



## The VRC Eagle

January 2006

Thank you for your support and interest in the Veterans Resource Central (VRC). Every quarter, we bring you an update on the progress that the Veterans Resource Central is making.

**What is the VRC?** Veterans Resource Central (VRC), a Pennsylvania nonprofit organization, provides transition assistance to returning veterans, active duty military and their families through a corps of volunteers and Internet tools. We provide education, information and guidance to veterans transitioning to civilian life, to military families dealing with life issues at home and to active duty or recently returned military planning for civilian careers.

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#### I. From the President (John Carrigan)

We finished 2005 with a flourish. As many of you are aware, we conducted our first fundraiser, in conjunction with one of our local restaurant chains, Isaac's, the first week in December. While our intentions to provide a broad portfolio of services to our veterans is on track, our ability to promote and support it is limited by our lack of funds. Hence the need to begin an active and ongoing fund raising program. We began with dinner at Isaac's at the West Shore Plaza followed by our Triangle Car Wash fundraiser.

Our next major step is to focus our time and effort supporting our veterans graduating from our local colleges in obtaining their first jobs. We will be using our business

contacts to begin helping them to get interviews and obtain jobs. I know it sounds easy, but it will require a large effort on everyone's part to make it happen. Those of you who either own or can influence hiring decisions within a company or organization can help us by informing us of available positions.

I want to thank all of you who have contributed time and effort to bring the VRC to life in 2005. We are truly a volunteer organization and as such, we are dependant on the support and effort of many willing people. Have a happy and safe New Year and help us support our returning troops and their families in the coming year.

## **II. Mentor Program Update**

CareerCenter Info and Campus Pulse  
(Wendy Robbins/Rob Johnson)

Work is well underway to launch the VRC Mentoring Program. This project focuses on directly helping the veterans that have returned. The Business Connection event will be held February 2nd at the newly remodeled Holiday Inn Harrisburg East. To date, we have commitments from over forty business professionals to participate as mentors and close to 20 students.

As a result of a Herculean effort by the CareerCenter team, the [training documents](#) for mentors and students are now complete. These are well structured, professional quality training documents similar to what you would expect to use at a Fortune 200 company.

### **Students**

Ready to graduate and need a professional job? Need an internship to gain valuable experience? All majors are welcome to meet with business people willing to be mentors and help you begin a meaningful career and there is no fee [More](#)

### **Mentors**

Want to participate as a mentor? [Sign up today](#)

Don't sit back. It's time to roll up your sleeves and to become more involved in one task or another with this endeavor. Please contact John Carrigan 717-796-6093 or Barbara Groce 717-221-3852 to discuss further areas in which you would like to participate.

## **III. FamilyCenter Info (Frank Piacine)**

During the recent holiday season, many reflected upon the blessings we enjoy. Among these are usually comfortable places to live, access to many comforts such as cable TV, the Internet and a myriad of stores within a short drive, and of course, family and friends. They are the things that we come to take for granted over time. This year, let us spend a few moments thinking about our troops overseas. They may have a few comforts, but they sacrifice much and live a hard and dangerous life to protect all the blessings we count here at home. Also, as always, let us remember their families here at home. Their lives are much harder as they go through this festive time without the presence of a loved one. The families have many needs, and VRC is moving ever closer to answering those needs.

We are slowly but effectively gather information on resources and a local "coalition of the willing" to help. This coalition is comprised of people, just like you and me, who are willing to devote a bit of time and effort to help families and our military abroad.

Currently, the team is working on an Easter project. I feel comfortable in projecting that VRC will make a difference in many lives during the next year. Our cause is both worthy and meaningful, and as such, it will continue to garner support.

#### **IV. Fundraising Update (Judy Ryan)**

Extra! Extra! Extra! The results are in and I thank all my super sales people. VRC has made a grand total of \$1,299.50 from our sales of the tickets for Triangle Car Wash. We had some fun and we built some camaraderie. We came out of the gate very strongly with this fundraiser. We will continue working to build up our account. My thanks to all of you for your hard work. A special thanks to my support people: Susan Carrigan, Jim Nace and Jeanne Lowing.

**We are so fortunate to have a team of dedicated people.**

#### **V. Operation Brighter Day Sent a Powerful Message to Our Troops (Anne Deeter Gallaher)**

Aaron Gallaher's Eagle Scout project titled Operation Brighter Day was a huge success thanks to the support of John Carrigan and a team of VRC volunteers. "We had more than 35 Scouts and friends help collect donated items from more than 1,000 homes and assemble individual Operation Brighter Day boxes. Each box was packed full with hard candy, pens, stationery, CDs, Beanie Babies, cards, gum, books, magazines, batteries, a phone card, and a picture and letter from an elementary child in the West Shore School District. Aaron's goal was to send 150 boxes to PFC Shane Rapsey with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne in Iraq, which is one for each soldier in the company. As a friend and former classmate of Shane's, Aaron wanted to show his support, respect, and admiration for the troops.



Here is Aaron Gallaher with his boxes ready to go to the US Post Office in Camp Hill.  
Helping him is fellow Scout Chad Martier on the right.

"My friend Shane could not believe it when he saw 58 sixty-pound boxes arrive in Iraq with his name on each one," Aaron said. "I think the Postmaster at the Camp Hill Post Office is still recovering from our shipment, but he was a veteran from Desert Storm and was very excited to be part of the project." Operation Brighter Day sent a total of 330 boxes to soldiers in Iraq. "I already received a really nice letter from a soldier thanking me and the VRC for our support. He said the letters from home really make a difference and that was the purpose of my project—to

brighten their day.”



Aaron Gallaher, from Boy Scout Troop 54, shaking hands with PFC Shane Rapsey with the 101st Airborne just before his deployment to Iraq in September 2005.

Many thanks to all the contributors and volunteers who helped make this project an enormous success.

## **VI. Events**

Upcoming events include:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>
2/1/06		Presentation of American Flag to Mayor Reed
2/2/06	5:30 – 7:30 pm	Business Connection Mixer, Holiday Inn East
2/6/06	9:00 am	First Monday, HACC Entrepreneurial Center
2/11/06	TBD	Presentation: Key Volunteer meeting in La Vale Maryland United States Army

If you are aware of upcoming PA events or organizations that you think the VRC should be participating in, please send information to [marketing@veteransresourcecentral.org](mailto:marketing@veteransresourcecentral.org).

## VII. Spotlight On...

### Staying Healthy

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) released a new publication, "[Next Steps After Your Diagnosis: Finding Information and Support](#)," to help patients who have been diagnosed with an illness learn more about their condition and treatment options. Included in this brochure is a list of 10 important questions to ask your doctor when you receive a diagnosis. These questions are designed to help individuals understand their disease or condition, how it might be treated, and what they need to know before making treatment decisions. Selected organizations and other resources, such as Web site addresses and phone numbers, are also included to help provide additional information on current medical research, clinical trials, and outcomes research about certain conditions and treatment options.

[www.ahrq.gov/news/press/pr2005/nxtstepspr.htm](http://www.ahrq.gov/news/press/pr2005/nxtstepspr.htm)

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### VA, GSA Sign Employment Pact

*The following was provided by the Hometown News Service of the Department of Veterans Affairs:*

VA, GSA Sign Agreement for Veterans' Businesses

WASHINGTON (Nov. 4, 2005) - The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the General Services Administration (GSA) have signed a formal agreement expanding GSA's efforts for businesses that are owned by veterans, especially service-disabled

veterans. "America's veterans are a national treasure, a pool of trained, motivated, reliable entrepreneurs," said the Honorable R. James Nicholson, Secretary of Veterans Affairs. "They're looking for a helping hand, not a hand-out."

The agreement signed between the two federal agencies commits GSA to place additional emphasis upon programs for veteran-owned businesses and businesses owned by service-disabled veterans.

In 1999, Congress passed legislation urging all federal agencies to strive toward awarding 3 percent of their contracts - by value - to service-disabled, veteran-owned small businesses.

Among other features, the agreement commits VA and GSA to co-sponsor eight regional conferences for veteran businesses in the coming year, with participation by the Small Business Administration and other federal agencies. The first will be held Nov. 7-8 in Kansas City, Mo.

VA's efforts on behalf of veteran-owned businesses are overseen by the Department's Center for Veterans Enterprise (CVE). Further information about VA's programs for veteran-owned businesses is available on CVE's Internet Web site at <http://www.vetbiz.gov>. GSA's activities on behalf of service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses are located at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov).

To view and download VA news release, please visit the following Internet address: <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel>

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*For more information about the VRC, contact John Carrigan at [jacarrigan@veteransresourcecentral.org](mailto:jacarrigan@veteransresourcecentral.org) or Barbara Groce at [BGroce@sovereignbank.com](mailto:BGroce@sovereignbank.com).*

Until our next issue, we thank you for your continued support,

Jen Carrigan, Newsletter Editor  
and the VRC Team