

The Bay State Patriot

A Publication Of

Massachusetts Department Of Veterans' Services



Deval L. Patrick
Governor

Thomas G. Kelley
Secretary, DVS

JudyAnn Bigby, M.D.
Secretary, EOHS

Volume 1



From Tom Kelley

In this third issue of The Bay State Patriot, I want to thank all of you for advocating on behalf of veterans. We also solicit your feedback and ideas on how to better serve veterans.

DVS has marked a lot of "firsts" in the past few months. Some of the recent successes include our SAVE team marking one year since its inception along with successful outreach to over 7,000 veterans and families in the Commonwealth. The Women Veterans' Network held its first-ever Women Veterans' Conference, and DVS held a first-ever LIVE Online Webcast and Discussion.

The Women Veterans' Network sponsored a free one-day conference for women veterans and their families, with approximately 200 attendees. Our "We Owe U" webcast proved to be an informative discussion due to the assistance of all of our panel participants, including the VA, Massachusetts National Guard, local VSOs, UMASS-Boston and other state agencies.

As Massachusetts continues its efforts towards "going green," DVS is joining in the effort. We are making every effort to save costs, conserve, and utilize the vast options web based systems provide. This new Web-VSMIS is a tool for VSOs as well as DVS to use that will allow for expedited and more efficient processing of claims. The new system will

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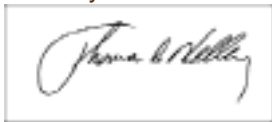
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save money, time, and paperwork while also providing better accuracy and communication between the cities and towns and DVS.

Most recently, I am proud to say, that DVS was the recipient of three Department of Labor Grants to address homelessness and unemployment among Massachusetts Veterans. Working with Veterans, Inc. in Worcester, The Northeast Veterans' Outreach Center, and Father Bill's these grants will allow us to assist veterans live independently and demonstrate skills learned through the training and work ethic demonstrated in their military service. (Please see the article by Charlotte Brindley for details.)

I look forward to hearing from all of you, and continuing to work with you on behalf of our veterans and families.

Thank you.



Meeting VA Secretary Shinseki



Left to right: Undersecretary of Veterans' Services Coleman Nee, Caroline Powers of the Governor's Wash. DC Staff, State Senator Ken Donnelly, Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, VA Secretary Shinseki, Secretary of Veterans' Services Tom Kelley, State Representative Hank aughton

"We Owe You" Webcast

The Department of Veterans' Services delivered its first informational webcast on June 16th at the Campus Center at UMASS Boston. "We Owe You: A Live Webcast Discussion for Veterans and Families about the Benefits and Resources Available to Them" was produced by the Rendon Group and hosted by Mike Nikitas of NECN. Lieutenant Governor Murray and Secretary Tom Kelley opened the events, and then 13 panel experts answered questions about DVS Benefits, VA health care, VA Benefits, the GI Bill, Housing, Women Veterans, Employment, Family Programs, TBI, Suicide. Vet Counseling Centers. Prevention and Operation Total Warrior. 285 participants watched

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the webcast live. The webcast was aired twice on NECN and continues to be available at www.weoweu.org. Responses to questions that could not be answered during the webcast due to time limits are posted there also. Please visit the website and watch the webcast. We welcome any feedback you may have.

By Cheryl Lussier Poppe, Dir. Programs and Services

Lieutenant Governor Murray's Veterans Tour



Recently, Lieutenant Governor Murray completed his two week MASS Veterans' Tour: Massachusetts Awareness for Support and Services. The tour, beginning June 15, and ending June 29 brought the Lieutenant Governor to various meetings, events, and facility tours throughout the Commonwealth. As the Chairman of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services he has been a constant and dedicated advocate on behalf of veterans and their families in Massachusetts.

"Those who have served to protect the ideals of the United States of America and keep us safe deserve to be taken care of when they return home," said Lieutenant Governor Murray. "Over the last two weeks, I traveled across the Commonwealth to meet with veterans and their family members to hear about their needs and how we can better support them."

Throughout the two-week tour, Lieutenant Governor Murray made 18 stops including a round table discussion with OEF/OIF Veterans, taking part in the DVS "We Owe You" webcast, a visit to the Woburn Career Center, the Northeast Veterans' Outreach Center, Massachusetts National Guard sites, VSO offices, the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Agawam, and the Women Veterans' Network Conference, where he delivered a welcoming speech.

The tour served as an avenue for the Lieutenant Governor to reach out to the veterans in the community, as well as the people working on behalf of the veterans. He was able to see, first hand, the great work being done by the various programs and agencies throughout the state. Furthermore, he was able to hear, directly, what some of the needs are in the various cities and towns.

By Cayenne Isaksen, Media and Public Affairs Coordinator

DoD Announces Transferability Options For "Post 9/11 GI Bill"



The Defense Department announced today its policy for transferring educational benefits to the spouses and children of service members under the "Post 9/11 GI Bill," which takes effect Aug. 1, 2009.

"This is as it should be in a volunteer force where families also serve," said Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy Bill Carr. "Transferability of GI Bill benefits is the most requested initiative we receive from our service members, and we believe it will assist us in retaining highly qualified military personnel."

Career service members on active duty or in the selected reserve on Aug. 1, 2009, and who are eligible for the "Post 9/11 GI Bill," maybe entitled to transfer all or a portion of their education entitlement to one or more family members. To be eligible, service members must have served in the Armed Forces for at least six years, and agree to serve four additional years, from the date of election to transfer.

Service members with at least 10 years of service, who by DoD or service policy are prevented from committing to four additional years. may transfer their benefits provided they commit for the

maximum amount of time allowed by such policy or statute.

Additionally, to maintain proper force structure and promotion opportunities, temporary rules have been developed for service members eligible to retire between Aug. 1, 2009 and Aug. 1, 2012. Depending on their retirement eligibility date, these service members will commit to one to three additional years, from the date of election to transfer.

Service members may be eligible for the "Post 9/11 GI Bill" if they served at least 90 aggregate days on active duty on or after Sept. 11, 2001, and were honorably discharged. Based on the length of active duty service, members are entitled to a percentage of the cost of tuition and fees, not to exceed the most expensive in-state undergraduate tuition at a public institution of higher learning. Members not on active duty may also receive a monthly living stipend equal to the basic allowance for housing payable to a military E-5 with dependents, and to an annual \$1,000 stipend for books and supplies.

The Department of Veterans Affairs administers the "Post 9/11 GI Bill," and determines eligibility for education benefits. Further information on eligibility, benefit levels, and application procedures can be found at their Web site, <http://www.gibill.va.gov>

VA press release

Grand Opening of Military and Family Support Center



On June 23, Secretary Tom Kelley participated along with Lieutenant Governor Murray, MG Joseph Carter and Representative Scott Brown to cut the ribbon, marking the Grand Opening of the Military and Service Member Support Center in Wellesley. This center provides a central location for the Operation Total Warrior Reintegration Program for all National Guard and Reserve Components in Massachusetts and will combine that program with the central office of Family Programs, Chaplain, Military One Source, Military Life Consultant, the Transition Assistance Advisor, the Education

Office and the Director of Psychological Health. In addition, other state agencies will be able to use the facilities to meet with clients centrally and for meetings and trainings that are compatible with the goals of Operation Total Warrior.

By Cheryl Lussier Poppe, Dir. Veterans' Programs and Services

Tom Kelley Speaks to Salem State College Veteran Alumni



On June 4th Tom Kelley delivered the keynote address to a gathering of over 80 Veteran Alumni at Salem State College. He thanked them for their service and reminded them that Massachusetts leads the way in benefits and services for veterans and their families, and provided an update on several initiatives. Secretary Kelley urged the college to step forward to assist veterans by maximizing the resources they have - expert staff, facilities, counselors and veteran peers. Salem State has over 200 veterans attending classes.

The Veteran Alumni Dinner was the opening event of Salem State's Alumni Weekend. The purpose of the dinner was to gather Alumni to rejoin the campus, share memories of their days at Salem State and form an affinity group to support veterans returning to campus.

By Cheryl Lussier Poppe, Dir. Veterans' Programs and Services

DVS Receives Three DOL Grants for Veterans' Employment

The Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services was recently awarded three out of seventeen

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Grants under the Veterans' Workforce Investment Program (VWIP), and two grants with the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP). The Massachusetts grants include collaborations with Veterans Inc. in Worcester, Father Bills and MainSpring in Quincy, as well as the Northeast Veterans Outreach Center in Haverhill. More information will be posted at our website in the next few weeks.

Massachusetts First Annual Conference for Women Veterans



On June 27, 2009, the Women Veterans' Network hosted the first annual Massachusetts Conference for Women Veterans. About 240 women veterans, whose service spanned World War II through the present wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, had the opportunity to obtain information about the benefits and services available to them as veterans.

There were thirteen workshops that ranged from learning about Massachusetts Chapter 115 benefits, to getting involved with veterans organizations, and how one can use yoga to help manage symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. In addition, there were exhibitors from various state, federal, and private organizations who were available to answer questions, to inform, and to engage them in matters concerning women veterans and their well being.

Lt. Gov. Timothy P. Murray attended the opening ceremony as the keynote speaker and spoke proudly of the Commonwealth's 27,000 women veterans' and the women currently serving on active duty from Massachusetts. Later in the day Lt. Governor Murray and his two daughters laid flowers at a WWII woman veterans' grave at the Massachusetts State Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Agawam.

"We would like to do this every year. This is our first time. We wanted to see what the reception was, and it was outstanding!" said Heidi Kruckenberg, Director of the Women Veterans' Network. "In the future we'll try to locate the conference in other geographic areas of the Commonwealth so that women veterans across the entire state have the opportunity to get involved and experience what we have experienced here today."

By Panayiota Bertzikis, Women Veterans Network

Dedication of Women's Memorial in Marshfield

On Sunday, May 3rd, Frank Hayes, Rusty Tramonte, Barney Dowd and Veterans' Park Trustees dedicated a monument stone and a water fountain in a memorial park to honor all women veterans. This was a fitting tribute to the number of women veterans from the town of Marshfield who have served in all conflicts. The pink granite stone represents the strength of women's dedication and the fountain reflects the essential element important to all life, which is a great analogy to women's service in the military. Dozens of women veterans and supporters attended the dedication. George Earle was Master of Ceremonies. Representative Richard Cantwell, Undersecretary of Veterans' Services Coleman Nee and Cheryl Poppe made remarks as well as then VSO of Marshfield, Dick Martin. The lovely park is located at the intersection of Route 3A and Rte 139 in Marshfield and is worth the trip to pause and reflect.

By Cheryl Lussier Poppe, Dir. Programs and Services

Hail and Farewell to Heidi Kruckenberg, of the Women Veterans' Network



With mixed feelings we bid farewell to Heidi Kruckenberg as the Program Coordinator for the Women Veterans' Network. Heidi joined the network in 2002 and since that time has led several initiatives, expanded the size of the women veteran database, started the Women are Veterans' Too event at the state house, and supported the annual luncheon run by the Governors' Advisory Council on Women Veterans. Through Heidi's efforts, many more women veterans in Massachusetts are aware of the benefits and services available to them. This past year Heidi organized a special screening of the movie "Lioness" at the Boston Public Library and hosted a panel discussion afterward. She re-published Frequently Asked Questions for Women Veterans, and the culmination of her hard work was realized June 27, 2009 at the first statewide conference for women veterans held in Holyoke (See separate article)

While we are sad to see Heidi leave the Network, we wish her well in her adventures ahead. Heidi will be starting her new profession as a Doula. A Doula provides preparation and support to women preparing for childbirth. A whole new population of women will now benefit from Heidi's strength, compassion and dedication to women. Heidi will remain at DVS on a part time basis to assist with the DVS website and publications.

By Cheryl Lussier Poppe, Dir. Veterans' Programs and Services

From the S.A.V.E. Team



News from Western Massachusetts...Collaboration is Key!

Over the last year the SAVE team has increased its outreach to Western Massachusetts, and we are receiving a very warm welcome from all of the other veteran support organizations in the area. Collaboration between our team and other supporting agencies has been overwhelmingly successful.



SAVE has partnered up with the Veterans Service Officers in the area, to support veterans as they return home. In early March, West Springfield's VSO Jim Berrelli and I made a presentation of state benefits to Marine OIF veterans who had been home less than a week, on all of the benefits available to them, including the home loan program (A Home for the Brave) and M.G.L. Chapter 115 benefits that are available to them through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

SAVE has also teamed up with the Northampton VA's OIF/OEF program to welcome home returning Air Force veterans. Our team accompanied the VA to Westover and Barnes AFB bases to offer support and address any current needs of those service members. The team presentation covered the Commonwealth's outstanding veteran benefits program and encouraged them to take advantage of any benefits they were eligible to receive.

The SAVE team will be partnering with the VA's returning veterans program in September and October of 2009 doing outreach to new veterans at the Big E in Springfield as well. In late October SAVE will also be partnering with the District Attorney's office in Western Mass., with a workshop for first responders in Hampden, Berkshire, Hampshire and Franklin counties. SAVE will share their success stories from previous collaborations with law enforcement, and also discuss ways to assist returning veterans in need.

The SAVE team is striving to serve the veterans in the western part of the state, and we intend to increase our collaborative relationships in our effort to support any veteran in the commonwealth that may benefit from our advocacy.

By Holly Marston, Outreach Coordinator

Ipswich VFW Hosts Iraq/Afghanistan Veterans

On June 13th, the Ipswich VFW hosted an informational gathering for OIF/ OEF Veterans at the Ipswich VFW. This was sponsored by the local VFW, PLAV, American Legion and AMVETS posts. Several agencies presented briefings on benefits and services to reach out to veterans in the local area. Kevin Lambert of DVS (SAVE), Terry Hart, Ipswich VSO and Steve Mitchell, the LVER from the Cape Ann Career Centers were among those presenting briefings. Several veterans and family members commented on the timely information and were pleased to learn about all the resources available. The VFW hopes to host another similar event next year.

Among the visitors were Representative Brad Hill, and Senator Bruce Tarr. Operation Troop Support, a family support operation based out of Danvers Massachusetts was there in full force with one of its dedicated Volunteers, Joanne Patton. Mrs. Patton is the wife of General George Patton Jr., and an avid veterans' advocate. Mrs. Patton announced an upcoming event at Green Meadows Farm in Hamilton for returning OIF/ OEF Veterans and their families. This will be held on Saturday, August 29th from Noon -3 pm. Details can be found at www.gmfarm.com.

By Cheryl Lussier Poppe, Dir. Veterans' Programs and Services

VA Provides Benefits Information to Massachusetts Veterans

There is a new process for providing benefit summary letters for veterans and survivors. These letters, in the mail now, inform beneficiaries of their current benefit status and provide one document that can be used for multiple purposes. The beneficiary can use this letter for state tax and vehicle tax relief, as a statement of benefits to provide to lenders, in establishing civil service preference, or for any other Massachusetts programs or entitlements requiring VA benefit verification.

This letter is a summary of benefits the veteran is currently receiving from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The letter to disabled veterans is for use in applying for benefits such as state or local property or vehicle tax relief, civil service preference, housing entitlements, free or reduced state park annual memberships, or any other program or entitlement for which verification of VA benefits is required. The letter is considered an official record of service-connected disability(ies).

The letter contains the following information: Personal Claim Information, Military Information, and individual VA Benefits Information.

If you have any questions about this letter or need additional verification of VA benefits, please call us at 1-800-827-1000. If you use a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD), the number is 1-800-829-4833. Send electronic inquiries through the Internet at <https://iris.va.gov>.

By Richard Earley, Contact Office

Open House at Community Boating



Community Boating Incorporated hosted an open house for Veterans and family members on June 21st. The purpose of the program is to welcome veterans home, introduce them to the joys of sailing. CBI especially wants to make disabled veterans aware of their accessible sailboats as part of their universal access program. At the event they announced special rates for veterans, active duty military and disabled veterans. While a regular membership is \$240 for a season (May thru September), veterans and active duty military memberships are \$120, and disabled veteran rates are commensurate with the universal access program fees (\$1). For more information, contact Marcin Kunicki at 617-523-1038 Ext. 23 or Marcin.Kunicki@community-boating.org. More

information about schedules and programs can be found at <http://www.community-boating.org>

By Cheryl Lussier Poppe, Dir. Veterans' Programs and Services

Economic Stimulus Package

The IRS through the Economic Stimulus Package is giving a \$250 one-time payment to retirees, disabled individuals, and SSI recipients receiving benefits from the Social Security Administration, Railroad Retirement Beneficiaries, and disabled veterans receiving compensation benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The one-time payment is a reduction to any allowable "Making Work Pay Credit" (this credit is also part of the stimulus package and will provide a \$400 per individual \$800 per family refundable tax credit in 2009 and 2010). So if you are looking for the \$400 or \$800 next that amount will be reduced by the \$250 payout this year. If you have any questions please feel free to contact: Gail.McAuliffe@Massmail.state.ma.us

By Gail Eldridge-McAuliffe, Paralegal

Need an Annuities Refresher?

The Massachusetts annuity for 100% service-connected disabled Veterans, Gold Star spouses and Gold Star parents are disbursed twice a year, during the last week of July and the last week in February. Applications for a February pay-out must be complete and approved by December 31st and applications for an August pay-out must be completed and approved by June 30th of any given year.

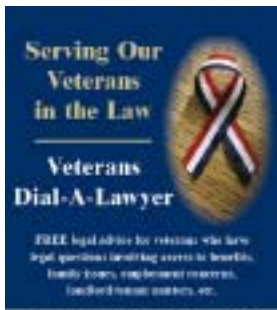
Once approved, annuity recipients must inform Veterans' Services of any changes in address or bank information if they have signed up for direct deposit. Failure to do so in a timely manner may cause the next disbursement to be delayed. Additionally, family members of the annuitant must inform our office of the annuitant's death as the annuity is a non transferable benefit.

Documents needed to accompany the applications are listed on the bottom left hand corner of the application. Please make sure all necessary documents are included for mailing. If an incomplete application is mailed in, a follow up letter will be sent to the applicant requesting additional documents. In addition, an approval letter will be sent out to the recipient as soon as the application is approved.

Applications for the annuity are available at the local Veterans' Offices throughout the state and may also be downloaded from the Veterans' Services web site at www.mass.gov/veterans. Once on the home page, click on "Annuities" then click "How to apply". There are links for applications, direct deposit forms and the W9 form. Direct deposit is optional, but every application must have a W9 form to process a payment as mandated by the Office of the Comptroller.

By Jackie Rivera, Director of Annuities

Veterans' Legal Services Initiatives



The "Serving Our Veterans in the Law" initiative has been made possible, the last two years, due to a collaboration between The Department of Veterans' Services and the Massachusetts Bar Association. From this collaboration the Veterans "Dial-A-Lawyer" program was launched. This program is held twice annually and is specifically designed for veterans who can call in, to a call center, and have a range of legal issues answered over the phone. Veterans can also call every Monday from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. to discuss issues related to VA benefits claims. Our upcoming dates for FY 2010 will be October 15th and April 29th.

Secondly, this year we started a new initiative called our Visiting Lawyer Program. This program was set up at the request of Ken Trajanowski, VSO of the Northbridge District. We held this first of its kind event on June 3rd at the American Legion in Northbridge. Telephone intake registration was required, prior to the event. On the day of the event the pre-registered clients got to meet face-to-face with volunteer attorneys, including Ed McIntyre, President of the Massachusetts Bar Association, for a 15 minute discussion of their legal issues. All that participated seemed very pleased with the program. We will be hosting a similar event at the stand down at the Veterans' Northeast Outreach Center on September 24th again registration will be required prior to the event, more information will be forthcoming. (If you are a VSO and would like to host an event in your area please contact Gail Cavanaugh-McAuliffe at (617) 210-5782 or Elizabeth O'Neil at (617) 338 -0560 to make arrangements.)

A new relationship was developed this year between DVS and the Boston Bar Association Bankruptcy Section. During our First Massachusetts Conference for Women Veterans recently held at Holyoke Community College, we were fortunate to have Attorneys Don Lassman and Mark Rossi present "Navigating Through Difficult Economic Times" which covered credit problems, foreclosure and bankruptcy to the attendees. The attorneys are knowledgeable and very pleased to be aiding veterans in this manner. (If you would like to schedule a session please contact Gail Cavanaugh-McAuliffe at (617) 210-5782.)

Thanks to a grant from the Massachusetts Bar Foundation these programs will be continuing through this fiscal year. We would also like to thank Shelter Legal Services Foundation for their support of these programs and their services to our veterans.

By Gail Cavanaugh-McAuliffe, Paralegal

Veterans' Smoking Cessation Program Saw Great Success



The Department of Public Health (DPH) and DVS collaborated, in November 2008, to launch a veterans' smoking cessation program. The program was put in place to assist veterans and their families in the battle to quit smoking. Over the course of six months, the quitline was able to assist 3,680 veterans and family members in their fight to quit smoking.

Massachusetts veterans smoke at a higher rate than the general adult population: 22% as opposed to 16.4%, when adjusted for age (based on figures from 2008). Smoking remains the number one cause of preventable death and disease in the Commonwealth, accounting for over \$4.3 billion in health care costs annually. Studies have shown that smokers are three times as likely to quit for good if they use quit-smoking medications such as the patch, combined with counseling and support from trained specialists. The program offered a 4-week supply of nicotine patches in conjunction with phone support and counseling.

Over the course of the six months the program was running we were able to further promote the program due to the assistance of members of the community. Mike Sweeney, VSO, and Mayor Edward Clancy of Lynn, along with Senator Thomas McGee helped us celebrate our first 1,500 callers and encourage more in the community to come forward. A second event was held in Leominster with the aid of Leominster VSO Rick Vatour .

Although the DVS/DPH program ended June 30 there is still help available for veterans looking to quit smoking. If you are a veteran, or know a veteran, who is still looking for assistance to quit smoking, we encourage you to contact the VA about their smoking cessation program

By Cayenne Isaksen, Media and Public Affairs Coordinator

VA Reopening Health Care Enrollment to Thousands of Veterans

WASHINGTON (June 19, 2009) - The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), which now has nearly 8 million Veterans enrolled in its award-winning health care system, is poised to welcome nearly 266,000 more Veterans into its medical centers and clinics across the country by expanding access to health care enrollment for certain Veterans who had been excluded due to their income.

"This incremental approach to expanding enrollment ensures that access to VA health care for a greater number of beneficiaries does not sacrifice timely access or quality medical care for those Veterans already enrolled in VA's health care system," Dr. Gerald Cross, VA's Acting Under Secretary for Health, said. "Over the next four years, we hope to provide enrollment to more than 500,000 Veterans."

Under a new regulation effective June 15, VA will enroll Veterans whose income exceeds current means-tested thresholds by up to 10 percent.

These Veterans were excluded from VA health care enrollment when income limits were imposed in 2003 on Veterans with no service-connected disabilities or other special eligibility for care. There is no income limit for Veterans with compensable service-connected disabilities or for Veterans being seen for their service-connected disabilities.

Veterans who have applied for VA health care but were rejected due to income at any point in 2009 will have their applications reconsidered under the new income threshold formula. Those who applied before 2009, but were rejected due to income, must reapply. VA will contact these Veterans through a direct-mail campaign, Veterans service organizations, and a national and regional marketing campaign.

Information about enrollment and an income and assets calculator are available at www.va.gov/healtheligibility. The calculator provides a format in which Veterans enter their household income, number of dependents, and zip codes to see if they may qualify for VA health care enrollment.

In addition to applying online, Veterans may also contact VA's Health Benefits Service Center at 1-877-222 VETS (1-877-222-8387). Each VA medical center across the country has an enrollment coordinator available to provide Veterans with enrollment and eligibility information.

VA News Release

DVS Graduates of the Supervisor Certificate Program



The EOHHS Center for Staff Development (CSD) has completed two seasons of the new Supervisor Certificate Program (SCP). The CSD describes this program as "an academic and hands on intensive training program designed to help supervisors gain the skills necessary to be a successful supervisor in health and human services."

This Department of Veterans' Services had three graduates from the first class, Winter 2008. They were Anna Costa, Data Entry Supervisor, Charlotte Brindley, Program Coordinator, and Hazel Pryce-Bourramane, Reimbursement

System Analyst. Hazel was also part of the initial planning group, helping to choose the most important skills that supervisors need to use on the job.

The Spring 2009 class graduates from the Department of Veterans' Services were Marcia Szkolka, Executive Administrative Assistant, and Michael Krasinkiewicz, Park Foreman at the Veterans' Memorial Cemetery in Agawam.

All of our graduates attended six days of training, participated in reflective exercises, worked on their own projects, and gave a written and oral report of how they used the new skills in real job situations. Congratulations to all!

DVS is Entering the 21st Century and Going Green

DVS is pleased to announce the coming soon of Web-VSMIS. The Web-VSMIS is an internet-based system that will replace the current paper-intensive application process for veterans' benefits to an on-line application process. The system will be more efficient, virtually error-free, faster response time and cost saving benefits. The Operations division has already started testing the program and has been training VSOs this August in preparation to go live at the end of August.

The Department of Veterans' Services publication Veterans' Laws and Benefits is a compilation of resources regarding state benefits in the areas of education, employment, medical assistance, and motor vehicles and property taxes. The booklet is available online and can be accessed at the Secretary of State website at the following link <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cisvet/vetidx.htm>

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