

October, 2017 Edition

The Informer



From Our Chair:

By: Tommy Simpson III, Department of Health, US Army, Health Services Consultant, USA Veteran

José Narosky once remarked, “In war, there are no unwounded soldiers.” Held each October, National Disability Employment Awareness Month is a national campaign that raises awareness about disability employment issues and celebrates the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. The men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States face similar challenges. While many have visible disabilities, even more have invisible disabilities, which oftentimes can hinder their reintegration into the civilian workforce after their service obligation has ended. As we pay tribute to all who have graced our workforce and have contributed in so many meaningful ways, let us be reminded that it is better to build bridges, not ladders.

For your viewing pleasure, this [link](#), entitled “Richie Parker: Drive”, offers great inspiration on why one cannot always judge a book by its cover – enjoy!

It is my sincere hope this newsletter finds you well and I look forward to seeing you at our next VERG meeting.

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Veteran Spotlights

By Mary Huff, US Army veteran, Department of Natural Resources, Aquatic District Manager,

Mary Huff currently serves as the Aquatic District Manager for Orca Unit in the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). She originally joined DNR as an Aquatic Land Manager in June 2015, and was promoted to her current position in May 2016. Mary works out of the DNR Northwest Region office in Sedro-Woolley (Skagit County) where she is honored to oversee a team of six full-time and one part-time professional staff. The Orca Unit manages aquatic lands in Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan, and Snohomish counties, as well as, on Camano Island in Island County.



Mary was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army upon graduating from the University of Washington in June 1994. After completing Military Intelligence Officer Basic Course at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, she was assigned to 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division in Kirchgoens, Germany as an Assistant S2 (Intelligence and Security Officer.) In late 1995, following the signing of the Dayton Peace Accord, she deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina for 11 months on Operation Joint Endeavor as part of the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR). Part way through her tour in Bosnia-Herzegovina, she was assigned as the tactical commander of a remote communications site. Upon redeploying she assumed the role of Analysis and Control Team Leader/Executive Officer for C Company, 501st Military Intelligence Battalion in Dexheim, Germany. Her final assignment was as the S2 for 1-4 Air Defense Artillery Battalion in Mainz-Wackernheim, Germany.



After leaving active duty, Mary explored a number of different career options through work, volunteering, and graduate school. For eleven of those years, she was a military spouse, so job transitions came with each move. In 2004, after “lucking into” a contract job as the Sustainability Outreach Coordinator at Fort Lewis, Washington, she realized her heart was in environmental conservation: Since that time most of her experience has been with environmental nonprofits and public agencies. Still, she remains involved in military servicemember, family, and veteran issues both personally and professionally. Her three passions, in this regard, are honoring those who have been injured or killed in service to their country; advocating for mental health treatment; and assisting veterans with obtaining employment in the civilian world.

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2017 State Agency Employer of the Year Award

The Washington State Veterans Employee Resource group is, once again, soliciting state agency nominations for employer of the year. We intend to recognize a Washington state agency for making significant strides in supporting the objectives of Executive Order 13-01. Specifically, in employing Veterans and in supporting transitioning service members throughout state government.

This will not be a numbers race to recognize the agency with the highest percentage of Veterans in their work force. It's an award to recognize the following:

- Creativity and innovation in recruiting and hiring veterans
- Development of Veterans in state employment
- Efforts to involve Veterans in developing a culture inclusive of transitioning service members
- Collaborative partnerships to increase support networks for state employed Veterans

To nominate your agency (or another state agency), please use [this link](#) and follow the instructions to submit your nomination by midnight, 10/15/2017.

If you have questions about this award, please contact VERG-member, Betty DeVos (formerly Carter) at bettyd@dor.wa.gov.

Toys For Tots 2017

Your organization can make a difference in a child's life. Toys for Tots will be providing collection boxes for toys in November 2017. These toys will be given to children with DSHS vouchers only.

Please contact John "Moose" Moysiuk at moysiukjl@hotmail.com or <https://olympia-wa.toysfortots.org/local-coordinator-sites/lco-sites/default.aspx> if you wish to collect toys in your organization.

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Upcoming Events

Veterans Job Fair	11/1/17	1000-1400	Kent	https://www.eventbrite.com/e/veterans-employment-career-exposition-tickets-36661802438
WADVA Events Calendar				http://www.dva.wa.gov/calendar

Tools & Resources

[Veterans Choice Health Care](#): VA health care includes regular checkups with your primary care doctor and access to specialists, such as cardiologists, gynecologists, and mental health providers. You can also get home health care and geriatric care, as well as medical equipment, prosthetics, and prescriptions.

[Connecting Veterans to the Health Care they need in Washington](#): Bridging the gap between Health Care and Health Policy.

[WA Pathways to Employment \(Veterans Pages\)](#): Each year thousands of disabled military personnel return to the civilian labor force seeking rewarding and meaningful work. The resources in these pages can help you in your job search and your transition to civilian life.

[Working for Washington State](#): Check out state employment opportunities and sign up for daily job postings sent to your email inbox.



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Do you have ideas or information to disseminate? Send your information with a Communications Request to the Communications Team and we will take action!

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