



The Secretary of Veterans Affairs

*Second Annual
Alternative Dispute
Resolution Excellence
and
Diversity and Inclusion Excellence
Award Ceremony*

**Department of Veterans Affairs
G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Veterans Conference Center
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC**

Friday, October 21, 2011
1:00 o'clock

*The Secretary of Veterans Affairs Second Annual
Alternative Dispute Resolution Excellence Awards and
Diversity and Inclusion Excellence Awards*

For the Second Annual Alternative Dispute Resolution Excellence and Diversity and Inclusion Excellence Award Ceremony, the Office of Resolution Management and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion join together to recognize VA employees who have made exemplary accomplishments in furthering VA's goals in the areas of alternative dispute resolution and diversity and inclusion.

The criteria for selection in furthering the goals of Alternative Dispute Resolution are based on individuals' and programs' demonstrated efforts in effectively managing conflict, thereby preventing disputes from arising and saving time and resources; and encouraging others to use Alternative Dispute Resolution by developing creative and innovative ways and solutions.

The criteria for selection in furthering the goals of diversity and inclusion are based on individuals' and teams' demonstrated efforts in creating a diverse, high-performing workforce that reflects the communities VA serves; cultivating an inclusive workplace that enables full participation; and facilitating outstanding customer service and stakeholder relations.

These awards demonstrate the importance placed on VA's Alternative Dispute Resolution and Diversity and Inclusion Programs. We are proud to honor this year's Alternative Dispute Resolution Excellence Award and Diversity and Inclusion Excellence Award recipients.

Welcome

Ms. Rosa Franco

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Resolution Management

The National Anthem

Ms. Shelia Gaskins

Office of Administration

Invocation

Chaplain Jeni Cook

Associate Director at the National Chaplain Center

***Introduction of the
Secretary of Veterans Affairs***

Ms. Rosa Franco

Remarks

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki

Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Presentation of Alternative Dispute Resolution Excellence Awards

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki

Presentation of Diversity and Inclusion Excellence Awards

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki

Benediction

Chaplain Jeni Cook

Closing Remarks

Ms. Rosa Franco

~ Reception to Follow ~

Alternative Dispute Resolution Excellence Awardees

Category A (Employee)

***Sandra F. Simmons, Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 4 Lead
Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Manager
VA Medical Center, Coatesville, PA***

Ms. Simmons is being recognized for her visionary leadership in managing a cadre of 45 collateral duty mediators and maintaining a premier ADR program in VISN-4 for the past five years. As a result of her leadership, mediations are conducted timely, pre-mediation coordination has been consistent, and performance ratings for mediation services have been outstanding. Ms. Simmons has a proven record for effectively managing conflict, thereby preventing disputes from arising and saving time and resources. She has contributed to the fair, efficient, and effective resolution of disputes, and has furthered the Department's mission and goals by promoting and utilizing ADR. She encourages all employees to use ADR, and continuously develops creative and innovative solutions to workplace disputes.

Category B (Manager)

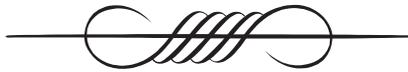
***Adam C. Walmus, Director
VA Medical Center, Houston, TX***

Mr. Walmus' leadership in maintaining a positive work environment of acceptance and inclusion is the cornerstone of the medical center's ADR program. This is accomplished by utilizing strategic goals and objectives as tools to ensure the positive embracement and effective utilization of ADR throughout the medical center. His focus on early conflict resolution has assured that a wide perspective of thoughts are incorporated into addressing issues and concerns involved in planning and delivering the highest quality healthcare to our nation's Veterans. Mr. Walmus is a great example for leadership throughout the VA for emphasizing the importance of ADR, and demonstrating on a daily basis an unprecedented commitment to ADR that fosters an atmosphere supportive of early dispute resolution.

Category C (Program)

***The Marion VA Medical Center
Marion, IL***

The Marion Medical Center's ADR program consistently exceeds participant satisfaction performance measures. This program has 11 mediators, 7 of whom have been certified by the Office of Resolution Management. These mediators come from a wide range of disciplines, and have been so successful in resolving disputes that they are requested by other Federal agencies to conduct mediations. With its team of mediators, the Marion VA Medical Center experienced a cost avoidance of \$308,771 in EEO complaint processing as of April 2011. Part of Marion's mission is providing exemplary services to our Veterans; this care is delivered by an engaged, collaborative team in an integrated environment that supports learning, discovery and continuous improvement. Marion's ADR staff reached this goal by resolving workplace disputes in a timely and efficient approach. This helps to ensure an environment of honesty and mutual trust, which in turn helps to provide excellent care to our Veterans.



Diversity and Inclusion Excellence Awardees

Category A (Manager/Supervisor)

***Terry Gerigk Wolf, Director and CEO
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (VAPHS), Pittsburgh, PA***

Mrs. Wolf is being recognized for her outstanding leadership and commitment to fostering a diverse workforce and an inclusive work environment at VAPHS. Under Mrs. Wolf's leadership, VAPHS is active in succession planning and has enacted numerous programs to ensure that employees can bolster their professional skills. Mrs. Wolf also supports flexible scheduling to help employees enhance productivity while accommodating their educational and personal goals. In addition to being a tireless advocate for educating employees, Mrs. Wolf is also greatly

concerned with communicating with all VA/PHS stakeholders. Her management style champions communication, which she sees as vital to ensuring that all employees feel included and engaged in the conversations at VA Pittsburgh. She uses a number of innovative communication methods to promote a culture of open communication and inclusion among her 3,704 employees. These include a “Director’s Page” on VA Pittsburgh’s Intranet site—which includes a compliments page, blog, message board, and an archive of every all-employee email message sent from the Director’s signature. Mrs. Wolf is a VA leader whose actions serve as a model for diversity and inclusion excellence as she continues to make invaluable contributions to furthering the Department’s goals in these areas and to ensuring equal opportunity.

Category B (Nonsupervisory Employee)

**Novella Brown Scott, Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist
Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System (CAVHCS), Tuskegee, AL**

When it comes to the diversity and inclusion arena, Ms. Scott has embraced the concept of shared leadership in her role as a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist within the CAVHCS, Mental Health-Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (MH-RRTP). She has shined as a beacon of hope to encourage Disabled Veterans that they can be positive contributors in the workplace and has dedicated herself to conveying this message to them as well as to CAVHCS staff, stakeholders, communities, and even potential employers. Ms. Scott was instrumental in the development of various programs and initiatives to aid homeless and unemployed Veterans and Disabled Veterans such as a “Ready to Work” training and skills program for unemployed Disabled Veterans. She also helped to develop the first MH-RRTP Women’s Focus Group and the first MH-RRTP Annual Prom in an effort to recognize the service of women Veterans and promote positive awareness of homeless Veterans seeking employment by ensuring participation of positive community leaders. Ms. Scott worked to remove the stigma and barriers associated with the equal opportunity employment of homeless Veterans and coordinated various trainings to understand disabilities, decrease stigma, and emphasize the desire for community employment by people with disabilities. Ms. Scott is a hidden treasure within the walls of CAVHCS and is the manifestation of the organization’s leadership drive to meet the vision of the Department of Veterans Affairs to create and sustain a high-performing workforce by leveraging diversity and

empowering employees to achieve superior results in service to our Nation's Veterans.

Category C (Team)

***VISN 16 Diversity Advisory Committee
South Central VA Health Care Network, Ridgeland, MS***

The VISN 16 Diversity Advisory Committee is being recognized for their outstanding efforts to promote diversity and inclusion throughout the entire South Central VA Health Care Network. The Committee took creative action knowing that a diverse workforce and an inclusive work environment are essential to a high-performing organization. They developed, signed, and executed a Diversity Contract aimed at creating and sustaining a high-performing workforce by leveraging diversity and empowering all employees to achieve superior results in service to our Nation's Veterans and leadership accountability in these areas. The Committee also created a Diversity Web page to facilitate communication: the VISN Director can post monthly messages and all employees can submit ideas for improvements and share thoughts about how to create the best workplace cultures. Their proactive commitment also led them to establish the goal of critically evaluating their VISN data and to identify opportunities for continuous improvement in the areas of representation, recruitment, and retention. The VISN 16 Diversity Advisory Committee serves as a model of excellence for their creative and innovative approaches to VA's diversity and inclusion goals.

