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# The Center for Minority Veterans

## The CMV Vision

The Center for Minority Veterans (CMV) is the Department of Veterans Affairs model for inter-and intra-agency co-operation, to ensure all veterans receive equal service regardless of race, origin, religion, or gender. We are process improvement-oriented and both internal and external customer-centric. We assist VA in executing its mission in the most equitable, efficient and humane way possible. Dignity and an acceptable quality of life are the products we seek to deliver to ALL veterans no matter what their circumstance. We will grace our mission execution with gratitude to the men and women we now serve who in turn served our Nation so well.

## The CMV Mission

To assist the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to "keep the promise" by acting as facilitator, change agent, strategic thinker, honest broker and cheerleader to the men and women of VA in executing its MISSION. As internal consultants to the organization, we will facilitate VA's ability to deliver services to veterans worldwide by approaching our mission with a "Veteran Comes First" philosophy based on a deep respect for the men and women who dedicated themselves to the defense of our Nation. We acknowledge the diversity of our veterans and profoundly value the strength and unique character this diversity has contributed to our great Nation.

## Who We Serve

First and foremost our staff is dedicated to all veterans regardless of race or ethnicity. As required by Congress in 1994, under Title 38 Public Law 103-446, CMV's primary emphasis is on minority veterans. Specifically, these veterans include the following minority groups: Pacific Islander, Asian American, African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Native American, including American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian.

## What We Do

- Serve as principal adviser to the Secretary on the adoption and implementation of policies and programs affecting minority veterans.
- Promote the use of VA programs, benefits, and services for eligible minority veterans.
- Evaluate current programs and make recommendations on how VA can better serve minority veterans.
- Publicize the results of medical research that is of particular significance to minority veterans.
- Disseminate information and serve as a resource center for the exchange of information regarding innovative and successful programs that improve the services available to veterans who are minorities.
- Make recommendations to the Secretary, Under Secretary for Health, Under Secretary for Benefits, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs and other Department officials for the establishment or improvement of programs in the Department for eligible minority veterans.

# How We Outreach to Minority Veterans

CMV is charged with identifying barriers to service and health care access, as well as increasing local awareness of minority veteran related issues by developing strategies for improving minority participation in existing VA benefit programs. CMV utilizes three major outreach initiatives to ensure minority veterans concerns are addressed:

## ◇ **Minority Veterans Program Coordinator (MVPC)**

The primary goal of this outreach initiative is to increase local awareness of minority veteran related issues and develop strategies for increasing their participation in existing VA benefit programs for eligible veterans. MVPCs are located at Regional Offices, Health Care Facilities and National Cemeteries and are responsible for:

- Promoting the use of VA benefits, programs, and services by minority veterans.
- Supporting and initiating activities that educate and sensitize internal staff to the unique needs of minority veterans.
- Targeting outreach efforts to minority veterans through community networks.
- Advocating on behalf of minority veterans by identifying gaps in services and making recommendations to improve service delivery within their facilities.

## ◇ **Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans (ACMV)**

Appointed by the Secretary, The Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans (ACMV) was established under Public Law 103-446, sec 510, November 2, 1994. The Committee consists of veterans who represent respective minority groups and are recognized authorities in fields pertinent to the needs of the minority group they embody. The Committee's responsibilities include:

- Advising the Secretary and Congress on VA's administration of benefits and provisions of health care, benefits, and services to minority veterans.
- Providing an annual report to Congress outlining recommendations, concerns and observations on VA's delivery of services to minority veterans.
- Meeting with VA officials, veteran service organizations, and other stakeholders to assess the Department's efforts in providing benefits and outreach to minority veterans.
- Making periodic site visits and holding town hall meetings with veterans to address their concerns.

## ◇ **Veteran Business and Economic Development Outreach**

A need exists to educate, inform and identify minority veteran business owners and potential business owners on the intricacies of contract and business procedures, processes and contracting opportunities available in both the government and private sectors. CMV has partnered with the VA's Office of Small and Disadvantage Business Utilization (OSDBU) to co-sponsor business outreach activities to target minority veterans, disabled minority veterans and current minority business owners. The goal is to address business related needs, identify opportunities and benefits, provide access to business opportunities and contracts within the federal government, and private sector. Specifically, we promote business and entrepreneurial outreach for minority and disabled veterans to help them with the following:

- Understanding the processes involved for business start-ups, financing and government contracting.
- Gaining basic working knowledge of contracting, SDB, Hub Zone, 8A certifications, marketing and business legal structures.
- Developing immediate contracts and emphasizing the importance of networking, communication and relationship building.