



VETS NEWS ND

ND DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

ISSUE 03 JANUARY 2016



Newsletter

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform readers of local events, community programs, Veteran-related news, and provide information on Veterans' benefits and other resources. This newsletter, in addition to our website and Facebook page, will keep Veterans and their families up-to-date on current events and hopefully serve as an informational guide to various topics, such as education benefits or filing claims.

North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs Mission Statement

The mission of the North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs is to assist veterans of North Dakota and their dependents in obtaining all benefits to which they are entitled, both federal and state, either by direct contact or through the assistance of the County and Tribal Veterans Service Officers.

North Dakota State Approving Agency Mission Statement

The North Dakota State Approving Agency works in cooperation with its partners; (1) to promote and safeguard quality education and training programs for all veterans and other eligible persons; (2) to ensure greater education and training opportunities that meet the changing needs of Veterans; and (3) to advocate and support the GI Bill® resources available for those programs.



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Town Hall with Veteran Commissioner

Lonnie Wangen



North Dakota Department of Veteran Affairs Commissioner Lonnie Wangen is traveling the state to many North Dakota universities and colleges, hosting Town Hall style meetings to engage with local veterans and providing an opportunity for conversation about available benefits, programs, and struggles of college aged veterans. All veterans, staff, faculty, and community members are invited to come and take part in these town halls.

If you have any questions regarding the town hall meetings, please feel free to contact Rhonda Schauer, Director, State Approving Agency at (701) 328-5445 or rschauer@nd.gov. See you there!

January 25, 2016

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Minot State University

Minot State University Conference Center
500 University Ave West
Minot, ND 58707

Campus Coordinator: Andrew Heitkamp

February 2, 2016

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Bismarck State College

Auditorium – NECE Building
Bismarck, ND

Campus Coordinators: Lane Humber, Rhonda Schauer

February 1, 2016

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

North Dakota State College of Science
Old Main Building

Williston, ND

Campus Coordinator: Mindy Manock Tayer

February 16, 2016

NDSU

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Memorial Union Great Room
Fargo, ND

Campus Coordinator: Anne Robinson Paul,
Jim Becks

Williston State College/TBA



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The Administrative Committee on Veterans Affairs The ACOVA

The ACOVA is responsible for the organization, policy, and general administration of all veterans' affairs in North Dakota. It is made up of 15 voting members, each appointed by the Governor, representing the five major veteran organizations in the state, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, AMVETS, and Vietnam Veterans of America. Every year the Governor selects members of this committee from the two names submitted by the state's veteran organizations. The Committee is also comprised of three nonvoting members who are to serve in an advisory capacity - the North Dakota Adjutant General, the Center Director of the federal Veterans Affairs, and the Executive Director Job Service North Dakota.

ACOVA meet minutes are posted on the nd.gov/veterans website and are available for all to review. This organization meets quarterly. Subcommittees of the AVOCA are: ACOVA Legislative Committee, Chaired by Trish Hodny. Department of Veterans Affairs and Budget Subcommittee, Chaired by Richard Belling. North Dakota Veterans Home Governing Board, Chaired by Gary Skarpol. Post War Trust Fund & Appeals Committee, Chaired by Marlys Morgenstern.

Exciting news from the ACOVA will be shared each quarter through the Newsletter.

Use your GI BILL for On the Job Training

What is OJT?

OJT is training you receive while actually performing a job and earning wages, as well as receiving your G.I. Bill benefits. OJT programs normally range from six months to two years in length. Some examples of OJT are: Welder, Painter, Cook, and Auto Mechanic.

For more information, contact Rhonda Schauer,
Director, State Approving Agency at:
(701) 328-5445 or at www.nd.gov/veterans

How do I get started?

If you do not have a job, or if you are not working in the occupation you want, contact your local Job Service Veteran Representative for help finding an employer who can offer the kind of training You need to reach your occupational goal.

Next, either you or your employer should contact the North Dakota State Approving Agency at 701-328-5445 to get the process started for approval and for necessary applications.

Over 2 dozen private companies, agencies, and programs are approved from across the state. Check out the NDDVA website at www.nd.gov/veterans to find out more!



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North Dakota Veterans News

NDDVA On Cutting Edge of Electronic Disability Claim Transfer with the VA

On Thursday, December 3, 2015, the North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs (NDDVA) successfully transferred a veteran's claim for a service-connected disability to the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) through the VA's Digits 2 Digits (D2D) program. This is the first time a claim has been transferred through the D2D program in North Dakota. The NDDVA is one of the first organizations in the nation to have the ability to transfer claims electronically through the program. The Digits 2 Digits program, along with the Stakeholders Enterprise Portal, enhances the NDDVA's ability to better serve the veterans of North Dakota and assist them with processing claims to the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs. This method of submitting claims is faster and easier, allowing Service Officers to more efficiently and effectively assist veterans.

**Faster and
Safe VA
Claims!**

The VA's D2D program allows a Veteran Service Officers (VSO) electronic claim management program to communicate with the Federal VA's claim system. In this way the data typed into the VSO's program for the veteran is transferred as actual data into the Federal VA system which saves the time and resources once needed to re-type this data. As an example; when a veteran visits the VSO in Stark County to file a claim with the Federal VA all information is typed into the Stark counties claim management program and documents needing a signature are signed on an electronic signature pad. All necessary documents for the veterans claim can then be compiled or "Packaged" and released to the NDDVA. The claim package is immediately received by the NDDVA's for review and final approval. The claim is then electronically uploaded directly to the Federal VA claim system. No paper documents are mailed or carried from the VSO to the Federal VA. This method saves several days in time copying documents, mailing documents, scanning documents and re-typing the data into each program and most importantly is kept in a secure data base.

Feel free to ask your VSO or NDDVA representative about this innovative service, or find more information at www.nd.gov/veterans!



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Welcome!

The North Dakota Department of Veteran Affairs Welcomes Calie Lindseth as the new **Women's Veteran Coordinator**. Calie comes to the department with a wide background of experiences in military and veteran service that will further round out our staff. Calie previously worked for the North Dakota National Guard as an Education Specialist, helping veterans, service members, and dependents return to higher education and aid them through the benefits process.

Calie is also a member of the North Dakota Army National Guard. She is currently finishing up her Masters of Public Health at North Dakota State University and hopes to pursue another graduate degree. We welcome her to the department!

Did you get a VA Tax Letter in the Mail?

Recently the VA has been sending out letters and the IRS TAX from **1095B** to veterans. This form is to verify medical coverage for the purpose of taxes under the Affordable Care Act. The VA will be sending these forms out between Dec 2015-Jan 2016.

If you file taxes, you will need to fill this form out and submit it with your yearly taxes. If you do not file taxes, you will not need to fill this form out. The VA will communicate with the IRS that you are enrolled within their system, which meets the threshold of meaningful health coverage.

Please refer to your Veteran Representative, Tax Professional, or the VA for any questions you may have. You can also refer to the VA Website FAQ at: <http://www.va.gov/health/aca/faq.asp>.



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