

**SERVING KENTUCKY'S VETERANS**



**KDVA FY23  
ANNUAL REPORT**  
01 JULY 2022 to 30 JUNE 2023

**KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**



**OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER**  
1111B LOUISVILLE ROAD  
FRANKFORT, KY 40601



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>FROM THE COMMISSIONER</b>                                     | <b>3</b>   |
| Agency Accomplishments for FY23                                  | 4          |
| <b>FROM THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER</b>                              | <b>5</b>   |
| Interstate Information Exchange Initiative & Legislative Summary | 6          |
| <b>FROM THE CHIEF OF STAFF</b>                                   | <b>7-8</b> |
| Personnel Data & Organizational Chart                            | 10-11      |
| <b>FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR FY23</b>                              | <b>13</b>  |
| <b>OFFICE OF KENTUCKY VETERANS SERVICES (OKVS)</b>               | <b>15</b>  |
| Veterans Cemeteries Division                                     | 17-22      |
| Veterans Benefits Division                                       | 23-26      |
| Veterans State Programs Division                                 | 27         |
| Homeless Veterans Program  | 27-29      |
| Women's Veterans Program   | 30-32      |
| KyVETS (Veterans Employment, Training, and Support Services)     | 32         |
| <b>OFFICE OF KENTUCKY VETERANS CENTERS (OKVC)</b>                | <b>33</b>  |
| Veterans Centers Services & FY23 Synopsis                        | 33-37      |
| <b>OFFICE OF VETERAN LEGAL SERVICES (OVLS)</b>                   | <b>38</b>  |
| In-House/Outside Legal Services & FY23 Synopsis                  | 38-41      |
| <b>KENTUCKY VETERANS PROGRAM TRUST FUND</b>                      | <b>41</b>  |
| Veterans Trust Fund Overview & Balance Statement for FY23        | 41-43      |
| Trust Fund Board Meeting Overview: 14 September 2022             | 44         |
| Trust Fund Board Meeting Overview: 14 December 2022              | 45-46      |
| Trust Fund Board Meeting Overview: 22 March 2023                 | 47-48      |
| Trust Fund Board Meeting Overview: 28 June 2023                  | 49-50      |

# FROM THE COMMISSIONER

Pursuant to KRS 40.300(1), the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs is headed by a commissioner appointed by the Governor pursuant to KRS 12.040. KDVA's present Commissioner is U.S. Army Lt. Colonel (Retired), Whitney Allen. Commissioner Allen is the seventh commissioner to be appointed to the role.

Excellence, in every facet of our organization, is fundamental to KDVA's mission and, as Commissioner, I believe our agency has reached this lofty goal, exceeded expectations, and built a better tomorrow for the veterans of our state. KDVA has turned a directive to succeed into a tradition of pushing boundaries and increasing service that embodies everything our agency does. Our four state veteran centers continue to receive 5-star ratings for their excellent long-term care of veterans. Our cemeteries continue to operate and maintain the utmost care and respect in honoring our veteran brothers and sisters who've passed away. Additionally, my Benefits team has provided aid and assistance to veterans across the commonwealth.

We're only halfway into the FY22/23 and we've already held the groundbreaking ceremony for our future and fifth state veteran center in Bowling Green, KY. We've also worked with numerous partner agencies in making events and initiatives happen to support our vets.

As Commissioner, it is my pleasure to oversee these truly incredible divisions and to work in concert with them to ensure that the veterans of this Commonwealth receive, not only what they have earned, but what they deserve. KDVA has done more than meet its mandate to service the veterans of the Commonwealth. It has built a cherished series of programs, initiatives, and departments that have created meaningful change for the former servicemen and women of our state, no matter where they may find themselves in life.

While it is reassuring and certainly a positive experience to have won accolades and awards, to have expanded outreach and to have brought our department into the modern era. What all this truly means, is that we have improved the lives of the veterans in our Commonwealth. There is no higher privilege and no higher honor.

Moving forward, I hope more veterans will take advantage of the services we offer, as we are here for them. Our veterans are entitled to the care and benefits we can provide. They earned it from their service to this great nation and deserve our best.

Respectfully,

*Whitney P. Allen, Jr.*

Whitney P. Allen, Jr., Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired)  
Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs



*"Let us not wait for other people to come to us and call upon us to do great deeds. Let us instead be the first to summon the rest of the path of honor. Show yourself to be the bravest of all the captains, with more of the right to leadership than those who are our leaders at present." Xenophon*



# AGENCY ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR FY23

As Commissioner, I am extremely proud to highlight KDVA's accomplishments for FY23:

- 2023 VA Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence Award for Creative State Programs Category for KDVA's Annual State Commanders Conference.
- Robert E. Spiller Bowling Green Veteran Center Groundbreaking Ceremony (November 02, 2022).
- The Benefits Division generated over \$467.56 million dollars in entitlements and pensions for Kentucky veterans, widows, and dependents for FY23.
- Veterans Program Trust Fund (VPTF) granted a total of \$597,040.95 to 25 grantees.
- Homeless Veterans Trust Fund granted a total of \$240,780.23 to 630 veterans.
- KDVA's Veterans Center maintaining CMS Five-Star Ratings during FY23.
- Veterans Cemeteries performed 1564 internments during FY23.
- KDVA/VA Veterans Experience Action Center (VEAC) (June 2023).
- KDVA executed several key outreach activities and events, to include:
  - 2022 KDVA State Conference (August 2022).
  - Wreaths Across America (December 2022).
  - Joint Women Veterans Symposium with University of Louisville (March 2023).
  - Homeless Veterans Program 5K Walk, Run, Stroll (October 2022).
  - KDVA Veterans Cemeteries Memorial Day Ceremonies (May 2023).
  - 2023 KDVA Women Veterans Conference (June 2023).
- KDVA's engaged in an Interstate Information Exchange Initiative (IIEI).
- KDVA appointed its inaugural class of KDVA Ambassadors (June 2023)



Picture of all three Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence Awards KDVA has earned for the past three years in a row.

# FROM THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

U.S. Army Officer (Retired) Juan A. Renaud was appointed KDVA's Deputy Commissioner on January 15, 2023. During FY23, Deputy Commissioner Renaud was engaged in furthering strategic partnerships and promoting agency cohesiveness. He was also engaged in promoting and tracking significant veteran-friendly legislation to expand benefits and services for Kentucky's veterans and their families. Deputy Commissioner Renaud supervises the agency's staff and reports to Commissioner Whitney Allen.

During FY23, KDVA continued the expansion of its Interstate Information Exchange Initiative (IIEI) strategic engagements. These engagements have resulted in discussions about region conferences and symposiums focused on Veteran programs and benefits which will assist Veterans in bordering states.

Throughout FY 23, KDVA has also refined national partnerships with various agencies and offices across the Veterans Administration (VA). Our VA partners have supported KDVA with executive level participation in our state Women Veterans Conferences and the KDVA agency wide State Conferences. These partnerships additionally define KDVA as a state equivalent organization that assist veterans and their families receive benefits and services, they are entitled.



Governor Andy Beshear poses with KDVA's executives following the signing of House Bill 2.

Traveling hundreds of miles, KDVA have met with leaders of the following state agencies:

- Georgia Department of Veterans Service in Atlanta, Georgia (June 2023).
- Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs in Springfield, Illinois (July 2023).

KDVA's primary objective remains to ensure that veterans are afforded exceptional benefits and service at the federal and state levels, notwithstanding where they decide to reside after separation or retirement from the U.S. Armed Forces.

Next, KDVA strengthened its capabilities as an agency by investing in the people who work tirelessly to ensure that veterans of the Commonwealth receive quality services, care, and interment. KDVA's leadership team also traveled intrastate to meet with the agency's Regional Administrators (RAs), Veteran Benefits Representatives (VBRs), and Veteran Centers as a way

of demonstrating appreciation for the entire agency's efforts to support Kentucky's veterans and families.



Governor Andy Beshear was joined by bill sponsors and members of KDVA as he signed House Bill 2. This Bill provided much-needed support towards completing the Bowling Green Veterans Center, due to be completed in 2024.

Lastly, KDVA continued to support veteran-friendly legislation to ensure that Kentucky veterans of the Commonwealth continue to receive the maximum number of opportunities, benefits, and services that their honorable service has earned them. KDVA promoted the following legislation to support Kentucky's military community and families:

### **House Bill 2:**

An ACT relating to the Bowling Green Veterans Center, appropriated General Fund moneys in the amount of \$16,630,000 in fiscal year 2022-2023 from the Budget Reserve Trust Fund Account (KRS 48.705) to the Kentucky Department of Veterans' Affairs for construction of the Bowling Green Veterans Center.

### **House Bill 29:**

The Bill amended KRS 40.315 to remove the residency requirement for interment in veteran cemeteries.



Deputy Commissioner Juan Renaud and Silas Session, Director of the Office of Kentucky Veteran Services, appeared before the Veteran Military Affairs and Public Protection Committee (VMAPP) June 2023.

# FROM THE CHIEF OF STAFF

During FY23, the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army Major (Retired), Dwyane Edwards continued his duties with KDVA. Appointed pursuant to KRS 12.050, Chief of Staff Edwards reports to Commissioner Whitney Allen.

## Commissioner's Guidance on the Way Ahead:

- *Promote Women Veteran Initiatives*
- *Promote Suicide Prevention Awareness*
- *Establishing Strategic Partnerships with Federal and State Agencies*
- *Recruitment for Veteran Service Organizations*
- *Expand Office of Kentucky Veterans Services Operations and Capabilities*



Our strategic partnerships were one of the keys for KDVA to reach our goals, we have worked hand in hand with the Labor Cabinet to develop a viable and effective Veteran Pipeline to keep talented veterans working in the Commonwealth. Our partnership with the University of Louisville resulted in a celebration of Women Veterans during Women History Month. Our partnership with Ft Knox and Ft Campbell's Transition Assistance Program has resulted in full employment for veterans who opt to remain in the commonwealth after their service ends. We launched a veteran information initiative with the VA Center for community and Faith-based Partnerships.

KDVA has been a key facilitator for the Veteran Administration's Veteran Engagement Action Center initiative. The VEAC is the VA's key program that brings a concentration of meaningful assistance to veterans in one community.

The Commissioner of KDVA has initiated a unique program where he mentors and trains his staff by having unique off-site conferences. The conferences are centered around presentations by leading Commonwealth Secretaries and Commissioners. The conferences have served as springboards for the agency's strategic planning.

We are also excited about working with the Department of Aging and Independent Living and the Department of Behavioral Health, as well as a host of other partners with which KDVA is creating an elastic array of services to assist the Commonwealth's veterans.



KDVA's team works tirelessly to bring new initiatives and partnerships to fruition. KDVA's personnel data, as reported by HR Manager, John Ostroske, and organizational chart are included below:

## KDVA PERSONNEL DATA: STAFFING AS OF 30 JUNE 2023

### OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

| Position Title        | Number of Positions Filled |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| • Commissioner        | 1                          |
| • Deputy Commissioner | 1                          |
| • Chief of Staff      | 1                          |
| • Executive Secretary | 1                          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>          | <b>4</b>                   |

### OFFICE OF VETERAN LEGAL SERVICES (OVLS)

| Position Title                              | Number of Positions Filled |
|---|----------------------------|
| • Executive Director and Staff Attorney III | 1                          |
| • Information Officer III                   | 1                          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                | <b>2</b>                   |

### OFFICE OF KENTUCKY VETERAN CENTERS (OKVC)

| Position Title                     | Number of Positions Filled |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Executive Director               | 1                          |
| • Deputy Executive Director        | 1                          |
| • Medical Director                 | 1                          |
| • Licensed Psychologist            | 1                          |
| • Budget Specialist II             | 1                          |
| • Thomson-Hood Veterans Center     | 155                        |
| • Eastern Kentucky Veterans Center | 157                        |
| • Western Kentucky Veterans Center | 94                         |
| • Radcliff Veterans Center         | 86                         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                       | <b>503</b>                 |

### OFFICE OF KENTUCKY VETERAN SERVICES (OKVS)

| Position Title                  | Number of Positions Filled |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Executive Director (Detail)   | 1                          |
| • Budget Specialist III         | 1                          |
| • Administrative Specialist III | 1                          |
| • Budget Specialist II          | 1                          |
| • Human Resource Branch Manager | 1                          |
| • Human Resource Specialist II  | 1                          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    | <b>6</b>                   |

### KENTUCKY VETERANS CEMETERIES DIVISION



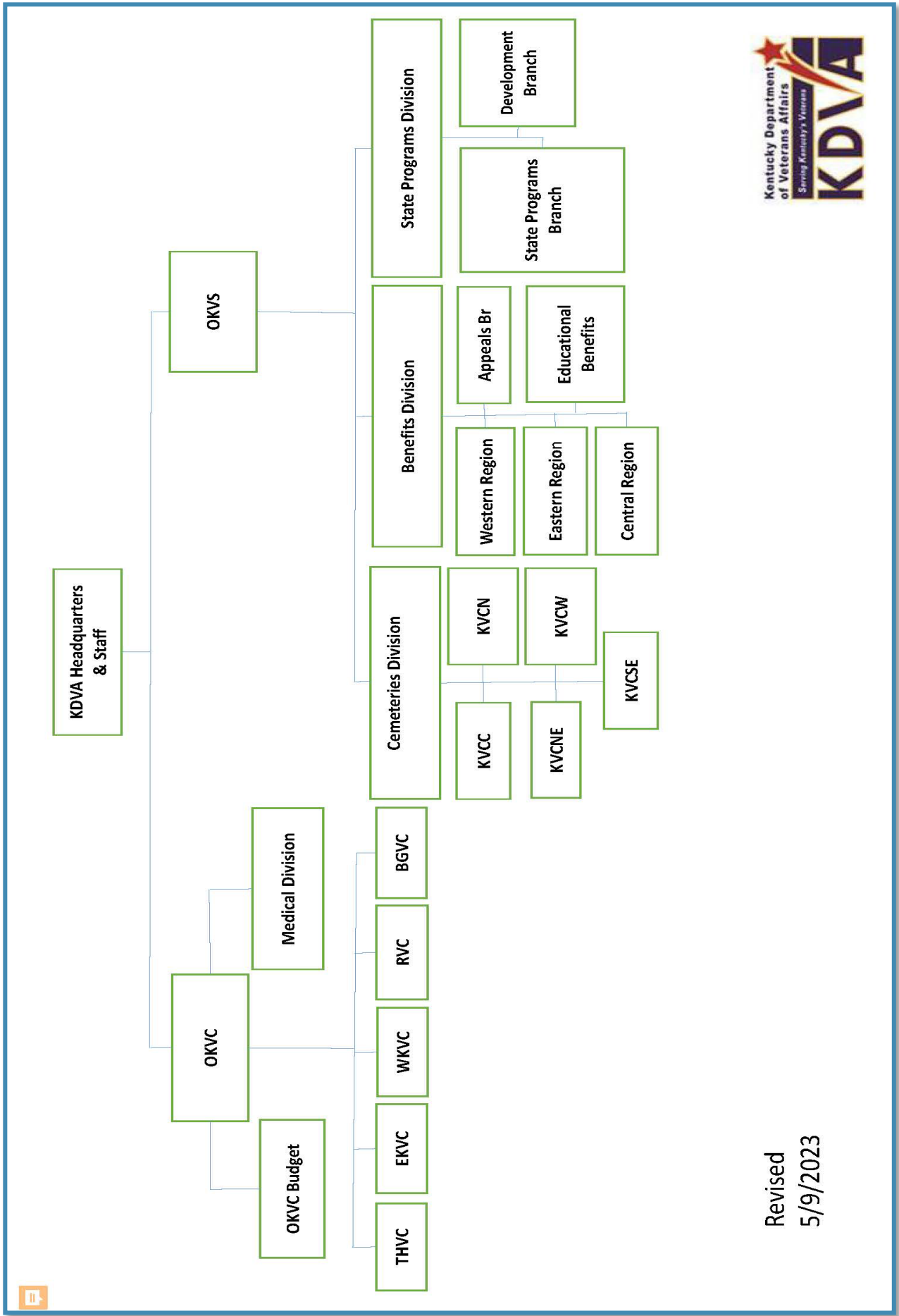
| Position Title                  | Number of Positions Filled |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Assistant Director            | 1                          |
| • Cemetery Branch Manager       | 5                          |
| • Cemetery Superintendent       | 6                          |
| • Administrative Specialist III | 5                          |
| • Administrative Specialist II  | 1                          |
| • Cemetery Caretaker            | 17                         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    | <b>35</b>                  |

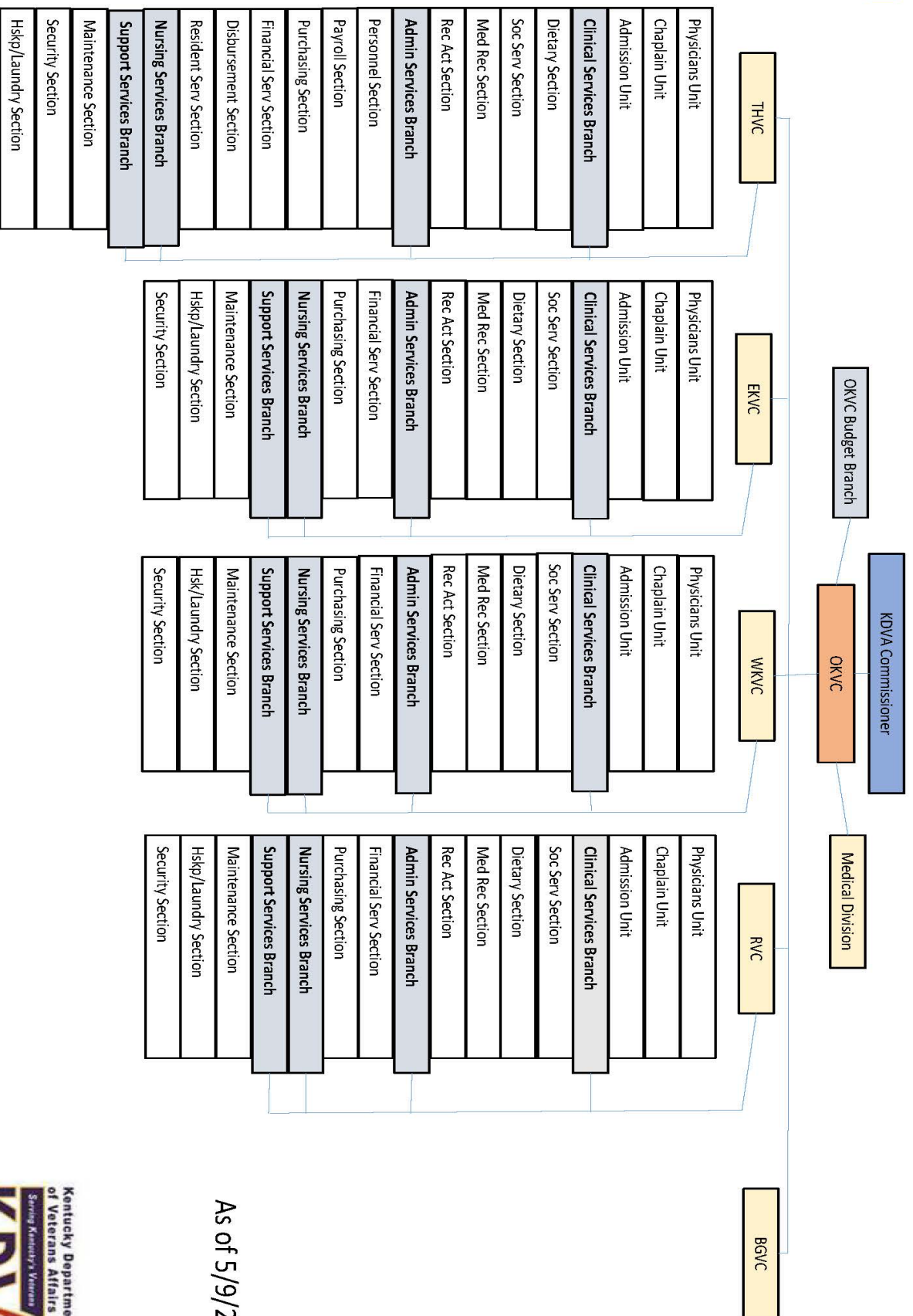
#### KENTUCKY VETERANS BENEFITS DIVISION

| Position Title  | Number of Positions Filled |
|---|----------------------------|
| • Assistant Director                                    | 1                          |
| • Veterans Benefits Regional Administrators             | 4                          |
| • Administrative Specialist III                         | 1                          |
| • Veterans Benefits Field Representatives I & II (VBFR) | 18                         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>24</b>                  |

#### KENTUCKY VETERANS STATE PROGRAMS DIVISION

| Position Title                               | Number of Positions Filled |
|--|----------------------------|
| • Assistant Director                         | 1                          |
| • Homeless Veterans Program Administrator    | 1                          |
| • Homeless Veterans Administrative Assistant | 1                          |
| • Women's Veterans Program Administrator     | 0                          |
| • KyVETS Program Administrator               | 1                          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                 | <b>4</b>                   |





As of 5/9/23

# KDVA's FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR FY23

## APPROPRIATIONS

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| • General Fund Appropriation                      | \$30,092,600.00        |
| • Restricted Fund Appropriation                   | \$67,154,900.00        |
| • Federal Funds Appropriation (CARES Act funding) | \$2,433,600.00         |
| <b>TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS</b>                       | <b>\$99,681,100.00</b> |

## ALLOTMENTS

|                                |                        |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Kentucky Veterans Centers    | \$89,882,200.00        |
| • Kentucky Veterans Cemeteries | \$4,104,700.00         |
| • Kentucky Veterans Services   | \$5,694,200.00         |
| <b>TOTAL ALLOTMENTS</b>        | <b>\$99,681,100.00</b> |

## EXPENDITURES BY FUND

### GENERAL FUND

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| • Kentucky Veterans Centers              | (\$22,358,363.96)        |
| • Kentucky Veterans Cemeteries           | (\$2,594,800.00)         |
| • Kentucky Veterans Services             | (\$5,139,436.04)         |
| <b>TOTAL KDVA GENERAL FUNDS EXPENDED</b> | <b>(\$30,092,600.00)</b> |

### RESTRICTED FUND

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| • Kentucky Veterans Centers                 | (\$52,623,710.37)        |
| • Kentucky Veterans Cemeteries              | (\$816,109.49)           |
| • Kentucky Veterans Services                | (\$0.00)                 |
| <b>TOTAL KDVA RESTRICTED FUNDS EXPENDED</b> | <b>(\$53,439,819.53)</b> |

|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| Federal Fund Kentucky Veterans Centers | (\$1,780,472.03) |
|--|------------------|

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| <b>TOTAL KDVA EXPENDITURE BY ALL FUND SOURCES</b> | <b>(\$85,312,891.89)</b> |
|---|--------------------------|

## EXPENDITURES BY CLASS

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| • Personnel                                   | (\$63,837,356.73)        |
| • Operating                                   | (\$10,917,261.72)        |
| • Grants, Loans & Benefits                    | (\$5,553,036.59)         |
| • Debt Service                                | \$-                      |
| • Capital Outlay                              | (\$5,005,236.85)         |
| • Construction                                | \$-                      |
| <b>TOTAL KDVA EXPENDITURES BY ALL CLASSES</b> | <b>(\$85,312,891.89)</b> |



\*\*\*\*\*

**The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall ... assist veterans and their families and dependents in the presentation, proof, and establishment of all claims, privileges, rights, and other benefits which they may have under federal, state, or local laws, and to cooperate with all national, state, and local government and private agencies securing services or any benefits to veterans, their families, and dependents.**

**KRS 40.310(1)**

\*\*\*\*\*

Image of Kentucky Veterans Cemetery North

# OFFICE OF KENTUCKY VETERAN SERVICES

KDVA's Office of Kentucky Veteran Services (OKVS) was established pursuant to KRS 40.300(5), June 29, 2021, as part of the Office of the Commissioner. During FY23, OKVS was headed by its first formerly appointed Executive Director, Retired U.S. Army MAJ Silas Jermaine Session Sr., D.Ed.Min, who was appointed pursuant to KRS 12.050, Oct 16, 2022. OKVS consists of the Veterans Cemeteries Division, the Veterans Benefits Division, and the Veterans State Programs Division. Executive Director Sessions reports to the Commissioner.

OKVS' aim can be summarized by the following 5As: we want to reach 1.) all Kentucky, 2.) all year, 3.) informing all Kentuckians of our services, while doing our best to 4.) recognize all Kentucky veterans and their family members, and consistently high performing OKVS teammates. In addition to recognizing OKVS teammates, we want to 5.) develop all OKVS teammates to continue to excel and thrive in providing superb veteran services.

Here are a few ways OKVS added synergetic value in a cross section of the plethora of events conducted.



National Governor's  
Challenge Innovation  
Conference. May 2023.

The OKVS presented at the Veterans Employment and Training Symposium in November 2022 at the Kentucky Community and Technical Colleges System (KCTCS) to share how KDVA can support veterans through tuition waivers and other services. OKVS sent a proposal to the Council on Postsecondary Educations to hopefully create a collaboration between the Kentucky state colleges and universities veterans support programs. OKVS coordinated a tuition waiver presentation at the KCTCS Veterans Employment and Training Symposium in November 2022.

OKVS coordinated discussions with the Kentucky Department of Education to increase the number of eligible families regarding the Kentucky Tuition Waiver, which led to a great opportunity to present at the April webcast for superintendents across the Commonwealth. OKVS led a professional development offsite session on April 28, 2023, for KDVA staff.



OKVS executive director served on the executive board for the Governor's Challenge team as of March 2023 and represented the Governor challenge team at the May 2023 National Governor's Challenge Innovation Conference. OKVS' executive director serves as Commissioner Allen's proxy for the Kentucky Judicial Committee on Mental Health and presented with Commissioner Allen at the Veterans Breakout session titled "Combatting Behavior Health Issues for Kentucky Veterans" during the summit, May 31 to June 2, 2023.

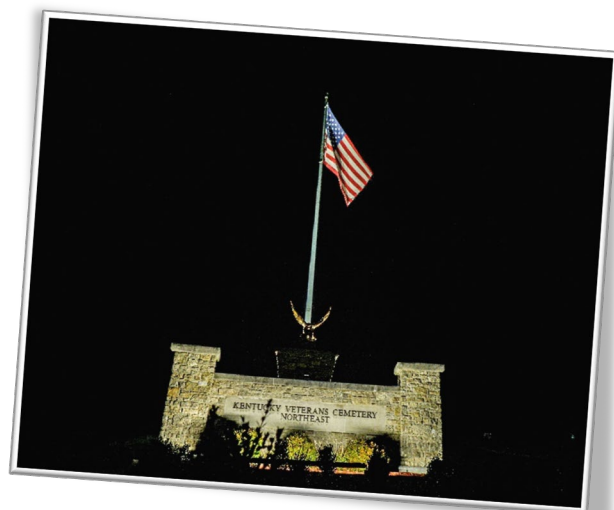


OKVS continues to establish a presence at multiple VSO meetings and events, like the Hardin County Veterans Court and the Joint Executive Council of Veterans Organizations (JECVO), to learn of the great opportunities for veterans and to disseminate KDVA pertinent information. OKVS conducted multiple site visits across the commonwealth to a myriad of events with each division, including some specified in their reports.

Commissioner Allen at the Veterans Breakout session titled "Combatting Behavior Health Issues for Kentucky Veterans."

## Veterans Cemeteries Division

Kentucky has five state veteran cemeteries that service the 120 counties that make up the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The veterans' cemeteries are fully funded by the General Assembly and staffed by full-time state employees. Kentucky's five veteran cemeteries have completed 19,997 honorable and dignified interments, 1,564 were completed during FY23.



Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West (KVCW) opened on March 1, 2004, in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. Kim Ebeling a U.S. Army spouse currently serves as the Veteran Cemetery Manager for this facility.

Main entrance Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Northeast.

As of June 30, 2023, 6,103 veterans and family members have been interred at KVCW. During FY23, KVCW averaged 36 interments per month.

Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Central (KVCC) opened on June 1, 2007, in Radcliff, Kentucky. Retired Airforce Command Chief Master Sergeant Shane Lagrone currently serves as the Veteran Cemetery Manager. After sixteen years of operation, 9,340 veterans and eligible family members are interred at KVCC, as of June 30, 2023. During FY23, KVCC averaged 61 interments per month.

Kentucky Veterans Cemetery North (KVCN) opened on August 22, 2008, in Williamstown, Kentucky. Retired Sergeant First Class Robert Miller currently serves as Veteran Cemetery Manager. As of June 30, 2023, 2,674 veterans and eligible family members are interred. During FY23, KVCN averaged 18 interments per month.

Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Northeast (KVCNE) opened on October 1, 2010, in Grayson, Kentucky. Frank Kees a Navy veteran is currently serving as the Veteran Cemetery Manager. As of June 30, 2023, 1,759 veterans and eligible family members are interred. During FY23, KVCNE averaged 12 interments per month.

KDVA's fifth and final cemetery, the Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Southeast (KVCSE) opened on May 1, 2018, in Hyden, Kentucky. Eric Barger a Lesley County native—is currently serving as the Veteran Cemetery Manager. As of June 30, 2023, 98 veterans and eligible family members are interred. During FY23, KVCSE averaged 2 interments per month.

The Cemeteries Division's Budget encompasses both general operating funds and donations made in trust by Kentuckians and Kentucky businesses to aid in the enhancement and beautification of KDVA's five cemeteries. The Cemeteries Division's FY23 budget is as follows:

| CEMETERIES OPERATING BUDGET | FY23 ANNUAL REPORT |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Beginning Balance           | \$689,782.05       |
| Revenue                     |                    |
| • General Fund              | \$2,594,800.00     |
| • Interments                | \$957,207.00       |
| • Dependent Burials         | \$203,500.00       |
| • Misc. Income              | \$1,285.04         |
| Total Revenue               | \$3,756,792.04     |
| Expenditures                | (\$3,410,909.49)   |
| Ending Balance              | \$1,035,667.60     |

| CEMETERIES TRUST FUND | FY23 ANNUAL REPORT |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Beginning Balance     | \$231,557.87       |
| Revenue               |                    |
| • Donations           | \$38,081.36        |
| • Interest            | \$8,419.09         |
| Total Revenue         | \$46,500.45        |
| Expenditures          | (\$51,302.19)      |
| Ending Balance        | \$226,755.13       |



## INDIGENT VETERANS' BURIAL PROGRAM

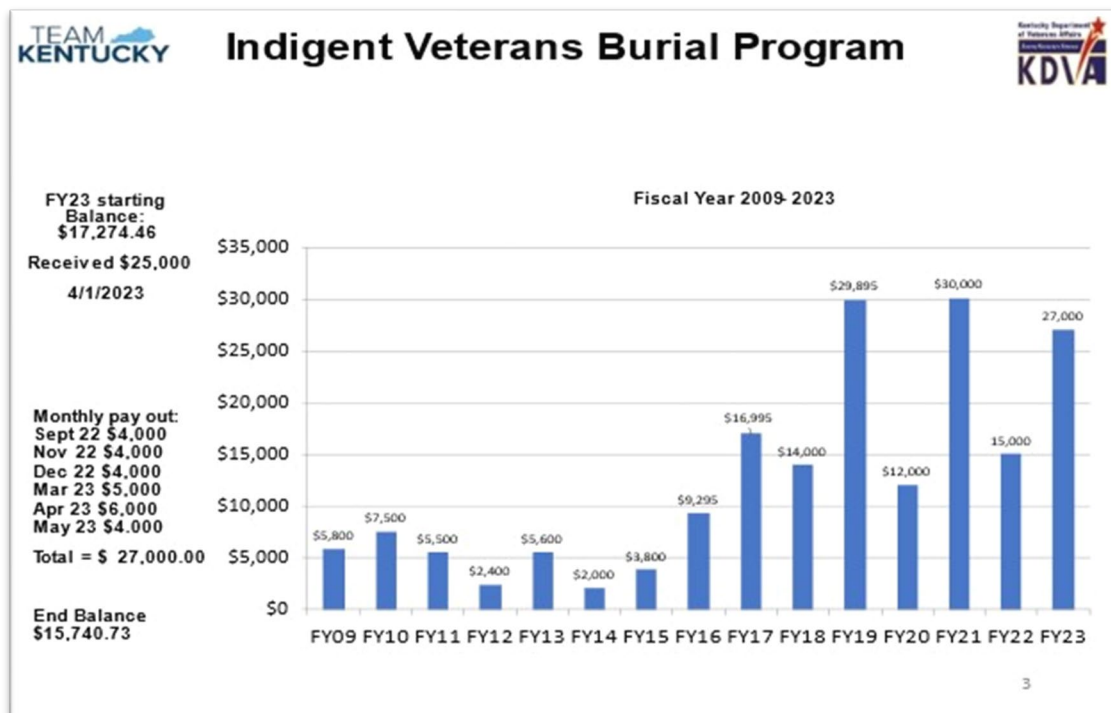
The Commonwealth of Kentucky appreciates the need to provide honorable burials for Kentuckians who have served the Commonwealth and the nation in the Armed Forces. The Commonwealth also recognizes that the brave military veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces should never have to face pauper burials due to financial hardships. However, many indigent veterans do not have the means to defray the cost of funeral expenses at the end of their life. To correct this unfortunate situation, KDVA's Cemeteries Division oversees the Indigent Veterans' Burial Program. Promulgated pursuant to 17 KAR 4:040, the Program provides funding up to \$1,000.00 to help cover the cost of funeral arrangements for each indigent veteran.



The Motorcycle Hearse was provided to give PFC Leonard Adams WWII KIA his last ride to KVCC.

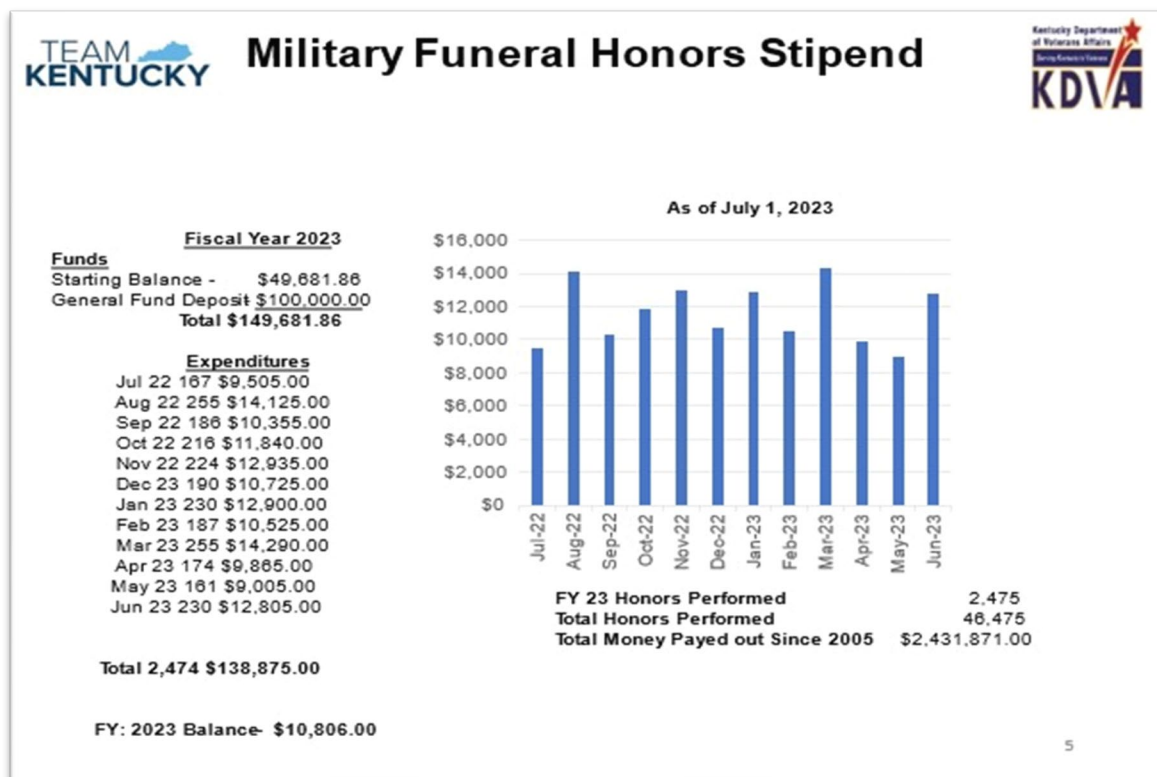
The Indigent Veterans Burial Program started FY23 with a budget of \$17,274.46, and then received another \$25,000.00 from the Veterans Program Trust Fund. During FY23, the program paid \$27,000.00, to assist with interring 27 veterans were provided with an honorable and dignified interment with full military honors. Each Veteran then was interred in the closest state veteran cemetery or the closest national cemetery in Kentucky.

Since its inception in 2009, the Program has expended \$144,785.00 to provide indigent veterans with honorable and dignified burials. The average cost of each interment is \$904.90. As a result, all one hundred sixty (160) indigent veterans received full military burial honors and were interred in one of KDVA's five state veterans' cemeteries or one of the five national VA cemetery located within the Commonwealth of Kentucky.



## VETERANS' SERVICE ORGANIZATION BURIAL HONOR GUARD PROGRAM

On July 1, 2002, the General Assembly promulgated KRS 40.360 & 40.362, which establishes KDVA's Burial Honor Guard Program and the Burial Honor Guard Trust Fund. The Program assists local Kentucky VSOs with augmenting the existing Federal program that offers a two-person honors team. The Veterans Burial Honors Program (BHP) in Kentucky provides a final tribute to the men and women who served our state and nation honorably as members of the U.S. Armed Forces. It allows a grateful nation to pay its last respects in a dignified and solemn ceremony. KDVA administers the Program with assistance from VSOs, funeral directors, and the active duty and reserve components of the U.S. Armed Forces.



## NOTEWORTHY ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR FY23

This past fiscal year, the Cemeteries Division added 10 new positions to bring our cemeteries in line with the amount of interments per month. KVCC hired a new Veterans Cemetery Manager during FY23. The Division continues to experienced a large turnover with Caretaker positions. This past Memorial Day all cemeteries experienced large crowds for their Memorial Day Ceremonies. KVCSE went through an Compliance Review Program's (CRP) site evaluation in April 2023. Out of the three different priority levels KVCSE scored exceptionally high in all three priority levels and is up for a Stewardship award presented by the National Cemeteries Administration (NCA). KVCW applied for and received a Federal Grant from the Veterans Cemetery Grants Program (VCGP) for \$2.5 million for an expansion of 2,000 pre-placed double depth lawn crypts.

House Bill 29 was signed into law removing the residency requirement for eligibility for interment into one of Kentucky's five state veterans' cemeteries.



## CEMETERIES DIVISION GOALS FOR FY24

Goals for FY24 include the following:

- Pursue burial expansion for KVCC, and KVCW for new Columbarium walls.
- Continue to work with our partners in raising funds to build a Gold Star Monument at KVCW and KVCSE.

- Complete KVCN's Committal shelter limestone project.
- Continue the Expansion at KVCW 2,000 pre-placed double depth lawn crypts.
- Continue to utilize the NCA School for cemetery personal.



Kentucky Veterans Cemetery North:  
Gold Star Family Monument.



## Contacting State Veterans Cemeteries

Mr. Alvin W. Duncan ▪ U.S. Army MSG (Retired)

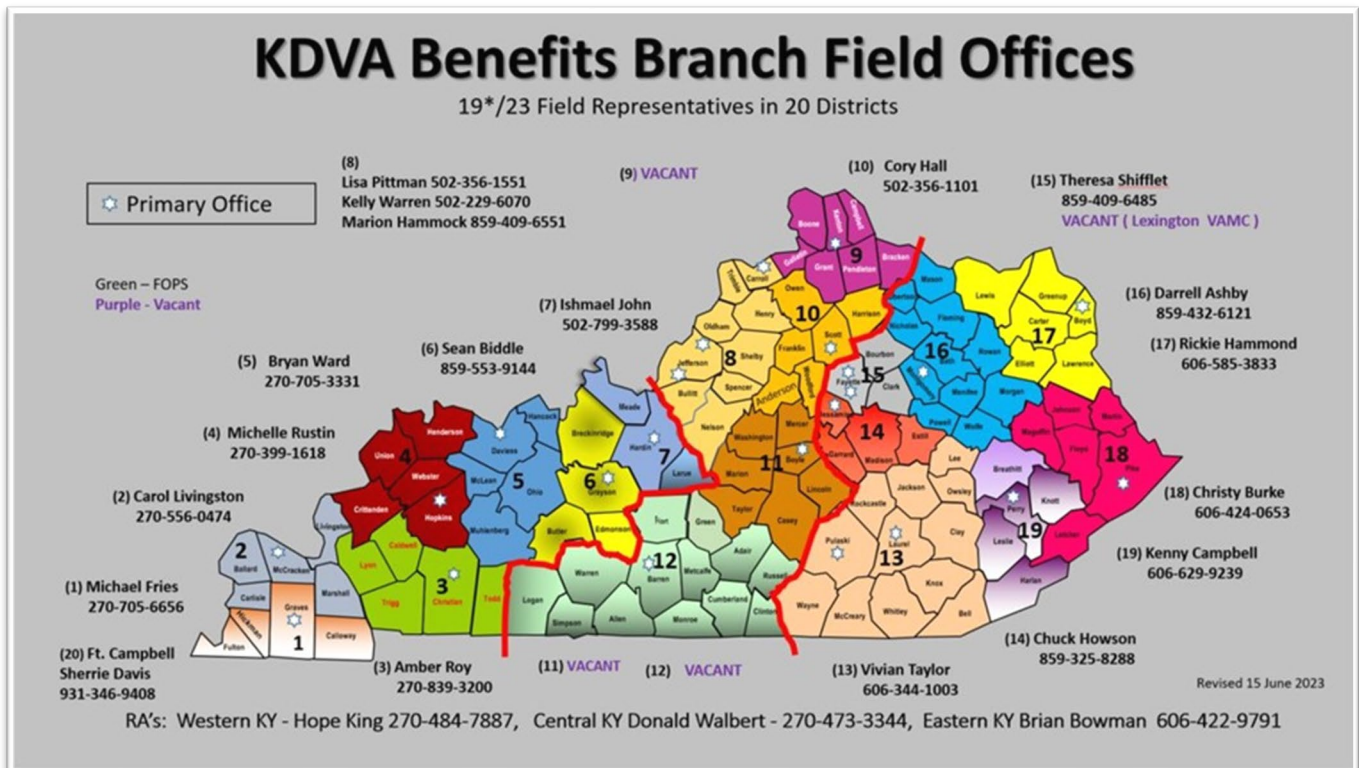
Director State Veterans Cemeteries ▪ OKVS

O: (502)782-5731 ▪ C: (502)229-2718 ▪ [Alvin.Duncan@ky.gov](mailto:Alvin.Duncan@ky.gov)



## Veterans Benefits Division

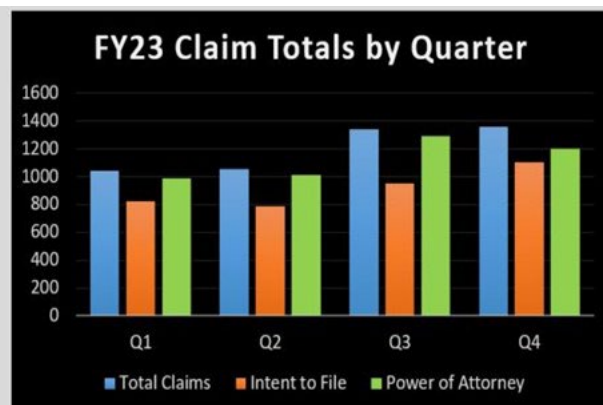
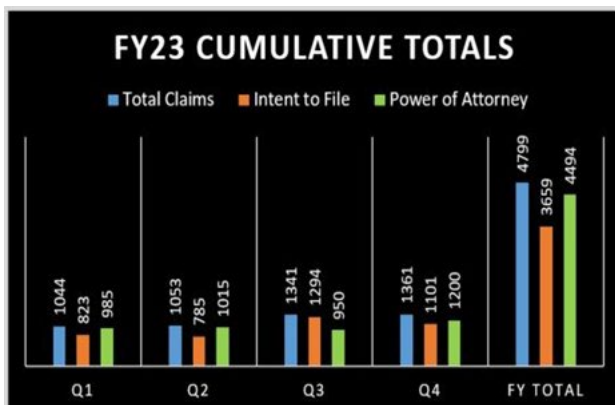
Established pursuant to KRS 40.317, KDVA's Benefits Division's primary mission is to assist veterans and their family members with filing for their federal VA Compensation and Pension Benefits. The Benefits Division has Veterans Benefits Representatives (VBRs) across the Commonwealth to ensure that veterans have 'accredited' representatives when pursuing their VA claims for compensation and benefits. The following demonstrates where representatives are located:



## Noteworthy Accomplishments for FY23

FY23 saw both a return to normalcy and the return of KDVA's VBRs to their offices. While the Benefits Division conducted many in-office visits with veterans and family members, the Division continued to leverage available technology to assist clients who either did not wish to or were unable to travel to a Field Representative Office.

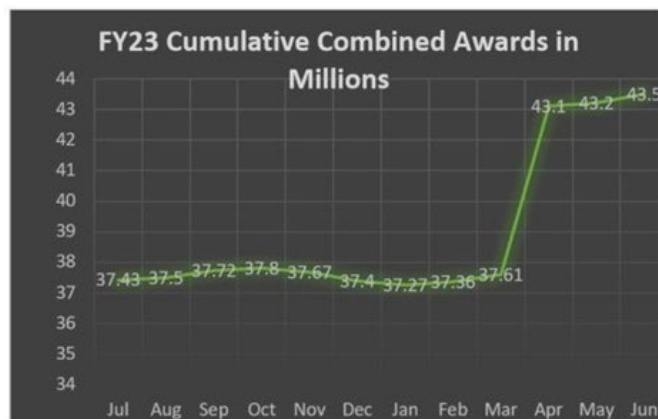
In FY23, the Benefits Division submitted 4,799 'fully-developed' Pension and Compensation Claims to the U.S. Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). In addition, the Benefits Division submitted 3,659 Intent to File notices (ITFs), preserving an effective date for future claims. The Benefits Division also added 4,494 Power of Attorneys (21-22) additional veterans and survivors, who appointed KDVA as their accredited representative and performed 51,837 Veteran and dependent actions in FY23.



### POWERS OF ATTORNEY (POAs) AS OF 30 JUNE 2023

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| • Total Veterans in Kentucky:                            | 267,825       |
| • Veterans represented by KDVA as of 03.31.22:           | 28,052 (+187) |
| • Beneficiaries represented as of 03.31.22:              | 9,738 (+177)  |
| • Overall Percentage of KY Veterans Represented by KDVA: | 14%           |

### Annual Claims Data for FY23



Over the course of FY23, the successive monthly Compensation and Pension awards to Kentucky veterans and survivors represented by KDVA—approximately 14% of veterans in the Commonwealth—increased from \$37.4 million to \$43.5 million. The total VBA payments to our clients including FY23 was \$467.56 million.

### Annual Appeals Data for FY23

The Division's full time Appeals Manager fully supported the BVA's Virtual Hearing ongoing initiative by representing appellants at 91 virtual hearings. This hearing option allows veterans or family members to participate in their hearings from the comfort of their home. In addition to contributing to the running award totals, successful appeals yielded lump sum retroactive awards in excess of \$1.2 million.

## CLAIMS SUMMARY

- Total Claims: 4,317
- Intent to File Notices: 3,248
- New 21-22 (POA): 4,013

## APPEALS SUMMARY

- Board of Veterans Appeals Hearings: 66
- HLR Conferences: 25
- FY23 Appeals Retro Awards: \$1,267,292.60

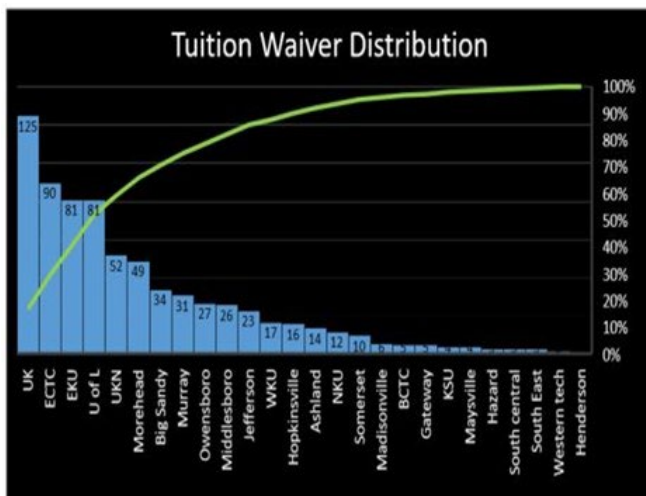
KDVA's national reputation for excellence and innovation was recognized by being selected as one of the first states to partner with the Veterans Engagement Office of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to present a Virtual - Veterans Experience Action Center (VEAC). During FY23, Kentucky successfully hosted the first in-person VEAC in Louisville, KY June 2023. The VA joined forces with KDVA and community and strategic partners to connect veterans, family members, caregivers, and survivors to services and benefits they have earned. This event was extremely successful, and the Benefits Division was able to capitalize on lessons learned to increase the number of customers actions from 26,166 FY22 to 51,837 FY23.



Veteran Benefits Representatives assisted veterans during the first in person Veteran Experience Action Center partnered with Federal VA.

## Tuition Waivers for FY23

For FY23, the Benefits Division continued to administer the Kentucky Tuition Waiver program by processing 833 applications and awarding 702 waivers of tuition to Kentucky's state-funded colleges and universities with a monetary value of \$23,932,020.00.



## Benefits Division Goals for FY24

- Increase veterans claims and Powers of Attorney from 27,000 to 35,000.
- Engage with corporate entities that provide Veterans Resource Groups.
- Reform operation and training within the Division.
- Provide training for claims officers located within Kentucky's Veteran Service Offices.
- Increase engagements in the surrounding counties.
- Continue to hire capable VBRs to efficiently process veterans' claims.
- Execute benefits claims clinics with Humana, Inc., Jim Beam, and others.
- Establish the Division's first physical Veterans Engagement Action Center (VEAC) in the spring of 2023.



### Contacting Veterans Benefits Division

Mr. Stephen Buford ▪ U.S. Army (Retired)

Director of Veterans Benefits ▪ OKVS

Stephen.Buford@ky.gov

Website: [veterans.ky.gov/Benefits](https://veterans.ky.gov/Benefits)



## Veterans State Programs Division

KDVA's Veterans Programs Division offers a wide variety of programs to veterans of the Commonwealth. The Division consists of the Homeless Veterans Program (HVP), the Women's Veterans Program (WVP), and KyVETS—a work force resource program for veterans seeking employment in the Commonwealth.

### HOMELESS VETERANS PROGRAM

Established pursuant to KRS 40.340, KDVA's Homeless Veterans Program (HVP) is focused on preventing veteran homelessness across the Commonwealth by connecting with veterans in need before they are in crisis. HVP is a proven, successful program that aids those at imminent risk of homelessness by collaborating with community partners and together working to connect veterans with resources across the state.

During 2022, the General Assembly awarded the HVP Trust Fund \$200,000 and a full-time employee for the 2022-2024 budget session. Margaret Raymond hired on to help process applications made to the Veterans Program Trust Fund.

### THE HOMELESS VETERANS PROGRAM: REQUESTED GRANTS

FY 23 the Homeless Veterans Trust Fund paid out a total of \$240,780.23 to help 630 veterans.

During FY19, HVP paid \$62,457.65 helping 256 veterans. During FY20, HVP paid \$123,638.96 helping 364 veterans. During FY21, HVP paid \$101,848.28 helping 318 veterans. During FY22, HVP paid \$157,812.66 helping 417 veterans. Working in conjunction with community partners, numerous veterans found permanent housing. HVP received and expended the following amounts on preventing veteran homelessness:

| HOMELESS VETERANS TRUST FUND               | FY23 ANNUAL REPORT  |
|--|---------------------|
| Beginning Balance                          | \$9,832.94          |
| Revenue                                    |                     |
| • VPTF Transfers                           | \$20,000.00         |
| • Donations                                | \$5,312.00          |
| • Interest                                 | \$2,815.48          |
| • Stale Checks                             | \$2,813.34          |
| • General Funds                            | 200,000.00          |
| <b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>                       | <b>\$230,940.82</b> |
| Expenditures to avoid Veteran Homelessness |                     |

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| • Gas   | (\$9,740.63)          |
| • Electric  | (\$72,690.76)         |
| • Water/Sewer                                       | (\$16,015.21)         |
| • Rent/Temporary Shelter                            | (\$138,098.89)        |
| • Military Order of the Purple Heart Tornado Relief | (\$1,000.00)          |
| • Transfer remaining grant back to VPTF             | (\$3,199.74)          |
| • <b>Returned Check Fee</b>                         | (\$5.00)              |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>                           | <b>(\$240,750.23)</b> |
| <b>FY23 ENDING BALANCE</b>                          | <b>\$23.53</b>        |

## Noteworthy Accomplishments for FY23

FY 23 started out with \$209,832.94 and a goal of helping 500 veterans. To make the program more convenient and responsive to community partners the grant amount increased from a standard \$350.00 to \$500.00.

Veterans are now able to access the grant once per calendar year (every 365 days). The second request is preferred to be submitted from a community partner.



## FY23 Outreach:

The Homeless Veterans Program made application to the Veterans Program Trust Fund asking for sponsorship for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Run, Walk, Stroll, 5 K to help focus attention on the KDVA's commitment to end veteran homelessness.

The board generously granted \$3,443.31 to sponsor the event in Louisville at Iroquois Park on October 22, 2022.



Commissioner Whitney Allen and the Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer at the 5K run in Louisville, Oct. 22, 2022.



John Miles, Veteran Coordinator for Metro Louisville Government facilitated a partnership with Ginger Wallace and Brooke Pardue with Parks and Alliance of Louisville to sponsor a cold weather coat drive from 11/25/22 - 1/1/2023 during the Winter Wonderland Spectacular. Dec 16, 2022, was Veterans night and a discount was offered.



Eileen Ward, Homeless Veterans Program administrator drops off goods to the House of Hope in Louisville, KY. Dec. 20, 2022.

The Kentucky Community Enrichment Foundation, Inc. and the Louisville Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. are preparing for the 11th Annual Kappa Christmas Basket Giveaway. KDVA was invited to provide names of veterans and families that deserve a blessing for the Christmas Holiday.



### Contacting the Homeless Veterans Program

Mrs. Eileen Ward

Homeless Veteran Program Administrator • State Programs Division • OKVS

O: (502)782-5730 • C: (502)352-3120 • Eileen.Ward@ky.gov

Website: [https://veterans.ky.gov/Veterans-](https://veterans.ky.gov/Veterans-Programs/Homeless-Veterans/Pages/default.aspx)

[Programs/Homeless-Veterans/Pages/default.aspx](https://veterans.ky.gov/Veterans-Programs/Homeless-Veterans/Pages/default.aspx)

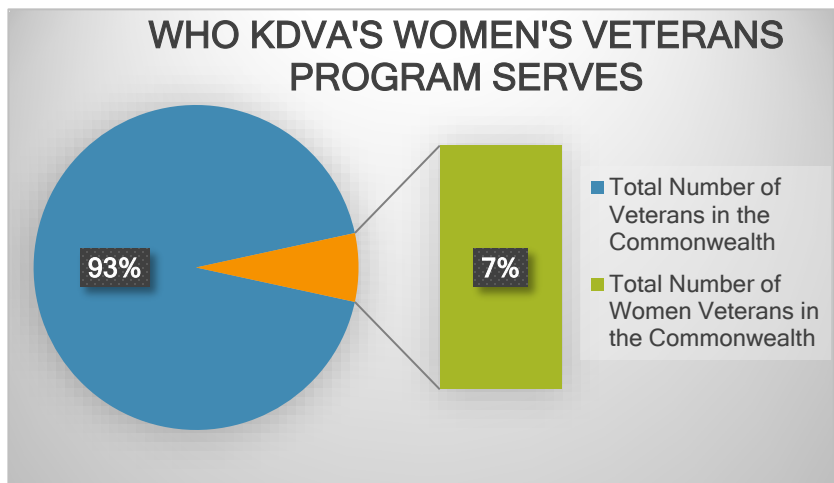
## WOMEN VETERANS PROGRAM

Established pursuant to KRS 40.600, KDVA's Women Veterans Program (WVP) is dedicated to addressing the unique need of women who have honorably served. The mission of the Women Veterans Program is to ensure that Kentucky's women veterans have "equitable access to federal and state veterans' services and benefits" and to ensure that women veterans are treated with dignity and respect and are understood by veteran service providers. The program promotes advocacy, public awareness, collaboration, research, education, honor and recognition, and support to women veterans and their families.

### The Female Veteran Population in the Commonwealth of Kentucky

During FY22, there were over 27,000 women veterans residing in the Commonwealth.

KDVA's Women's Veterans Program made great strides performing outreach to improve women veterans' awareness of eligibility for federal and state veterans' services and benefits. Locate, Educate & Advocate!



### Noteworthy Accomplishments for FY23

#### Telling Their Stories: A Celebration of Women Veterans

The Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs Women Veterans Program and The University of Louisville Commonwealth Center for The Humanities and Society presented a speaker series about Women Veterans and the importance of their stories and perspectives.



Martha Kotite speaks to the audience during the Women Veterans Event, March 16, 2023.

Guest Speaker for the 2023 event was Martha L. Kotite, Retired Captain, U.S. Coast Guard, Award Winning Author, and TEDx Speaker. Women veterans from across the state were invited to attend, hear Captain Kotite's inspiring words, and purchase her award-winning books on women resiliency. The audience was also treated to some history of Kentucky Women Veterans Programs by Former KDVA Commissioner Heather French Henry.



## Meet the New Women's Veteran Committee

The Kentucky Women Veterans Coordinating Committee is authorized in KY Statute and its members specified by either position or contribution to women veterans. The current Committee membership is:

- Maria Cantu
- Robin Higgins
- Erin Mires (secretary)
- Shawn Blades
- Representative Pamela Stevenson
- Senator Lindsay Tichenor (chair)
- Robin Grant

## 2023 Women Veterans State Conference

The Women Veterans Program held its 2nd annual Women Veteran's Conference at the Crowne Plaza Hotel Louisville, KY.

The morning session was dedicated to the Veterans Administration Women's Health Reengagement Training Workshop to discuss topics specific to women veterans only; The wide range of subjects included health care challenges, as well as all the benefits available for women veterans. The wide range of subjects included military sexual trauma, preventive care and wellness, mental health, and others.



Kentucky Women Leaders and Veterans at the Women Veterans State Conference.



Lt. Governor Jacqueline Coleman speaking during the Women Veterans State Conference.

There was an impressive list of speakers: Speakers included Lt. Governor Jacqueline Coleman, VA Principal Deputy Undersecretary Michael Frueh, VA Deputy Assistant Secretary Zaneta Adams, VA Executive Director for Women Veterans Lourdes Tigla, KDVA Commissioner Whitney Allen, State Representative Pamela Stevenson, and Inspire CEO Erin Mires.

## Women's Veterans Program Goals for FY23

The goals of the Women Veterans Program include an expansion of the marketing effort to identify and support Kentucky's 27,000 women veterans. In addition to increasing awareness of and among our women veterans, the Program will seek partners both in government and without. Building and affirming an identity as women veterans is top of the list—as well as scrutinizing programs designed to serve women veterans. Progress along these lines will be reviewed regularly by the Women Veterans Coordinating Committee as well as during our next Annual Women Veterans Conference.



### Contacting the Women's Veterans Program

Dina Parrott WVP Administrator ▪ State Programs Division ▪ OKVS  
O: (502)782-5738 ▪ Website: <https://veterans.ky.gov/Veterans-Programs/Women-Veterans/Pages/default.aspx>

## KyVETS

In 2023, we have the happy situation of historically low unemployment for Kentucky veterans. However, of concern is the pay gap between pay and allowances of departing servicemembers and the pay they are receiving as civilian veterans. Our focus remains on helping veterans gain high quality jobs that more than pay a living wage—certainly at least equivalent to their active duty pay—and standard of living.

KyVETS has thus partnered with a number of entities in the employment space to enhance and encourage certifications for soon-to-depart servicemembers that will allow them to enter the workforce at much higher levels of pay.

In addition, KyVETS has begun to develop a large network of KY employers who desire to hire high quality veterans at good wages. Partners such as the KY Chamber of Commerce and the Department of Labor are consistent sources of information for the Program.



### Contacting the KyVETS Program

Jennifer Case KyVETS Program Administrator  
State Programs Division ▪ OKVS  
O: (502)782-5740 ▪ Website: <https://veterans.ky.gov/Veterans-Programs/Veteran-Employment/Pages/Veterans-Employment.aspx>

# OFFICE OF KENTUCKY VETERAN CENTERS

Pursuant to KRS 40.320 and 40.325, the General Assembly determined that the establishment of state veterans' nursing homes was in the best interest of the veterans of the Commonwealth and necessary to the well-being of the Commonwealth's elderly and disabled veterans. The Office of Kentucky Veterans' Center (OKVC) was established to operate the Commonwealth's veterans' centers and medical division. Pursuant to KRS 12.050, OKVC's Executive Director is Mark Bowman, who reports to Commissioner Whitney Allen. Martha Workman serves as Deputy Executive Director of OKVC.

Kentucky has four state veterans centers with a fifth under construction in Bowling Green that service the 120 counties that make up the Commonwealth of Kentucky.



Thomson-Hood Veterans Center (THVC) opened in 1991 in Wilmore, Kentucky. Joni Gosser currently serves as the facility's Administrator. The facility is a 285-bed skilled nursing facility with a secure unit. During FY23 the facility provided 39,210 days of care.



The Paul E. Patton Eastern Kentucky Veterans Center (EKVC) opened 2002 in Hazard, Kentucky. Wade Lindon, an Army Veteran serves as the facility's Administrator. The facility is a 120-bed skilled nursing facility with a secure unit. During FY23 the facility provided 24,674 days of care.



The Joseph E. Ballard Western Kentucky Veterans Center (WKVC) opened in 2002 in Hanson, Kentucky. LaDonna Scott serves as the facility's Administrator. The facility is a 156-bed skilled nursing facility with a secure unit. During FY23 the facility provided 19,493 days of care.

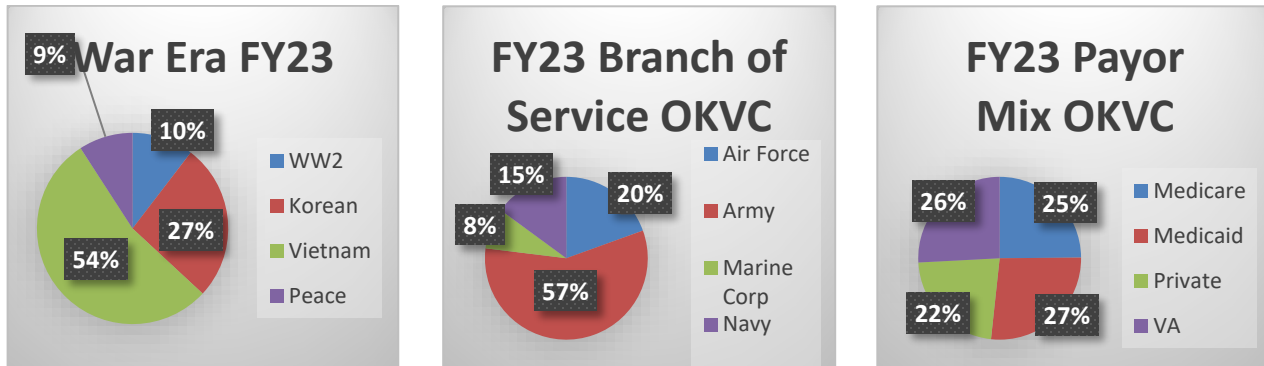


The Carl M. Brashear Radcliff Veterans Center (RVC) opened in 2017 and is located right outside the gates of Fort Knox Army Post. Sue Popplewell serves as the facility's Administrator. The facility is a 120-bed skilled nursing facility with all private suites. During FY 23 the facility provided 16,016 days of care.

The Robert E. Spiller Bowling Green Veterans Center started construction in 2023. The 60-bed skilled nursing facility is in the Transpark in Bowling Green on 25 acres and is scheduled to open in the fall of 2024. OKVC is proud to provide skilled nursing care in four diverse regions of the state, with a new state of the art facility under construction in Bowling Green.

## Veteran Populations: Who OKVC Serves

OKVC serves veterans of various ages, branches of service, as well as combat and peacetime service eras. The following provides an overview of our veteran population:



## Serving Kentucky's Veterans: OKVC's Operating Budget

The Office of Kentucky Veterans Centers operations are funded by a mixture of both general fund support and restricted revenue in the form of Medicare, Medicaid, Private Pay, Insurance and VA per diem payments. OKVC's FY23 budget is as follows:

### OKVC OPERATING BUDGET FOR FY23

#### REVENUE

|                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| • General Funds    | \$22,358,363.96 |
| • Restricted Funds | \$56,268,610.18 |

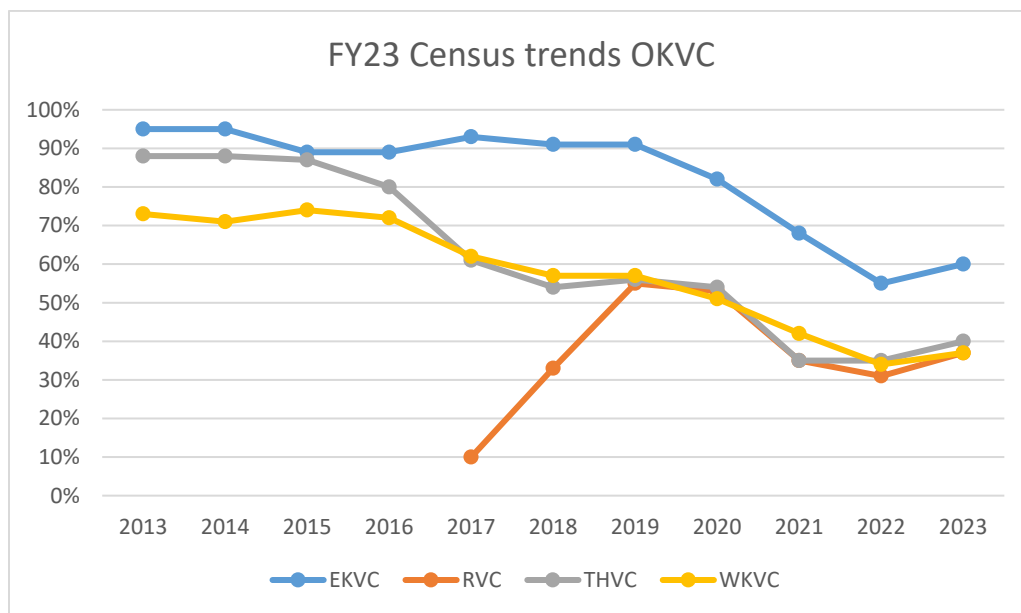
|                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| <b>TOTAL REVENUE</b> | <b>\$78,626,974.14</b> |
|----------------------|------------------------|

|                     |                           |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>EXPENDITURES</b> | <b>(-\$76,762,546.36)</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------------|

Staffing vacancies and the COVID19 pandemic have led to a historical low census. OKVC has worked with the Personnel Cabinet, Office of State Budget Director and State Legislators in aggressively addressing this issue. Based on those collaborative efforts, KDVA successfully implemented a targeted locality premium that helped increase wages for difficult to fill positions. In addition, grade changes and Special Entry Rates improved the agency's ability to fill vacancies. The following net increase in full time staff for each facility demonstrate the impact of those efforts. The second graph demonstrates the slow recovery from the effects of COVID.



|      | 18A FT positions<br>Filled as of 2/16/2023 | 18A FT positions<br>Filled as of 7/12/2023 | Net gain/(loss)<br>Since initiative began |
|------|--|--|---|
| EKVC | 105  | 155  | 50  |
| RVC  | 70   | 84   | 14  |
| THVC | 144  | 155  | 11  |
| WKVC | 78   | 90   | 12  |
| OKVC | 397  | 484  | 87  |



In November 2022, Gov. Beshear joined federal, state and local leaders to break ground on the Bowling Green Veterans Center, the Commonwealth’s fifth state veterans home in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Then on April 19, 2023, KDVA hosted a special ceremony announcing that the new facility would be named after Colonel Robert E. Spiller, key to the efforts in making a state veterans home in Bowling Green a reality. The 60-bed skilled nursing facility started construction in the fall of 2022 and is scheduled to open in the fall of 2024. House Bill 2 funded an additional \$16,630,000 in fiscal year 2022-2023 from the Budget Reserve Trust Fund to previously appropriated budget items to complete construction of the \$53 million Veterans Center in Bowling Green. The Veterans Center will create approximately 120 new jobs and will be the state’s fifth long-term skilled nursing care facility. The 80,000-square-foot facility will provide 60 beds and is being built on 25 acres donated by the Inter-Modal Transportation Authority at the Kentucky Transpark in in Bowling Green, KY.



The groundbreaking ceremony for the Robert E. Spiller Bowling Green Veteran Center in Bowling Green, KY, Nov. 2, 2022.

## Noteworthy Accomplishments for FY23

Flooding in Eastern Kentucky brought out the best in the Commonwealth and our KDVA family. Everyone came together to provide support and assistance to those affected by the devastating flooding by opening up a “donation store” to help our teammates at the Paul E. Patton Eastern Kentucky Veterans Home.



OKVC secured grant funding for virtual reality devices for veterans. MyndVR, the leading provider of VR-based, digital therapeutic experiences for the aging population in collaboration with the BVL (Bowlers to Veterans), a 501c3 charity that funds recreation therapy programs to address the emotional and physical needs of Veterans and active-duty military awarded the grants to state veteran homes across the nation. Veterans are engaging in this new technology to expand their experiences beyond the facility's physical walls.



Congratulations to the Eastern Kentucky Veterans Center's restorative team for receiving the 2023 Governor's Ambassador Award for the restorative nursing team's efforts during COVID.

Both the Paul E. Patton Eastern Kentucky Veterans Center and the Carl M. Brashear Radcliff Veterans Center were awarded a 3-year grant for to help foster culture change from The Eden Alternative Grant through Altarum. Each facility and its team will go through a transformational process to teach culture change and how to develop a more person centered/home like environment for our veterans.



OKVC entered its third year of its Nurse Loan Repayment Program. Over the past three years, OKVC has provided forty-five (45) nurse loan tuition reimbursement payments totaling over \$283,657 to qualified nurses in all four state veterans homes. That \$283,657 investment yielded a net turnover savings of approximately \$875,858.

## Office of Kentucky Veterans Centers Goals for FY24

- Fill staffing vacancies to increase access to care.
- Restructure facilities to increase private rooms for a more homelike environment.
- Complete construction of the Robert E. Spiller Bowling Green Veterans Center in Bowling Green, a 60-bed state veterans home.
- Continue development of in-house mental/behavioral health program.



## Contacting the Office of Kentucky Veterans Centers

Mr. Mark Bowman ▪ U.S. Navy Veteran

Executive Director Office of Kentucky Veterans Centers ▪ OKVC

O: (502)782-5725 ▪ C: (859)553-9359 ▪ [Mark.Bowman@ky.gov](mailto:Mark.Bowman@ky.gov)

Website: <https://veterans.ky.gov/Veterans-Centers/Pages/default.aspx>

# OFFICE OF VETERAN LEGAL SERVICES

KDVA's Office of Veteran Legal Services (OVLS) was established pursuant to KRS 40.300(4). The reports to the KDVA Commissioner and address legal issues associated with KDVA's mission to assist Kentucky veterans and their families to pursue "all claims, privileges, rights, and other benefits which they may have under federal, state, or local laws." Honorable Tamara Reid-McIntosh continued serving as Executive Director and Counsel for OVLS, reports to Commissioner.

During FY23, the Office of Veteran Legal Services continued to fine-tune its Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to ensure that the Office serves veterans more effectively and efficiently by becoming a repository of information, materials, and resources for veterans seeking legal services within the Commonwealth. As a result, OVLS undertook the following legal services:

## Administrative Legal Services

During FY23, OVLS continued to advise KDVA's divisions and programs in the furtherance of its mission and represents KDVA before the Commonwealth's administrative boards and commissions. OVLS also provided legal support to the Veterans Program Trust Fund Board of Directors. As KDVA is an extension of the Governor's Office, OVLS's Counsel continued to serve as Ethics Officer to ensure KDVA functions within the Executive Branch's guidelines.



## Outside Legal Collaborations

During FY23, OVLS sustained and furthered partnerships with organizations that focus on or assist with veterans legal issues. Specifically, OVLS continued referring veterans to Legal Aid societies throughout the Commonwealth, which offer veterans, based on their income, low/no-cost legal assistance with civil matters (*e.g.*, domestic relations, contracts, probate, etc.). OVLS also expanded began compiling a database of attorneys in the Commonwealth who may be willing to provide legal services at a discounted hourly rate if a veteran's income exceeds the requirements to be eligible for assistance from Legal Aid.

Approximately 90% of OVLS's referrals for FY23 were in regions 2 and 3; however, Legal Aid societies cover each of the following regions:

- **REGION 1:** Kentucky Legal Aid, 1700 Destiny Lane, Bowling Green, KY 42104 (270.782.1924 or 800.782.1924): <https://www.klaid.org/>.



- **REGION 2:** Legal Aid Society, 416 W. Muhammad Ali Boulevard, Suite 300, Louisville, KY 40202 (502.584.1254): <https://yourlegalaid.org/>.
- **REGION 3:** Legal Aid of the Bluegrass, 104 E. 7th Street, Covington, KY 41011 (859.431.8200): <https://lablaw.org/home>.
- **REGION 4:** Appalachian Research and Defense Fund, 120 N. Front Avenue, Prestonsburg, KY 41653 (866.277.5733): <https://www.ardfky.org/>.

## Noteworthy Accomplishments for FY23

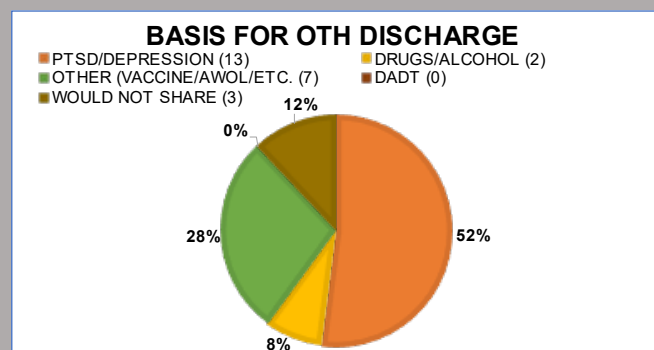
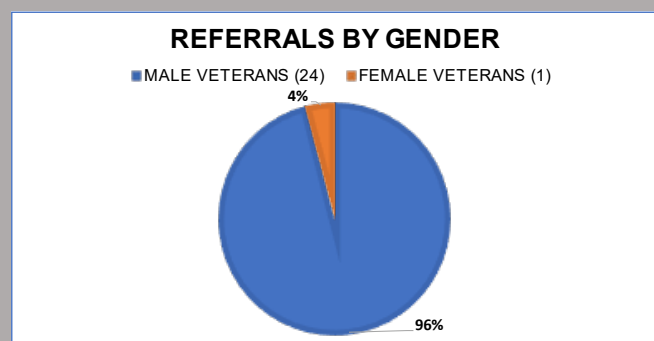
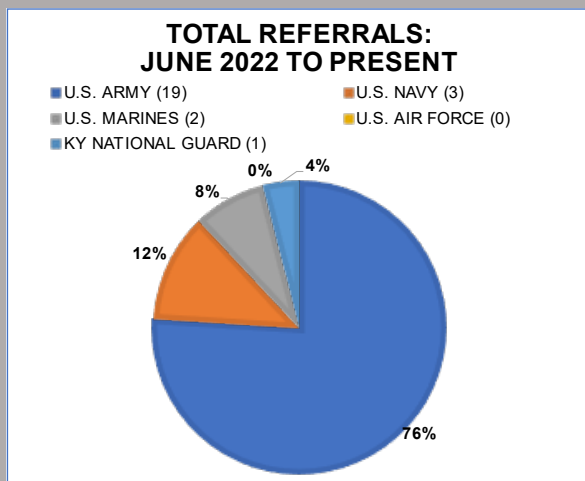
During FY23, OVLS finalized over 150 service contracts for staffing and services for OKVC. OVLS drafted and/or mediated the terms of service contracts, academic practicum MOAs, as well as other service contracts between KDVA and outside agencies and vendors.

During FY22, OVLS negotiated a partnership with the [National Veterans Legal Services Program \(NVLSP\)](#) to provide veterans with no-cost legal assistance with more sophisticated federal VA compensation and pension benefits claims and military service record upgrades:

- Appeals: Board of Veteran Appeals (BVA) and the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC) in Washington D.C.
- Military Service Record Upgrades ([Lawyers Serving Warriors® \(LSW\) Program](#)).



Since June 2022, OVLS has referred twenty-five (25) military service record upgrade applications to NVLSP's LSW Program. The following specifies the referrals by branch of service, basis for OTH discharge, and gender. The average upgrade application process extends from 18 to 24 months.



OVLS also continued to expand its relationship with the Commonwealth's Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) programs, to include the counties offering VTCs in Lexington, Elizabethtown, Louisville, and Northern Kentucky. Counsel for OVLS attended two VTC Graduations during FY23, one in Hardin County and the other in Fayette County. Ten veterans completed the programs.

Additionally, OVLS supported several KDVA sponsored events during FY23, while counsel for OVLS accepted seats on three boards, to include:

- Attended KDVA's Women Veterans Conference (June 2023).
- Supported the Women Veterans Recognition Day Celebration, in recognition of 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Armed Forces Integration Act (June 2023).
- Served as co-chair for the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (2022-2023).
- Transitioned from Governor's Challenge to become a member of the Kentucky Bar Association's Military Law Committee and the Kentucky Administrative Adjudicators Association (KAAA) (2023).

Judge Shumate celebrating with graduates of the May 2023 Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) Graduation in Hardin County.



## Office of Veteran Legal Services Goals for FY24

- Expand OVLS's services to include guidance with veteran-owned business formation.
- Equip veterans with information to avoid VA home loan defaults and pursue repairing and/or improving their credit scores in preparation for VA home ownership.
- Continue promoting the VTC programs throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky.
- Complete hearing officer training for the Commonwealth of Kentucky.
- Continue to serve as a conduit for applicants seeking military service record upgrades through NVLSP.
- Continue to aid Kentucky veterans as they seek legal services throughout the Commonwealth for civil matters and minor criminal infractions.
- Serve on KDVA's Military Law Committee and promote OVLS's Continuing Legal Education (CLE) training module: "Veteran's Law in the Commonwealth", to better serve Kentucky veterans' legal needs.



## Contacting the Office of Veteran Legal Services

Ms. Tamara Reid-McIntosh, JD, PhD • U.S. Air Force Veteran  
Executive Director & Counsel • OVLS

O: (502)782-5723 • C: (502)229-7910 • [Tamara.ReidMcIntosh@ky.gov](mailto:Tamara.ReidMcIntosh@ky.gov)

Website: <https://veterans.ky.gov/Pages/Legal-Resources.aspx>

\*\*\*\*\*

The Department of Veterans Affairs shall manage the Veterans' Program Trust Fund established by KRS 40.460 by hosting all Board meetings, providing logistical support, recording the minutes of each meeting, and authorizing expenditures once the Board has approved a request for funds.

KRS 40.310(7)

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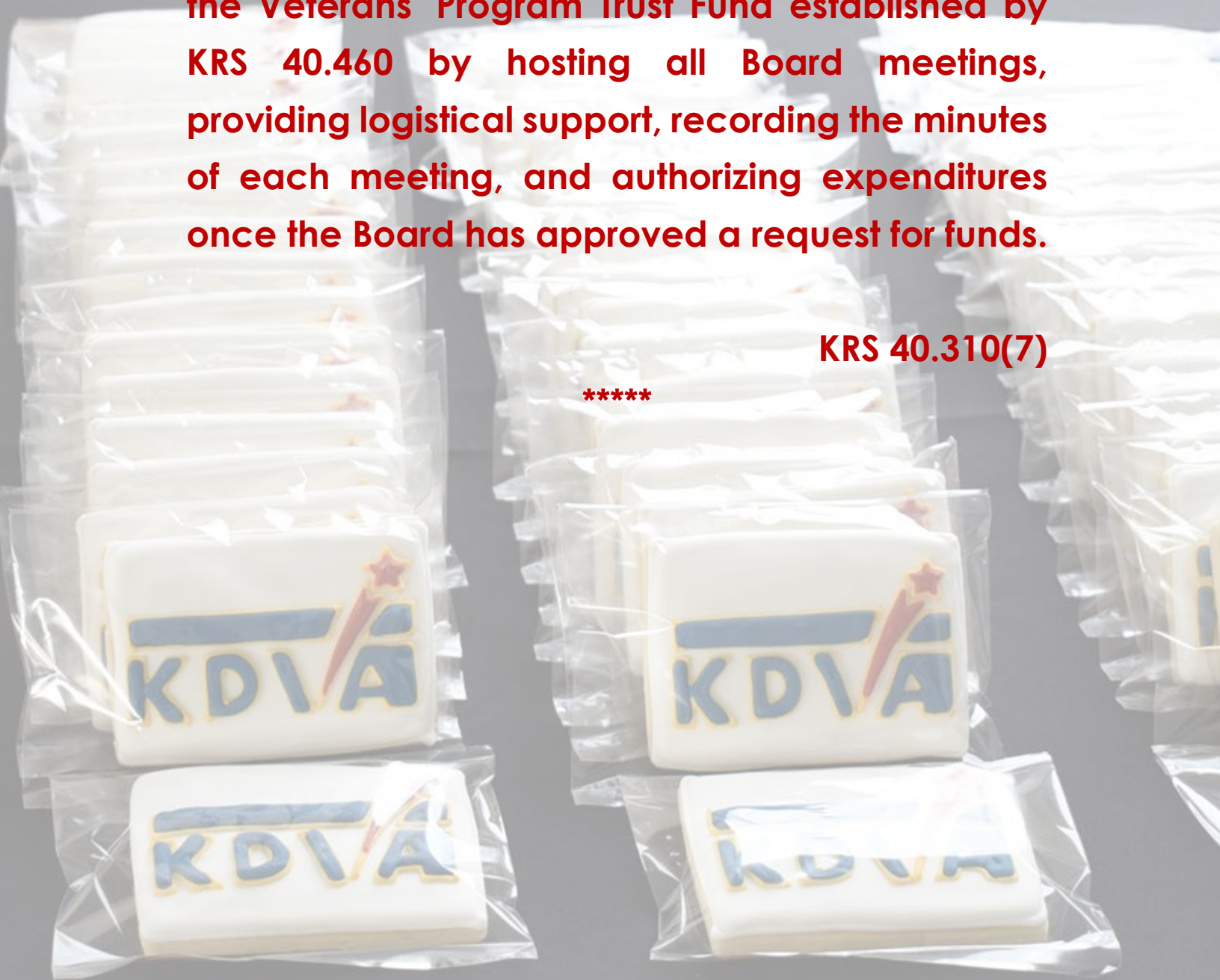


Image of KDVA cookies at an event 2022.

# VETERANS PROGRAM TRUST FUND

The Veterans Program Trust Fund (VPTF) was established as part of the Kentucky Vietnam Veterans' Bonus Act on December 23, 1988. The purpose of the VPTF is to direct funding to projects and programs that aid Kentucky's veterans. KRS 40.460(2)(b), KRS 40.310(7), and 201 KAR 37:010 outline assembly and population requirements for the Trust Fund Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors must consist of eleven members appointed by the Governor, representing the organizations detailed below:

| POSITION  | REPRESENTATIVE       | APPOINTED        | TERM EXPIRES     |
|---|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| The Commissioner  | Whitney Allen        | 04 August 2021   | NA               |
| The Commissioner's KDVA Designee                              | Juan A.Renaud        | 06 June 2023     | NA               |
| Governor's Advisory Board for Veterans' Affairs               | Dave Best            | 22 May 2023      | NA               |
| Joint Executive Council of Veterans Organizations of Kentucky | David Rummier        | 16 July 2020     | 15 July 2023     |
| American Legion, Kentucky                                     | Vacant               |                  |                  |
| Veterans of Foreign Wars                                      | Carl J. Kaelin       | 16 July 2020     | 15 July 2023     |
| Disabled American Veterans                                    | Dave C. Jarrett      | 04 October 2019  | 15 July 2022     |
| American Veterans   | Vacant               |                  |                  |
| Kentucky National Guard                                       | LTC Carla A. Raisler | 08 July 2021     | 15 July 2023     |
| At-large Member   | Amy McGrath          | 11 November 2022 | 10 November 2025 |
| At-large Member   | Timothy Martinez     | 8 July 2021      | 15 July 2023     |

## VPTF's Financial Impact

Funding sources include dollars generated by taxpayers who receive an income tax refund and who contribute all or a portion of that refund to the Trust Fund through the tax check-off on their state income tax form. The Trust Fund also receives a \$5.00 fee that is included in the price of an initial or the renewal of a veterans' license plate. The Trust Fund also graciously accepts tax-deductible contributions from individuals, groups, or corporations. This FY23 update outlines the amounts received from each of these sources.

The Trust Fund began the year with a balance of \$659,482.36. Expenditures during FY23 totaled \$380,921.65. The fiscal year ended with a fund balance, less obligations of \$936,242.29.



## STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE FOR FY23

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| <b>REVENUE</b>                          |                       |
| • Veteran's Plate Sales                 | \$561,583.29          |
| • Donations from Taxes                  | \$17,048.00           |
| • KYTC Web Based Renew Donations        | \$41,604.99           |
| • Stale Check Redeposits                | \$42.14               |
| • Miscellaneous Donations               | \$4,892.50            |
| • Return of Internal Unused Grant Funds | \$3,199.74            |
| • Interest Income                       | \$29,310.92           |
| <b>Total Revenues</b>                   | <b>\$657,681.58</b>   |
| <b>EXPENDITURES</b>                     |                       |
| • External Program Grants               | (\$323,664.65)        |
| • Interagency Program Grants            | (\$46,400.00)         |
| • Program Administration                | (\$10,857.00)         |
| <b>Total Expenditures</b>               | <b>(\$380,921.65)</b> |
| Excess Revenues over Expenditures       | \$276,759.93          |
| Net Change in Fund Balance              | \$276,759.93          |
| <b>FUND BALANCE, BEGINNING</b>          | <b>\$659,482.36</b>   |
| <b>FUND BALANCE, ENDING</b>             | <b>\$936,242.29</b>   |

### A Year in Review: FY23

During this reporting period, the VPTF obligated funds for 25 worthy projects that benefited the Commonwealth's veteran population. The Trust Fund Board of Directors also approved additional modifications to the application in conjunction with KDVA's website updates. Application enhancements, which have continued since FY20, have significantly improved the quality of grant proposals and the effectiveness of Trust Fund expenditures.

### FY23 Meeting Minutes at a Glance

The remaining pages of the KDVA FY23 Annual Report are dedicated to highlighting the scope of projects undertaken and/or supported by funds obligated and dispersed by the VPTF during FY2. The Board of Directors convened four times during FY23: 14 September 2022, 14 December 2022, 22 March 2023, and 28 June 2023. For each meeting, the organization, funding request, purpose, and award amounts are outlined:

## KENTUCKY VETERANS PROGRAM TRUST FUND BOARD MEETING 14 SEPTEMBER 2022

### **ORGANIZATION:** Veterans Rural Outreach

**REQUEST:** \$29,345 to make improvements to 6 homes that serve homeless Veteran population in Shelby County.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$29,345.

- Motion made by David Rummler (JECVO) and seconded (VFW) by Carl Kaelin
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

### **ORGANIZATION:** POW/ MIA Flag Guard

**REQUEST:** \$1,840 to honor an MIA Soldier by building a granite bench with a bronze plaque.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$2,140.

- Motion made by COL Fred Bates (KYNG) and seconded by Dave Jarrett (DAV).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

### **ORGANIZATION:** Pike County Memorial VFW Post 3769

**REQUEST:** \$6,400 to assist with moving a M5 Anti-Tank Gun from Bowling Green, KY to Pikeville Veterans Memorial Park including set up to meet TACOM's static display requirements.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$6,400.

- Motion made by Carl Kaelin (VFW) and seconded by David Rummler (JECVO).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

### **ORGANIZATION:** Morehead State Military Initiative Program

**REQUEST:** \$10,500 to assist military related students and local veterans.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$8,000 with a stipulation that the funds should solely assist Morehead student that are Kentucky Veterans.

- Motion made by Carla Raisler (At-Large) and seconded by Carl Kaelin (VFW).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

## TRUST FUND APPLICANTS AND OUTCOMES



KDVA's donation to Veterans Rural Outreach for improvements to the Veterans Community Center that supports the six Veteran homes in Shelby County.

### **ORGANIZATION:** Visual Presentations Inc.

**REQUEST:** \$10,000 to fund the Kentucky Veterans Day Parade.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$10,000.

- Motion made by David Rummler (JECVO) and seconded by Rick Eisert (Governor's Advisory Board).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

### **ORGANIZATION:** Mountain Comprehensive Care Center, Inc.

**REQUEST:** \$20,000 to provide Welcome Home Packages to homeless veterans when they transition to residences.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$10,000.

- Motion made by Carl Kaelin (VFW) and seconded by Dave Jarrett (DAV).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

## KENTUCKY VETERANS PROGRAM TRUST FUND BOARD MEETING 14 DECEMBER 2022

### **ORGANIZATION:** Louisville Orchestra

**REQUEST:** \$20,000 to provide 150 tickets for a concert for Gold Star families and Kentucky Veterans.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$2,700.

- Motion made by Dave Jarrett (DAV) and seconded by David Rummler (JECVO).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

### **ORGANIZATION:** Living Arts and Science Center

**REQUEST:** \$460 for an exhibit that will identify, uplift and advocate for women veterans in the Commonwealth. Applicant amended request for amount of \$250 and purpose to provide a reception for women veterans.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$250.

- Motion made by COL(R) Fred Bates (KYNG) and seconded by Dave Jarrett (DAV).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

### **ORGANIZATION:** Northern Kentucky University – Veterans Resource Station

**REQUEST:** \$2,961.16 to promote the NKU Veterans Resource Center (VRC) to promote Green Zone Brigade Day to showcase the mission of the VRC as NKU's Veterans' Hub.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$2,961.16.

- Motion made by David Rummler (JECVO) and seconded by COL(R) Fred Bates (KYNG).
- Motion unanimously carried.

### **ORGANIZATION:** Operation Honor Corps

**REQUEST:** \$50,000 to assist with the following: (1) to purchase requisite commercial flag poles to raise flags for the U.S. branches of service (to include Space Force) and the American flag at the Veterans Memorial at Patriot's Landing; and (2) to purchase 100 commercial flags to be displayed at the entrance of Kentucky's Veterans Cemetery North.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$50,000 (with stipulation).

## TRUST FUND APPLICANTS AND OUTCOMES



**Operation Honor Corps request to purchase U.S. Branch Flags for placement at Patriot's Landing in Williamstown, KY.**

### **ORGANIZATION:** Veteran's Walking Wounded Project, Inc.

**REQUEST:** \$9,250 to provide veterans guidance in the Fayette County Veterans Drug Treatment Court.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$9,250 (with stipulation).

- Motion made by COL(R) Fred Bates (KYNG) and seconded by David Rummler (JECVO).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

### **ORGANIZATION:** Leitchfield VFW Post 12175

**REQUEST:** \$10,871.25 to provide asphalt pavement with marking around the Clarkson Veterans Memorial Park.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to deny the request because the City of Leitchfield owns the property, and it is within the City's purview to make the requested modifications.

- Motion made by Carl Kaelin (VFW) and seconded by Dave Jarrett (DAV).

- Motion made by Dave Jarrett (DAV) and seconded by COL(R) Fred Bates (KYNG).
- Motion unanimously carried.

- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

**ORGANIZATION: Blue Grass Community Foundation**

**REQUEST:** \$50,000 to complete field granite markers and two interpretative signs, which will serve as educational resources at Splash! a public water feature at Charles Young Park.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$50,000.

- Motion made by COL(R) Fred Bates (KYNG) and seconded by Carl Kaelin (VFW).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

**ORGANIZATION: Disabled American Veterans Chapter 003**

**REQUEST:** \$4,757.50 to conduct a 20th Anniversary ceremony to honor veterans who served in the Global War on Terror, to include Operation Desert Shield/Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** \$5,207.50, with the additional funds to purchase additional challenge coins for the veterans to be honored.

- Motion made by made by Carl Kaelin (VFW) and seconded by David Rummler (JECVO).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.



## KENTUCKY VETERANS PROGRAM TRUST FUND BOARD MEETING 22 MARCH 2023

### ORGANIZATION: Active Heroes

**REQUEST:** \$41,600 to support Equine Assisted Therapy Services

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$10,400.

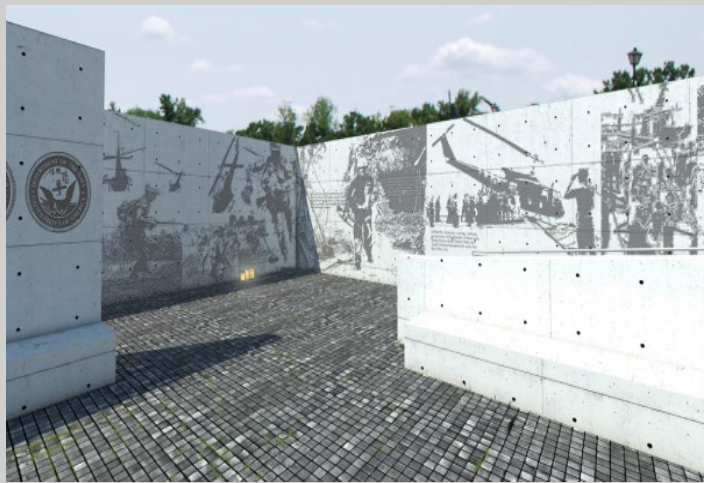
- Motion made by Carla Raisler (KYNG) and seconded by Dave Jarrett (DAV).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

### ORGANIZATION: KDVA Indigent Burial Trust Fund (Internal Transfer)

**REQUEST:** \$25,000 to provide reimbursement to a funeral home for costs incurred for indigent veterans.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$25,000.

- Motion made by Dave Jarrett (DAV) and seconded by David Rummler (JECVO).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.



## TRUST FUND APPLICANTS AND OUTCOMES

### ORGANIZATION: Churchill Downs VFW Post 2921

**REQUEST:** \$2,000 to obtain display cases and mannequins for displaying military uniforms in their military history museum.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$2,000.

- Motion made by Carl Kaelin (VFW) and seconded by Carla Raisler (KYNG).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

### ORGANIZATION: Tri-Anh Foundation, Inc

**REQUEST:** \$100,000 to build a monument to honor the soldiers who fought in the Vietnam War.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$100,000 (with stipulations).

- Motion made by Carl Kaelin (VFW) and seconded by Dave Jarrett (DAV).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

### ORGANIZATION: Veterans Memorial Park of KY

**REQUEST:** \$30,192 to fund a monument that depicts the Spanish American and Philippine Wars.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$30,192.

- Motion made by Tim Martinez (AL) and seconded by Dave Jarrett (DAV).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

Tri-Anh Monument wall are decorated with photos of those who fought in Vietnam. As visitors stroll through the monument site, the conflict in Vietnam comes to light in a beautiful yet solemn dedication. This is more than a monument; it's a homage to the heroic battle against Communism and a display of compelling humanity.

**ORGANIZATION: Vietnam Veterans of America  
Chapter 1066**

**REQUEST:** \$5,000 to place a KY Veterans Hall of Fame monument in Richmond and Berea.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to deny the request because of precedent set to avoid locating Veterans Memorials in too close a proximity to other Veteran Memorials.

- Motion made by Dave Jarrett (DAV) and seconded by Carl Kaelin (VFW).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

**ORGANIZATION: DAV Chapter 15**

**REQUEST:** \$35,000 to enhance the Magoffin County Veterans Memorial by installing brick columns, flag poles lighting, and a location for POW/MIA flag.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$35,000.

- Motion made by Carl Kaelin (VFW) and seconded by Dave Jarrett (DAV).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

**ORGANIZATION: KY Veterans Hall of Fame**

**REQUEST:** \$30,000 to assist in funding a project that will honor Kentucky veterans selected to the Hall of Fame.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$25,000.

- Motion made to table for more information made by Carl Kaelin (VFW) and seconded by Carla Raisler (KYNG).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.
- Motion made to amend and award \$25,000 by Richard Eisert (GAB) and seconded by Dwayne Edwards (KDVA), Chief of Staff, KDVA Designee.
- Amended motion for approval unanimously carried.

## KENTUCKY VETERANS PROGRAM TRUST FUND BOARD MEETING 28 JUNE 2023

### **ORGANIZATION:** Kentucky Historical Society Foundation

**REQUEST:** \$25,000 to provide a one-year exhibition of the history of Kentucky women veterans who served in the military.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board delayed the vote for additional budget information.

- Motion made by David Rummler (JECVO) and seconded by Carl Kaelin (VFW).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

### **ORGANIZATION:** Kentucky Minuteman Relief Fund

**REQUEST:** \$34,000 To provide financial assistance to Kentucky National Guard soldiers and airmen when unexpected emergencies occur.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$34,000.

- Motion made by David Best (Governor's Advisory Board/GAB) and seconded by David Rummler (JECVO).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

### **ORGANIZATION:** National Association for Black Veterans (NABVETS)

**REQUEST:** \$16,000 to fund events for the "Week of Valor."

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$13,800.

- Motion made by Carl Kaelin (VFW) and seconded by Dave Jarrett (DAV).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

### **ORGANIZATION:** Service Dog Solutions, Inc.

**REQUEST:** \$28,000 to train and place four (4) service dogs with a veteran over the next year.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$28,000.

- Motion made by Carl Kaelin (VFW) and seconded by David Rummler (JECVO).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

## TRUST FUND APPLICANTS AND OUTCOMES

### **ORGANIZATION:** Warrior Battalion

**REQUEST:** \$12,000 to provide emergency funds to veterans for one year.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$6,000.

- Motion made for by Carl Kaelin (VFW) and seconded by David Best (Governor's Advisory Board/GAB).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.



Kentucky Historical Society Exhibit: Our Stories Our Service: Kentucky's Women Veterans.

### **ORGANIZATION:** Honor Flight Kentucky

**REQUEST:** \$50,000 to fly veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit war memorials.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$50,000.

- Motion made by Carl Kaelin (VFW) and seconded by David Rummler (JECVO).
- Motion unanimously carried.

### **ORGANIZATION:** HorseSensing, Inc.

**REQUEST:** \$15,000 to create more housing for veteran men that live at our program while going through the HS Grooming Education, Certification, and Job Placement Program.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$15,000.

- Motion made by Dave Jarrett (DAV) and seconded by David Rummler (JECVO).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

**ORGANIZATION: DAV Chapter 003**

**REQUEST:** \$2,651.66 to purchase a standard uniform for funeral details, posting of colors, and other veteran events.

**BOARD'S AWARD:** The Board voted to approve an obligation of \$4,095.

- Motion made by Dave Jarrett (DAV) and seconded by David Rummler (JECVO).
- Motion for approval unanimously carried.

If you are an agency or organization of the Commonwealth seeking to fund a program and/or project that benefits Kentucky veterans, please visit:  
<https://veterans.ky.gov/veterans-trust-fund/Pages/default.aspx>  
to apply for funding from the Veterans Program Trust Fund (VPTF).



## Notes

**“THE WILLINGNESS WITH WHICH OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE  
LIKELY TO SERVE IN ANY WAR, NO MATTER HOW JUSTIFIED,  
SHALL BE DIRECTLY PROPORTIONAL AS TO HOW THEY  
PERCEIVE THE VETERANS OF EARLIER WARS WERE TREATED  
AND APPRECIATED BY THEIR NATION.”**

**-GEORGE WASHINGTON**

(ATTRIBUTED)



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**KDVA's FY23 Annual Report was designed and assembled by  
the Public Information Officer.**