



E-BRIDGE

Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area & Western Chapter, INC.



Executive Director's Message

WRITTEN BY KORY AMARAL

The Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area and Western Chapter wants to wish everyone a happy holiday season. Each year the holidays bring us together to celebrate what we achieved in the last year. Although we are still trying to navigate a new world filled with uncertainty, we must surround ourselves with individuals who can see how positivity can bring us together. The Chapter will be having multiple events to celebrate the holidays for inpatients at the SCI/D Center in Palo Alto because we know what it is like to be away from family and friends during the holidays. As always, please take the time to speak with veterans throughout the season because many of our veterans are alone. We must come together as a community to ensure everyone is included in celebrating the holidays.

Starting in the New Year, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area and Western Chapter will be sending out election information for FY 23-25. We are always looking for members to get involved with the Board of Directors. There will be more information in the Jan-Mar Edition of *the Bridge*. I am here for you if you have any questions regarding the election process.

Starting on Friday, January 27, 2023, the Chapter and the SCI/D Center in Palo Alto will be continuing our SCI Peer Mentoring Program - Education & Lunch. Each month we have an education topic pertaining to spinal cord injuries or diseases. This is also a great way to interact with your fellow veterans. Please refer to Page 2 for more information.

The office at VA Palo Alto Health Care System's SCI/D Center is still closed to visitors. If you need to speak with us in person, let me know and I can put you on the visitor list with approval from the SCI/D Center. Please, if you need anything, do not hesitate to reach out. We are here for you, email Kory Amaral at amaral@bawpva.org or call (650) 399-5296 with any questions or concerns.

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NATIONAL PVA'S SPORTS UPDATE

NATIONAL PVA'S VETERAN CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

ABOUT US

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Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area & Western Chapter, INC.



SCI Peer Mentoring Program - Education & Lunch

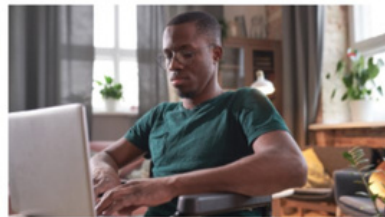
SPONSORED BY THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA AND WESTERN CHAPTER, INC. AND SCI/D CENTER AT VA PALO ALTO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



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: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83514266166>



08/18/210 - 1 and 11/18/2021 10.12.2022

December Calendar

WINTER LUNCHEON (INPATIENTS) DECEMBER 6

TABLES TENNIS & SHUFFLEBOARD CLINIC DECEMBER 8

NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER (NSO) MONTHLY CHAT DECEMBER 13

BINGO AND PIZZA NIGHT (INPATIENTS) DECEMBER 15

WINTER BREAK DECEMBER 12 TO JANUARY 2

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Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area & Western Chapter, INC.



Goods Inspiring Veterans Everywhere (GIVE) Program

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA AND THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA & WESTERN CHAPTER, INC.

The Chapter 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. Through the GIVE Program, we would love to expand the program by bringing in more funds for our veterans.

Clothing Donation Program - GIVE
<https://www.pva.org/ways-to-give/g-i-v-e-clothing-donation/>

Car Donation Program

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA AND THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA & WESTERN CHAPTER, INC.

Are you tired of having too many cars or is your car getting old and you are looking to donate it? The Car Donation Program is a program in which we accept vehicles and the proceeds go to our veterans. The process is very simple and veterans from Northern California will benefit from the donation.

Car Donation Program
<https://pva.careasy.org/HOME.html>

GIVE

Generosity can be found anywhere. Even the back of your closet.

Donating clothes and other household goods can help improve the lives of injured veterans.

Give GIVE a try and schedule your **FREE** pickup today.
www.org/givegoods

Paralyzed Veterans of America VEHICLE DONATION PROGRAM

Especially now, we need your support.

Donate a car, truck or other vehicle. The process is easy, the pick-up is free, and your gift is tax-deductible.

Give Today

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Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area & Western Chapter, INC.



National PVA's Washington Update

WRITTEN BY NATIONAL PVA'S GOVERNMENT RELATIONS TEAM IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

House Takes Action on Clothing Allowance Legislation

The House is preparing to vote on H.R. 4772, the Mark O'Brien VA Clothing Allowance Improvement Act. This important legislation would make clothing allowance payments automatic until the VA determines the veteran is no longer eligible to receive the benefit. If the legislation passes the House, it will then go to the Senate for further consideration.

The Senate companion bill to this legislation is S. 2513, the Brian Neuman VA Clothing Allowance Improvement Act. Please contact your senators about this legislation by clicking [here](#).

PVA Testifies at House Hearing on Improving Access to Air Travel

On November 17, the House Transportation and Infrastructure, Aviation Subcommittee held a hearing titled, "Accessible Air Travel: Addressing Challenges for Passengers with Disabilities." The hearing featured testimony from Rep. Jim Langevin (D-RI) who is retiring this year and is the sponsor for the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act (H.R. 1696). Rep. Langevin spoke of the difficulties he has encountered as a wheelchair user in air travel and the need for reform.

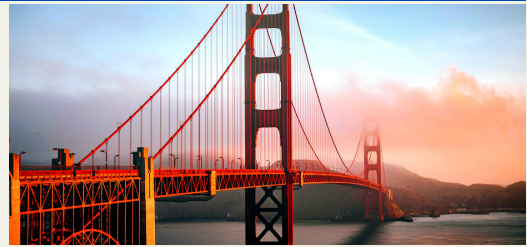
Heather Ansley, Associate Executive Director of Government Relations, testified on behalf of PVA. Ms. Ansley noted that the major problem with commercial air travel is that aircraft are required to have very few accessible features. She urged Congress to make systemic improvements in air travel in the next FAA Reauthorization by including the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act. She also called on Congress to include language directing appropriate agencies and administrations to take the next steps as outlined in a September 2021 report on in cabin wheelchair restraint systems.

Other witnesses included Brian Ryks, Executive Director and CEO Metropolitan Airports Commission (Minneapolis/St. Paul) on behalf of Airports Council International—North America; Matt Scott, Paralympian, Team USA; Heather Krause, Director, Physical Infrastructure, Government Accountability Office; and Graham Keithley, Vice President and Associate General Counsel, Airlines for America. To watch the hearing, please click [here](#). To read the testimony from all of the witnesses, please click [here](#).



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Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area & Western Chapter, INC.



National Service Officer Monthly Chat

IN SPONSORSHIP WITH THE
PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA'S BAY AREA AND WESTERN
CHAPTER, INC. AND NATIONAL PARALYZED VETERANS OF
AMERICA

Monthly Chat with your National Service Officer (NSO)

Who: PVA Members &
SCI/D Veterans

When: Second Tuesday of the
Month
11:30am

(Will only stay on the call for 15 mins if no one calls in)

Where: Virtual (Zoom)
Meeting ID: 867 9150 1025
Passcode: 370759
+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86791501025?
pwd=OHJ1KzNoVi9XR0FoSHNvVHRkcFRUZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86791501025?pwd=OHJ1KzNoVi9XR0FoSHNvVHRkcFRUZz09)

Why: To receive benefit updates
and to ask questions



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](#)

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National PVA Sports

IN SPONSORSHIP WITH NATIONAL PVA'S SPORTS TEAM IN WASHINGTON, D.C. AND PVA CHAPTERS



2022-2023 ANNUAL CALENDAR



PVA BASS

TOURNAMENT SERIES

Mid-America Bass Tournament
September 16-18, 2022
Eufaula, OK

Vaughan Bass Tournament
October 7-9, 2022
Marion, IL

Southeastern Bass Tournament
September 30-October 2, 2022
Evans, GA

Florida Gulf Coast Bass Tournament
March 24-26, 2023
Kissimmee, FL

Kentucky-Indiana Bass Tournament
April 21-23, 2023
Kuttawa, KY

Mid-Atlantic Bass Tournament
June 2-4, 2023
Hopewell, VA

Capital Clash Bass Tournament
June 9-11, 2023
Waldorf, MD

PVA BILLIARDS TOURNAMENT SERIES

Mid-South Billiards Tournament
October 28-29, 2022
Memphis, TN

Mid-Atlantic Billiards Tournament
March 17-19, 2023
Richmond, VA

Mid-America Billiards Tournament
June 16-18, 2023
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Buckeye Billiards Tournament
June 24-26, 2023
Columbus, OH

AIR RIFLE & PISTOL PROGRAM

National Postal Matches
November 2022 – March 2023
In-person event dates coming soon!

PVA BOWLING TOURNAMENT SERIES

Great Plains Bowling Tournament
July 28-31, 2022
Council Bluffs, IA

Mid-Atlantic Bowling Tournament
September 9-11, 2022
Richmond, VA

Nevada Bowling Tournament
December 2-5, 2022
Las Vegas, NV

Florida Gulf Coast Bowling Tournament
February 23-25, 2023
Tampa, FL

Mid-America Bowling Tournament
March 31 – April 3, 2023
Oklahoma City, OK

PVA NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS CIRCUIT

North Central Trapshoot
September 9-11, 2022
Sioux Falls, SD

Oregon Trapshoot
September 24-25, 2022
Hillsboro, Oregon

Cal-Diego Trapshoot
March 18-19, 2023
Redlands, CA

Nevada Trapshoot
March 31-April 2, 2023
Las Vegas, NV

Wisconsin Trapshoot
May 19-21, 2022
Green Bay, WI

Vaughan Trapshoot
May 26-28, 2023
Elburn, IL

Iowa Shooting Trapshoot *
June 16-18, 2023
Cedar Rapids, IA
**Year-End Tournament*

BOCCIA

New England Boccia Tournament
November 5-6, 2022
West Roxbury, MA

West Virginia Boccia Tournament
December 2-3, 2022
Charleston, WV

Bayou Boccia Tournament
February 3-5, 2023
Gulfport, MS

Gateway Boccia Tournament
March 17-19, 2023
St. Louis, MO

HANDCYCLING

Echelon Racing League Virtual Paracycling Series (Online)
November 2022 - February 2023

PVA High Performance Off-Road HC Camp
August 13-18, 2022
Crested Butte, Colorado

Off-Road Handcycling Championships
August 19-21, 2022
Crested Butte, Colorado

Pocahontas Off-Road Camp
September 29 – October 2, 2022
Chesterfield, VA

Tampa VA Handcycling Clinic
January 21, 2023
Tampa, FL

PVA High Performance Camp
January 30 – February 3, 2023
Brooksville, FL

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

PVA – NWBA Lakeshore Basketball Camp
August 4-7, 2022
Birmingham, AL

Bay Area & Western Disc Golf
August 19-20, 2022
San Jose, CA

New England Disc Golf Clinic
September 10, 2022
West Roxbury, MA

PVA Rugby Clinic
September 16-18, 2022
Phoenix, AZ

New England Basketball Camp
September 23-26, 2022
New Haven, CT

PVA Wheelchair Rugby Invitational
February 23-26, 2023
Raleigh, NC

NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES



July 4-9, 2023
Portland, Oregon

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER FOR AN EVENT: PVA.ORG/ADAPTIVE-SPORTS

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Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area & Western Chapter, INC.



Veterans Career Program

WRITTEN BY NATIONAL PVA'S VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM TEAM
IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

Member Column

JESSICA GREENE
BOARD MEMBER
WOMEN'S HEALTH COMMITTEE MEMBER

MS. GREENE IS A LIFETIME MEMBER OF THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA AND HAS SERVED ON THE PVA BAY AREA AND WESTERN CHAPTER'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS SINCE 2015. SHE IS ALSO THE BOARD'S APPOINTEE TO THE PVA'S WOMEN'S VETERANS INITIATIVE.

PRIOR TO JOINING THE BOARD, MS. GREENE WORKED AS A JOURNALIST IN THE TELEVISION/WEB NEWS BUSINESS. SHE GRADUATED FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA, FLORIDA, WHERE SHE MAJORED IN COMMUNICATION AND WAS PART OF THE SENIOR ARMY ROTC PROGRAM.

MS. GREENE SUSTAINED AN INCOMPLETE SPINAL CORD INJURY IN A CAR CRASH NEAR FORT BRAGG, NC WHILE TRAINING WITH THE 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION. SHE RECEIVED A MEDICAL/HONORABLE DISCHARGE IN 1994.

A LIFELONG ATHLETE, MS. GREENE REMAINED ACTIVE IN SPORTS AND RECREATION AFTER HER INJURY. SHE HAS ATTENDED THE NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES EACH YEAR SINCE 2012. SHE HAS ALSO ATTENDED THE DAV WINTER SPORTS CLINIC MULTIPLE TIMES, AS WELL AS THE NATIONAL VETERANS SUMMER SPORTS CLINIC.

HER PASSION FOR FITNESS, HOLISTIC HEALTH AND WELLNESS LED HER TO PURSUE A MASTER'S DEGREE IN RECREATION THERAPY. SHE HAS ALSO WORKED AS A CLINICAL RESEARCHER WITH THE SCI DEPARTMENT AT THE VA PALO ALTO.

PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

Partner For Life

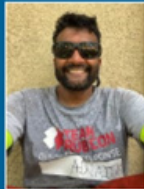


Meet Adi Thampi – a Sergeant of Marines and combat veteran. Adi first connected with PVA's Veterans Career Program in 2020 after completing law degree. He worked with our Employment Specialist, Taylor Scott, on his job search, resume writing and interview skills; and eventually relocated to the DC area to work for a Veteran Service Organization (VSO).

In early 2022, our Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Danielle Hetu, reached out to Adi to let him know about staff turnover and how to reach out if he needed assistance. He was working for another VSO, and while he found the work very rewarding he also wanted to look at advancement. They updated his resume, drafted new cover letters, reviewed LinkedIn content, and had meetings to discuss applications, interviews, frustrations, etc.

Adi had worked tirelessly on the PACT ACT and was part of the big push to get it passed. Soon after, he was offered the position of Legislative Counselor and Senior Associate at Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) and will be starting in December 2022.

Having a month off in between jobs would have likely been a nice break; however, Adi wanted to do something physical that would be "good for his heart". He has been in Florida the past few weeks with Team Rubicon cleaning up and rebuilding after the hurricanes.



IMPACT + OPPORTUNITIES

October 2022

19 Client Placements

- 12 Paid Employment
- 6 Education/Training
- 1 Volunteer
 - 17 Veterans
 - 2 Family Members
 - 3 PVA Members
 - 2 PVA Member-Eligible
- The average salary for the 8 clients placed in full-time employment was \$57,744; and the average income for the 4 clients in part-time employment was \$15,063.



Veterans Career Program Joins Unite Us Network



The Veterans Career Program announced a new partnership with **Unite Us**, the nation's leading technology company connecting health and social care services, to address the unmet needs of individuals and their families through a secure coordinated care network. This network of services benefits transitioning military members, veterans, military spouses, and military caregivers who are also seeking career assistance.

The Unite Us network of health and social care services, together with VCP's dedicated Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and Employment Specialists, will provide a whole-person approach to quality-of-life care and help the veteran community achieve their career goals.

PVA Chapters, Nonprofits, community-based organizations, and other providers seeking to connect their clients to the Unite Us network of resources should click this link and complete the form: <https://uniteus.com/contact/>



[PVA.org/find-support/veterans-career-program](https://pva.org/find-support/veterans-career-program)

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About Us

THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA & WESTERN CHAPTER, INC.

The Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area and Western Chapter, INC. (BAWPVA) is a nonprofit, veterans service organization located in Palo Alto, CA. BAWPVA serves spinal cord injured and/or dysfunction veterans located in Northern California, Northern Nevada and the Pacific Islands. BAWPVA is one of 33 chapters of the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) located across the United States. Currently, BAWPVA has approximately 500 members. The Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area and Western Chapter, INC. (BAWPVA) services provide direct support to the Chapter's programs. BAWPVA sponsors various events and adaptive sports clinics at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System in Palo Alto, CA, VA Northern California Health Care System, VA Central California Health Care System, VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System and VA Pacific Islands Health Care System.

If you are interested in membership, volunteering, or donating please contact us today.

Our office is located at:

3801 Miranda Ave.
Building 7 Rm. E-118
Palo Alto, CA 94304

Our Mailing Address is:

P.O. Box 27
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