



News Release

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SLVHCS Director receives VA Secretary's Alternative Dispute Resolution Award

NEW ORLEANS –Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System Director Fernando Rivera was awarded the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) 2013 Secretary's Annual Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Award, Individual Effort by Senior Executive Service Official in a ceremony today.

This award is the highest recognition for individuals who have made exemplary contributions to furthering VA's goals in the area of ADR. It also recognizes and highlights programs that implement innovative ADR techniques that contribute to the fair, efficient, and effective resolution of disputes and Equal Employment Opportunity complaints. Additionally, this award serves to encourage the marketing of best practices that serve as models for all VA organizations.

Rivera was cited as a great example of an employee who personifies VA's core values of Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence. He demonstrated these values by emphasizing the importance of ADR, demonstrating an unprecedented commitment that fosters an atmosphere supportive of early dispute resolution, and providing exemplary services to Veterans and to VISN 5.

"Conflicts occur despite our best efforts and listening to others is key," said Rivera. "So ensuring that everyone has a voice during disputes and that all voices are given equal respect is important."

Rivera's commitment to ADR will be critical as SLVHCS prepares to open its replacement medical center in 2016.

"We will be hiring an additional 1,000 employees to fill new positions, and many of our existing employees will begin working in a new 24/7, inpatient medical center, which is something we've not had in 10 years," Rivera explained. "So listening to avoid and resolve conflicts early is in the best interest of everyone, especially our Veterans."

The replacement medical center is under construction on a 30-acre site in Mid-City, New Orleans. Bounded by Canal, South Galvez and South Rocheblave Streets and Tulane Avenue., the 1.6 million sq. ft., \$1 billion facility will serve about 70,000 enrolled Veterans and meet the full array of VA missions: health care to America's heroes, education, research and national preparedness.

For more information about Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System, visit <http://www.neworleans.va.gov>, go to Facebook at www.facebook.com/VANewOrleans or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/vaneworleans.

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