

Department of Veterans Affairs



The Seventh Annual Report of the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans

July 1, 2001

Report of the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans

Seventh Annual Report

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Introduction

The Committee held its first meeting of the fiscal year in November 2000 at the VA Regional Office and Medical Center in Wilmington, DE. The Committee also traveled to Philadelphia to receive briefings on ongoing programs and current operations and had an opportunity to tour the Philadelphia VA Regional Office and Insurance Center. The second meeting was convened in April 2001 at the VA Central Office in Washington, DC. This meeting was scheduled in Washington to allow the Committee to meet with the newly appointed Secretary and new senior officials.

This year, the Committee continued to focus its reviews on topics both internal and external to VA, addressing a variety of concerns having significant impact on all veterans, but specifically matters facing the minority veteran communities.

Since our last report, the Committee has undergone some transformation. Sadly, one member, Mr. Talmadge C. Foster died in July 2000. Two members, General Fred A. Gorden and Mr. Otho Lister, resigned for personal and professional reasons. We thank them for their service on the Committee. We welcomed four new members, Ms. Lourdes Alvarado-Ramos, Mr. Ralph Cooper, Ms. Kim Pignatiello, and Dr. Roselyn J. Rice.

We want to thank the Directors and employees of the VA Wilmington and Philadelphia centers for their support during our meeting and those individuals who made presentations and provided information or data to the Committee during this year's meetings. Our sincere thanks is also extended to the Center for Minority Veterans staff for their administrative support and assistance on Committee activities.

General Overview

This is the Seventh Annual Report of the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans. The Committee conducted two mandatory meetings as required by Title 38, United States Code §544. Two separate meetings were held: Wilmington, DE, November 1-17, 2000, at the VA Medical and Regional Office Center, and Washington, DC, April 2-4, 2001, at VA Central Office. The Committee reviewed several program areas during its meetings and received briefings and reports from VA officials and others on a variety of issues including:

- Veterans' Business Development
- VA's Diversity Management and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program
- VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program
- VA's Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Program
- VA Hepatitis C Centers
- Race-Related Experience Scale for Asian American Veterans with PTSD
- Community Based Veterans Organizations – The Veterans Benefits Clearinghouse
- Racial Differences in Mortality Rates – Disparity in Health Care – JAMA Report
- Veterans Demographic Data – VetPop2000
- Department of the Army In-Service Higher Education Programs

The Committee also reviewed the status of recommendations from previous reports and expressed concerns that several recommendations have not been fully implemented.

The Advisory Committee focused its November 2000 meeting on veterans' business development. As a result of the enactment of Public Law 106-50, the Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 2000, the Committee requested briefings from the VA Director, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, and a report from the Associate Administrator for Veterans Business Development at the Small Business Administration. The Committee also received information concerning the legislative history of the Veterans' Business Development Act.

Additionally, the newly appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary for Diversity Management and Equal Employment Opportunity spoke to us and shared his plan for improving VA diversity and reducing the incidence of EEO complaints.

The Committee took advantage of the proximity to the Philadelphia Regional Office and Insurance Center and was able to tour both facilities and receive informative briefings from the Center Director and key staff members.

We also had an opportunity to meet with Dr. Chalsa Loo, a VA PTSD Center Honolulu researcher, who shared the results of a study she conducted on the “Race Related Experience Scale for Asian American Veterans with PTSD.”

The April 2001 meeting, held in Washington, DC, was an occasion to meet Secretary Principi and follow-up on issues raised in previous meetings. As a result, we briefly discussed the results of the program evaluation for the Montgomery GI Bill education programs and obtained additional information concerning Hepatitis C treatment.

Dr. Ashish K. Jha, a VA researcher at the San Francisco VAMC provided a report on a published study in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) concerning Racial Differences in Mortality Rates – Disparity in Health Care.

The Director of VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service briefed the Committee. We also received information on the new veterans population survey tool from the VA actuary staff.

The Committee viewed a moving video produced by the VA Tucson Medical Center entitled “Serving Native American Veterans – RESPECT” that focused on feed back from Native American veterans and their perception of VA care.

We concluded with a presentation from the Adjutant General of the Army who familiarized us with the Army’s college degree programs and the Army University Access on Line Program.

Report on the Wilmington, DE, Meeting

General:

The Advisory Committee conducted its field hearing at the VA Medical and Regional Office Center (VAMROC) in Wilmington, DE. Mr. Antonio Davila, Director, Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs, was the host, along with the Director and staff of the VAMROC. The primary focus of this meeting was business development and contracting opportunities within government for veteran-owned small businesses. Additional discussions with Mr. Armando Rodriguez, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Diversity Management and EEO, concentrated on VA diversity management and equal employment opportunity programs. Dr. Chalsa Loo, VA PTSD Center Honolulu reported on the results of her research study that examined the relationship of racism and PTSD in Asian American veterans.

Veterans Entrepreneurship:

Veteran-owned business opportunities have been an area of concern to this Committee for quite some time. Mr. Scott Denniston, Director, VA Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, appeared before the Committee to update us on VA's progress to meet its minority and veteran-owned contracting goals. He presented a good news/bad news scenario. There are more small businesses being created, but more business opportunities are needed. These businesses have more than 60 percent of their contracts outside of government. He reported that the number of contracting opportunities has been cut in half because of the use of the government purchase card for procurements under \$25,000, and secondly, the numbers of smaller contracts have been reduced. Other factors contributing to the reduced use of minority- and veteran-owned businesses include the following items: (1) a reliance on prime vendors to cover the entire country; (2) a lack of confidence in minority-owned businesses by government contracting officials; (3) a lack of importance from senior managers on the need for effective outreach and lastly; (4) a lack of contracting plans to identify and locate minority and veteran-owned businesses.

VA's Small Business Program is a decentralized system with a small Central Office staff operating with fewer resources to monitor small business contracting by VA field facilities. This may be causing percentages of goal accomplishments to decline. Field contracting officers report to facility Directors, not the OSDBU Director.

There are several changes that must occur in order to revolutionize the VA corporate culture concerning veteran-owned and minority-owned small businesses. Myths, misunderstandings, and stereotypes in relation to veteran and minority-owned businesses must be defeated in order to see positive results. We highly recommend the following actions: (1) VA should improve documentation for its outreach efforts to veteran- and minority-owned small businesses; (2) we encourage the Secretary to set higher contracting goals for these businesses and establish incentives for contracting officers to increase the number of minority- and veteran-owned companies doing business with VA; and (3) Contracting officers should have a clause relating to minority- and veteran-owned business contracting in their performance plan. Furthermore, we recommend that a program evaluation of the VA small business program be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the program and to identify program weaknesses.

Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act:

On August 17, 1999, Public Law 106-50, the Veterans' Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 1999, was enacted. The Committee requested to be briefed on the impact that this law will have on minority veterans.

Mr. William D. Elmore, Associate Administrator, Office of Veterans' Business Development, Small Business Administration (SBA); Mr. Rick Weidman, Vietnam Veteran of America (VVA); and Mr. Alan Gibson, VVA Missouri State Council, gave an extensive briefing on a number of key issues. They made several suggestions to the Committee to reduce the barriers for disabled veterans as well as recommendations that would enhance their marketability with businesses: (1) Increase outreach programs so that veterans are aware of available programs; (2) Provide training to develop practical business and marketing skills; (3) Provide motivational training and counseling to assist disabled veterans interested in entrepreneurship; and (4) Educate the general population to purge the stereotypical connotations associated with the word "*disabled*".

Mr. Elmore created the position of an Associate Administrator for Veterans' Business Development at the SBA. This position eliminates layers that prevent information or concerns from being transmitted through the appropriate channels. According to Mr. Elmore, mentoring and access to capital is key to the success for entrepreneurial veterans.

Workforce Diversity Plan:

Mr. Armando Rodriguez, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Diversity Management and EEO, spoke with the Committee at length concerning diversity goals for the Federal Government and VA and emphasized the need to ensure minority veterans are a part of the solution. VA is expected to have 76,000 new positions available, and the Department is working on hiring minorities, women, and people with disabilities. Implementation of the White House Hispanic Employment Initiative Executive Order will assist in diversifying the Federal Government. Additionally, most people do not understand that people with disabilities are also minorities with disabilities, and there is a proposition to have a numerical goal to hire minorities with disabilities.

Mr. Rodriguez recommended that VA design a solid diversity program, increase resources and encourage incentives for those persons employed in the area of workforce wellness and diversity employment. Other recommendations are (1) Provide training on sensitivity and intercultural communications to address the differences in cross-cultural communication; (2) Assign minorities to SES rating panels and provide solid individual development plans; (3) Analyze

career development training to determine the racial, ethnic, and gender perspective and increase minority participation; (4) Develop innovative recruiting, which can include partnering with other agencies and groups. This also includes marketing the organization and creating appealing recruitment advertisements.

Asian American Vietnam Veterans Race-Related Study (AVRS):

Chalsa M. Loo, PhD, is the Principal Investigator, National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Pacific Islands Division, Spark M. Mastunaga VA Medical & Regional Office Center, Honolulu, Hawaii. Dr. Loo briefed the Committee on the major objectives of the AVRS study. The primary emphasis of this study was to construct a validated scale to measure the exposure to race-related stresses in the military on Asian American veterans with PTSD, and secondly, to know what contributions race-related stresses have on PTSD and other psychiatric disorders. This 3-year study used both surveys and focus groups to sample 300 Asian American Vietnam veterans. The theory model race-related stresses were composed of three factors: (1) direct experience on race, prejudice, and stigmatism, (2) bicultural identification, and (3) exposure to racist environments. One finding indicated that Asian American soldiers related to the Vietnamese people and this caused stress, which was further exacerbated when these soldiers were accused of being Vietnamese that killed American soldiers.

Following the discussions, the Committee recommended that the study be presented to VA officials and eventually to the general public. Additionally, it is critical to develop comprehensive treatment for minority veterans affected by PTSD due to racism, to include all Asian veterans. It would be beneficial if this study could be repeated with Native Americans and expanded to other minority groups.

Report on the Washington, DC, Meeting

General:

The Advisory Committee meeting was held at VA Central Office to give the members an opportunity to introduce themselves to Secretary Principi and communicate their goals and objectives. This meeting allowed both the Secretary and the Committee to address important issues and discuss areas that impact all veterans. The Committee also heard reports from several key individuals. They were Mr. Ralph Cooper, Executive Director, Veterans Benefits Clearinghouse; Mr. Julius Williams, Director Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service; and Dr. Ashish K. Jha, who spoke on Racial Differences in Mortality Among Men Hospitalized in the Veterans Affairs Health Care System. Additional

presentations were made by Ms. Janet Thompson, VHA Office of Civil Rights; Dr. Michael Cantor of the VHA National Center for Ethics; and Dr. Lawrence Deyton, Chief Consultant to Public Health Strategic Healthcare Group (PHSHG). The Director, Center for Minority Veterans, Mr. Willie Hensley, also gave an overview of his programs' initiatives and objectives.

Secretary Principi's Comments:

The Secretary addressed the Committee commenting that he will look to the Committee for advice and guidance. Minority veterans make up 25 percent of the overall veteran populations and both VA and the Committee have a responsibility to ensure they have access to programs and benefits, the Secretary stated. The Secretary relayed several concerns. He stressed the fact that minority veterans do not utilize education benefits—only 50 percent take advantage of this program. Also it is important, he stated, to ensure the VA workforce is diversified, for example only 2 medical center Directors—out of 172—are Hispanic. The Secretary has established four priorities: (1) to provide veterans with timely and accurate decisions of disability claims; (2) to increase veterans access to high quality health care, including specialized services, (3) to maintain our cemeteries as national shrines; and (4) to ensure that information technology serves to break down the barriers within our Department and eliminate the barriers separating us from other Departments.

Veterans Benefit Clearinghouse (VBC):

Mr. Ralph Cooper briefed the Committee on the Veterans Benefit Clearinghouse (VBC), whose focus is directed toward improving the quality of life of veterans and their families living in the West Roxbury section of Boston, MA. The VBC serves 4,000 veterans and their families. Supporters of this program include Massachusetts Department of Veteran Services, U.S. Department of Labor, City of Boston, Neighborhood Jobs Trust, numerous foundations, corporations, and a variety of state agencies. This program conducts an annual stand-down for homeless veterans; provides information on HIV prevention and education; employment and training; drug rehabilitation assistance; and support for family members. Currently VBC is concentrating on fund raising efforts to meet budget demands and establishing partnerships with ministers to support initiatives for faith-based program assistance.

Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Service:

Mr. Julius Williams, Director Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service, discussed the role and mission of this job training and employment program for veterans. The purpose of this program is to provide service and

assistance to veterans who have a minimum of 20 percent service-connected disability. This service assists these veterans to achieve maximum independence in daily living and when possible become employable and maintain suitable employment.

Statistically those who complete the program are 41 years old, with 87 percent over age 30, and 69 percent with 1 or more dependents. The average income for this group entering the program is \$4,942 and the average income for those completing the program is \$28,671. The rehabilitation rate was 64.5 percent at end of FY 2000 and 62 percent for those with serious employment handicaps. Average stay in the program is 31 months. Once employed the individual must remain at the place of employment for a minimum of 60 days. Participants in the program are typically 39 years old; are high school graduates and 78 percent having 1 or more dependents.

Some initiatives underway are to increase out-based service locations, improve communications, expand case management, and implement an employment specialist pilot project. Additional strategies included refinement of employment services and strengthening partnerships.

The Committee expressed concerns that disabled veterans are at a disadvantage when diagnosed while on active duty, and should be registered as a disabled veteran and eligible for vocational rehabilitation prior to separating from active duty. The Committee is also concerned that the Service does not maintain any demographic data by race or ethnicity.

Racial Differences in Mortality:

Dr. Ashish K. Jha reported that Black patients who are treated in non-VA hospitals receive fewer tests and less therapy after admission for heart attack and lung cancer. They have worse outcomes after kidney transplants, cancers, and readmission after heart attack. These problems are caused by insufficient or inadequate insurance, lack of access to good medical facilities, regular primary care physicians, and minimal medical attention for chronic conditions. He reported that Black veterans admitted to VA medical facilities fared much better. Although Dr. Jha presented statistical data, the Committee did not feel that the data was representative of the population. Also the Committee recommended that Dr. Jha expand the study to include other minorities and survey more facilities. An additional recommendation included that the Committee receive a briefing from the Houston VA Research Center to learn more about the database being utilized.

Serving Native American Veterans:

Ms. Janet Thompson is the Co-Chair of the Native American Advisory Council and represents the VHA Office of Civil Rights. Ms. Thompson called for new approaches and a new vision to serve the Native American veteran. She emphasized that we must acknowledge their spiritual beliefs, cultural, and historical mores. Currently there are 190,000 Native American veterans and 558 tribes. Approximately 42,000 served in Vietnam, and 90 percent of those veterans were volunteers. Among these veterans there are recipients of 2 Congressional Medals of Honor, 71 Air Medals, 51 Silver Stars, and 47 Bronze Stars.

The problems we face now are that many of these veterans do not speak English well. Therefore, they do not understand the procedures and have difficulty obtaining transportation to health care facilities. Oftentimes they live in remote areas, with only 1 phone for 300 people. Also it is important to understand that Native Americans think in their native language and must mentally translate their answer into English before responding. As a result, these individuals will nod “yes” even when they do not comprehend the question.

Additionally, understanding the Native American cultural belief system is imperative to addressing care and benefits. The Committee recommended the following suggestions: (1) utilize the video “Serving Native American Veterans—RESPECT—A better way to serve the Native American” as a training tool at VA hospitals and nursing schools; (2) provide funding to expand the video to include other Native Americans and make this available for viewing by all VA employees; (3) Form a partnership between the Advisory Committee for Minority Veterans and the Native American Advisory Council to support their efforts to sensitive health care givers; and (4) obtain the Secretary’s support.

Hepatitis C Treatment:

Dr. Lawrence Deyton, Chief Consultant to Public Health Strategic Healthcare Group (PHSHG), Victoria Darcey, Deputy Chief Consultant, Public Health and Environmental Hazards, and Dr. Abid Raham, Government Liaison, PHSHG, participated in these discussions. Dr. Deyton reported that African Americans had the highest incidence rates of Hepatitis C (HCV) infection. Statistically the sources of infection for persons with HCV are drug use (60%), sexual (15%), transfusions before screening (10%), other (5%), unknown (0%), and health care workers (2%). Over 70,000 veterans have been diagnosed with HCV, and most disquieting is that VA studies continuously leave out major minority groups.

Of major concern is that too few Native Americans use the health care system and consequently are under represented in the study. This also means

they are not being tested nor treated. Dr. Deyton noted that VHA has placed increased emphasis on screening and testing of veterans for HCV and recommended that a plan and strategy be developed for outreach assistance to all veterans, including the three most affected groups—African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans. Outreach efforts to date have not been focused, and a community advisory group is being formed to develop a strategy and further recommendations.

Center for Minority Veterans:

Mr. Willie Hensley, CMV Director, informed the Committee on the following major initiatives: (1) Medical research into prostate cancer, (2) cultural factors in cardiac adaptation to chronic illness; and (3) delivery of health care to Native Americans and Hispanics. Mr. Hensley indicated that the Minority Veterans Program Coordinator phone conference averages 70 participants each month, however, the goal is 100 participants. The bi-monthly veteran's phone conference averages 15 participants a session. The goal is 30 participants a session.

Committee Recommendations

The Committee recommends that VA:

Number 1. Revitalize the Small and Disadvantaged Business program to improve veterans' participation in business opportunities with VA.

Number 2. Conduct a Small/Minority Business Conference and include VA senior management, contracting officers, and small business owners. Request the Secretary make this a matter of his interest and include it in evaluations.

Number 3. Develop and implement a workforce diversity program with incentives to ensure the desired results for a comprehensive diversity plan.

This is particularly important in addressing future workforce deficiencies. There are 35,827 full-time permanent VA employees who are 55 years or older. There are a total of 40,372 full-time/part-time/temporary VA employees who are 55 years of age and over. This total includes the 35,827 full-time permanent employees cited above. A diversity plan could be implemented without difficulty.

Number 4. Reemphasize the need for sensitivity training throughout VA, specifically in the health care system.

Number 5. Establish partnerships with colleges and universities and utilize these institutions as a resource to recruit and educate persons on careers with VA.

Appendix A

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MINORITY VETERANS BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

1. **Alvarado-Ramos, Lourdes E.** Hispanic American

Ms. Alvarado-Ramos is the Superintendent of the State of Washington Veterans Home and the State of Washington Soldiers Home and Colony in Orting, WA. She is a Vietnam-era Army veteran, retiring at the grade of Sergeant Major after 21 years of service. Ms. Alvarado-Ramos has extensive experience in medical facility and human resource management. She is a member of the State of Washington Department of Veterans Affairs' Executive Management Team, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Fort Lewis Retiree Council. Ms. Alvarado-Ramos is the recipient of the Governor's Distinguished Managers Association Award. She resides in Olympia, WA.

2. **Cockett, Jr., Irwin K.** Native Hawaiian

General Cockett is a Native Hawaiian, disabled, male, Korean and Vietnam veteran who served in the Army. Commissioned through Officer Candidate School in August 1952, he retired at the rank of Brigadier General after serving 22 years on active duty and 14 years in the Hawaii Army National Guard. He was appointed Commander, Hawaiian Army National Guard, December 1982 and Assistant Adjutant General, Army, State of Hawaii, in May 1983. General Cockett retired from the Guard in August 1986 and currently resides in Honolulu, HI.

3. **Cooper, Ralph D.** African American

Mr. Cooper is a Vietnam era veteran who served in the U.S. Air Force. He is currently the Executive Director of Veterans Benefits Clearinghouse, Incorporated (VBC), a non-profit agency in Roxbury, MA. Mr. Cooper is a member of the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans; the Congressional Black Caucus Veterans Braintrust; Senator John Kerry's Committee on Black Veterans' Affairs; and, the Minority Developers Association. Mr. Cooper earned his Masters in Education in Community Psychology from the University of Massachusetts, and his Bachelors of Arts in Psychology from Boston State College. He resides in Roxbury, MA.

4. Chung, David O.

Asian American

Mr. Chung is of Chinese descent and resides in Saint John, IN. He is a disabled Vietnam veteran who served in the U.S. Air Force. Mr. Chung is a life member with Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA). He has served on VA's National Committee on Minority Affairs and is the State Chairman for Minority Affairs, for the State of Indiana. He assisted in a 31-city whistle stop tour of the Vietnam Women's Memorial National Monument from Santa Fe, New Mexico to Washington, DC. Additionally, Mr. Chung hosted a veterans' forum on a public access TV talk show that he produced and directed. The show was sponsored by the city of Chicago from 1987 to 1990.

5. Davila, Antonio

Hispanic American

Mr. Davila has served as the Executive Director, Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs, a state agency, since 1991. He is a Past National President of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs. Mr. Davila received the "Secretary's Award" from Togo D. West, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in recognition of his leadership and dedication of service to our Nation's veterans. Mr. Davila holds a Master of Arts Degree in History, with a concentration in Latin American Studies, from the State University of New York, Fredonia, NY. He served on active duty in the U. S. Air Force from 1964-1968. He has also served in the Massachusetts Army National Guard (1977-1980) and the United States Army Reserve (1980-1998), receiving numerous awards and decorations.

6. Duran, Ingrid M.

Hispanic American

Ms. Duran is a peacetime Marine veteran and served in the Marine Corps from January 1986 to December 1989. She currently holds the position as the Executive Director, Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute. She has also served as the Director of the Washington, DC, Policy Office of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials. Over a 6-year period, Ms. Duran has held several key positions on Capitol Hill with the Clerk of the House of Representatives, staff of the Banking Committee, and as a Legislative Assistant to Congressman Gene Green (TX). Ms. Duran currently resides in Arlington, VA.

7. Foster, Talmadge C.

African American

(Deceased July 2000)

Mr. Foster is an Army veteran who served in the military from 1952 to 1955. He organized, planned, and administered the Alabama Veterans Leadership Program (AVLP). AVLP is a non-profit organization that recruits, counsels, trains, and supervises unemployed veterans and provides job placement and referral services. Mr. Foster has served as a member of the Alabama State Board of Veterans Affairs.

8. Gomez, Gumersindo Hispanic American

Mr. Gomez is a community activist, Counseling Psychologist, and veterans' advocate. Residing in Springfield, MA, he is currently the Executive Director of the Puerto Rican Veterans' Association of Massachusetts, Inc. Mr. Gomez has worked in the VA's Veterans Center Program and Spanish American Union as a caseworker. Mr. Gomez served twenty years in the US Army retiring at the rank of First Sergeant and is the current Chairman of the Health Care Subcommittee.

9. Gorden, Fred A. African American
(Resigned April 2001)

A graduate of the United States Military Academy, West Point, General Gorden is a retired Army combat Vietnam veteran who retired with the rank of Major General after 34 years of military service. General Gorden served on the Board of Directors, USAA Insurance Company. He currently resides in San Antonio, TX, and is employed with the USAA Insurance Company in San Antonio. General Gorden holds a Masters of Arts degree in Foreign Language Literature.

10. Holden, Terry R. African American

Mr. Holden is a U.S. Army veteran who currently resides in New Orleans, LA. He is the Human Resource Director with the Office of Family Support in New Orleans, LA. Mr. Holden is on the Board of Directors for Goodwill Industries of Southeast Louisiana, where he works with disabled and homeless veterans. He is also a member of the Friends of the Library Board of Directors, where he has focused attention on the needs of veterans with literacy problems. Mr. Holden is active in the New Orleans community and is the recipient of the 1999 Charles E. Dunbar Award for his achievements in community services. Actively involved in veterans' issues for the past 12 years, he has expressed interest in developing communication vehicles that will reach minority veterans.

11. Ivarra, Francisco F.** Hispanic American

Mr. Ivarra is a disabled combat Vietnam veteran who served in the U.S. Army, from 1968–1970. He has extensive experience as a consultant on diversity and has held numerous positions as an instructor and administrator in the community college and university systems. Currently residing in Seattle, WA, he holds an MA in Sociology from Western Washington University. Mr. Ivarra is currently the National Commander for the American GI Forum, serves on the Governor's Veterans Affairs Committee, and is the Administrative Facilitator for the Seattle VARO Minority Veterans Coordinating Committee.

12. **Lister, Otho** African American
(Resigned March 2001)

Mr. Lister is an Air Force Vietnam-Era veteran. Mr. Lister retired from the Air Force after 27 years of active service as a Chief Master Sergeant (E9) and currently resides in Aurora, CO. He is an employment and training specialist and a member of The Retired Enlisted Association (REA). Mr. Lister served as the National President of REA from 1984-1987.

13. **Loudner, Don** Native American - Sioux

Mr. Loudner is a 7/8 degree Hunkpati Sioux and currently resides in Mitchell, SD. He served in the United States Army during the Korean conflict (1950 to 1952) and has 32 years of service in the Army Reserves as a Chief Warrant Officer (CW4). He has worked at the Bureau of Indian Affairs as the Agency Superintendent at the Yankton Sioux Indian Reservation and served 3 years as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for South Dakota. Mr. Loudner is currently a Commissioner on the South Dakota State Veterans Affairs Commission.

14. **Metoxen, Gary** Native American - Oneida

Mr. Metoxen is a career Navy veteran. Currently residing in DePere, WI, Mr. Metoxen currently serves as the Chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee of the National Congress of American Indians. He is also the Director of the Oneida Nation's Veterans Affairs Office.

15. **Pignatiello, Kim M.** Caucasian

Ms. Pignatiello is an Army Gulf War veteran, serving as a Signal Intelligence Analyst. She is proficient in Spanish and Korean, and has extensive experience counseling veterans and dependents about veterans' benefits and services. Ms. Pignatiello has worked with homeless veterans on such issues as housing, employment, schooling, and health care. She resides in San Angelo, TX.

16. **Price, George B.*** African American

Mr. Price is a retired Army Brigadier General with over 27 years of military service. After retirement from active military service, he took a position in the Telecommunications Industry, providing technical engineering services and consulting services to clients. He is currently the personal manager for opera diva, Leontyne Price. He has served as a board member for Boy Scouts of America, Women's Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, and the ROCKS, a minority non-profit organization comprised of active duty and former military officers. He currently resides in Columbia, MD.

17. Rice, Roselyn Joann, M.D. African American

Dr. Rice is a Vietnam-era veteran who served in the U.S. Navy and the United States Public Health Services (PHS). She separated from the Navy as a Commander, and is currently in the inactive reserves. Dr. Rice received her medical degree from Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk, VA. She specializes in general medicine, and has experience in infectious diseases, epidemiology and internal medicine. She is currently a physician consultant and Medical Director of the AmeriGroup Corporation in New Jersey. She has published more than 120 peer-reviewed publications and manuscripts on a wide-variety of health care issues. She resides in Hampton Bays, NY.

18. Richie, Sharon I. African American

Dr. Richie retired from the Army Nurse Corps after 27 years of service. A Vietnam-Era veteran, she received her Doctorate in Organizational Behavior in 1998, and now focuses her community outreach efforts toward enhancing the health care of all veterans. Dr. Richie is currently the Chief Nurse consultant for the United Arab Emirates military health care system.

19. Rollins, Robert L. African American

Mr. Rollins is an African American male, retired, Korean War and Vietnam Army veteran. He retired with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel after 22 years of service. A resident of Tallahassee, FL, Mr. Rollins is currently the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, Florida A&M University. He serves on the Military Academy Board for Senator Bob Graham.

* Denotes Chairman

** Denotes Vice Chairman

Appendix B

Advisory Committee On Minority Veterans

MEETING AGENDA November 13 – 15, 2000 Wilmington, Delaware

Monday, November 13

8:00 AM	Call to Order	Chairman	Rm.
8:05 AM	Welcome to Delaware	T. Davila and Medical Center Director	Director's Conference Room VAMROC
8:15 AM	Introduce New Members	T. Hawkins	
8:20 AM	Minutes of Last Meeting	Recorder	
8:30 – 9:45 AM	CMV Update	W. Hensley	
9:45 – 10:15 AM	Chairman's Time	G. Price	
10:15 – 10:30 AM	Break		
10:30 – 12:00 AM	Veterans' Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act	R. Weidman (VVA) and P. Comacho (Joiner Center)	
12:00 – 1:30 PM	Lunch	On your own	
1:30 – 2:30 PM	OSDBU	S. Denniston Director, OSDBU	
2:30 – 4:30 PM	Subcommittee Breakouts	Subcommittee Chairs	
4:30 – 5:15 PM	Subcommittee Reports	Subcommittee Chairs	Subcommittee on Outreach & Subcommittee on Health Care
5:15 PM	Committee Recess	Chairman	

Advisory Committee Agenda (Continued)

Tuesday, November 14

8:30 AM	Call to order	Chairman	
8:35 – 9:00 AM	Ethics Briefing	T. Hawkins	
9:00 – 10:15 AM	Sensitivity Training and VA Workforce Diversity Plan	Armando Rodriguez, DAS for Diversity Management & EEO	
10:15 – 10:30 AM	Break		
10:30 – 11:30 AM	Small Business Administration	William D. Elmore	
11:30 – 1:00 PM	Lunch	On your own	
1:00 – 1:30 PM	Vans to VAROIC	C. Waters	
1:30 – 4:00 PM	Tour VAROIC	VAROIC Director	Briefings to be set up by VAROIC
4:00 – 4:30 PM	Vans Return to Hotel/VAMROC	VAMROC Wilmington	
4:30 – 5:30 PM	Subcommittee Reports	Subcommittee Chairs	
5:30 PM	Recess		

Wednesday November 15

8:30 AM	Call to Order	Chairman	
8:45 – 9:45 AM	“Race Related Experience Scale for Asian American Veterans with PTSD”	Dr. Chalsa Loo (VA PTSD Center, Honolulu)	
9:45 – 10:00 AM	Break		
10:00 -- 11:00 AM	ACMV Advisory Committee Reports – Update on Committee Recommendations	T. Hawkins	
11:00 AM – 12:00	General/Open Discussion -- Next Meeting Agenda	Chairman & Committee Members	
12:00 (Noon)	Adjournment	Chairman	

Appendix C

Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans

MEETING AGENDA

April 2 - 4, 2001

Washington, DC

Monday, April 2

8:30 A.M. – 8:35 A.M.	Call to Order	Chairman Price
8:35 A.M. – 8:45 A.M.	Minutes of November Meeting	Recorder
8:45 A.M. – 9:15 A.M.	Reserved for Secretary -- Photo Op with Committee	Secretary Principi
9:15 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.	Veterans Benefits Clearing House	R. Cooper
10:00 A.M. – 10:15 A.M.	Break	
10:15 A.M. – 11:15 A.M.	Disabled and Service-connected Veterans Rehabilitation Programs	J. Williams, Dir., VR&E
11:15 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.	Lunch	On your own
1:00 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.	CMV Update	W. Hensley
2:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.	Racial Differences in Mortality Rates -- Disparities in Health Care, JAMA Report	Dr. A. Jha VAMC San Francisco
3:00 P.M. – 3:20 P.M.	Planning/Outlining the 7 th Annual Report	Chairman Price
3:20 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.	Break	
3:30 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.	Subcommittee Working Session	Breakout Rooms TBD
5:00 P.M.	Recess	

Tuesday, April 3

8:30 A.M. – 8:45 P.M.	Call to Order	Chairman
8:45 A.M. – 9:45 A.M.	Video: Serving Native American Veterans -- RESPECT	Janet Thompson, VHA Office of Civil Rights and W. Hensley, CMV
9:45 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.	Break	
10:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.	VA Task Force on Health Care Disparities	Dr. Michael Cantor
11:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	VA Educational Services Education Program Evaluation	Celia Dollarhide, Director, VA Educational Services Marcelle Habibion Ray Wilburn (Policy & Planning)
12:00 P.M. – 1:30 P.M.	Lunch	On your Own
1:30 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.	Hepatitis C Treatment -- Native American Veterans	Dr. Lawrence Deyton, Victoria Davey RN, MPH and Dr. Abid Raham: Public Health Strategic Healthcare Group
2:30 P.M. – 2:50 P.M.	Break	
2:50 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.	Subcommittee Working Sessions	Breakout Rooms TBD
4:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.	Subcommittee Reports	Subcommittee Chairpersons
5:00 P.M.	Recess	Chairman Price

Wednesday, April 4

8:30 A.M. – 8:35 A.M.	Call to Order	Chairman Price
8:35 A.M. – 8:45 A.M.	Administrative Announcements	CMV Staff
8:45 A.M. – 9:45 A.M.	VetPoP2000 Survey	Dr. Stephen Meskin Chief, Actuary Officer
9: 45 A.M. – 10:20 A.M.	Committee Guidelines for Completing 7th Annual Report -- Assignments	Chairman Price
10:20 A.M. – 11:20 A.M.	In-Service Education Programs – Industry Certifications	Brigadier General Frost, The Adjutant General, US Army
11:20 A.M. – 12:00 Noon	ACMV Administrative Matters	Mr. Hawkins & CMV staff
12:00 Noon	Adjournment	Chairman Price