



Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs

ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2021
July 1, 2020 - June 30 2021



This year has been a year of living our mission to Serve, Support and Advocate for the Indiana Veteran Community. The year started out with continued uncertainty due to the ongoing pandemic. I am very proud of all the staff, who during our nation's most difficult time in memory, continued to excel at serving the Indiana Veteran Community.

During this year, the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) worked to strengthen all our activities. We improved and bolstered the operation of the Military Family Relief Fund (MFRF) by implementing new capabilities in our case management system. We worked to eliminate additional barriers to veterans receiving MFRF funding and fought hard to create the opportunity for more veterans across the state to become aware of, apply and be approved for the MFRF.

The Indiana Veterans Home (IVH) staff worked hard to keep our residents and visitors safe from COVID-19. While other organizations were fighting this terrible disease inside their facilities, our team kept it out until the massive worldwide increase in infection that started in November 2020. I consider every one of our staff heroes for the tireless effort they gave serving the residents of the IVH.

IDVA continues to strengthen its promise to address veteran homelessness and veteran suicide. The incredible success of grant recipients of the Grants for Veterans Services program during its first year resulted in a 400% increase in applications for the team to consider this year. Previous recipients commented that the structure of these funds allowed them to serve veterans in ways that other funds could not. This program allows IDVA to help fill critical gaps in statewide organizations' service to our veterans.



Indiana Veterans Center finished its first full year since its renovation. This one-of-a-kind facility is now home to federal, state, local and nonprofit organizations serving veterans. When veterans enter this building, we can meet many of their needs in a one-stop shop.

The Indiana Veterans Affairs Commission is the hardest working group of volunteers that oversee any state agency. The Commission met for its required quarterly meetings, but it also met over 30 additional times to evaluate and award veterans additional funds from the MFRF and hear appeals for the Tuition and Fee Remission Program. We are blessed to have a group of individuals who have a passion to serve Indiana veterans.

The challenge for IDVA going forward is to see how we can continue to expand and grow our partnerships with other veteran-serving organizations throughout Indiana. The team has started to develop and implement new programs to achieve this, but that is a story to be told for next year. To all the amazing partners of IDVA who help serve all those who have served us, thank you for yesterday, today and tomorrow.



Mission

The mission of the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs is to Support,
Serve and Advocate for the Indiana Veteran Community.

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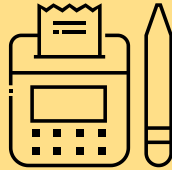
Vision

Indiana is the choice for Veterans to Live, Work and Thrive.

Indiana Veterans



**Indiana's Total
Veteran Population**
372,074



U.S. Census Bureau 2020 American Community Survey



**Indiana's Women
Veteran
Population: 27,963**

*Women are the nation's fastest
growing veteran population!*

U.S. Census Bureau 2020 American Community Survey



**Peacetime Veteran
Population:**
71,680

U.S. Census Bureau 2020 American Community Survey

**Wartime Veteran
Population:**
300,394



131,664 Gulf War (Aug. 2, 1990, - Present)
130,705 Vietnam War era: (Feb. 28, 1961, - May 7, 1975)
27,276 Korean conflict (Jun. 27, 1950, - Jan. 31, 1955)
10,749 World War II (Dec. 7, 1941, - Dec. 31, 1946)

U.S. Census Bureau 2020 American Community Survey

Veteran Population by Race

White/Not Hispanic 88.2%
Black or African American 8.2%
Hispanic/Latino 2.8%
(2) or More Races 1.8%
Some Other Race 1.0%
Asian 0.5%
American Indian 0.3%

U.S. Census Bureau 2020 American Community Survey

Veteran Treatment Courts

30

State Suicide Rates Per 100,000 population

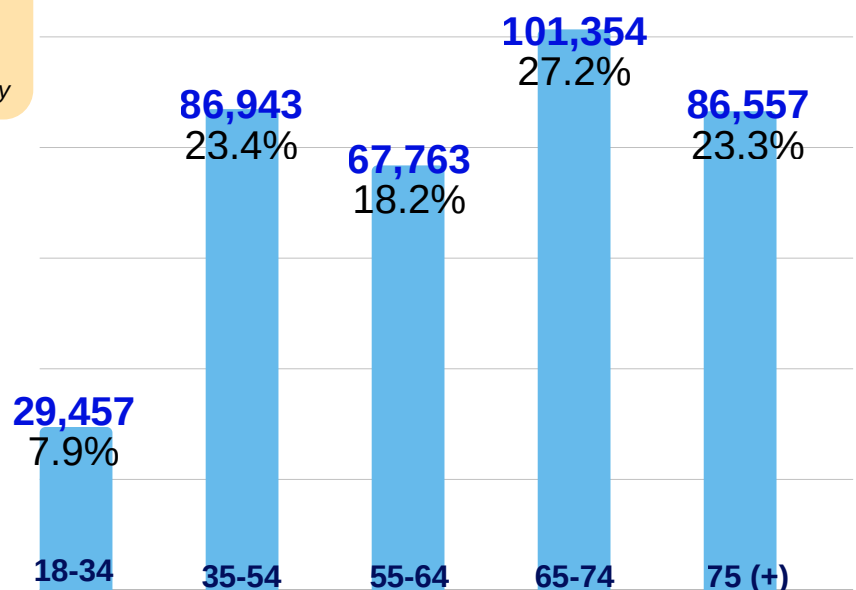
**Veteran
29.8**
**Total Rate
18.2**

PURDUE
UNIVERSITY

Military Family Research Institute

Indiana Snapshot 3/12/2022

MEASURING COMMUNITIES
Mapping Progress for Military & Veteran Families



Indiana Veterans By Age

U.S. Census Bureau 2020 American Community Survey

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=Indiana%20Veterans&tid=ACST5Y2020.S2101>

Executive Team

**Dennis A. Wimer, Director**

Dennis has served as director since February 2019. He is an Air Force veteran who has a wealth of experience in the business, nonprofit and educational industries. Dennis brings a servant's mindset to the agency and is excited to continue serving Indiana's veterans and their families.

Mike Thompson, Operations Director

Mike most recently served in the Indiana Department of Workforce Development where he led the U.S. Department of Labor's Jobs for Veterans State Grant program. He is currently a member of the 38th Sustainment Brigade as distribution and integration staff sergeant, Indiana National Guard.

**Gabrielle Owens, General Counsel**

As General Counsel, Gabrielle provides legal advice as well as leadership in departmental policy, audit and legislative functions. Most recently, she served in the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute and has over 20 years' experience in practicing law. Gabrielle is the daughter of a retired Air Force colonel.

**Joy Grow, IVH Superintendent**

Joy came to IVH in September 2015 as its chief counsel and was named Superintendent in 2020. Joy is a graduate of Ball State University and Michigan State University. Joy believes in servant leadership and enjoys being engaged in the community and volunteers at many community art and cultural events.

**Joseph DeVito, Outreach Director**

Joe is a Coast Guard veteran, graduate of Indiana University Southeast and a former CVSO and DSO. Joe has experience in business, outreach and volunteer work. As Outreach Coordinator, he has a passion for reaching veterans and increasing the number of veterans served and benefits awarded across the state.



IDVA Team



TRAINING & SERVICES



Timothy E. Dyke
Director



Philip A. Krumm
Director



Michael L. Hamm
State Veteran
Service Officer



Thomas D. White
Northwest District
Service Officer



Cameron Lochner
Northeast District
Service Officer



Cambria Sparks
Central-East District
Service Officer



Kevin Hinton
Southwest District
Service Officer



Bryan Schmidt
Central-West District
Service Officer



Ronald Higgins
Southeast District
Service Officer

STATE APPROVING AGENCY



Raymond Baker
Director



Amber R. Mertens
Assistant Director



Tim Wilson
Program Director.



Tara M. Eggen
Program Director



Summer G. Tacy
Program Director



Fredrick Hudson
Program Director

CUSTOMER SERVICE



Kelly Cherry
Office Manager



Shannon Nicoloff
Reception

IDVA Team



INDIANA VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY



Alan J. Burnham
Superintendent



Charlie J. Burton
Asst. Superintendent



David McKay
Foreman



Albert S. Bennett
Foreman

OUTREACH & COMMUNICATIONS



Kirsten Clark
Communications
Manager



Laura McKee
Women Veterans
Coordinator

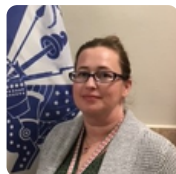


Salon N. Osborne
Digital Marketing
Manager

MILITARY FAMILY RELIEF FUND



Lynn Dickey
Director



Janie Gregory
Assistant Director

LEGAL & LEGISLATIVE



Anthony Weber
Grants & Legislative
Administrator

IDVA Overview



Support, Serve, and Advocate for the Indiana Veteran Community

This Indiana Veteran Community consists of veterans, family members, caregivers, friends, organizations, and providers that touch veteran lives in some way. Indiana owes a great debt to its veterans, past and present, for their personal sacrifices and dedicated service.

IDVA is committed to providing quality services, benefits, and programming. We are devoted to enhancing and expanding Indiana's resources, continuing our vision:

Indiana is the choice for Veterans to Live, Work, and Thrive.

Since its establishment in 1945, the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) has remained focused on improving the lives of Indiana veterans. As veteran communities and benefits evolve, IDVA is dedicated to customizing communication to reach every veteran and family category or group. The IDVA staff creates, coordinates, and participates in direct outreach events for veterans and their families across the state daily.

IDVA's partnerships with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and many other public and private organizations continues to grow. We share the Indiana Veterans Center with many great veteran agencies; the combination of federal, state, city and nonprofit veteran organizations under one roof is like no other facility in the nation.

IDVA continued to create innovative methods of communication and operations while facing the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The use of internships, technology and office mobility kept the team on mission.

IDVA's executive leadership restructuring was completed to incorporate the operations director, general counsel, outreach director and superintendent of the Indiana Veterans Home. Led by Director Wimer, the executive team is focused on being transparent, implementing effective policies, empowering staff, and striving for positive change.

The entire IDVA, including the Indiana Veterans Memorial Cemetery and the Indiana Veterans Home, is dedicated to achieving its vision that Indiana is the choice for veterans Live, Work and Thrive.

Division Overview

TRAINING & SERVICES



The IDVA Training and Services division staff consists of the Director of Veterans Services, the Training Manager, and the State Veteran Service Officer. The mobile division is made up of (6) District Service Officers (DSOs). The division staff manages state benefit applications and online applications for Tuition and Fee Exemption daily. The State Service Officers focus is assisting veterans applying for federal benefits, VA pension and VA health care enrollment. The District Service Officers, located throughout the state, provide guidance and training for newly appointed County Veteran Service Officers (CVSOs) and their staff. The DSOs help with CVSO outreach and conduct quarterly district CVSO training and information meetings.

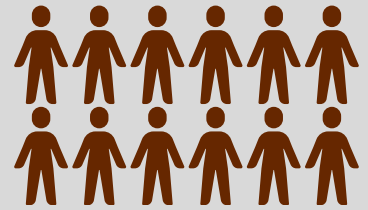
Veteran License Plates

678

APPLICATIONS
PROCESSED

- Disabled Veteran
- Purple Heart
- POW/MIA

89

CVSOs with
VetraSpec Accounts85 Accredited
7 pending8 Accredited
Asst. CVSOs

146

Total
VetraSpec Accounts

Disabled Property Tax Deductions

839

APPLICATIONS
PROCESSED

Reduced Fee Hunting & Fishing License

372

APPLICATIONS
PROCESSED

Tuition & Fee Exemption Applications:

2020-2021 Academic Year: 1,532

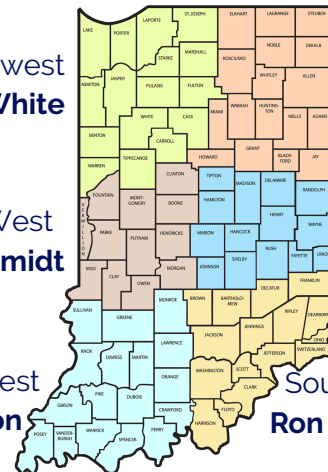
1,412 Awarded
79 Denied 41 On Hold

*Tuition & Fee Exemption Applications
are 100% filed online using Scholar
Track application system*

Northwest
Thomas WhiteCentral-West
Bryan SchmidtSouthwest
Kevin HintonNortheast
Cam LochnerCentral-East
Cambria SparksSoutheast
Ron Higgins

District Service Officers (DSO)

The (6) DSOs each cover 13-15 CVSO offices. They provide on-site training and special projects assistance to the county offices to bring training and services to the CVSO office.



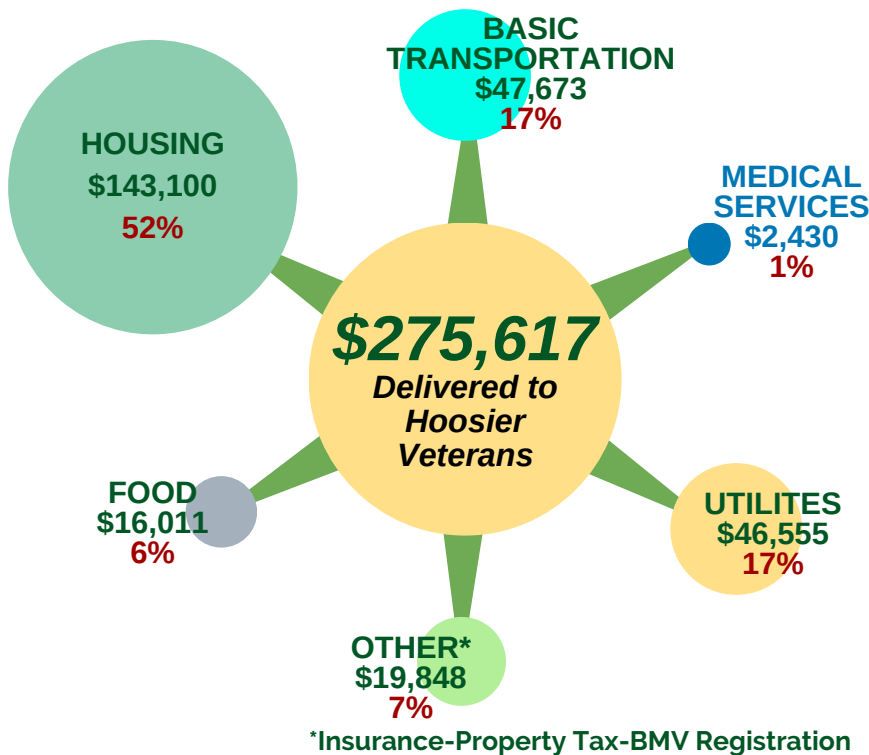
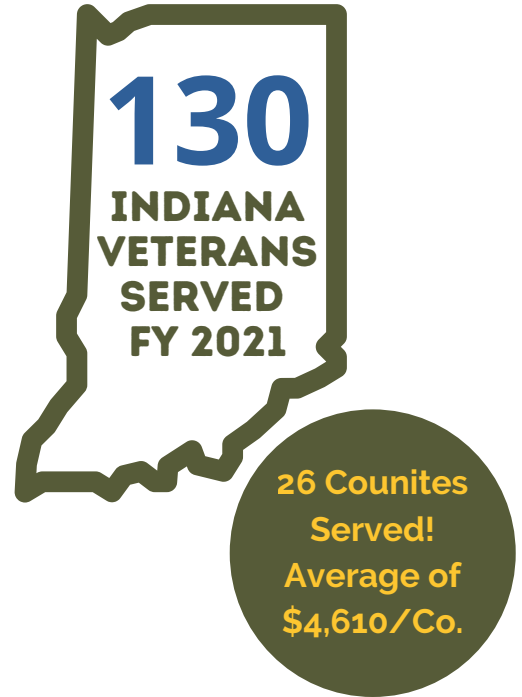
Division Overview

MILITARY FAMILY RELIEF FUND

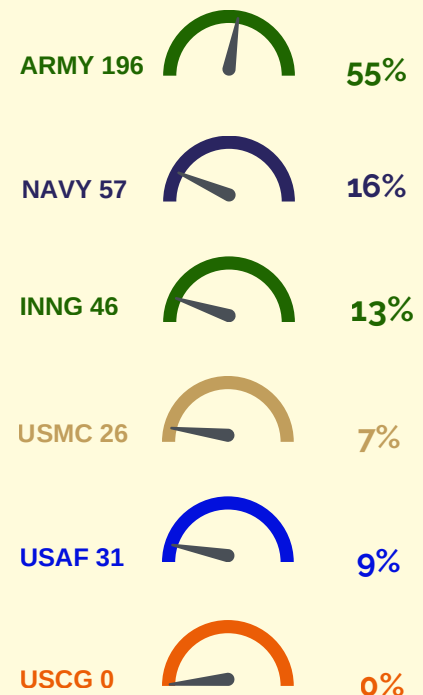


The Military Family Relief Fund (MFRF) assists veterans and their dependents that are experiencing financial hardship. The funds may be awarded for essential household expenses that have become difficult to afford. During the fiscal year 2021 we continued to offer our regular grant program and the COVID-19 program to assist veterans affected by the COVID pandemic. The MFRF has undergone technical improvements to make the process of applying quicker and more convenient for the veteran. We offer an online portal on our website for submitting applications. We have a new digital case management system in place to make processing applications more efficient and accurate.

The MFRF has built a strong network of partner organizations to refer veterans for assistance. In addition to assisting financially we are now able to support our veterans with job search, financial counseling, federal and health benefits, and legal counsel.



Applications by Branch

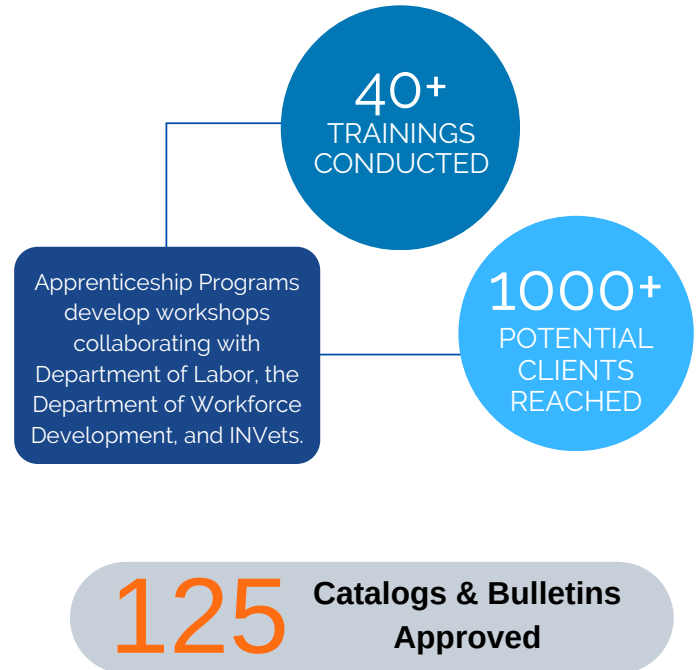


Division Overview

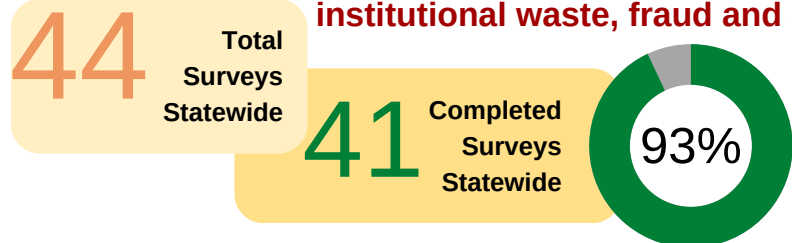
STATE APPROVING AGENCY



The State Approving Agency (SAA) approves college and non-college degree programs, vocational flight training, apprenticeships, and other on-the-job training programs. These approvals allow for federal educational assistance benefits to be paid to veterans and other eligible persons under several programs administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Through a cooperative agreement with VA, the SAA is tasked with approving and maintaining the approval of the educational and training facilities. The SAA team welcomed a new outreach coordinator to work with apprenticeship and on the job training programs. The SAA successfully completed all requirements of the fiscal year 2021 cooperative agreement and achieved a satisfactory rating, the highest rating possible.

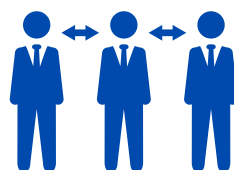


Compliance Surveys are assigned by the VA to avoid/detect institutional waste, fraud and abuse.

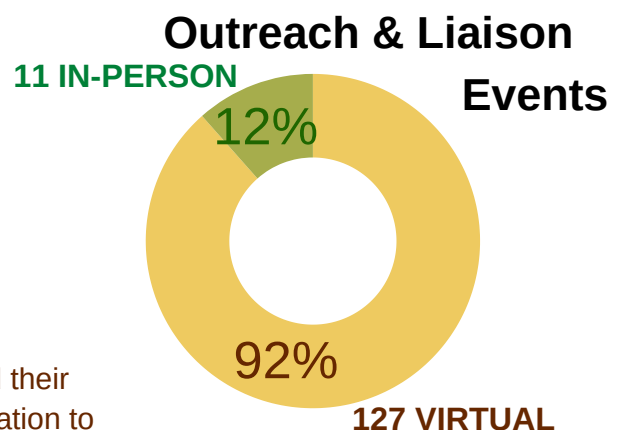


Without these APP programs, many federal GIBILL® benefits would remain unused!

Apprenticeship Program (APP)



APP attracts veterans and their families from across the nation to live, work & thrive in Indiana



Division Overview

LEGAL & LEGISLATIVE



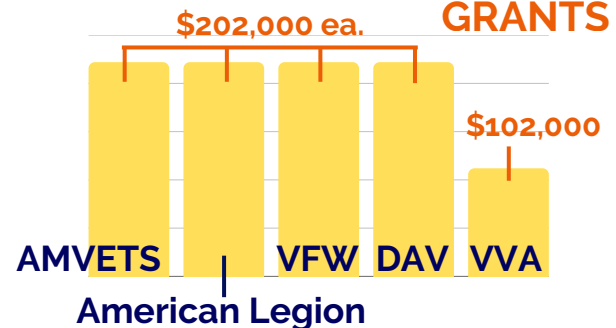
The IDVA Legal & Legislative Division (LLD) provides counsel to the IDVA Executive Team and all divisions of IDVA. The LLD represents IDVA in all appeals, coordinates all IDVA legislative functions, administers grants to nonprofit organizations serving veterans and to nationally chartered veteran service organizations, performs compliance monitoring of state grant funds, executes contracts and other legal memorandums, and conducts the day-to-day administrative activities concerning the Indiana Veterans Affairs Commission.

During the 2021 legislative session, the LLD worked with the Indiana General Assembly and veteran stakeholders to achieve numerous legislative successes. The most notable was eliminating several barriers concerning eligibility for the Military Family Relief Fund, allowing more veterans to connect with MFRF. Additionally, statutory changes were made regarding tuition and fee exemption appeals to allow additional time in the appeal process while being mindful of students' needs.

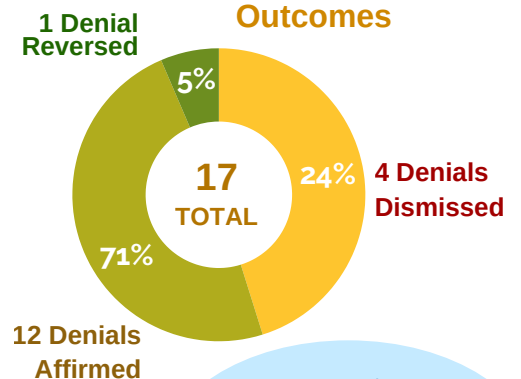
Grants for Veteran Services

	ROUND ONE	ROUND TWO
Indiana Legal Services	\$100,000.00	\$52,950.00
Family Service Assoc. of Howard Co.	\$84,000.00	\$50,450.00
Center for the Homeless	\$79,250.00	
The Shepard's House	\$77,500.00	
HVAF	\$76,250.00	\$20,800.00
Volunteers of America	\$75,750.00	
Lafayette Transitional Housing	\$72,750.00	\$35,550.00
Reach Services	\$72,000.00	\$72,000.00
Veterans Changing Services	\$71,500.00	\$43,386.00
Operation Job Ready VETS	\$69,000.00	
Transition Resources Center	\$44,000.00	
HealthNet, Inc.	\$32,750.00	
Operation Combat Bike Saver	\$25,000.00	\$40,900.00

Veteran Service Organization GRANTS



MFRF Appeal Outcomes



Tuition & Fee Appeals

REASONS FOR APPEALS

25%

2 Adopted

33%

3 Period of War

42%

4 Applicants over age

OUTCOMES OF APPEALS

Overturned

22%

78%

Upheld

**47 OVER \$2500
MFRF REQUESTS
46 APPROVED
for \$140,904.66**

**OUTREACH & COMMUNICATIONS**

The IDVA outreach division continued to expand IDVA's reach statewide. One example is "The Hoosier Veteran" newsletter. A new layout and design have helped increase interest, readership, and subscriptions. The addition of monthly featured articles have developed a following among subscribers who enjoy learning about interesting Hoosier veterans, events, and topics. Other media publications have helped distribute Hoosier Veteran features statewide. We look forward to sharing more stories this year!

FY 2021 New Subscriber Profiles

2,497 New Subscribers Added



December 2021

Vets Gift: Welcoming Home
Vietnam Veterans

by Kirsten Clark



October 2020

Gov. Holcomb presents lost dog tag,
Purple Heart to family

Vietnam War veteran Donnie Prine died in 2013

In a special ceremony Tuesday, Gov. Eric J. Holcomb and members of the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs present the spouse and family of late Vietnam War veteran Donnie Prine with his recovered dog tag and a posthumous Purple Heart.



November 2020

**MFRF COVID-19 Special App**

Did you know the **MFRF COVID-19** emergency grant may be used on a case-by-case basis by families for up to two months of household needs such as food, housing, utilities, medical services, childcare and other essential family support which has become difficult to afford due to the coronavirus pandemic.

February 2021



29,019
Total
Subscribers



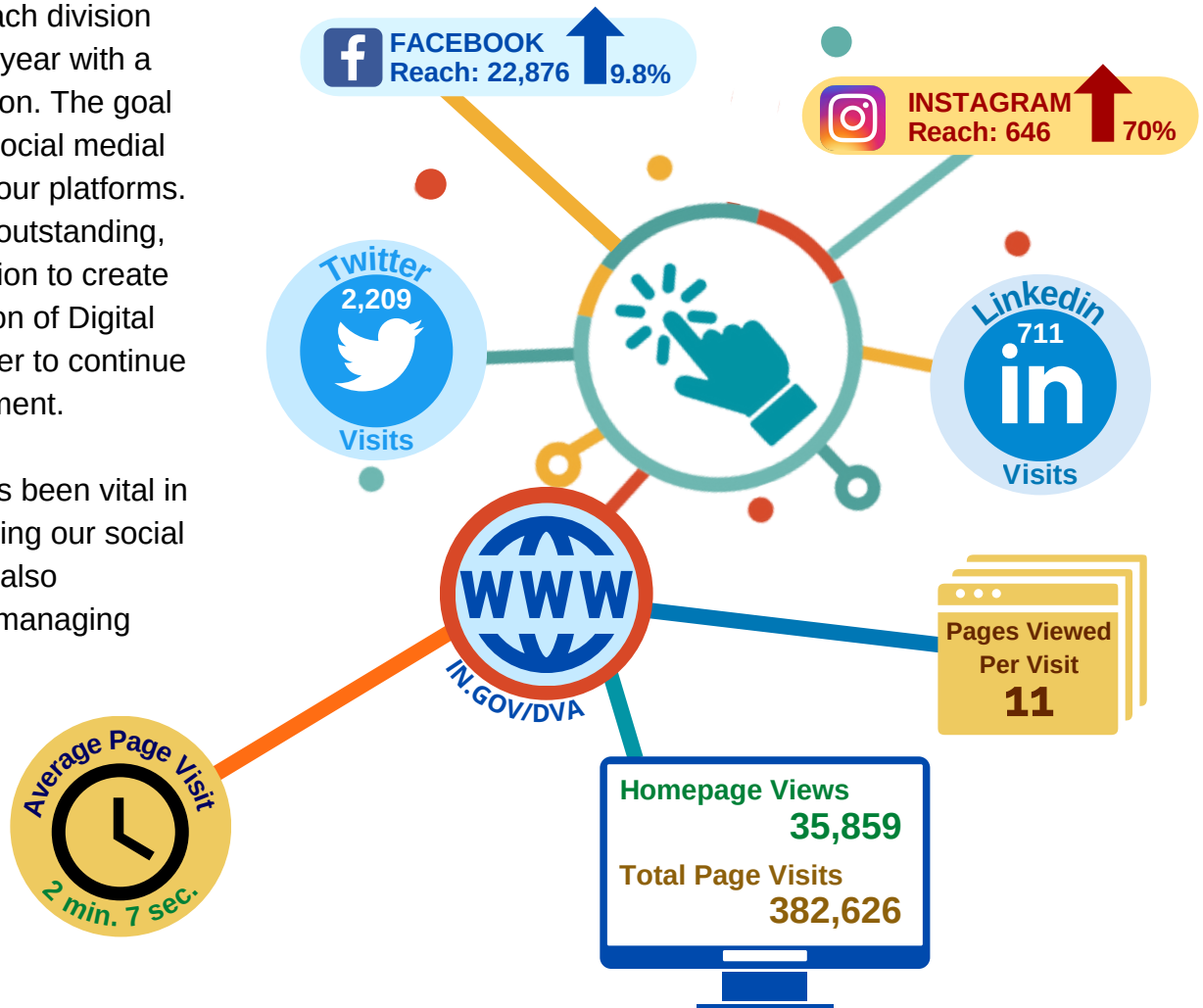
Division Overview

OUTREACH & COMMUNICATIONS



The IDVA outreach division began the fiscal year with a new intern position. The goal was to engage social media users and grow our platforms. The gains were outstanding, leading the division to create a full-time position of Digital Marketing Manager to continue to build engagement.

The new role has been vital in not only developing our social media voice but also developing and managing new programs.



WINVet is dedicated to empowering women veterans to Live, Work and Thrive by providing resources, community outreach, networking, and community service. The WINVet program participates in statewide outreach events and partners with service organizations and the VA to educate and enrich women veteran's lives.

WINVet provides reliable resources, delivers quality statewide outreach and cultivates a vast networking collective for all Women of Indiana who are Veterans.

WINVet partnerships, events and leadership roles include:



INDIANA WRITERS CENTER



MILITARY
WOMEN'S
MEMORIAL



www.va.gov/womenvet

Division Overview

VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY



The Indiana Veterans Memorial Cemetery is dedicated to veterans and their families as a lasting memorial, and final resting place, in appreciation and gratitude for their service and sacrifice.



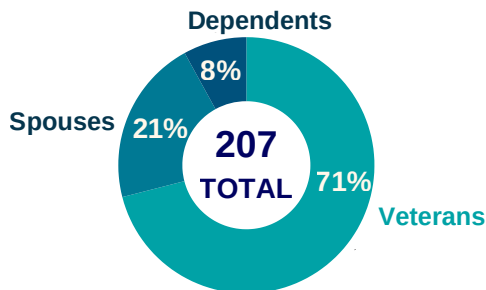
VETERANS DAY 2020

On Nov. 11, 2020, the Indiana Veterans Memorial Cemetery could not hold the usual Veterans Day service. The service to honor all past and present veterans and their families was limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic. IVMC staff and IDVA executive leadership placed American flags at each grave marker and the grounds were open to public to visit with proper safety precautions being observed.

PRE-NEED
BURIAL
APPLICATION
118 Submitted
116 Approved



GOVERNMENT
HEADSTONES



IVMC INTERMENTS



Governor's
Memorial
Certificates Issued

IVMC held the Memorial Day Service on May 31, 2021. This event was the first public event since some of the restrictions of COVID-19 had been lifted. The Service was well attended. Speakers included State Rep. Randy Frye, Madison Mayor Bob Courtney and Gabrielle Owens, IDVA General Counsel.

The Raise and Realignment project was completed with 1,215 headstones raised and realigned. Headstones in Sections 1, 2, & 5 were removed, a gravel/limestone base was placed, and headstones were replaced. Upon completion, each headstone was cleaned and sod was placed.

The annual **Wreaths Across America** event at the IVMC was held on Dec. 18, 2020. The event had a wonderful community turnout. IDVA executive leadership helped the IVMC staff ensure every grave marker was adorned with one of the approx. 1,500 wreaths.



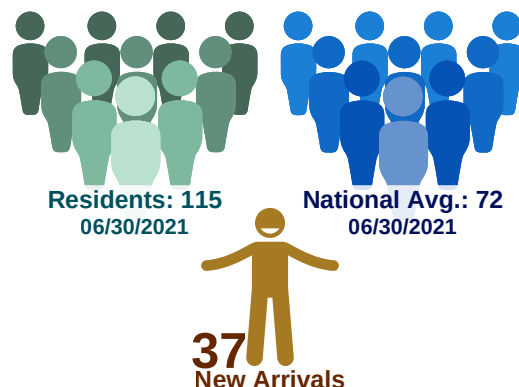
Division Overview

INDIANA VETERANS HOME

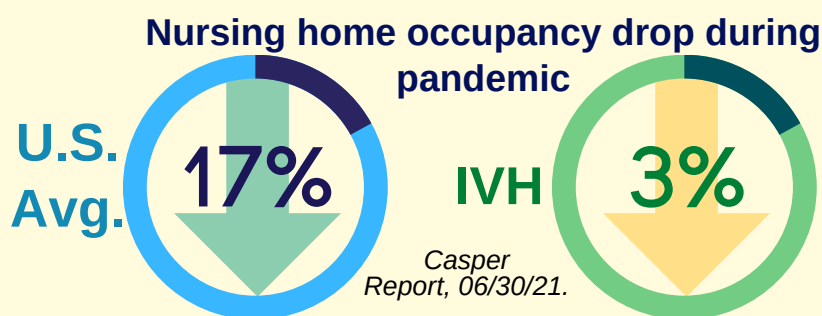


The IVH staff has risen to heroic heights to protect the residents and fellow staff during the uncertain times of this COVID-19 crisis. We are grateful and proud of the work that has been completed to prepare for this emergency, including the sweeping precautions that have been instituted so rapidly. We are also proud of the daily effort to keep a sense of calm and normalcy in our facility. This crisis has made it abundantly clear how each person that works at IVH is essential to our mission.

CURRENT RESIDENTS:



Thank You:
Sons of the American Legion
Through a generous donation, the Auditorium was updated to include a state-of-the-art sound system.



IVH Admissions & Marketing is proactively working to increase census back to pre-covid numbers due to the major hit from COVID.



TEMI the ROBOT @ IVH!!

Thank You:
American Legion, VFW, DAV & DAV Aux.
Their donations helped bring Temi the Robot to our our resident floors.
Temi roams the unit playing music or speaking to our residents and staff.



FIRST FLOOR

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION

- Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) (800) 827-1000
- Veterans Readiness & Employment (VBA) (800) 827-1000
- VA HUD-VASH Vocational Rehabilitation (317) 464-1400
- Volunteers of America (463) 202-5864
- Disabled American Veterans (317) 319-3844
- INVets (317) 353-3674
- American Legion (317) 916-3605

SECOND FLOOR

- VA HUD-VASH Veteran Health Initiative Clinic (317) 778-0217

THIRD FLOOR

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (317) 232-3910

- State Approving Agency (SAA) (317) 234-6062
- Training & Services (317) 234-8628
- Military Family Relief Fund (MFRF) (317) 232-3914
- Outreach & Communication (317) 234-9769
- Women Veterans Coordinator (317) 232-3919
- Legislative & Legal (317) 232-3165
- State Veteran Service Officers
- Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) (317) 234-8661
 - Local Veterans Employment Specialist (LVER)
 - Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP)

FOURTH FLOOR

- Historic Auditorium - Conference/Meeting Space
- Operation: Job Ready Veterans (317) 982-7781
- Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans (317) 549-5900
- The Indy Vet House, Inc. (317) 988-1200
- Veterans Housing Veterans (BRS Reality Group) (317) 344-9767

Mission

The mission of the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs is to Support, Serve and Advocate for the Indiana Veteran Community.

IDVA LOGO

Symbolism Meaning-Purpose

The eagle represents freedom

On June 20, 1782, the Bald Eagle was chosen as the emblem of the United States of America.

The eagle, with its majestic appearance was chosen for its long life and great strength.

The bald eagle on the IDVA logo gives Hoosier veterans a familiar symbol of patriotism and military service. The bald eagle appears on each military branch flag and/or seal.

Surrounding Wreath

The laurel wreath stands for honors received in combat defending the peace represented by the olive branch. Wreaths appear on many military seals, flags and logos adding to the familiar symbol of patriotism and military service.



Color Scheme & Date:

The 2 colors of the IDVA logo, Oxford Blue and Gamboge, represent the colors of the Indiana state flag. 1945 is the year the IDVA was founded.

The Torch & Shield

The Indiana Torch symbolizes enlightenment and liberty.

The surrounding rays symbolize the far reaching influence of the state. The 19 stars represent Indiana being the 19th state to join the union. These symbols are emblazoned on a shield that represents the protection of the principles our Hoosier veterans served to protect.

Single Gold Star

The single gold star centered over the eagle pays respect to Hoosier Gold Star families. The term "Gold Star" describes a family member who has lost a loved one in military service. The Gold Star signified the family's pride in the loved one's sacrifice rather than the mourning of their personal loss.

Vision

Indiana is the choice for Veterans to Live, Work and Thrive.