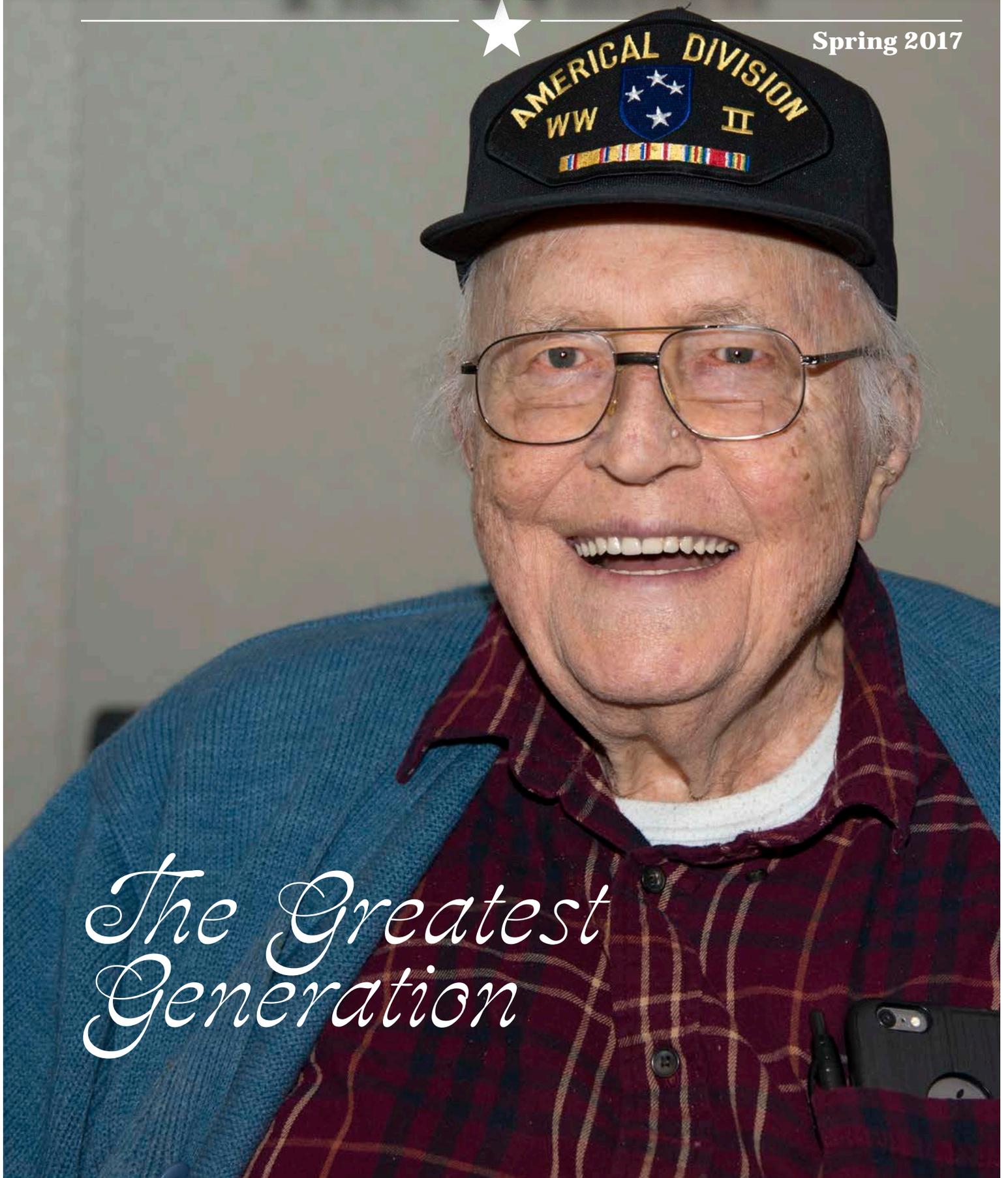


The Wahlen



Spring 2017



*The Greatest
Generation*



The Greatest Generation teaches us how to be better healers.

*T*hrough poetry and pictures, sharing stories and giving back they heal. Inside the Deer Creek conference room of building 16 sits two World War II Veterans and two Korean War Veterans. Combined there are 352 years of wisdom, strength and courage in this room. This group of combat Veterans meets every Wednesday, and while their numbers fluctuate from week to week there is a core group that keeps coming, year after year. They are family.

"We have similar experiences and it does us good to tell our stories. We help someone else through our stories and it gives us strength. It helps us remember stuff we don't want to remember but need to in order to make sense of what's going on in our brain," Floyd Bekins says. Floyd is a 94-year-old Army Veteran who served in the South Pacific. "I entered basic training in September of 1943. Back then there were no tours of duty. You went in and you were in until the war was over." Bekins says.

Joe Russell is an 83-year-old Korean War Veteran. He says he realized after coming to VA that he's only been "existing" for the last 57 years. He calls it defensive living. "I was escaping, I was avoiding. I was focused on working hard and getting educated but I was not really living or loving. I couldn't trust anyone to open up and I was really angry." Joe served in the United States Navy aboard the USS White River. As a ship serviceman he operated a 40 MM off the coast of Incheon, South Korea. He leveled miles of beach head, and in the process saw things one doesn't ever forget.

Divorce, addiction, and two suicide attempts later, Joe found himself at VA. He has been a part of this group for seven years now. He wipes away tears as he speaks, "I feel human again and like I belong. I have found peace and a brotherhood in here and I have let the anger go," Joe says. He's also rebuilding his relationship with his children.

This group also wants to make sure younger Veterans are far savvier than they were when just getting out. They work to educate, raise money,

and honor young Veteran families. Over the past several years their generosity has funded Honor Flights for World War II Veterans, and facilitated medal boxes for other disabled Veterans.

They sit on panels, and share their feedback with VA providers from all disciplines and skill levels and with physicians in the community. Group facilitator Jared Martineau says they learn so much from these brave men, and through their words and observations we all become better healers.

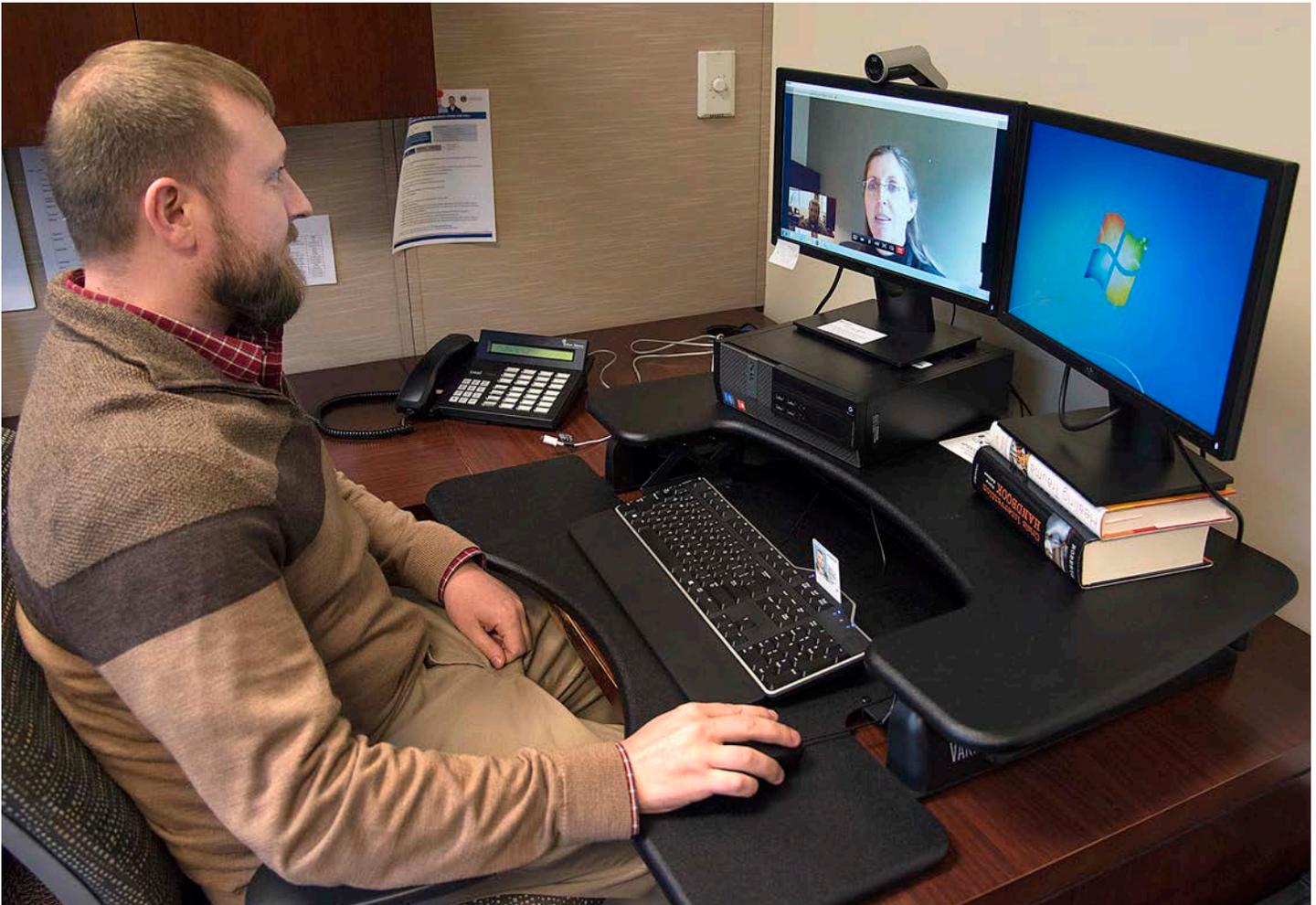
They agreed to this story in the hope that other Veterans will reach out for support if they need it. They do it out of love and appreciation for service. They do it to make themselves whole again.



Jennifer Johnson awards her provider Katryna Joubert with the I CARE Secretary's Award. Johnson says Joubert and the women's program literally saved her life and credits them with getting past her MST trauma.



New Telehealth Hub reaching Veterans throughout the U.S.



*D*id you know that VASLC clinicians on our campus are talking to Veterans as far away as Florida? Our new Tele-Mental Health Hub services Veterans in nine different states and helps, on average, about 150 Veterans per month. Director Alethea Varra says some of their Veterans live in rural areas and may not otherwise be able to access care as quickly. Telemedicine is much like a virtual medical appointment; a provider makes a connection with a Veteran via computer screen. Therapies

include: evidence based treatment for PTSD, addiction, pain management, in-depth medication management, specialized assessments, and even couples therapy.

SLC is one of four pilot sites in the United States and VASLC is just getting started. More offices and more providers are on the way here and elsewhere as VA's new Secretary, Dr. David Shulkin, realizes the effectiveness of tele-health in reaching our most rural Veterans. Varra says with a new software in place we can even talk to Veterans in their own homes.



National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic



This could be
next year! **you**

VASLC sends 13 Veterans to National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic in Snowmass



Ask any Veteran involved in adaptive sports and they will tell you: "It's life changing." VASLC's Adaptive Sports Programs force Veterans to face fears and battle insecurities.

Congratulations to:
John Paxman, Joe Johnson, Anna Kennedy, Edmund Riding, Darrell Bonzo, Grant Adler, Jim Huber, Shane Housley, Stephen Joyce and Marty Smith.

A special shout out to

Army Veterans Darryl "Feet" Jensen, Seth Pack and Monty Monserret



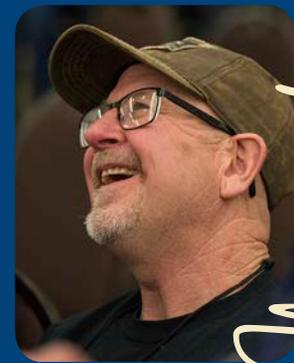
Feet

Feet won the Clinic's Novice Award this year for attitude and ability. Jensen lost both legs in Iraq but spreads a smile wherever he goes.



Seth

Seth is a better snowboarder now than before he lost his leg in Iraq to an IED. He snowboards competitively, was named the National Abilities Center Athlete of the year in 2014 and has aspirations of being a Paralympian.



Monty

Monty Monserret was all smiles during Opening Ceremonies. The Gulf War Veteran is visually impaired and never dreamed he'd be heading downhill willingly a month ago. "I never knew anything about it. I haven't skied in 20 years. I am nervous, but I am excited."

For more information call Heather Brown at 801-582-1565 ext. 1559



VASLC Mental Health Programs & Resources



To get connected with or ask questions about any of these treatment plans or programs please call 801-584-1255.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

We provide outpatient post-deployment transition assistance and outpatient PTSD services. Services are for events occurring during the military, including combat, accidents, sexual assault and post-deployment readjustment.

The VA is actively training clinicians in Evidence Based Psychotherapies (EBP)

Current initiatives include:

- Prolonged Exposure (PE) for PTSD
- Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) for PTSD
- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) for depression
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for depression
- Social Skills Training (SST) for serious mental illness
- **RECOVERY/PRRC**
Recovery-oriented care for Veterans receiving mental health care for Severe Mental Illness (SMI). This team integrates evidence based/recovery-oriented services for Veterans diagnosed with SMI across all programs providing care to this population and with community agencies providing care to Veterans.

- **MHICM (Mental Health Intensive Case Management)**

Serving Veterans diagnosed with a severe or persistent mental illness. Case management services are provided to Veterans and are tailored to their individual needs. Some services offered are transportation to medical and mental health appointments, assistance with ADLs, grocery shopping, picking up medications, monitoring medication compliance and social activities.

- **Peer Support Program**

Our peers empower other Veterans through personal recovery stories, symptom management and a variety of other tools and resources. To find out more on how you can work with a Peer Support Specialist or on how you can become a Peer Support Specialist, contact the Local Recovery Coordinator:

 801-582-1565, ext. 4384
Peer Specialist: ext. 2784.

- **Walk-in PTSD Clinic:**

 Bldg. 16, Tuesdays, 11:00am

- **Military Sexual Trauma (MST) Program**

MST screening, referral, and treatment. Our program spans all VASLC medical and mental health programs.



Suicide Prevention

The Suicide Prevention team ensures our high risk Veterans are monitored, safe, and receiving the extra support they need. Other functions of the Suicide Prevention Team include: outreach, education and managing referrals and follow-up through the Veterans Crisis Line.

 1-800-273-8255

Transition Care and Management

To provide seamless transition from military service to the VA health care system by addressing physical and emotional concerns associated with combat zone service and adjustment to civilian life. TCM assists Veterans and their families as they navigate Veterans Health Care, and Veterans Benefits Administration.

 801-582-1565 ext. 5246

 Bldg. 14 across from Outpatient pharmacy

Mental Health / Telehealth Services

Bringing mental health treatment to where the Veteran lives. Teleconferencing devices are used in our community clinics to provide and enhance mental health services to Veterans living in rural areas. Our telehealth hub is right here in Salt Lake City and serves Veterans throughout the intermountain west.

Women Veterans Program

The Women Veterans Program ensures the delivery of the highest quality health care while offering privacy, dignity and sensitivity to the gender-specific needs of women Veterans. Care sites include; the SLC Women's Clinic and Community Clinics across the system.

Schedule your appointment today

 801-582-1565 ext. 5414.

Caregiver Support Program

The program provides a wide range of services to caregivers of eligible Veterans of all eras.

It provides additional services, including a monthly stipend, to caregivers of Veterans who were seriously injured in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001. Veterans of all eras may qualify for additional services and support.

 801-582-1565 ext. 4165

Homeless Veterans Program

The VASLCHCS Homeless Veterans Program is committed to ending homelessness among Veterans by helping them address their emotional, physical, social, cultural, and financial needs in order for them to become self-reliant.

 801-582-1565 ext. 2746

Veterans interested in homeless program services can show up in person:

VA Outpatient Mental Health (Building 16)

George E. Wahlen VA Campus
Monday and Wednesday at 11:00am

The Salt Lake City Library

210 East 400 South
Thursday at 1:30pm

The Road Home Shelter

210 South Rio Grande Ave
(please enter near the women's shelter)
Tuesday and Friday 9:00am-10:30am

National Call Center for Homeless Veterans:

 1-877-424-3838

Vocational Rehabilitation/CWT

Our compensated work therapy program and other vocational rehabilitation opportunities help Veterans return to competitive employment through transitional work, job development and placement. Veterans will get assistance building resumes and properly translating their military skills into civilian job opportunities.

Job Searching Resource:

Weekly Vocational Services orientation and intake:

 Bldg 16, Deer Creek Room,
Fridays at 9:30am



Addresses topics related to job seeking, vocational rehabilitation programs (CWT), job search resources, VHA employment programs, VBA benefits, etc. No appointment necessary.

 801-582-1565, ext. 2729

Job Search Skills - Individual and Group assistance: Will address just about any question or problem related to job search, employment training, resumes, interview skills, resources, federal and state employment programs, etc.

 801-582-1565, ext. 6314

Veterans seeking VBA schooling as a part of a Veteran's Service Connected Disability benefits, should inquire at the VR&E office.

 Bldg 550, VA Regional Office, third floor

Veterans Justice

Outreach Program:

VJO partners with law enforcement, jail and courts to assist eligible Veterans with accessing the treatment they need. The purpose of VJO in connection with the court system is to ensure that Veterans involved in the criminal justice system have access to benefits, services, and the treatment they deserve.

 801-582-1565 ext. 6327

Veterans Legal Clinics

The Veterans Legal Clinics provide an opportunity for Veterans to speak to an attorney, free of charge.

Salt Lake Legal Clinic

2nd Thursday of each month (except December) 5:30pm – 7:00pm
Bldg 8, MPC on the VA campus

St. George Legal Clinic

1st Wednesday of each month
5:30pm – 7:00pm
St. George VA Clinic

Pocatello Legal Clinic

3rd Wednesday of each month
5:30pm – 7:00pm
Idaho State University Veterans Sanctuary
Pond, Student Union Building 3rd Floor
921 South 8th Avenue, Pocatello

North Star, Substance Abuse Program

A 15-bed residential unit featuring a 21-28 day program. There is also an intensive outpatient program in addition to a relapse prevention program.

Walk-in intakes: Monday - Friday at 11:00am,

 801-582-1565 ext. 1840

Inpatient Psychiatry Unit (IPU)

This is an inpatient psychiatric unit committed to helping mentally ill Veterans achieve optimum health and quality of life through excellence in the delivery of compassionate patient care. The unit provides a safe, 24-hour therapeutic atmosphere with individualized assessment and treatment. Group therapy is also a central part of the inpatient program. **Admission is by referral only.**

In addition to treatment, VASLC offers a variety of recovery groups and classes:

- *addiction treatment*
- *women's groups*
- *holistic medicine*
- *LGBT groups*
- *homeless support*
- *anger management*
- *anxiety*
- *better sleep group*
- *positive support*
- *PTSD support groups*
- *Veterans of color*
- *men and women support and empowerment groups*
- *self-improvement*
- *ladies night out*
- *men's MST group*
- *post traumatic growth*
- *PTSD spouse support*
- *recreation therapy groups*
- *Veterans Advisory council*

Please talk to your provider about participation in any of the above groups.

Other VASLC Programs and Resources

Advanced Low Vision Rehabilitation Clinic

The Low Vision Clinic works collaboratively with the VIST Coordinator to assess the Veteran's needs and interests as well as determine goals to assist the Veteran in adjustment to vision loss.

 801-582-1565, ext. 1574

Choice Program

Serving Veterans waiting more than 30 days for an appointment or living greater than 40 miles away from the closest VA facility.

 1-866-606-8198

 [Veterans Choice Program](#)

Community Residential Care (CRC) Program

CRC provides supervision to eligible Veterans who are not in need of hospitalization or nursing home placement but who, because of mental health or psychosocial conditions, would benefit from living in a home setting.

Decedent Affairs

Patient Representatives are here to assist you when a loved one passes. We can answer all of your questions about burial reimbursements, grave markers, and bereavement assistance.

 801-582-1565, ext. 1900.

Fisher House

This home away from home provides a place for families that live 50 miles away or farther to stay, free of charge, while their loved one is receiving treatment. Reservations are required.

 801-582-1565, ext. 5900

Holistic Medicine

Holistic Medicine provides Pain Medicine, Palliative Care, and Integrative Health services to our Veterans.

- Pain Medicine service provides care for patients with persistent or "chronic" pain, including medicines to control pain and psychological care.
- Palliative Care service provides supportive care for patients with serious medical illness, pain and management symptom control, psychosocial and spiritual care; advanced care planning, end of life care, and bereavement support to families.
- Integrative Health Service offers several options for patients: acupuncture, meditation, manual therapies, hypnosis, Qigong, Yoga, and a Choose to Heal class to introduce various strategies and multicultural approaches to physical, emotional, spiritual wellbeing and better health.

Referrals from your Primary Care Provider are required.

 801-581-1565, ext.
Pain Medicine 4942
Palliative Care 2059
Integrative Health 2661

Home Based Primary Care (HBPC)

The mission of HBPC is to provide comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and primary care in the homes of Veterans with complex medical, social, and behavioral conditions for whom routine clinic-based care is not effective. The team evaluates needs, identifies

resources, and assists with obtaining federal or community services. Veterans must meet criteria to be eligible for HBPC.

Referrals to the HBPC program are made by a the VA primary care provider.

Health Promotion Disease Prevention (HPDP) Program

It is VA's goal to keep Veterans "well and well-informed." We strive to improve the quality of life for Veterans by providing VA clinicians with evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention practices. Please contact us for more information on classes and programs.

 801-582-1565, ext. 4246

- Living well with chronic conditions is a 6 week program to help any Veteran with any chronic condition to manage symptoms, work with your health care team, and improve your health. Learn tools to manage:
 - pain
 - fatigue
 - breathing
 - sleep problems
 - stress
 - depression
 - weight management
 - communication
 - decision-making
 - problem-solving
 - medication management
 - working with health professionals
 - healthy eating
 - physical activity

...and more

- **MOVE! Weight Management Program** is VA's weight management program designed to help Veterans lose weight, keep it off and improve their health. The MOVE! Program offers patients several weight management options from group classes focusing on topics of nutrition to behavior modification and exercise.
 - ☎ 801-582-1565 ext. 2149.
- **Tobacco Cessation Program** is designed to help Veterans quit smoking, chew, or e-cigarettes. The program consists of tobacco cessation group treatment, pharmacist consultation, telephone coaching, and text coaching.
 - **VA telephone quit-line:** Counseling free of charge, any time between 6:00am and 6:00pm Mountain time. The quit-smoking telephone coaches provide up to four phone calls.
 - ☎ 1-855-QUIT-VET (1-855-784-8838)
 - **VA 24/7 texting support service:** For Veterans that can receive text messages. To sign up:
 - 💬 text VET to 47848 from your mobile phone
 - 🌐 visit [Smoke Free Vet](#)
 When you need support they will text you tips and encouragement.
 - Please call the Lead Tobacco Cessation Clinician to find out more about the Tobacco Cessation Program or to be enrolled.
 - ☎ 801-582-1565, ext. 1874.

Library

The Library features regular and large print books and magazines, Internet access is also available.

- 📍 Bldg. 14, basement
Monday – Friday
7:00am to 6:00pm

Medical Foster Home Program

MFH is a voluntary program that offers safe, long-term care in a home setting. MFH is a great alternative to institutionalized care. The program includes regular comprehensive case management visits by a VASLC Home Care Team.

- ☎ 801-582-1565 ext. 2183

My HealtheVet

My HealtheVet is VA's online personal health record that allows Veterans to take charge of their own healthcare.

- Communicate with your VA providers and clinics through Secure Messaging
- Access your VA Medical Records through the Blue Button
- View Appointment information
- See Lab Results
- Prescription refills
- Get personalized Wellness Reminders
...and much more!

- ☎ 801-584-1209

🌐 [My HealtheVet](#)

Nutrition and Food Services (NFS)

NFS provides expertise in nutrition assessment, diagnosis, and intervention to help the Veteran improve his/her nutrition condition, medical outcomes and overall quality of life. We provide group or one-on-one sessions.

- ☎ 801-582-1565, ext. 2123

Pain Management

Pain Medicine Service provides care for patients with persistent or "chronic" pain, including medicines to control pain and psychological care. A referral from your Primary Care Provider is required.

- ☎ 801-581-1565, ext. 4942

Other VA Pain Management Programs:

- **Women's Comprehensive Pain Program**
 - ☎ 801-582-1565, ext. 5414 or 2151
- **Chronic Pain Management Group (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy)** is 6 week class designed to improve your quality of life and physical/emotional functioning despite the presence of pain.
 - ☎ 801-582-1565, Ext. 3497

Pathways

Coping with life's problems and/or mental illness can be difficult but getting help should not be. Pathways can help you access the right care. This is not a therapy group; it is an orientation group. Walk-ins welcome!

- 📍 Bldg. 16, Bear Lake classroom
Tuesdays 4:30pm to 5:30pm
- ☎ 801-582-1565, ext. 2321

Recreation Therapy

Recreation Therapy is a process that utilizes recreation interventions based on the interests, abilities and needs of individuals with illnesses and/or disabling conditions. Veterans can choose from dozens of seasonal activities including:

- skiing
- bowling
- golf



- water volleyball
 - fishing
 - rock climbing
 - art
 - guitar
 - singing
- ...and many more.

 801-582-1565 ext. 1559.

Sweat Lodge

Healing Native American Sweat Lodge Ceremonies are held each Friday evening at 7:00pm, and a Women's Only Ceremony is held on the 3rd Saturday of every month at 2:00pm in the Purtkwahgahm Healing Ground (Southeast corner of Bldg 4). There are other Native American Ceremonies available upon request.

 801-582-1565, ext. 4556

Transfer & Lodging Center (TLC)

Lodging is available for Veterans traveling more than 50 miles for medical appointments in Salt Lake City. Veterans should check in at the Transfer & Lodging office.

 Bldg. 1, first floor, room 1B31
Monday- Friday
8:00am - 4:15pm
After hours, weekends, and holidays please check in through the Emergency Department.

Veteran Directed Home and Community Based Services Program (VD-HCBS)

An alternative for long term nursing home placement, Veterans are able to live in their own home.

 801-582-1565, ext. 2492

Veterans Transportation Service (VTS)

The Veterans Transportation Service in partnership with Utah, Idaho, Wyoming and Nevada Veteran Service Organizations proudly support the transportation needs of Veterans traveling for appointments in Salt Lake City. Van service is available from Ely and Elko, Nevada; Idaho Falls and Pocatello, Idaho; Afton and Rock Springs, Wyoming; and from Vernal, Price, Richfield, Logan, and Saint George, Utah. Wheelchair transportation is available on some routes.

 801-582-1565,
ext. 2003 or 1027

 1-800-613-4012,
ext. 2003 or 1027

 [VA SLC Transportation Services](#)

VIST

The VIST Team Program has primary responsibility for identifying and serving the needs of visually impaired and blinded Veterans. Services include:

- periodic total health reviews
- support and adjustment counseling for Veteran and family
- review and facilitation of individually appropriate benefits and services
- referral to the Advanced Low Vision Rehabilitation Clinic
- referral to a VA Blind Rehabilitation Center

Volunteer Services

VAVS volunteers are a priceless asset to the Nation's Veterans and to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Please call us for information regarding volunteer opportunities.

 801-582-1565, ext. 1241



VA Salt Lake City Health Care System opens first ever food pantry

"This is not like your regular food pantry," says an Army Veteran who identified himself as 'Jason.' "This is Veteran friendly. It's very discreet no one sees me come in."

'Jason' along with 1.7 million other Veterans experiences food insecurity—meaning they have inconsistent access to adequate food because of limited financial resources. Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans are at double the national average for food insecurity, which is at a whopping 14.5%.

Natalie Green, VASLC employee and creator of the pantry program, thinks that is just too high. "If you break that number down, that's just a tremendous amount of Veterans --just here locally," says Green. "We could be doing more."



Green is certainly right with 13.4% of Salt Lake residents experiencing food insecurity, there's a constant need for food programs. Green stepped in at the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System where there were no food assistance programs and she pitched the idea for a food pantry. On March 9, 2017, the food pantry opened its doors.

Anyone can donate food to the pantry, staff, Veterans, and the general public. Monetary donations are also welcome. "I wanted to do something that was more than just a regular project; I wanted to be able to make a difference in Veterans lives and be able to impact them directly through what I develop," says Green.

The food pantry is staffed by Veterans in the Compensate Work Therapy program to keep the dynamic of Veterans serving Veterans.

"Use the food pantry," says Jesse, a 10-year Air Force Veteran. Jesse is wheelchair bound and was thrilled to be stocking up on much needed groceries, "Don't let pride stop you from getting what you need."

The Food Pantry is located in the basement of BLDG 3 in room GA13. It's open every Thursday from 2:30pm-4:00pm to all Veterans that receive care through the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System. The Food Pantry is also adjacent to the Clothing Supply room which is also free for any Veteran that is in need of clothing.

For more information on the Food Pantry and or how to donate
 801-582-1565 ext: 1957.

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
VA Salt Lake City Health Care System



VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

Introducing *my*VA stories

Attention Veterans:

We want to know about your VA experience: the good, the bad, and the extraordinary. Will your story impact other Veterans? Better yet, will you inspire them to improve their own lives through action?



Contact the Office of Communications and Public Affairs:

 810-584-1252

 [Jill Atwood](mailto:jill.atwood@va.gov)



Now Veterans can access wait time and quality of care measures across the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System and across the health care industry.

 Check it out: [Access to Care](#)

SOCIALIZE WITH US!

 FACEBOOK: VA SALT LAKE CITY

 TWITTER: VA SALT LAKE CITY

 FLICKR: VA SALT LAKE CITY