



Annual Report 2022



Tolman High School Military Appreciation Game, October 2022

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Message from the Director

Fellow Rhode Islanders:

On behalf of the dedicated employees at the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services (RIVETS), I am pleased to provide this annual report of the agency's activities over the last year. Under the leadership of Governor McKee, our Office continues building upon the momentum of the last year to ensure our Veterans and military families are treated in the manner and with the respect they deserve.



Reflecting on last year, resiliency continues to play a major role in the Office's success. As the team shares the efforts RIVETS undertook in 2022, the work continues on an array of demographic and social areas: caring for Veterans who have served from World War II to the Global War on Terrorism, addressing the needs of our active duty, guard and reserve, and all of our military families. From advocating on behalf of Veterans who have service-connected health or disability impacts, supporting their education and employment goals, to striving to end homelessness and prevent suicide among Rhode Island Veterans, RIVETS has remained focused on our collective commitments. This report celebrates and honors the successes of those who work tirelessly to serve our military Veterans and military families – highlighting progress, discussing unmet needs, and identifying challenges that lie ahead.

The Office recognizes our Veteran constituents and their families identify as members of multiple groups with varying and diverse interests. Crossing barriers and working with other state agencies and community partners have been a critical component of our service to Rhode Island's Veterans and military families.

I want to thank our partners. The Office could not achieve our mission of serving Rhode Island Veterans and their families without the support and commitment from the private, public, and non-profit organizations who put Veterans first.

As you read this report, I hope you will be inspired to join us as RIVETS forges new partnerships and strengthen collaborations to support Rhode Island's diverse Veteran community.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Yarn". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kasim Yarn
Director of Veterans Services

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“Every day, our Veterans help keep Rhode Island strong. What has always made our nation great are the patriots who, generation after generation, dedicate themselves to building a nation that is stronger, freer, and a little more perfect.”

-Governor McKee



RIARNG Departure Ceremony, May 2022

Mission

Effective immediately, the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services maintains the following:

- Thorough knowledge of individual and social factors contributing to personal problems that affect the Veteran, active duty, guard and reserve, and/or their families;
- Remains current on issues and trends impacting the work and mission of the agency;
- Forms strong and successful partnerships locally, regionally, and nationwide to address Veterans' issues in Rhode Island.

These focuses are imperative to reduce homelessness amongst Veterans, Veterans living in poverty, Veteran unemployment rates, ensure Veterans receive proper medical care, continue quality customer service at the Rhode Island Veterans Home and Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery and ensure every Veteran has an opportunity to make it in Rhode Island.

Vision

A community of partners, providing a collective impact to all Veterans, active duty, guard and reserve, and their families, in having equitable access to programs and services.

United in Our Work

The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services is humbled to have the privilege of serving our state's Veterans. Our work is supported and amplified by countless advocates, community groups, non-profit organizations, families, and individuals. RIVETS also has invaluable partnerships with municipalities, the General Assembly, and state and federal agencies. Their support was critical in delivering services to Rhode Island's Heroes over the past year.



RI Dept of Corrections Veteran Employee Town Hall, November 2022

Values

The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services' core values underscore the obligations inherent in our mission. The values define who we are, our culture, and how we interact with Rhode Island's Veterans, active duty, guard and reserve, and their families.

Our values are more than just words – they spell the word 'SERVE' – guiding us daily, reminding us that RIVETS serves America's Heroes.

Support: Be Veteran-centric; identify, consider, and advance the interest of Veterans.

Excellence: Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement.

Respect: Treat all those we serve and colleagues with dignity and respect.

Veracity: Adhere to the highest professional standards and maintain the trust and confidence of all whom we encounter.

Engagement: Work diligently to provide excellent service to Veterans and others, regardless of their eligibility for RIVETS programs and services. Be driven by the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services' mission and fulfill responsibilities as a public servant.



Salute to Veterans Waterfire, November 2022

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services prioritizes the continual improvement of our agency's inclusiveness to all aspects of diversity, to combat all forms of oppression, and works to build equitable and inclusive plans, programs, and services to serve Rhode Island's Veterans, active duty, guard and reserve, and their families. RIVETS believes that an inclusive environment ensures equitable access to resources and opportunities for all. It also enables individuals and groups to feel safe, respected, engaged, motivated, and valued for who they are.

RIVETS demonstrates core values by implementing our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plan and initiatives in a continuous effort to improve. RIVETS utilizes Veteran data from the Unite RI network, along with customer feedback, and input from our community partners to inform and influence the programs and services provided. This feedback has driven RIVETS to broaden our 'footprint' and our ability to meet our clients where they learn, work, or reside.

In 2022, RIVETS made strides to improve access to services by expanding outreach and providing services in areas of the state where the Office, or our partners, did not previously have a regular presence:

- RIVETS is providing Veteran Case Management services through a partnership with United Way 211 at locations targeted toward the underserved populations in Rhode Island.
- RIVETS expanded our affiliation with the Providence VA Regional Office, including sharing office space so it could utilize our Veterans Resource Center in Warwick and other state office locations to provide benefits counseling.
- RIVETS broadened the membership of our 9/11 Advisory Council to include all institutions of higher education throughout the state, increasing our outreach to veterans and military families utilizing education benefits
- RIVETS partnered with the RI Office of the Post-Secondary Commissioner, securing office space in the Westerly and Woonsocket Education Centers, further expanding our reach and providing services to residents who live at the far-ends of the state.

RIVETS recognizes our reach is only limited by our ability to work collaboratively. Progress is being made in these areas, and RIVETS can do more. Our vision is to build on a recognition of our current progress and a clear grasp of what can be and ensure that our decision-making reflects and respects the diversity in the Rhode Island Veteran population.



Black History Month Discussion, Bishop Hendricken H.S., February 2022

Veteran Cohorts in Rhode Island

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau (2020) and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, Rhode Island's Veteran population skews considerably more homogenous and older than the state's overall population. This data shows 71 percent of the Rhode Island population identifying as white alone, while almost 91 percent of the Rhode Island Veteran population identified as white alone. Rhode Island's population is aging, many Veterans have already turned the tide on the age wave. Rhode Islanders aged 65 and older comprise 18 percent of the total population in the state while Rhode Island Veterans aged 65 and older comprise 50 percent of all Veterans in the state.

Female Veterans

Women represent more than half of the population of the State of Rhode Island, but female Veterans represent only 8 percent of Rhode Island's Veterans. While the male Veteran population is projected to decline over the next 25 years, by 2045, women will represent 22 percent of Rhode Island's Veteran population, making them one of the fastest-growing Veteran cohorts.

Minority Veterans

Like the Veteran population in general, minority Veterans are older than the U.S. population. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics estimated there were 5,828 minority (all races/ethnicities except non-Hispanic White) Veterans in Rhode Island in 2020, representing about 9 percent of Rhode Island's Veterans. While the White, non-Hispanic Veteran population is projected to decline over the next 25 years, by 2045, minorities will represent 33 percent of Rhode Island's Veteran population, making them one of the fastest-growing Veteran cohorts.



Memorial Day Ceremony, RIVMC May 2022

As a group, Veterans are older than the U.S. population. In Rhode Island, nearly 70 percent of Veterans are age 55 or older, in comparison to just 32 percent of the general state population being 55 and older.

Age Bracket	Percentage of RI Veterans
18-34	9%
35-54	21%
55-64	20%
65-74	23%
75 and older	27%

Unite RI

In 2017, the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services launched the RIServes network, with 35 agencies and providers. Ours was the first-of-its kind community network across the entire state – offering enhanced coordination of care to fill gaps for our underserved veterans, military members, and their families.

The RIServes platform proved to be so successful that other health and social service organizations have adopted, expanding into more than just a Veteran-specific program. The program is now called Unite Rhode Island (Unite RI) and serves all Rhode Island residents who are in need of resources and referrals, resulting in a true no-wrong-door program for clients to access benefits, including health care, housing, food, education, job training, legal and financial counseling, and so much more.

Our administrative office acts as the hub and “Coordination Center” for Rhode Island Veterans, military members, and their families. Clients come into our network either through self-referral via the online portal, via a network partner, or through the RIVETS Resource Center. Utilizing the “Coordination Center” model, service providers and partners throughout the state are empowered to offer assistance beyond their immediate areas of expertise. Each provider has access to the large network of Veterans benefits throughout the state, ensuring that Veterans and military families are connected to the services they need – and most importantly, that they don’t slip through the cracks.

In late 2021, a second coordination center, operated by United Way 211, was added to the network. In 2022, 100 new partners joined the Unite RI network including RI Elder Info, The Point (Aging and Disability Resource Center), Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness, Rhode Island Department of Corrections, and Lifespan RI. The growth of the platform has expanded the reach of Unite RI to over 350 network partners and over 500 programs receiving referrals. Utilizing the Unite RI platform allows for continued coordination between public, private, and non-profit entities that are now able to work together in real-time to ensure positive outcomes for Rhode Islanders.

RIVETS UNITE RI YEARLY SNAPSHOT –2022

SERVING 5 COUNTIES WITH A VETERAN POPULATION OF 62,224 | TOP NEED: Benefits Navigation



894
Clients



1257
Service
Requests



710
Participating
Organizations



2953
UniteRI Users



80% Military Members & Veterans
18% Spouses, Family Members & Caregivers
2% Undisclosed



84% Male 16% Female*
*Percentage is based on the number of the individuals who disclosed gender data

SERVICES BREAKDOWN –2022



Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery

The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services operates and maintains the Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery (RIVMC) in Exeter. It is a dignified, solemn resting place for Veterans and their eligible spouses or dependents. Situated on 280 acres, our state's Veterans cemetery showcases our everlasting appreciation for those who served this country honorably.

Averaging 100 internments per month, the RIVMC continues to be one of the busiest state Veterans cemeteries in the nation. During Fiscal Year 2022, the cemetery conducted 1200 committal services. Its staff consists of 12 employees, which includes 10 full-time personnel and two seasonal workers.



Gold Star Families Memorial Ribbon Cutting, May 2022

The RIVMC offers all Veterans and their families the opportunity to inscribe the Veteran's name on the memorial wall or memorial walkway. Notification of the memorial wall/walkway program is sent out each February.

In addition, many military units, organizations, and campaigns also have monuments throughout the cemetery to honor their respective Veterans. Monument design, placement, and installation are coordinated with the RIVMC leadership. RIVMC has four monuments in the design/fundraising stage, including an Invisible Wounds of War Memorial, a Native American Monument, a Portuguese Veteran Monument, and a Warriors Cairn.

Ceremonies & Accomplishments

The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services conducts an annual Memorial Day observance at the cemetery against the fitting backdrop of the World War II Monument. In 2022, Governor McKee and Director Yarn hosted approximately 400 members of the public in an outdoor ceremony honoring our departed Veterans. Over 40,000 flags were placed within RIVMC for Memorial Day and 65,000 stick flags were distributed for placement on Veteran graves throughout Rhode Island.



Memorial Day Ceremony, RIVMC May 2022

Throughout the year, the RIVMC hosts several events that promote our state's unending gratitude to those Veterans who have so honorably served our country, including 9/11 Patriot Day and Saluting Branches, among others. Saluting Branches assisted with the removal of five diseased or rotten trees and helped plant 15 trees in our "I" Section that was in desperate need of trees. RIVMC also hosted Wreaths Across America in December 2022. Volunteers assisted the laying of over 7,600 wreaths in sections of the cemetery.

Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery

Partnerships

In 2022, the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services and the RIVMC continued to build and maintain partnerships with several organizations throughout the state. These relationships not only promote the mission of providing Veterans a dignified resting place, but also strengthen the Veteran community through outreach, fellowship, and a sense of community.

The RIVMC Administrator participates as a member of the Rhode Island Historical Cemetery Commission and conducts outreach with the local Veterans service organizations, including the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Our partners include:

Funeral Directors Association of RI
Gold Star Families
Home Depot of North Kingstown
National Grid Saluting Branches
Naval Station Newport
Patriot Guard Riders

Rhode Island Job Corps of Exeter
Rhode Island National Guard
Sons and Daughters of the Revolution
University of Rhode Island
VA National Cemetery Administration

Future Plans

- RIVMC is currently constructing a second row of Memorial Walkway Border Panels to continue that program well into the future.
- RIVMC is awaiting the arrival of new section markers to replace damaged and mismatched section markers.
- RIVMC is planning to purchase a new tractor and dump truck to replace our aging vehicles.



Jewish War Veterans Memorial Ceremony, May 2022



Gold Star Families Memorial Ribbon Cutting, May 2022

Rhode Island Veterans Home

The Rhode Island Veterans Home (RIVH) serves as a testament to our state's appreciation for all the men and women who honorably served in the United States military. The 260,000 square-foot facility was rebuilt from the ground up to provide state-of-the-art amenities and officially opened in 2017. The Home provides housing and care for Rhode Island's Wartime Veterans, and it is located on the same 100-acre parcel that has served as the home for Rhode Island's Veterans since 1890. The mission of the Veterans Home continues to be the delivery of high-quality nursing care, responsiveness to resident health and safety needs, and the commitment to providing the highest quality of life for Rhode Island heroes.

The Rhode Island Veterans Home is built upon the premise of interconnected service and accessibility for Veterans and their visiting families. The design concept focuses around "neighborhoods," which are groups of resident housing providing a closer and more personal sense of community. This community living design creates a home for residents and leads to more powerful, meaningful, and fulfilling lives, as well as ensuring a relationship-rich living environment.

Throughout the year, the staff of the Rhode Island Veterans Home have worked diligently to ensure health and safety, while maintaining quality of life for the Veteran residents. In partnership, and with guidance from the Rhode Island Department of Health, thorough screening, testing and vaccination procedures have been utilized throughout the year to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

The Veterans Home remains committed to keeping Veterans connected with their families. In the height of the public health emergency, the Veterans Home was required to adhere to strict policies requiring visitors to schedule an appointment, undergoing a full symptom screening and temperature check, and being escorted to a physically distanced meeting area utilizing full PPE. This year, the Home adopted a single point of entry system and visitation is now completely open, requiring only a brief symptom check upon entry.

The health and safety of residents at RIVH continues to be the top priority. This year, enhancements were made to the facility and operations to better serve our Veterans. The Home transitioned from paper-based medical records to a new electronic medical record system.



Veterans Day Ceremony, November 2022

Our Residents

The staff at the RIVH remain steadfast in our commitment to providing residents an environment that is safe and truly improves their quality of life.

The RIVH supports a robust therapeutic recreation program, activities, entertainment, and off campus excursions. Each neighborhood has dedicated activities staff who provide a wide range of enjoyable, therapeutic, and informative activities based on the individual preferences of that neighborhood. Additional activities are provided throughout the home like pet therapy, mentoring programs from religious and Veterans groups, and centralized activities like movie night, BINGO, bocce, and volleyball.

The RIVH features plenty of outdoor space and the design of the campus is conducive to outdoor open-air events which allow for ample social distancing. In partnership with the University of Rhode Island, the on-site greenhouse continues to provide enrichment opportunities for residents. Among other activities, the URI Master Gardeners offer a gardening program. The program teaches residents how to grow and care for food and other plants.

This year, significant emphasis was placed on entertainment and off-campus excursions. RIVH maintains relationships with numerous local performers who provide weekly entertainment to our Veterans. In addition to the regular weekly entertainment schedule, numerous big-bands, orchestras, jazz bands, and dancers performed this year.



In addition to the weekly local entertainment and individual neighborhood activities, RIVH facilitated over 20 off-campus trips and 35 on-campus concerts and entertainment events. Other programs, like our Audubon series which provided live access to “birds of prey” and reptiles, are educational and entertaining. Numerous VFW’s and Elks clubs have graciously hosted residents for a handful of cookouts, clambakes, and holiday gatherings. RIVH continues its tradition of including families for Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner.

Perhaps the most notable activity this year was the “Sail to Prevail” program, providing eight weekly sailing trips out of Newport. Over 60 Veterans were afforded the opportunity to spend a few hours sailing in the harbor. Veterans who preferred a different activity had the opportunity to tour local lighthouses, both by land and sea, or go fishing from shore.

RIVH Family Council

The partnership and support from Rhode Island Veterans Home families have always been essential to ensuring the quality of life of residents. Family members continue to provide instrumental emotional, and caring support, and are key partners of the Rhode Island Veterans Home. RIVH works to provide an inclusive environment, fostering mutual recognition, respect, and a sense of belonging and acceptance for family members. None of this work could be accomplished without the support of our Family Council—a dedicated group of individuals, led by Deborah Fowler. The RIVH Family Council meets monthly to share issues of concern with RIVH leadership, bring solutions and suggestions for best practices, and share information. The Family Council continues to be an important advocacy voice for the residents.

Veterans Service Grant

Since 2017, the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services has had the privilege of partnering with non-profit organizations and institutes of higher education to serve the Rhode Island Veteran community. Through a competitive application process, RIVETS awarded grants totaling \$200,000 in 2022. Ten recipient organizations are providing support to the Rhode Island Veteran community through the Veterans Service Grant program.

Each organization identified one or more of the following areas where grant funding would be used to support the Veteran community:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Veterans Disability Benefits | Veterans Living in Poverty |
| Veterans Education | Veterans Long-Term Care |
| Veterans Employment and Employment Training | Veterans Mortuary Affairs |
| Veterans Experiencing Homelessness | Veterans Post Traumatic Stress Disorder/
Agent Orange Effects/Burn Pits |
| Veterans Family Members/Caregivers | Veterans Transitional Assistance |
| Veterans Financial Planning/Services | Veterans Transportation |
| Veterans Legal Services | |

Veterans Inc. received funding to replenish their Rhode Island Veterans Fund. Veterans Inc. utilizes this fund to provide financial support to Veterans to help pay urgent bills or meet other financial needs. Support has been provided in the form of purchasing oil, assisting with car loan payments to prevent repossession, and assistance with utility, cable, and cell phone bills. Through this program, Veterans may also be referred to employment and training programs or benefits counseling to help support or improve their quality of life.

Button Hole received funding to support golf programs for Veterans and their family members. Button Hole is a safe, fun, and social space where Veterans can gather and play golf or learn to play golf. In 2022, Button Hole delivered bi-weekly Veteran golf clinics, offered free use of the golf course and driving range during designated times, and hosted the annual Disabled Veterans Golf Clinic.



(Image Right) Button Hole offers the use of the paramobile golf cart, a mobility device that enables the golfer to be supported in an upright position to swing the golf club.

The Veterans Service Grant has presented another opportunity for RIVETS to partner with institutions of higher education to ensure that Veterans and military families have support to pursue their educational goals. In 2022, the Community College of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, and the University of Rhode Island all received funding to support veterans relief funds at each of the campuses. Emergency relief funds are available to student Veterans to alleviate financial burdens, such as housing costs, childcare, and transportation to enable students to continue to pursue college credits despite financial obstacles. Since July 2022, twenty-eight student Veterans have received emergency relief, and the need for support and resources continues to grow.

RIVETS is proud to partner with the following organizations which are recipients of the 2022 Veterans Service Grant:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| Beachwood Integrative Equine Therapy | Rhode Island College |
| Button Hole | SHRI Service Corps |
| Community College of Rhode Island | University of Rhode Island |
| Operation Stand Down RI | Veterans of Foreign Wars |
| Providence Clemente Veterans Initiative | Veterans Inc. |

Mental Health Action

This past year has focused on working in partnership with an array of federal, state and local elected officials, organizations, and agencies on strategies that will benefit Veterans and their families. RIVETS is committed to working with a wide diversity of advocates, stakeholders, and policy makers to elevate Veteran and Veteran family well-being and mental health to a priority position on multiple policy, program, and budgetary agendas.

Legislators at the State and Federal levels have been key allies, as have mental and behavioral health agencies—those who do and do not explicitly serve Veterans. Elected officials and subject-matter experts once again joined Governor McKee and Director Yarn for Rhode Island's Second Annual Mental Health Action Day on May 20, 2022. As the global conversation around mental health continues – including the White House's unity agenda strategy to address mental health in the United States – finding effective resources and knowing how to get help remains a challenge. Rhode Island's Mental Health Action Day encourages people to take their first steps towards mental health action – whether for themselves, for their loved ones or to advocate for systemic changes through a wide range of tools.

While no agency, organization or group has been able to eliminate Veteran death by suicide, RIVETS seeks to reduce Veteran suicide through the Staff Sergeant Fox (SSG Fox) Suicide Prevention Program. The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services has joined with the Rhode Island Department of Health and the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals to implement community-based suicide prevention efforts to meet the needs of Veterans and their families through outreach, suicide prevention services, and connection to VA and community resources.

RIVETS also leads the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families – with Director Yarn serving as co-chair – by focusing on three priority areas: 1. Identifying service members, Veterans and families and screening them for suicide risk 2. Promoting connectedness and improving care transitions 3. Providing “lethal means” safety through initiatives like gun locks, safety planning, and promotion of the Veteran Crisis Line.

As part of the SSG Fox Suicide Prevention Program, RIVETS is working to help community-based providers to better identify service members, Veterans, and family members with risk factors while connecting them with appropriate benefits and services. RIVETS encourages all of our partners to explore resilience, military culture, suicide awareness and prevention educational opportunities.

Director Yarn is a leading mental and behavioral health advocate, having played a crucial role in the State's 'It's Okay to Not be Okay' campaign. Director Yarn has led peer discussions, sharing his own personal story and shining a light on the fact that no one should feel shame for seeking help. In April 2022, Director Yarn was honored by the Mental Health Association of Rhode Island (MHARI) with the Mental Health Hero of the Year award. MHARI thanked Director Yarn for his advocacy for people in recovery, his work to prevent suicide among Veterans, and his courage to share his family story which is raising awareness, improving lives, and inspiring Rhode Islanders.

RIVETS is committed to the men and women who have served our country, continuing to advocate for better mental health and early intervention services. RIVETS proudly partners with federal, state, and local agencies, and private entities to achieve our shared goal of preventing Veteran suicide.

In April 2022, Director Yarn was honored by the Mental Health Association of Rhode Island (MHARI) with the Mental Health Hero of the Year award. MHARI thanked Director Yarn for his advocacy for people in recovery, his work to prevent suicide among Veterans, and his courage to share his family story which is raising awareness, improving lives, and inspiring Rhode Islanders.



Community Partnerships and Outreach



RING Yellow Ribbon Event, October 2022



United Way 211 Event, August 2022

The Year in Review

- RIVETS participated in more 50 outreach events throughout the state to meet Veterans and military families in their communities.
- Our team provided Veteran Case Management services through a partnership with United Way 211 at locations targeted toward the underserved populations in Rhode Island.
- By securing office space in the Westerly and Woonsocket Education Centers, RIVETS is further expanding our reach and providing services to residents who live at the far-ends of the state.
- RIVETS partnered with Unite RI to host a community partner meet-up event with organizations that serve Rhode Island Veterans and Military families.
- Through collaboration with the Warwick Health Equity Zone, RIVETS is meeting needs of Veterans and Military families in the Warwick community.



9/11 Memorial Clean-up, September 2022

Our mission is made possible by the partnerships RIVETS holds with so many organizations throughout Rhode Island.

The RIVETS team thanks every service provider and all of the volunteers who donate their time to helping Rhode Island's Veterans.

Legislation

The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services had a successful 2022 legislative session, thanks to our strong partnerships with members of the Rhode Island Senate and House of Representative, as well as support from Veteran advocates and stakeholders. This year was one of the most productive – and beneficial – legislative sessions when it comes to making Rhode Island an attractive place for Veterans and their families to live, work, and learn.

Through the leadership of Governor McKee, and key support from Senate President Ruggiero, House Speaker Shekarchi, and other members of the General Assembly, Rhode Island stopped taxing military service pensions, effective July 1, 2022. With implementation of this exemption, Rhode Island will no longer be a regional or national outlier in taxing military retirement income. Rhode Island was only one of four states that did not provide a specific state income tax exemption for military pension income. With this change, Rhode Island is an even more competitive and attractive location to settle for military retirees. Recently, Rhode Island has been ranked among the ten best states for hiring Veterans and received the second-best rating in the nation for Veteran access to medical care, and Providence was named the best large city for Veterans to live. Ending taxation of military service pensions will advance Rhode Island among the ranks of the best states for military retirees and attract additional well-trained, highly educated, and high-earning Veterans to settle in our state.



Governor McKee made important investments to support staffing at the Rhode Island Veterans Home in the FY2023 budget. As seen across the health and long-term care industry, and as exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, health care staffing has presented challenges for the Veterans Home. In healthcare, and nursing in particular, employees are reaching retirement age or leaving the profession all together. American Rescue Plan funds were dedicated to supporting our ability to secure travel nursing staff. Additional investments of general revenue funding was made to provide recruitment and retention incentives for staff at the Veterans Home. RIVETS was able to develop a multi-point incentive plan designed to attract, train, and retain

critical direct care workers. These are steps that RIVETS must take to recruit, retain, and continuously train a vibrant health care work force for our state-run Veterans Home.

This past year, RIVETS also requested and supported several pieces of legislation which were signed into law.

The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services submitted a bill ([S-2995/H-7824](#)) to authorize the administration of the division of motor vehicles to make available, to Purple Heart Medal recipients, up to two (2) sets of special registration plates. This legislation was requested by the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services based upon community and stakeholder input. Specifically, there was a roundtable discussion Gov. McKee joined in Westerly at the dedication of the Purple Heart Trail and Veterans at that event brought up the issue of only being able to access one set of Purple Heart license plates. With passage of this legislation, Rhode Island joins with at least 23 other states that allow for up to two sets of Purple Heart plates to be issued to Purple Heart Medal recipients, regardless of the number of medals they've earned.

RIVETS supported another piece of legislation ([S-2136/H-7514](#)) related to motor vehicle plates, creating a special plate for recipients of the United States Bronze Star Medal. The Bronze Star Medal is the fourth-highest ranking award a service member can receive for heroic and meritorious deed(s) performed in an armed conflict. For those who receive the Bronze Star Medal, it is a signal of their sacrifice, bravery, and honor while serving their country.

Prior to this legislative session, Rhode Island did not impose state-level consequences for incidents of stolen valor. Thanks to leadership from legislators, and support for [S-2425/H-7714](#) from advocates and the Office of Veterans Services, it is now a crime in Rhode Island to knowingly benefit from false statements about military service. Lying about military service is dishonorable, especially given so many brave men and women in uniform – as well as their families – have sacrificed so much in service to our country.

The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services supported the pivotal Let RI Vote Act ([S-2007/H-7100](#)). This legislation made permanent the temporary pandemic-era policies which were enacted to keep voters and election administrators safe by expanding access to early voting and mail ballots. Veterans have defended our rights and freedoms across the globe, and we honor their service and sacrifice by ensuring unnecessary barriers to voting are removed from our elections.

These successes are clear indications that Rhode Island continues to advance and prioritize issues of importance to Veterans and military families. The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services will continue to elevate the needs of Veterans and further ensure that military families have the opportunity to thrive in Rhode Island.

Veterans Services Strategic Plan

The nation makes a simple promise when one signs up to serve in the military: if you serve us, we will serve you when you transition out of service. The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Service (RIVETS), takes up the directive given by President Lincoln to care for those who have borne the battle. To further that objective, in 2013 the General Assembly directed RIVETS to work with other state agencies and community partners to develop, maintain, and annually update a statewide Veterans Services Strategic Plan (VSSP) for the delivery of services for Veterans and their families.

In October 2022, Director Yarn and the RIVETS team convened the annual meeting of the VSSP Advisory Committee, which includes partners from the following agencies and organizations:

Rhode Island Commerce Corporation
 Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare,
 Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals
 Rhode Island Department of Business Regulation
 Rhode Island Department of Health
 Rhode Island Department of Human Services
 Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training
 Rhode Island Department of State
 Rhode Island National Guard
 Rhode Island Office of Healthy Aging
 Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner
 Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
 Rhode Island Veterans Treatment Court



During that meeting, the Advisory Committee worked to update the VSSP, break down barriers, and renew focus areas. The Advisory Committee came to the conclusion that a focused effort should continue for coordination of services through a no-wrong-door approach. Another recommendation from the Advisory Committee was encouraging delivery of programs and services where Veterans live, work, and learn. Other recommendations and updates are included in the VSSP, and our agency is carrying out the nation's most sacred obligation to care for military members and their families when they return home.

RIVETS serves more than 60,000 Ocean State Veterans and their families through the operation of the Rhode Island Veterans Home, the Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery, and the Rhode Island Veterans Resource Center. The Veterans Home in Bristol provides skilled nursing care to our Veterans. The Veterans Memorial Cemetery is a dignified and solemn resting place for Rhode Island Veterans and their eligible dependents in Exeter. The Veterans Resource Center in Warwick serves as the coordination center for UniteRI, our referral network which connects Veterans, active duty, guard and reserve, and their families to benefits and resources.



The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services acts as the lead agency to assist and direct access to community, state, and federal resources to those who have served in the Armed Forces and their families.

Veterans Services Strategic Plan

Working with partners from several community, state, and federal partners, the VSSP is executed through:

- (1) Task force and working groups with state and federal agencies (e.g., U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Corrections, Department of Labor and Training, Department of Children Youth and Families, Department of Human Services, Office of Healthy Aging, the Task Force of Incarcerated Veterans, the Rhode Island Judiciary, the Rhode Island State Police, and others);
- (2) UniteRI, our coordinated network of community providers; and
- (3) Community outreach with state agencies, non-profits, Veteran service organizations, and municipalities.

The work RIVETS executes is reliant upon our excellent working relationship with the Providence Veterans Affairs Regional Office as well as the Providence Veterans Affairs Health Care System. These partnerships allow us to ensure holistic assessments of medial, mental, vocations, education, and economic well-being for all transitioning service members, Veterans, their families and caregivers to improve their economic security, health and quality of life outcomes.

Given the diverse demographics of Rhode Island Veterans, the work focuses on thirteen service categories. Veterans and military family needs were clear during the COVID-19 pandemic; like many Rhode Islanders, Veterans presented to the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services seeking food, housing heat, and other essential needs assistance.

While those needs continued in 2022, the greatest need reverted to benefits counseling, as it had been prior to the onset of the pandemic. Legal and financial services continue to be sought as part of housing needs, as well as transportation services for both medical and employment needs. Increases and shifts in demand and delivery of services due to the pandemic influenced the way RIVETS provides programs and services. It has also provided us with insight and allowed us to advocate for changes, new programs, and partnerships that will benefit the Ocean State's Veteran population.

RIVETS recognizes that our reach is only limited by our ability to work together. RIVETS leverages municipal, state, and federal capabilities, ensuring the Office can have a collective impact for Veterans and their families throughout the following thirteen Veterans Service Categories:

- Veterans Disability Benefits
- Veterans Education
- Veterans Employment & Training
- Veterans Family Members & Caregivers
- Veterans Financial Planning Services
- Veterans Homelessness
- Veterans Legal Services
- Veterans Living in Poverty
- Veterans Long Term Care
- Veterans Mortuary Affairs
- Veterans PTSD, Suicide Prevention, Agent Orange Health Effects, and Burn Pits Health Effects
- Veterans Transitional Assistance
- Veterans Transportation

Support: Be Veteran-centric; identify, consider, and advance the interest of Veterans.

Excellence: Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement.

Respect: Treat all those we serve and colleagues with dignity and respect.

Veracity: Adhere to the highest professional standards and maintain the trust and confidence of all whom we encounter.

Engagement: Work diligently to provide excellent service to Veterans and others, regardless of their eligibility for RIVETS programs and services. Be driven by the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services' mission and fulfill responsibilities as a public servant.

Veterans Services Strategic Plan

Veterans Disability Benefits

The federal Department of Veterans Affairs provides service-connected disability benefits. The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services assists Veterans with benefits counseling, application, and appeals processes. In addition, RIVETS works with Veterans not eligible for VA disability compensation by connecting them with programs such as SSDI and the General Public Assistance, administered by the state's Executive Office of Health & Human Services and the Department of Human Services.

- UniteRI continues to streamline the benefits navigation process.
- RIVETS benefits from being part of the broader UniteRI network, offering access to hundreds of providers for Veterans, active duty, guard and reserve, and their families.
- UniteRI is the first 'no wrong door' referral system for Veterans in Rhode Island, allowing for warm hand-offs and follow-ups, ensuring clients get the services they need in a timely manner.
- Delivery of benefits, care, and services to underserved, marginalized, and at-risk Veterans to prevent suicide, homelessness, improve economic security, health, resiliency, and quality of life, and achieve equity.

Veterans Education

Rhode Island's state colleges and universities waive tuition for Rhode Island National Guard members. They also provide free tuition for Service-Connected Disability Veterans rated at 10% or higher. In addition, the federal VA administers the Forever GI Bill, which provides funds for tuition.

- RIVETS has increased its level of student Veterans advocacy amongst the state college campuses, and partnered with private higher education providers to deliver better access to resources for their Student Veteran populations.
- RIVETS has entered into a partnership with the Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, opening satellite offices at the Westerly and Woonsocket Education Centers. Student Veterans face unique challenges when transitioning from military to campus life, RIVETS has successfully connected student Veterans to programs, services, and case management at the URI (Kingston), RIC (Providence) and CCRI (Warwick) campuses over the past years through our VetCorps program. Renting office space and positioning RIVETS staff at the Rhode Island Office of Postsecondary Commissioner campuses will help ensure RIVETS connects with these students, ensuring they are successful while enrolled in a course of study, upon graduation, and beyond.
- RIVETS is ensuring access to educational opportunities, training, and jobs worthy of the Veteran's skills and service.

By remaining faithful to our values and continuing to provide quality care at the Veterans Home, quality customer service at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery, and acting as a resource hub for Veterans Services, RIVETS is able to focus on our objectives and desired end state.



Veterans Services Strategic Plan

Veterans Employment & Training

The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services continues to partner with the Department of Labor & Training's Veterans employment counselors to identify appropriate employment and training opportunities for those who have served. RIVETS also works with the Governor's Workforce Board, Rhode Island Department of Business Regulation, and the federal VA's Vocational Rehabilitation program.

- Through collaboration with the Governor's Office, General Assembly, and state agencies, RIVETS continues to work towards the adoption of effective practices for the transfer of military and spouse licenses in good standing and substantially equivalent; licensure through endorsement; temporary licensure; and expedited licensing.

RIVETS has built high-performing, integrated partnerships with federal, state, local, tribal, and community agencies and organizations to enhance Veterans job-readiness, placement, and Veteran entrepreneurship. An example of such a partnership is RIVETS' relationship with General Dynamics/Electric Boat. RIVETS and General Dynamics engage in weekly communication, sharing opportunities for Veterans including job postings, job fairs, training and education opportunities, and Veteran-centric events sponsored by General Dynamics. RIVETS and General Dynamics also both occupy space in the Westerly Education Center.

Veterans Family Members & Caregivers

Through UniteRI, the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services can help family members and caregivers navigate the benefits system and identify agencies that offer caregiver support. In addition, the federal VA offers caregiver assistance and the Vet Center provides caregiver and family counseling.

- RIVETS awards grants to nonprofit organizations to provide social services to family members.
- RIVETS has expanded the UniteRI network to include more services accessible to family members.
- RIVETS is ensuring multiple channels to information about benefits, care, and services are clear and easy to understand and access.
- RIVETS works collaboratively with OHA, who in 2021 released the State of Rhode Island's first State Plan on Caregiving, which extends through 2023. Rhode Island has one of the highest general populations of adults over age 85, and our Veteran population skews much older as well. Our caregivers are supporting loved ones, ensuring they are aging with dignity and purpose. Caregivers have a tough job, and RIVETS is here to support them.
- RIVETS is delivering quality services and promoting the health and well-being of Veterans' eligible family members, survivors, caregivers, and service members.
- RIVETS is formalizing Veteran Community Partnerships (VCPs) in Rhode Island, which are coalitions of Veterans and their caregivers, VA facilities, community health providers, organizations, and agencies that provide seamless access and transition throughout the full continuum of care and support services in the VA and the community.

RIVETS is setting conditions to ensure every Veteran has an opportunity to flourish and be successful in Rhode Island by reducing homelessness, poverty, and unemployment among Veterans; increasing Veterans' access to healthcare; and maintaining quality, responsive client services at the Rhode Island Veterans Home and the Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery.

Veterans Services Strategic Plan

Veterans Financial Planning Services

The RI Department of Labor & Training offers vocational finance planning for its clients, and the RI National Guard and Naval Station Newport have financial counselors available for service members. The Providence VA offers free income tax return preparation and community partners like Operation Stand Down RI help with financial planning.

- RIVETS identifies partners for the UniteRI network to offer free coaching to Veterans.
- All Veteran employment and training programs have financial counseling available as a supplementary service.

Veterans Homelessness

Rhode Island is making significant progress and has developed a shared vision with community leaders to identify and implement concrete steps to overcome barriers to permanent housing faced by Veterans.

- RIVETS Director is an active member of the RI Continuum of Care Committee (RICOC) and was appointed as co-chair of the RICOC Veterans Committee.
- RIVETS awarded grants to non-profit organizations providing social services to Veterans experiencing homelessness.
- RIVETS works with municipalities and agencies in ensuring housing developed for Veterans is providing person-centered services, so the Veteran has every opportunity to succeed.

RIVETS is working to strengthen and build partnerships across federal, state, local, tribal, and private sector organizations, and provide integrated support to homeless Veterans that ensures homelessness is prevented, curtailed, and non-recurring.

With our sister-state agencies and the VA, RIVETS is taking an all-of-governance approach to ending homelessness among Veterans to obtain permanent and sustainable housing with access to high-quality healthcare and supportive services.

Veterans Legal Services

The RI National Guard has a legal assistance program for its members, as does the NAVSTA Staff Judge Advocate's office. The RI Bar Association offers reduced-fee and pro bono assistance through the Armed Forces Legal Services Project. Roger Williams Law School launched the Veterans Disability Appeals Field Clinic to represent clients appealing disability decisions before the VA and the Board of Veterans Appeals. The RI Veterans Treatment Court continues to serve Veterans with successful rehabilitation and treatment for service-related issues that have led to misdemeanor infractions.

- The RIDOC partnership for incarcerated Veterans continues to be a success, working to ease the reintegration into the community for Veterans following their release from incarceration.
- RIVETS awarded grants to non-profit organizations providing legal services to Veterans and military families.
- RIVETS will promote medical-legal partnerships (MLPs) through the VA. It has been shown that Veterans who receive legal services at an MLP experienced significant mental health improvement, as well as improvements in their housing and income.

Veterans Services Strategic Plan

Veterans Living in Poverty

Veterans are eligible for the same programs available to all Rhode Islanders. For example, the state administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), childcare assistance, and monetary assistance. Community partners such as Operation Stand Down RI, Veterans, Inc., Gateway to Independence, and the RI Coalition To End Homelessness help Veterans who are unable to afford housing and other services.

- RIVETS increased supportive services to give homeless and at-risk Veterans access to needed assistance through the UniteRI network.
- RIVETS awarded grants to non-profit organizations to provide social services to Veterans and family members experiencing poverty.
- RIVETS has strengthened partnerships with the RI Department of Human Services to better serve Veterans and military families who require food assistance. RIVETS has also been able to refer older Veterans who are just above Medicaid levels to the Rhode Island Office of Healthy Aging to explore options for long term services and supports that would allow them to age in their own homes and avoid more costly nursing home placements.

Poverty rates are historically lower for Veterans than non-Veterans. Poverty rates for Black and Hispanic Veteran households are much lower than those of their non-Veteran counterparts. In 2017, Black Veteran households had a poverty rate of 9.6%, versus 23.2% for Black non-Veteran households, a difference of 13.7 percentage points. The rate for Hispanic Veteran households was 7.6%, compared with 18.6% for Hispanic non-Veteran households. The difference was less stark between households headed by white Veterans and white non-Veterans: 5.8% vs. 9.4%, respectively.

Pew Research Center

Veterans Long Term Care

The Rhode Island Veterans Home and the VA Long Term Care program offer options for Veterans seeking long-term skilled nursing care. In addition, RIVETS works with the state's Medicaid agency to determine other long-term care options for those Veterans who are not eligible for admission to the RI Veterans Home nor VA long-term care options.

- In collaboration with the RI Department of Health and the Providence VA Health Care System, RIVETS continues to look to expand services in both Providence and Washington Counties.
- The VA delivers long-term services and supports (LTSS), including home care related services and nursing home care to eligible, aging, frail, and end-of-life Veterans of all ages. RIVETS is working to ensure Veterans are living either at home or in the least-restrictive environment possible.
- Veteran Community Partnerships (VCPs) is a national initiative to ensure all Veterans and their caregivers have access to the widest range of choices and services.
- RIVETS is committed to optimizing the health and well-being of Veterans with multiple chronic conditions, life-limiting illness, frailty, or disability associated with chronic disease or injury.
- RIVETS leadership participates in the Rhode Island Long Term Care Coordinating Council.
- RIVETS Strategic Planning, Policy and Communications Administrator has joined the RI Haven Elder Justice work group, ensuring the rights, needs, and issues impacting Veterans are included in the planning and including elder abuse prevention.

Veterans Services Strategic Plan

Veterans Mortuary Affairs

The Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery (RIVMC) provides a dignified, final resting place for Rhode Island's Veterans and eligible dependents. The cemetery staff works closely with funeral directors and the RI National Guard's Honor Detail to arrange military honors and committal services. The state's General Public Assistance program helps to fund basic funeral services for those Veterans who do not have the means to pay for services and are not eligible for the RIVMC.

- On December 16, 2021, RIVMC cut the ribbon on a set of new columbarium walls as part of a multi-phase project which will eventually build 40 walls containing 14,000 niches. The project is expected to allow the cemetery to continue offering niche inurnment for more than a half-century.
- RIVETS continues to advocate for our nation's heroes, caregivers, families, survivors, and service members to improve their quality of life and ensure end-of-life dignity.



Memorial Day Ceremony, RIVMC May 2022

Veterans Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Veteran Suicide, Agent Orange Effects & Burn Pit Health Effects

In the wake of COVID-19, millions of people uncovered new mental health conditions and millions more have had their existing challenges exacerbated. That is why RIVETS, along with Governor McKee, led the way in Rhode Island, and partnered with a coalition of more than 1,400 nonprofits, brands, government agencies, and influential leaders nationwide to observe the Second Annual Mental Health Action Day to drive our culture from awareness to action on mental health.

- Rhode Island is an active participant in the VA Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families, co-chaired by Director Yarn.
- RIVETS is a member of the Rhode Island Summit Policy Committee addressing tobacco and other substance additions through the Center for Health Promotion.
- RIVETS is a key member of the Adult Behavioral Health System of Care team at EOHHS, recognizing the importance of including the Veteran perspective in health and human services.
- The VA is pursuing research, implementing studies to establish a holistic approach for military toxic exposure presumption, and delivering benefits, care, and services that improves quality of life for Veterans. RIVETS will ensure Veterans are connected to appropriate services and programs.
- RIVETS is working with partners to provide innovative and state-of-the-art mental health care to prevent suicide and promote Veterans' and service members' health outcomes and quality of life.
- RIVETS is working with Rhode Island Department of Health for delivery of services through the VA Staff Sergeant Fox Suicide Prevention Grant. Through this work, RIVETS is providing resources toward community-based suicide prevention efforts to meet the needs of Veterans and their families through outreach, suicide prevention services, and connection to VA and community resources.

Veterans Services Strategic Plan

Veterans Transitional Assistance

Through an information-sharing partnership with the Department of Defense, RIVETS instituted an outreach program to recently-separated service members. A case manager welcomes the returning service member home. A case manager introduces him or her to the services offered by RIVETS, and lets them know that the office stands ready to assist with benefits counseling and resource navigation. The military also offers the Transitional Assistance Program (TAP) to those coming off active duty. The RI National Guard offers transitional assistance to its members returning from deployments.

During normal operations, Naval Station Newport conducts a week-long TAP class and has partnered with Director Yarn to provide a brief to each new convening class.

Veterans Transportation

RIVETS quickly established transportation as a top need amongst the Veteran community. Transportation is commonly known as a co-occurring need, in that it often accompanies requests for food, housing, and employment assistance. Within the Veterans Services community, a wholistic approach is always the target approach to assisting our Veterans.

- RIVETS leverages RIPTA's low cost and wide reaching bus network, offering VetPass, a program for qualifying Veterans to secure day-to-day, monthly, or reloadable RIPTA fare based on their need and circumstance.
- RIVETS is working to increase access to virtual and in-home services, promoting federal and community care solutions to improve well-being for Veterans in under-served suburban areas of the state.
- RIVETS recognizes that transportation is a social determinant of health. Transportation can affect access to healthcare services, social services, employment, and educational opportunities. For this reason, RIVETS is ensuring our Veterans Service Officers are able to provide benefits counseling where our Veterans live, work, and learn.

Our Partners

Our success is defined by our ability to work in a collaborative way with our partners. These efforts allow us— and our network of community providers — to maximize resources and make a collective impact on improving positive outcomes for our Veterans and their families. Collaboration is key to our “No Wrong Door” approach; RIVETS leverages these capabilities to better serve Veterans and their families and ensure each and every person who seeks assistance is connected to the right programs and services.



Building the Team

Jacques Dextradeur II joined the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services in early 2022 in the position of Chief Veterans Services. Jacques brings years of benefits navigation, education and career training, along with direct counseling experience to Veterans and their families regarding VA benefits and related programs. Jacques also spent time working within state and local governments, providing skills allowing him to effect change across multiple administrations.

Jacques served as a member of the 443rd Civil Affairs Battalion, an Army Reserve unit out of Rhode Island, as a non-commissioned officer – rising to the rank of Staff Sergeant. Jacques is a combat Veteran, first deploying to Kosovo in the early 2000's and then again in Baghdad in 2004 and 2005 during the Global War on Terror.



During his time in Iraq, Jacques served as primary liaison for the 1st CAV Division and then the 3rd Infantry Division to the Mayor of Baghdad, the Baghdad City Council, the Baghdad Provincial Governor, and the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq. Jacques' contributions ensured the success of the 2005 Iraqi elections, and his actions helped to establish the Iraqi Provisional Council. He continued his military service through 2007 in the U.S. Army Reserves.

The leadership and problem-solving skills Jacques possesses are an asset to the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services – he is continuing his commitment to serve his fellow Veterans and the common-good through his ceaseless endeavor to ensure Veterans and their families receive the benefits they have earned and deserve.



RING Yellow Ribbon Event, October 2022

Building the Team



In April 2022, Joanna Pallini joined the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services as the Chief Human Services Policy and Systems Specialist. Joanna has years of experience working with Rhode Island families at the Department of Human Services, Department of Children, Youth and Families, and the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals. Prior to state service, Joanna specialized in working with individuals with mental health and substance use disorders in the non-profit sector. With a long history of military service in her family, Joanna is passionate about treating Veterans and families with respect and building connections with providers in our community. Joanna has a bachelor's degree from Rhode Island College and a master's degree in Psychology. Joanna spends her free time serving as a ministry leader at her church. She also enjoys hiking, singing, and spending time with family.

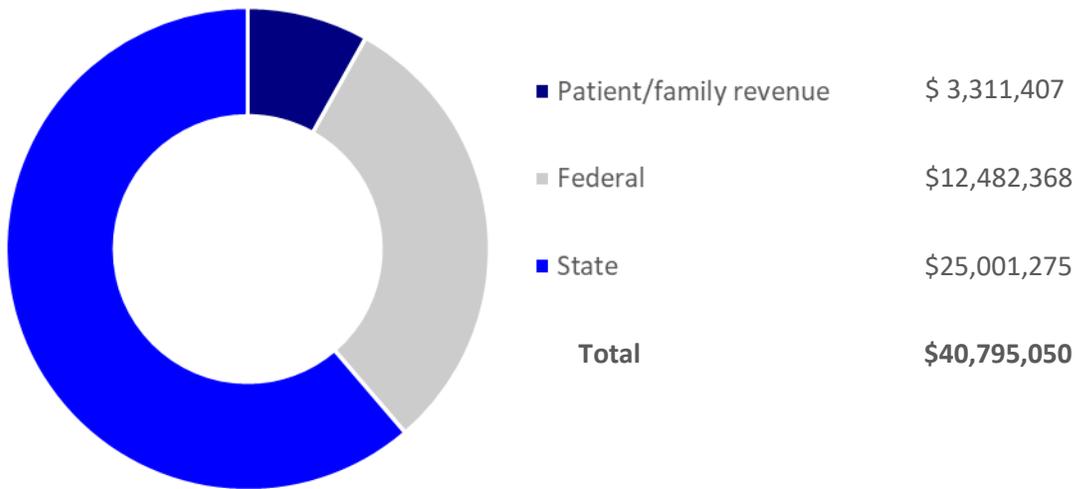
Diane Lucier has worked at the Rhode Island Veterans Home for over 17 years. Most recently, she held the position of Clinical Administrator, overseeing the Social Work Department. Diane has a master's degree from the University of Connecticut and is an independently licensed Clinical Social Worker in both Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Diane has extensive experience in the diagnosis and treatment of Veterans and has a working knowledge of the VA Health Care System.

In November 2022, Diane transitioned to a new role, providing master's level case management in support of the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon (SSG) Fox Suicide Prevention Grant. Diane brings her expertise to collaborate with the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services, the Department of Health, and the Providence VA Medical Center. In her new role, Diane will also travel to the Woonsocket and Westerly Education Centers to provide support and benefits counseling to Veterans, Active-Duty Military, and their families at these locations.

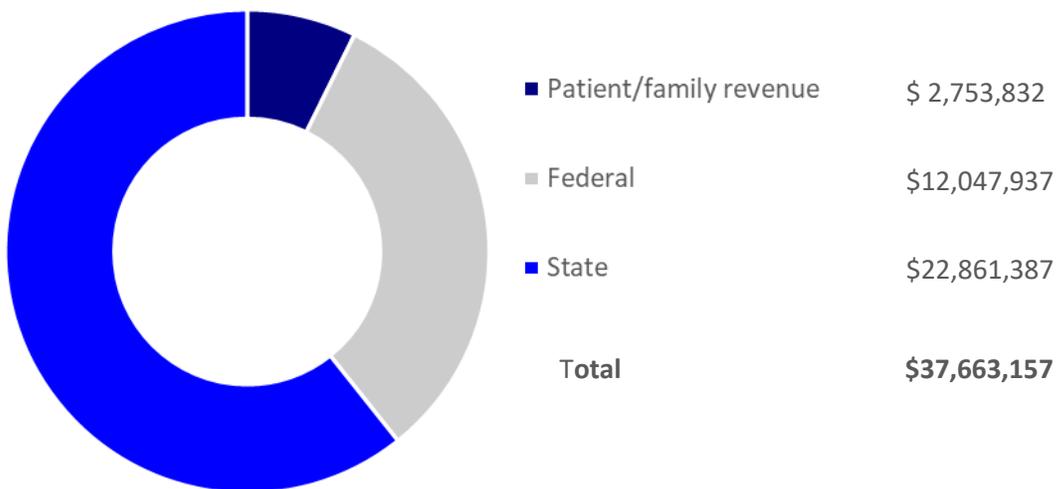


Revenue Totals

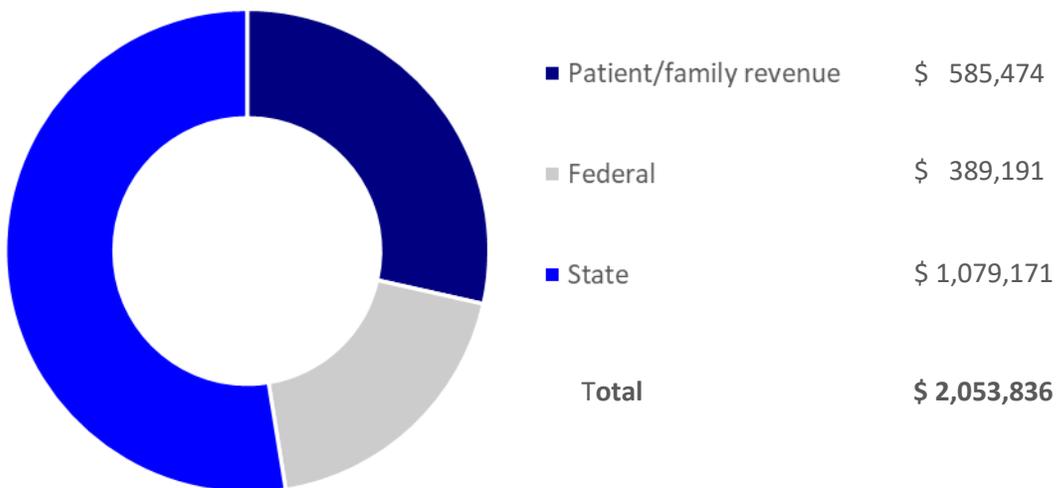
RI Veterans Services FY 2022 Total Revenue



RI Veterans Home FY 2022 Revenue

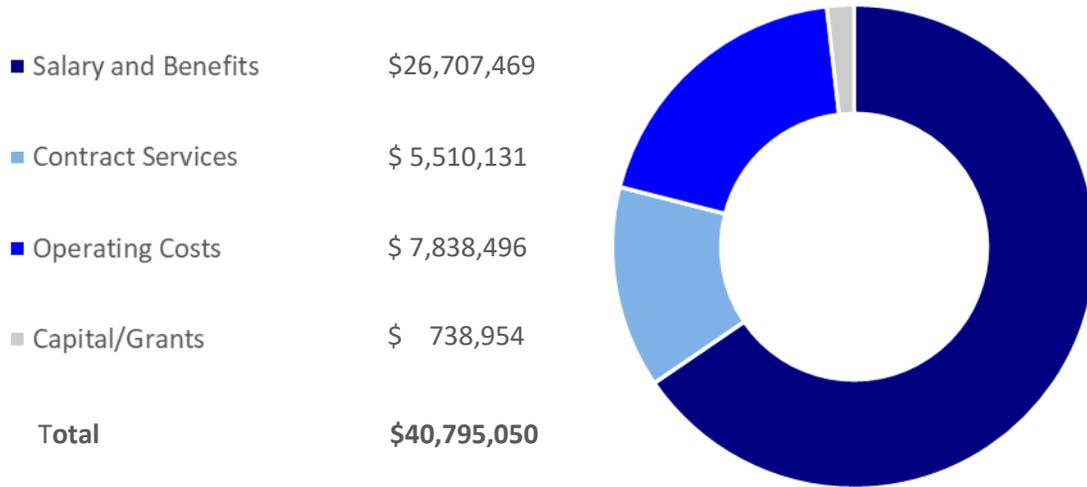


RI Veterans Cemetery FY 2022 Revenue

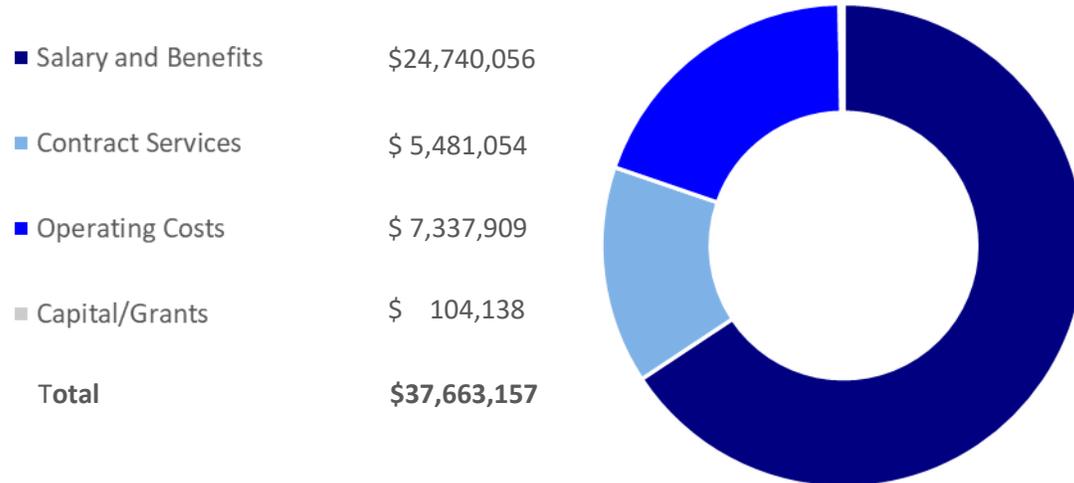


Expenditure Totals

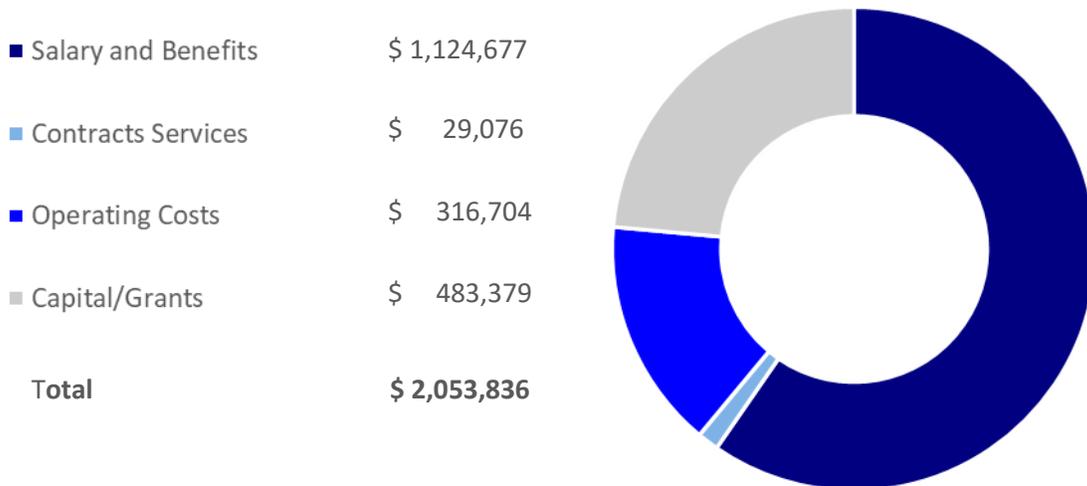
RI Veterans Services FY 2022 Total Expenditures



RI Veterans Home FY 2022 Expenditures



RI Veterans Cemetery FY 2022 Expenditures





69th Anniversary of the Korean War, July 2022

Contact Us

**Rhode Island
Veterans Resource Center**

560 Jefferson Blvd. Ste 206

Warwick, RI 02886

(401) 921-2119

**Rhode Island
Veterans Home**

480 Metacom Avenue

Bristol, RI 02809

(401) 253-8000

**Rhode Island
Veterans Memorial Cemetery**

301 South County Trail

Exeter, RI 02882

(401) 268-3088

www.vets.ri.gov

