



DMAVA

HIGHLIGHTS



FEBRUARY 9, 2012

Black History Month Reflections

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Floyd L. White, III, 177th Fighter Wing

Black History Month was officially designated in 1986 by Congress, which noted that February 1, 1986, marked “the beginning of the 60th annual public and private salute to Black History.”

Sixty years prior, Dr. Carter G. Woodson’s Association for the Study of Negro Life and History first designated Negro History Week on February 12, 1926. The date was chosen to acknowledge the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States who helped abolish slavery, and Frederick Douglass, an abolitionist movement leader.

Today I would like to reflect upon Mary McLeod Bethune. Mary McLeod Bethune served on presidential commissions under presidents’ Calvin Coolidge (child welfare) and Herbert Hoover (child welfare, home building and home ownership) and through her activities, came to the attention of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor. She became a personal friend of Eleanor Roosevelt, sometimes speaking on the same platform with her, and consulted with FDR on minority affairs. She played a key role in establishing, in 1936, the Federal Committee on Fair Employment Practice, to help reduce discrimination or even

exclusion of African Americans by the growing defense industry.

During World War II, Bethune pressured the Secretary of War to commission black women as officers in the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (later the Women’s Army Corps). She



Photo courtesy Library of Congress

assisted Oveta Culp Hobby in identifying and selecting such candidates to represent about 10 percent of the total candidates selected. Mary McLeod Bethune was a frontrunner in establishing access to opportunity for African Americans. In 1973, Bethune was inducted into the National Women’s Hall of Fame. Schools are named in her honor in 15 cities across the nation.

Today as a chaplain I am thankful for our command and all of its efforts to be inclusive of everyone throughout the command. In my three year tenure here with the 177th Fighter Wing, I have never met an Airman of this command who is unwilling to help his fellow Airman.

As the scripture reveals to us as we continue to do our duty, “may goodness and mer-

cy follow us all the days of our lives and may we dwell in God’s house forever” - Psalms 23 Verse 6.

May God continue to bless the United States of America and the New Jersey National Guard.



Vietnam Era Museum and Educational Center to host author lecture and reading

On Saturday, Feb. 11, at 1 p.m., the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation will host an author lecture and poetry reading by two distinguished New Jersey veterans: Former Marine Cpl. Matthew Craw and former Army 1st Lt. Charles H. Johnson, at the Vietnam Era Museum and Educational Center.

Spend the afternoon with two men who have made the journey from military service member to writer. The authors will read excerpts and share their experiences bridging the gap between generations of American veterans. The program will be moderated by Marc Bonagura, associate professor of English at Brookdale Community College in Lincroft.

Matthew Craw, of Little Silver, joined the Marine Corps in 2003 after witnessing the effects of 9/11, and later served in Iraq as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. After returning home in 2006, Craw attended Brookdale Community College where he met Bonagura, mentor professor, and began drafting the book. Craw is currently a senior at Rider University.

Craw's upcoming book, "The Song Each Bullet Sings: The

Story of Iraqi Freedom through the Eyes of One Marine", details his wartime experiences. Writing the book helped Craw deal with posttraumatic stress disorder and is intended to help the families and friends of Soldiers and Marines understand how war has impacted their loved ones.

Johnson, of Hillsborough, is a graduate of the ROTC program at Rutgers University and served in South Vietnam as a first lieutenant and an infantry platoon leader for the 1st Cavalry Division from 1970 to 1971. An accomplished poet, he is the author of "Sam's Place", "Tunnel Vision" and other numerous poetry collections.

Lecture attendees are asked to RSVP to 732-335-0033. The Center is located adjacent to the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial off the Garden State Parkway at exit 116. The Educational Center is open

Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Admission is free for veterans and active-duty military personnel. Regular adult admission is \$5; student and senior citizen admission is \$3, and children under 10 are admitted free. Regular admission applies to all lectures.



NEW JERSEY VIETNAM VETERANS' MEMORIAL VIETNAM ERA MUSEUM & EDUCATIONAL CENTER

Division of Pensions and Benefits supports "America Saves Week"

It's no secret that this tough economy has Americans struggling to cope financially. That's why now is a critical time to reduce debt and save money for the future. And the ideal time to start is during **America Saves Week**, which runs from Feb. 19 to Feb. 26.

Spearheaded by the American Savings Education Council, America Saves Week is a nationwide event in which individuals are encouraged to take action to begin saving or to save more efficiently.

Similar to National Save for Retirement Week, this event is a

great opportunity for state employees to learn more about positive financial habits.

If your New Jersey State Employees Deferred Compensation Plan education consultant has not yet contacted you regarding this event, please reach out to your consultant to obtain materials and schedule seminars at your location.

Please join us in encouraging employee attendance at seminars during America Saves Week and/or one-on-one appointments with their education consultant.

Region	Education Consultant	Cell Phone	Email address
North Jersey	Rocco Attanasio	609-571-5532	rocco.attanasio@prudential.com
Statehouse/Mercer County	Michael McConnell	609-334-5202	michael.mcconnell@prudential.com
Central Jersey	Susan McAleavey	609-472-1634	susan.mcaleavey@prudential.com
South Jersey	Patricia Scherer	609-462-1239	patricia.scherer@prudential.com





Lt. Col. Brian K. Scully, second from left, Executive Officer for the Office of the Adjutant General, greets some of the more than 20 wheelchair-user veterans from New Jersey Veterans Memorial Homes in Paramus and Vineland at a hockey game on Feb. 4, at Sun National Bank Center in Trenton. The hockey event was organized by Robert I. Cirkus, past State Commander of Department of New Jersey Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America and the Preiskel-

Miller-Glassberg Post No. 47, Clifton, as a way to allow these veterans an opportunity for a night out with friends and entertainment. Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cuniff, Acting Adjutant General of New Jersey; Raymond L. Zawacki, Deputy Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, and Scully were among the leaders from the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to welcome and greet the veterans during the game. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez, NJDMAVA/PA)

NEW JERSEY NATIONAL GUARDSMEN IN AFGHANISTAN



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

NJARNG hosts OCS orientation program

By 1st Lt. Vincent Solomeno, 444th MPAD

SEA GIRT, N.J. - The New Jersey Army National Guard's 254th Regional Training Institute hosted an orientation day here on Saturday, Feb. 4, for Soldiers and civilians interested in attending the Officer Candidate School's (OCS) Class 56 here.

More than 60 prospective candidates took a tour of facilities, attended briefings, and heard from senior lead-

ers about the importance of becoming a commissioned officer.

Addressing the orientation, Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff, The Acting Adjutant General, applauded the prospective candidates for their initiative and interest.

"This is a challenging program, and rightfully so," said Cunniff to the prospective candidates as a reminder of the

rigorous OCS training. "OCS has a long and distinguished tradition of excellence."

In addition, he extolled the importance of a strong officer corps. "As a leader, you will provide organization and purpose for your subordinates," said Cunniff. "This is a privilege; a privilege to lead the Army and Air National Guard of tomorrow."

The Adjutant General was joined on stage by Brig. Gen. James J. Grant, director of Joint Staff at N.J. Joint Force Headquarters; Col. James Stenson, commander of the 254th Regiment; and Lt. Col. Willie Forman, commander of the 254th Regiment's 2nd Modular Training Battalion, which has responsibility for the OCS program.

Also on hand to welcome the prospective candidates were other senior leaders of the New Jersey Army National Guard and Soldiers already engaged in the OCS program.

Among those interested in joining Class 56 was Gustavo Limo of Elizabeth. A prior service Marine Corps veteran, he noted that pursuing a commission fits with his civilian career aspirations.

"Many businesses are looking for employees with military leadership background," said Limo. "This can only help."

New Jersey's 254th Regional Training Institute is home to the Northeast region's largest OCS program. Successful applicants to the Class of 56 will graduate in the summer of 2013.

“ This is a challenging program, and rightfully so.

**Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff,
Acting Adjutant General**

Attorney General's Office hosting Veterans Civil Rights seminar

The New Jersey Attorney General's (AG) Office in partnership with The American Legion will conduct a regional Veterans' Civil Rights seminar, on Feb. 18, from 9:30 a.m. - 1 p.m., at Essex County College, 303 University Ave., Newark, NJ. The event will be hosted by The American Legion, Guyton-Callahan Post 152, and the College.

All veterans, family members, and veteran service organizations are invited to attend. You do not have to belong to The American Legion to participate.

The AG's Division on Civil Rights (DCR) is concerned, based on the lack of complaints, that discrimination claims against veterans with disabilities and active military personnel are under-reported. Therefore they have decided to launch their own outreach campaign based on these concerns, in conjunction with The American Legion.

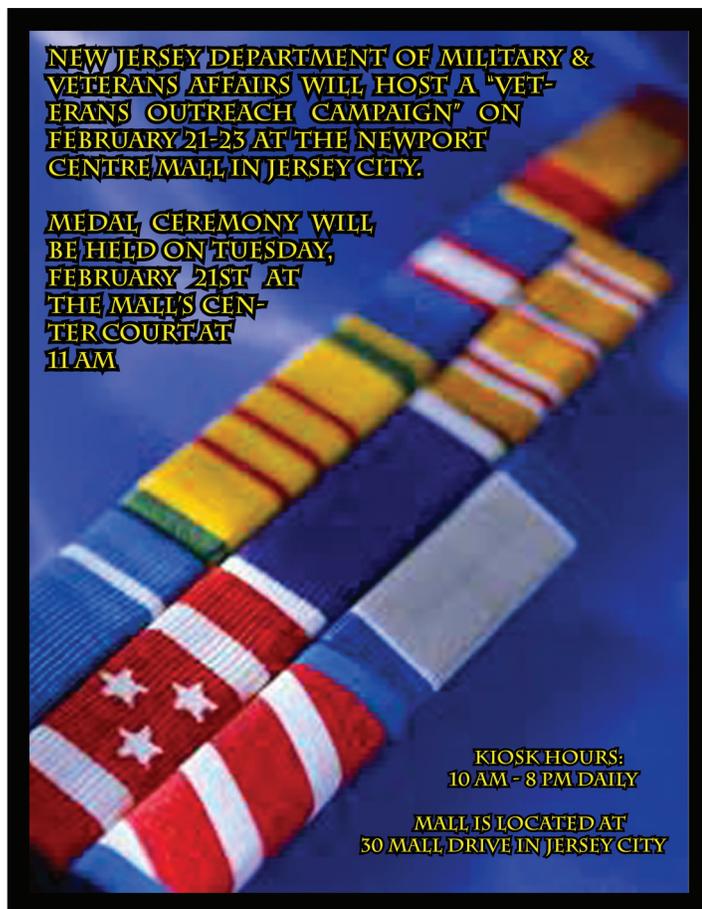
Veterans are entitled to employment-related protection under the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD). This law also provides substantial protection of those who seek to gain or continue employment with a disability. DCR has a special interest in any veterans with disabilities having discrimination complaints in employment, housing, and public accommodations. They are also concerned about military reservists and National Guardsmen that have lost their employment, or assigned to different positions following their return from a deployment.

Therefore, the AG's office produced an educational seminar to inform all veterans of their civil rights. The DCR will ensure the prosecution of all veteran discrimination cases, including employer and other business dealings. New Jersey's disability laws are more stringent than federal law, which will be part of this discussion. The AG's DCR also believes that veterans discrimination is being under reported, therefore a further need for this education. A representative from the Federal EEOC will also be present to explain Federal Discrimination Laws.

Additionally, another segment of the seminar will be explanation of the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act (VEVRAA) of 1974, which requires federal contractors and subcontractors to provide equal opportunity and affirmative action for Vietnam era veterans, special disabled veterans, and veterans who served on active duty during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized.

The DCR will also explain the process to file a claim, and the locations of their offices that are available to assist veterans in need of these services. The American Legion will host this and further seminars across the state.

If you have any general questions pertaining to this seminar, please call Bob Looby, The American Legion's Coordinator, on 908-894-0746. You may also contact the Newark Attorney General's office at 973 648-4826.



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY & VETERANS AFFAIRS WILL HOST A "VETERANS OUTREACH CAMPAIGN" ON FEBRUARY 21-23 AT THE NEWPORT CENTRE MALL IN JERSEY CITY.

MEDAL CEREMONY WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST AT THE MALL'S CENTER COURT AT 11 AM

**KIOSK HOURS:
10 AM - 8 PM DAILY**

**MALL IS LOCATED AT
30 MALL DRIVE IN JERSEY CITY**

Discounted tickets to Rutgers game

Attention New Jersey veterans and military service members: Enjoy Rutgers University men and women's basketball games at discounted prices.

All 100 level tickets will be \$15 (normally \$35) and all general admission tickets will be \$5 (normally \$15) for the women's basketball game against Seton Hall on Feb. 21, at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased online by clicking on the below link: <https://ev12.venue.net/cgi-bin/ncommerce3/EVExecMacro?linkID=Rutgers&evm=prmo&RSRC=&RDAT=&caller=PR>

Type in the code "NJDMAVA" in the box and click the "go" button. You will be taken to a page where the tickets can be purchased at the discounted rate. Or you can call 866-445-GORU (4678). Offer is only good while tickets are available.

Both games will be played at the Louis Brown Athletic Center, which is located at 83 Rockafeller Road in Piscataway.

DMAVA Highlights is published weekly by the Public Affairs Office of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. The views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense, the Army, the Air Force, the National Guard, Veterans Affairs or the state of New Jersey. Letters may be sent to: NJDMAVA, DMAVA Highlights, Public Affairs Office, PO Box 340, Trenton NJ 08625-0340. e-mail at pao@njdmava.state.nj.us.

N.J. Vietnam Veteran's foundation to host benefit seminar in April

The New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation in conjunction with the Veterans Administration Health Care Community Outreach Team invites you to a FREE seminar on Saturday, April 14, at the Vietnam Era Museum and Education Center from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Come to this informative event and learn about the VA health care system. At 10:15 a.m., there will be a 45-minute presentation regarding health care eligibility and benefits followed by a questions-and-answers session.

Any veteran that is currently enrolled and wants to learn more about their health care benefits is encouraged to attend, and also learn about non-health related benefits such as: home loans, life insurance, filing disability claims, and death and burial benefits.

Furthermore, a VA mobile health unit will be on site for any "eligible" veteran to receive a brief health care assessment, including blood pressure check and patient education. Any veteran seeking information about how to enroll in the VA health care system should bring their DD-214.

Attendees are asked to RSVP their attendance to 732-335-0033.

The Educational Center is located at the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial off Exit 116 in the Garden State Parkway.

Comedy night at Paramus Elks

The New Jersey Elks National Veterans Service Commission is hosting a comedy night on Saturday, March 10 as a fundraiser for homeless veterans.

Featuring several comedians at the Paramus Elks Lodge# 2001 at 7 p.m., tickets will be sold for \$30 per person.

For tickets or more information, call 908-510-8503.

Paramus Elks Lodge# 2001 is located at 200 N. Street, Route 17 in Paramus.

America Saves Week and NJ State Deferred Compensation seminar

Meet with Mike McConnell from Prudential Retirement Services to learn about the America Saves program or discuss your State Deferred Compensation account.

Seminar starts at 9:30 a.m. on Feb. 23, in Conference Room B (TAG Command Conference Room) from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Individual meetings will be held every 15 minutes with the representative.

Contact Paul Serdiuk in Human Resources Division at 609-530-6878 or via email at paul.serdiuk@njdmava.state.nj.us to schedule an appointment.

New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff – The Adjutant General (Acting)

Brig. Gen. James J. Grant – Director, Joint Staff

Raymond Zawacki – Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Patrick Daugherty – Public Affairs Officer

Air Force Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez - Public Affairs Specialist

Army Staff Sgt. Wayne Woolley – Public Affairs Specialist