



‘Good Work’ Recognized as Best in Department

It’s rare to find anyone hopeful about anything when the odds are 315,000 to one. But recently one Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System (CAVHCS) staff member beat those odds, and it’s her rare spirit and hopefulness that was probably directly responsible for her success.

“This all seems surreal,” said Ms. Novella Brown Scott, BS, CPSS, Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist of her recent selection as the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs’ Second Annual Diversity and Inclusion Excellence Award in the Nonsupervisory Employee Category. “But, I was taught by my parents to keep working for others as a servant leader, and eventually your good work will be noticed.”

Scott is an Army Veteran who has a strong track record of being noticed for her good work. Since 1982 she’s worked at CAVHCS in roles ranging from Chief Clerk, Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS) and Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist

(VRS) to her current assignment in support of the Mental Health-



Secretary Eric Shinseki presents the Department of Veterans Affairs Second Annual Diversity and Inclusion Excellence Award to CAVHCS’ Ms. Novella Brown Scott.

Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program. Along the way Scott has been selected as CAVHCS’ Employee of the Month, Employee of the Year, A Women of Excellence and even served as the first female Councilman on the City Council of Union Springs.

However, that list of accomplishment didn’t completely prepare her for being told she would be expected to fly to Washington, D.C. to receive an award from Secretary Shinseki in a ceremony in the Department of Veterans Affairs Central Office. “Our Acting Director, Mr. Talton, was the one who told me that I’d been selected,” said Scott. “I was in shock. I walked through the process of getting an itinerary and security clearance and I was still in shock. They said someone could come with me and I wanted to be sure my supervisor

Please see ‘Good Work’

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CAVHCS Holds Second Annual Rehab Fair

By: Joice Promisee, CAVHCS

Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System’s (CAVHCS) Second Annual Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Awareness Fair was held recently on East Campus. This event was in conjunction with National Rehabilitation Week October 18th-24th. The purpose of the Rehab Fair is to provide information that will increase awareness to Veterans, stakeholders and the community of the vast array of rehabilitation services available at CAVHCS.

The program began with a discussion by Jyoti Gharge, MD, CAVHCS Psychiatrist on what it takes to complete a successful admission to the Comprehensive Integrated Inpatient Program (CIIRP). Each program participant was presented an information packet inclusive of all pertinent documents for admission.

The Social Worker presented two CIIRP Graduates. These Veterans shared their success stories from their participation in the Comprehensive Integrated Inpatient Rehab Program at CAVHCS. “When I came here I could not walk,” one Veteran shared. “The therapists and the doctors continued to work with me. With the staff’s persistence, I can now walk. The social worker worked very hard to make sure that all of my needs were met.”

Another Veteran’s testimony from a current resident, “The rehab staff works very hard to get you back to functioning. The staff really cares a lot about the Veterans.”

A Booth Exploration/ Exhibit offered participants another opportunity to gain even more insight. Each discipline in PM&R provided an exhibit with information. Stakeholders were able to meet the individual rehab team members to ask questions and see demonstrations of equipment used.

The Occupational Therapy Department provided a demonstration to the Multi-Sensory/Multi-stimulation Room. Visitors participated in guided tours of CAVHCS Outpatient Rehab Facility in Building 120 and the Inpatient Rehab Unit in 129-1B.

The event ended with an in-service “Rehabilitation at the Bedside,” presented by Sharon Parker, RN, Debra Ellis, KT, Gloria Brown, KT and Janice Watts, OT. The presentation allowed stakeholders a chance to see a simulation of how a Veteran receives rehabilitation at the bedside in addition to receiving ongoing therapies. Contact hours (1.5) were provided.

Based on written comments from attendees, the event was both educational and informative. One stakeholder wrote, “I did not know that all of these services were available for rehab at the VA.”

“This is a beautiful facility and many services are offered to the Veterans,” wrote another Veteran.

From the Director

James R. Talton, PA-C, MBA, MS, FACHE

It has been a few weeks since I arrived at CAVHCS and I thank all of you for making me feel so welcome. You are obviously highly-trained professionals who are well prepared to accomplish our mission of serving Veterans. I am impressed with your attitudes and willingness to solve Veterans' concerns. Positive attitudes are a crucial factor in establishing and maintaining a clinical and workplace environment of excellence. Such excellence includes resolving Veteran and staff concerns at the lowest level.

I relish this opportunity to thank you for the support I am receiving and to briefly inform you of two observances:

The Combined Federal Campaign has begun and will continue through the beginning of November. In its 50th year of fundraising on behalf of charity organizations, CFC is the only agency authorized to solicit Federal employees on government property. CFC continues to be the largest, most successful workplace fundraising model in the world. CAVHCS' goals for charitable giving are solicitation of every

employee and \$51,132 in donations. Thank you, in advance, for your contribution.

Finally, I strongly encourage you to participate in annual Flu Vaccination Campaign. As employees in a healthcare facility, we are at high risk for contracting the influenza virus. I call upon you to protect yourself and our Veterans by visiting the Occupational Health Department to receive your Flu Vaccinations.

I look forward to working with you and supporting your efforts to provide the highest quality healthcare possible, maintain and expand services, and facilitate every Veteran's satisfaction with the outcome of their healthcare experience.



Mary Lovelady of Occupational Health made sure Director Talton received his Flu Vaccination this year.

CAVHCS All-Stars

While I was at my appointment on October 4, 2011 with Dr. Banister I had a blood sugar problem. Mrs. Gosha came to my rescue. She got my blood sugar up and I was ready to thank her so much for her assistance. The VA needs more staff like her. She is a great asset to this facility.

-- Respectfully, Brenda G. H., Montgomery, Ala.

Please commend Karen Sidney. She is the nicest, most helpful and confident person I have met since coming to the VA. We really appreciated what she did for us while we are at the facility.

-- Sincerely, Harry J. and Paula L., Waverly, Ga.

I recently visited the Dental Lab and received the greatest treatment and care from Barbara Bristow. She is a credit to the VA and her profession. Please tell her what a great job she does for the Veterans. I also saw Dr. Harris during this same visit and just as he has many times before, he was kind, courteous and very professional. I have always received great care when visiting the Dental Department. Please give him my thanks and best wishes.

-- David W. A., Troy, Alabama

I just wanted to let you know how pleasant my last visit to the VA was. I was stressed from work when I came in for my appointment, but the nurses there were so friendly and welcoming to me during my visit that I left with a smile. Ms. Annie Gosha and Ms. Mee Ho Chin were my nurses and I look forward to my next appointment. I can't remember the doctor's name, but he did an excellent job too!

-- Thanks again, James S. Prattville, Ala.

I am very happy with the West Campus and my treatment there. Dr. Namineni, my colonoscopy surgeon was terrific as usual. He spends time with me to be sure I understand the pre-op procedure and the follow-up with Barium Enemas. I have much confidence in him. He is to be commended.

-- With respect, Fred F., Montgomery, Ala.

My name is Robert B. and I was seen in the Montgomery Eye Clinic and I am very satisfied with the minimum time in the waiting room and the quality of the service received. I have no problem giving credit where credit is due.

-- Great job as Always! Robert B., Montgomery, Ala.

The CAVHCS Salute



Accredited by
The Joint Commission

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James R. Talton, PA-C, MBA, MS, FACHE
Johnny R. Davis
Rozelia Bean, MS, RN
Cliff Robinson, MD
Al Bloom

The CAVHCS Survey says...

As Thanksgiving approaches...what do you have to be thankful for?



Shavonne M. Smith
Registered Nurse,

“I am thankful for family, friends, good health, and financial stability. I am blessed!”



Phillip Brown,
Food Service Worker,

“Im blessed to be around people with good faith and spirit, to have a good job, and just to be able to look at someone and say ‘Good morning!’”



Faye Rayford-Outsey
Associate Chief Nurse,
Preventive Health Education

“A path to simplicity, giving freely. God loves a cheerful giver. II Corinthians 9;7”

CAVHCS CFC Total \$23,207.14 *(as of October 28)*

CAVHCS has already conducted training of CFC Key Workers, and the CFC booklets listing the more than 20,000 nonprofit, charitable organizations participating in this

year’s campaign are now available for review. If you have any questions please contact your work center Key Worker.



2011 CFC Key Workers

Twila Mercan – Chair/Sr. Project Officer, Ext. 3792 (East Campus)

Melanie Lunsford-Johnson – Senior Project Officer, Ext 3627 (East Campus)

Rose H. McCall – Senior Project Officer, Ext. 4559 (West Campus)

Monsherri Golston, Montgomery - Ext. 4096
Chief of Staff Office

Patricia Garrett, Tuskegee - Ext 3628 or 3727
GEC&R

Marivic Reighard, Montgomery - Ext. 4391
Patient Care Services-Acute Care & Specialties-Intensive Care Unit

Ms. Leanne Maraman, Montgomery - 4835
Patient Care Services

Debra Hill, Tuskegee - Ext. 5422
Office of the ACOS/GEC&R

Valerie Tomlinson, Tuskegee - Ext. 5041
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Deloris Sweeney, Montgomery - Ext. 4761
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Samantha J. Davis, Montgomery - Ext. 4262
Chaplain Service

Eric Patterson, Montgomery - Ext.4451
Dental Service

Alice M. Smelly, Tuskegee - Ext. 5321
Dental Service

Catherine Wilson, Ext. 3449
Environmental Management Service

Dorothea McBride, Tuskegee - Ext. 3094
Director’s Office

Jennifer Armolt, Ext. 3253
Diabetes Clinic / Food and Nutrition

William H. Thomas, Tuskegee - Ext. 5229
Painter Bldg 14

Brenda J. Bradford, Montgomery - Ext. 4881
Bldg 7

Lydia Corte, Montgomery - Ext. 4669
Logistics, Room 6

CAVHCS Photo Gallery

During October CAVHCS staff showed their support for Breast Cancer Awareness by having another Pink Out and two Breast Cancer Walks. (VA photos by Robin Johnson)



‘Good Work’

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Ms. Valerie Clark was there. I appreciate that she saw what I was doing and thought it was worthy enough to be nominated.”

Scott’s parents were unable to travel to the ceremony, but that doesn’t mean Scott didn’t ensure they would be a part of her success. “My father is a World War Two, Army Veteran who wasn’t able to travel on the Honor Flight either,” explained Scott. “So while I was in Washington I went to the Memorial and took as many pictures as I could. I’m putting together a collage for him and I’ll share it with our family during Thanksgiving. My parents have been married for 75 years and they did a wonderful job of raising 8 children.”

Scott readily attributes her successes to her upbringing, and the love a support provided by her parents.

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But anyone who has spent time with her knows her hopeful spirit is literally contagious, and the national recognition she received recently started right here at CAVHCS. “All the Veterans know,” said a smiling Scott as a parade of Veterans stuck their heads into her office to offer congratulations and just say ‘hey.’ “I’ve received well wishes from my sorority, CAVHCS staff and even some of my classmates.”

An ever-humble Scott was more than a little reluctant to respond when asked if she had any advice for staff who want to emulate her recent success. “I guess if I had to answer that question I’d say – you’ve got to be a team player. Work together and do the best you can,” said Scott. “You might be entertaining angels. Somebody is going to see how you perform one way or the other. Secretary Shinseki said at the ceremony that the six of us (five other categories were recognized) were selected from 315,000...so when it’s your time, it’s your time.”

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Flu Season Frequently Asked Questions - Answered

By: Mary Catherine Porch, APN

CAVHCS Health Promotion Disease Prevention Program Manager

This morning I had the pleasure of offering the flu vaccine to a veteran. He had some interesting questions that I commonly hear from other veterans. I thought it would be helpful to address those questions in this article.

Should I wait to be vaccinated until the weather is cold?

Flu vaccinations should begin as soon as the vaccine is available. At the VA, flu vaccine is available in all clinics. No one should wait to get the vaccine as the peak of flu season occurs in different parts of the country at different times. Sometimes it is as early as November or as late as the Spring. Since it takes two weeks to get immunity to the flu once you receive the injection, get vaccinated as soon as possible. You will be protected against the flu throughout the flu season. No appointment at the VA is needed. Just go to your primary provider's office and ask for the flu vaccine. Flu vaccine is recommended to everyone over six months of age.

Can I get the flu from the vaccine?

The answer to this question is emphatically, "No". During flu season, it is possible to catch other viruses that cause symptoms similar to the flu. There is also a chance that after getting the vaccine, one can catch the flu before he is able to build immunity to the flu viruses. This is another reason that it is important to receive the flu vaccine as soon as possible.

Why get the vaccine if there are other viruses that cause similar symptoms?

Each year the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identifies the viruses in the community that are most likely to cause the seasonal flu that can lead to numerous cases of mild or severe illness and sometimes death. The seasonal flu vaccine protects against these common strains.

What are the side effects of the flu vaccine?

The most common side effect of the flu shot is soreness at the site of the injection. Rare symptoms include muscle pain, weakness and fever. These symptoms are usually mild and last 1-2 days. The nasal flu vaccine can cause cold-like symptoms, such as, runny nose, nasal congestion, sore throat, headache, chills and weakness. Like the flu shot, the symptoms are usually mild and last 1-2 days. (As with any other vaccine or medication, a person can be allergic to the vaccine. In this case, a person could develop a rash, swelling or difficulty breathing. Allergic reactions to the vaccine are rare.) Some people who have had mild symptoms after receiving the vaccine will avoid getting the vaccine yearly. However, 1-2 days of mild symptoms cannot compare to the level of sickness that can persist for weeks when one gets the flu. Death can also occur amongst the weakest people in the population such as the elderly, chronically ill and young children. Even if you are healthy, it is best to be vaccinated to protect yourself and avoid spreading the flu to others.

How do I know if I have the flu or just a cold?

Symptoms of the flu include runny, stuffy nose, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, weakness and sometimes fever, diarrhea and vomiting. Symptoms are usually severe and can persist for 2-3 weeks. The symptoms of the common cold are runny, stuffy nose, cough, and sometimes weakness, headache and fever. However, the symptoms are generally mild and resolve in 5-10 days.

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If I get the flu, should I go to the Emergency Room?

If you think that you have the flu, contact your primary care provider. Sometimes during the first couple of days of symptoms, an antiviral medication may be prescribed to help lessen the intensity of the flu. Severe symptoms that require a trip to the emergency room are shortness of breath, sudden dizziness, confusion, persistent vomiting, or chest pain or pressure. Also, if the flu symptoms seem to be improving but then you get a fever with a cough, get medical attention.

Severe flu symptoms in infants and young children include those listed above as well as bluish skin color, irritability, not waking up or interacting with others, a fever with a rash, inability to eat or take fluids, fewer wet diapers or lack of tears. If any of these signs or symptoms is present, get immediate medical help.

Remember that children, elderly people and those with chronic illnesses such as asthma, diabetes, lung diseases, kidney and liver problems, sickle cell, HIV, AIDS, cancer and those who are obese are most likely to have complications from the flu and possibly die of the flu. It is estimated that 36,000 people in the United States will die this year of this preventable disease. Do not let that be you. Your health is important to us.

If you would like more information about the flu or healthy living, visit the Veteran/ Family Health Education Centers in Tuskegee and Montgomery.

VA Awards \$7.5 Million to U.S Olympic Committee

The Department of Veterans Affairs awarded \$7.5 million to the U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC) to provide recreation and sport activities for disabled Veterans and disabled members of the Armed Forces.

"The grant builds upon VA's commitment to provide adaptive sporting opportunities for Veterans in communities nationwide," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki.

In 2010, VA awarded \$7.5 million to the USOC to begin the program.

Under terms of the agreement, VA funds are provided to the USOC's member organizations, Paralympic Sports Clubs and Veteran and military organizations to start community-based, physical activity programs for disabled Veterans and disabled

members of the Armed Forces. Disabled Veterans can locate adaptive sporting events in their communities by visiting the U.S. Paralympics Web site:






www.usparalympics.org



Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki poses with Army veteran Jim Martinson, at the 24th National Disabled American Veterans Winter Sports Clinic in Snowmass Village, Colo.

Sheila Mayfield from Muscogee County Health Department addresses attendees of the recent Columbus, Ga Community Based Outpatient Clinic Baby Shower for female Veterans currently receiving obstetric support through CAVHCS. During that Baby Shower Women's Health Clinic personnel also evaluated current maternity consults and obtained feedback from Women Veterans regarding their level of satisfaction with CAVHCS and community maternity and obstetrical care.
(VA Photo by Robin Johnson)



 2011 CALENDAR OF EVENTS VA OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS 						
		<h1>November 2011</h1>				
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<input type="checkbox"/> Epilepsy Awareness Month <input type="checkbox"/> American Diabetes Month <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetic Eye Disease Month <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Skin Month <input type="checkbox"/> National Family Caregivers Month <input type="checkbox"/> COPD Awareness Month		Urology Nurses and Associates Week (Nov. 1-7)				
		1	2	3	4	5
6 *Daylight Saving Time Ends	7	8 *X-Ray Discovered (1895)	9 *Berlin Wall Opened (1989)	10 *Marine Corps Established (1775)	11 *Veterans Day	12
13 *Fall of Kabul, Afghanistan (2001)	14 *World Diabetes Day	15 *America Recycles Day	16	17 *Great American Smokeout	18	19
20	21 *Cold War Formally Ended Nov. 21 (1990)	22	23	24 *Thanksgiving Day	25 	26
National Influenza Vaccination Week (Nov. 27-Dec. 3)				<input type="checkbox"/> National Alzheimer's Disease Month <input type="checkbox"/> National Marrow Awareness Month <input type="checkbox"/> Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month <input type="checkbox"/> Pulmonary Hypertension Awareness Month <input type="checkbox"/> National Long-Term Care Awareness Month <input type="checkbox"/> American-Indian & Alaska Native Heritage Month <input type="checkbox"/> National Hospice Month <input type="checkbox"/> Lung Cancer Awareness Month <input type="checkbox"/> National AIDS Awareness Month		
27	28	29	30 *Computer Security Day			

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.