



## Upcoming Events

September 2024

### Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

### National Hispanic Heritage Month

September 15-October 15

### Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week Conference

September 15-19; Philadelphia, PA

### Citizenship/Constitution Day and Constitution Week

September 17 and September 17-23

### POW/MIA Recognition Day

September 20

### Anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

September 26

### Gold Star Mother's Day

September 29

### Gay and Lesbian Medical Association Conference

September 30-October 2; Charlotte, NC

## ORMDI

### Steps Toward Conflict Resolution

You can contact ORMDI toll-free at 1-888-566-3982 (TDD/TTY, dial 711 before providing this number) and speak with a specialist regarding equal employment opportunity (EEO) complaint processing or harassment prevention. You must initiate contact with an EEO counselor within 45 days of the date of the alleged act of discrimination by calling 1-888-566-3982 or visiting your local ORMDI Field Office. The harassment prevention procedures do not affect rights under the EEO complaint process. Harassment should be reported immediately to a manager or supervisor, [Harassment Prevention Coordinator](#), or the [ORMDI Harassment Prevention Program](#). For Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) services, email the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer [ADR team](#).

## Commemorate Hispanic Heritage Month

VA joins the Nation in commemorating National Hispanic Heritage Month (HHM) this September 15 to October 15. This year's theme is "Pioneers of Change: Shaping the Future Together" ([National Archives](#)). During HHM, VA commemorates Hispanic cultures and histories, and significant contributions Hispanics have made to American society and to the Nation. In 1968, Congress passed Public Law 40-498 to honor the achievements of Hispanics in America with histories and cultures from ancestors who came from Spain, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Congress, by Public Law 100-402, as amended, authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation designating September 15 through October 15 as "National Hispanic Heritage Month." These dates are significant as they commemorate the independence of various Latin American countries including Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico declared independence on September 16 and Chile on September 18.

As of June 30, 2024, Hispanics represented 7.61% of VA's permanent workforce. Of its permanent workforce, VA employs 122,940 Veterans, of which 8.62% are Hispanic. VA is experiencing less than expected participation for Hispanic men and women when compared to the Relevant Civilian Labor Force. In addition, Hispanic men have less than expected participation rates at GS-01 through GS-03, GS-05, GS-06, GS-08, and GS-11 through GS-14, and women have less than expected participation rates at GS-01 through GS-03, GS-10, GS-12 through GS-15, and Senior Executive Service levels when compared to the permanent VA workforce.

VA managers and supervisors are encouraged to support events and activities that recognize Hispanics and their many contributions to American society. The VA Central Office HHM Planning Committee and others will host an event on Wednesday, October 9, 2024, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. (EST) in room 230 at VA Central Office (810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420) which will also be broadcasted to those internal to VA.

Mr. Jaime Areizaga-Soto, Chairman, Board of Veterans' Appeals will serve as the moderator, and Ms. Katherine Martinez, Virginia Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations Vice Chair and Travis Manion Foundation Mid-Atlantic Regional Lead, will serve as the keynote speaker. The event will also include a panel discussion focused on methods that the Department can use towards supporting the unique needs of Hispanic Veterans, as well as identify tangible opportunities to help improve the employee experiences and career journeys of VA's Hispanic workforce. Secretary Denis McDonough will provide closing remarks. For more information, visit [VA's Hispanic Employment Program](#).



2024 Hispanic Heritage Month

# “Pioneers of Change: SHAPING THE FUTURE TOGETHER”

[www.nationalcouncilhepm.org](http://www.nationalcouncilhepm.org)

2024 Hispanic Heritage Month poster design by Mariana I. Purcell Rivera. Reprinted with permission.  
Materials may be accessed at [www.nationalcouncilhepm.com](http://www.nationalcouncilhepm.com).

## Message from the DAS

Mr. Dennis McGuire, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Resolution Management, Diversity and Inclusion

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) published final guidance on harassment in the workplace, **Enforcement Guidance on Harassment in the Workplace**. The **Summary of Key Provisions: EEOC Enforcement Guidance on Harassment in the Workplace**, “is intended to provide a broad overview of the document and issues related to workplace harassment” such as:

- What should an employer consider when investigating a harassment complaint?
- What if an employee who complains about harassment has no evidence, beyond their own statements, to prove that the harassment occurred?
- If an employer investigates a harassment complaint and determines that harassing conduct did occur, is the employer required by law to fire the harasser?
- Can an employer reassign or reschedule an employee who reports harassment in response to the employee’s report?

Visit **ORMDI’s Harassment Prevention Program** for more information.

## VA Internship and Fellowship Recognition Week Recap

**Celebrating the Vital Contributions of Interns and Fellows Across VA**

VA Internship and Fellowship Recognition Week (IFRW) offers a yearly opportunity to pause and focus on the future of VA — one with a new generation of employees who are highly skilled, have a passion for public service, and reflect the diversity of the Veterans we serve.

From July 22-26, the Human Capital Services Center (HCSC) hosted VA’s second annual IFRW. The week’s events celebrated the vital contributions of interns and fellows across VA and highlighted the role early career hiring programs play in shaping a workforce that is prepared to meet the needs of Veterans for years to come.

Throughout the week, teams across VA showed appreciation for the interns and fellows helping them achieve their missions using the IFRW Celebration Toolkit. The toolkit, created by HCSC, provided templates for newsletter articles and blog posts, recognition certificates supervisors or facility leadership could use to mark the occasion, and thank you cards that could be customized with a personal note.

Interns and fellows were invited to join the Office of Personnel Management for a virtual panel discussion featuring senior leaders who began their careers as interns and a virtual networking session to meet interns across the Federal Government with similar goals. These activities offered opportunities for interns and fellows to reflect on their experiences so far and look toward a future career in public service.

Staff from the Pathways Program Management Office hosted events focused on highlighting the benefits of internships at VA, including a Talk About It Tuesday for potential interns via LinkedIn Live and a lunch and learn highlighting how the VA Presidential Management Fellows Program can help hiring managers fill vacancies with skilled candidates.

Lastly, all employees were invited to a panel discussion featuring program alumni and diversity experts to explore how the Pathways Programs, National Diversity Internship Program, and Workforce Recruitment Program are helping VA foster a more inclusive workforce by offering pathways to employment for students and recent graduates from diverse backgrounds.

HCSC would like to thank everyone who participated in IFRW’s events, especially the participants of the Hiring a Diverse Workforce Panel: Ali Ahmad, Ashley West, Eli Khalil, and Tynnetta Lee. Your contributions made the second annual IFRW a success and we hope you will join us next year.

If you are interested in hiring an intern or fellow and would like more information about VA’s early career hiring programs, please contact the [Pathways Program Management Office](#).

## Affinity Conferences

VA employees who plan to attend should follow appropriate conference attendance approval procedures established for their respective organizations. Costs associated with attending must be authorized by each employee's organization. No centralized funding is available to pay for registration:



### Annual National HBCU Week Conference

The Annual National Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Week Conference is planned under the leadership of the White House Initiative on HBCUs and with input from the President's Board of Advisors on HBCUs and its conference sponsors. It provides a forum to exchange information and share innovations among and between institutions. Stakeholders, including federal agencies, provide an overview of successful engagements that, if replicated, could improve instruction, degree completion, and the understanding of federal policies that shape and support higher education. This year's event will be held September 15-19, 2024, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with the theme, "Raise the Bar: Lead the World." For more information, visit the [HBCU website](#) or contact Ms. Tynnetta Lee, VA's HBCU representative.



### GLMA Annual Conference

The 42nd Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA) Annual Conference on LGBTQ+ Health will be held in Charlotte, North Carolina, September 30 to October 2, 2024. The theme is: "Practice with Pride." Since its inception in 1981, GLMA's Annual Conference on LGBTQ+ Health has served as the premier scientific conference for LGBTQ+ and allied health professionals to share innovative healthcare breakthroughs and interventions, as well as the latest research on LGBTQ+ health. The conference is open to health care providers of all disciplines, researchers, academics, health administrators, policy experts, advocates and all LGBTQ+ health supporters. Following supervisory and budget approval, attendees must also register on the [GLMA website](#). For more information, contact Mr. Sterling Akins, VA's Departmental LGBTQ+ Program Manager, ORMDI.



### Out & Equal Workplace Summit

The Out & Equal Workplace Summit will be held in Orlando, Florida, October 7 to 10, 2024. The theme is: "Illuminating Truth, Community, and the Path Forward." The largest LGBTQ+ workplace inclusion event in the world, the Summit brings together a global community of thought leaders and changemakers to knowledge share, exchange promising and/or best practices for making measurable and lasting change, and to network in ways that build important relationships that last a lifetime. Following supervisory and budget approval, attendees must also register on the [Out & Equal website](#). For more information, contact Mr. Sterling Akins, VA's Departmental LGBTQ+ Program Manager, ORMDI.



### HACU Annual Conference

The [Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities \(HACU\) 38th Annual Conference](#) will be held November 1-3, 2024, at the Gaylord Rockies Resort & Convention Center in Aurora, Colorado. This year's theme is, "Championing Hispanic Higher Education Success: Reaching New Heights of Excellence and Equity." The conference will include plenaries, luncheons, and networking opportunities, and it will provide a unique forum to share information and ideas for the most promising practices in the education of Hispanics. For more information, contact Ms. Karen M. Basnight, VA's Acting Departmental Hispanic Employment Program Manager, ORMDI.

## AAGEN SES Leadership Development Program

### Accepting Applications for 2024-2025 Class

The Asian American Government Executives Network (AAGEN) Senior Executive Service (SES) Leadership Development Program is a comprehensive program that offers executive development courses, coaching in mock interviews, individual mentoring, and career counseling for candidates to gain the skills to effectively compete for SES positions. Each candidate will be assigned an SES mentor who will provide guidance throughout the program. The next class will commence December 9-11, 2024, and the program will continue through September 2025. The training sessions will be held in the Washington, DC metro area. Participants should expect a quarterly time commitment of 2-3 days of classes and other sessions, plus at least one mentoring session. Additional activities, as assigned by the SES mentor and trainers, will be completed on the participant's own time. For more information or to apply by September 10, 2024, visit [AAGEN](#). For information on [VA's Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander \(AANHPI\) Special Emphasis Program \(SEP\)](#), contact Ms. Tynnetta Lee, VA's Departmental AANHPI SEP Manager, ORMDI.

## Training

### Fiscal Year 2025 Management Directive 715: Barrier Analysis Training

The ORMDI Workforce Analysis Team will conduct virtual “Management Directive 715: Barrier Analysis Training.” The purpose of the training is to educate participants on how to conduct a barrier analysis by following four steps: identify triggers, investigate potential barriers, create and implement an action plan, and conduct follow-up. This training is not only intended for EEO Program Managers responsible for conducting barrier analysis but also Human Resources Personnel, Diversity Specialists, Special Emphasis Program Managers, and management. For information on dates and times, [check out course item number 3844925 in the Talent Management System](#) (TMS). Space will be limited.

### Harassment Prevention Training

ORMDI will host a virtual “Overview of the Harassment Prevention Program (HPP)” class on September 4 from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. (ET). All employees and supervisors are welcome. To participate, [register for course item number 4563938 in TMS](#), and choose a date and time to register.

ORMDI will also host “Overview of VA Handbook 5979 - Harassment Prevention Program Procedures” on September 18, October 16, November 20, and December 18 from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. (ET). Executives, managers, and supervisors are encouraged to attend. To participate, [register for course item number 4627175 in TMS](#), and choose a date and time.

### Workplace Civility and Root Causes of Workplace Disputes for Managers and Non-Managers

The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer (OCHCO) Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program will be offering the virtual version of their “Workplace Civility and Root Causes of Workplace Disputes for Managers and Non-Managers” training. The training will be held on the last Wednesday of each month. Each training will host up to 40 participants. Register in TMS for VA Supervisors/Managers (VA 4559059), 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. (ET), or for VA Employees (VA 4562623), 1 to 2 p.m. (ET). For more information and guidance pertaining to this training, contact Mr. Leroy Hill, ADR Specialist, OCHCO.

## Other VA Resources

### C20: Take Your 20 for Veteran Health

C20 is a 20-minute live, interactive webinar hosted by Dr. “Chai” Chad Kessler, VA’s National Director for Emergency Medicine. It brings together the VA community through discussions about clinical and health care issues facing Veterans and topics related to VA employee wellness, growth and retention. Join C20 every Tuesday and Thursday at 12 p.m. ET (recast Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. ET). **Past C20 episodes** are available online.

### The Audacity to Fail Podcast

What does it truly mean for a team to feel a sense of ownership? How can leaders cultivate an environment where every team member is invested, engaged, and feels responsible for the success of the team? On this episode of the **Audacity to Fail Podcast: misStepping Into Success**, Dr. Shari Dade sits down with Dr. Thuy Boardman to discuss how to navigate the role of leadership when decisions are tough. Dr. Boardman is an Organization Development Psychologist for VISN 8. In this role she provides executive and leadership coaching, team development, and leadership development services to VISN 8 facilities. Get ready to join us as we explore the journey through sticky leadership. Whether you're currently facing a sticky situation or simply want to be better prepared for the future, this episode is packed with valuable information you won't want to miss. The series is also available on the **Talent Management System**.



Office of Resolution Management, Diversity and Inclusion  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW (08) | Washington, DC 20420

Office of Human Resources & Administration/Operations, Security and Preparedness  
[VA on Facebook](#) | [VA on YouTube](#) | [VA Jobs](#)