



DIVERSITY@WORK

A PUBLICATION OF THE OFFICE OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT & EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY,
A PROGRAM OFFICE WITHIN VA'S OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION

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<<http://www.va.gov/dmeeo/ca/daw.htm>>

JULY/AUGUST 2006

THE SECRETARY'S 16TH ANNUAL EEO AWARDS

EEO Award Recipients Set the Example

The Secretary's 16th Annual Equal Employment Opportunity Awards ceremony was held on July 14, 2006, in VA Central Office's G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Veterans Conference Center in Washington, D.C. The awards are the highest recognition given to Department employees who excel in promoting—or making significant contributions to—the equal employment opportunity (EEO) program in VA. Individuals who ranked the highest in each of the award categories were presented with a plaque and a \$2,500 cash award.

In Category A, Nonsupervisory Employees, the recipient is **Cecil N. Rachels**.

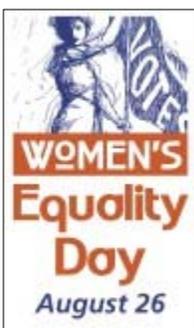
Ms. Rachels is a medical support assistant and the program manager for the People with Disabilities Program at the VA Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia. She is being

recognized for staying abreast of problems encountered by people with disabilities. Ms. Rachels is always willing to assist anyone—fellow worker or veteran. She will work with any employee with a disability, any manager, or any department within her facility or community, to help determine reasonable accommodations. Ms. Rachels also spends time with supervisors and employees who work with someone with a disability, to impress upon them the need for respect and equal treatment. She also encourages the recognition and reward of contributions made by employees with disabilities. Ms. Rachels strives to always show patience in all of her endeavors and to provide a sympathetic ear for employees and veterans.

[Continued on page 3.]

CELEBRATE!

Women's Equality Day



VA proudly joins the Nation in celebrating Women's Equality Day on August 26, 2006. This year marks the 86th anniversary of the passing of the 19th amendment, granting women the right to vote.

This amendment was the culmination of a 72-year-long civil rights movement that originated at the world's first women's rights convention held in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848.

In 1967, Executive Order 11375 added sex to other prohibited forms of discrimination. In response to this, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) established the Federal Women's Program (FWP). Executive Order 11478 integrated the FWP into the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program

and placed the FWP under the direction of EEO for each agency. OPM regulations implementing Public Law 92-261 require that Federal agencies designate a FWP Manager to advise the Director of EEO on matters affecting the employment and advancement of women.

Overall, VA employment of women reached 58.57 percent in fiscal year 2005 and women's representation in VA continues to grow in GS-13 through 15 levels (the leadership pipeline) and Senior Executive Service positions. Take time to honor these women for delivering vital health care, benefits, and memorials to our Nation's veterans and their families.

For information on VA's Federal Women's Program, contact Wanda Jones, National Program Manager, at Wanda.Jones@va.gov or (202) 501-1970. ■

IN THIS ISSUE:

FIELD NOTES News You Can Use	2
WEB SITE SPOTLIGHT Great Place to Work Institute	2
EEO AWARDS (Continued from Page 1)	3
DM&EEO ONLINE Our Mission	4
DIVERSITY CALENDAR Upcoming Events	4

BOOKMARKS

- ▶ **Asian Pacific American Network**
www.apanet.org
- ▶ **Black Leadership Forum**
www.blackleadershipforum.org
- ▶ **Deaf & Hard of Hearing in Government**
www.dhhig.org
- ▶ **Diversity Best Practices**
www.diversitybestpractices.com
- ▶ **Families and Work Institute**
www.familiesandwork.org
- ▶ **Hire Interested and Ready Employees in the U.S.**
www.hireus.cds.hawaii.edu
- ▶ **The Interfaith Alliance**
www.interfaithalliance.org
- ▶ **National Hispanic Business Association**
www.nhba.org
- ▶ **Native American Business Alliance**
www.native-american-bus.org

Contact information for other diversity-related organizations can be found on the DM&EEO Web site at: www.va.gov/dmeeo/org

FIELD NOTES

News You Can Use

Web Site Update

In compliance with the policy for VA Web site "Look and Feel" from the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs, DM&EEO has updated its Web site to adopt these new standards. Please visit DM&EEO's revised Web site at www.va.gov/dmeeo for online tools that can help promote the employment of veterans, women, minorities, and people with disabilities and for information about creating and sustaining a diverse workplace free of discrimination.

Diversity News

Look for DM&EEO's monthly news program, *Diversity News*, on the VA Knowledge Network's Communications Channel 2 or on the Web at www.va.gov/dmeeo/ca/diversitynews.htm. The July broadcast focuses on "a psychologically healthy work environment" and the August episode is dedicated to the qualities possessed by inclusive organizations. If you'd like to share your story ideas, comments, or suggestions for *Diversity News*, please e-mail us at dmeeo@va.gov with the words DIVERSITY NEWS in the subject line.

WEB SITE SPOTLIGHT

Great Place to Work Institute

Content: The quality of our workplaces has major social implications. Everyone is familiar with the symptoms of bad workplaces—the personal stress, the erosion of physical and mental health, the lower productivity. The Great Place to Work Institute is dedicated to helping organizations understand and practice the qualities and behaviors that lead to the creation of great workplaces. This effort leads to enhanced quality of work life for employees and improved financial performance for the organization. The Institute is a research and management consultancy based in the U.S., with international affiliate offices throughout the world. Their work is based on the major findings of more than 20 years of research—that trust between managers and employees is the primary defining characteristic of the best workplaces. They offer services and tools to help companies build trust and become more effective organizations.

For more than 20 years the Great Place to Work Institute has:

- ▶ Advanced the knowledge of what makes a great workplace.
- ▶ Recognized the best companies to work for in the U.S. and around the world.
- ▶ Helped numerous companies transform their workplaces.

Internship Farewell

The 2006 National Internship Program Summer Farewell will be July 25, 2006, in VA Central Office's G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Veterans Conference Center from 10 to 11:30 a.m. The Honorable R. Allen Pittman, Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration, will provide the farewell remarks. This summer, VA sponsored over 100 interns. The program began on May 28 and will end on August 5 for most of these students. Many interns were recruited by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars, American University's Washington Internships for Native Students Program, and the Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities. These organizations are viewed as partners in VA's effort to develop a high-performing, diverse workforce. For more information, contact Brenda Martin, National Internship Program Coordinator, at Brenda.Martin@va.gov. ■

<http://www.greatplacetowork.com>



Must-See Features: Each year, the Great Place to Work Institute produces various "Best Companies to Work For" lists for the U.S., as well as lists that appear in 25 different countries. Their lists, including the "Best Small & Medium Companies to Work for in America" and *Fortune* magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" in America, can be viewed under the "Best Companies List" link from the Institute's home page.

The Institute defines a Great Place to Work as one where: You TRUST the people you work for, have PRIDE in what you do, and ENJOY the people you work with. This definition is embodied in the framework of the Great Place to Work Model, which is the foundation for all of their work. The Great Place to Work Model can be viewed under the "What Makes a Great Place to Work" link from the Institute's home page.

Contact Info: 169 11th Street
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Phone: (415) 503-1234

Accessibility: No information offered. ■

THE SECRETARY'S 16TH ANNUAL EEO AWARDS

(Continued from Page 1)

In Category B, Supervisors and Managers Through GS-14 and Equivalent, the recipient is **Carrie M. Johnson-Clark**.

Ms. Johnson-Clark is the Director in the Office of Management and Administration, Board of Veterans' Appeals, and has taken to heart VA's strategic objective to "recruit, develop, and retain a competent, committed, and diverse workforce that provides high quality service to veterans and their families."

For recruitment, her policy requiring selection panels for all hiring has ensured that applicants receive a fair and impartial review. In addition, she has encouraged the hiring of interns, management fellows, and high school and college students. To aid retention, she has encouraged the implementation of programs for employee recognition and reward, and the review and rewriting of performance standards to ensure they are measurable. Among her contributions toward staff development are her promotion of a knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) writing workshop (hosted by the Board of Veterans' Appeals Women's Leadership Initiative) and the implementation of a supervisory training and development program.

In Category C, Managers and Executives GS-15 and Above, the recipient is **Charles M. Dorman**.

Mr. Dorman, Executive Director of the Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, has demonstrated his commitment to building and maintaining a diverse, high-performing workforce: by assigning adequate resources to diversity initiatives, by ensuring that senior managers and employees are directly involved in planning and conducting diversity activities, by training employees in intercultural communication, by appointing special emphasis program managers who are interested in improving the system's diversity, and by training managers and supervisors about their EEO responsibilities and the tools available to them to help meet those responsibilities. Mr. Dorman also has ensured that his system's multi-year equal employment opportunity and cultural diversity plan addresses three major areas: maintaining vibrant programs for EEO, diversity, and affirmative action; improving the hiring of individuals with disabilities; and improving the hiring of minorities.

In Category D, EEO Program Representatives, the recipient is **Patricia A. Griffin**.

Ms. Griffin is the EEO Program Manager for the VA

Gulf Coast Veterans Healthcare System in Biloxi, Mississippi, and has been a champion for EEO since 1994, when she set up a new program office to accommodate all EEO activities (and she rewrote the facility's EEO policy). Under her leadership, diversity management and EEO activities have become better focused, and cooperation among diversity and EEO staff has increased. She has educated employees at all levels about the benefits of workforce diversity, and she has helped them to understand and appreciate the contributions that each employee makes toward strengthening the healthcare system. Ms. Griffin has always placed a premium on creating a positive work environment, and on ensuring that the healthcare system's workforce truly reflects the people served (as well as the surrounding community)—especially with respect to people with disabilities.

Our final award recipient, being honored in Category E, Employees Promoting the Programs for Disabled Veterans and Persons with Disabilities, is **Ronni P. Miller**.

Ms. Miller is the Chief, Voluntary Service, at the Durham VA Medical Center in Durham, North Carolina. Through the voluntary service program, Ms. Miller promotes job opportunities for disabled veterans and for people with targeted disabilities. She works with agencies throughout the city of Durham to find volunteers and to cultivate opportunities that will provide those volunteers with valuable job skills and work experience. Ms. Miller has helped place inpatient and outpatient veterans in volunteer positions. Many of these veterans have faced life-changing events, both physically and mentally. For them, volunteering provides a sense of belonging and accomplishment. As a result of Ms. Miller's efforts, the North Carolina Rehabilitation Association recognized the Durham VA Medical Center in 2004 with an award for establishing an outstanding work readiness program for students with the most significant disabilities.

VA congratulates all of the award recipients for establishing work environments that embrace and celebrate equal employment opportunity. Photographs of the award recipients taken during the ceremony will be posted shortly on the Internet at www.va.gov/dmeeo/eoawards.htm.

For additional information about the Secretary's EEO Awards, including how to make a nomination for next year's awards, contact Wanda J. Jones at Wanda.Jones@va.gov or (202) 501-1970. ■

Diversity@Work

Newsletter published by the National Office of DM&EEO, a program office within VA's Office of Human Resources & Administration. To subscribe or unsubscribe, e-mail dmeeo@va.gov.

To join *NewsLink* (a free, weekly electronic news service), e-mail dmeeo@va.gov with SUBSCRIBE NEWS in the subject line.

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Visit our **Web site**, www.va.gov/dmeeo, for additional staff e-mail addresses.

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

Department of Veterans Affairs
www.va.gov

VA's Office of Human Resources & Administration
www.va.gov/ofcadmin/portal

VA's Office of Resolution Management
www.va.gov/orm

VA's Office of Human Resources Management and Labor Relations
www.va.gov/ohrm

DM&EEO ONLINE



The mission of DM&EEO is to provide leadership in creating and sustaining a diverse workplace free of discrimination at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Here's a sampling of online tools available on DM&EEO's Web site (www.va.gov/dmeeo) that can help you promote the employment of veterans, women, minorities, and people with disabilities:

- ▶ Women's Equality Day and other special observance resources.
- ▶ 2006 events, conferences, conventions, and programs.
- ▶ Links to professional and community organizations.

2006 DIVERSITY CALENDAR

JULY

National Council of La Raza Annual Conference

July 8–11; Los Angeles, CA
www.nclr.org

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Annual Convention

July 15–20; Washington, DC
www.naacp.org

Federally Employed Women National Training Program

July 17–21; Atlanta, GA
www.few.org

National Association of Hispanic Nurses Annual Conference

July 19–21; Phoenix, AZ
www.thehispanicnurses.org

Southeastern Federal Recruiting Council Annual Conference

July 19–21; Savannah, GA
www.sefrc.org

MANA: A National Latina Organization's Avanzamos Ford Fellowship Training and National Hermanitas Summer Institute

July 19–23; Crystal City, VA
www.hermana.org

Anniversary of the Creation of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

July 21 (1930)

American GI Forum National Conference

July 25–29; Overland Park, KS
www.agif.us

National Urban League Annual Conference

July 26–30; Atlanta, GA

<http://nul.org/2006sponsor.html>

AUGUST

Women's Leadership Exchange Conference

August 8; Long Beach, CA
www.womensleadershipexchange.com

National Black Nurses Association Annual Institute & Conference

August 9–12; Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Organization of Chinese Americans National Convention

August 10–13; Philadelphia, PA
www.ocanatl.org

Disabled American Veterans National Convention

August 12–15; Chicago, IL
www.dav.org

American Veterans National Convention

August 13–19; Reno, NV
www.amvets.org

Abilities Expo

August 18–20; Detroit, MI
www.abilitiesexpo.com

Blacks in Government Annual National Training Conference

August 21–25; New York, NY
www.bignet.org

Women's Equality Day

August 26

Society of American Indian Government Employees National Training Conference

August 28–31; Anchorage, AK
www.saige.org

For more events, visit www.va.gov/dmeeo and select the Calendar link.
