



E-BRIDGE

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



Executive Director's Message

WRITTEN BY KORY AMARAL

I hope everyone is excited for Spring. I know we have been getting much needed rain, but I am ready for the sunshine so we can do more outdoor activities. We are gearing up for the Winter Sports Clinic. It will be held April 1-8, 2024 in Snowmass, CO. We have 18 SCI/D veterans attending so it will be a great time! After the Winter Sports Clinic, we will start to prepare for the National Veterans Wheelchair Games (NVWG) which will be held in July 2024. Please visit www.wheelchairgames.org for more information. Applications are due April 5, 2024.

On the last Friday of the month, 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 next meeting will be on Friday, March 29, 2024 and the topic will be Service Dogs. 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 masking mandate has come back to VA Palo Alto Health Care System due to the flu season. Please expect to wear a mask when you enter the buildings on campus. I cannot do anything to change the policy, this mandate came from the recommendations of the county and VA leadership. The office at VA Palo Alto Health Care System's SCI/D Center is now open to visitors. If you need to speak with us in person, let me know. We are not always in the office so please contact me first to make sure we do not miss each other. Also, 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

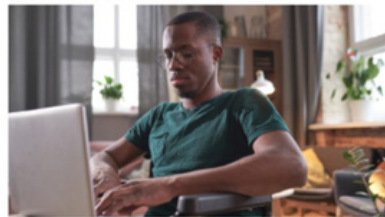
SPONSORED BY THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA AND WESTERN CHAPTER, INC. AND SCI/D CENTER AT VA PALO ALTO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



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>



08/18/210 - 1 and 11/16/2024 10.12.2023

March Calendar

- NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER (NSO) MONTHLY CHAT (VIRTUAL) MARCH 12
- BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING MARCH 12
- INTERACTIVE ARTS CLINIC MARCH 14
- BINGO & PIZZA NIGHT MARCH 21
- SCI PEER MENTORING PROGRAM - EDUCATION & LUNCH MARCH 29

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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>

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

PVA 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.

DOT Releases Proposed Rule to Improve the Air Travel Experience of Wheelchair Users

The Department of Transportation (DOT) has published a notice of proposed rulemaking on ensuring safe accommodations for wheelchair users in air travel. The proposed rule is based in large part on PVA's February 2022 DOT petition to initiate rulemaking authority, as well as follow up letters on the topic. The changes proposed by DOT include several vital steps that would dramatically improve the air travel experience for people with disabilities. Specifically, they would clarify airlines' obligations and responsibilities to individuals with disabilities; better enforce violations and administrative penalties onto airlines that mishandle assistive devices; and improve airline processes for returning, repairing, and replacing mishandled wheelchairs, to include informing wheelchair users about the location of their device during transit and allowing them to choose their own repair company, if their wheelchair or scooter is damaged. The changes would also mandate critical hands-on training on a regular basis to any airline staff or contractors who physically assist passengers with mobility disabilities or handle battery-powered assistive devices. PVA will be submitting comments in response to the proposal.

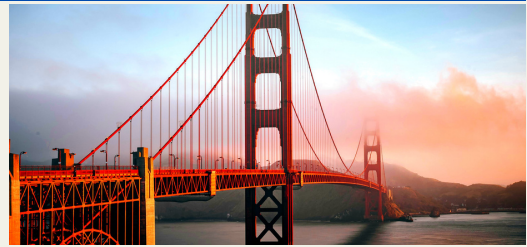
Upcoming Veterans' Committee Activities

On March 6, 2024 at 10 a.m. ET, PVA National President Robert Thomas will testify about PVA's 2024 public policy priorities before a joint session of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. To watch the hearing live (or recorded) you can view it here: <https://www.veterans.senate.gov/2024/3/legislative-presentation-of-veterans-of-foreign-wars-of-the-united-states-multi-vsos-pva-www-nasdva-mrc-bsf-iava-bva-swan-sva-amvets>

Please visit the [House](#) and [Senate](#) Veterans' Affairs Committee webpages for information on upcoming hearings and markups.

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National Service Officer (NSO) 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

[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 Veterans Wheelchair Games (NVWG)

COSPONSORED BY THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA AND THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES
JULY 25-30, 2024 • NEW ORLEANS, LA

REGISTER TODAY!

WHEELCHAIRGAMES.ORG

Co-Presented by:

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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

PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA IS DEDICATED TO PROVIDING OUR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES WITH THE SUPPORT THEY NEED. THAT'S WHY WE ARE THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE ARE NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR SCHOLARSHIPS FOR THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR!

WE WILL BE ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS UNTIL MAY 15, 2024, AND WILL AWARD SCHOLARSHIPS WORTH \$2,500 FOR FULL-TIME STUDENTS AND \$1,000 FOR PART-TIME STUDENTS. TO BE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY, YOU MUST BE:

- A PVA MEMBER, THE SPOUSE OF A MEMBER, OR AN UNMARRIED CHILD (UNDER 24 YEARS OF AGE) WHO IS DEPENDENT (AS DEFINED BY THE IRS) ON THE MEMBER FOR PRINCIPAL SUPPORT.
- A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES.
- ACCEPTED AND ENROLLED AS A FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME STUDENT IN AN ACCREDITED U.S. COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY.

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS WILL BE NOTIFIED BETWEEN JUNE 6 AND JUNE 16, 2024.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO ACCESS THE APPLICATION FORM, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [HTTPS://PVA.ORG/FIND-SUPPORT/SCHOLARSHIP-PROGRAM/](https://pva.org/find-support/scholarship-program/).

PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

January 2024

MAKING THE TRANSITION



Whether you've been a veteran for 10 years (or more) or planning your transition from the military, our Veterans Career Program counselors can help you with your career goals. Dwight Kirkpatrick is a retired Army Master Sergeant and service-connected disabled veteran.

During his transition from military service, he began creating his resume and searching for a new career. He spoke to people in his network about resources and advisors to help him navigate through the civilian employment process. After being referred to the PVA Veterans Career Program by a friend, Dwight was introduced to Employment Analyst, Rodney Lee, for employment assistance.

Dwight and Rodney began working together shortly before Dwight's military retirement in October 2023, and they searched and explored employment options and opportunities. They also explored resume development, networking opportunities, and interview skills and techniques. After reviewing positions with several companies, Dwight found Bank of America's military development program to be a unique opportunity to learn, grow, and lead within the financial operations business sector.

The military development program SVP for Bank of America reviewed Dwight's resume and invited him to interview. Dwight studied for his performance and prepared for his interaction through mock interview practice sessions. He completed three interviews with the bank over the course of two months and would later receive a congratulations call for being hired as the Assistant Vice President of Global Operations.

MONTHLY IMPACT

20 Client Placements

- 13 Paid Employment
- 4 Education/Training
- 3 Volunteer
 - 17 Veterans
 - 2 Active Duty
 - 1 Family Member
 - 1 Caregiver
 - 4 PVA Member



- The average salary for the 11 clients in full time employment was \$71,117; and the average income for the 2 clients in part time employment was \$26,236.

WELCOME: CHRISTY SINGH



Meet our newest Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC), Christy Singh. She is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC), Certified Vocational Evaluator (CVE), and impartial Vocational Expert for the Social Security Administration. Christy has worked ten+ years in both the private and public sectors as a Vocational Expert and subject matter expert with years of conducting evaluations for clients of various backgrounds, in various areas such as worker's compensation, veterans seeking total disability based on individual unemployability (TDIU), long-term and short-term disability, vocational capacity evaluations, wage earning capacity evaluations, vocational skills and career plan development. In her spare time, she continues to think about work and her beloved race car (6-speed manual) that her husband so generously built for her. She is married with 6 kids (all adults) and have 5 grandchildren (two of whom are twin boys).

Christy resides in the Tampa, FL region and will be supporting clients in Florida, Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North & South Carolina, and Puerto Rico.



[PVA.org/VeteransCareerProgram](https://pva.org/VeteransCareerProgram)

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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 532 members, but sees over 1,000 paralyzed veterans at the SCI/D Center at VA Palo Alto Health Care System.

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:

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Website:

bawpva.org

