



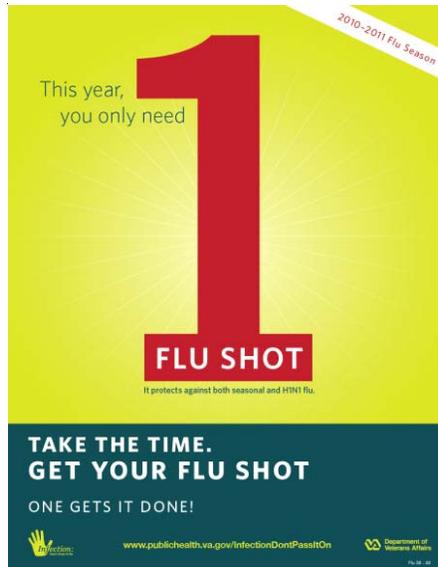
This year's Flu Season focus: One Shot

Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System (CAVHCS) has begun offering Seasonal Flu Vaccine to eligible veterans in virtually every clinical setting – and plans are to provide the vaccine in a few far less traditional settings.

“When Veterans come to CAVHCS they should expect to be offered an opportunity, maybe even more than once, to receive the Seasonal Flu vaccine,” said Ms. Karen Gholston, CAVHCS’ 2010 Flu Campaign Champion. “Plus, this year our outreach approach will be a little different. We’re going to go where veterans are. We’re planning to provide the vaccine at the 66th Annual Tuskegee Veterans Day Parade (November 4), the inaugural River Region Veterans Day Parade (November 11) and the Phenix City/Columbus Veterans Day Parade (November 13).

Following last year’s H1N1 Pandemic Flu outbreak there remains a natural appreciation and concern for ensuring veterans get the complete array of recommended vaccinations. This year it’s easy.

“This year’s Flu Season campaign features the approach of ONE SHOT,” explained Gholston. “One shot means this year’s vaccine includes elements of the H1N1. Every year the vaccine targets what the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)



determines will be the likely virus make-up, and of course H1N1 was a part of that consideration.”

Veterans and staff are able to find out more about this year’s campaign as well as facts about influenza on the CAVHCS web site at www.centralalabama.va.gov/The_Flu_and_You.asp. Available information ranges from infection control and identifying risk factors to flu season etiquette and who should get vaccinated. According to the CDC targeted, prioritization for the Flu Season vaccination includes;

- * Pregnant women.
- * Veterans 50 years of age and older.
- * People who live with or provide care for infants aged under 6 months.
- * Personnel who have direct contact with patients or infectious material,

Please see ‘Flu Season’

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How about a grande latte, half vanilla, extra hot, non-fat

By: Rose McCall
CAVHCS Public Affairs

CAVHCS recently held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the grand opening of the Veteran Canteen Service (VCS) Patriot Brew House, which features Starbucks coffee in the Tuskegee Campus’ Building 83.

“The Patriot Bew House has had an excellent reception from the people at CAVHCS in both sales and a positive growth of more than 25 percent,” said VCS Manager Brad Hodges. “The big sellers are of course the Starbucks coffee, as well as the fruit smoothies and lattes. We also offer gourmet sandwiches and salads, which are not available in the Canteen in Building 90.”

The advent of the VCS Patriot Brew House took a little more than 12 or 13 months to accomplish. “The project was started by Mr. Struchtemeyer back around August 2009, and it’s important that we thank everyone who worked so hard to make this happen,” said Hodges, who has been with the VA for seven years. “I’d like to thank Rickey Sawyer and the Engineering staff for their vital support in getting the Brew House up and running for the grand opening.”

Bringing Starbucks to a VA Medical Center may seem like a luxury, but currently there are more than 80 VCS Brew Houses featuring Starbucks coffee in VA Medical Centers, where Veterans and their families are enjoying lattes and the comforting, surprisingly-therapeutic, aroma-filled coffee house experience across the nation.



Tazetta Hall (far left) pours one of the first cups of coffee at the new Patriot Brew House in the Tuskegee Campus’ Building 83, shortly after the grand opening where (l-r) Dorothea McBride, Glen Struchtemeyer, Ricky Sawyer, Brad Hodges and Mary Tinsley conducted the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

CAVHCS All-Stars

I would like to express my appreciation to Mrs. LaDonna K. Golden, Assistant Chief of Customer Service, Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System. Mrs. Golden assisted me with great concern, understanding and was most professional with my medical emergency problem.

Mrs. Golden made it possible for me to see the only doctor that could treat me, and do emergency surgery on my right eye. The emergency doctors provided by Mrs. Golden have saved my right eye and I will regain my normal vision. I would like to thank Mrs. Golden for the many ways she provided assistance to me. I respectfully and sincerely, thank you Mrs. Golden. -- *Sincerely, Ritchie D. T.*

My name is Meketia G. My father David Harold N., Jr. was in the VA in Tuskegee. I'm writing to inform you of the great care he received during his stay. He had wonderful nurses who were always on hand to answer any questions I may have had about my father's care. Upon his release they walked me through everything I needed to know and they made sure I understand what to do and how to do it. I would really like to show my appreciation to his Social Worker Justin Okeke, who made his transformation from the nursing home to home care comforting for us. She went above and beyond the call of duty to assist me and my family. Thank you for having people on staff that still care about helping the Veterans. -- *Sincerely, Meketia G., Montgomery, Ala.*

Silence is one thing. Caring is something different. I have never been cared for any better than NOW at this facility. I want to thank you and the entire staff. Everyone I encounter goes well beyond what they are paid to do. I deeply appreciate it. -- *Signed, Emanuel G., Dixon Mills, Ala.*

I have received OUTSTANDING Service from Ms. Roberta Lewis of the X-Ray department for in town appointment. She was very nice and gave me a lot of information for future needs. Thanks and Keep up the GOOD work. -- *Respectfully, Roosevelt J. Georgetown, Ga.*



We're Fired Up!

The CAVHCS Combined Federal Campaign is in its final days.

The campaign officially ends November 12, 2010

CAVHCS is currently just short of the \$49,469 goal and YOU could put us over the top!

All pledges after November 12th will not change our total, but CFC will still accept the pledge.

Montgomery Campus
Judy Davidson Room # 1C-103 Ext. 4710
Mary H. Smith Room 3B-101 Ext. 4845

Tuskegee / CBOC Columbus
William Wheat, Jr.
Building 83-107 (Eligibility / Enrollment)
Ext. 3393 Cell 799-1012

The CAVHCS Salute



Accredited by
The Joint Commission

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2011 Federal Benefits Open Season Facts, Resources

Open Season for the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) begins November 8, 2010 and will end December 13, 2010.

There are three (3) separate programs that will participate in this year's Open Season: the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program; the Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS), and the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP).

Employees are encouraged to review their FEHB coverage and verify that their current plan has not been changed or been discontinued. Employees should also make certain that they review the new FEHB plan premiums for the 2011 Plan year. During the FEHB Open Season, eligible employees will be able to enroll, change options or plans, reduce or cancel health insurance, as well as enroll or make changes to premium conversion.

FEHB plan guides and brochures will be available on the OPM website at www.opm.gov/insure/health. Employees are strongly encouraged to use MYPAY at <https://mypay.dfas.mil> when making their FEHB Open Season elections.

Why should you care? This is the time to make elections you usually can't make any other time of the year. All health or dental or vision plans are not alike. Open Season is about exercising your right of choice. Failure to consider your health plan choices could leave you without the healthcare services or supplies you need or with a premium you can't afford; dental and/or vision coverage can fill in the gaps of any coverage you now have or pay for services you now don't get; and a flexible spending account lets you save money and pay less tax.

Health Benefits Fairs are scheduled for both campuses on Monday, November 15, 2010 from 9am to 11am in the Theater of Building 90 at the Tuskegee Campus, and the Multi-purpose Room (1E-104) at the Montgomery

Campus. Representatives from Blue Cross Blue Shield, First Health (formerly Mail Handlers Benefit Plan), and Government Employees Hospital Association (GEHA) will be available to answer questions that you may have concerning their health insurance plans.

Brochures on the Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS) and the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) will also be available at the Health Benefits Fair.

Additional information on these programs is available at www.FSAFEDS.com and www.benefeds.com.

Employees are encouraged to attend the health benefits fair at either campus.

Resources: You can find the health insurance rates at www.opm.gov/insure/health/rates/indindex.asp

You can find dental rates at www.opm.gov/insure/dental/rates/index.asp

You can find vision rates at www.opm.gov/insure/vision/rates/index.asp.

How do you make an Open Season election?

For FEHB, use the Health Benefits Election form (SF 2809) or use an online self-service system; the Human Resources Office of your agency can help you.

For dental or vision under FEDVIP, go to www.benefeds.com or call 1-877-888-3337.

For flexible spending accounts under FSAFEDS, go to www.fsafeds.com or call 1-877-372-3337.

Additional details can be found at www.opm.gov/insure or contact CAVHCS Human Resources Office for information.

considered to receive the Pneumococcal Vaccination. However, the giving the Pneumococcal Vaccination requires clinical decisions made by a provider, so the Pneumococcal Vaccination will only be offered in a traditional clinical setting."

While the Pneumococcal Vaccination will not be offered during outreach events like the Veterans Day parades, veterans and staff should be aware of many of the same prioritizations. According to the CDC targeted, prioritization for the Pneumococcal Vaccination includes;

- * All Veterans 65 years of age and older.
- * People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.
- * Any adult 19 through 64 years of age who is a smoker or has asthma.
- * Anyone 2 through 64 years of age who has a long-term health problem such as: heart disease, lung disease, sickle cell disease, diabetes, alcoholism, cirrhosis.
- * Anyone 2 through 64 years of age who has a disease or condition that lowers the body's resistance to infection.



'Flu Season'

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- * People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions.
- * People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.
- * People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu.
- * Health care workers.

"We've been educating Veterans and staff on the benefits of getting the Seasonal Flu vaccine for decades," said Dr. William Hill, CAVHCS Occupational Health. "And, those benefits to our immune systems remain crucial."

For some veterans the Seasonal Flu Campaign also presents an opportunity to receive another loosely associated vaccination – the Pneumococcal Vaccination.

"The Pneumococcal Vaccination is given to protect against several types of pneumococcal pneumonia," explained Gholston. "Many of the same Veterans we target to receive the Flu Season vaccination are targeted to be

CAVHCS Photo Gallery

CAVHCS Women's Wellness Program sponsored a series of observances and programs during Breast Cancer Awareness, which included two Breast Cancer Awareness Walks (one on the Tuskegee Campus and another on the Montgomery Campus) as well as a PINK OUT at all facilities.

Attendees at both Walks received educational materials and the benefit of perspective offered by a cancer survivor.



CAVHCS also conducted two Health and Safety Fairs where safety experts answered staff questions - and even a few flu shots were given.



Stimulus impact still felt

VA stimulus spending is not only helping Veterans by upgrading and expanding facilities and services but also by putting Veteran-owned businesses to work. As of last month, VA had obligated a total of \$1.811 billion (99 percent) of its American Recovery and Readjustment Act (ARRA) funds and made outlays totaling \$976 million (54 percent) of its ARRA funds.

Veteran-owned small business awards account for approximately 75 percent of all VA ARRA contracts and about 73 percent of those funds went to service-disabled Veteran-owned small businesses. The National Cemetery Administration has obligated a total of \$49,891,232. The Veterans Health Administration has obligated a total of \$999,821,087. Obligations for State Extended Care Award Grants account for \$148,288,138 in VA stimulus spending.

Canes for Veterans

A national program will provide 36,000 Hugo® Folding Canes free of charge to U.S. military Veterans in need of mobility assistance to honor them for their selfless contributions to our country. “Hugo Salutes Our Veterans” will be launched the day before Veterans Day and run November 10, 11 and 12, 2010 at all Sam’s Club locations nationwide, while supplies last.

Sam’s Club Membership is not required. Proof of U.S. military service may be required to be eligible. The Hugo Folding Cane that will be given out retails for \$29.99. It is a beautiful patriotic blue with an ergonomic comfort-grip handle, appropriate for both left- and right-handed users. Sturdy, functional and stylish, it has multiple height settings to comfortably meet the needs of most people.



The Hugo Cane easily unfolds, locks into position for use, and also includes a handle safety strap. To store, the cane conveniently folds into four sections. This year, Hugo Salutes Our Veterans will be greatly expanded to give out 36,000 canes over three days – Veterans Day and the days before and after. For additional information about the Hugo Salutes Our Veterans program, please visit www.HugoSalutes.com

Veterans Day Video

Just in time for Veterans Day, a new video explaining why we honor Veterans is available for viewing and downloading from the Veterans Day Web site: www.va.gov/opa/vetsday.

The video was produced by the Employee Education System for the Veterans Day National Committee. The committee works to promote the observance of Veterans Day nationwide and does so through distribution of the popular Veterans Day poster, a teacher resource guide, and supporting regional Veterans Day events.

The video is geared toward students and is intended to show not only why we honor Veterans, but how to honor them on Veterans Day and throughout the year. The video can also be viewed on VA’s You Tube channel: www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBfTQK5mPe8.

VA launches first official blog

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is launching its first official blog, opening a new line of communication between the Department and its stakeholders. The debut marks VA’s latest outreach effort aimed at improving the way VA and its clients engage online.

Called Vantage Point and edited by VA’s Director of New Media Brandon Friedman, the blog will launch with two primary features: A main column of articles written each day by VA staff and a section comprised of guest pieces submitted by other employees, stakeholders, and the general public.

Readers will be able to comment and participate on all articles. Vantage Point’s guest pieces will essentially function as “letters to the editor”.

Whether from a VA physician, a student going to school on the Post-9/11 GI Bill

or a representative from a Veterans Service Organization, all pieces will be considered for publication based on their rationale and reasoned points—not on how closely their views align with those of the Department.

The VA blog is expanding VA’s social media reach, adding to its presence on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube. Each VA administration has its own Facebook page and Twitter feed, and these platforms are being adopted by VA medical centers. Currently, 51 of 153 VA medical centers maintain a presence on Facebook and 27 are operating Twitter feeds.

The Department currently has the largest Facebook subscriber base among cabinet-level agencies with over 68,000 subscribers. To view the blog, visit <http://www.blogs.va.gov>. For more information, visit <http://www.va.gov>.



www.centralalabama.va.gov

CAVHCS saw a dramatic increase in participation in the annual All Employee Survey. And, unbeknownst to most staff the quad had a special incentive.

To call it a wager would go too far, but it's fair to say the winner - the Associate Director - was determined by whose services had the highest participation.

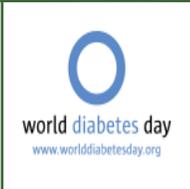
As a result names of staff from services under the Associate Director's direction were in the running to receive 11 gift certificates.

Here are the winners of the gift certificates - although through your participation in the All Employee Survey we're all winners.

- Janis Glass - Logistics
- Terry L. Suttan - Nutrition & Food
- Wayne E. Green - Environmental Management
- Horace E. Hall - Environmental Management
- Lucille Stewart - Business Office
- William E. Piper - Engineering
- Dannie L. Hartsfield - Nutrition & Food
- Aldon Johnson Jr. - Business Office
- Janice E. Butler - Business Office
- Warren K. Perry - Engineering
- Albert Beeler - Logistics



November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	 <p>Veterans Day Parade Tuskegee Campus</p>	Women's Veterans Program Montgomery Multipurpose Room 8 am - Noon	6
 <p>FALL BACK</p>	8	9	10	 <p>River Region Veterans Day Parade</p>		13
 <p>world diabetes day www.worlddiabetesday.org</p>	 <p>AMERICA RECYCLES DAY NOV. 15</p>	16	17	 <p>NATIONAL GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT</p>	19	20
21	22	23	24	 <p>Happy Thanksgiving!</p>	26	27
28	29	 <p>Computer Security Day</p>	Epilepsy Awareness Month www.efa.org American Diabetes Month www.diabetes.org National Alzheimer's Disease Month www.alz.org National Hospice Month www.nhpc.org Lung Cancer Awareness Month www.lungcanceralliance.org National Family Caregivers Month www.nfcacares.org			

The CAVHCS Community Calendar is not intended to be an all-inclusive, official calendar. It is intended rather to provide a medium for CAVHCS Salute to share upcoming events.

If you would like to add a CAVHCS event please email details directly to alan.bloom@va.gov. Submissions are not guaranteed to be published. Editorial considerations will be made for propriety, promptness and print space.