



**September 8, 2009**

### **STATE VETERANS CEMETERY – MEDICAL LAKE**

Thank you to all of the veteran leaders and community members who witnessed the presentation of \$8.8 million from Mr. Frank Salvias with the Federal VA State Cemetery Grant Service.

I am so proud that construction is underway and taking place with the support and backing of veterans in eastern WA and that both companies we've contracted with, JGM Landscape Architects and Bouten Construction Company, are local Washington State companies!

I invite you to check the Cemetery webpage regularly to keep up to date on what is happening.

[http://www.dva.wa.gov/eastern\\_wa\\_vet\\_cemetery.html](http://www.dva.wa.gov/eastern_wa_vet_cemetery.html)

### **PARTNERS FOR VETERANS SUPPORTIVE CAMPUSES**

I hope you'll be able to join us in the Capitol Building on Thursday, September 10, as the Governor, several agencies and higher education leaders sign a memorandum of understanding to demonstrate our support for veterans pursuing higher education.

With the Post 9/11 GI Bill we know that many veterans will be on campus for the first time. There are many things institutions can do to help these brave men and women be successful, including providing referrals to WDVA to ensure they are connected with their VA Benefits.

The ceremony will begin at 10am in the Legislative Building Rotunda. For more information visit:

<http://www.dva.wa.gov/PDF%20files/HECB%20MOU.pdf>

### **OUTSTANDING VETERAN AWARD NOMINATIONS**

Don't forget that September 15 is the deadline to get your nomination in for the 2009 Outstanding Service to Veterans Awards.

Nomination forms are available on the WDVA web page 'In the 'News' section, [www.dva.wa.gov](http://www.dva.wa.gov).

### **PIERCE COUNTY RECEIVES FUNDS TO SERVE HOMELESS VETERANS**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, included \$1.5 billion for a Homelessness Prevention Fund. Funding for this program, called the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing

Program (HPRP), is being distributed based on the formula used for the Emergency Shelter Grants program.

I'm proud to report that WDVA worked with the Pierce County Veterans Bureau, to apply for a HPRP Grant and recently received the good news that the Pierce County Veterans Bureau will receive \$75,000 to help homeless veterans.

Combined with other resources, such as the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project grant received by WDVA, this new grant provides another tool to help case managers assist veterans at risk of becoming homeless or who are homeless in developing successful community support and stabilization plans.

### **PARTNERING WITH THE SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**

Often our biggest challenge is making contact with veterans who are in need of help. One way to overcome this challenge is to ask other agencies and service providers to ask their clients whether they ever served in the military. If the answer is 'yes', help is as easy as letting your Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs know how to contact that veteran or family member.

WDVA and the Seattle Housing Authority are launching several activities to improve veteran identification and referral practices.

For example, the Seattle Housing Authority will begin offering WDVA brochures to clients who identify themselves as veterans. They will actively refer veterans participating in Seattle's Ready to Rent Program to WDVA to ensure they are connected with all state and federal VA benefits and both agencies will educate their employees on the services each provides.

I am confident this partnership will help veterans who have never asked the VA for help, get connected with their benefits.