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**VETERANS  
OUTREACH CENTER Inc.**  
★ Serving Those Who Serve U.S. ★



**Flag Store located at  
455 South Ave  
Rochester, NY 14620  
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**SUMMER 2019**

# The Veteran Advocate

*News and Information from the Nation's oldest community based non-profit organization serving veterans and their families*



## Executive Message

Spring always brings a sense of renewal and excitement, a time to embrace new ideas and get a fresh perspective. At Veterans Outreach Center, we asked the men and women we serve, "What is your greatest need?" Their answers have helped formulate the program structure and launch of the new VOC Morale Center for Health and Healing.

The combination of unemployment, transition from military life, health issues, and relationship challenges can create the "perfect storm" for some veterans; when this happens, the results are devastating. We have seen time and again when issues such as these lead to homelessness, substance abuse, incarceration, and even suicide. Our new Morale Center employs a holistic, trauma-informed care methodology designed to address the variety of issues our veterans face.

Veterans also commonly return home with an array of physical health ailments related to their service. These challenges can include chronic head and neck injuries from carrying heavy packs on their back; injuries to the joints and knees originating from jumping out of aircraft; back problems, headaches/migraines, muscle spasms, and much more from a variety of tactical maneuvers and physical training. But the challenges don't stop here. Sadly, our veterans who have extremely low or no income often lack access to places to engage in personal hygiene practices such as showers, hair washing, haircuts, and clothes washing—all tenants to general good health.

The VOC Morale Center for Health and Healing includes Chiropractic care, Acupuncture, A hydro massage chair (coming soon), yoga/meditative therapy, art therapy, community breakfasts and more. We are also excited to an-

nounce that through the generosity of many veterans' service organizations, Wegmans, and Lowes, we are now able to provide laundry and barber services on site at VOC! ALL of these offerings are free of charge to our veteran families. Additional services will be added as needs are identified.

The Morale Center is located at VOC's North Campus, at 449 South Avenue in the City of Rochester's South Wedge. All activities are conducted by a combination of staff, consultants, and volunteers, with VOC executive staff oversight. We are grateful for the donations and in-kind contributions of our volunteers and community partners that will be key in the center's operation.

For more information on how you can be a part of this transformative opportunity for the men and women who have served our nation, please contact me. I would welcome the opportunity to give you a tour of our facility and discuss possibilities!

Sincerely,

*Laura A. Stradley*

Laura Stradley  
Executive Director

*VOC Executive Director Laura Stradley will be recognized as a 2019 Women of Excellence recipient and honoree by the Rochester Business Journal and the community at large on Thursday, May 9th at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center. This award is given each year to women in leadership roles who are not only professionally successful, but are also committed to making a difference, inspiring change and mentoring the next generation of female leaders. Congratulations Laura! Job well done.*

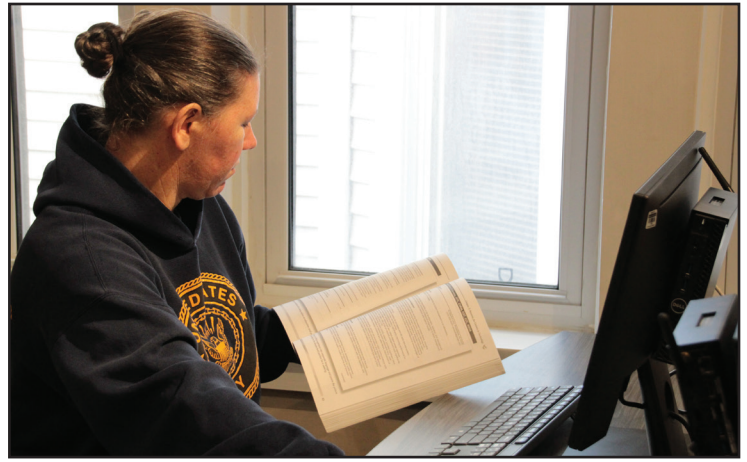
## Career Success at VOC

2018 was a year of great accomplishment for the Employment and Training Program at VOC. Over 500 veterans seeking employment and job skills development were served. Lives were altered and career paths were solidified for many veterans like Michael C. who is well on his way to self-fulfillment.

“I want to say thanks to Rick Saltreli, Training Coordinator at VOC for all his help in setting me up for my OSHA 10 Construction and General Industry training courses. I received certifications in both and with confidence, I applied for positions in the skilled trades. I was recently hired as a journeyman in the commercial roofers union, working for Elmer Davis. I appreciate all the support I’ve received from the staff at VOC in helping me to accomplish my career goal. Thank you all!”

VOC depends on dozens of community partners to help veterans remove barriers to employment. With gratitude, those partners were acknowledged on March 27th at the VOC Annual Service Provider Awards. Special recognition was given to two organizations: LawNY, for their pro bono work helping veterans navigate non-criminal legal issues, and OACES, the Office of Adult & Career Education Services for the Rochester City School district. “We value all of our community partners but these two organizations have done a tremendous job for us and have been consistent over the years in bringing help to our vets in different areas of their lives,” explains VOC Training Coordinator Rick Saltreli.

For more information on VOC employment and training opportunities, contact Nena Siverd, Program Manager at (585) 295-7818 or visit our web site.



## When Advocacy Works- Veterans Transportation Council

When the VA opens its new clinic on Calkins Road in July, 2019, veterans will have front door public transportation service thanks to the advocacy of Gary Gould and the members of the Veterans Transportation Council.



The group is made up of several veteran service providers including Veterans Outreach Center, Monroe County Veterans Service Agency, Compeer and the Veterans Memorial Council of Rochester and Monroe County. Leadership from the Canandaigua and Rochester VA also attend each meeting. Their core purpose is to seek transportation solutions for all veterans to gain access to critically needed VA services, particularly those with limited mobility.

## New Housing for Veterans



Groundbreaking ceremonies for the new VOC Liberty Landing affordable housing complex were held Friday, April 5th at the corner of Scio and Delevan Streets! Once complete, the 33-unit apartment building will give housing preference to veterans and their families. Moreover, 10 of the units will be set aside entirely for service-disabled and / or homeless veterans. VOC Liberty Landing is a combined effort between Conifer Realty, LLC and VOC. It will be the first permanent housing complex specifically dedicated to housing veterans in Monroe County!

VOC has been known in the Rochester community for many years as the premiere provider of homeless and transitional housing services for veterans. The addition of permanent, affordable housing means we will now be able to meet the full spectrum of housing needs. For more details on this important effort, visit [vocroc.org](http://vocroc.org).



## We Salute You!

VOC Executive Director Laura Stradley, Monroe County Executive Cheryl Dinolfo and local officials paid tribute to Vietnam Veterans during the county's annual "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" at the Roger Robach Community Center on March 29th. First proclaimed in 2012 and then officially designated in 2017 as National Vietnam War Veterans Day, the holiday is marked by ceremonies and celebration across the U.S.

Our local ceremony featured members of Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Chapter 20, and offered recognition and appreciation for all veterans who served during the Vietnam War. We were also incredibly fortunate to hear remarks from Medal of Honor recipient Gary Beikirch, as well as three-time Purple Heart recipient Chuck Macaluso. Both men served honorably and valiantly in the Vietnam War, and they continue to help veterans of all eras.

Nearly 23,000 Vietnam Veterans live in the six-county, greater-Rochester area, and many of them have joined VVA Chapter 20. Serving as the largest, most active and longest standing local chapter of the National Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc., the organization maintains a strong, united voice for addressing issues of importance to all Vietnam-era veterans.

## Welcome to VOC



Kristie Robertson-Coyne joined the Veterans Outreach Center Board of Directors in March. As the Senior Director of Advancement at University of Rochester's Wilmot Cancer Center, Kristie is excited about putting her extensive experience to work on behalf of the veterans we serve.

Kristie comes from a big military family! Both of her Grandfathers served in WWII, and her Grandmother was an Army nurse. Kristie's father was a Vietnam Veteran Reservist, and she has an uncle (now retired) who graduated from the Naval Academy and served two tours in Afghanistan. The legacy continues through her sister, Jill, who is a Lieutenant Colonel in the Airforce. She is currently stationed in California.

Kristie lives in Fairport with her husband Chris and her two daughters Olivia and Kendall. In early May, Kristie will be leaving her position at the Cancer Institute to become the Chief Advancement Officer at McQuaid Jesuit High School.

## Give United

The United Way Campaign is going on now! When the time comes to fill out your donor form, consider directing your campaign commitment to support veterans in your community with our United Way donor designation ID # 1119. We can send a United message to every veteran that Rochester cares. Your generosity provides food, clothing, shelter, employment training and so much more for veterans and their families.

Does your company have a matching gift policy? Check with your HR or payroll office or for assistance, or contact Kevin Gross at Kevin.Gross@vocroc.org, (585) 295-7833.



## Gifts In-Kind

When active military personnel need supplies and provisions, they are usually told to "See the Quartermaster". At VOC, our Quartermaster Program serves a similar purpose. We count on the generosity of others to be able to provide food and clothing to our veterans and their families. The VOC Quartermaster Program has been in full operation since August of 2018. Under the supervision of Tammara Van Sickle, hundreds of at risk veterans each year acquire suits and professional attire for job interviews, court appearances or other formal occasions. They also receive cold weather gear including coats, hats and gloves.

Through a partnership with Foodlink, canned goods and perishable food items like meat and eggs are available to fill an empty cupboard. Thanks to community food drives and individual donations, our veterans have access to greatly needed supplies, M-F, 10am-2PM.

Of critical necessity are all types of personal hygiene products including razors, shaving cream, shampoo and conditioner as well as new men's briefs (all sizes). Visit our website: [vocroc.org](http://vocroc.org) for a more complete list of needs or call our donation hot line at (585) 295-7851 for more information.



## New Branch Motto T-shirts and Hoodies

Come visit the store or check us out online, [www.eflagstore.com](http://www.eflagstore.com), to see the new branch motto merchandise! All designs were created by Stars and Stripes, The Flag Store and printed locally. Show support of our military branches and Veterans Outreach Center with your purchase.



## Sign up for Flag Day 2019

Join hundreds of volunteers in celebrating 'Old Glory' and supporting VOC at the same time. On June 13, 14, 15 & 16 we will need your help in staffing a booth at one of 40 locations around the Rochester Region for our annual Flag Day fundraiser. Pass out free flags and information about V O C while collecting donations to support veterans. You can sign up for one of our locations or manage one at your place of employment. It's a fun way to support a great cause! Sign up online at [www.vocroc.org/flagday](http://www.vocroc.org/flagday), or contact Kevin Gross at [Kevin.Gross@vocroc.org](mailto:Kevin.Gross@vocroc.org)



## A Gift of Time and Talent

We salute all of our volunteers and are thankful for EACH AND EVERY ONE all year! We could not serve those who serve U.S. without their tireless dedication and commitment to VOC. Visit our website for volunteer opportunities.



### Our Mission

Our mission is to serve veterans with compassion and advocate for all who have worn our nation's uniform so they can **RISE** and live life to the fullest.

### Our Values

Our guiding principles and corresponding behaviors.

**RESPECT:** We treat everyone with dignity and compassion, and we show appreciation for strengths as well as vulnerabilities.

**INTEGRITY:** We are trust-worthy, honorable and professional. Taking ownership of our actions and communication is a top priority; we do this by conveying honesty and respect through tone, verbal and non-verbal interactions. We demonstrate fiscal responsibility with all resources.

**SERVICE:** We believe that service is part of the American fabric, and recognize the great sacrifices that are made by all who have worn our nation's uniform. We are committed to serving our veterans and their families with passion and deep appreciation for their service.

**EXCELLENCE:** We are hard-working, innovative and creative; we strive for continuous improvement. Our goal is to consistently grow the quality and scope of our services, in order to better meet the needs of our veterans and their families.