



WE HONOR VETERANS

ACHIEVEMENTS 2012

National Hospice and Palliative Care
Organization





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"The collaborative work that VA is doing with NHPCO through *We Honor Veterans* is a shining example of the value of partnership. Together, we have grown in trust, knowledge, and expertise because communities and VA are joining together to help more Veterans and their families receive the best quality care at the end of life."

–**Robert A. Petzel, M.D.**,
Under Secretary for Health,
Department of Veterans
Affairs (VA)

"It is an honor to work so closely with VA on *We Honor Veterans*. We knew there was a huge need to fill with Veterans' end-of-life care, and we are grateful for the tremendous number of hospices that have embraced and partnered with the program. They show us every single day what it means to care compassionately for the men and women who served this nation."

–**J. Donald Schumacher**,
Psy.D., President & CEO,
National Hospice and
Palliative Care Organization
(NHPCO)

INTRODUCTION

“One out of every four dying Americans is a Veteran. Each deserves compassionate care at the end of life.”

Veterans often carry experiences from their military service that present unique challenges, and unfortunately, many of them may not know about, or have access to, hospice and palliative care. There is much that we as a nation can do to recognize their unique needs and guide Veterans and their families towards more peaceful endings.



Recognizing this need, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) have been working together since 2008 to help improve the care Veterans receive from hospice and palliative care providers. Using the tools of the *We Honor Veterans* program hospice professionals across America, often in collaboration with local VA facilities, are stepping up to build their skills and accept the mission to serve our nation's Veterans.

So much exciting and innovative work has been accomplished in the past few years. The following pages provide some glimpses of those successes and point the way toward the future—including how we as individuals can help. We invite you to read the stories, take in the information presented, and feel pride in the growing community of hospices and VA staff doing extraordinary work together.

America's Veterans have done everything asked of them in their mission to serve our country and we believe it is never too late to give them a hero's welcome home. Now it is time that we step up, acquire the necessary skills and fulfill our mission to serve these men and women with the dignity they deserve.

WE HONOR VETERANS

Hospice Professionals on a Mission to Serve

We Honor Veterans, a program of NHPKO in collaboration with VA, invites hospices, state hospice organizations, Hospice-Veteran Partnerships and VA facilities to join a pioneering program focused on respectful inquiry, compassionate listening, and grateful acknowledgment.

By recognizing the unique needs of America's Veterans and their families, community providers, in partnership with VA staff, will learn how to accompany and guide them through their life stories toward a more peaceful ending.

Launched in September 2010, *We Honor Veterans* provides tools and resources that encourage providers to:

- Commit to honoring Veterans at the end of life
- Assess their current ability to serve Veterans
- Provide Veteran-centric education for staff
- Measure quality and outcomes of Veterans' care



Resources

Resources at www.WeHonorVeterans.org address key aspects of serving Veterans including:

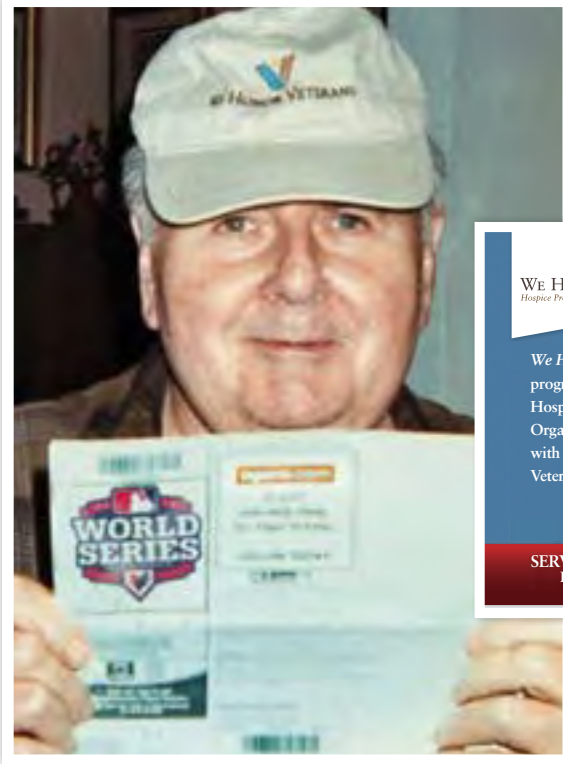
- Unique care needs of Veterans
- Military History Checklist
- Veteran benefits and VA organizational structure
- Recognition ceremonies
- Vet-to-Vet Volunteer Program
- Outreach materials
- Staff and volunteer training modules

A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME EXPERIENCE

On October 28, 2012, Navy Vet Vincent Garbesi and his brother-in-law, Chris Quarles, a Vietnam Veteran, were seated near first base at Detroit’s Comerica Park as the Detroit Tigers and the San Francisco Giants vied for the World Series title.

Sixty-nine-year-old Garbesi is a devoted Tigers fan and a patient of the Hospice of Michigan, a Level Three *We Honor Veterans* Partner. He had never been to Comerica Park, let alone a World Series game. When NHPCO got two tickets to the 2012 World Series as part of an ad package to promote the *We Honor Veterans* program, the Hospice of Michigan’s leadership came to mind. The staff at the Hospice of Michigan were quick to identify Garbesi as an appropriate patient who would be able to attend—and enjoy it.

“We were thrilled,” Garbesi said, “and very grateful for this unexpected, once-in-a-lifetime experience.”



Hospice patient and Navy Veteran Vincent Garbesi was thrilled with the opportunity to attend a World Series game in Detroit in the fall of 2012.

PARTNER LEVELS



We Honor Veterans was designed so that hospices can start with just a simple desire to become part of the program and then progress through four different partner levels, achieving additional distinction as they move up.

The project's website, www.WeHonorVeterans.org, provides a wealth of resources and information that hospices can use. There are very specific activities that a hospice must do in order to move from Partner Level One through Level Four. Here are some examples:

Recruit: Complete and submit the **Partner Commitment Form**.



Level One: Ask about military history and know what to do with the answer. Use the **Military History Checklist** or similar questions to learn more about the Veteran's military service and the implications it may have for the care and services to be provided by the hospice staff.



Level Two: Partner to improve care. Develop a **Hospice-Veteran Partnership (HVP)**, which is a coalition of VA facilities, community hospices, state hospice organizations and others working together to ensure that excellent care at the end of life is available for our nation's Veterans and their families.



Level Three: Extend VA and community reach to improve care and access. Create a **Vet-to-Vet Volunteer Program** that matches trained hospice volunteers who are Veterans with Veteran patients.



Level Four: Improve quality by measuring the impact of VA and community interventions by using a **Veteran-focused version of NHPCO's Family Evaluation of Hospice Care (FEHC-V)**.

"We have always had a special place in our hearts for Veterans, and this confirms our deep commitment to them. We are so grateful for the Veterans' service to our country, and it is a privilege to be able to meet their needs in partnership with NHPCO and VA."

–Samira K. Beckwith, Hope Healthcare Services,
Fort Meyers, Florida, Level Four Partner

TREMENDOUS GROWTH AND IMPACT

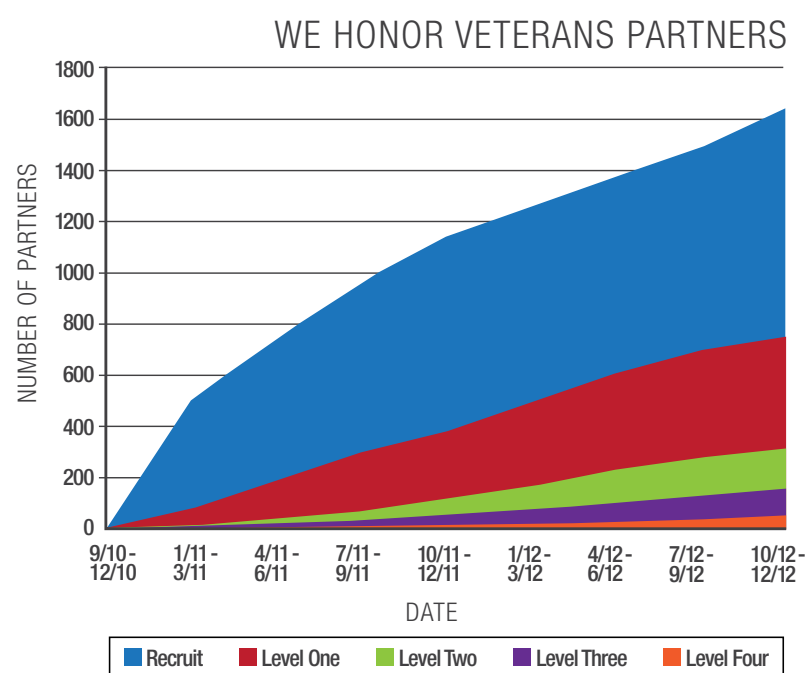
There has been an explosion of interest in *We Honor Veterans* by NHPCO members. From the inception of the program in September, 2010, to the end of 2012, the hospice community has embraced the program in ever-increasing numbers. With more than 3,000 member hospices, NHPCO still has much outreach to do, but the success of the first years dramatically underlines the program's momentum. There are now 1,600 hospices, both NHPCO member and non-member organizations, which participate in the program and are recognizing Veterans in a variety of creative and, often heartfelt, ways.

All *We Honor Veterans* Partners are acknowledged in the "Partner Directory" at www.WeHonorVeterans.org.

"When I was a parish priest in New York, I knew I had several Veterans from the Vietnam War in my congregation. I wanted to offer support for their struggles and recovery, but a friend who had himself served in Vietnam, told me that Vets would not talk deeply to anyone who had not served there. If you hadn't been there, they believed, you would not understand. The initial training provided by *We Honor Veterans* proved the case. While I have no small respect for the military, there was so much I did not understand.

Through the training experience, I began to see real people and my eyes, as well as my heart, were opened. I never considered that conditions and needs might be specific to each conflict, different for each group serving, from the Great War through recent struggles. I am grateful to *We Honor Veterans* for an awakening and a lesson in compassion."

—**Reverend Roy Green**, Hospice & Palliative Care of Washington County, Maryland, Level Three Partner



BEST PRACTICES

VETERAN STATUS INFORMATION	
1. Did you (or your spouse or family member) serve in the military?	
1a. Patient <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Did you serve on active duty? Did your service include combat, dangerous or traumatic assignment? Do you have a copy of your DD214 discharge papers?
1b. Did your spouse serve on active duty? Comments:	
1c. Do you have any immediate family members that served or are serving in the military? Comments:	
MILITARY BACKGROUND	
2. In which branch of the military did you serve?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Army <input type="checkbox"/> Navy <input type="checkbox"/> Air Force	<input type="checkbox"/> Marines <input type="checkbox"/> Coast Guard <input type="checkbox"/> Reservist or National Guard member
3. In which war era or period of service did you serve?	
<input type="checkbox"/> WWI (4/6/17 to 11/11/18) <input type="checkbox"/> WWII (12/7/41 to 12/31/48) <input type="checkbox"/> Korea (6/27/50 to 1/31/55) <input type="checkbox"/> Cold War	<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnam (8/5/64 to 5/7/75 and 2/28/61 for Veterans who served "in country" (in Vietnam) before 8/5/64) <input type="checkbox"/> Gulf War (8/2/90 through a date to be set by law or presidential proclamation) <input type="checkbox"/> Peace Time <input type="checkbox"/> Afghanistan/Iraq (OE) <input type="checkbox"/> Other Note: after 9/11/00, must months continuous active period for which they were on active duty.
4. Overall, how do you view your experience in the military?	
5. If available would you like your hospice staff/volunteer to have military experience?	
VA BENEFITS INFORMATION	
6. Are you enrolled in VA?	
6a. Do you receive any VA benefits?	
6b. Do you have a service-connected condition?	

Five best practices of *We Honor Veterans* have evolved as hospices around the country implement activities and share their experiences with NHPCO and each other.

- Military History Checklist
- Vet-to-Vet Volunteer Program
- Hospice-Veteran Partnerships
- Pinning Ceremonies
- Family Evaluation of Hospice Care - Veteran's Version (FEHC-V)

Under the “Partner Resources” section, the *We Honor Veterans* website (www.WeHonorVeterans.org) provides a wealth of information to help hospices implement these best practices. NHPCO adds to these resources regularly.

Military History Checklist

Asking about patients’ military service, using the Military History Checklist as a conversation starter, is the place to start. It is a requirement of being a Level One Partner. Everything else flows from having identified Veterans in a hospice’s care, including:

- Identification of patients as Veterans is the first step in honoring them for their service;
- Veterans may have issues related to their military service which their plan of care should address;
- Veterans may be entitled to benefits through VA; and
- Hospice volunteers who are Veterans may be able to provide valuable support to Veterans and families.

“My father was deeply touched when the staff commented on his military history. The recognition and appreciation of his WWII service meant a great deal to him, and I want to continue to do that with other Veterans.”

—**Marcia Howell**, Hospice of Northeast Georgia Medical Center, Gainesville, Georgia, Level Three Partner

The Military History Checklist and other practical resources are available at www.WeHonorVeterans.org.

BEST PRACTICES (CONT.)

Vet-to-Vet Volunteer Program

Many community hospice providers have implemented innovative models for serving Veterans at the end of life: such as the Vet-to-Vet Volunteer Program. Hospices recruit Veterans to serve as volunteers and then pair them with hospice patients who also have military experience. Based on being part of the military culture, which often has a common language and shared experiences, Veteran volunteers have the unique ability to relate and connect with their patients. Together, they are able to create an environment in which life review and healing is more likely to occur. Such volunteer programs are a Level Three requirement.



The Gift of Veteran Volunteers
Covenant Hospice
Pensacola, Florida

Randy Barbour told Jim Kirby, "All I want to do is go to the Naval Aviation Museum. Then I'll never have to leave my home again." Randy is an Army Veteran and Covenant Hospice patient and Jim is a Navy Veteran and Covenant Hospice Volunteer. And voicing that wish was all that was needed.

Within a month of that conversation, Randy was at the renowned museum and received a special two-hour tour from Vice Admiral Gerald Hoewing. He was also given a medallion commemorating the 2012 opening of the National Flight Academy and a book detailing the history of the museum. It was a special day and as Randy's handwritten note later expressed, the tour was an experience he will cherish forever. Jim was the catalyst that made it happen.

Randy Barbour (seated) was able to have a dream come true after he shared it with his Veteran hospice volunteer.

"Veterans have made many sacrifices that undeniably leave a lasting impact on their lives years after they have taken off the uniform. While Covenant Hospice's staff are taught the special needs of Veterans through trainings and our close work with the Department of Veterans Affairs and local Veteran Service Organizations, our Veteran volunteers can be our best teachers, and can make an invaluable contribution in the care we provide to our nation's finest at the end of life."

**—Brian Ranelli, Covenant Hospice, Pensacola, Florida,
Level Four Partner**

BEST PRACTICES (CONT.)



Veterans from different eras still share many commonalities, based on their shared experiences of military culture.

Hospice-Veteran Partnerships

Hospice-Veteran Partnerships are coalitions of state hospice organizations, community hospice providers, VA facilities, state and community organizations, as well as others, working together to ensure that excellent care at the end of life is available for all Veterans and that support is available to families. Participation in such a partnership is a requirement to achieve Level Two designation in *We Honor Veterans*.

The goals of Hospice-Veteran Partnerships are to:

- Improve Veterans' access to hospice and palliative care and ease transitions across care settings;
- Ensure every Veteran is able to receive hospice care at the time and place of need;
- Strengthen the relationships between community hospices and VA facilities; and
- Initiate comprehensive end-of-life community engagement plans designed to reach Veterans.



Slowly but Surely
Beacon Hospice
East Providence, Rhode Island

Establishing a Hospice-Veteran Partnership takes time—and effort. When Beacon Hospice in East Providence, RI learned that a requirement of Level Two was to identify a local, regional, or state-wide Hospice-Veteran Partnership, staff was disheartened to learn there was no state-level partnership.

However, they were not daunted. Beacon Hospice staff took the necessary steps of forming their own local partnership by consulting with NHPKO staff and reading the online Hospice-Veteran Partnership Toolkit. After developing a list of potential partners and sending out invitations for an informational meeting, the inaugural Rhode Island Hospice-Veteran Partnership meeting was held.

Turnout was disappointing: only one potential partner sent staff. So the first meeting was three Beacon Hospice staff and three Odyssey Hospice staff. Together, they decided to forge ahead and invited more and more community organizations and even competitors to the table.

BEST PRACTICES (CONT.)

Slowly but surely more organizations and individuals signed on to be part of the Rhode Island Hospice-Veteran Partnership and now the group consists of multiple hospices, healthcare providers, representatives from the VA and individual Veterans.

Their first activity was to conduct a community needs assessment. It identified a need for community education on Veteran benefits and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The group offered a PTSD in-service that drew 67 health professionals from the community in attendance. The partnership was also busy on Veterans Day when they conducted pinning ceremonies for Veterans in various locations within the community. The partnership conducts regular meetings, is expanding their ranks, and is planning future activities to educate their community and honor their Veterans.

“Prior to the forming of our Hospice-Veteran Partnership, there was not a lot of talk between hospices. With this new partnership the community hospices communicate with one another about ways to work together to improve Veterans’ care.”

–**Michelle August**, Beacon Hospice, East
Providence, Rhode Island, Level Three Partner



Active duty military personnel enjoy participating in community events.

Leaving Competition at the Door

“With the Hospice-Veteran Partnership I am a part of, my direct hospice competitors and I have worked hand in hand with one common goal: learning the unique needs of Veterans and how to provide those that have served for us excellent end of life care. There is never a “this is how my hospice does it” mentality. Along with the local VA we have all incorporated educational resources from the *We Honor Veterans* website. The resulting involvement has assisted us to discover how to serve our Veterans with dignity, respect, integrity, and most of all, honor. Competing hospices have stood side by side at events promoting the *We Honor Veterans* program and assuring that the Veterans that come to our booth are receiving benefits or educate them on how to enroll.”

–**Tracey Wheatley**,
Hospice & Community Care,
Lancaster, Pennsylvania,
Level Two Partner

BEST PRACTICES (CONT.)



Pinning Ceremonies

The purpose of a pinning ceremony is to publicly acknowledge the military service and sacrifices made by the Veteran and his or her family. The ceremony often provides an opportunity for Veterans to share parts of their stories.

There are planned ceremonies and spontaneous opportunities. In planned ceremonies, an event is coordinated to enable family and staff to be present for the ceremony. It might be connected to a holiday such as Veterans Day or Memorial Day, but can be any time. In spontaneous ceremonies, a hospice staff member or volunteer takes advantage of an opportunity that arises unexpectedly, perhaps during a visit to a patient's home or upon admission to an inpatient unit.

In either case, the Veteran is asked if he or she would like to tell a bit about when they served, how long they served, and what they remember most. Whoever is doing the ceremony listens, ask questions, and allows family members to also ask questions and add information.

Suggested Words for the Pinning Ceremony:

"Ms./Mr. Veteran, thank you for your service to our nation. Thank you for the sacrifices you made and your willingness to serve our country. You endured hardships and were willing to risk your life to maintain our freedom. On behalf of (our staff, the VA, the ___Hospice) please accept our thanks and gratitude. When you see this pin, know that your service to the nation is deeply appreciated. We thank you."

BEST PRACTICES (CONT.)



Public Recognition through Community Pinnings Mercy Care Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

“We Love Our Vets” read the sign at the Inlet Square Mall in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. It was Valentine’s Day 2012, and Mercy Care had been asked by the Mall promotion director, along with other local businesses, to collaborate on a special event to honor and thank the Veterans in this community for their service to the country.

Flags representing all branches of service were carried into the Mall’s central court where over 300 hundred family members and guests were seated and watched with pride as their loved ones entered and took their seats. All the while, there were bands playing, a barbershop quartet singing patriotic songs and appearances by the JROTC drill team, Rolling Thunder and the Patriot Guard.

After a few short speeches were made to express the community’s gratitude for their service, the Veterans from each branch were then asked to stand. With the swiftness of a well-trained military squad, 12 Mercy Care Veteran volunteers walked through each aisle and carefully placed a specially designed “Mercy HONORS” pin on the lapel of each Veteran standing at attention. After Veterans from each branch received their pins, the Mercy Veteran volunteers stood at attention and saluted each group, from the Army to the Merchant Marines.

“Watching from the front of the room, I saw one Veteran after another smile with appreciation while others had tears streaming down their cheeks. I was to learn that for many, this was the first time anyone had thanked them for their service.”

—**J. Michael Neal**, Mercy Care, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, Level Two Partner



Pinning ceremonies are especially meaningful to Veterans.

BEST PRACTICES (CONT.)



Kim Vesey (center) accepted NHPCO's Advancing End-of-Life Care Access Award on behalf of VITAS Innovative Hospice Care of Dayton. Also pictured are NHPCO's President & CEO J. Donald Schumacher (left) and NHPCO Board Chair Ron Fried.



Level Four Partner Wins Award
VITAS Innovative Hospice Care
Dayton, Ohio

NHPCO presented its inaugural Advancing End-of-life Care Access Award to VITAS Innovative Hospice Care of Dayton in November, 2012. VITAS of Dayton began its Veterans initiative in 2008 to ensure that information about hospice is readily available to Veterans and their families that are facing serious and life-limiting illness.

Among the many activities supporting Veterans, they provide outreach services to local homeless Veterans and partner with the VA to provide supportive services to drug and alcohol dependent Veterans. The organization also supports the community's "Honor Flight" program which brings Veterans to the nation's capital to visit the many monuments and memorials that honor this country's greatest heroes. The hospice has honored Veterans they care for by hosting pinning ceremonies where they thank those who have served the country through military service. They have pinned well over 1,000 Veterans in the last three and a half years.

VITAS Innovative Hospice Care of Dayton is a Level Four Partner in the *We Honor Veterans* program – the highest level a hospice can currently attain.

Family Evaluation Of Hospice Care – Veterans Version (FEHC-V)

In order to achieve Level Four status in the *We Honor Veterans* program, hospices must evaluate the care they provided to Veterans. To help hospices do this, NHPCO, in collaboration with the VA, developed a *Veterans* version of the Family Evaluation of Hospice Care (FEHC) survey.

FEHC is a post-death survey designed to yield actionable information that reflects the quality of hospice care delivery from the perspective of family caregivers. Hospices that submit FEHC data to NHPCO receive quarterly reports of the survey results which they can then use in their quality performance improvement initiatives. This groundwork will be extremely helpful for hospices as the regulatory body that oversees hospices, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, requires such data-gathering.

PARTNER ACCOMPLISHMENTS



WE HONOR VETERANS

A Small Gesture That Opens Doors Pikes Peak Hospice & Palliative Care Colorado Springs, Colorado

Several years ago, Pikes Peak Hospice & Palliative Care staff members who are Veterans themselves, or had served in the uniformed services, initiated a special effort to formally thank the distinguished Veterans receiving our care.

Each Veteran patient is presented with an heirloom-quality coin, created in the shape of a “dog tag,” and a certificate of appreciation that bears the seal of his or her branch of service.

These heirloom-quality dog-tag coins are patterned after the “coins of excellence” that nearly all service members have received while in uniform. John Bauer, who has served as chaplain at the hospice since 2004 and retired from the U.S. Army in 2003, explains, “While just a piece of metal, the coins of excellence are treasured by all soldiers, sailors, Marines, or airmen who had one pressed into their hands as a ‘thank you’ for service rendered, so it was fitting to model our small gift after them.”

Bauer continues, “Initially, we didn’t know how this expression of gratitude would be received by our Veteran patients—and we were both heartened and surprised. Heartened when one of the first responses we received was a simple, ‘thank you for saying thank you.’”

Family members have also expressed gratitude for the simple gesture. Many of these family members had endured the worry and loneliness of having their loved ones far away from home in harm’s way, so the coin and certificate have become heirlooms to them when their loved ones have died.

“I’m no hero. People may think that I am, but that’s just because there’s not many of us left.”

—Norman Brown, World War II Veteran



Pikes Peak Hospice & Palliative Care’s presentation to 92 year-old Norman Brown with John Bauer (pictured above). Norman was a combat Veteran of World War II—a gunner on one of the B-29s that flew over Japan.

PARTNER ACCOMPLISHMENTS (CONT.)



“Since instituting this Escort Ceremony for Veterans, families of non-Veteran patients have asked that a similar service be conducted for their loved ones, so Stein has created a generic policy and performs a non-military ceremony on request. While the ceremony is simple, it is meaningful. Families often tell us, with tears in their eyes, that it is just what their deceased loved one would have wanted.”

—**Julie Yeager,**
Stein Hospice,
Sandusky, Ohio,
Level Four Partner



WE HONOR VETERANS

An Honorable Send-off

**Stein Hospice
Sandusky, Ohio**

During a brief ceremony at one of Ohio’s two Veterans Homes, a U.S. flag was draped over the body of a Veteran who had just died as staff members gathered around for a short but meaningful tribute. This ceremony took all of 15 minutes, but the staff members of Stein Hospice, which has offices in both Veterans Homes, were so moved by it that they decided to create a similar ceremony for Veteran patients at Stein Hospice’s 18-bed Care Center in Sandusky.

When the “Escort Ceremony” was inaugurated, Rev. Charles Odums, a chaplain at one of the Veterans Homes and a parent of a slain soldier, taught hospice staff how to properly fold the

U.S. flag, and the training was taped for future hires. The hospice then created a formal policy, established procedures, and notified the area funeral home directors. A Stein Hospice chaplain donated a U.S. flag (that had been flown over the U.S. Capitol years ago) and a storage case was purchased.

When a Veteran patient dies, a “Code Stars and Stripes” intercom announcement is made. During the day, as many as 25 staff members are able to gather outside the patient’s room. In the middle of the night, only one or two staff might be available. Regardless of the number of participants, the ceremony is essentially the same:

- After the funeral home director has moved the Veteran from the bed to a gurney, a flag is placed over the body (stars over the head and to the left side, and stripes at the feet).
- If a Veteran is available, he or she leads the procession, followed by a chaplain, family members, and Stein Hospice staff and volunteers. (At Stein, the Veteran might be the senior medical director, Dr. William Inglis, a Veteran volunteer, a family member of the deceased, or a family member of another patient.)
- The procession stops at our chapel, where the flag is folded.
- One of the participants offers words of appreciation for the Veteran’s service to our country and condolences to the Veteran’s loved ones.

PARTNER ACCOMPLISHMENTS (CONT.)



Creating a Lasting Tribute **Hospice & Palliative CareCenter, Winston-Salem, North Carolina**

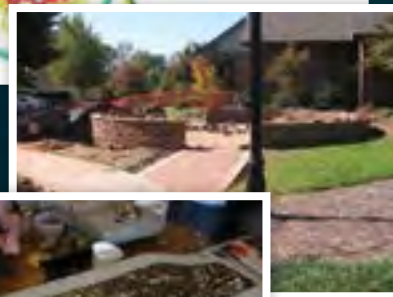
In celebration of Veterans Day in 2012, the Hospice & Palliative CareCenter of Winston-Salem, NC unveiled their Veterans Garden. It is located right in front of their Hospice Home, which is located on their 14-acre wooded campus. Its centerpiece is a flagpole that is embedded in a large boulder, upon which the emblems of the five branches of military service are engraved. The flagpole is surrounded by a raised flower bed and four custom benches, designed and handcrafted by sculptors from the local community under the guidance of local artist, Jan Detter. The benches feature beautiful mosaic designs (Jan's specialty), some made from actual bullet casings.

The garden was designed for wheelchair accessibility, with the goal of being a special place for reflection and respite while also being a tangible expression of thanks to all Veterans who have served our country.

The hospice reports that the project received overwhelming support from the community, with fundraising efforts being swift and successful. A significant portion of the funds were raised by reaching out to local Veteran organizations like the VFW, Patriot Guard Riders, Oak Ridge Military Academy and the American Legion. Tina Stearns, director of community outreach, presented "Hospice 101" sessions during their meetings and received donations for the garden afterwards. Families that had been served made donations, as did corporations, including Wells Fargo which gave a major grant.

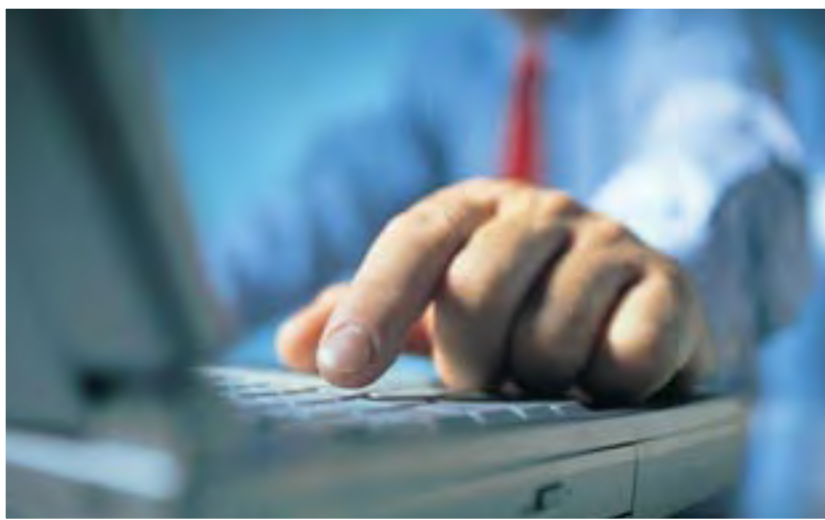
"As we look upon the finished garden, we see so many benefits that have come from it. Our President/CEO, Brian Payne, wanted a way to openly demonstrate our support of all Veterans, and it surely accomplishes that. But it has also served as a way for many members of our community to express their thanks through donations and has helped us, as an organization, develop valuable relationships with the VA, the VFW, Patriot Guard Riders and the Oak Ridge Military Academy."

**—Tina Stearns, Hospice & Palliative CareCenter,
Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Level Two Partner**



Bullet casings were used to create the design in the back of a bench for a Veterans Garden.

VETERAN-CENTRIC EDUCATION



Hospices are clamoring for education to help them understand Veterans' needs and serve them appropriately. To meet that demand, NHPKO offers a wide range of "Veteran-Centric" educational programming. "Veteran-Centric" means keeping the needs of Veterans always at the center of attention. Offerings include:

- Online courses
- Partner networking calls
- Webinars

In addition, *We Honor Veterans* Partners provide education to their staff and community.

Online Courses

Unlike webinars which take place in real time, online courses can be viewed at any time. NHPKO has developed a series of online courses that hospice professionals can view at the most convenient time and location for them – free of charge.

Online Courses Available at www.WeHonorVeterans.org:

- Understanding Veteran Benefits
- Building a Veteran-Centric Culture
- Homeless Veterans at Life's End
- Service Related Diseases, Illnesses and Conditions
- Understanding the Department of Veterans Affairs
- Hospice-Veteran Partnership Program
- Wounded Warriors, Their Last Battle

Partner Networking Calls

NHPKO hosts regular networking calls for *We Honor Veterans* Partners where hospices come together to discuss the successful aspects of their programs. Ideas are circulated and challenges are addressed. NHPKO staff take notes on "best practices" shared during these calls and posts them online for easy reference by everyone.

Six *We Honor Veterans* Partner networking calls were held between June 2011 and December 2012 with a total of 1040 participants.

VETERAN-CENTRIC EDUCATION (CONT.)

Webinars

Participants in webinars can listen to the presenter through their computer’s speaker or over the telephone, while watching slides that illustrate the presentation. Often, a hospice will reserve a conference room and invite many staff members to participate, so webinars can easily reach thousands of hospice professionals at one time.

Webinar Topics

A total of 2,858 sites registered for the following webinars that were offered January 2011–October 2012:

- Caring for Veterans in Rural Areas At the End of Life
- Volunteers: An Essential Ingredient for EOL Care for Veterans
- Reaching Out Model Programs: Overview and Implementation
- Building Partnerships, Improving Care
- Understanding VA’s End of Life Care Initiative and NHPCO’s FEHC Veterans Module
- The Experiences of Veterans from Different War Eras
- Psychosocial Issues in Veterans
- Peace at Last: Healing for Veterans, Staff and Ourselves
- *We Honor Veterans*: Creating a Veteran-Centric Culture

Partners’ Community Education

The numbers are impressive for education provided to their communities by *We Honor Veterans* Partners. They speak to how thoroughly committed the partners are to educating others about the needs of Veterans. In a little over two years, *We Honor Veterans* Partners conducted 4,351 educational presentations in their own communities and reached 111,842 participants.

October 2010–December 2012

Audience	Presentations	Participants
Staff/Volunteers	3,163	73,986
Community	559	23,905
Veterans	629	13,951
Totals	4,351	111,842

“Well done. I’m excited about sharing this with our team so they can describe how we will be serving Veterans. It not only motivated me to act, but gave me practical ways in which to serve our Veterans.”

“I enjoyed the different speakers that gave information about how their organizations moved through the different [Partner] levels. I learned many ideas from that. Thank You!”

THE FUTURE: WHAT'S NEXT



The tremendous success of *We Honor Veterans* continues to provide more momentum and opportunities for the future. This is one of the most successful campaigns ever launched by NHPKO and the speed with which it has been embraced by the hospice and palliative community, and the VA, speaks volumes about the joint willingness to understand and serve Veterans.

Plans for the near future include:

- Engaging new hospice Partners and encouraging current Partners to progress through the four levels.
- Establishing *We Honor Veterans* 'Mentors' which will involve engaging Level Four Partners to assist other hospices seeking to progress through the Partner levels.
- Expanding Partner opportunities to other community providers beyond hospice.
- Connecting with other national corporations and organizations to creatively work together to enhance collaboration of community services and VA facilities.
- Establishing a broader structure for *We Honor Veterans* and other Veteran initiatives under the Center for Veteran's Care, part of NHPKO's new Mary J. Labyak Institute. Through this Center, NHPKO determines gaps in practice, identifies resources and develops and disseminates tools to deliver the best possible end-of-life care to Veterans and their families.

Ultimately, the overarching goal is to engage the entire nation in caring for Veterans at the end of life. It is our duty and honor to serve those who have served us at their most vulnerable time. Now it is time that we step up, acquire the necessary skills and fulfill our mission to serve these men and women with the dignity they deserve.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

America's Veterans have done everything asked of them in their mission to serve our country and we believe it is never too late to give them a hero's welcome home. You can help.

- **Join Us!** Many hospices which are not yet *We Honor Veterans* Partners may already be doing work that would qualify them for this distinction. To learn more about joining, visit the *We Honor Veterans* website – and see “Enroll Your Hospice.”
- **Donate!** Individuals wishing to make either one-time or recurring donations can do so safely and securely at www.WeHonorVeterans/support.
 - You can double or sometimes triple your gift's impact if you work for a company that provides matching gifts.
 - If you are a federal employee, look for CFC #11241 to support the work of *We Honor Veterans*.
 - Give through Network for Good by entering the charity “NATIONAL HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE ORGANIZATION” and designating to *We Honor Veterans*.
- **Make a Group Gift!** Coworkers, friends or family members who want to work together in creative ways to make a group gift to *We Honor Veterans* can:
 - Plan an event, invite friends, and designate gifts; and
 - Host a special day for dressing casual at work or potluck lunch and encourage donations.
- **Run to Remember!** Runners or walkers can raise money for *We Honor Veterans* by registering for any race they wish (5K through marathon) and then registering at www.runtoremember.org and gaining access to powerful fundraising tools.
- **Sponsor the Center for Veteran's Care!** Individuals wishing to explore making a major gift to the program as part of the Campaign for the National Center for Care at the End of Life or companies interested in discussing unrestricted educational grants or other partnership opportunities are invited to contact staff at the National Hospice Foundation at 877-470-6472 or info@nationalhospicefoundation.org.





WE HONOR VETERANS ACHIEVEMENTS 2012

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National Hospice and Palliative Care
Organization

