(June 29, 2015)

In order to further improve the lines of communication and to respond to the concerns between the National VA Council and you our members, I have established a National VA Council Briefing. This NVAC Briefing will bring you the latest news and developments within DVA and provide you with the current status of issues this Council is currently addressing. I believe that this NVAC Briefing will greatly enhance the way in which we communicate and the way in which we share new information, keeping you better informed.

Alma L. Lee
National VA Council, President

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In This Briefing: Office of Diversity and Inclusion - NewsLink: June 26, 2015

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Presidential Proclamation—African-American Music Appreciation Month, 2015. During African-American Music Appreciation Month, we recognize the artists who have enriched our lives and the ways their beats and harmonies have advanced our unending journey toward a more perfect Union.

VA Campaign Encourages Public to Help Raise PTSD Awareness. As the country recognizes Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Awareness Month, the VA National Center for PTSD is inviting the public to participate in its “PTSD Awareness: June 2015” campaign, which began June 1.

Profile of Veterans. The report uses 2012 American Community Survey data to compare the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Veterans and non-Veterans.


VA Launches Community-Based Employment Service for Homeless Veterans. The Department of Veterans Affairs announced a new employment program aimed at helping job-ready Veterans exiting homelessness, and those on the brink of homelessness, gain stable and long-term employment.

Perceived Stigma, Discrimination, and Disclosure of Sexual Orientation Among a Sample of Lesbian Veterans Receiving Care in the Department of Veterans Affairs. This article examines lesbian Veterans’ experiences with perceived stigma and discrimination in VHA healthcare, their perspectives on disclosure of sexual orientation to VHA providers, and their recommendations for improvements in VHA healthcare to create a welcoming environment for lesbian Veterans.

Supreme Court Decision: Obergefell v. Hodges. The Fourteenth Amendment requires a State to license a marriage between two people of the same sex and to recognize a marriage between two people of the same sex when their marriage was lawfully licensed and performed out-of-State.

Best Practices: A Guide to Restroom Access for Transgender Workers. This publication provides guidance to employers on best practices regarding restroom access for transgender workers.

Request for Information: A Notice by the Indian Health Service. The Indian Health Service is seeking broad public input as it begins efforts to advance and promote the health needs of the American Indian/Alaska Native Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender community.

Do Ask, Do Tell: Encouraging Employees with Disabilities to Self-Identify. This research investigates what companies are doing to build a disability-inclusive culture and encourage employees with disabilities to voluntarily self-identify, as many organizations with government contracts are now required to do under recent revisions to Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The EEOC to Hear About Progress and Challenges at Meeting Commemorating 50th Anniversary. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission will hold a meeting on Wednesday, July 1, at 9:30 a.m. (Eastern Time), at agency headquarters.

No Quick Fix for Workplace Harassment, Social Scientists Tell EEOC Task Force at Open Meeting. There is no one magic bullet to stop workplace harassment or prevent its occurrence and the efficacy of solutions such as training varies widely, a panel of psychologists told the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s Select Task Force on Workplace Harassment at a public meeting.

Commissioners Examine Strategies to Reduce Retaliation in the Workplace. Addressing retaliation is good for businesses and for workers a panel of
experts told the Commissioners of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission during a meeting.


**Childlessness Falls, Family Size Grows Among Highly Educated Women.** Among women in the United States, postgraduate education and motherhood are increasingly going hand-in-hand.

**FMLA: Protecting One, Protecting All.** Whether you are a single mom caring for a sick child or a same-sex couple needing time to bond with a newly adopted baby, job-protected leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act provides a critical safety net for working families.

**Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Healthcare and Social Service Workers.** This publication updates Occupational Safety and Health Administration's 1996 and 2004 voluntary guidelines for preventing workplace violence for healthcare and social service workers.

**For More Workplace Diversity, Should Algorithms Make Hiring Decisions?** The question of whether workplace diversity is good seems to have been answered, but the question of how to attain such diversity seems to be the more baffling one.

**Evolving Perceptions About Diversity and Inclusion.** Despite making significant inroads, a recent survey of 750 Federal employees suggests agencies still struggle with diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

**Employee Job Satisfaction and Engagement: Optimizing Organizational Culture for Success.** The following report represents the findings from the Society for Human Resource Management Employee Job Satisfaction and Engagement Survey of 600 U.S. employees, conducted in November 2014.

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NewsLink is part of VA's ongoing effort to increase awareness and acceptance of diversity and to promote a flexible and inclusive work environment. For more information, please visit the Office of Diversity and Inclusion Web site at [http://www.diversity.va.gov](http://www.diversity.va.gov). To subscribe to NewsLink, please visit [http://www.diversity.va.gov/products/newslink.aspx](http://www.diversity.va.gov/products/newslink.aspx). To unsubscribe, please reply to this e-mail.