patient Care Services, provides input to VHA leadership on evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention policy. NCP provides programs, education, and coordination for the field consistent with prevention policy to enhance the health, well-being, and quality of life for veterans.

Linda Kinsinger, MD, MPH Director, VA NCP



A Year-End Review and a Look Ahead

Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right. ~Oprah Winfrey

It always seems appropriate this time of year to take a few minutes to reflect back on what's happened over the past year and to look ahead at what's to come. I promise this won't be like one of those irksome "Christmas letters" from friends or family that gloat about all the fabulous places they've been this year and the incredible accomplishments of little Johnny or Suzy! But it is good to stop and reflect back on what all has happened in prevention in VHA over the past 12 months – together we've accomplished a lot!

It's hard to believe that only a year ago, the *MOVE!* Weight Management Program for Veterans had its national launch, with a toolkit full of materials and resources and also web-based training modules for staff. Since then, an amazing number of patients have received weight management services through the *MOVE!* Program. I have been very impressed with all the *MOVE!* activities reported on the *MOVE!* VISN coordinators' calls. Many of you have carved out precious time to provide this care to your patients and I hope you're seeing some rewards from it. Just this morning, I got a call from a veteran who's lost about 50 pounds, based on the advice and support he received from a *MOVE!* provider; in his words, "It's saved my life! I feel so much better all the way around." I'm sure you hear those words of thanks, too.

Anecdotes like that do make us feel good, but to really know how well the *MOVE!* Program is working, we need a strong evaluation plan. That's not easy to do, given limitations of the data we have access to and the lack of a distinct control group, but we've developed a

solid plan, based on a framework that's been used extensively for evaluation of public health programs. So over next few years, we will have a good sense of the health impact of this program. In addition to the *MOVE!* Program for Veterans, we also launched *MOVEmployee!* this year. Staff are important role models for patients; providing support for them to manage their weight is just as essential as it is for patients.

Another new initiative for 2006 was HealthierUS Veterans, an initiative to reach out to all veterans and their families to encourage them to "Eat Healthy. Be Active. Get Fit for Life" in order to reduce the risk for obesity and diabetes. Over the past 12 months, there have been a number of events and activities all over the country promoting the initiative, from Boston to Florida to Salt Lake City to Seattle. Many facilities have formed new partnerships with organizations in their communities to work together to get this health message out to the public. Thanks to you for your support of this initiative, an issue that's of special interest to Secretary Nicholson.

We've continued to work on other prevention activities as well, in addition to weight management, obesity, and diabetes. In July, we held a very successful conference in Alexandria, Virginia, with our colleagues in Primary Care. We were pleased to see so many friends and acquaintances there. We're hoping to do a repeat performance in two years. The Prevention Handbook finally was signed and released for distribution. This established in policy the positions of VISN Preventive Medicine Leader and Prevention Coordinator and called for administrative

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support. I wish I could give you all a Christmas present of additional time to do the work, but the size of the package that'd be required would be too big for Santa's sleigh!

Another new initiative this year was the creation of the Office of Veterans Health Education and Information within NCP. We are pleased to have 2 staff who have worked hard on patient education over the years, Rose Mary Pries and Pam Hebert, join us here in Durham. Thanks to Dr. Madhu Agarwal for her vision and support for this office, VHA finally has a national program office devoted to coordinating and improving patient health education for veterans.

What's coming in the new year? We'll continue to work in all the areas mentioned above for 2006. But we're also planning new projects, as well. One will be to develop a coordinated, comprehensive policy for clinical preventive services for VHA. There will be more on this in the next newsletter.

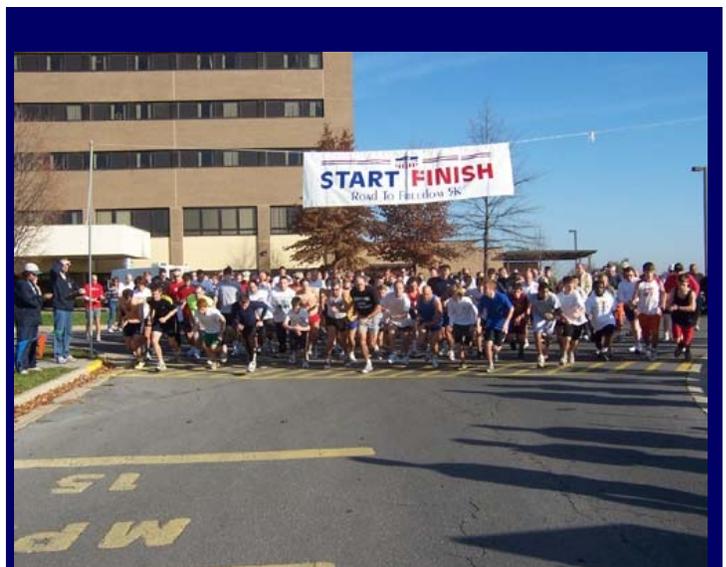
Here are NCP's strategic goals for FY 07:

1. Continue to develop and support the *MOVE!* weight management program throughout VHA.
2. Lead activities for HealthierUS Veterans Initiative on obesity and diabetes prevention in collaboration with HHS.
3. Lead activities in support of VHA Strategic Initiative 8.1 and other high-level initiative as requested.
4. Provide evaluation of *MOVE!* and support *MOVE!*-related research projects.
5. Ensure high quality delivery of preventive services through support and education of field prevention program and staff; monitor prevention-related performance measures in the field.
6. Establish and promote VA clinical preventive services policy in collaboration with other PCS and VHA program offices.

7. Support and encourage employee wellness.
8. Develop a plan for and conduct activities of the Office of Veterans Health Education and Information.

We can't accomplish these goals without your support and participation and we look forward to working with you in the coming year. At this time next year, I'm sure I'll be just as amazed looking back, as I was this year. Our efforts in prevention in VHA are healthy and strong and making a difference in veterans' lives. Best wishes for a Happy New Year to you all!

Linda



*"Road To Freedom" Run, Walk,
or Roll—Veterans' Day
November 11, 2006
VAMC Martinsburg, WV*

Leila C. Kahwati, MD, MPH Deputy Director, Clinical Medical Consultant, *MOVE!* Program



I'm delighted to start contributing to the HealthPOWER! Quarterly Newsletter as the "new" NCP Deputy Director, Clinical. We all have been using the term "new" loosely around here since technically I'm not really new. I've been working for the NCP as a contractor since July 2004. My permanent VA appointment to the Deputy Director position caps off a year of leadership transition—program office reorganization and growth which have strengthened the NCP's ability to achieve its vision "to improve and maintain veterans' health status and quality of life by providing high quality preventive health care."

In my new role, I will continue to function as the medical consultant to the *MOVE!* Weight Management Program. Between the efforts of the NCP *MOVE!* Program Team and the dedicated work of *MOVE!* Coordinators and front-line providers, *MOVE!* has flourished and I'm happy to be remaining actively involved in *MOVE!* Program development and refinement. One of my newer responsibilities with respect to *MOVE!* has been to coordinate the national *MOVE!* Program Evaluation. An evaluation of this magnitude requires collaboration and cooperation from a number of VHA offices and people and we've made good forward progress to date. We recently finished the first *MOVE!* Annual Report collection from 153 facilities as required by VHA Handbook 1101.1-Managing Overweight/obesity For Veterans Everywhere. The Annual Report is a major data element contributing to the evaluation and it will help the *MOVE!* Team further focus its efforts. We are also keeping a close watch on the development of the Corporate Data Warehouse, as it undertakes the first national roll-up of patient height and weight data, critical data elements for our evaluation. Lastly, we continue to work with Betsy Lancaster of the VHA Support Service Center (VSSC) to develop on-line tools using existing VA data and information technology resources for the field to monitor their own program's growth and performance.

One of my other new responsibilities is to coordinate the NCP's research activities and actively collaborate with other investigators on projects of mutual interest. Translating research into practice is a two-way street and active communication to researchers about what is operationally an "important research question" is critical. We've successfully collaborated with a number of investigators in this regard and continue to work with others to help shape operationally accurate and relevant to the field research proposals so that findings can be more readily implemented.

My last new responsibility is to support the work of our Director, Dr. Kinsinger, and the work of other NCP Program Managers. This includes preparing briefs, reviewing proposals and products, helping to brainstorm solutions to tough questions, and staying abreast of the latest developments in the field that are relevant to the patients and staff we serve. Part of this responsibility includes participating on or making presentations to various committees and workgroups both within and outside of VHA.

So what kind of person did Dr. Kinsinger hire to fill these shoes? Well, I technically belong to Generation X although I never worked at The Gap[®], never moved back home after college, and rarely played video games while growing up outside of Rochester, NY. About half-way through college, I decided to shift gears from a biochemistry bench-scientist track and headed towards medical school to pursue a career in preventive medicine and public health. Following my residency in Family Medicine, I worked for several years in a US Army Clinic in Germany while my husband, an Active Duty Army Physician, completed his military obligation. Following this, I completed a residency in Preventive Medicine/Public Health and a Health Resources and Services

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Administration (HRSA)-funded Primary Care Research Fellowship, both at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I came to NCP as a contractor soon after fellowship ended and have been here ever since. I live with my husband and two young daughters (aged 3 years and 9 months) in the wonderful community of Chapel Hill, where we struggle, just like everyone else, to maintain a good balance between work and home. I treasure (almost) every minute I have with the kids and remain cautiously pessimistic

about ever having a real hobby or a clean garage and basement.

As a now regular contributor to Health**POWER!**, my hope is to provide you with useful, relevant information in a well-written easily digestible format. I welcome your suggestions for article topics, questions you would like to see answered, or prevention issues you have always wondered about. I look forward to the rewards and challenges of my new position, but most importantly the opportunity to improve preventive healthcare for VHA patients.



A quick reminder – the monthly Prevention Conference Calls are scheduled for the 2nd Tuesday of the month @ 1PM Eastern. If there are subjects you'd like to see featured on the calls, please contact Pam Del Monte at Pamela.DelMonte@va.gov.

The schedule of calls is on the following page along with the listing of 2007 Monthly Prevention Topics.

December's call featured success stories from prevention coordinators around the nation.

A big thank you to Geraldine Wiess who shared many, many strategies to improve influenza immunization rates for veterans and employees. Her colleagues and staff refer to her as the immunization queen and she has the tiara to prove it! To learn more about what Gerri is doing in Rochester, please view the December Prevention call summary posted on the NCP intranet site.



Monthly Prevention Topics 2007

MONTH	TOPIC	PREVENTION CALL*
January	Healthy Weight	January 9, 2007
February	Heart Disease	February 13, 2007
March	Bone Disease (arthritis, osteoporosis, back pain)	March 13, 2007
April	Cancer (Colorectal, Skin, Breast, Cervical, Prostate, Lung) Public Health Week	April 10, 2007
May	Hypertension/Stroke National Employee Health & Fitness Day	May 8, 2007
June	Safety / Violence	June 12, 2007
July	Depression	July 10, 2007
August	Immunization (National Immunization Month)	August 14, 2007
September	Diabetes	September 11, 2007
October	Stress (Breast Cancer Awareness Month)	October 9, 2007
November	Tobacco The Great American Smokeout	November 13, 2007
December	Alcohol/Substance Abuse	December 11, 2007

*All calls are scheduled for 1PM Eastern Time. Access Code - 18987

Monthly prevention topics are posted on NCP's website:

<http://www.prevention.va.gov> (internet)

<http://vaww.nchpdp.med.va.gov> (intranet)

Pamela Del Monte, MS, RN, C Program Manager for Field Communications



This past November I had the privilege of co-presenting with Michelle Ruslavage at the 2007 AMSUS conference's Federal Nursing Luncheon (see next page). Michelle is Nurse and Health Promotion/Disease Prevention Consultant for the Indian Health Service under the Department of Health and Human Services. Our presentation A Partnership "VA - HHS/HIS, Addressing Obesity and Diabetes Issues" was focused around the efforts of both the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Indian Health Service in educating about obesity and diabetes. It was a great opportunity to update nursing leaders from the VA, all branches of the military, the Public Health Service and others about the HealthierUS Veterans initiative, what we specifically are doing in the VA and what strategies are being utilized by the Indian Health Service.

In addition to outlining the 5 Core Components of HealthierUS Veterans - Promotion of *MOVE!* Weight Management Program outside the VA, the Prescriptions for Health, Fitness Challenges, Partnerships and the Fit for Life Volunteer Corps - I also shared what nursing is doing. My nursing colleagues are hard at work. A sampling of activities include an active role in *MOVE!*, screening, counseling, follow-up and support groups, educating veterans and staff, developing walk-a-thons/roll-a-thons for veterans and staff and promoting competitions among nurses. A few of the more unique activities include working with Canteen Service and Food & Nutrition Service to change vending choice options and working with Voluntary Services to provide healthy snacks instead of doughnuts. Additionally, nurses are partnering with community groups and with county health departments to address obesity and diabetes.

I hope that you've had a chance to visit National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention's new internet website - www.prevention.va.gov. The new site has the VA branded look and has content applicable to clinicians and consumers. Much of the content that was on the previous site is available, but may be located in different places.

Here is a quick overview of where you will find information.

NCP Home: What's New; Mission; Staff listing
Prevention Practice: Monthly Topics; Resources for prevention leaders: Prevention resources: Immunization resources
Health Promotion/Wellness Health promotion resources: Employee Wellness tools and resources; *MOVEmployee:* Farmers Market information
NCP Publications: HealthPOWER!; Wellness Digest; Step-by-Step Guide
Educational Resources: Continuing Education links and materials
Prevention Policies: Prevention handbook; *MOVE!* handbook; 2007 prevention related performance measures; Links to the Clinical Practice Guidelines and to other VA publications
 Links to the *MOVE!*, HealthierUS Veterans and Office of Patient Care Services websites.

Information specific to the VA will be located on the NCP intranet website. Visit it frequently, as new information is added often.

Work has also begun on updating and revising the NCP intranet website. We'll provide updates on that progress on the calls and in HealthPOWER!

VA NCP at AMSUS

The 112th Annual Meeting of the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS) Conference was held on November 5-10, 2006, in San Antonio, Texas. The theme of the conference was "Health 2015: Actionable Strategies for Caring for Our Warriors, Veterans and Country." NCP staff who attended the conference included: Dr. Linda Kinsinger, Director; David Pattillo, Deputy Director for Administration; Dr. Ken Jones, *MOVE!* Program Manager; Pamela Del Monte, Prevention Practice Program Manager; Pamela Frazier, Office Manager; and Connie Lewis, Special Assistant.



NCP's Booth

As a result of the departure of Dr. Jonathan Perlin in August, Dr. Michael Kussman carried on the responsibility as President of AMSUS as Acting Under Secretary for Health. Other notable VHA leaders attending the conference included Dr. Gerald Cross, Acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health; Dr. Madhu Agarwal, Chief Patient Care Services Officer; and Dr. William Duncan, Chief Consultant, Medicine/Surgery Services.

Pam Del Monte presented "HealthierUS Veterans: Preventing Obesity and Diabetes—A VA and HHS Partnership." Dr. Ken Jones participated in a panel discussion on "New Tools and Innovative Programs for Weight Management in the Uniform Services and Veterans Administration." Both presentations were well received and prompted attendees to visit NCP's booth in the Exhibit Hall.

NCP's booth included window shades of the *MOVE!* Program and HealthierUS Veterans initiative; a poster of NCP activities and accomplishments, as well as various handouts related to NCP programs and activities. Notable visitors at the NCP booth during the conference included Dr. Kenneth Moritsugu (Acting Surgeon General), Dr. Kussman and Dr. Cross.

During the VA Luncheon on November 8th, Dr. Perlin delivered a discourse on "Health Services in the Private Sector." Afterward, Dr. Kussman presented Dr. Perlin with an award of appreciation. Recipients of AMSUS awards were also recognized, including Dr. Kussman who received the Founder's Medal.



**Dr. Kinsinger with AMSUS
conference attendee**



Dr. Jones with Dr. Gerald Cross

***MOVE!* Update**

Ken Jones, PhD

Program Manager for *MOVE!*



As the calendar rolls over from 2006 to 2007, it is a good time to reflect on the progress for *MOVE!* We planned for a January launch of *MOVE!*, sending the field toolkits and making on-line training available. The VSSC *MOVE!* Utilization Data Cube shows that over 35,000 veterans have participated in *MOVE!* clinics (up to the middle of November). To enroll this many patients in care, we estimate that over a half million patients have been screened, provided with risk counseling, and offered *MOVE!*. This level of activity reflects a great deal of work on the part of Primary Care staff, *MOVE!* team members, Physician Champions, and facility and VISN *MOVE!* Coordinators.

A VA dietitian attending the annual meeting of the American Dietetics Association was approached by a dietitian from outside our system who stated, "I want to come to work at the VA because of *MOVE!*." Not only are healthcare professionals noticing our work, but other federal agencies and the media are attending to our proactive stance in supporting veterans in their self-management of overweight and obesity.

In 2001, only 40 medical centers reported having weight management programs. The 2006 *MOVE!* annual report has indicated that virtually every medical center or health care system has either implemented *MOVE!* or is actively working on initiating their program. We are hearing anecdotal reports of significant weight loss and marked improvements in health and quality of life for veterans. We look forward to the initial work of the systematic *MOVE!* evaluation which our Clinical Deputy Director, Dr. Leila Kahwati, is coordinating. As the *MOVE!* Program Manager, I want to thank all of you for your contributions to veteran health through *MOVE!*.

When we evaluated the *MOVE!* toolkit, we found that the most highly rated item was the 2006 *MOVE!* Calendar. With a small amount of

extra funds, we developed an updated 2007 Calendar. By now, your *MOVE!* Facility coordinator should have received 100 of the *MOVE!* 2007 Calendars and information on how to order more.

Our Director, Dr. Kinsinger, and I were pleased to attend the VISN 8 Healthier US Veterans (HUSV) event, which includes promotion of *MOVE!*. We participated in the Bay Pines event, but all facilities in VISN 8 and many of the CBOCs held simultaneous events on November 16. The events included community partners such as representatives from local health departments, the State Veterans Office, and representatives of the Steps to a Healthier US teams from Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties. Another key partner in this activity was the Veteran Canteen Service (VCS). VISN 8 and NCP partnered with VCS Dietitian, Meryl Garnto, to 1) promote the Wise-up canteen meal, which is now under 600 calories, and 2) co-brand healthy food alternative with Wise-Up! and *MOVE!* logos (including the Wise-Up! Meal and vending machine products). The canteen also offered items in special sections of the Canteen Store, to support increasing physical activity and weight management. VCS also donated HUSV workout visors, pedometers, and prizes for the events. The VISN 8 HUSV event occurred in the midst of their VISN 8 "On the *MOVE!*," a VISN-wide August-January weight loss and physical activity campaign, which includes competition and web-based information for veterans and staff. VISN 8, VCS, and community partners are to be commended for their creative efforts and leadership in promoting HUSV. With patients and staff, we should take the key messages of HUSV to heart in 2007: "Eat Healthy, Be Active, Get Fit for Life!"

Richard Harvey, Ph.D. Program Manager for Health Promotion



Employee Wellness - A Wave of the Future in VHA and Beyond?

Interest in wellness programs for employees is alive and well and appears to be growing. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta GA have opened a wonderful new physical activity facility for its employees that also includes rooms for relaxation to reduce stress. Several lengthy features on employee wellness programs in industry have appeared in the local newspapers lately, and large national meetings have been held annually for years. For example, the 17th Annual Art and Science of Health Promotion Conference is being held March 28-31 in San Francisco, and a conference titled "Rewarding Healthy Behaviors for Health Plans and Employers" is being held near Orlando in January.

Employee wellness activity is growing in VHA as well. NCP has been involved in this process for several years and has seen the number of wellness programs and size of the e-mail lists expand significantly. NCP is committed to facilitating this growth. The *MOVEmployee!* manual and the Wellness Toolkit have been available on both the VA intranet and internet NCP websites under the Employee Wellness tab for several months. But wait... there are now two more additions to the Toolkit! A lengthy list of links for employee wellness resources has been posted, as well as 10 ready-made PowerPoint presentations for use with employee groups (or with patients where applicable). These presentations have speaker notes with them so that they may be presented verbatim if desired.

The more ready-made wellness tools there are available, the more employee wellness can flourish in VHA! So there is more to come. NCP is preparing a document describing strategies for hosting a healthy meeting. There are many ways in which large meetings and conferences can incorporate health-promoting elements and

enhance participants' involvement and benefit without undue modification. It is anticipated that the "Healthy Meeting" will represent an evolutionary step towards a beneficial paradigm shift for VHA.

A comprehensive stress reduction program has also been proposed. The NCP Wellness Advisory Council has begun work on a "calendar" featuring wellness behaviors and topics for each of 12 months. Additional proposed materials include specific guides for having a healthy cooking demonstration, physical activity events, and so on. Finally, an employee wellness "Handbook" has been discussed as a possibility for the not-too-distant future.

The economic aspects of employee wellness are of interest to top level leadership and can do much to advance the cause of employee wellness. To assist with this, NCP plans to prepare a synopsis of economic information related to this topic. Our collective efforts to promote wellness for our employees and our patients should help shift our culture from a disease focus to a health and wellness model in VHA.



*Great American Smokeout
November 16, 2006
VAMC Martinsburg, WV*

David A. Pattillo, MHA Deputy Director for Administration

Leadership VA (LVA)



During 2006, I had the fortunate opportunity as a member of NCP to participate in a VA capstone training opportunity, Leadership VA (LVA). Established in 1978, LVA is a VA-based executive development program that brings people from all VA organizational elements together for a series of four, one-week training sessions. The sessions are designed to: achieve an integrated view of today's VA in order to further the goal of achieving "One VA"; explore the internal and external forces effecting the VA; gain insight into the current and predicted challenges facing the VA in the delivery of services and benefits to the veterans' community; and increase leadership skills by providing opportunities for refining those skills through practice in group settings.

LVA Class 2006 brought together 70 leaders from within VA to reinforce the theme of "One VA," designed to help us learn and appreciate the true magnitude of the mission of the VA. Getting to know my classmates also laid a foundation for networking with VA leaders who I learned truly share a deep personal commitment to the VA and to public service in its broadest sense. Participating members in my class came from all program offices in the VA to include: the Veterans Health Administration (VHA); Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA); National Cemetery Administration (NCA); Inspector General (IG); General Counsel; Board of Veteran Appeals; Assistant Secretary for Management; Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology; Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration; Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning, and Preparedness; and Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs.

LVA Class 2006 had two notable firsts! It featured Mike Brenny in his first assignment as Executive Director, Leadership VA. Mike

made an immediate impact on the program from the start by making positive changes to the curriculum. He is a wonderful leader and mentor for LVA. Previous LVA classes have traditionally met in Baltimore, Philadelphia, Washington, DC, and Williamsburg. LVA 2006 replaced Williamsburg with St. Louis. LVA 2006 began April 2006 with Session I in Philadelphia with a theme of "VA field operations - preparing VA leaders for tomorrow." Program goals included: improving knowledge of current and future VA field operations in the Medical Center, Regional Office and Insurance Center, the National Cemetery Administration, and other field elements; a look at management issues faced in VA field operations; building a foundation for looking at the major challenges which face the VA today; beginning the development of working relationships among participants; and furthering the participants' presentation skills. Highlights of this session included fishbowl introductions, Philly cheese steak, riding the duck, and hearing the story of the first recipient of TSGLI (Traumatic Serviceman Group Life Insurance).

Session II was held in Washington, DC in June 2006. Highlights included touring Arlington National Cemetery and playing LVA alumni and Secretary of the VA Nicholson in the traditional LVA softball game. The theme of the session was "organizational and political awareness." Goals included: developing knowledge of VA Central Office organization, operations, and policy formulations; improving the knowledge of VA's relationship to and interactions with Congress and other parts of the Executive Branch; developing an

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appreciation of the impact of other organizations upon the VA, and to continuing to intensify participants' commitment to serving America's veterans.

Session III was held in a new location—St Louis—in September. Highlights included touring the National Personnel Records Center and Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery. The theme was “leadership development” with goals of: fostering participants' further development of leadership skills with emphasis on leading people, managing change, and creativity; assisting participants in further development of presentation and media relations skills; and continued learning about VA field operations and other field elements that are instrumental in the delivery of care and benefits to veterans.

Session IV, our final session, occurred in Baltimore in November 2006 . Highlights included VA National Rehabilitation events, the MCVET Center, and our Group Projects! The powerful theme for this session was “commitment to public service – serving our veterans.” Goals included: learning about

others who have made a commitment to public service and who, by their dedication, serve as an example to us; intensifying participants' commitment to serving America's veterans; fostering the development of leadership and management skills; reviewing major initiatives which the VA is undertaking; and presenting the results of the Leadership Study Groups.

As I look back on the value of LVA 2006, I have come to appreciate the scale and enormity of the mission of the VA and the fact that I have formed close bonds with the members of my class. But, it is the relationships that I formed with the members of my Leadership Study Group whom I have come to cherish the most. As a member of Group 5, my fondest memories are the presentations, teleconferences, hard work, after hours sessions, camaraderie, and fun of this group. I will always think of them as the “veterans” of LVA 2006. And so, a special thanks to Barbara Brandt (VHA), Joan Hanson (Asst Sec for HR&A), Brad Houston (VBA), Jim Jackson (Asst Sec for HR&A), Lynette Sherrill (Asst Sec for IT), and Lisa Simoneau (VHA), and to NCP for their support while I attended this exceptional course. I strongly encourage others to attend LVA.



**LVA Class
of 2006**

HEALTHIERUS VETERANS ON THE MOVE!

By Rebecca A. Goldsmith, PA-C and Stephen K. Harmon, PhD, CHES

There are two cutting edge programs designed to combat the alarming trend of worsening obesity in this country. One program is the Healthier U.S. Veterans Program, which was designed by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). This program addresses issues such as lack of physical activity, poor nutrition and tobacco use that contribute to health problems, which include diabetes and obesity. An integral part of this new initiative is the *MOVE!* Program (Managing Overweight/Obesity for Veterans Everywhere) that specifically addresses healthy eating habits and increased physical activity. The slogan for these programs is simple: “Eat Healthy, Be Active & Get Fit for Life!”

The *MOVE!* Team for the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System (VASLCHCS) began a gradual implementation of the program in October 2005. The team is multidisciplinary and co-chaired by a Registered Dietician and the VASLCHCS local *MOVE!* Coordinator. In addition to enrolling veterans into the *MOVE!* Program, there was a concerted effort by the Team to change cultural awareness throughout the hospital. Signs were posted near elevators and in stairwells to encourage using the stairs. A one mile indoor walking route was established in the tunnels that join campus buildings using large blue boot foot prints on the floor to highlight the route. Volunteers encourage patients and staff to use the walk route instead of riding the golf carts. The VA Canteen Service began offering healthier food choices in the cafeteria through their “Wise Up” program and changed the signs in the vending areas and on machines to promote healthy choices.

On September 27 and 28, 2006, the VASLCHCS hosted a two-day kick-off event called “Healthier U.S. Veterans on the *MOVE!*” to raise awareness of these two new programs.

New banners were placed on lampposts around the medical center featuring the campaign slogan in bold letters: “Eat Healthy, Be Active & Get Fit for Life!” A new outdoor one mile walking loop was also unveiled and a Farmer’s Market provided a variety of free fruits and vegetables.

A variety of free classes were offered including medical hypnosis, meditation, tai chi, Qi gong, weight management, stress and goal setting, bariatrics sensitivity training, and a “Come to Your Senses—Living Skills” workshop. Event attendees were also provided tours of the gym and pool facilities and a demonstration of Watsu/Jahara water therapy. VA employees and community volunteers provided educational posters, *MOVE!* success stories and displays. The event offered blood pressure screening, body mass index and body fat percentage measurement to interested attendees.

The community support was impressive and included the representatives from the Huntsman Cancer Institute, AARP of Utah, American Diabetes Association, Utah State Parks, Utah Health Department, Salt Lake County Parks and Recreation, and Salt Lake City Bicycle Collective. Over 300 employees, veterans and guests registered during the two-day event.



Scott Coles, VA Canteen Service, offers healthy food samples during kick-off



James R. Floyd, Director, VASLCHCS, participates in health screening services

Veterans' Day Activities – Veterans on the *MOVE!* Walk November 3, 2006

Linda Zaiontz, Chief, Recreation Therapy Service
Jackie Vaughan-Williams, Recreation Therapist
South Texas Veterans Health Care System

Number of veterans involved: 24 (Kerrville), 23 (San Antonio)

Number of staff involved: 41 (Kerrville), 28 (San Antonio)

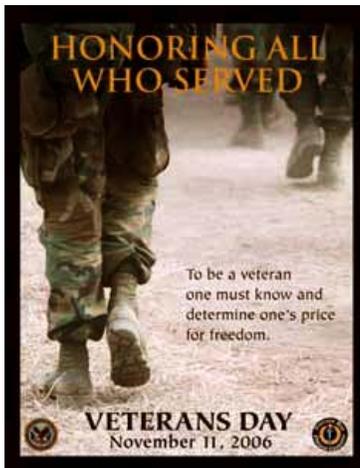
The South Texas Veterans Health Care System (STVHCS) San Antonio and Kerrville Divisions celebrated National Employee Health & Fitness Day with Veterans on the MOVE Walks on November 3rd and 7th, 2006. The Kerrville Walk took place on the Medical Center grounds and the San Antonio Walk took place at the University of Texas Health Science Center (UTHSC) track across the street from the Audie L. Murphy Memorial VA Medical Center. The event for veterans and employees was organized by the Recreation Therapy Service. The participants were given pedometers, bottled water, nutrition bars and NCP *MOVE!* Physical Activity Handouts.

Kerrville Division





San Antonio Division



Department of Veterans Affairs Manila, Philippines—Veterans' Day

Twinky Yu Soriano, R.N., MAN
Clinical Staff Nurse

Veterans Day is an excellent occasion to show our deepest gratitude to the more than 650,000 American service members who died in battle, the 1.4 million who were wounded and the 25 million surviving veterans (<http://www1.va.gov/opa/feature/celebrate/acts4vd.asp>).

At USDVA OPC Manila, Philippines, we organized a simple but meaningful 3-hour program to give tribute to our veterans last November 9, 2006. It was our way of expressing our appreciation for their services and recognition of their sacrifices for America's welfare in keeping this nation "the land of the free and the home of the brave."

The activity started with registration of the participants at 7:00 AM. Our Chief LFSD, Mrs. Cecilia Salbilla, the Master of Ceremonies, set the tone for the program. There was a short parade towards the back lot. Banners were carried by the employees and by the veterans.

After the fun walk, Mr. Gerald Charleston, the Clinic Manager, led the invocation prayer. He also paid tribute to the veterans who died for the nation, as well as recognized the sacrifices of their orphans and widows.

Our Chief Medical Officers, Dr. Eleanor A. Lopez and Dr. Vicente Gatilao, Jr., gave the welcome remarks. Dr. Lopez reiterated the importance of exercise as integral to living a healthy lifestyle. Our Regional Director, Mr. Jon Skelly delivered his speech about the Veterans Day theme, **"Honoring All Who Served. To Be a Veteran One Must Know and Determine One's Price for Freedom"**. He mentioned the Proclamation made by President George W. Bush declaring November 11, 2006,

as Veterans Day. He urged all Americans to observe November 5 through November 11, 2006, as National Veterans Awareness Week to recognize the valor and sacrifice of our veterans through ceremonies and prayers. This was followed by 25-minutes warm up, dance and cooling down exercises to the tune of popular music led by our dancing divas from the Professional Services and the Medical Administrative Divisions.

Two of our veterans expressed their thoughts and feelings about the VA in general and the OPC-Manila in particular. They expressed their gratitude to all the employees, especially the medical providers, for providing excellent and high quality service that a veteran like them truly deserved. They considered the clinic as a home of the retirees in the Philippines.

Our Clinic Manager, Mr. Gerald Charleston, officially closed the event. He expressed his gratitude to everybody for their active participation and preparation for our own celebration of Veterans Day 2006. He also reminded everybody to always remember their commitment to take care of the veterans, their widows and orphans, in memory of the final paragraph of President Lincoln's speech in his second inaugural address, **"to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan."**

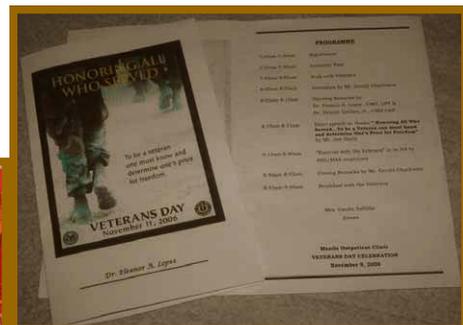
With the generosity of members of a focus group and the employees, a heart-healthy breakfast was served. Other goodies included cake, fruits and Filipino delicacies. The event was not complete and memorable without a simple token of appreciation for our beloved veterans. Colorful Philippine-made face towels decorated with paper ribbon were distributed to them.



The two Chief Medical Officers, Dr. Vicente Gatilao Jr. and Dr. Eleanor A. Lopez leading the walk



A special song number from the Veterans



Veterans Day 2006 T-Shirt, souvenir, and invitation



VA National Center for Health Promotion
and Disease Prevention
3022 Croasdale Drive, Suite 200
Durham, NC 27705

Office of Patient Care Services

Putting Prevention Into Practice in the VA