

FEBRUARY 2023

The Homeless Programs Office (HPO) newsletter contains news and information about VA's ongoing effort to prevent and end homelessness among Veterans.



Executive Director's Message | Around HPO

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Veterans who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness are strongly encouraged to contact the [National Call Center for Homeless Veterans](#) at (877) 4AID-VET (877-424-3838) for assistance.

Message From Monica Diaz, Executive Director, VHA Homeless Programs Office



It was 1965. United States Marine Jesse Brown was on patrol in Da Nang, Vietnam when he endured the severe combat wounds that would change his life.

Brown returned to Great Lakes Naval Hospital outside of Chicago to recover, but despite his best efforts, his right arm remained partially paralyzed.

He soon learned that his future in the country he served—and nearly sacrificed his life for—would not be easy. The ink had barely dried on the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Brown

found that most job opportunities available to black men required significant manual labor that he would not be able to do with just one functioning arm.

In 1967, Brown received a job offer from [Disabled American Veterans](#) (DAV) and began helping Veterans apply for VA benefits. He saw firsthand how these benefits could be life-changing for Veterans.

Nearly 30 years after his injury, Brown testified before the Senate as President Clinton's nominee for Secretary of VA, declaring, "I believe that the way a society treats its Veterans is an indication of who we are as a nation."

[Read Monica's full message.](#)

Around HPO



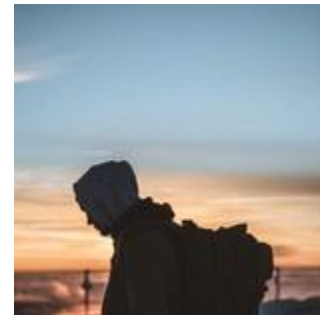
[Ending Veteran Homelessness Podcast: Growing Older Together: How VA is Evolving to Support Aging Veterans](#)

This month, we are joined by HUD-VASH team members to learn about how the how VA homeless programs are changing to help older Veterans age gracefully in their own homes. Our guests talk about the HUD-VASH Aging and

Disabled Veterans Initiative and how it's being implemented in the California Bay Area. [Listen to the full episode.](#)

[2022 State of Veteran Homelessness Infographic](#)

Few conditions are more harmful to individual health and welfare than homelessness. That's why VA is committed to making sure every Veteran has a safe and stable place to call home. [Read our infographic](#) to learn about the state of Veteran homelessness in 2022, how we are addressing the challenge, and how you can help.



[HUD Awards \\$315 Million in Historic Grants to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness](#)

This month, HUD announced the first set of communities to receive grants and vouchers to address homelessness among people in unsheltered settings and in rural communities, totaling nearly \$315 million in grants to 46 communities. HUD will be awarding grants to an additional set of communities as well as allocating housing vouchers to awarded communities.

Together, these grants and vouchers comprise a first-of-its-kind package of resources to help communities provide housing and supportive services to people in

unsheltered settings and people experiencing homelessness in rural areas. [Learn more.](#)

[National Center on Homelessness among Veterans FY 2022 Annual Report](#)



In fiscal year 2022 (FY 2022), an overarching theme for the Center was inclusivity of the perspective of Veterans with lived experiences of homelessness. This theme was woven into many of the Center’s discussions, projects and processes and also furthered the Center’s mission of promoting knowledge and solutions to address and prevent homelessness among Veterans. [Read the full annual report.](#)

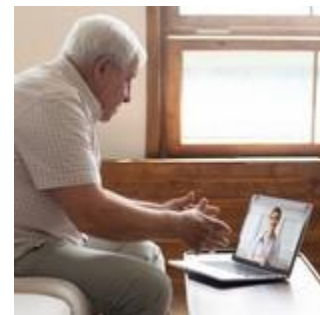


[The State of Unsheltered Veteran Homelessness](#)

Despite homelessness amongst Veterans continuing to drop, our communities are seeing an increase in the rate of Veterans experiencing unsheltered homelessness. [Learn why focusing on unsheltered homelessness matters](#) and what VA is doing to help.

[VA Offers \\$30M in Grant Funding to Assist Formerly Homeless Veterans](#)

As a part of ongoing efforts to prevent and end Veteran homelessness, VA is announcing \$30 million in grant funding for organizations to help formerly homeless Veterans maintain their independence and housing stability. [Read the press release.](#)



Health Update



According to the CDC, cases of [norovirus](#) are spreading across the country at levels that are higher than usual for this time of year.

[Norovirus](#) is a very contagious virus that causes vomiting, diarrhea, nausea, and stomach pain. Anyone can get infected and sick with norovirus. You can get it from having direct contact with an infected person, consuming contaminated food or water, or touching contaminated surfaces and then putting your unwashed hands in your mouth.

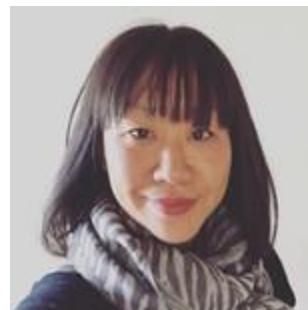
[Protect yourself and others](#) from norovirus by:

- Washing your hands often
- Rinsing fruits and vegetables
- Cooking shellfish thoroughly

- Staying home when sick and for two days after symptoms stop
 - Avoiding preparing food for others when sick and for two days after symptoms stop
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HPO Staff Spotlight: Alice “Jia” Son, LCSW

Ten years ago, when Jia Son came across a role with HUD-VASH that seemed like a perfect fit, she took a leap of faith and moved across the country to San Francisco. It turned out that the leap was worth it, as she spends her days helping provide services that help Veterans obtain permanent housing.



As the HUD-VASH Director for the VA San Francisco Health Care System, Son has the opportunity to provide support to her team of HUD-VASH supervisors, ensure they have the tools and resources they need, and assist with short- and long-term projects.

One of the latest projects aims to help aging Veterans who need a higher level of care, often with complex medical issues and severe cognitive decline. [Read the full spotlight](#) to learn about the partnership with Colma Veterans Village and how it's supporting aging Veterans with wraparound services.

HPO Fact of the Month



Did you know housing Veterans doesn't just provide shelter, but can lead to life-changing health, social and socioeconomic outcomes for them and their families?

Landlords have a unique opportunity to give back to those who have served. [Learn about the benefits of renting to Veterans](#) and how VA can help you get connected to tenants.