

# VET Connection



Winter 2012



## SALT LAKE CITY FISHER HOUSE

A warm welcome in store for families and Veterans!

Your Link to the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System



## VA Salt Lake City Fisher House to Open its Doors on January 9, 2012

The VA Salt Lake City Health Care System is proud to announce the upcoming Fisher House grand opening. After four years of gathering community donations and support, this “home away from home,” will finally become a reality to Veterans and military service members in need.

The home will provide a place for families and Veterans to stay, free of charge, while their loved one is receiving medical treatment. Because Veterans often have to travel a long way to receive medical care at the George E. Wahlen VA Medical Center, the Fisher House will fulfill a critical need in our highly rural area. Veterans and their families will enjoy a spectacular view of the Wasatch Mountains while enjoying an atmosphere of hope and healing.

The VA SLC Fisher House was generously gifted by the Fisher House Foundation, but now it is up to us to sustain it for our Veteran and military families. This is where you come in. We are hoping the community will continue to rally behind those who have sacrificed so much through donations and volunteerism. Thank you to those who have already given so much. Please check out our website for a “Wish List” as well as other ways to get involved. Cash or check donations are always welcome and acceptable payable to Fisher House SLC.

Grand Opening Celebration:  
February 29, 2012 at 10:00 am.



Common Area

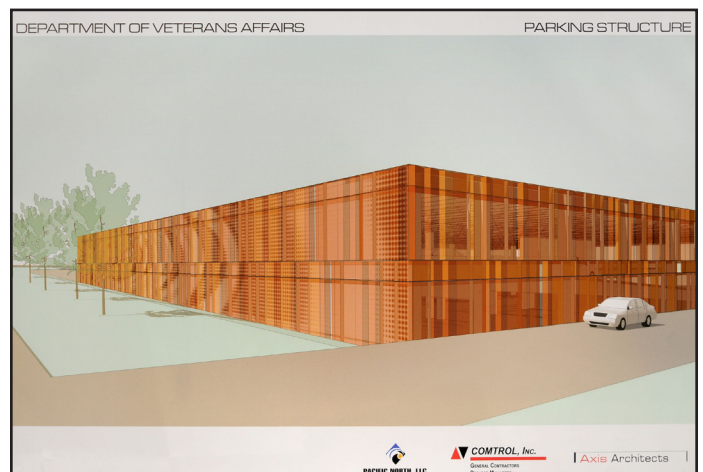


Kitchen Area

## New Mental Health Outpatient Building Now Open



## New Parking Garage to be Completed Summer, 2012



## *1st Annual Spirit of George E. Wahlen Award*

Seven years ago, President Bush signed legislation naming the medical center in honor of George E. Wahlen. That was an entirely fitting and appropriate honor for this man — a man who 66 years ago was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Truman for his actions on Iwo Jima in March of 1945. His story of gallantry and bravery on the battlefield is well known. As time passes though, we want to make sure the name gracing our building does not become lost, but rather that we, the employees of this wonderful healing place, can carry on the spirit that Mr. Wahlen brought to his service to his nation, his family, and his fellow Veterans.



We established the *Spirit of George E. Wahlen Award* to honor two employees a year — one supervisor and one non-supervisor — who best exemplify Mr. Wahlen’s spirit, in the hope that we can keep his spirit alive within us and within this medical center for generations to come.



Maria T. Fruin  
OEF/OIF/OND Program Manager  
2011 Supervisory  
Spirit of George E. Wahlen Award



Matthew O. Stuart  
Health Systems Specialist, Quality Management  
2011 Non-supervisory  
Spirit of George E. Wahlen Award





First ever Legal Stand Down



Volunteers pack supplies for homeless Veterans

## 2011 Homeless Veteran Stand Down

The VA Salt Lake City Health Care System hosted its first ever Legal Stand Down on Friday, November 4, 2011. The Honorable Judge Paul M. Warner held a session of the United States District Court of Utah Veterans Court during our annual Homeless Stand Down. Fifteen Veterans stood before Judge Warner that day. The event was designed to give special consideration to Veterans who are having legal troubles as a result of issues related to their service. The VA and the United States District Court believes these Veterans could be better served through treatment rather than caught up in the criminal justice system. The court allows Veterans to atone for what they've done, yet receive the services they need to succeed in the future.

An additional 31 Veterans received legal assistance from 25 volunteer attorneys and University of Utah law students.

Overall a total of 261 Veterans were seen during the Stand Down event of which 230 received health and dental screenings and winter gear for the harsh winter months ahead.

Utah State Fair: We enrolled, treated and scheduled appointments for over 40 Veterans at the Utah State State Fair on September 11<sup>th</sup>



11-11-11 Unite For Veterans Campaign with KUTV Channel 2



Reporter Emily Flores and Veteran JD Milne talk about PTSD

## Valor House: Homeless Veteran Safe Haven



By Spring of 2013 a dusty lot will be transformed into a home for 72 homeless Veterans. Valor house is taking shape and so will the uncertain future of so many of our nation's heroes. VA Salt Lake City Health Care System in partnership with the Salt Lake City Housing Authority broke ground on the new transitional housing facility over the summer. Valor House will guide Veterans from dependence to independence through clinical case management, peer support groups, life skills education and vocational rehabilitation. We know it takes a community and caring partners within that community to successfully guide and care for our homeless Veterans.

### Other Services Provided:

1. Facilitated discussions, skills-based education, and informational groups: e.g., Leadership Development, Community Responsibility, Nutrition Education/Meal Planning and Food Handling, HIV and AIDS Information and Resources, Tobacco Education and Smoking Cessation, Household and Kitchen Management.
2. Coordinated Mental Health Services, substance abuse treatment support and clinical support.
3. Coordinated physical healthcare.
4. Family reunification support.
5. Physical Health and Wellness Education.
6. Life Skills Groups – Financial Literacy, Housing and ID, Healthy Relationships, Transitioning to Community.
7. Supportive Groups – Substance Abuse Education and Relapse Prevention, Onsite AA/NA, Behavioral Groups, Veteran support groups.
8. Family Reconciliation/Reunification Services or Closure Counseling.
9. Employment Skills and Interests Assessments.
10. Job Readiness, Job Training and Job Placement.
11. Volunteer, Mentoring and Leadership Opportunities: a. Group speaking; b. Becoming a mentor; c. Volunteer Projects at other Veteran sites in Salt Lake City.

Homeless Program Contact Information: 801-582-1565, ext. 6330.



## Utah Hospitals Receive Award for Quality Care



At the Utah Hospital Association's Fall Leadership Conference in Park City, HealthInsight, a private, non-profit community-based organization dedicated to improving the health and health care in Nevada, New Mexico and Utah, recognized six Utah hospitals as recipients of the 2011 HealthInsight Quality Award.

The hospitals selected for the HealthInsight Quality Award this year were:

- George E. Wahlen Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, VA Salt Lake City Health Care System — Salt Lake City
- Bear River Valley Hospital — Logan
- Fillmore Community Medical Center — Fillmore
- Intermountain TOSH: The Orthopedic Specialty Hospital — Salt Lake City
- Mountain View Hospital — Payson
- Orem Community Hospital — Orem

HealthInsight Quality Award recipients are selected for demonstrating high quality health care and excellence in performance on a combination of publicly reported Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) quality of care measures and patients' perception of care measures. Patient

involvement in care is a new focus nationally, so for the first time this year the award criteria included performance on patients' perspectives of hospital care. Research has shown that high performance on patients' hospital experiences goes hand-in-hand with excellent clinical care. The HealthInsight Quality Award program was launched in September 2004 to promote transparency in health care.

**Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record  
VLER Health Program**

*One view of your health history . . .  
wherever your care was provided*

**Attention VA Patients:**

Are you receiving medical care at other health care facilities?

Tired of misplaced or incomplete health record?

If so, you may sign up to participate in VLER Health Program.

<http://www.saltlakecity.va.gov/VLERHealth>

## SCUBA DIVING

Mark, our professional scuba diving instructor, is opening the group to you!

VA Pool, Building 8  
Starting in January 2012  
Contact Emily for details





The Salt Lake City Vet Center is here to serve our Veterans at a brand new location!

22 West Fireclay Ave.  
(4200 South Main Street)  
Murray, Utah 84107

Phone: 801-266-1499 • FAX: 801-266-4577

## Million Veteran Program Comes to VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

The VA Salt Lake City Health Care System is involved in a new national research initiative, the Million Veteran Program (MVP): A Partnership with Veterans. MVP is a national research program to study how genes affect health and illness, with the goal of improving health care for Veterans and others. MVP will be the largest study of genes and health in the United States with the goal of enrollment of one million Veterans over the next six year period.

Everyone who receives health care at the VA is welcome to enroll and we encourage it. Enrollment began at a few VA medical centers earlier this year and will expand to at least 50 medical centers over the next two years. The VASLCHCS is honored to have the privilege to participate.

Dr. Larry Meyer is the local site investigator and Michelle Interdonato, RN, is the study coordinator and can be reached at 801-582-1565, ext. 2446.

If you would like more information or have questions, contact Michelle, visit [www.research.va.gov/mvp](http://www.research.va.gov/mvp), or call 1-866-441-6075.

## Million Veteran Program: A Partnership with Veterans



### W.I.L.D. Dream Building Workshop (When I Live Dreams)

Let us help you keep your New Year's Resolution alive!

Starting Thursday, January 5  
3:00-4:00 p.m.  
Open to all Veterans  
Emily's office



### Guitar Lessons

Start playing the guitar today!

Richard Crump is a professional guitarist, volunteering his time for your personal lessons.

Contact:  
[richiecrump.crump@gmail.com](mailto:richiecrump.crump@gmail.com)

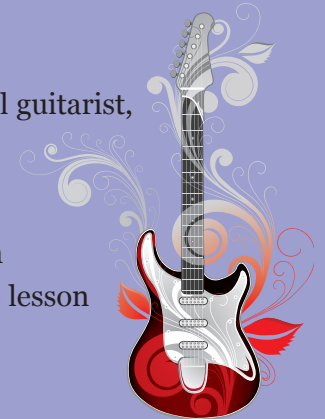
Guitars are available during the lesson

Wellness Room, Building 8

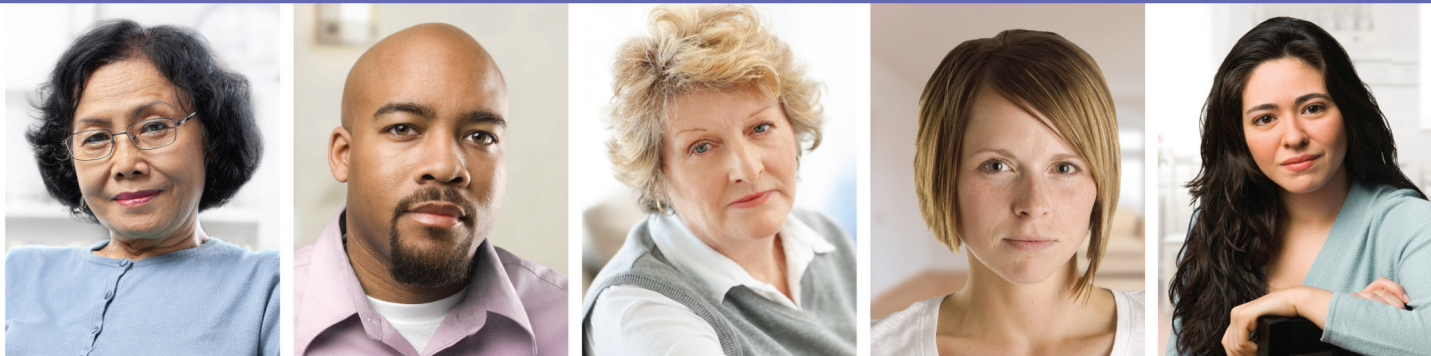
Tuesday-1:00-1:30 p.m.

Wednesday-9:00-9:30 a.m.

Thursdays-2:30-3:00 p.m.



You're there to support your Veteran.



VA is here to  
support YOU.



**Call 1-855-260-3274 toll-free**

to reach VA's Caregiver Support Line. Ask questions, get support and referrals, and learn how VA can assist you as a family caregiver.

**Monday through Friday, 8:00 am – 11:00 pm ET**

**Saturday, 10:30 am – 6:00 pm ET**

[www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov)



**VA HEALTH CARE** | Defining **EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century

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