

PROGRESS NOTES

A Newsletter for Employees and the Veterans We Serve in Eastern Oklahoma

JCMVAMC Welcomes New Leadership

On January 17, 2012, James R. Floyd was appointed as the facility's new Medical Center Director. Floyd arrives from Missouri where he served as the VISN 15 Network Director from October 2008 to January 2012. He administered health care services to Veterans from seven medical centers on nine campuses and more than 47 community based outpatient clinics in Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Kentucky.

Floyd is a graduate of the 2009 class of the Department of Veterans Affairs Executive Fellows Program and a 2009 recipient of the coveted federal Presidential Rank Award for outstanding career achievements for leadership in health care.

In 2008, he was appointed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to serve as a member of the Veterans Rural Health Advisory Committee. Also that year, the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States presented him the Ray E. Brown Award for his advocacy in federal health care leadership.

He was originally appointed within the VA as Director of the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System in 1997. In 2004, he was recognized with the Under Secretary for Health's Diversity Award for his work in establishing innovative outreach and treatment programs to Native American Veterans and, in 2002, he received the VA Secretary's Medal for Meritorious Service for exceptional performance in coordinating federal agencies' medical and security support for the 2002 Winter Olympic and Para-



Mr. James R. Floyd

lympic Games.

Prior to working in VA, Floyd served in the U.S. Public Health Service, Indian Health Service, for more than 10 years. During that time, he served as Director of the Portland Area Indian Health Service from 1992 to 1997 and directed the management of federal health care facilities in the states of Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

He also assisted tribal governments in the development of community-based health care programs. During his tenure with Indian Health Service, he served a special assignment in the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs developing legislative authority for Native American health care programs.

LEADERSHIP Cont'd on pg. 2

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



It is truly an honor to be the director of the Jack C. Montgomery VA Medical Center. Having been around the country, being back in this location at this time is what I wanted to do. I chose to come here because I wanted to be near the patients I grew up around and their families. For me, it's very personal because I know a lot of our Veterans personally and I've known them for years.

Our Veterans come to us when they're sick, injured or suffering. They place their trust in us. It is our responsibility to do our very best every day with every patient, every opportunity we have in the most efficient way possible.

It is also very important for us to take time and acknowledge our Veterans' service to the country. During February, VA medical centers around the country will honor our Veterans during VA's National Salute to Veteran Patients. Our local salute will be held Feb. 7-14 and will kick off with a program on Feb.

7 at 2 p.m. in the auditorium with guest speaker and Desert Storm Veteran Dr. David White. The salute will conclude with a Valentines for Veterans Concert on Feb. 14 at 7:30 p.m. at the Muskogee Civic Center. The Temptations Review featuring Dennis Edwards will headline the concert.

My challenge to the staff during the National Salute is to take a minute and find out something about the patient you are serving. As we continue to serve them, we will not only know their name, but we'll also know something about them. I believe this is very important and will help us better serve our nation's heroes.

Sincerely,

James R. Floyd, FACHE
Medical Center Director

Leadership (Cont'd from pg. 1)

Floyd's health care career began in 1978 with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma where he served as the Director of Community Services. In that capacity, he designed and established the first tribal-owned and operated health care system in the United States, which consisted of a 39-bed community hospital and four outpatient health clinics.

Floyd is a Creek and Cherokee Indian and a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. He is Board Certified by the American College of Healthcare Executives, holds a master's degree in Public Administration/Health Administration, and a post-graduate Certificate in Managed Care Administration.

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Progress Notes is produced by the Jack C. Montgomery VAMC Public Affairs Office, Room 1B153, mail code 00PAO. Please contact Nita McClellan at email address benita.mcclellan@va.gov and fax 918-577-3648 or Nathan Schaeffer at email address: nathan.schaeffer@va.gov if you have comments, suggestions, ideas or questions. Your feedback is always appreciated. All submissions are subject to editing and will not be returned to sender.

JCMVAMC Remembers Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The medical center celebrated the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on Jan. 12 with a remembrance program in the auditorium.

The program was organized by the Special Emphasis Black Employment Committee and included the first performance by the new VA Gospel Choir.

Rev. Marlon Coleman, Pastor of the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in Muskogee and retired VA employee, was the main speaker and he asked those in attendance to use their voice every day to bring about positive change. The committee also represented the medical center in Muskogee's Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Day Parade on Jan. 16.



Rev. Marlon Coleman, a local pastor and retired VA employee, was the keynote speaker at the Martin Luther King, Jr. program.



JCMVAMC employees and their family members participated in Muskogee's Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Day Parade on Jan. 16.

JCMVAMC Holds Memorial Service for Patients



The medical center held a memorial service on Jan. 24 to remember Veteran patients who have passed away in the last six months. JCMVAMC holds the memorial service twice a year to honor and remember the Veterans who have died and received their care at the medical center.

Left: Dr. Manivannan Neelamegam, Chief of Geriatrics & Extended Care, greets family members and loved ones of Veteran patients who have passed away.

Healthy Living Message: Strive for a Healthy Weight

Maintaining a healthy weight means balancing the number of calories you eat with the calories your body uses or burns. If you maintain your weight, you are “in balance.” You are eating close to the same number of calories that your body is using. Your weight will remain stable.

More Tips to Maintain a Healthy Weight

- If you are gaining weight, you are eating more calories than your body is using. These extra calories will be stored as fat, and you will gain weight.
- If you are losing weight, you are eating fewer calories than you are using. Your body is using its fat storage cells for energy, so your weight is decreasing.
- A simple way to know if you are at a healthy weight is to know your body mass index (BMI).

BMI Guidelines:

Underweight = BMI less than 18.5

Normal weight = BMI of 18.5 to 24.9

Overweight = BMI of 25 to 29.9

Obesity = BMI of 30 or greater

- Being a healthy, normal weight is good for you and will help you prevent and control many diseases and conditions. Being overweight or obese increases your risk for diabetes, high blood pressure, cholesterol problems, heart disease, gallbladder disease, female health disorders, arthritis, some types of cancer, and sleep apnea.
- Eat wisely and choose a variety of low calorie, high nutrition foods and beverages in the basic food groups. Select foods that limit your intake of fats, cholesterol, added sugars, salt, and alcohol.

**Want the latest VA news?
Use your smartphone to
visit our website!**



- Be as physically active as possible. For health benefits, adults should do at least 2 1/2 hours a week of moderate-intensity or 1 1/4 hours a week of vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity or an equal combination of both. You'll see a difference in your weight and your health.
- Lifestyle changes that include healthy eating, regular physical activity, and maintaining a healthy weight are the keys to good health. If you need to lose weight, losing even a little will help.
- Losing as little as 5-10% of your current body weight can lower your risks for many diseases.
- A reasonable and safe weight loss is 1-2 lbs per week. It might take 6 months to reach your ultimate goal, but making gradual lifestyle changes can help you maintain a healthier weight for life.
- If you are normal weight, congratulations! To maintain your weight, engage in regular physical activity, eat wisely and weigh yourself regularly.

For more healthy tips, please visit:
www.prevention.va.gov

New Health Screening Machine Available for Employees

Employees have a brand new resource to help them monitor their health. A new interactive health station, called a Life Clinic Machine, is now available in Employee Health, which offers a comprehensive number of biometric measurements including: blood pressure, heart rate, weight, body mass index, body fat and blood oxygen.

The machine is wheelchair accessible and features a 10.4" touchscreen, electronic scale, automated upper arm pressure cuff and oscillometric methodology. The health screening takes approximately 5-10 minutes to complete and employees will be able to print out a report with their health screening results.

The medical center was able to purchase the Life Clinic Machine due to a grant from VA's Wellness Is Now (WIN) program. WIN is a program designed with the help of the Office of Federal Occupational Health (FOH) to help VA employees improve their health and well-being so they can more effectively serve our nation's Veterans and their families.

Appointments to use the machine are not required, but employees will need to check in first with Employee Health, which is located on the 5th floor by



Tracey Seabolt, an RN with Employee Health, demonstrates the new Life Clinic Machine which employees can use to measure their weight, blood pressure and body fat.

the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) union office. If you have a question about the Life Clinic Machine, please call Tracey Seabolt at ext. 3603.

Employees are also encouraged to log onto the VA WIN website, www.vaemployeewellness.com, and utilize interactive resources and tools such as a health risk assessment, personal health activity logs, lifestyle coaching and health education webinars.

Employees Volunteer at Gospel Rescue Mission



Jan Jackson, an Administrative Service Manager for Primary Care, serves chili to those in need at the Gospel Rescue Mission on Jan. 29.

CMVAMC employees and their family members gave back to the local community on Sunday, Jan. 29 by volunteering at the Gospel Rescue Mission, Inc., in Muskogee. Ten employees and their family members donated food and served lunch to those in need. They enjoyed chili, chocolate cake, banana pudding and homemade cinnamon rolls. The volunteers also passed out sweaters, socks and hygiene kits which were provided by Voluntary Service.

"It was a really good experience," said Jacqueline McGuire, a VA Social Worker who helped lead the volunteer event. "Everyone was grateful for what we did and we all enjoyed it."

The medical center has plans to organize future volunteer efforts at the shelter. The Gospel Rescue Mission is a full service homeless shelter in Muskogee dedicated to meeting the needs of the poor and the homeless.

Employee Spotlight - "Okie from Muskogee"

After working in a steel mill and paper mill for 37 years, Tommy Stamps was ready for a career change. In August 2004, he enrolled in classes at Platt College and began a Pharmacy Technician program.

Going back to school meant hitting the books in subjects such as Math and English, which he hadn't taken in almost 40 years. But Stamps received free tutoring from his roommate and classmate, who also happened to be his son, Tommy Stamps, II. After graduating from Hilldale High School in 2004, Tommy II decided to enroll in the Pharmacy Technician program at the same time as his father.

"I wouldn't have made it without him," he said. "He helped a lot."

The two didn't always get along as roommates, but Stamps said the experience brought him closer to his son.

"That's where I really got to watch him grow up," he said. "I got to see him go from what I call a kid to a young man. It was an experience that we both enjoyed."

After graduation in



Tommy Stamps II (left) and Tommy Stamps

March 2005, both began careers in the health care industry and both currently work at the medical center in Pharmacy. Tommy has worked in inpatient pharmacy at JCMVAMC for almost three years and Tommy II has worked in both inpatient and outpatient pharmacy since July 2011.

They don't work the same hours, but their shifts do overlap for 30 minutes. Since they both go by Tommy, it can get confusing for the Pharmacy staff.

"A lot of people call him two," said Stamps with a laugh. "More people call him two than 'Tommy II.'"

While working together may be a chall-

enge for some fathers and sons, it isn't an issue for the Stamps.

"I don't think there's many people that can say that they're working with their daughter or their son," said Stamps. "It's an experience that I think both of us enjoy. I know I do."

Tommy II agreed.

"I love working with him," he said. "I only see him for 30 minutes, but it's still nice."

They may only see each other for 30 minutes at work, but the two see plenty of each other at home. They bought a house together in Muskogee and are also golfing buddies.

"He's kind of my best friend, besides being my son," said Stamps.

Welcome Aboard New Employees!

Patricia Knapp
RN, Patient Care Services

Dana Carpenter
RN, Patient Care Services

Heather Crawford
RN, Patient Care Services

Brittany Thompson
*DRT, Nuclear Medicine/
Radiology Service*

Stephen Hwang
Physician, Medical Service

Zach Wilson
Purchasing Agent, Prosthetics Service

Kandice Brown
Purchasing Agent, Prosthetics Service

Karin Johnson
Physician, Medical Service

Michael Nugent
*Physician, Behavioral Medicine
Service*

Joel Eisenhauer
Police Officer, Police Service

Anthony Jones
Police Officer, Police Service

Chris Gurba
Police Officer, Police Service

Andrew Allen
Police Officer, Police Service

Retirements

John Stone
Environmental Management Service



UPCOMING EVENTS

Writing Workshop for Veterans

The medical center hosted a Warrior Writers workshop on Jan. 23, which was led by Iraq War Veteran Amber Stone, who also receives her care at the medical center. The two-hour workshop introduced Veterans to the benefits of writing and gave them an opportunity to write a short essay and then discuss their writing with other Veterans.

Stone began the class by explaining what Warrior Writers is about. She stated that the workshop is part of a Veterans' organization that seeks to connect Veterans with each other and also compile Veterans' writings and art into books, performances and exhibits.

Then she discussed how writing has helped her cope with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which she developed while serving in Iraq as a combat medic.

"People don't realize how therapeutic (writing) can be," said Stone, who has been leading Warrior Writers' workshops since 2009. "So I wanted to share that with others so I can help as many people as possible."

Vietnam Veteran Mark Saunders was one of nine



Vietnam Veteran Mark Saunders writes an essay during the Warrior Writers workshop.

Veterans who attended the workshop and he said he hoped the workshop would give him inspiration to finish a fiction novel about the Vietnam War.

"(Writing) is a stress reliever for me," said Saunders, who served as a combat engineer with the 1st Cavalry Division in Vietnam. "I think it's a good way to release a lot of those dreams and things you think about. If you will put it down on paper, I think it helps you to come to grips with it. I really do." Saunders said he especially enjoyed the discussion portion of the workshop.

"I don't normally share these things with anyone, including my family," he said. "But I feel like these people are family, because they're Veterans, so I opened up a little bit. Normally, I don't think I would."

If you missed the workshop on Jan. 23, please call Deborah Moreno at 918-577-4014 for future dates. Stone said Veterans can expect to write two or three essays during a workshop depending on the amount of discussion among Veterans. The workshop is open to all Veterans and prior writing experience is not required.



Iraq War Veteran Amber Stone reads a poem during a Warrior Writers workshop, which was held Jan. 23 at the medical center.

Employee AWARDS



David Trammell

David Trammell, the maintenance and repair supervisor for Engineering Service, is the **2011 Employee of the Year!** Trammell played an instrumental role in the medical center's preparation for the Joint Commission inspection last summer by coordinating weekly EOC rounds/inspections. During the inspection, he also provided information upon request to the team.



Brenda Priegal

Brenda Priegal, the Clinical Applications Coordinator (CAC), is the **February Employee of the Month!** As the CAC, Priegal produces outstanding products such as training materials and presentations, order sets, clinical reminders and templates. She strives to help providers and clinical staff be as efficient as possible and help them better serve our Veterans.



Linda Hinrichs

Linda Hinrichs, who works in Surgery Service, is both the **February Patriot of the Month and the 2011 Veteran Service Hero!** Hinrichs is credited with helping an elderly woman who was clearly disoriented and walking down the middle of Honor Heights Dr. by herself. Hinrichs located a number for the woman's daughter and stayed until she came to pick her up. While others passed the woman by, Hinrichs intervened.

Important Numbers and Information

*Jack C. Montgomery VAMC
918-577-3000 or toll free
at 1-888-397-8387*

*Ernest Childers VA
Outpatient Clinic (Tulsa)
918-628-2500 or toll free
at 1-888-398-8387*

*Hartshorne VA
Outpatient Clinic
888-878-1598*

*Vinita VA Outpatient
Clinic 918-713-5400*

VTS

Veterans can schedule transportation with the Veterans Transportation Service through their VA primary care provider or by calling the VTS call center at 918-577-3500 or toll free at 877-905-4538.

Returning Veterans

If you're a returning Veteran from Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom or New Dawn and not enrolled with VA health care, please contact Nanette Waller at 918-577-4150.

Veterans Crisis Line

*1-800-273-TALK (8255)
Press 1 for Veterans.
Veterans can call the Veterans Crisis Line to talk to trained professionals 24 hours a day, seven days a week.*

Homeless Veterans

Call 1-877-4AID-VET for assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week.