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President's Message



I just want to start out by saying that I hope everyone is safe during this COVID-19 pandemic. The Bay Area & Western PVA Chapter is making sure we are on top of COVID-19 updates. The office in Palo Alto will be closed until further notice for the safety of our staff.

The Bay Area & Western PVA Chapter is cancelling or postponing all events up to September 2020. The Annual Banquet will be postponed, but the date is not set yet. The 10th Annual Golf Tournament is being postponed to 2021 but will still take place at Palo Alto Hills Golf & Country Club. All Chapter Membership Meetings are on hold until the shelter in place is lifted and social gatherings are accepted. More details will be available soon.

I recommend that each veteran call into the Patient Education Meeting weekly for an update from the SCI/D Center at VA Palo Alto in regards to COVID-19. The Patient Education meeting with the SCI/D Center will be on Wednesdays at 12:00 pm PDT.

To connect, please call 800-767-1750. You will then enter the participant code 22095 and press # to join the meeting. There will also be different topics discussed during the meeting.

The Chapter and SCI/D Recreation Therapy are trying to find ways to keep veterans occupied during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you are looking to exercise and want to learn more about workout equipment that the Chapter can lend you, please contact Executive Director Kory Amaral at amaral@bawpva.org.

Palo Alto currently does not have a permanent National Service Officer (NSO) from PVA, so please if you have any questions or concerns you may call Tami Anderson at (612) 970-5668 or email Tami at tamiA@pva.org.

If you ever need to contact the office, please call us at 1(800) 273-6789 (the voicemails will only be listened to once a week due to office closure or email us at amaral@bawpva.org. We are here for you and always willing to help.

SCI Peer Support



Palo Alto, CA - VA Palo Alto's SCI/D Center is continuing its Peer Support Program every Wednesday at 2:00 PM. Peer Support is a great way to connect with other veterans in the SCI/D Family.

Important Links

Patient Education

Review past patient education sessions and find out how to participate

Air Access 30

Share stories about your air travel experiences as a passenger with a disability

Publications

View chapter newsletters, annual reports, PVA Publications

COVID-19 Resources

View National PVA's resources and updates on COVID-19

Donate

Vehicle Donation

Clothing Donation

Amazon Smile

iGive

eScrip

Monetary Donation

Contact Us

<http://www.bawpva.org>

<mailto:amaral@bawpva.org>

If you are looking to speak with other spinal cord injury (SCI) veterans and join a group of support, the Bay Area & Western PVA Chapter and the SCI/D Center's Recreation Therapy are hosting a teleconference each week to keep everyone connected. SCI Peer Support will take place on Wednesdays at 2:00 pm PDT. To connect, please call 800-767-1750. You will then enter the participant code 08241 and press # to join the meeting. Your participation in the group is voluntary, but we encourage you to call in and listen because you can gain knowledge and resources from veterans who have had an SCI for years.



National Veterans Wheelchair Games



The Paralyzed Veterans of America and the VA have decided to cancel the National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Portland, OR on July 3-8, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please visit www.wheelchairgames.org for more information about the Games in 2021 in New York, NY.

PAVE



Paralyzed Veterans
of America

Washington, D.C. – The Paralyzed Veterans of America started the Paving Access for Veterans Employment (PAVE) Program in 2007 to assist veterans in getting back into the community. Please see below for an article by the PAVE Director.

PAVE PROGRAM UPDATE

March 2020

PVA AND COVID-19

Respiratory complications are the leading cause of death for people with spinal cord injuries. The spinal cord control muscles that make lungs work and assists with the ability to produce a productive cough - and a productive cough is critical for lung clearance.



Due to this and other risk factors, COVID-19 is a particularly high-threat for many PVA members. Check out how PVA is taking care of our members and advocating on behalf of all people with disabilities during this pandemic on our website: pva.org/covid-19.

SUCCESS STORY- PRESTON CURRY

PVA member and US Army veteran Preston Curry has long been committed to serving other veterans. This commitment includes leadership positions with PVA's Mid-Atlantic Chapter, the Chesterfield County's Disability Services Board, and advocating on behalf of veterans with disabilities on Capitol Hill.

In May 2019, Preston started working with PAVE Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Allison Borden to determine what kind of paid employment would be best for him and his family. Given his volunteer leadership roles, he was not sure if full time or part time employment would be the best option. Preston also wasn't sure which industry or type of opportunities would be a good fit. He had held several jobs since his injury in 1995, but did not find them to be fulfilling.

Preston spent time working with Allison refining his resume, interview skills, and other aspects of the employment process. They worked together to identify opportunities that fit his interests and would be meaningful. Ultimately they determined that a part-time position would be best for now.

In January, Preston applied for a position as an Administrative Assistant with the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, Virginia Military Survivors & Dependents Education. In early March he interviewed for the position and received an offer shortly thereafter with a start date in March. DVS transitioned to "work from home" but onboarded Preston and another new employee on the promised start date.

Read more about Preston [here](#).

"I'm empowered knowing I'm ABLE to do anything I want"



IMPACT + OPPORTUNITIES

28 Client Placements

- 22 Paid Employment Opportunities
- 6 Educational Opportunities

85 Total Placements through March



CLIENT PROFILE

23 Veterans/ Transitioning Service Members

6 Caregivers and Families

2 PVA Members



PAVE CONNECT

PAVE Connect, our virtual employment initiative, provides timely and relevant career information when and where veterans and their families need it. Veterans, military spouses and veteran caregivers can engage experts on a variety of different topics including resumes, interview techniques, and going back to school. The program has pivoted to address the COVID-19 pandemic— learn more at www.pva.org/paveconnect

"PAVE does an amazing job of helping ALL veterans with their job search and career advice. They helped me immensely through a recent transition and I encourage anyone who is looking to move in, move out, or move up in their dream organization to attend a PAVE Connect session. Even those of us who have long since transitioned out of the military will find these sessions invaluable.

Invest in yourself with knowledge and advice from PAVE experts and have your battle buddies, shipmates, and Air Force buddies join you in this quest to better yourself and one another."

- Randy, USAF Veteran, PAVE Client



PAVE Powered by
Paving Access for Veterans Employment



GIVE Program



The Shelter in Place order due to the COVID-19 pandemic gives us time to clean out our closets. The Chapter encourages our local community to donate their clothing to our veterans.

The Bay Area & Western PVA Chapter in association with National PVA is hosting a Clothing Drive in the Palo Alto, CA Office. The Chapter is looking to the community to donate lightly used clothing and other items that will directly benefit a veteran. Though the GIVE Program, we would love the expand the program by bringing in more funds for our veterans.

[Clothing Donation Program - GIVE](#)



Washington Update



Washington, D.C. – The Paralyzed Veterans of America’s Government Relations Department works hard daily to improve life for veterans by focusing on legislation on the hill that will change the lives of individuals with disabilities.

ECONOMIC IMPACT PAYMENTS FOR VETERANS ON VA BENEFITS

On April 17, VA announced it is working directly with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and U.S. Treasury Department to ensure delivery of “Economic Impact Payments” to veterans and survivors who receive Compensation and Pension (C&P) benefit payments from VA without additional paperwork or IRS filings. The “Economic Impact Payments” will be issued automatically to recipients of non-taxable VA benefits who did not file annual income tax returns for 2018 or 2019. For veterans who did not file a tax return in 2018 or 2019 and have dependents under the age of 17, they need to submit their dependent information to the [IRS’s portal](#) prior to [May 5](#) in order to qualify for the additional \$500 per child payment. For more information on CARES Act ‘Economic Impact Payments,’

visit: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/economic-impact-payments-what-you-need-to-know>.