

# VETERANS ADVISORY NEWS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2016**INSIDE THIS EDITION:**

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THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS  
AFFAIRS WAS CREATED BY COOK  
COUNTY BOARD PRESIDENT TONI  
PRECKWINKLE IN DECEMBER 2012  
TO SERVE THE COUNTY'S EMPLOYEE  
VETERANS AND VETERANS WHO LIVE  
IN COOK COUNTY THROUGH  
OUTREACH AND SUPPORT SERVICES.

**QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:**

**BILL BROWNE:** 312-603-6423  
**AUDREY MOLLO:** 312-603-2221  
**COOK COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS EMAIL:**  
 VETERANS.AFFAIRS@COOKCOUNTYIL.GOV  
**COOK COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS WEBSITE:**  
 WWW.COOKCOUNTYIL.GOV/VETERANS-AFFAIRS/

**MESSAGE FROM COOK COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Dear Veterans:

This month's newsletter contains information on the following: Women facing the draft; additional updates and facts on the disabled veterans homeowner tax exemption; answers to frequently asked questions about the disabled veterans homeowner tax exemption; a new city law on military status discrimination in Chicago; and the commemoration honoring Vietnam veterans.

The Village of Hazel Crest will present the *Moving Vietnam Wall* from May 5-9 at the Hazel Crest Municipal Center, 17001 Holmes Avenue. The Village of Hazel Crest will host a ceremony honoring the 58,307 American servicemen and women who gave their lives in defense of the nation during the Vietnam War. Various veteran services organizations will be invited to participate in the *Moving Vietnam Wall* ceremony on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

The Cook County Department of Veterans Affairs is a partner in the Vietnam War Commemoration, which strives to recognize all veterans who served active duty in the Armed Forces during the period beginning November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1955 through May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1975. As a show of gratitude and support to this generation of Americans, March 29<sup>th</sup> has been declared "Vietnam Veterans Day" by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Silver Star Families of America project will begin on April 4<sup>th</sup>. Cook County Veterans Affairs seeks armed forces personnel who are currently serving or have served honorably in ANY War, and having served in a war zone been wounded by enemy action or injured or contracted a serious illness that could be rated at least 10 percent service-connected disabled by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Cook County Veterans Affairs encourages you to pass this information on to other veterans and use the newsletter as a reference tool for upcoming activities, events and workshops. For access to current and past editions of our monthly newsletters, please visit the official Cook County Department of Veterans Affairs website at: [www.cookcountyl.gov/veterans-affairs](http://www.cookcountyl.gov/veterans-affairs).

**Bill Browne, Director**  
**Cook County Veterans Affairs**



*President Obama signs S.614 in the Oval Office at the White House, 2009. The bill awarded a Congressional Gold Medal to veterans of the Women Airforce Service Pilots. The WASP program was established during World War II, and from 1942-1943 more than 1,000 women joined, flying 60 million miles of non-combat military missions.*



## FACT CHECK: ARE WOMEN FACING THE DRAFT?

<http://www.wbez.org/news/fact-check-are-women-facing-draft-115050>



The Pentagon has opened all jobs across the military to women, including once-closed posts in infantry and special operations forces. The announcement came after a nearly three-year process, and with the acknowledgment that women had fought and died in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. **The Issue:** That historic change has raised another historic question: Are women now facing the draft?

- **Female Army Vet: Combat Positions Should be Open to Women**
- **Former Marine: Some Combat Roles Should be Off-Limits to Women**

**The Short Answer:** No. Congress would need to change the law that governs Selective Service in order to require women to register, and that hasn't happened. Congress would also need to pass a law to restore the draft itself – a long shot, considering how unpopular it is. The debate is largely about symbolism and principle.

**The Long Answer:** President Obama removed all past restrictions on military service, including gay, lesbian, and transgender troops who want to serve openly; and women who qualify for front-line combat units. The Pentagon's admission of women to infantry and other units sparked a debate in Washington over whether that meant women must also register to be drafted along with young men — and whether they might be called up involuntarily.

Obama's administration has not taken a position, citing the need to study the issue and at least two ongoing lawsuits in the federal court system. Those suits, by plaintiffs who challenged the ban on drafting women, could someday result in a ruling that might change Selective Service. The Supreme Court upheld the ban on registering women in 1981, citing the ban then in place on women in combat. With women now admitted, the court might opt to hear the new cases and it could issue a new ruling.

For now, at least two top military commanders – Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley and Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Robert Neller – have said they personally support registering and potentially drafting women. The debate in Washington spread to the 2016 presidential race. Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, a Democrat, has said she'd need more information about a proposal to evaluate it. Her Democratic challenger, Bernie Sanders, so far hasn't volunteered a position, nor has Republican candidate Donald Trump.

Florida Sen. Marco Rubio's view is nuanced. He supports requiring women to register with the Selective Service, but not drafting them into combat roles. "The U.S. military is not an instrument for social experimentation," his campaign website says. Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, however, has been clear that he opposes registering and drafting women. He has used the issue to try to underscore his conservatism. "We have had enough with political correctness, especially in the military," he said during [a New Hampshire town hall](#).

"Political correctness is dangerous. And the idea that we would draft our daughters to forcibly bring them into the military and close combat, I think is wrong. It is immoral and if I am president, we ain't doing it." The U.S. hasn't drafted anyone since 1973. Although men still must register when turning 18, it requires an act of Congress to revive selective service. The current debate is mostly symbolic and political, as some tie drafting women to larger issues of fairness, such as the 1970s debate over the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution.

Since the Pentagon lifted its ban on women in combat, at least two members of Congress have sponsored a bill that would require women to register when they turn 18. Lawmakers may hold hearings about the issue, but few members of Congress have shown no eagerness to tackle the issue, anxious about difficult symbolic votes on an unpopular issue in an election year.



## UPDATE: FACTS ABOUT THE DISABLED VETERANS HOMEOWNER TAX EXEMPTION

Document is available atop the Assessor's Office website homepage as *Important Update Regarding the Disabled Veterans Homeowner Exemption*, at: [http://www.cookcountyassessor.com/assets/forms/DIS\\_VET\\_EXEMPT.pdf](http://www.cookcountyassessor.com/assets/forms/DIS_VET_EXEMPT.pdf).



COOK COUNTY  
ASSESSOR'S OFFICE  
Joseph Berrios

The Office of Cook County Assessor Joseph Berrios has a long history of serving veterans and continues assisting veterans with exemptions. Assessor Berrios supported and helped to pass the 2015 legislation greatly expanding the **Disabled Veterans Homeowner Exemption** beginning with Tax Year 2015, which is billed and due in 2016. This is not a new exemption; it was created in 2007. **This recent legislation (SB 107) not only increases the amount of Disabled Veterans Homeowner Exemption savings, but also expands eligibility to veterans whose level of service-connected disability is rated at 30% or higher. And for the first time, veterans with a service-connected disability rating 70% and greater are totally exempt from property taxes.**

- Veterans with a service-connected disability as certified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) are eligible for the exemption on primary occupied residence. This annual exemption reduces Equalized Assessed Value (EAV) on the primary residence, very likely lowering the tax bill. Non-remarried surviving spouses are also eligible.
- It's important to note that the EAV is not the amount of your taxes. EAV is the partial property value on which your taxes are computed; any reduction in EAV is not the dollar amount by which your tax bill may be lowered.
- **The Disabled Veterans Homeowner Exemption must be applied for each year.** State law requires the Assessor's Office to annually receive a renewal application, including VA Certification showing the veteran's disability level.
- Applications and further information for this exemption have been made available on the Cook County Assessor's website, at: [www.cookcountyassessor.com](http://www.cookcountyassessor.com). The application form with added details is accessible for download or print at the following link: [www.cookcountyassessor.com/assets/forms/DisabledVeteransEx.pdf](http://www.cookcountyassessor.com/assets/forms/DisabledVeteransEx.pdf). Applications are also available by mail and have been mailed to those who received this exemption last year.
- Assessor Berrios has extended the deadline for the Disabled Veterans Homeowner Exemption until Thursday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016; applications were due March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016. If you missed the deadline, you can receive exemption savings by filing a Certificate of Error (C of E) Form. Savings can still make it onto your Second-Installment tax bill this year. If even later filing the C of E Form, then savings will be applied retroactively and a refund check will be sent to you. For further information, call: (312) 443-7550.

The chart shows changes in exemption amounts based disability between the current and the new law:

- \*The official statute is the Disabled Veterans Standard Homestead Exemption

Taxable Years	Percentage of Disability*	Exemption Amount**
Tax Years 2011–2014	70%-100%	\$5,000
	50-69%	\$2, 500
Tax Years 2015 and Thereafter	30%-49%	\$2,500
	50%-69%	\$5,000
	70%-100%	Total Exemption



**COOK COUNTY ASSESSOR – DISABLED VETERANS HOMEOWNER EXEMPTION *CONTINUED*: PAGE 2 OF 2**

**\*\*IMPORTANT NOTE:** This amount will be deducted from your Equalized Assessed Value (EAV), which is the partial property value on which your taxes are computed. Please note that EAV is not the dollar amount of your taxes, and its reduction is not the dollar amount by which your tax bill may be lowered.

There may be some concern that disabled veterans are possibly not receiving their exemptions. In fact, all veterans will receive their exemptions at the normal time. However, some disabled veterans who are *completely* exempt from property taxes **might receive a First-Installment bill in February** with a balance due in March, which should be paid. Any over-payment will be fully refunded this summer.

This is a **one-time situation** that actually does **not** affect the vast majority of those who qualify for the Disabled Veterans Homeowner Exemption. All deductions in their tax bills will occur precisely on schedule. The very brief adjustment period affects only the smaller group: at least 70% disabled and thus completely exempt under the new law. The Cook County Assessor's Office is equally committed to them.

Again, overpayment will be fully refunded. Most important, **after February 2016, completely-exempt disabled veterans will never in any future year receive a tax bill balance due** for as long as their disability level remains unchanged and their EAV (partial home value) is under \$250K.

**To qualify for the Disabled Veterans Homeowner Exemption, the veteran must:**

- Be an Illinois resident who has served as a member of the United States Armed Forces on active duty, or a member of the Illinois National Guard, or U.S. Reserve Forces and has been honorably discharged;
- Own and occupy the property as the primary residence as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015;
- Have an EAV (partial home value) of less than \$250,000 for the primary residence, excluding the EAV of property used for commercial purposes or rented for more than six (6) months; *and*
- Have at least 30% service-connected disability certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

**A non-remarried surviving spouse** of a disabled veteran may continue to receive this exemption if the same primary residence continues as such for the surviving spouse. Application must be made annually. The non-remarried surviving spouse may also transfer the exemption amount (or less) to a new primary residence.

Veterans must please complete the exemption application and return it to the Cook County Assessor's Office at 118 North Clark Street Rm. 320, Chicago, IL 60602. Instructions for applicants:

- **A first-time applicant must** provide a Department of Defense DD Form 214, certified by either the Cook County Recorder of Deeds or Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs. This document is not required for future annual applications.
- **All applicants, first-time and in later years, must** provide a Disability Certification Letter from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- **To the non-remarried surviving spouse of a disabled veteran who is eligible** for the Exemption and is using the Exemption for the first time or transferring it to a new address: you must please provide the disabled veteran's death certificate and proof of ownership.

**\*\*\*Please Note:** This exemption **cannot be combined** with the Disabled Persons Homeowner Exemption or the Returning Veterans Homeowner Exemption. It **can be combined** with the regular (non-veteran and non-disabled) Homeowner Exemption, and certain other exemptions. All other exemptions information can be found at:

<http://www.cookcountyassessor.com/Exemptions/Exemption-Forms.aspx>.



### FAQ: DEADLINE EXTENDED FOR DISABLED VETERANS HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION

<http://www.cookcountyassessor.com/PdfForms/Exemption-Forms.aspx>

The office of Cook County Assessor Joseph Berrios has a long history of serving veterans, and continues assisting veterans and other taxpayers with property tax exemptions savings. Assessor Berrios supported and helped to pass the 2015 legislation of SB 107 – the Disabled Veterans Standard Homestead Exemption, greatly expanding eligibility and increasing exemption savings. Now, veterans with a service-connected disability rated 30% or more are eligible for this property tax deduction. And, for the first time, veterans with a service-connected disability rated 70% or more are *completely* exempt from property taxes.

The Disabled Veterans Homeowner Exemption application form and general information are available on the Cook County Assessor's website: [www.cookcountyassessor.com](http://www.cookcountyassessor.com) | [www.cookcountyassessor.com/PdfForms/Exemption-Forms.aspx](http://www.cookcountyassessor.com/PdfForms/Exemption-Forms.aspx). Assessor Berrios has extended the deadline to submit applications for the Disabled Veterans Homeowner Exemption until Thursday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016 (application originally due March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016). The latest document revision from the Cook County Assessor's Office regarding deadline extensions to submit applications *and* other veteran's property tax exemptions information, has been made available for print or download at the following links: [http://www.cookcountyassessor.com/assets/forms/DIS\\_VET\\_EXEMPT.pdf](http://www.cookcountyassessor.com/assets/forms/DIS_VET_EXEMPT.pdf) and [www.cookcountyassessor.com/Office/News.aspx](http://www.cookcountyassessor.com/Office/News.aspx).

#### ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

***Do I have to pay my 1<sup>st</sup> Installment Tax Bill if I am a Disabled Veteran with 70% - 100% of a disability?*** Yes; you should always pay your tax bill. Any overpayment will be fully refunded after the Second-Installment bill has been issued. A veteran who qualifies for a complete exemption from property taxes will see a -0- balance on their Second-Installment bill. That bill will also indicate a refund is coming. This is a one-time situation affecting only those disabled veterans who are completely exempt from property taxes. Also, please remind taxpayers that the tax bill they are paying is payable to the Cook County Treasures Office **NOT** the Cook County Assessor's Office.

***How do I go about getting my refund?*** All refunds pertaining to the Disabled Veterans Exemption are issued by The Cook County Treasures Office. They must provide **proof of payment** for the 1<sup>st</sup> Installment to the Treasures Office and then they will be issued a refund. If they have any more questions about their refund they should contact The Cook County Treasures Office (312) 443-5100. Refunds usually arrive 6-8 weeks after the Second-Installment bill is issued. For questions about *qualifying* for the exemption or a refund, please contact the Cook County Assessor's Office.

***Does your office send out any form of confirmation to those veterans who are eligible and have successfully completed their applications?*** No; unfortunately our office does not send out confirmation about exemptions, but taxpayers can call into our Taxpayer Services Department and ask if there exemption was processed. Since that is the Department that handles exemptions, their number is (312) 443-7550.

***For those veterans who missed the deadline, what options do they have to file or are they out of luck?*** If you miss the deadline, you can still receive your exemption savings by filing a Certificate of Error (C of E) form. Your savings can still make it onto your Second-Installment tax bill this year; if you are even later with your C of E, your savings will be applied retroactively and a refund check will be sent to you. It is explained in red print on the following Veterans Homeowner Exemption document, please distribute as "latest update." The same link applies: [http://www.cookcountyassessor.com/assets/forms/DIS\\_VET\\_EXEMPT.pdf](http://www.cookcountyassessor.com/assets/forms/DIS_VET_EXEMPT.pdf). Veterans can pull the application online: <http://sub.cookcountyassessor.com/assets/forms/DisabledVeteransEx.pdf>.





### NEW CITY LAW ON MILITARY STATUS DISCRIMINATION

[www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/cchr/AdjSupportingInfo/AdjFORMS/2016%20Adjudication%20Forms/2016MilitaryStatusDiscriminationFAQs.pdf](http://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/cchr/AdjSupportingInfo/AdjFORMS/2016%20Adjudication%20Forms/2016MilitaryStatusDiscriminationFAQs.pdf)

Chicago has amended its Human Rights and Fair Housing Ordinances to address discrimination targeting current and former members of the military. Effective March 16<sup>th</sup>, discrimination based on military status is prohibited in the City of Chicago in all areas under the Commission's jurisdiction: Employment, Public Accommodations, Credit Transactions, Bonding and Housing. Protection includes discrimination targeting individuals based on military discharge status and extends to active duty, or any reserve component of any State or Federal armed forces, or a veteran thereof. ***Please click on the above link to view the City of Chicago article in its entirety.***

- 1. What is considered "Military Status"?** One can claim military status protection if on active or reserve duty of any state or federal armed forces. A person targeted of discrimination based on discharge status can claim protection under this category.
- 2. Do new protections require preference to applicants based on military status?** No; protections do not require preference given on the basis of military status. Employers with a veteran's preference policy must apply it fairly and consistently.
- 3. If an employee has Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder episodes at work, is the employer required to ignore it?** No; employer's should treat PTSD like any disability-related need and pursue proper action under its reasonable accommodation policy.
- 4. Are employers required to save positions of deployed employees?** Military status protections do not include reemployment obligations. There *are* Federal/State law reemployment obligations, such as accrual of seniority and benefits during this time.
- 5. Are landlords prohibited to refuse rent to service members who may deploy during the lease agreement?** Yes; landlords cannot refuse rent to military based on possible deployment during duration of the lease. If appropriate notice is given, the landlord must terminate the lease without penalty if continued rent payments during such deployment cannot be arranged.
- 6. Are landlords prohibited to refuse to rent to applicants who intend to use the G.I. Bill to pay for housing?** Yes; the G.I. Bill constitutes a lawful source of income and should be accepted as a valid form of payment to cover housing expenses.
- 7. May a landlord refuse to rent to military if from a country the U.S. has occupied or invaded?** No; a landlord may not refuse to rent based on being a military member, irrespective of any socio/political objection to U.S. military involvement.
- 8. Are former service members protected under the new provisions if dishonorably discharged from the military?** Yes; discharge from the military, whether honorable or not, does not impact the anti-discrimination protections.
- 9. Are service members required to serve a specific length of time to have military status anti-discrimination protections?** There is no minimum required time in military service before being entitled to military status protections.
- 10. Do protections cover service members from branches in other states or countries?** Military status protections extend to any military service member in any state in the United States, but does not include military personnel from other countries.
- 11. Who enforces the new City law?** The Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR) is charged with enforcing this law.
- 12. How do you file a complaint under this law?** Within 180 days of the alleged discrimination, mail or visit the CCHR at 740 N. Sedgwick between the hours of 9:00AM-3:00PM to file a complaint. For more information, click the following link at: [www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cchr/supp\\_info/file\\_a\\_discriminationcomplaint.html](http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cchr/supp_info/file_a_discriminationcomplaint.html).
- 13. What are the penalties for violating the new City law?** Violations may be fined \$100-\$1,000 for each offense *and* result in damages awarded to the successful complainant, such as: attorney fees, injunctive relief, and business license discipline.

For more information or other informative materials, contact the Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR) at: (312) 742-8206 or [www.cityofchicago.org/humanrelations](http://www.cityofchicago.org/humanrelations).



## A LONG OVERDUE RECOGNITION: 50<sup>TH</sup> COMMEMORATION HONORS VIETNAM VETERANS

[www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/26087/a-long-overdue-recognition-commemoration-honors-vietnam-veterans-this-march-29/](http://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/26087/a-long-overdue-recognition-commemoration-honors-vietnam-veterans-this-march-29/)

### VVMF "In Memory" Program Honors Veterans Every Year

The scene then was vastly different from what today's returning Veterans experience. It's time for America to show their appreciation to those who served, especially those who continued to sacrifice long after the war's ending.

As part of the 50<sup>th</sup> Commemoration of the Vietnam War, the VA and 29 States and territories are commemorating the anniversary of the final withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam with a day of appreciation celebrated on March 29th.

More than 40 years after the war, many veterans continued to feel the effects of their service. Some battled with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Others fought illnesses caused by their exposure to Agent Orange and other chemical defoliants sprayed during the Vietnam War.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) believes their fight should be honored. VVMF's *In Memory Program* honors those whose lives were cut short as a result of their service, but do not meet the Department of Defense (DoD) guidelines to be **added to The Wall**.

*In Memory* is a way that all Vietnam veterans can be honored on the National Mall. Every year in June, VVMF hosts the *In Memory Ceremony*. Loved ones join together on America's backyard to honor their heroes' sacrifices. They are given the chance to read their veteran's name and leave a tribute of their veteran at The Wall, next to the more than 58,000 service members who fell in the Vietnam War.

Many families see this as long-overdue recognition for their veteran's heroism, devotion, and courage.



*"The Vietnam soldiers did not get the respect they so richly deserved when they came home from the war. Thank you so much for giving them the 'welcome home' that they should have gotten..." - Diana Hamlyn*

*In Memory* began in 1999 and has since honored **more than 2,500 veterans**.

A plaque that honors these Veterans was dedicated as a part of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in 2004.

**It reads: *In Memory of the men and women who served in the Vietnam War and later died as a result of their service. We honor and remember their sacrifice.***

As we approach March 29th and this Vietnam Veterans Day, take the time to remember those who honorably served. They sacrificed for their country and deserve their nation's appreciation and respect. To all of our Veterans we say, 'Welcome Home.'

***As part of the 50th Commemoration of the Vietnam War, VA is commemorating the anniversary of the final withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam with a day of appreciation celebrated on March 29th. Check with your local VA facility for events near you.***



## COOK COUNTY RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF CAREGIVERS AND THE RAISE ACT

<https://cook-county.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2577402&GUID=2306C6FB-2F88-4288-994C-0C2EEDDE89AE&Options=&Search=&FullText=1>

### Board of Commissioners of Cook County

#### Legislation Details

**PROPOSED RESOLUTION 16-1545 PASSED ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2016: URGING UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO PASS THE "RECOGNIZE, ASSIST, INCLUDE, SUPPORT AND ENGAGE (RAISE) FAMILY CAREGIVERS ACT"**

**WHEREAS**, across the country, more than 40 million Americans selflessly dedicate themselves to providing unpaid care for older parents, spouses, children with disabilities, disabled veterans and other loved ones; and

**WHEREAS**, by providing much-needed help with daily activities such as bathing, dressing, meal preparation, managing medications, transportation, and more, family caregivers have become the backbone of care in America; and

**WHEREAS**, on July 16, 2015, the Recognize, Assist, Include, Support and Engage (RAISE) Family Caregivers Act, (*H.R.3099 - RAISE Family Caregivers Act*) was introduced in Congress and would require the development of a strategy that would identify specific actions that government, communities, providers, employers, and others can take to recognize and support family caregivers; and

**WHEREAS**, H.R. 3099 - RAISE Family Caregivers Act directs the Department of Health and Human Services to develop, maintain, and periodically update a National Family Caregiving Strategy; and

**WHEREAS**, approval of this bill would help disabled and older Americans live at home, where they want to be by

- Promoting adoption of person and family centered care in all health and Long Term Service and Support (LTSS) settings
- Offering assessment and service planning involving care recipients and family caregivers
- Providing training and other supports
- Providing information, education, referral and care coordination
- Offering respite options
- Contribution to financial security
- Promoting workplace policies and supports that allow family caregivers to remain in the workplace; and

**WHEREAS**, on November 16, 2015 the H.R. 3099 - RAISE Family Act was referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education for consideration; and

**WHEREAS**, many Americans have been or will be family caregivers or are likely to need the help of someone to live independently in their homes and communities; and

**WHEREAS**, supporting caregivers is a bipartisan issue that touches almost every family.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the President and Members of the Cook County Board of Commissioners do hereby recognize and support the contributions that roughly 40 million family caregivers make every day; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the President and Members of the Cook County Board of Commissioners do hereby urge the United States Congress to pass H.R. 3099 - RAISE Family Act; and

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that Cook County Board of Commissioners will bring to light plight of these veterans and raise awareness to members of the United States Congress and President of the United States in a determined effort to gain equal treatment to these veterans, their families and communities in the United States.





THE VETERANS NETWORK COMMITTEE OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS

**HONOR FLIGHT 2016 HOSTED BY VNC OF NORTHERN AND WESTERN ILLINOIS**

Dear Veterans, Friends, and Neighbors:

I'm honored to provide you with the INSTRUCTIONS and PRE-APPLICATION for the 2016 Honor Flight hosted by VNC Honor Flight of Northern and Western Illinois. This three-day Honor Flight trip will take place:

**THURSDAY - SATURDAY, AUGUST 25 - 27TH, 2016**

**PLEASE FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS AND MAIL YOUR PRE-APPLICATION TO:**

**VETERANS NETWORK COMMITTEE OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS  
515 SKY LINE DRIVE  
FOX RIVER GROVE, ILLINOIS 60021**

**MORE INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT: [WWW.VETERANSNETWORKCOMMITTEE.COM/](http://WWW.VETERANSNETWORKCOMMITTEE.COM/)**

Greg Padovani - Chairman, Veterans Memorial Committee of Arlington Heights, IL

***Honoring the service and sacrifice of veterans and their families.***

*Please see inserts following newsletter for more information.*

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CHICAGO VETERANS ORGANIZATION

**THE OFFICIAL 2016 CHICAGO VETERANS 22-MILE RUCK MARCH**

On Friday, May 27th, veterans and supporters will be rucking 22 miles with 22+ pound ruck sacks to remember our fallen and raise awareness of PTSD and Veteran suicide. This patriotic ruck march will begin at Veterans Memorial Park in Glencoe at 8:00AM and will end at Milton Lee Olive Park around 5:00PM. Our goal is to raise as much awareness and funds for veterans and their families dealing with PTSD and the epidemic of veteran suicide. ***No one will ever be forgotten!***

**CHICAGO VETERANS 22-MILE RUCK MARCH**

**FRIDAY, MAY 27TH, 2016**

**8:00AM - 5:00PM**

**VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK**

**299 PARK AVENUE IN GLENCOE, IL 60022**

All funds will be donated to Chicago Veterans, a local non-profit organization who is committed to building a strong, positive veteran community. If you are as passionate about our cause as we are, we encourage you to create a fundraiser and help raise money for Chicago Veterans. To Donate, Become a Fundraiser, or Register for The Official 2016 Chicago Veterans 22-Mile Ruck March event, click the following link:

**<https://chicagovets.org/event/2016-ruck-march/>**. *Please see inserts following newsletter for more information.*

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**Cook County Employment Opportunities**  
available for Offices Under the President, Forest  
Preserve District, and Health and Hospitals  
Systems can be found at:  
<http://www.cookcountyil.gov/current-job-listings>

Forest Preserves District:  
<http://fpdcc.com/about/jobs/>

Health and Hospitals Systems:  
<http://www.cookcountyhhs.org/about-cchhs/human-resources/careers/>



## COOK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

COOK COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS  
COOK COUNTY BUILDING, ROOM 801  
118 NORTH CLARK STREET  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

[WWW.COOKCOUNTYIL.GOV/VETERANS-AFFAIRS/](http://WWW.COOKCOUNTYIL.GOV/VETERANS-AFFAIRS/)

BILL BROWNE: 312-603-6423

AUDREY MOLLO: 312-603-2221

COOK COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS EMAIL:  
[VETERANS.AFFAIRS@COOKCOUNTYIL.GOV](mailto:VETERANS.AFFAIRS@COOKCOUNTYIL.GOV)

## WOMEN IN MILITARY HISTORY

*"The defense of our nation is a shared responsibility. Women have served in the defense of this land for years before our United States was born. They have contributed their talents, skills and courage to this endeavor for more than two centuries with an astounding record of achievement that stretches from Lexington and Concord to the Persian Gulf and beyond," Retired Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan, Chief of Staff of the Army from 1991-1995 ([www.army.mil/women/index.html](http://www.army.mil/women/index.html)).*

Women in today's Army serve as commanders, doctors, engineers, mechanics, aviators, special operators, technologists and combat troops. In fact, all combat military occupational specialties are in the process of opening to women. More than 69,000 women currently serve as Soldiers - exceeding 14 percent of the active force ([www.army.mil/article/163772/Sky\\_s\\_the\\_limit\\_after\\_breaking\\_aviation\\_ceilings/](http://www.army.mil/article/163772/Sky_s_the_limit_after_breaking_aviation_ceilings/)).

## UPCOMING VETERANS BENEFITS AND RESOURCE EVENTS

*See Following Inserts for More Information and Event Details*

### VETERANS FORWARD AND STUDENT VETERANS OF AMERICA – BRIDGES TO EMPLOYMENT NETWORKING SESSION TO EXPLORE POTENTIAL CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- MARCH 22<sup>ND</sup> FROM 6:00 P.M. UNTIL 9:00 P.M. – LEWIS UNIVERSITY AT ST. CHARLES BORROMEO HALL 1 UNIVERSITY PARKWAY IN ROMEOVILLE, IL 60446
- MARCH 30<sup>TH</sup> FROM 6:30 P.M. UNTIL 9:30 P.M. - NEI UNIVERSITY AT ALUMNI HALL 5500 ST. LOUIS AVENUE IN CHICAGO, IL 60625

### OAK PARK VET CENTER – VETERANS HOME BUYING AND FINANCIAL EDUCATION SEMINAR

- REGISTRATION REQUIRED BY MARCH 22<sup>ND</sup> AT (312)798-9564
- MARCH 24<sup>TH</sup> FROM 10:00 A.M. UNTIL 12:00 P.M.

### IDVA - SALUTE TO WOMEN VETERANS BENEFITS FAIR: ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES

JUDD KENDALL VFW POST 3873 ,908 JACKSON AVENUE IN NAPERVILLE

- MARCH FROM 11:00 A.M. UNTIL 3:00 P.M.

### IDVA AND UIC PROCUREMENT – PARTNERING WITH OUR VETERAN BUSINESSES

UIC STUDENT CENTER EAST RM. 713 AT 750 S. HALSTED IN CHICAGO

- REGISTRATION AND MORE INFORMATION: (312)996-2971
- APRIL 7<sup>TH</sup>, 2016 FROM 9:00 A.M. UNTIL 1:00 P.M.

### CONGRESS WOMAN ROBIN KELLY – 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL YOUTH JOB AND RESOURCE EXPO OFFERING CAREER EXPLORATION FOR THOSE BETWEEN THE AGES OF 15-24

- REGISTRATION AND MORE INFORMATION: [reprobinkelly.eventbrite.com](http://reprobinkelly.eventbrite.com)
- APRIL 16<sup>TH</sup> FROM 9:00 A.M. UNTIL 12:00 P.M.

### USDVA EDWARD HINES, JR. HOSPITAL – 2016 HINES VA HEALTH FAIR

- FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT LORRY LUSCRI: (708)202-8387 X-21228
- APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup> FROM 9:00 A.M. UNTIL 3:00 P.M.

### ILLINOIS JOINING FORCES - SHE SERVED: WOMEN VETERANS CONFERENCE IN SPRINGFIELD

- REGISTRATION REQUIRED: [www.bitly.com/SheServed](http://www.bitly.com/SheServed)
- MAY 10<sup>TH</sup> FROM 8:00 A.M. UNTIL 5:00 P.M.



## SVA-IL Presents: BRIDGES TO EMPLOYMENT

Student Veterans of America-Illinois, The Illinois Joining Forces network, and The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs, would like to welcome you to our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual program season

### Setting up Strategic Assets: Bridges to Employment

Registration Required: <http://tinyurl.com/bte2016>

Setting up Strategic Assets: Bridges to Employment events assemble executives and senior managers from the public and private sectors to engage in a panel discussion educating Veterans on the strengths they bring to future careers. Following the panel, Veterans in attendance will connect in a networking forum with professional partners to empower student Veterans with networking skills necessary to succeed.



Expand your knowledge about the many potential benefits of hiring veteran assets



Mentor 100's of deserving veterans to assist them in networking for their future careers



Rapid interviewing opportunity with Student Veterans seeking careers.



Marketing opportunity with hundreds of other business professional

### When & Where:

#### MARCH 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016

Noon to 3:00pm  
**Lincoln Land Community College**  
Trutter Center  
5250 Shepherd Road  
Springfield, IL 6279

Point of Contact:  
Craig McFarland  
[craig.mcfarland@lcc.edu](mailto:craig.mcfarland@lcc.edu)  
(217) 786-9638

#### MARCH 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

6:00pm to 9:00pm  
**Lewis University**  
Saint Charles Borromeo Hall  
1 University Parkway  
Romeoville, IL 60446

Point of Contact:  
Roman Ortega Jr.  
[ortegaro@lewisu.edu](mailto:ortegaro@lewisu.edu)  
(815) 836-5339

#### MARCH 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016

6:30pm to 9:30pm  
**Northeastern Illinois University**  
Alumni Hall  
5500 St Louis Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60625

Point of Contact:  
Weston Polaski  
[w-polaski@neiu.edu](mailto:w-polaski@neiu.edu)  
(773) 442-4005

\*There is a limit of 25 registrations per location

Please register and visit the websites listed below for more information:



Registration:  
<http://tinyurl.com/bte2016>



Student Veterans of  
America Illinois:  
<http://www.svaillinois.org/>



Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/SVAillinois>

# ***Veteran's Home Buying and Financial/Credit Education Seminar***

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**Thursday, March 24, 2016**

**10am – 12pm**

**Oak Park Vet Center**

**1515 S. Harlem Ave**

**(708) 457-8805**

**Home Buying seminar and financial / credit education  
What you need to know to be able to purchase using a VA  
home loan. Why RENT? When you can BUY!**

**VA Home Loans, Credit / Repair and Restoration  
Mortgage Banker will be available for Q & A**

**SEATING IS LIMITED REGISTER TODAY AND TELL ANOTHER VET**

**RSVP** is required by March 22: Contact your Hostess

**Army Veteran Yvette Jones @ 312-798-9564**

**Real Estate Broker & Certified Military Relocation Professional**

[www.yvettejones.net](http://www.yvettejones.net)



# *Salute to Women Veterans*



## *Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs Celebrates The Achievements Of Women Veterans*

**Thursday, March 24, 2016**

**11:00-3:00**

**Judd Kendall VFW Post 3873  
908 Jackson Avenue  
Naperville, IL 60540**

***Keynote Speaker***

***LTC Sheila Perry***

***Benefits fair participants and services***

Benefits Assistance  
Veteran Service Officers  
Veteran Employment Specialists  
Veteran Entrepreneurship Resources

Veteran Case Managers  
Resume Review by Veteran  
Employment Specialist  
State Hiring Opportunities

*Main program at 12:00 - Light refreshments served*

**Veterans bring your DD-214 to get it certified by IDVA**

*Sponsored by the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs*





**ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS &  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS OBFS- OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT DIVERSITY  
Presents  
***PARTNERING WITH OUR VETERAN BUSINESSES*****

***What time and Where?***

***Thursday, April 7, 2016  
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.***

***UIC Student Center East  
Room 713  
750 South Halsted  
Chicago, Illinois 60607***



***Who should attend?***

***Veteran-Owned Small  
Businesses  
and  
Service Disabled Veteran-  
Owned Businesses***

**Did you know that the State of Illinois established a 3% goal for Veteran-owned businesses???**

***Why should you attend?***

- Learn about procurement opportunities with Higher Education Institutions and State Agencies
- Hear from successful Veteran-owned firms currently doing business with Universities
- The ABCs of Certification: Learn how to become certified as a VOSB / SDVOSB with the State of Illinois and the benefits of Certification
- You're Certified! What's Next? Learn to navigate the Universities procurement process and become a successful bidder
- Register with the Illinois Procurement Gateway (IPG) & Higher Education Procurement Bulletin
- Meet reps from State Universities, Capital Development Board, Comptroller's Office, IDOT and more...

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**For registration and more information contact Office of Procurement Diversity at  
312-996-2971 or [procurementdiversity@uillinois.edu](mailto:procurementdiversity@uillinois.edu)  
Parking is available across from Student Center East located at 760 W. Taylor St.  
(Enter on Taylor) for the reduced price of \$8.**

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS**  
URBANA • CHAMPAIGN • CHICAGO • SPRINGFIELD



Illinois Department of Central Management Services

**CMS**



## Congresswoman Robin Kelly

*Invites you to attend...*

### 3rd Annual Youth Job and Resource Expo

*The Expo is a way to connect employers and youth agencies with young people who are eager to work and grow. The event offers attendees between the ages of 15 to 24 opportunities for summer jobs, internships, career exploration, and access to youth services.*

**Saturday, April 16, 2016**

**9 a.m. to 12 noon**

**Thornton Township High School  
15001 Broadway Avenue, Harvey, IL**

To see a list of confirmed companies and to pre-register, please visit  
[reprobinkelly.eventbrite.com](http://reprobinkelly.eventbrite.com)

For additional information, contact Dante Sawyer at [dante.sawyer@mail.house.gov](mailto:dante.sawyer@mail.house.gov)  
or call (708) 679-0078.



# 2016 Hines Health Fair

*Open to all Veterans!*

**Wednesday**  
**April 27<sup>th</sup>**  
**9:00am — 3:00pm**



Located in the  
Hines VA Auditorium  
Building 9

**Giveaways &  
Screenings**

*Questions??*

**Contact:**  
Lorry Luscri, MPH, RD

**At:**  
**708.202.8387**  
**ext.: 21228**

# She Served: Illinois Joining Forces Women Veterans Conference



**Are you ready to help Women Veterans but you don't know how? Are you looking to expand your professional practices to better serve Women Veterans?**

Join the IJF Women Veterans Working Group for a day of exploring issues that Women Veterans may face.

Speakers will include subject matter experts as well as many different Women Veterans ready to share their experiences.

The day will include time for networking with professionals from across the state & a resource fair featuring representatives from many different state wide organizations.

## **Topics to be presented:**

- Military Culture from a Woman Veteran's perspective
- Trauma
- Employment
- Peer Supports Panel
- Integrated Medical Care
- Parenting and Families
- Homelessness-SSVF Provider Panel
- Culturally Competent Medical Care

**REGISTER NOW! SPACE IS LIMITED!**

**[www.bitly.com/SheServed](http://www.bitly.com/SheServed)**

**DATE: Tuesday, May 10<sup>th</sup> 2016**

**TIME: 8:00am-5:00pm**

**COST: \$35**

**Lunch Included**

## **LOCATION:**

**Camp Lincoln, IMA Building  
1301 N. MacArthur Blvd.  
Springfield, IL 62702**

## **LODGING:**

**A limited number of conference rate rooms available at the Wyndham Springfield City Center  
Please call 217-789-1530 for more information**

**5.5 CEUs for LSW, LCP, LCSW, LCPC provided by Thresholds  
IAODAPCA CEUs Pending**

**For more information contact:**

**Molly Knapp**

**[mknapp@hdadvocates.org](mailto:mknapp@hdadvocates.org)**

**312-265-9096**

**Generously Sponsored by:**



**JESSE BROWN**  
VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER  
*Putting Veterans first*







# VNC Honor Flight of Northern and Western Illinois

*A program of the Veterans Network Committee of Northern Illinois*

Thank you for your interest in the VNC Honor Flight Trip. Each year we start to distribute Honor Flight application forms in January and February for our August, VNC Honor Flight trip.

The VNC Honor Flight Trip will include veterans from WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Priority is given to WWII veterans and those veterans with terminal illness.

Each year, we have many veterans who want to go on the trip. But space is limited. So it's important to mail your information ASAP. Once the Honor Flight trip is filled, we cannot add or change veterans. **So it is first come, first served.**

**1st Step:** Fill out the Pre-application trip form below and mail it to our office. Please fill out ALL the information on the form. **Please print legibly.**

**2nd Step:** We will send you the Trip Honor Flight application and other paperwork after you have been approved for the trip. Please fill out that form and any other information we have asked for by mail back to us ASAP.

Each step will get you closer to being on the trip. Each step of the way we will help you learn more about the 3 day VNC Honor Flight trip.

## **Some things you can start to do for Step #2 to help:**

1. **You must have a Guardian for the trip.** This person should be age **16 to 65** and in good shape. Typically, a guardian is a family member or a good friend.
2. The Guardian must cover their cost for the 3 day trip. Cost will be determined early in the year. The cost for this year's trip should be between \$900.00 and \$975.00 for the Honor Flight Trip for the Guardian.
3. We must have a clear and legible **color** ID from both the Veteran & Guardian. This is a color copy of a driver's license, or a state ID, or passport.
4. The date of each year's trip will be set in April for the trip in August.
5. If you have special needs, please let us know.
6. Make sure we can read complete all the information on the form. (Please print all information)

**Go to the web-site for trip up-dates**  
**[www.veteransnetworkcommittee.com/](http://www.veteransnetworkcommittee.com/)**

515 Skyline Drive • Fox River Grove, IL 60021 • 847-875-0159  
[rgranath47@aol.com](mailto:rgranath47@aol.com) • [www.veteransnetworkcommittee.com](http://www.veteransnetworkcommittee.com)

Veterans Network Committee of Northern Illinois is a non-profit charity organized under Section 501 (c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, and our federal identification number is 47-4577656. All gifts and donations to Veterans Network Committee of Northern Illinois are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.



## Helping Veterans Eligibility

### World War II

7 Dec. 1941 to 31 Dec. 1946

### American Merchant Marines

7 Dec. 1941 to 15 August 1945

### Korean War

27 June 1950 to 31 Jan. 1955

### Vietnam

28 Feb. 1961 to 7 May 1975

### Lebanon

25 Aug. 1982 to 26 Feb. 1984

### Grenada

23 Oct. 1983 to 23 Nov. 1983

### Panama

20 Dec. 1989 to 31 Jan. 1990

### Persian Gulf

2 Aug. 1990 to - be determined

### Somalia

17 Sept. 1992 to - be determined

### Bosnia

21 Nov. 1995 to 1 Nov. 2007

### Kosovo

24 Mar. 1999 to -

### Operation Enduring Freedom

7 Oct. 2001 to - be determined

### Operation Iraqi Freedom

19 March 2003 to August 31, 2010

### Operation New Dawn

September 1, 2010

## Sexual Trauma and Harassment

### Bereavement Counseling

(Family members of active duty personnel who die in the service)

## Other Chicago Area Locations Include:

### Chicago Veterans Resource Center

7731 S. Halsted St. • IL 60620

(773) 962-3740

### DuPage County Vet Center

750 Shoreline Drive #150 • IL 60504

(630) 585-1853

### Evanston Vet Center

565 W. Howard St. • IL 60202

(847) 332-1019

### Gary Vet Center

107 E. 93rd Ave. • Crown Point, IN 46307

(219) 736-5633

### Oak Park Vet Center

1515 S. Harlem, Forest Park IL 60130

(708) 383-3225

### Orland Park Vet Center

8651 West 159th. Street • IL 60643

(708) 444-0561

### Rockford Vet Center

7015 Rote Rd. • IL 61107

(815) 395-1276

### South Bend Vet Center

4727 Miami • IN 46614

(574) 231-8480

## Veterans Suicide Prevention Hotline

1-800-273-TALK, Veterans Press 1

To find a Vet Center near you call:

1.800-905-4675 (Eastern)

1.866-496-8838 (Pacific)

1.877-WAR-VETS (Combat Call Center)



“KEEPING THE PROMISE”

### Chicago Heights Vet Center

1010 Dixie Highway

Chicago Heights, ILL 60411

PH (708) 754-8885

FAX (708) 754-9882

[www.vetcenter.va.gov](http://www.vetcenter.va.gov)