



**MISSOURI VETERANS
COMMISSION**

2023

ANNUAL REPORT





MISSION

MVC IS "ALWAYS ON MISSION" TO SERVE VETERANS AS THE FIRST CHOICE IN SKILLED NURSING CARE; BEST CHOICE IN SECURING BENEFITS; AND PROVEN CHOICE IN A DIGNIFIED RESTING PLACE.



Paul Kirchoff
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the Missouri Veterans Commission (MVC), I take great pride in sharing the Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report. As we reflect on the year, one theme resonated: the State of Missouri's continued commitment to its Veterans.

The year was full of positive changes for MVC team members. Governor Parson proposed, and the General Assembly approved, a cost of living adjustment of 8.7%, as well as an increase in night and weekend shift differential for eligible MVC team members. The Governor also approved professional leadership development funding in the budget, which allowed MVC team members identified as "top performers" opportunities for professional growth and learning. This commitment by top government leaders is making a positive impact on the entire MVC workforce, as we are seeing reductions in turnover and increased retention. This allows our team to better serve Veterans.

Missouri has almost 400,000 Veterans representing approximately 8.4% of Missouri's adult population*, and they continue to serve their state and communities as they once served our nation. I am pleased to report a few of the substantial highlights showcasing MVC's continued commitment to Missouri's Veterans:

- Highlighting the economic benefit of the Veterans Service Program – for every \$1 MVC spends on this program, MVC Veteran Service Officers bring back \$134 in cash awards to Veterans and their families. These federal, tax-free dollars are spent in the state, stimulating the economy.
- Receiving a "Best in Class" customer satisfaction award from Pinnacle Quality Insight for six Missouri Veterans Homes for the fourth consecutive year.
- Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Veteran Cemetery Program. Since inception, MVC has interred over 30,000 Veterans and their family members, providing a dignified resting place.
- The expiration of the federal Public Health Emergency on May 11 relaxed reporting guidelines, changed protocols and guidance for healthcare personnel and facilities, and allowed MVC to transition away from emergency infection control protocols.

MVC saw incredible commitment to the Veteran population with budget support from both Governor Parson and the General Assembly. MVC received \$39.6M in one-time support for the Homes Fund, and \$13M from Medical Marijuana Funds. These funds provided much needed short-term budget stability. A long-term budget solution is required for MVC to fully recover from revenue loss that has taken place over the past decade and which was compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. Cash flow shortages jeopardize MVC operations in future fiscal years. MVC is committed to building on the past two years' short-term budget success and continues to focus our efforts on a stable budgetary framework with a long-term perspective.

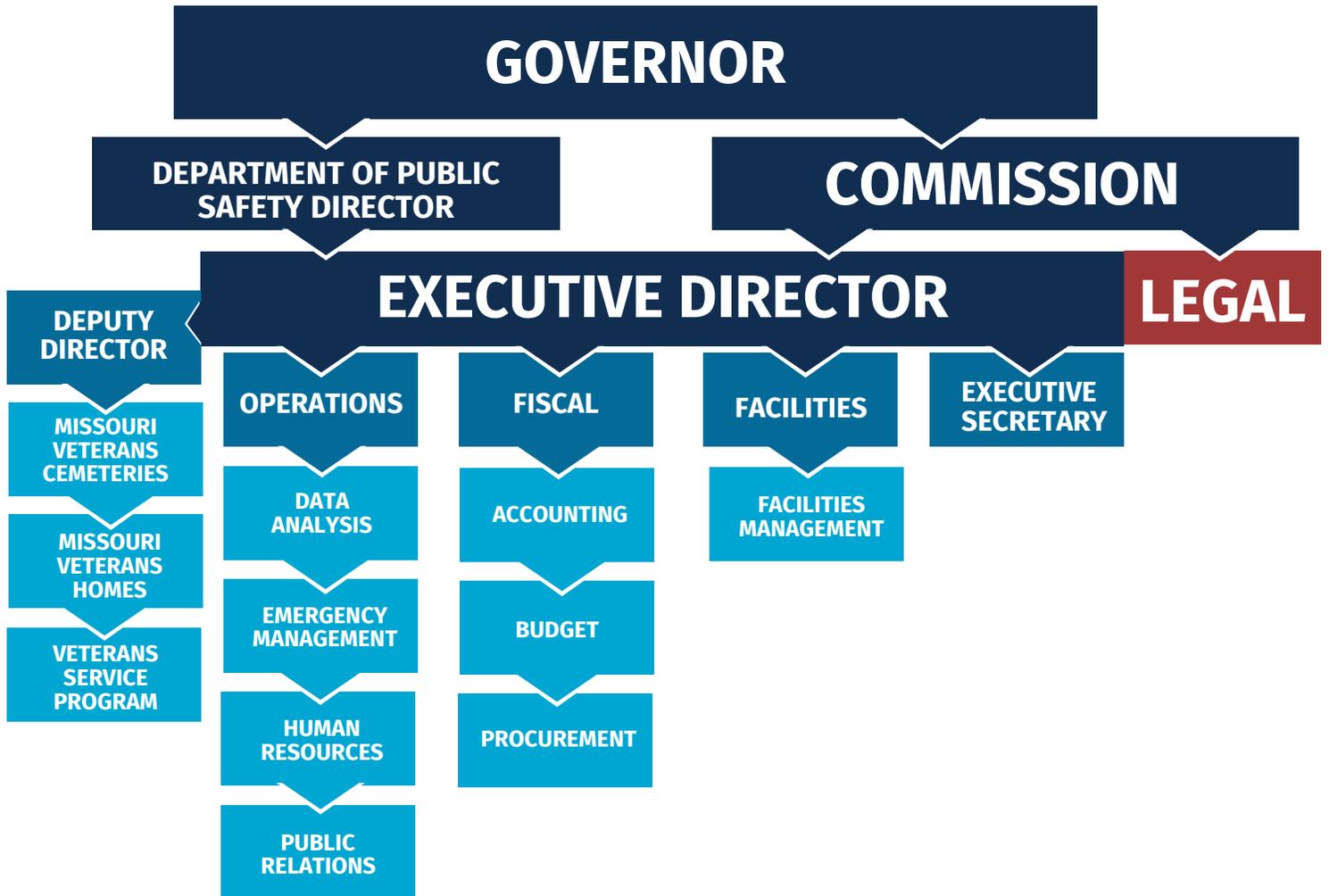
In closing, I would like to thank Governor Parson and members of the Missouri General Assembly for their continued commitment to Veterans and the MVC workforce. I also want to thank each MVC team member. It is a privilege and an honor to work with you to provide high-quality, compassionate care for Veterans; seamlessly integrated with the Veteran community; emphasizing a culture of transparency and excellence.

Respectfully,

Paul Kirchoff, Executive Director

*Missourians age 18 or older (as of 2020) according to population estimates from the Missouri Census Data Center
<https://mcrc.missouri.edu/applications/population/by-age/report.php?s=29&y=2020&d=&a=5b>

COMMISSION OVERVIEW



COMMISSION OVERVIEW

The Missouri Veterans Commission is comprised of three core programs administered by Headquarters staff and regulated by the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs. Programs within the Commission include:

- **Veterans Cemeteries Program** – Five state cemeteries that provide a dignified resting place for our nation’s heroes
- **Veterans Homes Program** – Seven facilities that provide unparalleled care for 1,238 Veterans in need of 24/7 skilled nursing
- **Veterans Service Program** – 49 Veteran Service Officers throughout the state of Missouri that assist Veterans and their dependents secure state and federal benefits

MVC is a state agency established by Missouri Statute to aid all Veterans, their dependents, and legal representatives by providing information regarding the rights of Veterans and their dependents and to assist Veterans in accessing their available benefits through the State and Federal Government. The Commission is comprised of nine individuals; four members of the General Assembly, two appointed by the House of Representatives and two appointed by the Senate, and five members appointed by the Governor, confirmed by the Senate.



COMMISSION CHAIR
KELLY MCCLELLAND



VICE-CHAIR
MEREDITH KNOPP



SENATOR
STEVEN ROBERTS



SENATOR
RICK BRATTIN



REPRESENTATIVE
DAVE GRIFFITH



REPRESENTATIVE
ROBERT SAULS



TIM SMITH



RANDY ALEWEL



STEVE MAPLES

VISION

TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY, COMPASSIONATE CARE FOR VETERANS; SEAMLESSLY INTEGRATED WITH THE VETERAN COMMUNITY; EMPHASIZING A CULTURE OF TRANSPARENCY AND EXCELLENCE.



FISCAL REVIEW

MVC will continue to make the most of dedicated taxpayer dollars and preserve Missouri's Veterans position at the forefront of the decision-making process. During FY23, MVC underwent a statewide annual audit of federal spending conducted every one (1) year as well as the single audit, a review of federal awards which is conducted every three (3) years. These audits reviewed the awards and spending during FY22. These audits were conducted simultaneously and MVC is proud to announce that both audits came back with no significant findings. This is accomplished through a collaborative effort among all team members before, during, and after audits.

The State Veterans Home Per Diem reimbursement from the VA and the resident room and care payments are the two largest revenues that source continued operations for the Homes Program. These sources are 100% dependent on the number of Veterans residing in the seven Veterans homes. The VA reimburses expenses at a daily per diem rate based on the number of Veterans in the facilities. Room and care rates are charged to Veterans with less than a 70% service-connected disability rating.

Although MVC continues to see improvements in talent acquisition and staffing levels, the census of Homes residents is still low, and returning to the full 1,238-bed capacity is currently out of reach. Therefore, MVC relies heavily on state funds to support continued operations. In prior fiscal years, the Veterans Homes Fund relied on solvency transfers from the Veterans Commission Capital Improvement Trust Fund (VCCITF). Given the continued decrease in revenue to support the VCCITF, this funding support is no longer available to replace lost revenues.

In FY23, Missouri Gaming Commission (MGC) transferred \$11,030,412 to the VCCITF. This revenue support is approximately half of what MVC received pre-pandemic and is not sufficient to support the requirements of the fund and to keep the Homes Fund solvent. Additionally, during FY23 Missouri Veterans Homes received a transfer of \$13,000,000 from Medical Marijuana Funds into Homes fund to support the operational needs of the Veterans Homes as the VCCITF no longer has the cash flow to maintain the solvency of the Homes Fund.

MAJOR REVENUE SUPPORT SOURCES

- 1 **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) federal grant program reimbursements**
 - State Veterans Home Per Diem
 - Cemetery Plot Allowance
 - Capital Improvement Projects
 - Recruitment and Retention Differentials for Direct Care Nursing Staff
- 2 **Room and care rates charged (Veterans with service connection rating below 70%)**
- 3 **Missouri Gaming Commission (MGC) proceeds**
- 4 **Veterans Assistance Fund - Medical Marijuana**
- 5 **Budget Stabilization Fund - One Time Funding**

Through unprecedented financial support and commitment to Veterans from the Governor’s office, General Assembly, federal and state departments and partners, MVC has afforded the ability to meet short-term financial obligations. Through this collaborative support during FY23, MVC’s dedicated funds will remain solvent through fiscal year 2024.

The infrastructure and fixed contractual obligations, alongside inflationary and talent acquisition constraints compound fiscal challenges. The long-term viability of MVC will require considerable support to sustain the Veteran support programs offered by the State of Missouri. Missouri Veterans Commission will continue to make sound financial decisions on behalf of the Veterans of our state.

FY23 FINANCIAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 8.7%** Salary increase for all team members effective March 1, 2023
- \$39.6M** Homes Fund cash flow support for operations from Budget Stabilization Funds
- \$13M** Homes Fund Revenue Replacement from Medical Marijuana Funds
- \$4.3M** CARES One-time funding from the VA - fully expended
- \$18.9M** Facilities Maintenance and Reserve Funding for COVID Construction Grant-up to 100% reimbursable by the VA
- \$2.2M** ARPA funding for the St. James water and sanitation line replacement project
- \$1.5M** \$1.5M Budget Stabilization funding to address Veterans Homelessness in Missouri
- Professional Leadership Development Awards for top-performing staff
- Veterans Homes Recruitment and Retention Differentials for direct care staff

FY23 REVENUE ALL FUNDS

VETERANS HOME FUND	
VETERAN ROOM AND CARE	\$13,261,494
VA PER DIEM AND RETROACTIVE CLAIMS	\$54,802,257
VA RETENTION GRANT	\$200,191
SOLVENCY TRANFERS IN - MEDICAL MARIJUANA	\$13,000,000
ONE-TIME SOLVENCY TRANSFER IN - BUDGET STABILIZATON	\$39,640,000
ONE-TIME SOLVENCY TRANSERS IN - GENERAL REVENUE	\$ -
OTHER	\$445,226
TOTAL DEPOSITS	\$121,349,167
VETERANS COMMISSION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT TRUST FUND (VCCITF)	
PLOT ALLOWANCE	\$1,123,841
CONSTRUCTION (HOMES & CEMETERIES)	\$484,385
TRANSFERS IN (GAMING)	\$11,030,412
OTHER	\$24,927
TOTAL DEPOSITS	\$12,663,564
VETERANS ASSISTANCE FUND	
TRANSFERS IN (MEDICAL MARIJUANA)	\$ -
CONSTRUCTION (CEMETERIES)	\$745,660
TOTAL DEPOSITS	\$745,660
VETERANS TRUST FUND	
DONATIONS	\$500
OTHER	\$358
TOTAL DEPOSITS	\$858
WORLD WAR I MEMORIAL TRUST FUND	
DONATIONS	\$164,860
OTHER	\$3,922
TOTAL DEPOSITS	\$168,782
TOTAL REVENUE ALL DEDICATED FUNDS	\$95,288,032
FEDERAL STIMULUS	
CARES FEDERAL STIMULUS	\$430
ARPA FEDERAL STIMULUS	\$ -
TOTAL DEPOSITS	\$430
TOTAL REVENUE ALL ONE-TIME FUNDS	\$39,640,000
TOTAL REVENUE ALL FUNDS	\$134,928,462

FY23 EXPENDED ALL FUNDS

HOMES	VSP	CEMETERIES	HQ	TOTAL
VETERANS HOME FUND				
\$108,045,319	\$906,107	\$-	\$1,247,258	\$110,198,684
VETERANS COMMISSION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT TRUST FUND (VCCITF)				
\$5,934,908	\$3,265,648	\$4,331,740	\$4,388,087	\$17,920,383
VETERANS ASSISTANCE FUND				
\$914,757	\$-	\$-	\$751,113	\$1,665,870
VETERANS TRUST FUND				
\$-	\$12,606	\$-	\$-	\$12,606
WORLD WAR I MEMORIAL TRUST FUND				
\$-	\$-	\$-	\$150,000	\$150,000
EPIDEMIOLOGY AND LABORATORY CONTROL FUNDS				
\$941,400	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$941,400
CARES ONE-TIME FUND				
\$4,255,629	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$4,255,629
CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL FUND				
\$7,293	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$7,293
GRAND TOTAL BY PROGRAM				
\$120,099,306	\$4,184,361	\$4,331,740	\$6,536,458	\$135,151,865

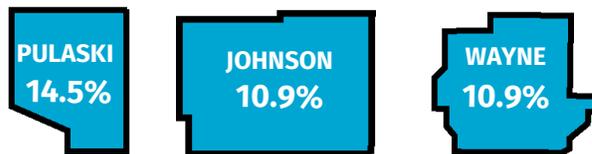


VETERAN* DEMOGRAPHICS

TOTAL VETERAN POPULATION IN MISSOURI IN FY23

399,154

TOP 3 COUNTIES BY VETERAN DENSITY



VETERAN POPULATION IN MISSOURI IN FY23

MALE VETERANS
358,565

FEMALE VETERANS
40,589

TOP 3 COUNTIES BY VETERAN POPULATION

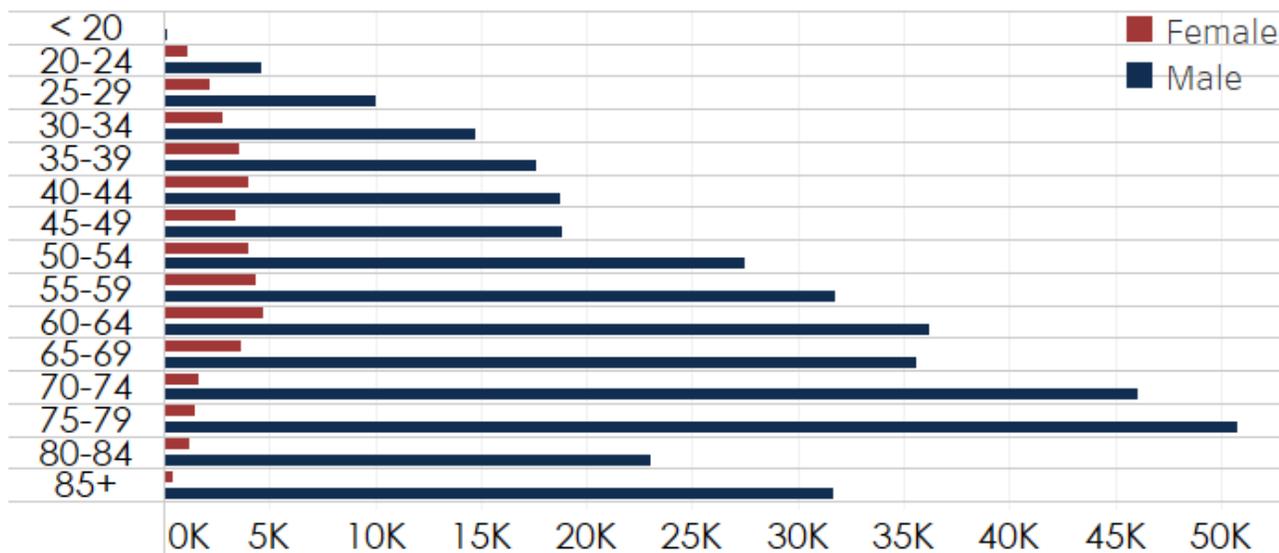


MOST COMMON AGE GROUP OF MISSOURI VETERANS

MALE VETERANS
70-74 YEARS OLD

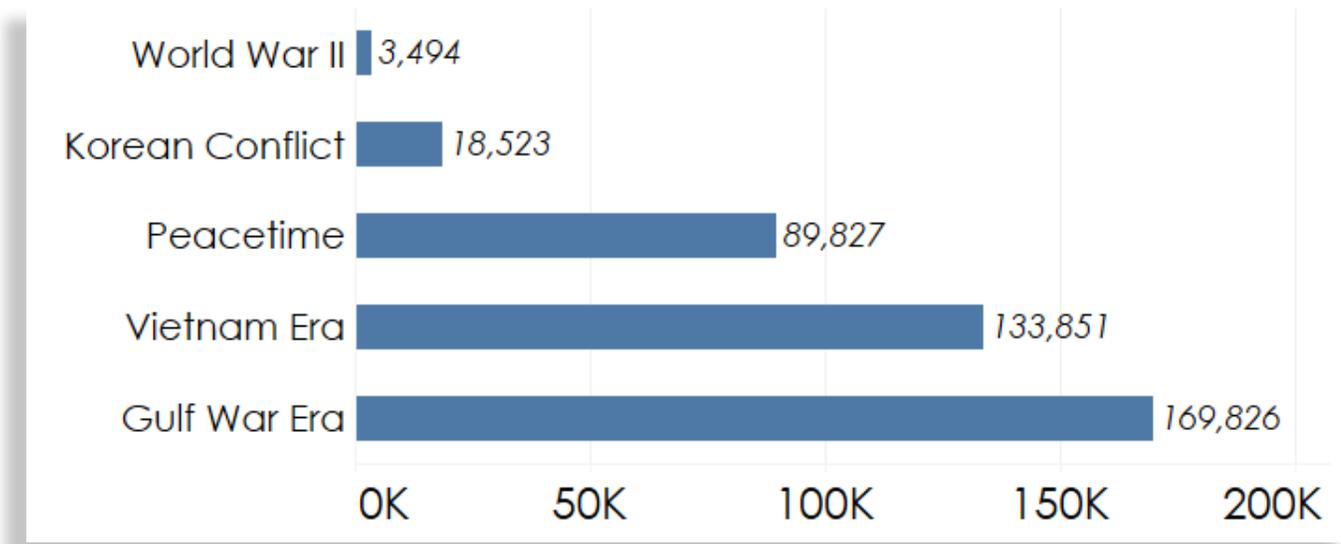
FEMALE VETERANS
60-64 YEARS OLD

TOP 3 WAR TIME ERAS BY VETERAN

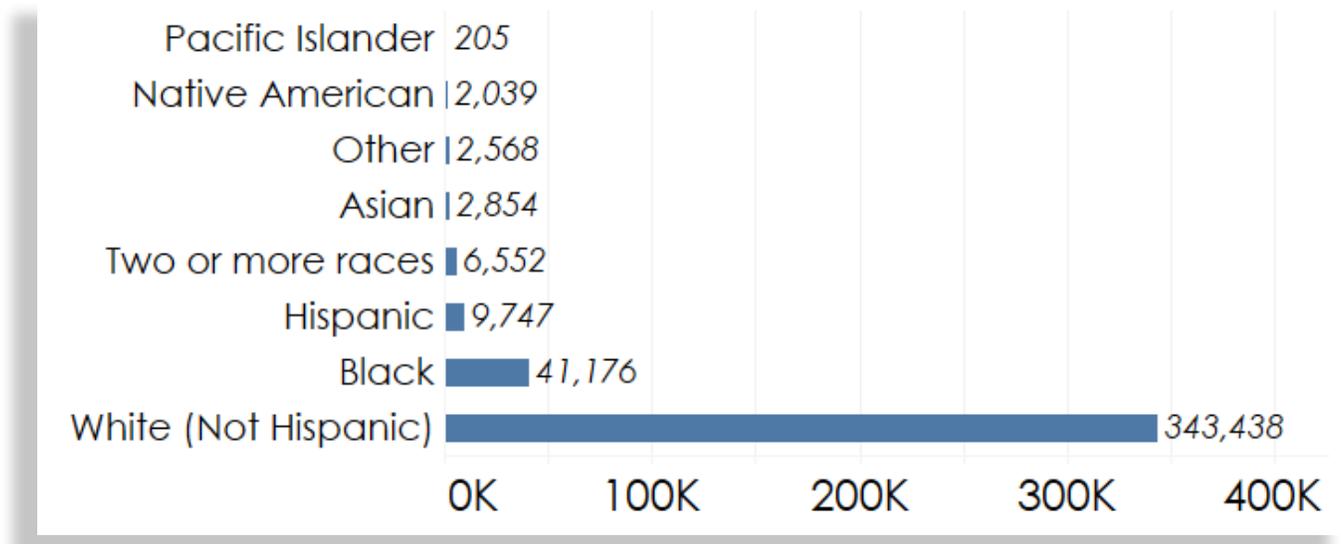


* Source - National Center for Veterans Analysis & Statistics - va.gov/vetdata/veteran_population.asp

FY23 MISSOURI VETERANS BY WARTIME ERA



FY23 MISSOURI VETERANS BY RACE





VETERANS CEMETERIES PROGRAM

The Missouri Veterans Commission oversees a network of six state Veterans cemeteries that ensure access to a dignified resting place for Veterans and eligible dependents. There are five operational cemeteries located in Bloomfield, Fort Leonard Wood, Higginsville, Jacksonville, and Springfield. The sixth cemetery is located at the Missouri Veterans Home – St. James and is closed to interments.

The Cemeteries Program continued its commitment to Veterans, their families, and team members during this 25th anniversary year. A peer review team was established to help team members prepare for VA inspections, quarterly counterpart meetings were implemented to help facilitate communication, sharing of best practices, and cross-training of team members. Additionally, a professional development day was added each month to ensure cemetery teams are well trained and prepared to meet any challenge.

The Springfield Cemetery earned the prestigious Operational Excellence Award from the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) in Fiscal Year 2022. This award is given to cemeteries that meet 100% of all six critical priority measures during on-site inspections and assessments. During the review, 95 standards and measures are evaluated in categories including safety, interment operations, grounds maintenance, equipment maintenance, customer satisfaction, and headstone, marker, and niche cover. A special ceremony was hosted at the cemetery on December 21, 2022, where NCA Deputy Under Secretary for Field Programs and Cemetery Operations, Mr. Glenn Powers, presented the award to the Springfield team.

MOST RECENT NCA TRI-ANNUAL REVIEW SCORES



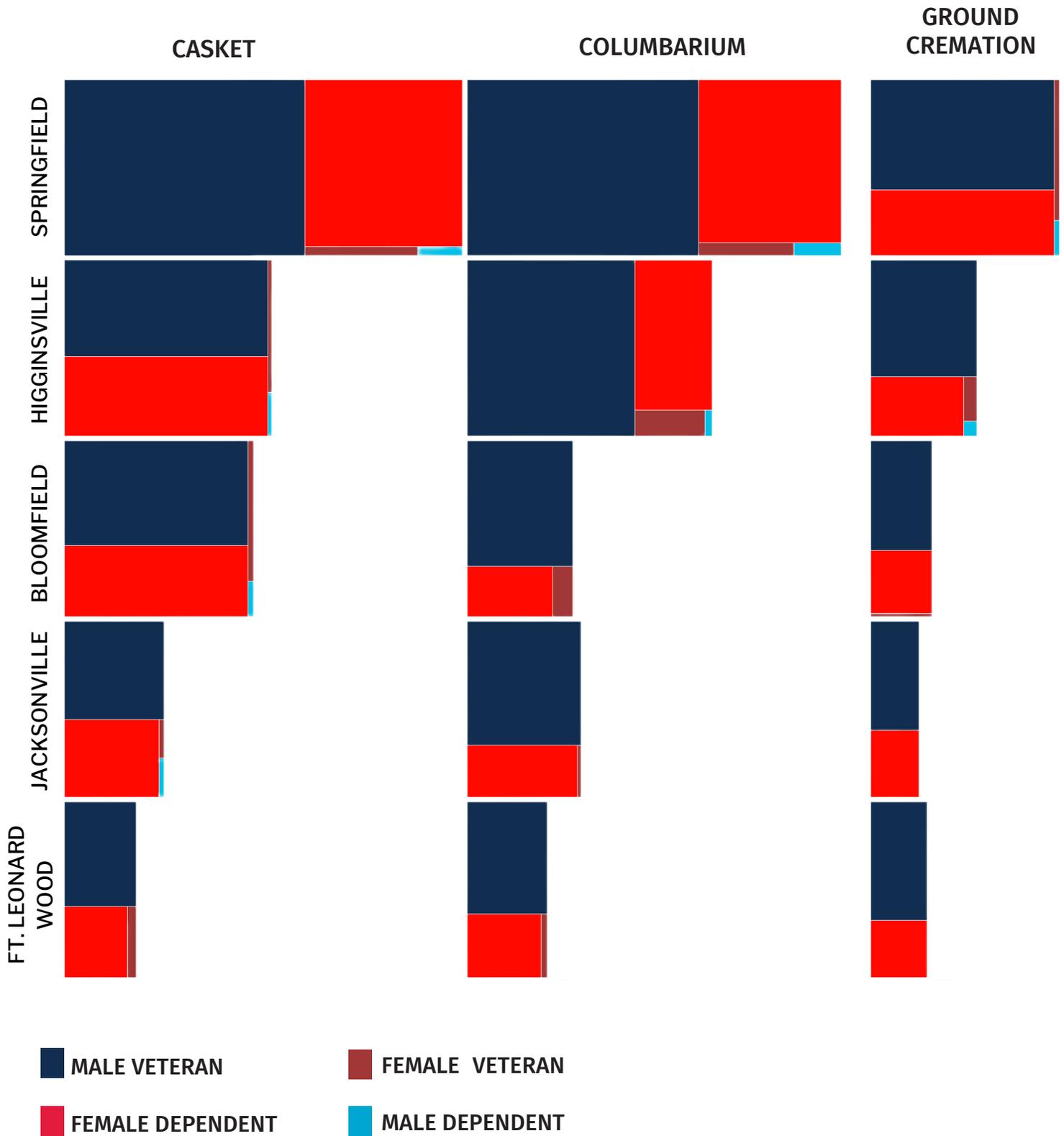
In addition to onsite inspections, the NCA conducts customer satisfaction surveys. Veteran next of kin and funeral home directors are surveyed in the independently-administrated survey. On average, the five cemeteries scored in top tiers across all categories:



In addition to the new endeavors, the Cemeteries Program took part in annual events to honor those interred on our grounds. Wreaths Across America allows the interred to be remembered and honored during the holiday season with donated wreaths. On Memorial Day, each cemetery participated in a remembrance ceremony, hosting over 1,500 visitors collectively.

VETERANS CEMETERIES PROGRAM

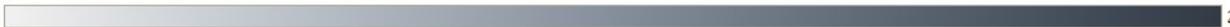
FY23 INTERMENTS BY BURIAL TYPE, GENDER, LOCATION, AND VETERAN STATUS*



*An individual is counted for each war time era and branches in which they served

FY23 INTERMENTS BY BURIAL TYPE, GENDER, LOCATION, AND VETERAN STATUS CONT'D

SPRINGFIELD	MV	208 (10.28%)	199 (9.83%)	99 (4.89%)	506 (25.00%)
	FD	129 (6.37%)	114 (5.63%)	59 (2.92%)	302 (14.92%)
	FV	5 (0.25%)	6 (0.30%)	4 (0.20%)	15 (0.74%)
	MD	2 (0.10%)	3 (0.15%)	1 (0.05%)	6 (0.30%)
HIGGINSVILLE	MV	96 (4.74%)	144 (7.11%)	61 (3.01%)	301 (14.87%)
	FD	79 (3.90%)	57 (2.82%)	27 (1.33%)	163 (8.05%)
	FV	3 (0.15%)	9 (0.44%)	3 (0.15%)	15 (0.74%)
	MD	1 (0.05%)	1 (0.05%)	1 (0.05%)	3 (0.15%)
BLOOMFIELD	MV	94 (4.64%)	65 (3.21%)	33 (1.63%)	192 (9.49%)
	FD	64 (3.16%)	21 (1.04%)	19 (0.94%)	104 (5.14%)
	FV	4 (0.20%)	5 (0.25%)	1 (0.05%)	10 (0.49%)
	MD	1 (0.05%)			1 (0.05%)
JACKSONVILLE	MV	48 (2.37%)	75 (3.71%)	20 (0.99%)	143 (7.07%)
	FD	36 (1.78%)	29 (1.43%)	15 (0.74%)	80 (3.95%)
	FV	1 (0.05%)	1 (0.05%)		2 (0.10%)
	MD	1 (0.05%)			1 (0.05%)
FT. LEONARD WOOD	MV	37 (1.83%)	44 (2.17%)	33 (1.63%)	114 (5.63%)
	FD	22 (1.09%)	23 (1.14%)	16 (0.79%)	61 (3.01%)
	FV	3 (0.15%)	2 (0.10%)		5 (0.25%)
GRAND TOTAL		834 (41.21%)	798 (39.435)	392 (19.37%)	2,024 (100%)

0  271

**MV = MALE
VETERAN**

**FD = FEMALE
DEPENDENT**

**FV = FEMALE
VETERAN**

**MD = MALE
DEPENDENT**

*An individual is counted for each war time era and branches in which they served



VETERANS HOMES PROGRAM

Each of the seven Missouri Veterans Homes provides comprehensive skilled nursing services to Veterans who are certified as needing such care by a licensed physician. A full-time staff of registered nurses (RNs), licensed practical nurses (LPNs), and certified nursing assistants (CNAs) provide round-the-clock medical and nursing care.

Rehabilitative services, such as occupational, physical and speech therapy, and recreational and restorative care, are provided under the direct supervision of licensed therapists and RNs. In addition to these services, Missouri Veterans Homes also provide pharmaceutical medications, physician care, dietary services, barber and cosmetology services, and laundry services at no additional fee. These extra services set the Missouri Veterans Homes apart when it comes to services and value.

In FY23, the state and federal government continued its commitment to Veterans through developing the MVC workforce. Unprecedented career and talent development initiatives took place this year. In late summer, MVC worked with state officials to gain approval for a retention and recruitment differential partially funded through the VA’s Payment to States for Programs to Promote the Hiring and Retention of Nurses at State Veterans Homes. This grant was approved and allowed MVC to pay Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) and Certified Medication Technicians (CMTs) a one-time \$920 differential to help with recruiting and retention. MVC also hired recruiters for each of the seven Veterans Homes to help build relationships with potential job candidates and create a positive workplace to help retain team members.

MVC believes in creating opportunities for its workforce and building a dedicated team of nursing and ancillary professionals to care for our nation’s heroes. This year, MVC established an affiliation agreement with Lincoln University School of Nursing to sponsor CMT training in all seven Veterans Homes. This agreement provides MVC the opportunity to offer current CNA staff additional training and certification for career advancement. Under the program, CNA’s learn new skills, obtain CMT certification making them eligible for advancement, and all while continuing to serve our Veterans.

High CNA turnover and low retention plagued MVC during the COVID pandemic as many healthcare workers departed the industry, or chose careers outside of healthcare. To increase efficiencies and to foster opportunities and job skills, each Home recruits CNA students and organizes classes to train students to obtain a state certification as a Nursing Assistant. This year MVC trained 235 people subsequently certified by the state as CNAs. These newly certified team members are contributing to lower vacancies, lower turnover and higher retention. The program is a win for the students, MVC, and the Veterans we serve.

OF CNA STUDENTS THAT RECEIVED CNA CERTIFICATION IN THE VETERANS HOME FY23

CAMERON



CAPE GIRARDEAU



MEXICO



MT. VERNON



ST. JAMES



ST. LOUIS



WARRENSBURG



= 10 Students

VETERANS HOMES PROGRAM

MVC was honored to have six employees nominated as Missouri Health Care Association (MHCA) District—Level Employees of the Year during FY23. MHCA collects nominees from skilled nursing facilities across the state and selects finalists based on employees that went the extra mile in their dedication and compassion to their facilities and to the residents they serve:

CNA of the Year –

- Rosary Zalazinski, MO Veterans Home - St. James

Employee of the Year –

- Maria Tracy, MO Veterans Home - Cameron
- Letitia Redden, MO Veterans Home - St. Louis
- Jaylon Taylor, MO Veterans Home - Mt. Vernon

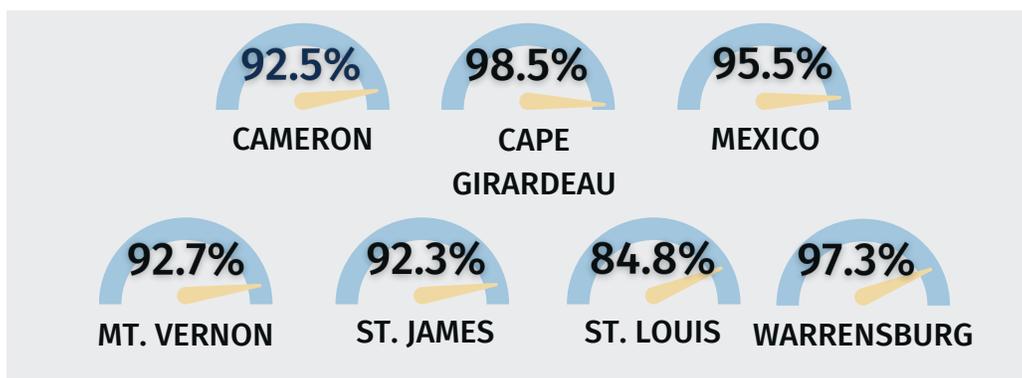
Administrator of the Year –

- David Hibler, MO Veterans Home - Cameron
- Leonard Rhine, MO Veterans Home - St. Louis

For the fourth consecutive year, six Missouri Veterans Homes received a “Best in Class” customer satisfaction award from Pinnacle Quality Insight.

Pinnacle is a customer satisfaction measurement firm with 26 years of experience in post-acute healthcare; they conduct over 150,000 phone surveys each year and work with more than 2,500 care providers. During the telephone survey, Veterans and their family members are asked open-ended questions and to rank facilities in specific categories. MVC has contracted with Pinnacle since 2019 to help obtain objective feedback on Veteran and family satisfaction as part of its commitment to providing the highest level of care to those we serve.

The aggregate customer satisfaction scores, expressed in a percentage, are based on a rating scale of one to five, five being the highest. The Overall Customer Satisfaction Score is the percentage of 4s and 5s MVC received, shown below for FY23:



In addition to being “Best in Class”, four Homes received deficiency-free surveys from the VA: St. James, Cameron, Warrensburg, and Cape Girardeau. On-site inspectors ensure Veterans Homes are meeting each of the 157 federal standards. A deficiency-free survey is the most favorable outcome available and means the Home is being operated in total compliance with federal regulations in key areas of resident care, services, staffing regulations, and life safety, just to name a few. This goal is not easily attainable.

VETERANS SERVICE PROGRAM

The Missouri Veterans Commission employs 50 Veteran Service Officers (VSOs). Each VSO is accredited by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and completes 16 hours of continuing education training each year to maintain accreditation. The skills required to provide successful claims assistance and appeals representation to the Board of Veteran Appeals include a vast knowledge base of VA laws, federal, state, and local services and benefits available, and customer service skills. These skills and abilities allow our team to help Missouri Veterans understand their benefits and successfully provide Veterans and their families with the assistance needed to obtain their earned benefits and entitlements. The services they provide are 100% free to Veterans and their families.

Without professional assistance, many Veterans lose benefits they have earned. MVC's VSOs provide outstanding, dedicated service, individualize each application, and guide Veterans through the complex process. MVC's VSOs are Veterans themselves; they meet with Veterans face-to-face and develop claims that net the largest possible benefit.

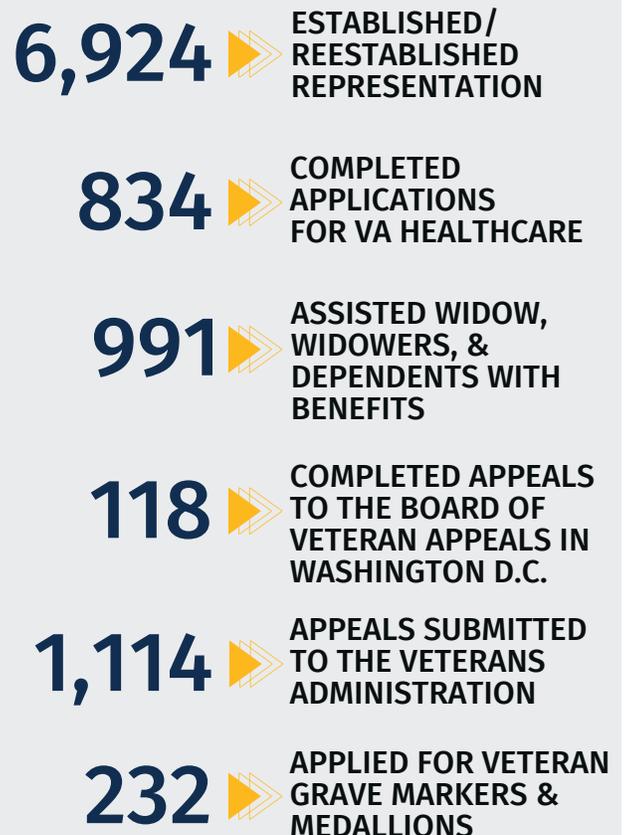
MVC VSOs have assisted Veterans and their families in obtaining more than \$439 million through federal benefits. These federal dollars enter the state as a direct result of the hard work of the Veteran Service Program. The funds are used by Missouri Veterans and their families and stimulate Missouri's economy.

During FY23, MVC VSOs filed 1,828 new compensation and pension claims which resulted in over \$13.6M in new awards during FY23 alone. This is a 60% increase in new awards and 23% increase in the number of new beneficiaries assisted by MVC VSOs since FY22. These amounts are directly attributable to the activities and efforts of

the MVC VSOs. The work the VSO team does for Missouri's Veterans and their families is long-lasting and impactful.

The Cape Girardeau VSO office made headlines this year through their years-long support and claim management for Veteran Spicer. In the landmark case, *Spicer v. McDonough*, the Federal Circuit Court vacated previous decisions and ruled that a Veteran is entitled to service connection where his service-connected disease or injury impedes the treatment of a disability. This decision, and the perseverance of the MVC VSOs, helps pave the way for numerous Veterans to obtain their earned benefits.

FY23 STATS



GRANTS PROGRAM

The Missouri Veterans Commission offers up to \$1,600,000 of grant funding and joint training and outreach efforts each year to be distributed in matching funds for Federally Chartered Veteran Service Organizations and municipal government agencies that are certified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to process Veterans claims. Allocations are determined by claims processing productivity. These organizations assist MVC in its mission of providing assistance in obtaining benefits Veterans and their families are legally entitled to, encouraging those eligible to apply, and successfully managing claims. In FY23, \$1,585,138.83 of the distributed grant, joint training and outreach funds were paid. The Veteran Service Organizations apply for grants through an application process and meet quarterly with MVC staff to discuss distributions and to share best practices.

FY23 GRANT DISTRIBUTION SUMMARY



\$572,618.11



\$111,575.48



\$537,870.81



\$48,487.68



\$184,680.57



\$39,372.08



\$90,534.10

COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH

Outreach efforts were strong in FY23 as the MVC team traveled across the state attending events and reaching Veterans in 51 counties. The year kicked off with the Missouri State Fair in August, where Veteran Service Officers and staff interacted with over 2,300 Veterans. Throughout the year, MVC attended 206 outreach events and made contact with over 10,000 Veterans. These interactions helped MVC push its communication strategy, which emphasizes education, benefit awareness and collaboration between state and federal partners.

The outreach team continues to partner with Governor Parson and others across the state through participation in the “Governors Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and their Families”. This important group is organizing efforts and contributing Missouri priorities to a national effort focused on Veteran suicide prevention. These efforts include the creation of digital media displayed in Government office buildings across the state and engaging the Veteran audience on social media platforms. MVC also established a contractual relationship with the Veterans Community Project and the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture to help address Veteran homelessness.

MVC partnered with multiple state government agencies to cross-promote Veteran benefits and educate about MVC’s important mission. Team members had the privilege to help orient newly-elected officials during the Freshman Legislative Tour. MVC coordinated efforts with the Missouri Department of Corrections on their Reentry 2030 program to ensure incarcerated Veterans are aware of and connected to their VA benefits before reentry. For the second consecutive year, MVC partnered with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to recognize and honor Veterans during their annual Hero Hunt. And, MVC established collaborative effort with the Missouri Department of Conservation to cross-promote Veteran events and benefits, such as hunting and fishing permits.

A new, refreshed social media mental health outreach campaign kicked off last fall, focusing on Buddy Check 22 and 988. In collaboration with the Missouri National Guard and the Missouri Department of Mental Health, MVC published videos, and digital reminders on the twenty-second day of each month. The combined campaign reached over 37,000 social media users. The campaign was designed to promote education, raise awareness of the problems of suicide facing military personnel, and learn about suicide prevention and resources available through the use of dialing 988 during a crisis.

MVC continues to add new resources to the Missouri Benefits and Resource Portal for Veterans and Military. This year the portal received over 31,000 new visitors.

Social media continues to be a primary way MVC interacts with the Veteran community. Our reach continues to improve, reaching 12% more social media followers than in FY22. We encourage everyone to follow and like our pages.



32,639



356



906



751

Will clinics continue to be one way MVC can help Veterans plan for the unknown. MVC established free legal clinics for drafting wills and powers of attorney for Veterans and their spouses in fiscal year 2022. This year, MVC’s Office of General Counsel continued the program which collaborates local attorneys to provide these services to Veterans and their spouses free of charge. all. In addition to these services, the team created “Planning for the Future”, a free informational guide to help Veterans and their families navigate options available as they age. The initiative has been highly successful, exponentially increasing the number of Veterans served.

FY23 WILL CLINIC STATS





**MISSOURI VETERANS
COMMISSION**

