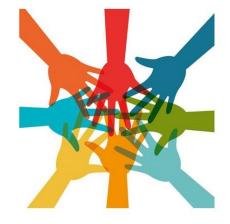


Volume 36, No. 4

Apr-Jun 2022





SCI PEER MENTORING PROGRAM -EDUCATION & LUNCH

Please join us the LAST FRIDAY of the month in the SCI Dining Room at 11:30 AM for a catered lunch and F-125 Conference Room at 12:00 PM for education and a peer support activity. This is a monthly program designed for SCI veterans to gather together and connect in a social and relaxed environment, socially distanced of course!

If you cannot attend in person, or if group is at capacity, you can call into ZOOM from your room or home.

MEETING ID: 835 1426 6166 PHONE: +1 669 900 9128 ONLINE: <u>https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83514266166</u>



PUBLISHED BY:

PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA AND WESTERN CHAPTER, INC.

3801 Miranda Ave (Bldg 7, Rm. E-118, MC 816) Palo Alto, CA 94304 650-858-3936 or 1-800-273-6789 (Toll Free)

E-mail: administration@bawpva.org

Chapter Web Site: www.bawpva.org

National PVA Web Site: <u>www.pva.org</u>

Kory Amaral, Chapter Editor **ELECTED OFFICERS**

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Sebastian DeFrancesco, Vice President

Kenneth Pollock, Secretary

Tomasz Modrzejowski, Treasurer

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Chet Miller

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Alice Borja, Sacramento National Service Officer 916-364-6791 or 1-800-795-3587 (Toll Free)

Jason McDonald, Reno National Service Officer III

775-321-4789

E-BRIDGE

To sign up for the monthly electronic newsletter please email <u>amaral@bawpva.org</u>

Articles published in *The Bridge* do not necessarily reflect the views of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area and Western Chapter (BAWPVA). BAWPVA neither endorses nor guarantees any of the products or services advertised herein.

President Reese Levasseur

I hope all is well and happy Spring. The Chapter is now calling



members on their birthday month instead of in the Summer time, but if you have changed your contact information, please reach out to the Chapter as soon as possible. We want to make sure we send you the latest in Chapter and VA updates.

The Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area and Western Chapter and the SCI/D Center at VA Palo Alto Health Care System have revamped our peer support program. The Peer Support Mentoring Program - Education & Lunch will take please on the last Friday of the month. Please see cover for more details. We encourage our SCI/D veterans to either attend or call into the meeting to socialize with your fellow veterans.

The office is still currently closed due to the COVID-19 restrictions at VA Palo Alto Health Care System. If you need anything, you can reach the office at (650) 858-3936 or email Executive Director Kory Amaral at amaral@bawpva.org. We will let you know when things change, but we want to respect the guidelines to ensure the safety of everyone.

Executive Director Kory Amaral

This year is flying by! We are excited to announce that we will start having community events. On Thursday, April 28, 2022 the Chapter and the SCI Recreation Therapist from VA Palo Alto Health Care System will host a PVA membership meeting and cycling clinic



at Shoreline Lake Park in Mountain View, CA. More information will be available soon. The Chapter will also be visiting Sacramento, CA in June. Ability Center and the Chapter will be hosting the event which will include a PVA membership meeting, an adaptive sports clinic and luncheon.

On Thursday, June 9, 2022 at 2:30 PM, the Chapter and the SCI/D Center will host our Annual SCI Memorial to honor the veterans we have lost in the past year. This event will be virtual due to the COVID-19 restrictions at VA Palo Alto Health Care System.

In early March, the Chapter met virtually with over 20 representatives for Advocacy Week. The National organization and the Chapter work together to ensure our veterans have access to proper health care through the VA. Some topics discussed were: Specialty Care, AUTO for Veterans, HISA grants, Improvement in Veteran Women's Health Care at the VA, Survivors Benefits, and more. We will continue to fight on your behalf because we know how important it is protect the care you receive at the VA.

I know that at times it is hard to get in touch with some individuals at the VA. I encourage you to call the SCI/D Center's Outpatient Clinic at (650) 493-5000 x65871. The SCI/D staff at the Outpatient Clinic are there to serve you. Please see page 16 for more details.

We have been in communication SCI Leadership and things may be changing soon in terms of visitation on the unit. We will definitely let you know when restrictions are lifted. I hope all of you remain safe during this time. I appreciate that I am able to serve our veterans everyday and I look forward to the future, and I know we will all get through this together. I am always here for you if you need anything. Please feel free to reach out to me at amaral@bawpva.org with any questions or concerns.

Indego[®] Gets Paralyzed Veterans Walking Again

PROUDLY DESIGNED & ASSEMBLED IN THE USA

NEW VA Program offers eligible veterans an Indego[®] exoskeleton at NO COST!

What's the Indego exoskeleton?

It's an FDA-approved robotic device that enables spinal cord injury patients (level T3-L5) to walk again.

✓ Regain your independence

 \checkmark Improve your cardio & bone density

 \checkmark Enjoy eye-level conversations again



Scan with your mobile phone to receive more information or schedule a demonstration.



Contact us today to find out if you are eligible to receive an Indego exoskeleton at no cost.

Phone: 844-846-3346 Email: support.indego@parker.com



Page 4



PVA Membership Meeting & Cycling Clinic Bay Area

Who:	PVA Members & SCI/D Center Outpatients
When:	Thursday, April 28, 2022 11:00am-2:00pm
Where:	Shoreline Lake Park 3160 N. Shoreline BLVD.
	Mountain View, CA 94043
Why:	Discuss updates from PVA/ VA and cycling clinic with the SCI Recreation
	Therapist
	Thorapiot
	Lunch Provided



That stuff that you keep telling yourself "someday I might wear that again."

The back of your closet can do something remarkable for injured veterans everywhere. Your generous donations of clothes and other common household goods help improve the lives of severely injured veterans and strengthen the fabric of our community.

Paralyzed Veterans of America

Boods Inspiring Veterans Everywhere Bay Area & Western Chapter

Give G.I.V.E a try and schedule your FREE pickup today. To learn more, call 866-281-1502 or go to pva.org/givegoods Paid for by the Jeffrey Carlton Charitable Foundation

Turn Your Used Vehicle Into Support for Paralyzed Veterans of America

We'll use the proceeds from the sale of your car, truck, RV or boat to change lives and build brighter futures for our seriously injured heroes.





Donating your car is easy, and your gift is tax-deductible

Vehicle donations to PVA are tax-deductible! Most vehicles are sold through local used-car markets. Our vehicle donation program works to get the highest return per vehicle and handles all the paperwork, too! Whether your vehicle sells for \$500 or less, more than \$500, or more than \$5000, you will be provided with the proper donation tax receipt(s).



Call 877-900-VETS or donate online at pva.careasy.org

National Service Officer Report Alice Borja, National Service Officer

Veteran Readiness and Employment and other Education and Employment Opportunities



You may receive Chapter 31 benefits, also known as, Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) (Formerly known as Vocational

Rehabilitation and Employment) services to help with job training, employment accommodations, resume development, and job seeking skills coaching. Other services may be provided to assist Veterans and Servicemembers in starting their own businesses or independent living services for those who are severely disabled and unable to work in traditional employment. VA's Education and Career Counseling program is a great opportunity for Veterans and Servicemembers to get personalized counseling and support to help guide their career paths, ensure the most effective use of their VA benefits, and achieve their goals. If you have a service-connected disability that limits your ability to work or prevents you from working, this can help you explore employment options and address training needs. In some cases, your family members may also qualify for certain benefits.

Eligibility

You may be eligible for VR&E benefits and services if you're a Veteran, and you meet all of the requirements listed below.

All of these must be true. You:

- Didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, **and**
- Have a service-connected disability rating of at least 10% from VA

Depending on your needs and goals, services may include:

- A complete evaluation to determine your abilities, skills, and interests for employment
- Professional or vocational counseling and rehabilitation planning for employment services
- Employment services such as job training, resume development, and other workreadiness support
- Help finding and keeping a job, including the use of special employer incentives and job accommodations
- On-the-job training (OJT), apprenticeships, and non-paid work experiences
- Post-secondary training at a college, vocational, technical, or business school
- Supportive rehabilitation services including case management, counseling, and medical referrals

• Independent living services if you're unable to work due to the severity of your disabilities

You can apply by mail, in person at a VA Regional Office or with a trained professional, such as, a Paralyzed Veterans of America, National Service Officer. Fill out an Application for Vocational Rehabilitation for Claimants with Service-Connected Disabilities (VA Form 28-1900).

After you apply, a meeting will be scheduled for you with a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) to find out if you have an employment handicap and if you're eligible for VR&E benefits and services. You have an employment handicap if your service-connected disability limits your ability to prepare for, obtain, and maintain suitable employment (a job that doesn't make your disability worse, is stable, and matches your abilities, aptitudes, and interests).

After an entitlement decision is made, you and your counselor will work together to develop a rehabilitation plan. This plan outlines the rehabilitation and other services that VR&E will provide.

If you disagree with a decision on your application for VR&E services and benefits, you can request a decision review. You can also manage any review requests or appeals you already filed.

VR&E Independent Living track

If your service-connected disability limits your ability to perform activities of daily living (like bathing, dressing, accessing the community, and interacting with others) and you can't return to work right away, you may qualify for independent living services through the Independent Living track. You may also receive these services as you work to find a job if that's a goal you and your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) have created. In both cases, your VRC can help you restore your daily-living activities.

Special Note: If you are entitled to the Specially Adaptive Housing Grant (SAH) or other housing grant you can apply for VR&E and use the Independent Living Grant together, as long as you are eligible.

All of these must be true:

- You have a serious employment handicap (SEH), and
- Your disabilities prevent you from looking for or returning to work, and
- You're in need of services to live as independently as possible

Please note: Having an employment handicap means your service-connected disability limits your ability to prepare for, obtain, and maintain suitable employment (a job that doesn't make your disability worse, is stable, and matches your abilities, aptitudes, and interests). Depending on your needs, services may include:

- Evaluation and counseling to identify your needs and goals
- Referral to support resources
- Evaluation to see if you're eligible for the VR&E home adaptation grant. This grant is part of your rehabilitation plan to improve accessibility features in your home.
- Guidance to help you understand if you're eligible for our adaptive-housing programs. These programs can help you make changes to your home—like widening doorways or adding ramps—so you can live more independently.
- These services generally last up to 24 months. In some cases, you may be able to use services for longer than this.

Veterans Career Program

Don't forget Paralyzed Veterans of America's Veterans Career Program, formerly known as PAVE, program which provides FREE employment support and vocational counseling assistance to ALL veterans, transitioning service members, spouses, and caregivers.

Leveraging a high-touch approach, our Employment Analysts and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors will work with you on your path toward a meaningful career. Our team also has expertise in helping veterans overcome employment barriers and other obstacles at all stages.

Whether you need help with job search and networking strategies or with obtaining necessary accommodations at work, the Veterans Career Program is always a click or a phone call away. Go to <u>www.pva.org</u> or contact your local National Service Officer for more information. **We are a partner for life**.

Ability Center proudly supports Bay Area PVA



Sacramento 6550 Freeport Blvd, Sacramento, CA 95822 Local: 916-392-1196 Santa Rosa 3285 Santa Rosa Ave, Santa Rosa, CA 95407 Local: 707-575-6997

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* * * * * * * * * * *



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ADAPTIVE SPORTS CLINIC



2nd Thursday of the Month

3:00 PM

VA Palo Alto Health Care System 3801 Miranda Ave. Building 7 's SCI/D Center Palo Alto, CA 94304

Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area & Western Chapter and SCI Recreation Therapy would like to invite all PVA Members, veterans, and families to join us for an Adaptive Sports Clinic.

Food will be provided to participants and food will be delivered bedside to inpatients if needed.

RSVP to BAWPVA 1 (800) 273-6789 or amaral@bawpva.org



BINGO AND PIZZA NIGHT

3rd Thursday of the Month 3:00 PM

> VA Palo Alto Health Care System 3801 Miranda Ave. Building 7's SCI/D Center Palo Alto, CA 94304 (May be virtual depending on COVID-19 status)



Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area and Western Chapter, INC. and SCI /D Recreation Therapy would like to invite all PVA Members, veterans, and families to join us for Bingo and Pizza Night.

Prizes will be given to participants and food will be delivered bedside for inpatients if needed.

RSVP to BAWPVA 1 (800) 273-6789 or amaral@bawpva.org



TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTH!

- Eliminate sleep deprivation
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- Prevent painful and life-threatening pressure injuries (bed sores)

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- AUTOMATED BODY ROTATION
- **PROGRAMMABLE TIMES & ANGLES**
- SMOOTH AND SILENT OPERATION
- ☑ UNINTERRUPTED SLEEP





LATERAL ROTATION



One of our representatives will be pleased to explain the features and benefits of **THE FREEDOM BED**, our value-added programs and services offered.

VA FSS CONTRACT: #36F79720D0184

CALL TOLL FREE: 800.816.8243 EMAIL: INFO@PRO-BED.COM WEB: WWW.PRO-BED.COM



Board Meetings via Zoom



If you are interested in participating in the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area and Western Chapter's Board of Director's Meetin

America, Bay Area and Western Chapter's Board of Director's Meeting via video and teleconferencing below is the information:

VA Palo Alto Health Care System is under strict restrictions due to the COVID-19 Pandemic; therefore, all meetings will be held virtually until further notice.

<u>9</u>







Want To Improve Your Bowel Function?



Did you know Paralyzed US Veterans May be Eligible for a ReWalk Personal Exoskeleton?

*Chun A, et al. Changes in bowel function following exoskeletal-assisted walking in persons with spinal cord injury: an observational pilot study. Spinal Cord. 2020;58(4):459-466. Contact ReWalk for more Information: rewalk.com/contact or 508.251.1154 option 2

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SCI/D Outpatient Clinic

VA Palo Alto - Building 7 Room F-143 650-493-5000 x65871

To best serve our Veterans in our SCI Outpatient Clinic – we ask for your assistance with following mandates regarding masking and visitors:

Masking and Visitor Requirements:

All patients and VA employees are mandated to wear a mask at all times while on the Palo Alto campus. If you refuse to wear a mask you will not be seen. There are no exceptions. Only approved visitors can come with a patient to an appointment. If you need assistance, there are SCI/D clinic nurses who can assure your needs are met during the appointment.

Please check in AND check out with the scheduler especially after your Annual Exam; make sure you get an appointment on your way out as appointments are not made automatically. Thank you

SPECIAL MODE TRANSPORT

Review your Special Mode Transport (SMT) expiration dates – when you receive a letter of expiration, please notify clinic RN as soon as possible to resubmit transportation consult **Clinic x65871 Navarre (833) 628-2773** *for pick up/drop off*

GURNEY TRANSFER APPOINTMENTS

For appointments where Veterans need to be transferred from wheelchair to gurney by nursing staff (CT, MRI etc.) – please call and schedule an RN-TRANSFER Appointment at least 2 weeks in advance. **Scheduling x65871**

DEFENDER'S LODGE

Defender's Lodge is available for Veteran's who live over 50 miles from the hospital – Consults will be placed 3-4 days prior to your arrival date. **Social Work x63328**

SPECIALITY CLINICS

ACUPUNCTURE

CHIROPRACTIC

PSYCHOLOGY

SCI CLINIC

INTEGRATED EVALUATION

UPPER EXTREMITY

TELEHEALTH

SEXUALITY

FUNCTIONAL EXTREMITY

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

> PHYSICAL THERAPY

UROLOGY

URODYNAMICS STUDY

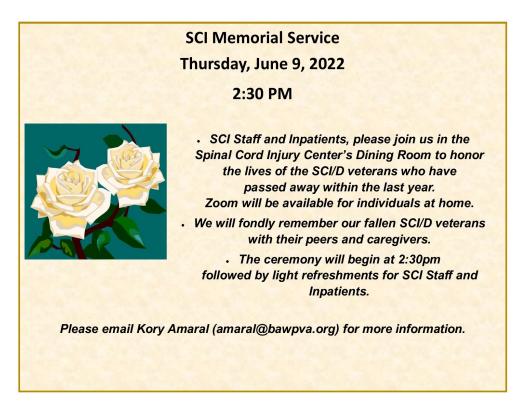
EMG

BOWEL AND BLADDER

WOUND

PLASTICS





New SCI Research Study at VA Palo Alto Health Care System

If you have a spinal cord injury or disorder (SCI/D) and identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community, then you may be eligible to participate in a novel research study conducted by the SCI/D Center at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System. We are recruiting participants from across the country and open to all genders and any sexual orientation.

Our research study involves a one-on-one phone interview and an online survey and should take approximately 1 hour of your time. Your identity and other personal information will be kept confidential and maintained securely. We want to hear about your positive and negative experiences related to your health needs and seeking healthcare. This is the first study on the health and healthcare of LGBTQ+ people living with SCI, and your input can help to uncover strengths and weaknesses within the healthcare system and contribute to making access to healthcare more welcoming and suited to your needs. There will be a stipend as an appreciation of your participation.

For any questions about research participant's rights, contact 1-866-680-2906 (*Stanford IRB*).

If you would like more information about this study or may be interested in participating, please contact our study coordinator at 650-353-1634.





Do you have a spinal cord injury (SCI)?

Do you self-identify as LGBTQ+?

Join our research study to explore the social and psychological factors related to your health.

Time commitment:

 Approximately 1 hour for a oneon-one phone interview plus completion of an online survey

Incentive:

 Receive a stipend for your participation

You may be eligible if you:

- have an SCI for at least 6 months
- ✓ self-identify as LGBTQ+*
- are 18 years of age or older
- Veterans and non-Veterans welcome

* Sexual orientation/gender identity does not need to be documented in your medical records to be eligible.

Participation is open across the US



For information on the study and how to join, please contact: **Shane Lamba** 650-353-1634

> For questions on participants' rights, contact: 866-680-2906

Monthly Chat with your National Service Officer (NSO)

Who	:	PV	A Me	emb	ers 8	k× x	F.X	
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The Bridge

EST. 1946

Bay Area & Western Chapter



Spring Luncheon Tuesday, Apríl 19, 2022 12:00pm



PVA Office Room E-118

Join us in the PVA Office Room E-118 for a to go lunch to celebrate Spring. All SCI/D veterans and their families are welcome (for inpatients and outpatients who have appointments on April 19, 2022 due to COVID-19 restrictions at VA Palo Alto Health Care System)

SCI/D Staff will be required to have a lunch ticket.

<u>Menu</u>

Chicken Burrito Steak Burrito Veggie Burrito Chips & Salsa

Sponsored by: Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area and Western Chapter, INC.

*Veterans with sitting restrictions will be served at bedside upon request.









April	Edward Baker Floyd Bethany Nicholas Pruneda Richard MacKenzie Pablitz Candela Jeff Haywood Qcutziel Frazier Milton Dixon Joseph Williams Travis Dunn Leonard Powell Danny Brozowski	James To James Fre Kenneth L Anthony S Michael	ottle ler eeman Lujan Saavedra cCullough el	John Markowski Jim Ptak Robert Dorroh Richard Picard Kurt Larsen Redic Thomas Todd Kelly Timothy Cissney Bruce Gibbings Matthew Simione James Kempner Sarah Nunley		Ernest Harris Curtis Brunn Richard Fuller Haskell Jones Shelton Inabinet Jerret Rita Cresencio Cruz Scott Henderson
May	Carrie Musso Benami Garcia Charles Heuck Tom Bishop Michael Gruber Roger Jenan Donnie Rawhoof Sabino Deodanes Marcia Nagle Peter Axelson William McNerlin	Richard Henry Alfred Matthews Alexandro Norita Allan Sloan Kevin Dunn Sandy Valdez John Say Penny Gillett Damien Giboney Jeffrey Crummett Ernest Mendes		Warren Hardy Clinton Martin Daniel Sabala Alfred Harrison Jeffrey Jongema Andrew Smith Jerral Hancock Carl Latona James Johnson David Barlow Hunter Lenthe		Joe Colvard Patricia Champagne Alejandro Vargas Richard Maple Michael Reese
June	Frank Mlejnek Bruce Austin Don Odle Victor Escamil Michael Doza Michael Goese Michael Stout Richard Lineb Robert Eaton Patrick McDor Steven Rapp Jack Nicholso	lla ch ack nald	Harold Ja Elizabeth Richard David Fr Susan Ip	n Fuller Iorris Duye icholson, Jr. anikowski n Stahl Gardner y polito ncis Fiesta	Edw Otis Alise Alvii	rick Harris vard Herrera Battle e Frosceno n Brown ald Brown

April 2022									
SUN	Mo	TUE	WE	THU	Fri 1	Sat 2			
3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
10	11	12	13	14	15	16			
17	18	19	20	21	22	23			
24	25	26	27	28	29	30			

- 1-2 Winter Sports Clinic (Office Closed) Snowmass, CO
- 12 Virtual NSO Chat 11:30am, Bldg. 7 Rm. E-118
- 12 Virtual BOD Meeting 1pm, Bldg. 7 Rm. E-118
- 14 Corn Hole Clinic 3pm, Bldg. 7 Dining Room
- 19 Spring Luncheon 12pm, Bldg. 7 Rm. E-118

- 21 Bingo & Pizza Night 3pm, Bldg. 7 Dining Room
- 28 Membership Meeting Bay Area/ Cycling Clinic 11am, Shoreline Lake Park Mountain View
- 29 Peer Mentoring • Support Program 12pm, Bldg. 7 Rm. F-125

May 2022									
Sun 1	Mo 2	Tue 3	WED 4	Тн 5	Fri 6	SAT 7			
8	9	10	11	12	13	14			
15	16	17	18	19	20	21			
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29	30	31							

June 2022									
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18			
19	20	21	22	23	24	25			
26	27	28	29	30					

- 10 Virtual NSO Chat 11:30am, Bldg. 7 Rm. E-118
- 10 Virtual BOD Meeting 30 Memorial Day 1pm, Bldg. 7 Rm. E-118
- 12 Interactive Arts Clinic 3pm, Bldg. 7 Dining Room
- 15-22 Annual Convention Atlanta, GA
- 19 Bingo & Pizza Night ٠ 3pm, Bldg. 7 Dining Room

- 27 Peer Mentoring Support Program 12pm, Bldg. 7 Rm. F-125
- (Office Closed)

- 9 SCI Memorial 2:30pm, Bldg. 7 Dining Room
- 14 Virtual NSO Chat 11:30am, Bldg. 7 Rm. E-118
- 14 Virtual BOD Meeting 1pm, Bldg. 7 Rm. E-118
- 16 Bingo & Pizza Night 3pm, Bldg. 7 Dining Room
- 24 Peer Mentoring • Support Program 12pm, Bldg. 7 Rm. F-125

- TBD Air Rifle Clinic San Mateo, CA
- TBD Sacramento **Membership Meeting** Sacramento, CA



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Important Telephone Numbers, E-Mail Addresses, & Web Sites:

Bay Area & Western PVATele:650-858-3936800-273-6789 (toll-free)E-Mail:administration@bawpva.orgWeb:www.bawpva.org

Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), Washington, D.C. Tele: 800-424-8200 (toll-free) E-Mail: info@pva.org Web: www.pva.org

Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) National Service Officers Vacant, NSO, Palo Alto Tele: 650-493-5000, ext. 65046

Alice Borja, NSO, Sacramento Tele: 800-795-3587 Mather Office: 916-843-2602

Jason McDonald, NSO, Reno Tele: 775-321-4789 U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Tele: 800-827-1000 (toll-free) Web: <u>www.va.gov</u>

 California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA)

 Tele:
 800-952-5626 (toll-free)

 Web:
 www.cdva.ca.gov

Social Security AdministrationTele:800-772-1213 (toll-free)Web:www.ssa.gov

San Mateo County Commission on Disabilities Web: www.smco-cod.org

VA Palo Alto Health Care System

 Tele:
 650-493-5000

 SCI Out-Patient:
 ext.
 65871

 W/C Repair:
 ext.
 63235

 Social Work:
 ext.
 64496

 OT:
 ext.
 65604

 PT:
 ext.
 65672

 Recreation:
 ext.
 64353

San Francisco VA Medical Center Eva Woodward, LCSW, SCI Coordinato Tele: 415-221-4810, ext. 23470



VA Northern California Brian Tolentino, LCSW, SCI Coordinator Tele: 916-843-9130

<u>Fresno VA Medical Center</u> Anita Morris, LCSW, SCI Coordinator Tele: 559-225-6100, ext. 4409

Reno VA Medical Center Chelsea Estep, LCSW, SCI Coordinator Tele: 775-785-7075

Honolulu Clinic Lee Ann Nakamoto, LCSW, SCI Coordinator Tele: 808-433-7853