



# News Release

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Contact: Amanda Jones  
(504) 565-4988  
[amanda.jones6@va.gov](mailto:amanda.jones6@va.gov)

## **VA Begins “Summer of Service” to Bolster Volunteer Assistance for Veterans**

*Calls Upon Individuals, Organizations and Communities to Serve Veterans in Nationwide Effort*

NEW ORLEANS — A new nationwide initiative – a “Summer of Service” – seeks the help of citizens in southeast Louisiana to create and build partnerships to grow the number of individuals and organizations serving Veterans here.

The Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System is renewing its commitment to Veterans by inviting the community to a town hall meeting June 22, 2015 at 6 p.m. at VFW Davis-Moran Memorial Post #8290, 28000 Main Street, Lacombe, LA 70445. We also invite the community to visit and explore opportunities to serve Veterans during an open house at our New Orleans clinic the week of June 28. More information to come.

“We have made progress over the past year addressing the challenges we face in delivering care and benefits to millions of Veterans and their families,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald. “While there is more work to do to honor our commitment to Veterans, we also recognize that VA cannot do it alone. We are asking Americans everywhere to join the Summer of Service and help us give back to those who have given so much to our nation.”

As part of VA’s Summer of Service, SLVHCS will launch its second Summer Youth Program.

“Last year we started a summer youth program again for the first time in 10 years, which was a great way to introduce young people to service,” said Cynthia White, Voluntary Service assistant. “High school students from around the region will help us serve our Veterans beginning next week.”

The Department of Veterans Affairs has an outstanding volunteer program, which will be highlighted throughout the country this summer. VA will build upon the ongoing work of its more than 350,000 employees and 76,000 volunteers around the nation – and the hundreds of volunteers at SLVHCS. While the central focus of the campaign will be increasing volunteerism and partnerships, it will also provide individuals and communities an opportunity to support other important priorities. Despite a hiring effort that brought more than 11,000 net-new employees onboard over the past year,

VA still needs more health care providers, claims specialists, medical support assistants, and cemetery directors to continue to expand needed services. VA's partners can help by getting the word out this summer.

“There is no mission more noble than serving veterans and their families. At VA, we constantly strive to improve the way we do our job,” said McDonald. “State by state, community by community, person by person, there are a number of ways we can all come together to serve veterans. From expanded partnerships with the private sector and non-profit organizations, to accelerating hiring, to celebrating the commitment of VA employees and volunteers – we need the help of communities everywhere to succeed.”

Volunteers can help serve veterans by visiting <http://www.volunteer.va.gov/> to find out the needs of your local VA facility. Follow #VASummerOfService on [Vantage Point](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), and join VA in caring for America's veterans.

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