

# VETERANS SERVICE BUREAU - 6510

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Veterans Service Bureau is to ensure that all honorably discharged military personnel in Albany County and their dependents receive the benefits to which they are entitled under the law. The Department assists Albany County veterans and their dependents in order to receive the maximum benefits to which they are entitled from Federal, State and local government sources. The department will accomplish this while they are ensuring that all veterans and their family members are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.

## **WHO WE SERVE**

We serve veterans WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Lebanon & Grenada, Panama, Persian, Gulf/War on Terror, from Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), as well as peacetime veterans, their spouses and dependents.

## **ABOUT OUR DEPARTMENT**

The Veterans Service Bureau works with veterans and their dependents in filing claims with various government entities, we assist individuals through the application processes and determine eligibility requirements for these benefits.

The Bureau provides assistance to Albany County Veterans applying for the following benefits:

- Return the FAVOR program was established in 2011 with the collaboration of the County Clerk's Office to provide honorably discharged Albany County veterans with discounts on purchases or services at local participating merchants. This outreach has increased the services to a large amount of veterans.
- VA Pension payment to wartime veterans with limited income who are permanently disabled and are 65 or older.
- Service Connected Disability Benefits from the Veterans Administration to veterans at least 10 percent disabled as a result of military service.
- Aid and Attendance pension benefits for certain widows of veterans to help pay for their medical or nursing facility costs.
- Assisted Living Benefits, including Blind Annuity Benefits, which pay blind veterans and eligible widowed spouses who have not re-married.
- Home Loan Guaranties by the Veterans Administration of private lender loans to eligible veterans and certain surviving spouses to purchase a home.
- Dependents and Survivors Benefits, including Death and Indemnity, Death Pension and Health and Medical Program for dependents and survivors of a veteran.

In addition, the Bureau provides general information and referral to veterans regarding employment, health care issues and Federal Agencies including the Small Business Association and the Social Security Administration.

## **2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES**

ACVSB continues to provide personal services to the veterans of Albany County. We allow "one stop shopping" for our veterans and their families by gathering all the information required and all the information the client requests and then getting the answers and forms required for veterans.

In 2016, ACVBS will have over 1000 interactions with veterans. Albany County's diverse population continues to pose one of the greater challenges the ACVBS faces in providing services to its veterans. To mitigate this problem, ACVSB has started a mobile office hour program. This allows a VSO to set up shop temporarily in town halls across the County and locations around the city.

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In addition, the ACVSB will honor Henry Johnson for receiving the "highest medal of honor". A picnic for the veterans at the Henry Johnson Monument on Livingston Avenue will be the site for this event.

## 2017 GOALS AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

ACVBS hopes to register an additional 1000 veterans by the end of 2016. We will cut the wait time for an appointment to one working day. As part of our outreach program, the Veterans Service Bureau will come to any Senior Service Assistant Living Facility, to assist with Aid and Attendance (AA) benefits, burial, pension and/or compensation and lost DD-214 (discharge paper).

## SUMMARY OF BUDGET CHANGES

- There are free job fairs the VSB can participate in;
- Soldier On, veterans outreach program;
- Share copier (no lease), with the Department of Social Services

Since RW's beginning with Albany County Veteran Service Bureau, he has made significant life changing decisions which started with a simple but hard call-out for help. As a 70 year old Marine veteran who has dealt with social-emotional challenges, financial hardships, and an overall distorted mindset for the Justice System and Social Services especially. After several meeting with an Albany County's Veterans Service Officer, his heart and mindset changed for the good. RW now receives a pension from the Veteran Affairs (VA) and is currently receiving food Stamps from the Department of Social Services. In addition, RW currently has a pending status for an Albany County Senior living apartment. RW's willingness to reach out to the Albany County's VSO for help despite his own personal insecurities resulted in his positive change of heart toward the VA and Social Services.

CC was referred to the Albany County Veterans Service Bureau by Homeless and Travels Aid Society (HATAS) in the spring of 2015. After being discharged from United States Air Force in 2008, her life began to spiral out of control. When things seemed they couldn't get any worst she encountered financial hardship and ended up homeless. With the support of Albany County VSO and a Soldier-On Case Manager KM, CC's life slowly started turning for the better. CC took full advantage of the Veteran Affairs (VA) Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) to get temporary employment. She was also able to get assistance from the Department of Social Services to obtain temporary shelter. With the help of the VSO she was able to land a full time job with benefits from Maximus and now has her own apartment. She is also planning to attend college in the upcoming semester.

A.O. was referred to Albany County Veterans Service Bureau by Albany Housing Coalition in May of 2016 as a possible candidate for H&V Collision Center Veteran Car donation. A.O. is a proud Iraqi Freedom veteran who is still serving as a member of the New York Army National Guard. A.O. commitment to service and his ability to pay attention to detail has always been a strong quality for him. A.O. is employed as a Public Safety in one of Officer in Albany County's malls and heavily depends on public transportation to get around. After a series of interviews coordinated by Albany County's VSO and H&V Collision staff, A.O. was awarded a car free of charge. All he is required to do is be able to put gas on it. A.O. will be receiving the car in July 2016 during a Valley Cats game Date to be determined.

A6510 Veterans Service Bureau				2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2017	2017	
				Count	Count	Expended	Adjusted	Requested	Proposed	Adopted	
<b>Personnel Services Individual</b>											
A6510	11027	001	480001	Director III	1	1	\$20,639	\$51,636	\$52,669	\$52,669	-
A6510	11927	001	480011	Veterans Service Officer I	1	1	\$42,460	\$43,297	\$51,310	\$51,310	-
A6510	11927	002	480012	Veterans Service Officer I	1	1	\$42,471	\$43,297	\$51,310	\$51,310	-
A6510	16236	001	480010	Clerk Typist I	1	1	\$31,836	\$32,473	\$33,123	\$33,123	-
<i>Personnel Services Individual Subtotal</i>					4	4	\$137,406	\$170,703	\$188,412	\$188,412	\$0
<b>Personnel</b>											
<b>Personnel Non-Individual</b>											
A	6510	19950		Longevity Raise			\$150	\$300	\$450	\$450	\$0
A	6510	19951		Health Insurance Buyout			\$500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0
<b>Subtotal for: Personnel Non-Individual</b>							\$650	\$1,800	\$1,950	\$1,950	\$0
<b>Equipment</b>											
<b>Contractual Expenses</b>											
A	6510	44020		Office Supplies			\$298	\$422	\$400	\$400	\$0
A	6510	44035		Postage			\$702	\$800	\$800	\$800	\$0
A	6510	44036		Telephone			\$582	\$400	\$400	\$400	\$0
A	6510	44037		Insurance			\$1,808	\$1,899	\$1,700	\$1,700	\$0
A	6510	44038		Travel/Mileage/Freight			\$350	\$600	\$600	\$600	\$0
A	6510	44039		Conferences Training Tuitio			\$1,118	\$1,525	\$1,525	\$1,525	\$0
A	6510	44041		Computer Fees			\$700	\$700	\$700	\$700	\$0
A	6510	44042		Printing And Advertising			\$764	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$0
A	6510	44049		Special Programs			\$2,391	\$5,600	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$0
A	6510	44066		Flags			\$0	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0
A	6510	44070		Equipment Repair And Rental			\$0	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$0
A	6510	44903		DGS Shared Services Charges			\$13,005	\$12,884	\$13,280	\$13,280	\$0
<b>Subtotal for: Contractual Expenses</b>							\$21,719	\$26,480	\$27,055	\$27,055	\$0
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>											
A	6510	89010		State Retirement			\$15,776	\$33,673	\$17,737	\$17,737	\$0
A	6510	89030		Social Security			\$10,461	\$13,158	\$14,563	\$14,563	\$0
A	6510	89060		Hospital And Medical Insurance			\$44,374	\$52,083	\$52,083	\$52,083	\$0
<b>Subtotal for: Fringe Benefits</b>							\$70,612	\$98,914	\$84,383	\$84,383	\$0
<b>Total Appropriations</b>							<b>\$230,387</b>	<b>\$297,897</b>	<b>\$301,800</b>	<b>\$301,800</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Revenue</b>											
A6510	03710	Veterans Service Bureau					(\$17,058)	(\$17,058)	(\$17,058)	(\$17,058)	\$0
<b>Total Revenue</b>							<b>(\$17,058)</b>	<b>(\$17,058)</b>	<b>(\$17,058)</b>	<b>(\$17,058)</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>County Share</b>							<b>\$213,329</b>	<b>\$280,839</b>	<b>\$284,742</b>	<b>\$284,742</b>	<b>\$0</b>