



VAC
VETERANS' ASSISTANCE COMMISSION
OF MADISON COUNTY

March 2022 1st Quarter Board Report

Respectfully Submitted

March 17, 2022

Bradley A. Lavite
Superintendent

Veterans' Assistance Commission (VAC) of
Madison County

157 North Main Street, Suite 115
Edwardsville, IL 62025-1963

Phone: 618-296-4751

Fax: 618-692-8958

E-mail: balavite@co.madison.il.us

Web site: <https://www.co.madison.il.us/mcvac>

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

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Glossary of Terms

Administrative Case Work and Advocacy-Related Services: Veterans' Service Officers (VSOs) assist Veterans; Service Members; their immediate families; unremarried widows of Veterans; or adult disabled children of Veterans, who were disabled prior to the age of 18, with various benefit-related filings through the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), and the National Cemetery Administration (NCA). Most notably are the filings for VA service-connected compensation and pension claims, health care, and burial benefits.

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC): This is a tax-free monetary benefit paid to eligible survivors of military Service Members who died in the line of duty or to eligible survivors of Veterans whose death resulted from a service-related injury or disease.

Disabled Veterans' Standard Homestead Exemption: This provides a reduction in a property's assessed value to a qualifying property owned by a Veteran with a service-connected disability.

Disability Compensation: This is a tax-free monetary benefit paid to Veterans with disabilities that are the result of a disease or an injury incurred in or aggravated during active military service.

Full Benefits Review: This review is completed on Veterans to determine the benefits and services for which they may be eligible to apply at local, state, and federal levels.

Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX): Each Fiscal Year (FY), the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) Office of Enterprise Integration (OEI) publishes the Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) report. This report provides the estimated dollar expenditures for major VA programs at the state, county, and Congressional District levels.

Impact on Local Economy: This term refers to direct and indirect monetary infusion into the local economy, as well as deferred cost savings from being a burden on non-veteran services and service providers.

Interim and/or Emergency Veterans' Financial Assistance: Interim and/or Emergency Veterans' Financial Assistance provides payments toward the bare necessities of life for Indigent Veterans; Service Members; their immediate families; unremarried widows of Veterans; or adult disabled children of Veterans, who were disabled prior to the age of 18, who meet income guidelines and/or emergency standards of indigence.

Intent-to-File: This is an application for Veterans and survivors who intend to file a claim for VA compensation, pension, or survivor's benefits. It preserves the effective date of future benefits while the claimant is gathering supporting documentation for his/her formal claim.

Outreach and Events: The VAC hosts and coordinates various outreach services, activities, and events throughout the year to Veterans, Service Members, their families, widows, and disabled adult children.

Pension: This is a tax-free, needs-based monetary benefit paid to wartime Veterans, who meet certain age or non-service-connected disability requirements.

Survivor's Pension: This is a tax-free, needs-based monetary benefit payable to a low-income, unremarried surviving spouse and/or unmarried child(ren) of a deceased wartime Veteran.

VA Health Care: This refers to a comprehensive medical benefits package available to qualifying Veterans, which includes primary and specialty care at VA hospitals and clinics.

2022 Veterans' Assistance Commission Board

Executive Board

Position	Name	Post City	Post
President	Ronnie Hicks	Glen Carbon, IL	VFW #2222
1 st Vice-President (Interim)	Kenneth Morales	Highland, IL	American Legion #439
2 nd Vice-President	Earl Watts	Alton, IL	American Legion #354
Recording Secretary	Kate Broadhurst	Highland, IL	VFW #5694
Treasurer	Phillip Witt	Granite City, IL	American Legion #307
Correspondent Secretary	Larry Meisenheimer	Bethalto, IL	American Legion #214
Corporate Registered Agent	Thomas Hoppenrath	Glen Carbon, IL	DAV #90
Board Director '21	Mark Nelson	Godfrey, IL	Marine Corps League #1160
Board Director '22	Ron Swaim	Edwardsville, IL	American Legion #199
Board Director '20	Vernon LeClaire	Cottage Hill, IL	VFW #7678
Board Director '19	Mike Harbison	Glen Carbon, IL	American Legion #435

Board-at-Large

Position	Name	Post City	Post
Delegate	Anthony Bargiel	Granite City, IL	American Legion # 113
Alternate	Ron Chiodini		
Delegate	Ronald Wright	Alton, IL	American Legion #126
Alternate	(no Alternate listed)		
Delegate	Ron Swaim	Edwardsville, IL	American Legion #199
Alternate	Ron Eberhart		
Delegate	Larry Meisenheimer	Bethalto, IL	American Legion #214
Alternate	William Burton		
Delegate	Phillip S. Witt	Granite City, IL	American Legion #307
Alternate	Donald Scheyer		

Delegate	Earl Watts	Alton, IL	American Legion #354
Alternate	Matthew Edwards		
Delegate	Jesse Hoskin	Collinsville, IL	American Legion #365
Alternate	(no Alternate listed)		
Delegate	Mike Harbison	Glen Carbon, IL	American Legion #435
Alternate	Dave Noble		
Delegate*	Kenneth Morales	Highland, IL	American Legion #439
Alternate	Kate Broadhurst		
Delegate	John Oltmann	Worden, IL	American Legion #564
Alternate	(no Alternate listed)		
Delegate	James F. Schleper	St. Jacobs, IL	American Legion #665
Alternate	(no Alternate listed)		
Delegate*	Brett Leman	Troy, IL	American Legion #708
Alternate	Kim Schoerner		
Delegate	Josh Rout	East Alton, IL	American Legion #794
Alternate	Robert Froehling		
Delegate	Richard Liljenberg	South Roxana, IL	American Legion #1167
Alternate	Christopher Furr		
Delegate	John Dempsey	Granite City, IL	AMVETS #51
Alternate	(no Alternate listed)		
Delegate*	Steve Diak	Madison, IL	AMVETS #204
Alternate*	Bud Champion		
Delegate	Terry Shephard	Granite City, IL	DAV #53
Alternate	Brian Hoedebeck		
Delegate	Thomas Hoppenrath	Glen Carbon, IL	DAV #90
Alternate	(no Alternate listed)		

Delegate	Mark O. Nelson	Godfrey, IL	Marine Corps League #1160
Alternate	James C. Freeman		
Delegate	Tim O' Donnell	Troy, IL	VFW #976
Alternate	Tony Avers		
Delegate	Larry Miller	Edwardsville, IL	VFW #1299
Alternate	(no Alternate listed)		
Delegate	James Jeneral	Granite City, IL	VFW #1300
Alternate	Thomas Castilleja		
Delegate	Wayne Able	Alton, IL	VFW #1308
Alternate	Wendel Parrish		
Delegate	Ronnie Hicks	Glen Carbon, IL	VFW #2222
Alternate	Steve Kaiser		
Delegate	Dave Jackson	Wood River, IL	VFW # 2859
Alternate	Robert Scott		
Delegate	Joseph Skipper	Collinsville, IL	VFW # 5691
Alternate	Donald Barkley		
Delegate	Kate Broadhurst	Highland, IL	VFW #5694
Alternate	Ricky Lallish		
Delegate	Vernon LeClaire	Cottage Hills, IL	VFW #7678
Alternate	(no Alternate listed)		
Delegate*	Payton Bealon	Edwardsville, IL	Student Veterans of America
Alternate	(no Alternate listed)		

Mission Statement

The Veterans' Assistance Commission (VAC) of Madison County, IL, provides needed services exclusively to Honorably Discharged Veterans; Service Members; their immediate families; unremarried widows of Veterans; or adult disabled children of Veterans, who were disabled prior to the age of 18, who reside in Madison County. The VAC works closely with local Veterans' Service Organizations (VSOs), as well as local, state, and federal agencies, to ensure the rights to which each Veteran is entitled are preserved and granted.

The VAC provides services for nearly **21,500** Madison County Veterans.

THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR ANY VAC SERVICE RENDERED.

Associations

- National Association of County Veterans' Service Officers (NACVSO) Member
- Illinois Association of County Veterans' Assistance Commissions (IACVAC) Board Member
- VA Metro East Vet Center Advisory Board Member
- Madison County Mental Health Alliance Member
- Madison County Institutions Committee Member
- Rotary Club Member

Strategic Partnerships

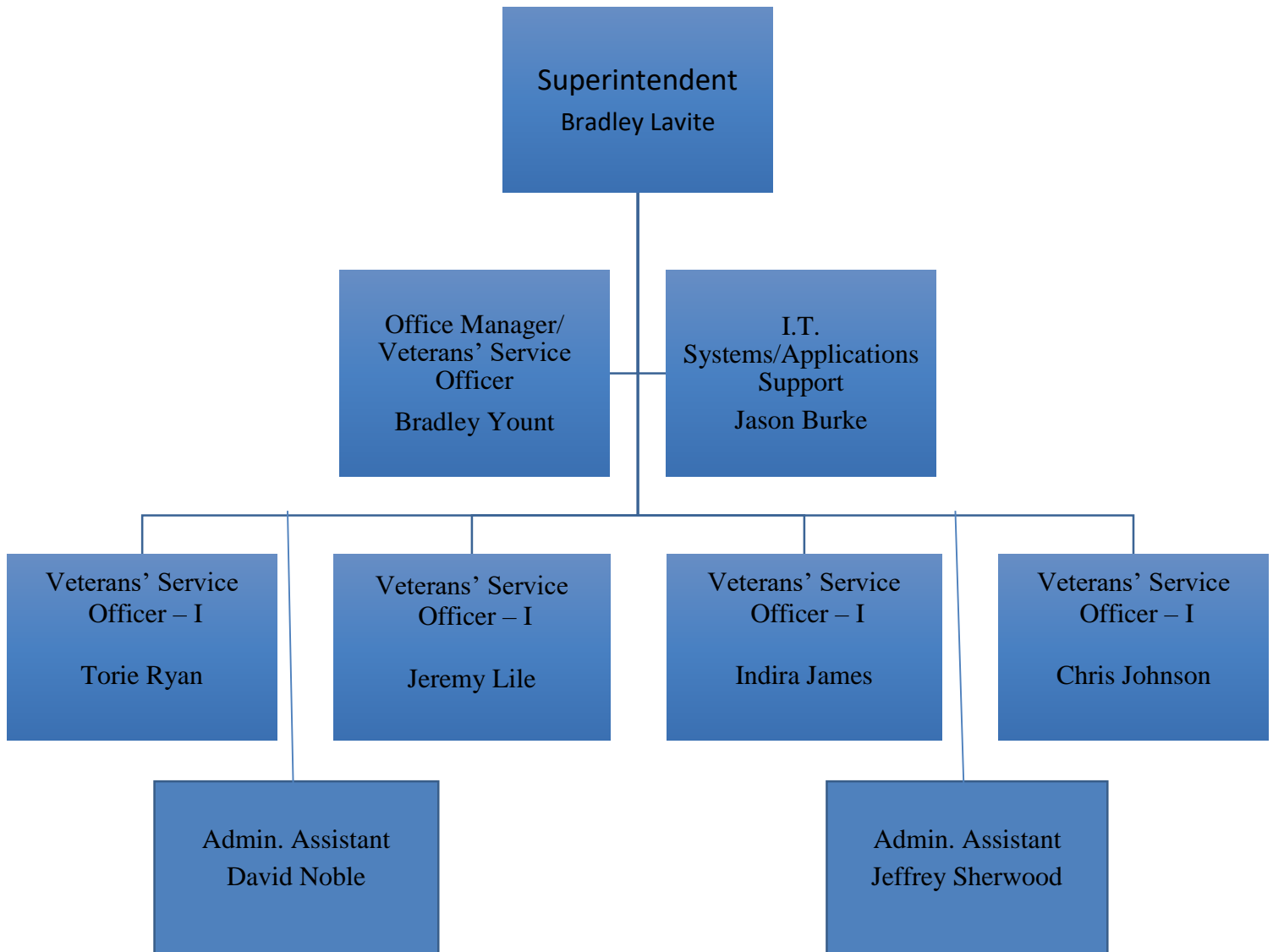
- Allsup – Provides Veterans' Disability Appeal Services.
- Illinois Armed Forces Legal Aid Network (IL-AFLAN) – Provides civil legal services across Illinois. It is a network of more than 10 legal aid organizations and law school clinics.
- Illinois Association of County Veterans' Assistance Commissions (IACVAC) – Was established by Illinois Statutes and is staffed by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) accredited Veterans Service Officers (VSOs) dedicated to serve Illinois Veterans and their families.
- Land of Lincoln Legal Aid – Provides eligible low-income and senior residents of central and southern Illinois with high-quality civil legal services in order to obtain and to maintain their basic needs.
- Madison County, IL, Regional Office of Education (ROE) – Assists schools and educators to improve teaching and learning, and assists school personnel with proper licensure (certification) procedures.
- National Alliance on Mental Illness Southwestern Illinois (NAMI SWI) – Is a non-profit, self-help, volunteer organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with mental illness and their families.
- Quilts of Valor – Covers Service Members and Veterans touched by war with comforting and healing Quilts of Valor.
- Southwestern Illinois Visiting Nurse Association (SIVNA) – Provides Home Care & Senior Services.
- VA Metro East Vet Center – Provides quality readjustment counseling in a caring manner to Veterans, while assisting them and their family members toward a successful post-war adjustment in or near their community.

Staff

Bradley Lavite – Superintendent
Bradley Yount – Office Manager/ Veterans’ Service Officer
Jason Burke – I.T. Systems/Applications Support
David Noble – Administrative Assistant
Jeffrey Sherwood – Administrative Assistant
Torie Ryan – Veterans’ Service Officer – I (Benefit Specialist)
Jeremy Lile – Veterans’ Service Officer – I (Benefit Specialist)
Indira James – Veterans’ Service Officer – I (Benefit Specialist)
Chris Johnson – Veterans’ Service Officer – I (Benefit Specialist)

VAC staff listed below were temporarily brought back into service to assist with VAC operations in 2021-2022.

C.J. Lucy-Yarian – Retired Administrative Liaison Officer
Timothy Turner – Retired Veterans Service Officer



Operational Overview and Outlook

During the 1st quarter of operations, our VAC has once again embarked on a major transformation by hiring two new full time Veterans Service Officers, and one Administrative Assistant in our reception area. The addition of these three positions is expected to increase exposure and further integrate the VAC into the Madison County veteran space while ensuring a consistently high level of service. Administrative casework and advocacy is expected to increase exponentially and move the VAC closer to a 50% market penetration rate. Currently, our VAC services approximately 8,000 of the registered 21,000 veterans, dependents, and survivors receiving Federal Department of Veterans Affairs benefits and services. As our menu of primary and secondary services expand, it is our goal to steadily increase our clientele by 2% annually. To support this level of growth, accredited staff have begun to share our mission to the community through weekly outreach events at The River Church and the Woodlands Golf Course.

The 1st quarter of operations for Financial Assistance remains steady with no remarkable changes. During 2022 the financial assistance landscape may change as VAC strives to build upon opportunities to strengthen our community partners within the Employment and Training as well as the Emergency Management spaces. The number of expected Financial Assistance applicants is expected to increase moving into the 2nd quarter. Legislative action has seen increased activity as VAC leadership has met with several congressional offices to advocate for the fair, equitable treatment, and distribution of benefits to the veterans of Madison County. As leadership fosters strong community partnerships, legislative advocacy projects are expected to increase as we move into quarters 2 and 3.

Additionally, the VAC has accomplished our 2021 goal of developing Micro-Grants for use by school districts throughout Madison County to improve the quality of life for the children and grandchildren of Veterans. The first round of grant applications and distributions have been granted with a positive impact on over 300 children per reports provided by the Regional Office of Education. To help support our lofty mission, the VAC board has welcomed several new posts to the commission and are encouraged to engage with every post in the county to strengthen our network. It is only through the continued support and collaboration of the community, member posts, VAC executive board, strategic partners, legislators, and staff that the VAC mission will continue. We look forward to a promising 2nd quarter.

Office Contacts

Office Contacts by Category		
Visits		824
Telephone Calls		1278
Email Contacts		234
Other Contacts		135
	Total	2471

Financial Accounts

Financial Accounts Remaining Budget by Type

Administrative - 020420-10-010	\$126,501.25
Aid-to-Vets - 020420-10-120	\$138,158.00
Levy Statement of Financial Position - 020420-10-000	\$715,378.36

Busey Checking Account – 5401 (Petty Cash/Tax Fund)	\$535.12
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“This account is reimbursable from VAC Administrative and/or Aid-to-Vets accounts. This account is reportable yearly to the County as part of Fiscal Year Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports (CFAR).”

Busey Checking Account – 6201 (Corporation Fund)	\$1,357.28
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"This account is funded through private donations from various sources. These funds are property of the VAC Corporation and not reportable to the County. The account is typically used to purchase items not normally included in the annual VAC operating budgets"

Interim and/or Emergency Veterans' Financial Assistance

Interim and/or Emergency Veterans' Financial Assistance provides payments toward the bare necessities of life. It is not designed to be an ongoing financial support over any considerable time, and it is not permanent assistance. This program is designed to assist Indigent Veterans; Service Members; their immediate families; unremarried widows of Veterans; or adult disabled children of Veterans, who were disabled prior to the age of 18, who are Madison County, IL, residents and who are in need of financial assistance to cover basic needs.

Veterans Assisted	19
Household Members Assisted	27
Number of Vouchers Issued	106

Admin Category	Q1	Q2	Q3	Total
Contingencies	\$43.88			
Data Processing Equipment	\$2,436.00			
Dues And Memberships	\$100.00			
Misc Data Processing Equipment	\$1,908.23			
Misc Office Furniture	\$456.30			
Office Furniture	\$940.80			
Office Supplies	\$729.10			
Outreach Event Costs	\$685.57			
Service Contracts	\$737.01			
Staff Training	\$60.00			
Travel	\$121.70			
Total				\$8,218.59

Financial Assistance by Category	Q1	Q2	Q3	Total
Contingencies - Aid to Vets	\$3,150.00			
Food Veterans Asst Pmts	\$3,247.00			
Shelter	\$4,666.35			
Electricity Veterans Asst Pmts	\$2,399.11			
Water Veterans Asst Pmts	\$1,599.59			
Sewage	\$339.24			
Incidentals Household	\$278.36			
Incidentals Personal	\$3,960.00			
Veterans Pet Assistance	\$640.00			
Other Medical Care	\$121.04			
Vet Asst Medical Premiums	\$229.26			
Total				\$20,629.95

Financial Assistance by Township	Q1	Q2	Q3	Total
Alton	\$2,863.26			
Collinsville	\$2,730.12			
Edwardsville	\$1,672.16			
Fort Russell	\$1,061.91			
Godfrey	\$555.73			
Granite City	\$4,201.77			
Saline	\$2,971.16			
Venice	\$1,399.24			
Wood River	\$3,174.60			
Total				\$20,629.95
Other Financial Assistance by Category	Q1	Q2	Q3	Total
Incidentals Household	\$0.00			
Outreach Event Costs	\$0.00			
Telephone	\$19.99			
Total				\$19.99
Community Financial Assistance	Q1	Q2	Q3	Total
Donations to Strategic Partners	\$0.00			
Monuments and Memorials	\$1,338.74			
Veteran Service Organization (Covid-19)	\$0.00			
Veteran Small Owned Business (Covid-19)	\$0.00			
Total				\$1,338.74

Administrative Case Work and Advocacy-Related Services

Administrative Case Work and Advocacy-Related Services assist Veterans; Service Members; their immediate families; unmarried widows of Veterans; or adult disabled children of Veterans, who were disabled prior to the age of 18, with various benefit-related filings. These fit, most notably, filings for VA service-connected compensation and pension claims, burial, and health care benefits.

Category	Q1	Q2	Q3	Total
Adaptive Housing	0	0	0	0
Add Dependent	4	0	0	0
Board Appeal	0	0	0	0
Burial Marker	0	0	0	0
Compensation Increase	4	0	0	0
DIC	5	0	0	0
Discharge Upgrade	1	0	0	0
Education Benefits	4	0	0	0
Fiduciary	0	0	0	0
Full Benefit Review	68	0	0	0
Healthcare Enrollment	12	0	0	0
Higher Level Review	2	0	0	0
Intent to File	67	0	0	0
Lay Statements	0	0	0	0
Misc.	9	0	0	0
New Compensation	46	0	0	0
NSC Burial Non-VAMC	1	0	0	0
Pension	3	0	0	0
Pension Update	1	0	0	0
Power of Attorney (POA)	87	0	0	0
Pre-Needs Burial	7	0	0	0
PTAX	44	0	0	0
Records Requested	49	0	0	0
Referral to ALLSUP	0	0	0	0
Referral to Office Manager	1	0	0	0
Referral to Vet Center	4	0	0	0
SC Burial	4	0	0	0
SC Plot Allowance	4	0	0	0
S-DVI	0	0	0	0
State Bonus Payment	2	0	0	0
Supplemental	19	0	0	0
Survivor's Pension	1	0	0	0
VA Web site Assistance	1	0	0	0
VADIP	4	0	0	0
V-MLI	0	0	0	0
Will/POA Worksheet	2	0	0	0
Case Work Total				449

Secondary Services by Category

Secondary services assist Veterans; Service Members; their immediate families; unremarried widows of Veterans; or adult disabled children of Veterans, who were disabled prior to the age of 18, with identifying and applying for services not specifically provided or administered by the VAC.

Secondary Services by Category

Disabled Veterans' Standard Homestead Exemption Filing Assistance	36
Education and Training – Related Referrals	4
Homeless (Coordinated Entry System) Referrals	1
Third-Party Social Services Referrals	16

Third-Party Social Service Referrals

Ameren Illinois Military Support (AIMS)	3
American Water H ₂ O Assistance Program	0
AT&T Low Income Internet Access Program	1
Emergency Rental/Mortgage Assistance Program (ERAP)	4
Township Assistance	0
Lifeline Cell Phone Program	0
Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)	5
Low Income Internet Assistance Program	0
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Benefit (SNAP)	2
Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)	1
Warm Neighbors Cool Friends	0

Outreach and Events

The VAC hosts and coordinates various outreach services, activities, and events throughout the year for Veterans; Service Members; their immediate families; unremarried widows of Veterans; or adult disabled children of Veterans, who were disabled prior to the age of 18.

Outreach and Events by Category

Crisis Program Referrals	4
Crisis Response Program Events	0
DAV Van Transportation Program (VTP)	
Vans in Network	2
Veterans Transported	84
VTP Miles Driven	5079
VTP Volunteer Hours	294
VTP Volunteers	3
Donations Received	\$0
Flags Collected	4
Regional Office of Education (ROE) Micro-Grants	\$15,000.00
Monuments and Memorials Grants Provided	\$1,338.74
Outreach Events	0
Quilts of Valor (Q of V) Provided	0
VA Vet Center/VAC Outreach Attendees	230

2022 Goals and Objectives

- Continued focus on the end of the COVID-19 pandemic and resumption of normal office operations.
- Realign VAC Executive Board position duties and responsibilities.
- Evaluate and continue using telework and virtual appointments as standard practices.
- Recruit, hire, and train additional Veterans Service Officers.
- Develop, implement, test, and refine a Veterans Crisis Response Program.
- Continue to expand our VAC Monuments and Memorial Grants.
- Continue to review, revise, update, and expand monthly, quarterly, and annual reporting.
- Establish a working relationship and a referral network with other Veterans' Service Organizations (VSOs).
- Increase Outreach and Events efforts with VSOs and strategic partners.
- Create a VAC historical repository and intensively research our VAC history.
- Continue archiving paper records and files digitally, as well as move toward a paperless office.
- Implement a VAC/VA work-study program.
- Develop volunteer opportunities, programs, and reporting measures.