Military Order of the Purple Heart

VA Voluntary Service (VAVS)

Recruitment Strategy

Recruiting Tactics

“An Invitation to Service”

Changing the Face of the VAVS
VAVS Recruitment Strategy

Recruiting Tactics

- Total volunteers and hours continue to slip; a trend that MUST be reversed

- A coherent VAVS recruitment strategy and recommended organizational structure have been developed, updated for 2014 and adopted by NAC

- At all levels, VACO/VAMC/NAC organizations: Recruitment is a full time, year round responsibility!
VAVS Recruitment Strategy
Recruiting Tactics

- **VAVS Invitational Recruiting Strategy** (Continued)

**Volunteer Retention**
- Meaningful work with positive feedback
- Allow for personal growth, flexibility in assignments
- Show respect for volunteers
- Eliminate barriers to use of volunteers
- Establish incentive programs for volunteers that reward hours worked, volunteers recruited, e.g. gift certificates, a gas allowance to help offset high gas prices
- RECOGNITION of volunteers efforts a key to personal satisfaction and retention
VAVS Recruitment Strategy
Recruiting Tactics

VAVS Invitational Recruiting Strategy (Continued)

**Broad-Based Recruiting**
- Maintain high media profile
- Distribute high quality materials
- Network with businesses, community groups, leaders

**Managing Volunteer Recruiting**
- Tailor to structure, network within NAC member organizations
- Enter into collaborations and partnerships
  - With other NAC organizations, Veterans groups
  - Share marketing, public relations materials, techniques
  - With Colleges, Universities
  - With other organizations with similar goals/interests
Recruitment Tactics

• Goals: At each VAMC, increase total number of volunteers and hours by at least 10%; lower average/median age to 55-60

• VAVS Invitational Recruiting Strategy
  - Generational Recruiting Age Demographics
    - Great Depression/WWII Generation (1925-1945)
    - Baby Boomers (1945-1963)
    - Generation Y – The “Millenial”
  - One on One, Face to Face Recruiting
  - Targeted Recruiting
    - Family Volunteering
    - Youth/Teen Volunteering
    - OEF/OIF Veterans Volunteering
VAVS Recruitment Strategy
Recruiting Tactics

Preparation for Effective Recruiting

• Every VAVS “recruiter” must have thorough knowledge of VAVS history, organization & culture, nationally and locally

• VAVS policies, procedures, indoctrination procedures and paperwork continuously reviewed, updated and streamlined with unnecessary procedures, forms and policies eliminated.

The goal: Put that volunteer to work in a few days!

• At all levels review, programs, activities, incentives and recruiting strategies. **What’s working – What’s not??**

• At each VAMC, form recruiting committee with experienced, innovative volunteers from local NAC organizations

• Clearly understand the benefits and the cost of volunteering

• Update and/or develop new brochures, recruitment materials and advertising
VAVS Recruitment Strategy
Recruiting Tactics

• AT NAC level, identify potential new organizations: Invite to join the NAC
  - Appropriate service, fraternal, civic, business organizations
  - Emerging Veteran Service Organizations (VSO’s) unique to recent operations, e.g. Soldiers Angels, Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America, Veterans for Freedom, Operations Interdependence
  - At VAMC level, identify and approach local organizations to recruit Regularly Scheduled (RS) Occasional (Occ) volunteers and to support specific events, e.g. Stand Down, Welcome Home, etc.

Business & Professional  Churches/Religious organizations
Volunteer Centers          Colleges (Fraternities/Sororities)
Unions/Trade Groups        Youth Groups
Retired Military/Military Units Veterans Groups
VAVS Recruitment Strategy
Recruiting Tactics

Summary

• Partnership and constant coordination between NAC organizations and VAVS at all levels is essential
• Understand what your organization brings to the table
• Be knowledgeable about VAVS history, culture, value to the Veterans, to the VHA, to the Nation
• Identify volunteer needs: develop, update, maintain volunteer position descriptions
• Continually review, update recruiting materials
• Develop a coherent, flexible recruiting plan: follow the plan
• Provide meaningful recognition, feedback to volunteers
• Be sincere, innovative, flexible and always courteous
• Have passion; it’s contagious
“The Power is in the Ask”