



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 want to wish you a Happy New Year. January flew by, but we have many events coming up in the next couple of months. Most events in the hospital are still limited to inpatients due to COVID-19 restrictions, but we plan to visit out spoke communities throughout the Spring of 2023.

The Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area and Western Chapter sent out election information for FY 23-25 in the Jan-Mar 2023 Edition of *the Bridge* and via email. We are always looking for members to get involved with the Board of Directors. The nomination for elections will close at the March 14, 2023 Board of Director's Meeting so please get your nominations in if you plan to run for the Board FY 23-25. I am here for you if you have any questions regarding the election process.

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. The January topic was Sexuality. This is also a great way to interact with your fellow veterans. Please refer to Page 2 for more information. Outpatients can join us via Zoom. The link is on the flyer.

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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ABOUT US

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



SCI Peer Mentoring Program - Education & Lunch

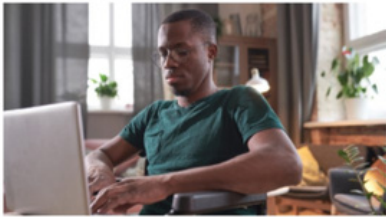
SPONSORED BY THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA AND WESTERN CHAPTER, INC. AND SCI/D CENTER AT VA PALO ALTO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



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>



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February Calendar

DISC GOLF CLINIC (INPATIENTS)
FEBRUARY 9

NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER (NSO) MONTHLY CHAT
FEBRUARY 14

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING
FEBRUARY 14

BINGO AND PIZZA NIGHT (INPATIENTS)
FEBRUARY 16

PRESIDENTS' DAY (OFFICE CLOSED)
FEBRUARY 20

ADVOCACY LEGISLATIVE SEMINAR (OFFICE CLOSED)
FEBRUARY 27 TO MARCH 2

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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.

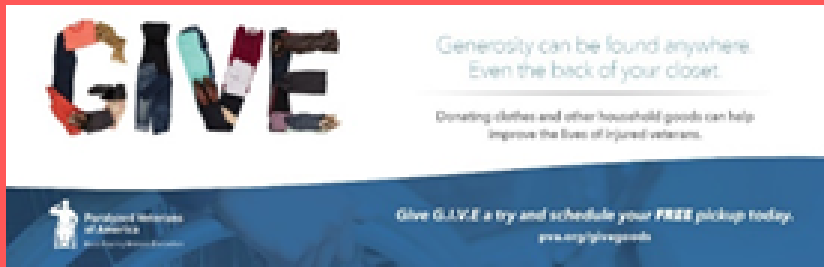
Clothing Donation Program - GIVE
<https://www.pva.org/ways-to-give/g-i-v-e-clothing-donation/>

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>



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National PVA's Washington Update

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



Nominee Announced for VA Under Secretary for Benefits

On January 23, the President announced the nomination of Joshua Jacobs to be VA's next Under Secretary for Benefits. If confirmed, Mr. Jacobs, who is already serving in an interim capacity as the Veterans Benefits Administration's (VBA) leader, would lead more than 25,000 VBA employees in the delivery of non-medical benefits programs. VBA provides disability compensation benefits to nearly six million veterans and their survivors and administers pension benefits for over 350,000 veterans and their survivors. Prior to rejoining VA in 2021, Jacobs was a Senior Associate at Booz Allen Hamilton. Jacobs also served as Senior Advisor in the Office of the VA Secretary during the Obama Administration. The next step will be for the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee to hold a nomination hearing.

Medical Providers Agree to Provide Wheelchair Transfer Services

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) settled with Barnett Dulaney Perkins Eye Centers (BDP) and American Vision Partners (AVP) based on a lawsuit alleging the eye surgery providers refused to provide services to patients needing wheelchair transfer assistance. In December 2021, DOJ sued BDP, who operates 24 locations, alleging the eye surgery provider refused transfer assistance to wheelchair users, in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). According to the complaint, BDP required patients to hire third-party medical support personnel to transport them to and from BDP's facilities and provide transfer assistance using gurneys or stretchers, which patients were required to remain on during surgery. In April 2022, DOJ amended the complaint to add AVP and claimed the providers even outright denied patients needing transfer assistance.

Under the settlement agreement, the medical providers must end their policy of denying patients needing transfer assistance. BDP and AVP must also engage in an interactive process with patients to discuss transfer assistance options and give consideration to the patient's preference. If a patient needs third-party transfer assistance, the provider must pay for it. In addition, the providers are required to disclose which locations have accessible medical equipment and train staff on safe transfer techniques.

Check out the [PVAction Force](#) page to view our latest alerts and a list of key legislation and its status.

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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](#)

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[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](https://pva.org/adaptive-sports)

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Veterans Career Program

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

Member Column

BUSTER KAWASAKI
PVA MEMBER

MR. KAWASAKI HAS BEEN A PVA MEMBER SINCE 2013. HE CURRENTLY RESIDES IN HAWAII BUT TRAVELS NATIONALLY FOR HIS ADAPTIVE SURFING COMPETITIONS.

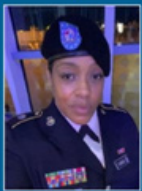
MR. KAWASAKI IS CURRENTLY RANKED 7TH IN THE 2022 ASSOCIATION OF ADAPTIVE SURFING PROFESSIONALS. FURTHER, HE IS RANKED 4/120 IN HAWAII AND 10/10 IN OCEANSIDE.

MR. KAWASAKI WILL COMPETE IN HAWAII IN MAY 2023 AND IN OCEANSIDE IN SEPTEMBER 2023.



PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

"Resilience is Silent and Deep."



Gwen Banks is an Army retired senior leader and combat veteran with a service-connected disability of 100%. Since serving over 20 years in the military, she was unfamiliar with the civilian employment process but began networking to gain more understanding. One of her contacts, another Veteran Career Program (VCP) client, referred Gwen to VCP's Employment Analyst, Rodney Lee. Shortly thereafter, Rodney and Gwen began working together.

Gwen knew that after receiving her MBA and with the human resource and operations experience she had gained, she wanted to pursue leadership roles in HR or business operations. They explored positions together from organizations that the VCP is partnered and connected with for meaningful opportunities that were close fits with her interest and qualifications. They began revising and tailoring her resume in preparation to start applying to positions once she was within six weeks of her military transition.

During this time, Gwen was involved with networking, researching organizations, building her LinkedIn profile, and revising several drafts of her resume. Due to her obvious leadership abilities and experience, Rodney introduced Gwen to an executive MBA development program for transitioning military leaders, and the executive over it. After piquing the interest of the program leader from their initial discussion, Gwen was invited to interview with Bank of America.

After interview preparations and mock interviews, Gwen went on to conduct four interviews with the bank and was selected and invited to join the organization in the February 2023 cohort. Gwen will begin her new career

IMPACT + OPPORTUNITIES

December 2022

19 Client Placements

- 16 Paid Employment
- 3 Education/Training
 - 17 Veterans
 - 1 PVA Member
 - 1 Family Member
 - 1 Caregiver
- The average salary for the 13 clients placed in full-time employment was \$64,145; and the average income for the 3 clients placed in part-time work was \$29,360.



In 2022, the Veterans Career Program placed a total of 221 clients: 199 are veterans, 20 family members, 4 caregivers; 32 are PVA members and 12 are PVA member-eligible.

- The average salary for full-time employment in 2022 was \$63,856; and the average income for part-time employment in 2022 was \$17,945.
 - Paid Employment: 167
 - Training/Educational: 42
 - Volunteer: 12

Also in 2022, we hosted a total of 82 Veterans Career Live informational sessions (36 career skills, 21 employer sessions, 13 education, 10 small business and 2 health/wellness) with 8,882 registrants and 2,835 live attendees (for a 32% conversion rate). Our attendees were 93% veterans, 3% military spouses, 2% caregivers and 2% employers/agencies.

post-military, as an Assistant Vice President of Global Technology & Operations, in a full-time permanent position under the bank's Military Development Program.

Gwen shared this quote from author Victoria Erickson: "Resilience is silent and deep, like roots. It doesn't announce itself. It doesn't explode outward. It doesn't fall. It doesn't break. It simply always is. And you are."



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

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