



STATE OF WASHINGTON
VETERANS AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
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Meeting Minutes

Meeting attended by (VAAC Member)	Chuck Wharton, Larry Alcantara and Bob Wallace
Date	October 19, 2017
Time	10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Location	Pearsall Building 2109 Sumner Avenue, Aberdeen, WA
Call to Order	Meeting called to order by Charles Wharton Invocation by Chaplain Ron Black Pledge of Allegiance led by Larry Alcantara
Welcome & Introductions:	Welcome and Introduction led by Charles Wharton Commissioner Wes Cormier Bolt welcomed guests to the area and shared their commitment to work with community members.
Presentations	<p>Purple Heart & Korean Peace Medal Presentation – 2 Korean War Veterans was presented their Purple Heart and Korea Peace Medal – Irv Stephens and Jim Evans – This two remarkable young marines were in the battle at Chosin Reservoir. The two Marine Veterans served in different locations. Both of these Marines were wounded in combat action. Their story is fairly common and not a "Combat Hero story" so their service has mostly gone unnoticed. Both of these Marines were awarded the Purple Heart on official record/paper but neither of them were officially presented the purple heart medal for their wounds suffered in the face of the enemy. Never being presented with their medal has always been lingering in their memory. Today after 67+ years WDVA is honored to present them their medals as well as the Korean Peace Medal.</p> <p>WDVA Update – Alfie Alvarado-Ramos</p> <p>WDVA continues to work with our community partners to ensure veterans and their families are connected with their earned benefits. WDVA priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connecting veterans their families with their benefits• Homeless Prevention and Intervention• Veteran employment and Active Duty Transition• Mental Health Care and Suicide Awareness & Prevention• Incarcerated Veteran Service and Prevention• Enhancing internal Agency Capacity

Behavioral Health – Robert Holt

His office is contracted with WDVA to provide behavioral health counseling for veterans and their families living in Grays Harbor County. His office is located at: 1210 Madison St, Aberdeen, WA 98520 and can be reach at (360) 532-4201

Veterans Employment – John Geelan – WorkSource

WorkSource is available to everyone in Grays Harbor County
www.worksourcewa.com

Veterans also may have priority service by Disabled Veterans Outreach Coordinator or Local Veterans Employment Representatives in the Office. They can help reduce barriers to work by helping with transportation, wardrobe, work-required tools or other gear.

WorkSource also partners with WDVA to provide the Veterans Innovations Program and Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program benefits to veterans who qualify. (more info at www.dva.wa.gov)

Other programs include the YesVets hiring initiative – www.yesvets.org

Veterans Assistance Program – Cassie Lentz

Indigent veterans and/or their family can apply for the Veterans Relief Fund by contacting their local service organization. The funds are to assist individuals with basic needs if they are unable to do so and are limited in the amount and the number of times funds can be accessed. Basic needs such as housing, utilities, food and other things. The service officer at the service organization can explain the program and the process. Services can be access by:
<http://www.healthygy.org/directory/veterans> or by calling 360-500-4049

Vet Corps – Mike Snyder

Vet Corp is funded thru the AmeriCorps grant. Vet Corps members are stations at many colleges throughout the state and the Vet Corps help veterans achieve their higher education goals by:

- Providing training and support to college faculty, staff and administration and increase their awareness of student veterans needs
- Providing a peer connection for veterans new to higher education
- Helping the college to meet the needs of student veterans
- Providing veterans with connections to federal, state and local benefits

- Help veterans and their family member navigate Washington's higher education and training programs as they adjust from military to civilian life.

Homeless Veterans Services (Union Gospel) – Gary Rowell

The Herron Street Facility of Union Gospel located at 405 E. Heron in Aberdeen provides shelter, shower and clean clothing for homeless men, they average serving 8 veterans a day. This shelter is more than an emergency shelter this shelter also becomes a place for homeless individuals to transition out of the homeless cycle.

Friendship House – 38 bed women and children facility operated by Mission Creek.

To contact Union Gospel mission call 360-533-1064 or visit their website at: <http://ugmgraysharbor.org/>