



# *E-BRIDGE*

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



## *Executive Director's Message*

**WRITTEN BY KORY AMARAL**

Who is ready for the heat?! Speaking of heat, we just got back from our Fresno Membership Meeting. I want to thank all the veterans, SCI/D staff, caregivers, and others who attended the events at the end of May. Please see Page 7 for more information and images from the event.

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, June 28, 2024 and the topic will be Acupuncture. 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 Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area and Western Chapter will have many events coming this Summer. The National Veterans Wheelchair Games (NVWG) will be July 24-30, 2024 in New Orleans, LA. The Chapter will also be hosting our Annual Banquet on Saturday, August 10, 2024 at the Crowne Plaza Cabana in Palo Alto. I am still waiting on the hotel for menu options, then I will send out the invites.

I will be out of the office most of June due to the Advocacy Legislative Seminar in Washington, D.C. June 9-14, 2024 and I will also be on a cruise to Europe the rest of June 2024 to celebrate my mom's 70th Birthday. As always, I am here for you so please either call or text me at (650) 399-5296 or email me at [amaral@bawpva.org](mailto:amaral@bawpva.org) and I will get back to you in a timely manner.

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## SCI Peer Mentoring Program - Education & Lunch

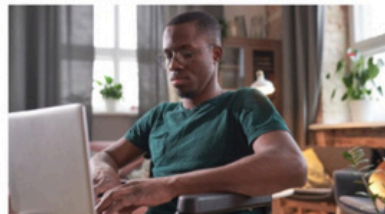
SPONSORED BY THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA AND WESTERN CHAPTER, INC. AND SCI/D CENTER AT VA PALO ALTO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



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>



06/18/2024 - 1:49:11 PM (Local) 5/12/2023

### June Calendar

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING  
JUNE 4

ADVOCACY LEGISLATIVE SEMINAR (OFFICE CLOSED)  
JUNE 9-14

NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER (NSO) MONTHLY CHAT (VIRTUAL)  
JUNE 11

ADAPTIVE SPORTS CLINIC  
JUNE 14

JUNETEENTH HOLIDAY (OFFICE CLOSED)  
JUNE 19

BINGO & PIZZA NIGHT  
JUNE 20

SCI PEER MENTORING PROGRAM - EDUCATION & LUNCH  
JUNE 28

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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](http://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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## *National PVA's Washington Update*

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



### **Veterans Omnibus Introduced**

After months of waiting, a comprehensive legislative package of veterans-related bills has finally been introduced. H.R. 8371, the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act, combines several bipartisan and bicameral proposals to reform and improve the delivery of healthcare, benefits, and services at the VA for veterans, their families, and survivors into a single package. Provisions in H.R. 8371 would expand economic opportunities for veterans, improve mental health care access, and facilitate better oversight of the VA by Congress. Most important, the bill includes the entire Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act which:

- Increases the expenditure cap for noninstitutional care alternative programs from 65 percent to 100 percent of nursing home care costs;
- Expands access to VA's home and community-based services to veterans at all VA medical facilities, as well as to veterans living in U.S. territories and Native veterans enrolled in the Indian Health Service or tribal health programs;
- Requires the creation of a centralized website to disseminate information and resources related to home and community-based programs and help veterans and caregivers determine their eligibility;
- Requires the VA to review staffing and resource needs, accessibility, and other aspects of the Office of Geriatrics and Extended Care and the Caregiver Support Program Office to make certain they are appropriately serving veterans and their caregivers;
- Creates a pilot program to provide home health aide services for veterans that reside in communities with a shortage of home health aides; and
- Requires the VA to establish a warm handoff process for veterans and caregivers who are discharged from or ineligible for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

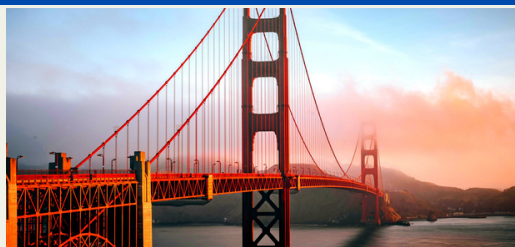
The bill also contains revised language from the Expanding Veterans' Options for Long Term Care Act (H.R. 1815/S. 495), which would test VA's ability to pay for veterans care at assisted living facilities. Currently, the VA can refer veterans to assisted living facilities, but it cannot directly pay for that care. Language in H.R. 8371 would allow VA to carry out a three-year pilot program, no later than two years after enactment for 60 eligible veterans in two Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs) to assess the effectiveness of providing assisted living services to eligible veterans and assess the satisfaction of the program. At the conclusion of the pilot program, participating veterans will be given the option to continue receiving assisted living services at their assigned site, paid for by the VA. We believe this would help veterans and the VA alike by giving greater access to assisted living and reducing costs for long-term care, allowing more veterans to receive needed assistance.

Initially, the plan was to bring the bill to the House floor on or about May 21, but growing opposition to the bill within the chamber coupled with administrative challenges delayed action on the bill until early June. PVA is greatly disappointed with the decision, and is working with congressional members and VSO partners to make sure this bill is placed back on the calendar and swiftly passed.



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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)

CO-PRESENTED BY THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA AND U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

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

**REGISTER TODAY!**

**WHEELCHAIRGAMES.ORG**

Co-Presented by:

VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs PVA Paralyzed Veterans of America



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## Veterans Career Program

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

### Member Column

THE PARALYED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA AND WESTERN CHAPTER, INC. (BAWPVA) VISITED OUR MEMBERS IN FRESNO, CA MAY 28-29, 2024.

THE CHAPTER HOSTED A MOVIE & SNACK AND A MEMBERSHIP MEETING & LUNCH. ALTHOUGH WE ONLY GOT SOME PARTICIPATION FROM MEMBERS, THE PVA MEMBERS WHO SHOWED UP WERE EXCITED AND WE WERE GRATEFUL TO EACH OF THEM.

IN SEPTEMBER WE LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING WITH OUR RENO MEMBERS AND IN OCTOBER WE LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING WITH OUR HAWAII MEMBERS. MORE INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE SOON.



## PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

April 2024

### VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM AWARD: WINDSTREAM



The Veterans Career Program Award is given to a company or organization that exemplifies the spirit of workplace equity, which has been at the heart of PVA's mission since it launched its Veterans Career Program in 2007. At this year's PVA Igniting Change Gala, we were honored to award the VCP Award to Windstream Holdings.

Windstream, a communications and software company, is regularly recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor, the Military Friendly® program, Vets Indexes 5 Star Employer, and the Military Times' "Best for Vets" Program for its commitment to supporting Veterans and prioritizing their employment. Windstream's dedication to Veterans extends beyond recruitment, as they actively promote a work environment where Veterans thrive and contribute their unique skills and experiences. As a result, roughly 14 percent of their employees are Veterans, military spouses, and Veteran spouses.

An invaluable partner, Windstream is a staple in PVA Veterans Career Program webinars. They also frequently work with PVA's dedicated career counselors to place clients in positions throughout their company.

Additionally, Windstream implements policies that include disabled Veterans in their Human Resources and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts, like inclusive language in job descriptions, remote work options, and accessible accommodations. By fostering an equitable workplace, Windstream has created a welcoming environment for all Veterans.

### MONTHLY IMPACT

- 20 Client Placements
  - 14 Paid Employment
  - 5 Education/Training
  - 1 Volunteer
    - 19 Veterans
    - 1 Active Duty
    - 2 PVA Members
- The average salary for the 12 clients in full time employment was \$65,937; and the average income for the 2 clients in part time employment was \$21,000.



Accepting the award on behalf of Windstream were Mary Michaels, Chief Human Resources Officer, and Paul Strickland, Vice President Customer Care at Windstream. We were joined by SBA Deputy Administrator Dilawar Syed who spoke about the connection between Veteran-owned/friendly businesses and Veteran employment.

### MEET TIFFANEY DAVISON



In 2023, we launched a 10-week virtual self-employment program for PVA members and spouses interested in pursuing small business opportunities. Thanks to generous grant funding from the Wells Fargo Foundation, we will host our fourth cohort later this year and are one track to awarding \$20,000 in start-up grants. We know that veteran-owned and veteran-friendly

businesses are key to lowering disabled Veteran unemployment.

We were honored to share the Gala stage with Tiffany Davison. Tiffany is a PVA Member who was part of our first self-employment cohort, and one of our first Pitch Night winners. She received a small business grant to help launch Handi No Cap LLC that designs and manufactures adaptive sportswear for disabled athletes.



PVA.org/VeteransCareerProgram

POWERED BY:



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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 522 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.

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