

THE WAHLEN

FALL 2019

Driving Out the Darkness

Iraq War Veteran shares her journey from suicidal to hopeful.

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Veterans Helping

Veterans

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VFW, Elks donate food to VA food pantry.

VA Knows Pain Caused by Opioid Overdoses

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Click here to view online interactive version.



From the Director

I'd like to share with you a troubling figure: Every day 20 Veterans die by suicide. That's more than 7,000 a year. The loss of one Veteran is one Veteran too many. And the tragedy is, every one of these deaths is preventable.

During National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month (held in September), Veterans, visitor, and staff were fortunate to hear the heartfelt story of Iraq War Veteran and suicide survivor Tammy Lane. It wasn't until Lane connected with our own Suicide Prevention Clinical Director, Dr. Michael Tragakis, that she was able to turn her life around. Now, the mother of three and a motivational speaker and author, Lane's story is proof that there is hope. You can read about her courageous journey on page 4 of this issue.

But many of our Veterans aren't aware of the resources we have.

You can help. Ask how a Veteran is doing – and listen. Know the warning signs of suicide and have the Veterans Crisis Line number on hand. These simple things can mean the literal difference between life and death.

VA's fight against suicide doesn't end in September. Ours is an ongoing campaign – and one that won't end until the number of Veteran suicides reaches zero. To put it plainly, we don't leave our Veterans behind.

We intend to win this war, and I know with your help, we can.

With deepest respect and gratitude,

Shella Stovall

Shella Stovall, Director

VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

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The Wahlen is a quarterly magazine publication designed for VA Salt Lake City Health Care System staff, Veterans, their families, volunteers. Its purpose is to inform, educate, entertain, and generate new ideas. It's written and produced by the staff of VASLCHCS Office of Communications. If you have a story idea for our next edition, contact Jennifer Dikes at Jennifer.dikes@va.gov or Jeremy Laird at jeremy.laird@va.gov

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To view The Wahlen online, visit www.saltlakecity.va.gov.

Follow VA Salt Lake City HCS on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



VA believes that everyone has a role to play in preventing suicide. We work with community partners across the country to prevent suicide among all Veterans, including those who may never come to VA for care.

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VA Salt Lake City honors our brave men and women during the 2019 Veterans Day parade.



Veteran Tammy Joy Lane served in the Utah Army National Guard from 2001 to 2007.



Driving Out the Darkness

■ By T.S. Jarmusz, Public Affairs Specialist

It was 2003 when Tammy Joy Lane first learned the true meaning of war.

Having joined the Utah Army National Guard on a romantic whim, the 20-year-old Liberty, Utah native found herself walking among the dark pages of history; first in Saddam Hussein's palace, and then just outside the Baghdad airport – a site often shelled by enemy mortars.

"It's not like when you're in school and you picture people going to war," Lane said. "I felt like the war wasn't ready for us. It was a mess. I guess that's what war is."

Though the bombings left Lane uneasy, they would prove to be the least of her problems.

She was off duty one night when a soldier from another unit made a pass at her. She knew the man and told him to stop.

When he didn't, everything changed.

The assault hurled Lane into a tailspin of regret.

I shouldn't have been there.

I shouldn't have been around him.

Later, the man would sexually assault her again.

Frantic, Lane worked up the courage to file a complaint. It was summarily dismissed.

Her support system had crumbled.

"You have the walls keeping the bad guys out, but now the bad guys are in the walls with you," Lane said. "You can't leave because you'll die, and you can't stay. There's nowhere to go. There's nowhere that's okay."

But Lane's greatest struggle lay ahead. A new war was taking shape; this one in her mind.

Alone in the darkness of her thoughts, the bombs no longer phased Lane.

Nothing did.

Her world had collapsed. To escape it, she

jabbed an IV into her artery and let it bleed out.

"I just thought it would fix things if I just was not here," she said.

While other soldiers stayed to fight, Lane was sent home early, compounding her guilt and shame.

"It was just a bad way to go because you don't feel like a hero," she said. "You just feel like you suck."

The once fun-loving girl fell into a frenzy of rage, anxiety, and pain. She hated men. She hated God. But mostly, she hated herself.

She spent the next few years bouncing in and out of psych wards. And as her life continued to degenerate, her debts swelled, as did her use of pills and alcohol.

"Once you're in that downward spiral, it's almost impossible to get out yourself," she said.

She tried to start over, marrying four times while crisscrossing the country. But the novelty in her life was a poor distraction from the truth: She couldn't run away from herself, in fact she attempted suicide another five times.

The last, after a fight with her husband pushed her past the breaking point.

"This is what people that have never felt suicidal don't understand," Lane said. "If something happens, like I upset someone and they aren't my friend anymore, I go right to, 'I've got to kill myself.'"

Lane found her way to the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System, where in 2010, she met psychologist Dr. Michael Tragakis.

Tragakis told Lane if she didn't change, she would die.

While she had little connection with her prior therapists, in Tragakis, Lane found the hope that had eluded her.

"You can tell he just really cares and wants to help," Lane said.

Together, they worked toward her recovery. Lane grew to accept the woman in the mirror, and in a few short years, her outlook on life was unrecognizable.

She ventured to Africa for a motivational speaking tour. She gave a TED Talk on the value of kindness and authored a book on the same subject.

"It's not hiding my story, it's sharing it that's going to make a difference," she said.

Tragakis is thrilled with her progress.

"Tammy is such an inspiration to me," Tragakis said. "She has dug deep into her mental health recovery, seeking honest gains to uplift herself and those she

loves. She now has confidence, stability, and emotional freedom."

Now at 36, Lane said life's less dramatic. But those dark years still haunt her.

The scars Lane carries may never fully heal. While she's dealt with the pain from the bombings and her attacker, the specter of suicide remains.

"It's not like just because I wrote a book, I'm fine," Lane said. "It is constantly on my mind. It never leaves you."

While fragments of her destructive thoughts may linger, Lane is getting better – in part because she has a reason to live: To help people understand that even among the bleakest of times there's always a glimmer of hope.

"I guess I grew up thinking you had to be perfect before you could help someone, or you had to have money and all this stuff to help people," Lane said. "But you don't, you just have to notice people and just care."



23 min

Play ▶

On this episode of the Upholding Valor podcast, we'll journey into the world of darkness that drove Iraq War Veteran Tammy Joy Lane and Vietnam Era Veteran Alan Morris to try and take their own lives. And we'll hear of how they survived the ordeal and learned that even amongst the bleakest times, there's always a glimmer of hope.



Army Veteran Karl Baylor serenades Veterans and staff outside George E. Wahlen VA Medical Center.

Will Sing for Smiles

Music helps Veteran waiting for heart transplant.

■ By T.S. Jarmusz, Public Affairs Specialist

For the last six months, Karl Baylor had been waiting to find out whether he'd live or die.

His heart was failing. It was only a matter of time.

Since February, Baylor, 62, has been staying at the George E. Wahlen VA Medical Center – one of five VA medical centers that provides heart transplants to Veterans.

But ill health did little to slow Baylor down or dampen his enthusiasm for life. Those that have grown to know Baylor said his real heart – personified in his buoyant Texan personality – was perfect the way it was.

"Karl's a character. He's a total character," Baylor's VA nurse Carolyn Redd said. "Karl's full of life, so much so that we had to go chase him."

Armed with a contagious personality and room-filling baritone, Baylor passed much of his time at the VA by singing to anyone who listened. His showmanship lifted spirits, transforming the Vietnam-era Army combat engineer into a local celebrity.

Not bad for man who should've been dead.

Baylor had been struggling with low blood pressure for some time when in 2014, doctors broke the news that he would need a new heart.

He brushed off the news.

"I took it like a glass of water," he said.

Baylor arrived at the George E. Wahlen VA Medical Center in Salt Lake from Mansfield, Texas in July of 2018. He was hooked up to a machine that would keep his blood flowing until a suitable heart was found – the first time he said the VA saved his life.

"If I would not have gotten this LVAD (Left

Ventricular Assist Device) put in, I would've been dead by November of that year," Baylor said. "I was barely pumping."

He moved into the hospital permanently on Feb. 10. And as he waited for his new heart, Baylor began to sing, captivating those around him.

While it was a small gesture, staffers said Baylor's voice lightened the steps around campus. His shows, twice a day just outside the hospital entrance, became something Veterans and staff looked forward to.

"It impacts me," Redd said. "When I park in the morning and the sun's coming up and I come around the corner and he's singing, it feels good."

Baylor's VA nurse Micaela Brandelmayer called his songs, "the most beautiful gift."

Sometimes they were soul, sometimes they were country, but always they were from the heart.

"You may have gone through something through the week or the day or you just may not even feel like coming to

work today," Baylor said. "But that song has a way of touching you in some kind of way, and to me, that's why I do it."

The music may have done as much good for Baylor as it did for his fellow Veterans.

"It is the most gratifying feeling to see smiles and uplifted spirit. In just that moment," Baylor said. "Every day that I can come out and sing, I'm happy."

So, he kept singing.

Karl Baylor with nurse Micaela Brandelmayer, who he affectionately calls "momma bear."

As he awaited a new heart, staffers grew closer to the man behind the voice.

"When people are here as long as he's been here, you get invested," Redd said. "You see them at their best and their worst and you want them to do well."

Brandelmayer agreed.

"When somebody's in here for a really long time, their support system may be really far away," Brandelmayer said. "We become their support system."

For Baylor, staffers became his second family; people who rejoiced in his triumphs and were saddened by his struggles.

He was particularly fond of Brandelmayer, "momma bear" who he said reminded him of his mother.

"You touched me girl," Baylor, his normally composed voice breaking, told her. "Ain't too many people that can get down in there."

Word that a heart was available came down in July.

"You don't have control. You want to cry. You want to laugh," Baylor, reflecting on the gravity of the moment said. "When you laugh, you're reminding yourself that somebody is giving you an opportunity to live. When you cry, you're reminded somebody had to pass. For you to live, somebody had to die."

He got his heart and a second chance at life on Aug. 2, at the University of Utah Medical Center.

Shortly after surgery, still tied to an army of tubes and machines that kept him alive; his body arrested with unspeakable pain, Baylor remained ever-positive.

"I haven't felt my heart in seven years," Baylor said. "What I'm feeling now, it's like, somebody is in here."

Baylor said he plans to stay in Salt Lake City for a while. He promised to visit his new VA family –

and bring his voice with him.

He was thankful to have a new lease on life and grateful for the VA for all it had done.

"I did not expect when I raised my hand in 1974 that the VA would take care of me now that I'm in my 60s in a way that I would never have expected, so I am proud to be a part of this," Baylor said. "I can keep living, I can take my grandchildren fishing, and doing things, singing, doing all the things I've been wanting to do, but do it with strength."

"It is the most gratifying feeling to see smiles and uplifted spirits."

– Karl Baylor, U.S. Army Veteran



Karl Baylor with nurse Micaela Brandelmayer, who he affectionately calls "momma bear."



↑ Tab the thumbnails above to enlarge. (Interactive only)

Leadership from VA Salt Lake City Health Care System, University of Utah Health, and South Jordan City break ground on new VA South Jordan Clinic during ceremony held Sept. 12.

New VA Clinic Breaks Ground in South Jordan

A new VA clinic is under construction in South Jordan, Utah to better serve Veterans.

By Jeremy Laird, Public Affairs Specialist

Leadership from VA Salt Lake City Health Care System, University of Utah Health, and South Jordan City donned hard hats emblazoned with VA and U of U Health's logos and grabbed golden shovels to break ground on the clinic on Sept. 12.

"We're not just breaking ground. What we're doing is ground breaking," said Karen Gribbin, M.D., interim director and Chief of Staff at VA Salt Lake City.

The new clinic expands a partnership that dates to

the conclusion of World War II between U of U Health and VA Salt Lake. The collaboration produces some of the finest trained physicians and as a result has served countless Veterans over the decades.

Navy Veteran Vernique Lynn, who spoke at the groundbreaking ceremony, called the partnership along with the Huntsman Cancer Institute her "triad" of lifesavers. Lynn, a breast cancer survivor and heart transplant recipient, credits the partnership and treatment received at the three facilities for saving

“We’re eager to build on our partnership with Veterans Affairs, especially if it means we can serve even more of those who have served our country.”

– Mike Good, M.D., C.E.O., University of Utah Health

her life not once but twice.

“We’re eager to build on our partnership with Veterans Affairs, especially if it means we can serve even more of those who have served our country,” said Mike Good, M.D., C.E.O. of University of Utah Health in a press release announcing the expanded partnership.

VA Salt Lake City is rebuilding and expanding its community clinics across the Mountain West, which

offered the perfect opportunity for U of U Health to assist in bringing the new 38,000-square foot clinic to life across the street from University of Utah Health’s South Jordan Health Center.

The new clinic will serve thousands of Veterans in the southwest portion of Salt Lake County and northwest Utah County, and is scheduled to open late summer 2020.



A virtual tour of the planned Ogden VA Clinic scheduled to open in the summer/fall of 2020.

Ready to Stop Smoking?

VA is here to help.

VA OFFERS HELP, RESOURCES

Quitting tobacco is not easy, and many Veterans make multiple quit attempts before quitting for good. VA health care providers are ready to help all Veterans who are ready to quit smoking or using smokeless tobacco products.

In fact, VA has more tobacco use treatment options available to Veterans in VA care than ever before. While quitting is hard, the rewards, and the satisfaction of knowing tobacco no longer has a hold on your life, make the effort worthwhile.

FREE RESOURCES TO HELP YOU BREAK THE HABIT

Tobacco cessation counseling and medications provided at all VA medical centers. Talk to your provider or visit [MyHealthEVet.com](https://myhealthvet.com).

- ✔ Quit VET: VA's tobacco quit line, in English and Spanish. Call 1-855-QUIT-VET (1-855-784-8838) between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday.
- ✔ SmokefreeVET: VA's quit tobacco text messaging

program. Text VET to 47848 or visit smokefree.gov/VET to sign up for SmokefreeVET in English. For Spanish, text VETesp to 47848 or visit <https://veterans.smoke-free.gov/tools-tips-vet/smokefreevetesp>.

- ✔ Stay Quit Coach: VA's interactive quit tobacco app. Visit <https://mobile.va.gov/app/stay-quit-coach> to download.

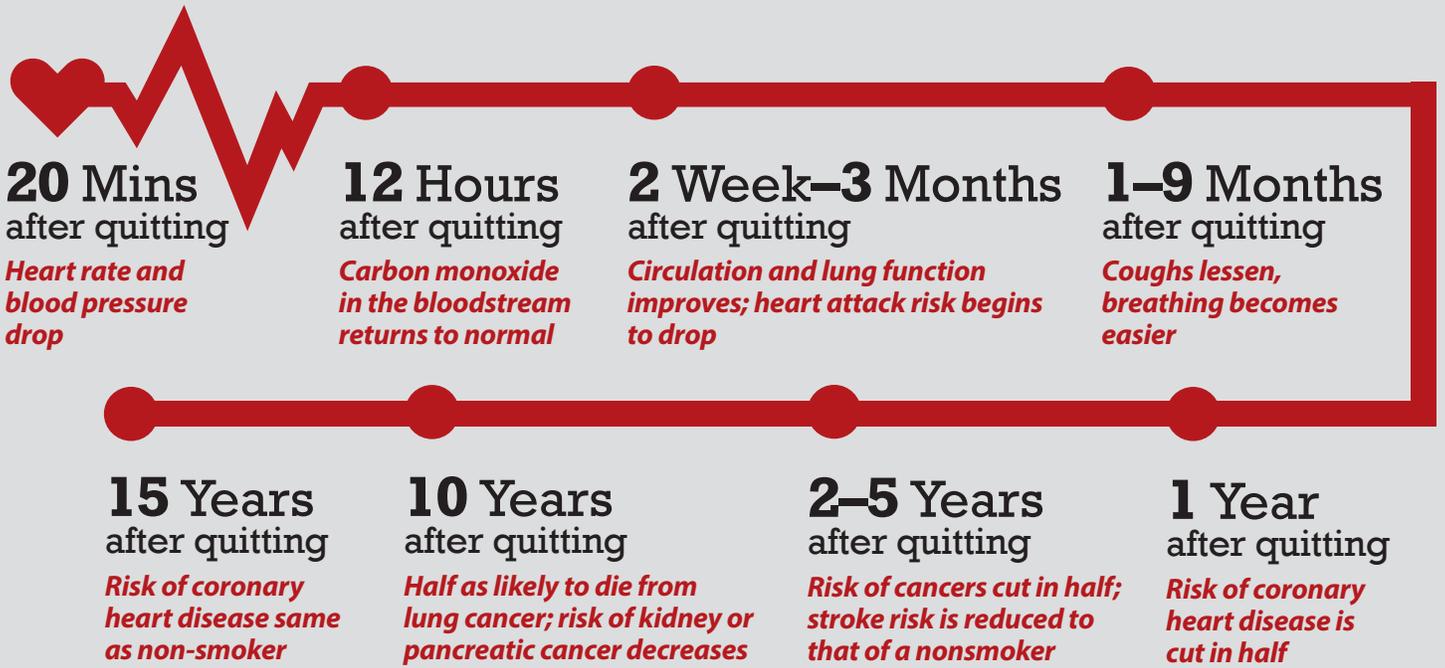
WHAT'S YOUR REASON?

You probably have said to yourself at some point, "I really should stop smoking."

There are many reasons you could want to quit tobacco — better physical and mental health, saving money, or even setting a good example for your children.



The benefits of quitting begin almost immediately!



- Fill out the packet
- Questions? Just ask!
- No cell phones
- Confidentiality



Nurse Practitioner Jamie Clinton-Lont providing Primary Care Pain Education and Opioid Monitoring Program (PC-POP) class to Veterans at the George E. Wahlen VA Medical Center.

VA Staff Knows Pain Caused by Opioid Overdoses

■ By Jeremy Laird, Public Affairs Specialist

Over a decade ago, Nurse Practitioner Jamie Clinton-Lont received a call from a Veteran's husband informing her that his 44-year-old wife had died of an overdose.

The event transformed Clinton-Lont's perspective, and since then, she's looked at treating pain in different way.

In 2013, she developed and launched the Primary Care Pain Education and Opioid Monitoring Program (PC-POP) as a pilot initiative within the VASLC women's program. Following on a successful launch, the program, now a part of the Whole Health

initiative, has expanded across the entire George E. Wahlen VA Medical Center.

"The first thing we say in the class is this is not about taking away your opioids. In fact, we don't want to take away the opioids," Clinton-Lont said. "We want people to be functional and that may be with the opioid medications."

New guidelines require all Veterans who are prescribed opioids for at least three months for non-cancer chronic pain to take the class once every six months. In the program, Veterans receive monitoring and collaborative care, learn how to safely take opioids, look at their individual risks, learn how to

administer Narcan (an overdose reversal drug) and are given a Narcan kit, and learn about ways to deal with pain without drugs.

"Opioids only reduce pain by 30-percent," Clinton-Lont said. "The patient has to find ways to deal with the other 70 percent."

And it's with that 70 percent of remaining pain – the pain that medicine alone can't fix – that Clinton-Lont and her team help Veterans learn how to cope with. For some Veterans, the solution could be losing weight, exercising, or sleeping better. For others, it might be mindfulness, yoga, qi gong, tai chi, or other Veteran-led programs.

No matter what route a Veteran decides to take, the class empowers them to take the lead in their pain management and their overall health and well-being.

Several Veterans who have participated in the program are now living a life free of opioids, Clinton-Lont said. In those cases, the Veteran spearheaded the decision and then coordinated their treatment with their primary care team. And while their pain may linger, Clinton-Lont said they feel a lot better and are now more functional.

U.S. Marine Corps Veteran Miranda McClurg is one of those Veterans.

Her six years of service in the Marines left her with a bulging disc that eventually ruptured. For nearly 10 years she was on opioids, then she attended PC-POP. McClurg admits that she initially complained about going and thought the program was "BS." Then Jamie told the class about that call from a Veteran's husband. Just as that call transformed Jamie's way of thought, it also transformed McClurg's.

She started participating in the class, listening,

and taking advantage of some of the additional VA Salt Lake City programs that helped her deal with the pain without medication. She eventually requested that she be taken off opioids altogether. She worked with Jamie and her doctor to accomplish that goal.

"I was sick of the way they made me feel. It felt like I was walking around in a fog all the time," McClurg said. "I feel better now that I off. My memory has improved. I feel clearer, I am not constantly tired. I get up and move more."

McClurg is now 3-years opioid free, and she credits PC-POP for helping her accomplish her goal. As for those Veterans who may be hesitant to attend the class. "Go a few times and listen to what they have to say"

PC-POP is offered at the George E. Wahlen VA Medical Center and select VA community clinics. Clinton-Lont said she hopes to roll the program out to all clinics in the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System and offer it to Veterans in rural areas via telehealth in 2020.

To learn more, visit the [Whole Health Website](#) or call 801-588-5991.



U.S. Marine Corps Veteran Miranda McClurg.



28 min

Play ▶

On this episode of the Upholding Valor podcast, we'll hear the personal and heartfelt tales of Veterans whose lives were shattered by opioid addiction.



From left to right: Rex Randall, VASLC Food Pantry, John Duncan, VFW Post 6395, Warren Johnson, VFW Post 6395, and Frank Robinette, Elks Lodge no. 949 unload cases of food donated by the VFW Post 6395 and Elks Lodge No. 949.

+ Veterans Helping Veterans

Local VFW, Elks donate more than \$2,000 in groceries to George E. Wahlen food pantry.

■ By Jeremy Laird, Public Affairs Specialist

Veterans helping Veterans. That's how U.S. Navy Veteran Warren Johnson described the donation of over \$2000 in food to the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System Food Pantry.

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6395 in Spanish Fork, Utah and Elks Lodge No. 949 in Provo, Utah raised the money, purchased the food, and donated it to the pantry.

"It's not about getting recognition. It's about helping Veterans," said Frank Robinette, U.S. Army

Veteran and Elks member.

The two groups don't plan on stopping with this donation—they will make a similar delivery after Thanksgiving.

"We don't want them to go without food for the holidays," Robinette said.

Emily Aikins, the VA Salt Lake food pantry coordinator, echoed those thoughts. "This donation, in particular, means we will not be worrying about keeping the shelves stocked throughout this holiday season. We will be able to offer more, to more Veterans."

The VA Salt Lake City food pantry serves Veterans enrolled in the VA Salt Lake City HCS who have inconsistent access to food. The pantry isn't meant to be a Veteran's sole source of nutrition, but it supposed fill in the gaps when needed.

The pantry is open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Tuesdays, and from noon to 4 p.m. on Thursdays. It serves anywhere from 5-30 Veterans every time it is open.

"Running the pantry is a team effort and members of our community step up time and time again to

make this possible," said Aikins. "Everyone who helps is part of our team and every donation makes a difference."

To donate, or for more information on the pantry, call Emily Aikins at 801-582-1565, ext. 5627.



ASSISTING VETERANS IN NEED

VA FOOD PANTRY

**Open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Tuesdays
and Noon to 4 p.m., Thursdays**

Veterans enrolled in the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System who have inconsistent access to adequate food are invited to our on-site food pantry.

For information, or to make a donation, contact Emily Aikins, LCSW at ext. 5627.



Food Pantry



This is an equal opportunity provider.



The 2019 Spirit of George E. Wahlen Award

Congratulations to the 2019 Spirit of George E. Wahlen Award nominees and winners.

VA Salt Lake City Health Care System awarded two employees the Spirit of George E. Wahlen awards. The award is given annually to one supervisor and one non-supervisor on Oct. 5 - the day the medical center's namesake, George E. Wahlen, received the Medal of Honor for his courageous acts on Iwo Jima.

The 2019 winners, Lynda Christensen, RN, Acute Medicine/Nursing Service, and Jennifer Ringel, RN, Acute Medicine/Nursing Service exemplify the characteristics and behavior of Mr. Wahlen. In his Medal of Honor citation, the phrase "tireless in his ministrations" is used to describe Mr. Wahlen's dedication on the battlefield, but it also describes his lifelong commitment to Veterans. This phrase also defines Lynda and Jennifer's commitment to Veterans. Their coworkers describe both as "going above and beyond" and "going the extra mile" and providing exemplary service to Veterans is at the heart of what both Christensen and Ringel do.

In addition to the two winners, 23 VA Salt Lake City employees were also nominated for the award. The

nominees are Norma Allegrezza, Allyson Armstrong, Martha Barnes, Kyra Beatty, Grace Belliston, Janet Bock, Melanie Brookman, Mineh Carrico, Rhonda Dutcher-Barfuss, Suzan Hancock, Al Hernandez, Melissa Hobbs, Deborah Hofmann, Chanelle Brandy Lende, Gregory Livers, Troy Perkins, Melissa Powers, Libby Severinsen, Jennifer Skousen, Matthew O. Stuart, Christopher Tietze, Alethea Varra, Sharon Weinstein.

Congratulations to the winners and all the nominees - they steadfastly serve our Veterans and in doing so keep the spirit of George Wahlen alive.



“

The difference between success and failure is a great team.



Jennifer Ringel, RN,
Acute Medicine/Nursing Service

Jennifer is a compassionate patient advocate always seeking to provide quality care to our Veterans. She has instituted and supported initiatives that directly improved care for patients. She also advocates for her staff when issues arise—addressing her concerns with leadership and comes with solutions not just problems. Jennifer holds herself and staff to the highest of ethical standards. She does the right thing for Veterans and staff every time, any time.



Lynda Christensen, RN,
Acute Medicine/ Nursing Service

Lynda is the symbol of unflappable calm under pressure. The Air Force Veteran is a nurse who Veterans and co-workers can always count on. She knows who to contact no matter what the issue. Her superior problem-solving abilities ultimately improve patient care, resource utilization, timely discharge and patient satisfaction. She quietly and consistently plugs along—she is the foundation of patient care on 3 West.



VA Salt Lake City HCS honors the sacrifices our brave men and women made for our country during the 2019 Veteran's Day parade.



#BeThere



Tab the thumbnails above to enlarge. (Interactive only)

VETERANS DAY PARADE 2019

Honoring the sacrifices our brave men and women have made for our country in the name of freedom and democracy is the very foundation of Veteran's Day. Thank You, Veterans!



**Veterans
Crisis Line**
1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**



Important VA Salt Lake City Numbers

Main Line

801-582-1565
1-800-613-4012 (Toll Free)

Information Desk

801-582-1565, ext. 4631

Customer Service

801-582-1565, ext. 1900

Appointment Scheduling

801-582-1565, Option 2

Blood Draw Lab

801-582-1565, ext. 4547

Communications and

Public Affairs

801-584-1252

Compensation and Pension

801-582-1565, ext. 1037

Enrollment Office

801-584-2585

Emergency Department

801-584-1205

Homeless Veteran Program

801-746-5561, ext. 6301

Medical Foster Home Program

801-582-1565, ext. 6317

Nurse Tip Line

1-801-584-2575, Option 3

Outpatient Mental Health Clinic

801-584-1255

Patient Billing

801-582-1565, ext. 2547

Patient Education

801-582-1565, ext. 4286/4289

Pharmacy Refill

801-582-1565, ext. 1382

Release of Information

801-584-1258

Respite Care

801-582-1565, ext. 1796

Smoking Cessation Program

801-582-1565, ext. 2800

Substance Abuse Program

801-582-1565 ext. 1840

Suicide Prevention Local Team

800-273-8255, ext. 6307

Transfer and Lodging Center

801-584-5626

Transition and Care Management

801-582-1565, ext. 2150

Travel Office

801-582-1565, ext. 1420

Vet Centers

Salt Lake City: 801-266-1499

Provo: 801-377-1117

St. George: 435-673-4494

Pocatello, ID: 208-232-6214

Veteran Service Organizations

American Legion

801-326-2380

Disabled American Veterans

801-326-2375

Veterans of Foreign Wars

801-326-2385

Veteran Benefits Administration

Disability Claims

1-800-827-1000

Utah Dept. of Veterans and Military Affairs

801-326-2372

Veteran Transition Assistance

801-432-4937

Veteran Transportation

801-582-1565, ext. 2003/1027

Vocational Rehabilitation

581-582-1565, ext. 2729

Voluntary Service

801-582-1565, ext. 1075

Walk-In PTSD Clinic

Every Tuesday 11 am in Bldg 16.
Please bring a copy of your DD214.
801-582-1565, ext. 2390

Women's Clinic

801-582-1565, ext. 2685



Important VA Phone Numbers

VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

801-582-1565 or
toll-free 1-800-613-4012

Scheduling an Appointment

801-584-2575, ext. 2 or
toll-free at 1-800-613-4012,
ext. 2575

Veterans who need to schedule, cancel or reschedule an appointment for all primary care clinics can call Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Automated Prescription Refill Line

801-584-2525 or toll-free at 1-800-579-0540

Veterans who need to request a refill of a prescription or check the status of refills can call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Have your social security number and prescription numbers ready when calling.

VA Benefits (other than health care)

1-800-827-1000

Veterans who need information on VA benefits including VA pension and compensation, home loans, and education can call the VA Regional Office.

Billing Questions

801-582-1565, ext. 2547 or toll-free at 1-866-393-1846

Veterans who have questions about a bill can call Billing.

Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-TALK (8255), Press 1 for Veterans

Veterans can call the Veterans Crisis Line to talk to trained professionals 24 hours a day, seven days a week or visit www.veteranscrisisline.net.

My HealthVet

www.myhealth.va.gov

Veterans can manage their health by logging onto My HealthVet, which offers access to Veteran health benefits and services.

For more information on VA related topics, visit
www.saltlakecity.va.gov.

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It's time to get your flu shot



Veterans enrolled in VA health care can get a free flu shot at a VA health care facility. Check with your **local facility** to confirm supply.

Flu – short for influenza – is a respiratory illness that spreads easily from person to person.

Flu vaccination is your best protection against the flu, which usually begins in the fall and can continue through late spring. Everyone age 6 months and older should get the vaccine.



www.publichealth.va.gov/flu/