

**Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations**  
**DRAFT Meeting Minutes**  
**December 15, 2021**

A meeting of the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) was held on December 15, 2021 at 10 a.m. at the Richmond Times-Dispatch Building, 8460 Times Dispatch Blvd, Mechanicsville, VA 23116.

**Members Present**

- Richard Shook, Air Force Association
- William Aramony, American Legion
- Glenn Yarborough, Association of the United States Army
- Denice Williams, Disabled American Veterans
- Sha'ron Martin, Fleet Reserve Association
- Lauren Augustine, Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America
- John Clickener, Marine Corps League
- Monti Zimmerman, Military Officers Association of America
- Mark Atchison, Military Order of the Purple Heart
- Vernon Peters, Military Order of the World Wars
- Preston Curry, Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Terence Moore, Reserve Association of America
- Dan Karnes, Roanoke Valley Veterans Council
- Rick Raskin, Veterans of Foreign Wars
- George Corbett, Vietnam Veterans of America
- Robert Barnette, Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association
- Kevin Hoffman, Virginia National Guard Association
- Michael Dick, Chairman, Board of Veterans Services
- John Lesinski, Chairman, Veterans Services Foundation
- John Maxwell, Commissioner, Department of Veterans Services

**Members Absent**

- Richard Van Norton, Jr., AMVETS
- Jack Hilgers, Legion of Valor
- Michelle Ramos Domingue, Navy Mutual Aid Association

**Alternates Present (representing their VSO)**

- Rich Rinaldo, Legion of Valor
- Meredith Burns, Navy Mutual Aid Association

**Alternates Present (not representing their VSO)**

- Rick Oertel, American Legion
- Lisa Gregory, Disabled American Veterans
- Bill Ashton, Fleet Reserve Association
- John Down, Military Officers Association of America
- Alvin Chandler, Military Order of the World Wars

- Harold Sayles, Veterans of Foreign Wars

### **Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present**

- The Honorable Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth (by Zoom for swearing in of new members)
- Tramaine Carroll-Payne, Department of Veterans Services (DVS)
- Steven Combs, DVS
- Claudia Flores, DVS
- Glendalynn Glover, DVS
- Brandi Jancaitis, DVS
- Robert Jukic, DVS (via Zoom)
- Kayla LaFond, DVS
- Ravi Padma, DVS
- Annie Walker, DVS
- Walt Mercer, Department of Military Affairs (DMA)
- Cassy Russell, DMA
- Larry Jarrell, Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)

### **Guests**

- Quinn Augustine
- Richard Anderson
- Rahsan Mitchell
- MacKenzie Heidelberg, Office of Congresswoman Spanberger
- Edie Smith (via Zoom)

### **Items included in the Agenda Packet**

- Draft Agenda
- Draft Minutes September 9, 2021 meeting
- BVS Report to JLC
- VSF Report to JLC
- VDVS Operations Update
- Proposed 2022 Meeting Schedule and Work Plan

### **Call to Order**

Acting Chairman Denice Williams called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

### **Thoughts and meditation**

The JLC Chaplain, Mr. Kevin Hoffman, provided thoughts and meditation, recognizing the memory of Mrs. Ellen Bernice Faircloth, mother of JLC Acting Chair Denice Williams, who recently passed.

### **Swearing in of new members**

The Honorable Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth, connecting via Zoom, swore in seven newly appointed/reappointed JLC members.

### **Roll Call of VSOs, Quorum Determination, and Introduction of Guest**

The roll was called, and 19 of the 20 Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) represented on the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) were recorded as being represented. A quorum was determined. The three *ex officio* members were recorded as present.

Acting Chair Williams asked the state officials and guests to introduce themselves. Their names and organizational affiliation are recorded above.

### **Approval of the Agenda (Attachment 1)**

Chair Williams asked for a motion to approve the Agenda as presented. Mr. John Clickener made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Sha'ron Martin, to approve the meeting agenda as presented. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

### **Approve September 9, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Chair Williams asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 9, 2021 meeting as drafted. Mr. Rick Raskin made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Vernon Peters, to approve the minutes as drafted. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

### **Legislative Initiatives**

Chair Williams asked for an update on each JLC legislative initiative.

JLC initiative 2022-01, Suicide Prevention among SMVF was proposed by AMVETS. Mr. Steven Combs provided information on the initiative from a process perspective explaining this is a budget initiative rather than a legislative initiative. Chair Williams asked for questions. None heard.

Chair Williams moved to JLC initiative 2022-02, expanding tax relief for surviving spouses. Mr. Monti Zimmerman, representing MOAA, reported on the legislative members who agreed to sponsor this initiative during the 2022 General Assembly session, to include co-patrons in the House for bi-partisan support. Mr. Zimmerman further detailed the specifics of the initiative.

Chair Williams moved to JLC initiative 2022-03, VSO Color and Honor Guards. Mr. John Clickener provided information on the legislative members who agreed to patron and co-patron the initiative.

Chair Williams moved to JLC initiative 2022-04 to increase state General Fund (GF) support to state cemeteries. Mr. Sha'ron Martin from the Fleet Reserve explained that this was a budget initiative and asked for questions. None heard.

Chair Williams move to JLC initiative 2022-05, to promote the hiring of the National Guard. Mr. Robert Barnette described the details of the initiative. Commissioner Maxwell provided more information on the V3 program and the grant total. Mr. Rich Rinaldo provided his thoughts that the grant money should be used fairly across services to include the National Guard. Mr. Kevin Hoffman commented that employers would be incentivized to hire with this grant money given that Guard members can be called to active duty.

Chair Williams moved to JLC initiative 2022-06 and 2022-07. Mr. Kevin Hoffman commented on the state park admission and noted that Texas offers free admission to state parks. Mr. Richard

Shook asked if family members were included. Mr. Hoffman responded the initiative applies to the Guardsmen. For 2022-07, Mr. Hoffman provided a brief history of state tax exemption for Guardsman. Mr. Zimmerman asked if there are any legislative patrons identified. Mr. Hoffman noted there are a few possible legislative members identified. BVS Chairman Michael Dick asked if the exemption is tied to an index. Mr. Hoffman indicated it is not tied to an index.

No additional comments or questions. Chair Williams moved to Reports and Updates

## **Reports / Updates**

### **BVS Report** *(Attachment 2)*

Chairman Michael Dick of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) provided the BVS report. He noted the appointment and re-appointments to the BVS are complete. Chairman Dick commented on the BVS efforts in 2022 to assist VDVS with identifying measures and metrics for the strategic priorities.

### **VSF Report** *(Attachment 3)*

Chairman John Lesinski of the Veterans Services (VSF) presented the VSF report. He commented on the VSF meeting held in December and the discussion on contributions. He noted the next meeting scheduled for March 2022.

### **VDVS Operational Update** *(Attachment 4)*

Commissioner John Maxwell provided an overview VDVS operations and noted an uptick in requests for services by veterans and their families to include request for housing services. Commissioner Maxwell noted the Virginia Women Veterans Summit is planned as an in-person summit in 2022. Commissioner Maxwell asked members to remind veterans of VDVS Transition Services.

## **New Business**

### **Election of Officers**

Chair Williams stated that, in the absence of a JLC Nominating Committee, the JLC would open the floor to nominations for Chair and Vice Chair, after which the Council would vote on each position. There were no objections.

Mr. John Clickener nominated Mr. Monti Zimmerman for the position of Vice Chair. Chair Williams asked if there were any further nominations. Hearing none, Mr. Robert Barnette made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Kevin Hoffman, that the nominations be closed. The motion was agreed to by unanimous consent.

Chair Williams asked for a vote of the Council to elect Mr. Zimmerman as Vice Chair for the 2021-2022 term. The vote was unanimous.

Chair Williams turned the gavel over to Mr. Zimmerman for the election of a Chair.

Mr. John Clickener nominated Ms. Denice Williams for the position of Chair. Vice Chair

Zimmerman asked if there were any further nominations. Hearing none, Mr. Robert Barnette made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Rick Raskin, that the nominations be closed. The motion was agreed to by unanimous consent.

Vice Chair Zimmerman asked for a vote of the Council to elect Ms. Williams as Chair for the 2021-2022 term. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Clickener asked about appointed officers and the procedures for appointment.

Mr. Steven Combs referred to the JLC Bylaws, and noted that the appointed officers were Legislative Officer, Assistant Legislative Officer, and Chaplain, and that the procedures called for the Chair to nominate these officers following the meeting, and for the Council to ratify the Chair's appointments at the next meeting.

Mr. Clickener recommended that, with the upcoming General Assembly session, an Interim Legislative Officer and Interim Assistant Legislative Officer be appointed and confirmed right away. Chair Williams named Mr. Clickener as Interim Legislative Officer and Mr. Zimmerman as Interim Assistant Legislative Officer. There was unanimous consent.

#### **The JLC and the 2022 General Assembly Session**

Ms. Claudia Flores proposed that the JLC hold its 2022 "Day at the General Assembly" by Zoom on January 13, 2022, with a schedule of speakers and timetable to be developed under guidance of the Interim Legislative Officers. The Council agreed with this approach.

#### **Lobbyist-in-a-Box (LIAB) Account**

Mr. John Clickener made a request that VDVS establish a Lobbyist-in-a-Box (LIAB) Account for the JLC to use during the 2022 session. He noted that LIAB is a system that links to the General Assembly's Legislative Information System (LIS) and is used to track bills. He also noted that the JLC was not a lobbying organization, and that the "Lobbyist" is LIAB was the system name. He noted that the cost of a separate account was \$400 per year.

VDVS Commissioner John Maxwell agreed to consider the request.

#### **Approve 2022 Meeting Schedule/Work Plan**

Ms. Claudia Flores directed the members' attention to the agenda packet, which contained the proposed JLC 2022 Meeting Schedule/Work Plan. There were no questions. Mr. Rick Raskin made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Mark Atchison, to adopt the Schedule/Work Plan as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Other New Business, Open Discussion, and "Good of the Order" reports**

Mr. Robert Barnette discussed the State Sponsored Life Insurance Program for National Guard Members.

Mrs. Brandi Jancaitis shared information on suicide prevention tools to include medication lock boxes and gun locks. Ms. Jancaitis directed members to a resource table to obtain additional information. Commissioner Maxwell commented on the Lock and Talk Program as a suicide

prevention measure.

Chair Williams and Commissioner Maxwell presented former JLC Chair Bill Ashton with a plaque to recognize his service as JLC Vice Chair from 2019-2020 and Chair from 2020-2021.

**Public Comment**

No public comment was received.

**Adjourn**

Chairman Williams adjourned the meeting at 11:36 a.m.

The next regular business meeting is Thursday, May 12, 2022 at 10 a.m. The meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held at the Virginia War Memorial.

The JLC will hold a Zoom information session on Friday, December 17, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. to review the veteran and military-related items in the Governor's introduced budget.

The JLC will hold the 2022 JLC Day at the General Assembly via Zoom on Thursday, January 13, 2022. An agenda/schedule will be sent as soon as possible.

# **ATTACHMENT 1**

## **Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations**

**December 15, 2021  
10:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.**

**Richmond Times-Dispatch Hanover Building  
8460 Times Dispatch Blvd, Mechanicsville VA 23116**

### **AGENDA**

- I. Opening, Meeting Notes, and Pledge of Allegiance – *Denice Williams, Acting JLC Chair* (10:00 – 10:05)
- II. Opening Thoughts & Meditation, *Kevin Hoffman, JLC Chaplain* (10:05 – 10:08)
- III. Swearing-in of new members – *TBD/if needed* (10:08 – 10:13)
- IV. Roll call and introduction of member, quorum determination, and introduction of guests – *Denice Williams, Acting JLC Chair* (10:13 – 10:30)
- V. Approve Agenda – *Denice Williams, Acting JLC Chair* (10:30 – 10:32)
- VI. Approve September 9 meeting minutes – *Denice Williams, Acting JLC Chair* (10:32 – 10:35)
- VII. Legislative Initiatives (10:35 – 11:15)
  - a. Status of JLC 2022 recommendations (patrons, bills, meetings, etc.) – *JLC Points of Contact*
- VIII. Reports (11:15 – 11:30)
  - a. Board of Veterans Services (BVS) – *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman*
  - b. Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) – *John Lesinski, VSF Chairman*
  - c. Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS) – *John Maxwell, VDVS Commissioner*
- IX. New Business (11:30 – 12:00)
  - a. Election of Officers, *Denice Williams, Acting JLC Chair*
  - b. The JLC and the 2022 General Assembly session – *Claudia Flores, DVS Director of Policy & Planning*
  - c. Lobbyist-in-a-Box (LIAB) Account – *JLC Chair*
  - d. Approve 2022 Meeting Schedule/Work Plan – *JLC Chair*
  - e. Other New Business, Open Discussion, and “Good of the Order” reports – *JLC Chair*
- X. Public comment period – *JLC Chair* (12:00 – 12:10)
- XI. Closing remarks and prepare for next meeting – *JLC Chair* (12:10 – 12:15)
- XII. Adjourn (12:15)

## ATTACHMENT 2

### Board of Veterans Services Report



101 N. 14TH STREET, 17<sup>TH</sup> FL.  
RICHMOND, VA 23219

*Michael Dick,*  
Chairman  
*Thurraya Kent,*  
Vice Chair  
*Victor Angry*  
*David Ashe*  
*Carl Bedell*  
*Senator John Bell*  
*Carl Bess*  
*Paige Cherry*  
*Jenny Dye*  
*Mario Flores*  
*Delegate Buddy Fowler*  
*Delegate Dan Helmer*  
*Joyce Henderson*  
*James O. Icenhour, Jr.*  
*John Lesinski*  
*Senator Mamie Locke*  
*Delegate Kathleen*  
*Murphy*  
*Kathy Owens*  
*Senator Bryce Reeves*  
*Susan Vervaeet Riveland*  
*Delegate Marcus Simon*  
*Melissa Watts*  
*Denice Williams*  
*Acting Chair, Joint*  
*Leadership Council of*  
*Veterans Service*  
*Organizations*  
*Jack Lanier*  
*2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair, Veterans*  
*Services Foundation*  
*Linda Schreiner,*  
*Chair, Virginia War*  
*Memorial Foundation*  
*John M. Maxwell,*  
*Commissioner, Virginia*  
*Department of*  
*Veterans Services*

### COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES

#### REPORT TO THE JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL December 15, 2021

The Board of Veterans Services (BVS) is pleased to report that Mr. Victor Angry and Mr. Carl Bedell were reappointed to serve another term on the Board. Both are vital members who bring a wealth of insight and experience. I am also pleased to report we have four newly appointed members. Mr. David Ashe is an Attorney at Law, specializing in veteran and Social Security disability law. He also served on active duty in the Marine Corps from 1996 – 2003 and is currently a Colonel serving in the Marine Corps Reserve. Ms. Susan Vervaeet Riveland is a U.S. Army Veteran. She is the Project Director for the Virginia Women Veterans' Story Project, which is an ongoing independent oral history project assembling individual recorded narratives of female military veterans in Virginia. Ms. Melissa Watts served many years with the Department of the Army and is currently the Director of Procurement for the Virginia ABC Authority. Ms. Joyce Henderson is a retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel and currently works as a Transition Specialist for the Department of the Army. We are looking forward to working with our new members and benefitting from the expertise they will bring to carry our mission forward.

Since our last report, our members have continued to actively advocate for and support veterans and their families across the Commonwealth. As a key stakeholder in the VDVS Strategic Plan, Board members reviewed the Commissioner's strategic priorities, to include suicide prevention, technological improvements, expanding capacity to support requirements for increasing numbers of veterans and family members requiring services, agency infrastructure needs, and strategic communications improvements. The Board plans to establish a work group in 2022 to assist VDVS in developing metrics to measure agency progress in achieving objectives.

Our next meeting is December 16 at the Richmond Times Dispatch. We anticipate hearing details from the Governor's introduced budget and discussions from legislators as we gear up for the 2022 General Assembly Session.

We look forward to continuing work with the JLC to support Virginia's Veterans and their families.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Dick".

Michael Dick  
Chairman



## ATTACHMENT 3

### Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Report



#### VIRGINIA VETERANS SERVICES FOUNDATION Report to the Joint Leadership Council December 15, 2021

The Virginia Veterans Services Foundation (VVSF) Board of Trustees held the final meeting for 2021 on December 9, 2021 at the offices of the Richmond Times Dispatch.

Secretary Jabs swore in Michael Coleman, who was recently appointed by the Governor to the Board of Trustees. Mr. Coleman brings a wealth of experience to the Foundation and will be an asset to the organization. Mr. Coleman will serve on the Finance Committee.

Work on various VVFS projects continues through the winter. The Procedures and Policies Committee and Finance Committee met jointly on November 16, 2021.

The P&P Committee Chair, Jack Lanier has been working closely with the committee and VVSF staff to update VVSF working documents and to finalize the FY22/23 Strategic Plan and the FY22 VSF-DVS MOU Annual Rider. Chair Lanier presented those documents to the full Board on December 9<sup>th</sup> and they were unanimously approved by the trustees.

The Finance Committee with the guidance of the Committee Chair, Walter Stosch worked with the committee to analyze various budget matters that the DVS CFO presented at the November Joint Meeting. Chair Stosch made a request to the full Board to consider and approve an additional \$75,000 for the FY22 budget to allow DVS programs the requested increased spending authority. The full Board unanimously approved the recommended FY22 \$75,000 budget adjustment.

The Development Committee Chair, Laura Schmiegel, has been working on a variety of corporate fundraising efforts and provided a detailed presentation to the Board. Capitol One, Sentara, and the Dominion Energy Charity Classic were highlighted along with a list of additional potential donors. With fundraising as a top priority, the Development Committee will have a busy year identifying the needed funding sources to support DVS programs.

A number of Community Fundraising events have taken place in FY22 and this is a very welcome return for VVSF. These events are essential for increasing funding and an excellent avenue for providing outreach opportunities throughout the Commonwealth. VVFS Chair, John Lesinski has been busy traveling to thank donors and receive event contributions, most recently to Fawn Lake Community in Spotsylvania and the George C. Marshall MOAA in Lexington.

In celebration of Veterans Day, there were a number of fundraising events in November. The Fawn Lake Community sponsored a golf tournament, D-BAT in Virginia Beach held a Memorial Wood Bat Championship tournament and Kendra Scott Jewelry in Charlottesville donated a percentage of their sales. The Foundation is very fortunate to have many dedicated and generous supporters. They invest a great deal of their time, and work hard to host fundraisers year after year.

VVSF Outreach opportunities in November included a live interview with the VVSF Chair, John Lesinski on the NBC12 midday news program. The VVSF Chair also served as the featured speaker for the Veterans Day Ceremony at John Tyler Community College. The filming of a videotape sponsored by Sentara Healthcare featuring John Lesinski and Jack Lanier detailing the work of VVSF took place. Members of the board also attended a Veteran Day Brunch hosted by Koontz Paint & Body Works in Richmond.

Commissioner Maxwell provided an update on the DVS programs and was available to answer questions. The Foundation greatly appreciates the willingness of the Commissioner and the DVS team to work together to provide support for Virginia veterans. Both organizations recognize that a strong collaboration will result in successfully identifying veterans along with providing the resources needed now and in the future.

On behalf of the Virginia Veterans Services Foundation Board of trustees, I would like to wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season and a Happy New Year.

The next VVSF Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for March 24, 2022 at a time and location to be determined.

Respectfully Submitted,  
John Lesinski, Chairman  
Virginia Veterans Services Foundation

**ATTACHMENT 4**  
**VDVS Operations Update**



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**

*Department of Veterans Services*

John Maxwell  
Commissioner

Telephone: (804) 786-0220  
Fax: (804) 786-0302

**Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS)  
Operations Update  
for the  
Joint Leadership Council  
December 15, 2021**

Over this past quarter, the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS) continued balancing virtual offerings with more in-person services. We've also resumed many outreach activities that were regular elements of our work within the community.

The number of total Virginia Veteran and Family Support (VVFS) existing and new clients served was significantly higher in November 2021, increasing by 22% over November 2020. Additionally there was a 29% increase in new clients in just one month from October 2021 to November 2021. For November 2021, 36% of service needs were for housing assistance, 10% for benefits, 6% for homeless assistance, 12% employment, and 7% for Behavioral Health. Over 20% of client referrals come from VDVS Benefits.

The Benefits service line continues both in-person and virtual appointments. The Benefits team serviced 2,480 veterans and family members in-person in November and saw an increase of 1287 in-person contacts. Total contacts for the month of November included 22,490 contacts via phone, email and in-person. This is a 24% increase from November of last year. Virtual service options will continue to enhance access to veterans and their families across the Commonwealth.

The V3 and V3 Transition Programs are working closely with the Virginia Chamber and have planned a robust Hire Vets Now (HVN) Networking Event calendar. There are 23 networking events scheduled on five different military installations. Each HVN event connects 20-25 V3 Certified Employers directly to transitioning service members and their families. V3 Transition Coordinators and V3 Regional Program Managers attend all events to ensure quality customer service to service members and military spouses, and our V3 Certified Employers.

V3 Transition will continue to build on last year's success in servicing 3,135 Transitioning Service Members (TSMs), veterans, and military spouses. We reached over 78,000 in the military community through services like the Virginia Welcome Letter and the Transition Connection Newsletter. The Boots 2 Suits (B2S) service, which provides professional clothing to Transitioning Service Members and military spouses, grew substantially from 171 applications in FY20 to 568 applications in FY21. To date in FY22 there are 270 applications, with over 1,000 Transitioning Service Members who utilized this resource in the past three years. Over 75% of the more than 1,000 Service Members that used Boots 2 Suits services plan to remain in Virginia upon separation.

V3 is building and deploying a core curriculum module for TSMs and their families highlighting all of the services, resources, and benefits that V3T provides. V3 Employer Connect is a virtual event series highlighting V3 Certified employers and connecting TSM and military family clients directly to those employers in a virtual webinar/Q&A setting.

The Military Education & Workforce Initiative (MEWI) partnered with the Veterans Services Foundation, Tech 4 Troops, and Altria Group to provide 50 refurbished laptops to Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). The first delivery (30 computers) is scheduled for January 12. The remaining 20 laptops will be purchased and provided after July 1.

We are nearing completion of a \$5.2M expansion project at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia) that will add over 3,000 pre-placed crypts. In conjunction with the community partners, all three state veterans cemeteries will hold special wreath laying events on December 18. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) approved two grant requests for additional columbaria at Amelia and Dublin. The grants total approximately \$1.85M and will provide enough additional niche spaces for about 10 years at each cemetery. A pre-award kick-off meeting is being scheduled for mid-January 2022 with construction expected to begin in late summer/early fall 2022.

VDVS Cemeteries Division is close to completing the transition from analog lines to VOIP soft phones with a toll-free number that will allow for centralized burial scheduling and eligibility determinations. The system is expected to be fully-operational by the end of February 2022 with the switch-over to a 100% VOIP system in early spring 2022.

Work continues to move forward on the Jones & Cabaco Veterans Care Center (Virginia Beach) and the Puller Veterans Care Center (Vint Hill, Fauquier County) as we count down to the planned Summer 2022 opening. Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center was recently ranked #2 among Virginia nursing homes by *Newsweek* magazine.

The 2022 Virginia Women Veteran summit is confirmed for June 15, 2022 at the Richmond Convention Center. The event theme is "*Empowered: Sisters in Arms Inspiring Generations.*" The focus of effort in 2022 is to holistically connect women veterans to services, both internal to VDVS and to external community resources. We want to identify any gaps in services that we can target for enhancement in building partner resources.

The Military Spouse Liaison conducted outreach and advocacy on behalf of military spouses in the Commonwealth. Beginning September 10, 2021, the Liaison met 72 partners and resources at in-person events and virtual meetings. She attended regional Military Spouse Economic Empowerment Zone (MSEEZ) meetings and will assist with the *Advocacy* pillar for the Northern Virginia MSEEZ. The focus of effort in 2022 is to increase military spouse attendance at networking events to include the Hire Vets Now events.

We spent a majority of time in 2021 developing the agency's strategic priorities and identifying goals and objectives for achieving those priorities. We will now turn our focus on ensuring we have the right metrics by which we can continually measure our progress toward achievement of our strategic goals in fulfilling the Compact to Virginia's veterans. We are grateful for our collaboration with the JLC and look forward to working with the JLC in 2022 to continue our mission of service.

Sincerely,  
  
John Maxwell