



VAC

VETERANS' ASSISTANCE COMMISSION
OF MADISON COUNTY

JUNE 2022

2nd Quarter Board Report

Respectfully Submitted

June 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>

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
Glossary of Terms	2
2022 Veterans' Assistance Commission Board	3-5
Mission Statement, Associations, and Strategic Partnerships	6
Staff	7
Operational Overview and Outlook	8
Office Contacts, Interim and/or Emergency Veterans' Financial Assistance	9-11
Administrative Case Work and Advocacy-Related Services	12
Secondary Services by Category	13
Outreach and Events	14
2022 Goals and Objectives	15

Glossary of Terms

Administrative Case Work and Advocacy-Related Services: Veterans' Service Officers (VSOs) assist Veterans; Service Members; their immediate families; un-remarried 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, un-remarried 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; unmarried 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
- 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.
- 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

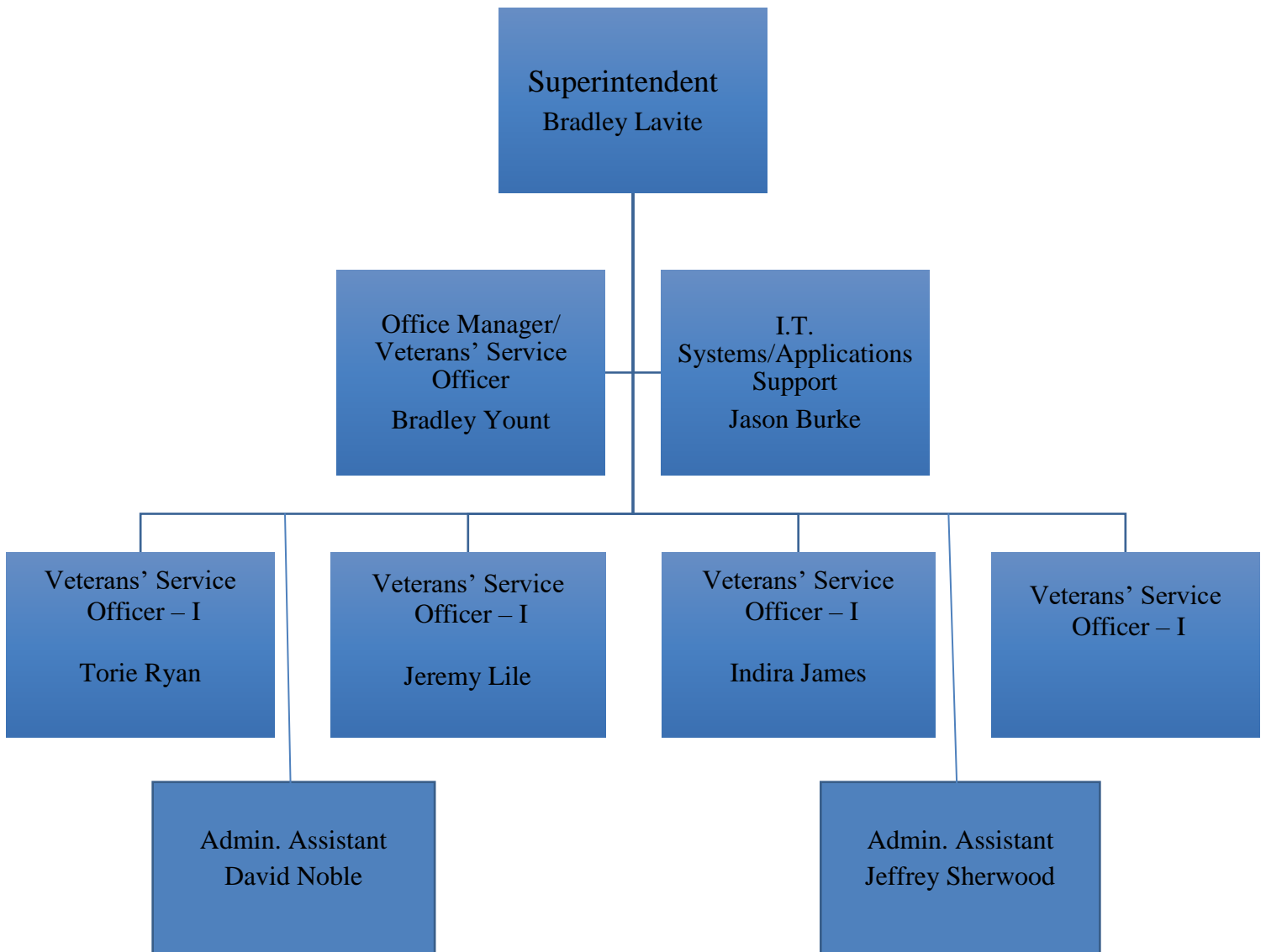
Torie Ryan – Veterans’ Service Officer – I (Benefit Specialist)

Jeremy Lile – Veterans’ Service Officer – I (Benefit Specialist)

Indira James – Veterans’ Service Officer – I (Benefit Specialist)

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



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.

The 2nd Quarter has seen a decline in the number of financial assistance applications despite the end of various federal stimulus programs. While the Emergency Rental Assistance Program is still in full swing, LIHEAP funding will begin to taper off along with the availability of LIWAP (Water assistance) within Madison County. To assist job seekers VAC leadership has met with representatives from the Illinois Department of Employment Services and have begun discussing various opportunities to leverage an employment and training program and/or referral network. Casework and Advocacy related services has seen an uptick in overall close rate, and upward of 100 additional casework items compared to the 1st quarter. As the VAC heads into the 3rd quarter, preparations have begun to implement procedural changes to align with new Veterans specific legislation. Staff changes for this quarter include the loss of VSO Chris Johnson to become the Madison County Emergency Management Director and the retirement of Administrative Assistant Dave Noble. The VAC currently has 2 vacant position which include an Administrative Assistant and a VSO that are expected to be filled during the 3rd quarter.

Financial Accounts

Financial Accounts Remaining Budget by Type

Administrative - 020420-10-010	\$118,977.53
Aid-to-Vets - 020420-10-120	\$123,716.52
Levy Statement of Financial Position - 020420-10-000	\$715,378.36
Busey Checking Account – 5401 (Petty Cash/Tax Fund)	\$535.12

“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)	\$1357.28
--	-----------

"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"

Administrative / Operations Related Expenditures

Admin Category	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Conference Fees	\$0.00	\$540.00		
Contingencies	\$43.88	\$0.00		
Data Processing Equipment	\$2,436.00	\$0.00		
Dues And Memberships	\$100.00	\$11.00		
Misc Data Processing Equipment	\$1,908.23	\$0.00		
Misc Office Furniture	\$456.30	\$0.00		
Misc. Office Furn and Non DP Eq	\$0.00	\$391.64		
Office Furniture	\$940.80	\$0.00		
Office Supplies	\$729.10	\$359.18		
Outreach Event Costs	\$685.57	\$370.01		
Service Contracts	\$737.01	\$891.95		
Staff Training	\$60.00	\$1,775.57		
Travel	\$121.70	\$700.92		
Total	\$8,219.00	\$5,040.27		

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; un-remarried 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.

Financial Assistance Participants	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Veterans Assisted	19	10		
Household Members Assisted	27	15		
Number of Vouchers Issued	106	47		

Financial Assistance by Category	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Contingencies - Aid to Vets	\$3,150.00	\$1,300.00		
Electricity – Vets Asst Pmts	\$2,399.11	\$1,389.78		
Food - Veterans Asst Pmts	\$3,247.00	\$831.40		
Incidentals Household	\$278.36	\$0		
Incidentals Personal	\$3,960.00	\$1,860.00		
Medical Premiums – Vets Asst	\$229.26	\$0		
Other Medical Premiums	\$121.04	\$60.52		
Pet Assistance – Vets Asst Pmts	\$640.00	\$360.00		
Sewage – Vets Asst Pmts	\$339.24	\$494.96		
Shelter- Veterans Asst Pmts	\$4,666.35	\$2,287.73		
Water – Vets Asst Pmts	\$1,599.59	\$571.49		
Total	\$20,629.95	\$9,155.88		

Financial Assistance by Township		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Alton		\$2,863.26	\$420.00		
Collinsville		\$2,730.12	\$2,545.53		
Edwardsville		\$1,672.16	\$1,200.00		
Fort Russell		\$1,067.91	\$0.00		
Godfrey		\$555.73	\$0.00		
Granite City		\$4,201.77	\$2,334.97		
Saline		\$2,971.16	\$304.55		
Venice		\$1,399.24	\$2,350.83		
Wood River		\$3,174.60	\$0.00		
Total		\$20,629.95	\$9,155.88		

Other Financial Assistance		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Outreach Event Costs		\$0.00	\$0.00		
Telephone		\$19.99	\$20.00		
Total		\$19.99	\$20.00		

Community Financial Assistance		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Donations to Strategic Partners		\$0	\$0		
Monuments and Memorials		\$0	\$0		
Veteran Service Organizations		\$0	\$0		
Veteran Small Owned Business		\$0	\$0		
Total		\$0	\$0		

Administrative Case Work and Advocacy-Related Services

Administrative Case Work and Advocacy-Related Services assist Veterans; Service Members; their immediate families; un-remarried 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.

Administrative Casework Category	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Adaptive Housing	0	1		
Add Dependent	4	13		
Board Appeal	0	1		
Burial Marker	0	1		
Champ VA	0	2		
Compensation Increase	4	14		
DIC	5	7		
Discharge Upgrade	1	0		
Education Benefits	4	4		
Fiduciary	0	0		
Full Benefit Review	68	56		
Healthcare Enrollment	12	16		
Higher Level Review	2	2		
Intent to File	67	72		
Lay Statements	0	3		
Misc.	9	31		
New Compensation	46	72		
NSC Burial Non-VAMC	1	0		
Pension	3	0		
Pension Update	1	1		
Power of Attorney (POA)	87	117		
Pre-Needs Burial	7	15		
PTAX	44	64		
Records Requested	49	51		
Referral to ALLSUP	0	0		
Referral to Office Manager	1	0		
Referral to Vet Center	4	0		
SC Burial	4	2		
SC Plot Allowance	4	0		
S-DVI	0	1		
State Bonus Payment	2	1		
Supplemental	19	27		
Survivor's Pension	1	3		
VA Web site Assistance	1	0		
VADIP	4	3		
V-MLI	0	0		
Will/POA Worksheet	2	6		
Casework Total	456	586		

Office Contacts by Category					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Visits	824	936			
Telephone Calls	1278	1058			
Email Contacts	234	233			
Other Contacts	135	184			
Total	2471	2411			

Year to Date Secondary Services by Category

Secondary services assist Veterans; Service Members; their immediate families; un-remarried 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	108
Education and Training – Related Referrals	3
Homeless (Coordinated Entry System) Referrals	7

Third-Party Social Services Referrals

Third-Party Social Service Referrals	7
Ameren Illinois Military Support (AIMS)	0
American Water H2O Assistance Program	2
AT&T Low Income Internet Access Program	7
Emergency Rental/Mortgage Assistance Program (ERAP)	1
Township Assistance	0
Lifeline Cell Phone Program	7
Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)	0
Low Income Internet Assistance Program	7
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Benefit (SNAP)	3
Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)	0
Warm Neighbors Cool Friends	0

Year to Date Outreach and Events

The VAC hosts and coordinates various outreach services, activities, and events throughout the year for Veterans; Service Members; their immediate families; un-remarried 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	8
Crisis Response Program Events	0
DAV Van Transportation Program (VTP)	
Vans in Network	2
Veterans Transported	140
VTP Miles Driven	11367
VTP Volunteer Hours	602
VTP Volunteers	3
Donations Received	\$0.00
Flags Collected	55
Monuments and Memorials Grants Provided	\$1,338.74
Regional Office of Education (ROE) Micro-Grants	\$15,000.00
VAC/Vet Center Participants and Appointments	533

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 and Administrative Assistants
- 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.