

## NCHV eNewsletter

September 2012



### VA Announces \$28 Million in GPD Grants

To fund 38 projects in 25 states and District of Columbia

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has approved \$28.4 million in grants to fund 38 projects in 25 states and the District of Columbia that will provide transitional housing to homeless veterans. Among these 38 projects, 31 will provide temporary housing to homeless veterans with the goal that they will retain the residence as their own.

"As we drive toward our goal to end homelessness among veterans by 2015, VA continues to find innovative ways to permanently house veterans who were formerly homeless," said VA Secretary Eric Shinseki. "Under President Obama's leadership, we have made incredible strides in creating programs to aid these brave men and women who have served our nation so well."

Thirty-one of the grants were awarded through VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD)'s "Transition in Place" model. The program allows veterans the opportunity to take over payment of a lease instead of moving out after using VA services, including substance use counseling, mental health services, job training and more. Other VA programs require veterans living in transitional housing to move out after 24 months. A list of the grant recipients can be found at: <http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/GPD.asp>.

GPD helps close gaps in available housing for the nation's most vulnerable homeless veterans, including women with children, Indian tribal populations, and veterans with substance use and mental health issues.

Those receiving funding have undergone a rigorous review by teams of experts rating each application under objective criteria to ensure that those funded have the ability to provide the services described and a solid plan to get these veterans into housing with a high probability of obtaining residential stability and independent living.

"Securing permanent housing is a vital step in the journey of our homeless veterans," said Dr. Susan Angell, executive director for VA's Veterans Homeless Initiative. "This is the last piece of the puzzle, and it is crucial for them in continuing to lead independent lives."

Community-based programs funded by GPD provide homeless veterans with support services and housing. GPD grants are offered annually as funding is available by VA's National Homeless Program.

Lisa Pape, national director of homeless programs for the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), which oversees GPD, said VHA's focus is creating and strengthening community services around the country so that homeless veterans get the support they need.

"Our focus is creating a team of community support— pairing a variety of services, such as mental health support, employment assistance and job training with the essential component of housing," Pape said. "Whether it is aid in overcoming substance use or finding a job, a community helping hand is exactly what these veterans need to lead a better quality of life."

On a single night in 2011, a national count of homeless veterans totaled 67,495, 12 percent lower than 76,000 in 2010. As part of Obama and Shinseki's five-year plan to eliminate veteran homelessness by 2015, VA has committed almost \$1 billion to strengthen programs that prevent and treat the many issues that can lead to veteran homelessness.

### **SSVF Deadline for Letters of Intent Approaches**

The GPD awards follow closely with a notice VA published asking interested organizations to submit a nonbinding Letter of Intent (LOI) to the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program to apply for initial and renewal supportive services grants by Sept. 28, 2012. The SSVF Program in the first 10 months of operation has assisted more than 28,000 veterans and their families to prevent or rapidly end homelessness. Letters of Intent have no impact on the opportunity for entities to apply when funding availability is announced. These letters will help VA gauge interest in the SSVF program as it seeks to make access to SSVF services available throughout the country. VA anticipates announcing a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) in the new fiscal year.

Additional information on this process can be obtained by [clicking here](#).

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## **VRAP Meets FY 2012 Goal, Accepting Applications for FY 2013**

*Goal of 99,000 veterans retrained by end FY 2013*

The Veteran Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) has surpassed its goal of approving 45,000 applications in fiscal year (FY) 2012. Under the VOW to Hire Heroes Act, which established VRAP in November 2011, the Department of Veterans Affairs, in cooperation with the Department of Labor, pays for up to 12 months of retraining assistance in "high demand" occupations for unemployed eligible veterans between the ages of 35 and 60.

"Our veterans have provided so many services to this country," said Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis. "This program serves them by helping unemployed veterans receive the training they need to compete for good jobs."

The program aims to retrain 99,000 veterans for high-demand jobs by the end of FY 2013. VRAP continues to accept applications, and benefits for additional approved applications will be available beginning Oct. 1.

For more information on VRAP and how to apply, [click here](#).

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## **AboutFace: Veteran Stories About PTSD and Treatment**

**Resource for veterans, families, service providers from National Center for PTSD**

AboutFace is an online video gallery dedicated to veterans talking about living with PTSD and how treatment turned their lives around. Meet men and women who speak candidly about PTSD symptoms, stigma, and the effects of PTSD on family and friends.

AboutFace is for people who think they might have PTSD and want to explore what treatment is like. It's also for family members who don't know what to do as they watch their loved ones struggle to recover from trauma.

Visit [AboutFace](#) to learn how PTSD treatment helped these veterans improve their lives.

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## Corporation for Supportive Housing Releases PHA Toolkit

### To help PHAs increase opportunities for the homeless

The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) has released a new interactive technical assistance tool to help Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) across the country improve opportunities for homeless and other vulnerable households.

The CSH PHA Toolkit is a guide to how PHAs can work with service providers to create supportive housing opportunities for the people who need them most. CSH is working with PHAs around the country to help them get started with supportive housing.

To access the PHA Toolkit, [click here](#).

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## Funding Opportunities

**The Housing Assistance Council (HAC)** has announced a new initiative to support local nonprofit housing development organizations that meet or help meet the affordable housing needs of veterans in rural areas. Work supported will be bricks-and-mortar projects that help low-income, elderly and disabled veterans with home repair and rehab needs; support homeless veterans; and help veterans become homeowners, tap into available housing programs and secure affordable rental housing. This new initiative is made possible through the support of The Home Depot Foundation (THDF).

The project can provide both temporary and permanent housing for veterans, depending on the local needs of the community. HAC will coordinate with The Home Depot volunteers and THDF on volunteer opportunities especially around home repair and rehab.

This is a new initiative, and grants will not normally exceed a maximum of \$30,000. Organizations interested in applying to this program are asked to send a Letter of Intent (LOI) by Oct. 31, 2012, at 5 p.m. ET. This initial letter should be no longer than three pages. For more information about requirements for the letter, contact the Housing Assistance Council.

HAC will review all LOIs and invite selected organizations to submit full proposals. Full proposals will not be accepted without a preliminary LOI accepted by the Housing Assistance Council.

The applicant must be a nonprofit organization, tribally designated housing entity (TDHE), or housing authority acting as a nonprofit, that serves veterans at or below 80% of area median income.

For more information about this program, contact Janice Clark, Program Coordinator, at [janice@ruralhome.org](mailto:janice@ruralhome.org).

**The Principal Financial Group** provides support to its communities through the Principal Financial Group Foundation. Grants are awarded to nonprofit organizations whose core missions fall under the following focus areas: health and human services; education; arts and culture; and civic, community and environment. Grants are awarded to organizations serving certain communities in Delaware, Iowa, Nebraska, Washington and Wisconsin. Deadlines vary by program focus and location. For more information, [click here](#).

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This eNewsletter is funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. For the latest news, resources and grant information, visit our website at [www.nchv.org](http://www.nchv.org).

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