

# LGBTSA Newsletter

## LGBT Staff and Allies Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

January 31, 2013

### Special points of interest:

- VAPAHCS HEI Update
- Name change for LGBTSA
- New Communication Strategy for LGBTSA

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### HRC HEI Update

VAPAHCS is joining over 100 other VAs in applying for rating as a "Leader in LGBT Healthcare" with the Human Rights Campaign's [Healthcare Equality Index](#). To achieve this prestigious rating, we must demonstrate completion of 4 Core Competency Areas: patient anti-discrimination policy on sexual orientation and gender identity, equal hospital visitation policy, staff anti-discrimination policy on sexual orientation and gender identity and training for staff on LGBT patient care issues.

Here is an update of our progress to date:

We have had 2 very productive LGBTSA HEI meetings (12/20/13 and 1/10/13). Thanks to Shannon Healer, Tiffany Rideaux, Dave Leo, Laura Tracy, Steve Finkelman and Beth Stovall for all of their help on our progress thus far:

1. Our policies will be posted on the LGBT Program Webpage, upcoming New Patient Handbook and Inpatient Magazine.
2. We have a database of frontline staff and managers who are registered for the HEI trainings and TMS is being set up for VA annual training requirement credit.
3. We have support from Public Affairs to begin a Safe Space Campaign which we are working on with the leadership of the Psychology Service's Multicultural Committee's LGBT Subcommittee.

### LGBTSA's new name!

Heliana received feedback from a transgender VA colleague that LGBTSA's original name "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Staff and Allies" suggested incorrectly that transgender people are not heterosexual. Acknowledging that the term transgender refers to gender identity and not sexual orientation (i.e.

transgender people may be gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual, asexual etc.), Heliana polled our group to see if we are willing to change our name to "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Staff and Allies." Everyone who replied to the inquiry stated approval of the new name and updated brochure.



### HEI Next Steps:

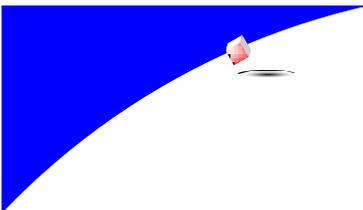
A final meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 2/21/13, 10-11 am on VANTS at 1800 767-1750 Access Code 86067.

The application will be submitted on March 1, 2013.

### LGBT Staff and Allies

EEO Special Emphasis Program





### Special Emphasis Program Managers Meeting

On 1/29/13, Heliana attended the quarterly meeting for Special Emphasis Program managers hosted by EEO. The meeting consisted of an ice breaker activity among SEP Managers in attendance:

- Elizabeth Turner-Nicholas- African American SEP Co-chair
- Cheryl Lanier-Gates- African American CEP Co-Chair
- Linh Pham- Asian/Pacific Islander SEP Manager
- Elizabeth Richards- Co-Manager Federal Women's Program
- Sandra Lee- Co-Manager Federal Women's Program
- Thomas Turrey- Hispanic SEP Manager

Presentations were provided by the following people:

- Ms. Martinez- Nursing Update
- Ms. Freeman- Overview of Facility Strategic Plan
- Ms. Dwinell- Student Program
- Mr. Coy- HR Share Point and Priorities
- Mr. Freidman and Mr. Hill-Jackson- Public Affairs Officer and Deputy
- Mr. Leo- Workforce Development
- Ms. Sai- Strategic Plan

If you would like more information about this quarterly meeting, contact Heliana at [Heliana.Ramirez@va.gov](mailto:Heliana.Ramirez@va.gov).



SEP Managers meet quarterly with EEO Staff.

**PLEASE Email Heliana your preferred date for our next meeting- 3/7, 3/14 or 3/12**

### Next LGBTSA Meeting: Your Response Requested

On 1/16/13 LGBTSA hosted its first off-campus social event at the Cheesecake Factory in downtown Palo Alto with 14 people in attendance. LGBTSA members decided that given our social event, we would not meet again until February for our regular meeting. With the HEI being due on March 1st, I would like to propose our next meeting be scheduled in March. Please email

Heliana with your preferred meeting date:

- Thursday, March 7th noon-1pm
- Thursday, March 14th noon-1pm
- Thursday, March 21st noon-1pm

If you would like to join the next HEI Call, please do so on **Thurs., 2/21 at 10am at 1 800 767-1750 #86067**

### LGBTSA's New Communication Strategy

At the LGBTSA Social Meet-up, we discussed ways to improve LGBTSA as we near our 1 year anniversary as a Special Emphasis Program for staff at VAPAHCS (we first met April, 2012). One suggestion was to consolidate our weekly emails into a newsletter.

Heliana is trying out this suggestion with Volume1, Issue1 of this newsletter. Please email Heliana with your thoughts about items to be added to future newsletters. Also, if you would like to help build this newsletter, your assistance would be greatly appreciated!

Please send an email to [heliana\\_ramirez@hotmail.com](mailto:heliana_ramirez@hotmail.com)



Must READ Story!



## Free Online LGBT Clinical Care Trainings!

Consider taking one or more of the following HRC HEI online trainings for these terrific benefits:

1. Increased knowledge about LGBT patient care
2. Annual training credit in TMS
3. Satisfaction knowing you have helped VAPAHCS in its application to be rated a "Leader in LGBT Healthcare" by the Human Rights Campaign Healthcare Equality Index!



### "LGBT Patient Centered Care: Executive Briefing" \*\*For managers

register at <http://hrc.org/hei-training/pages/lgbt-patient-centered-care-an-executive-briefing>

Description: This highly engaging and informative 90-minute live webinar with LGBT health expert Shane Snowdon equips senior healthcare managers with the information they need to ensure that their organizations provide optimal care for LGBT patients and are in full compliance with CMS and Joint Commission requirements.

### "Your LGBT Patients an Introduction" \*\*For frontline staff

register at <http://hrc.org/hei-training/pages/lgbt-patients-an-introduction>

Description: This 60-minute live webinar is available to organizations that have registered the required senior managers for the Executive Briefing. It is ideal for interested non-managerial employees. Managers who have attended the Executive Briefing should not take this 60-minute webinar, since its content is covered in the Executive Briefing.

### "Transgender Patients: Organizational Best Practices" \*\*For frontline staff

register at <http://hrc.org/hei-training/pages/transgender-patients-organizational-best-practices>

Description: This 60-minute live webinar is available to organizations that either received HEI 2012 training credit or have registered the required senior managers for the 2013 Executive Briefing. It is ideal for staff members who would like to learn more about how their organizations can better serve transgender patients. Please note, however, that it focuses on organizational practices, not clinical information

Strengthen your service to LGBT Veterans through a free, online HEI Training!

Please email [Dave.Leo@va.gov](mailto:Dave.Leo@va.gov) once you have registered so VAPAHCS will get credit for your training.

**Please email [David.Leo@va.gov](mailto:David.Leo@va.gov) once you have registered so that VAPAHCS gets credit for your training on the HEI application.**

### Did you know VAPAHCS has LGBT-Related Policies for Veterans and Staff?

Check out the [LGBT Program page on VAPAWeb](#) for the following policies:

1. Anti-discrimination for LGBT Veterans (VA Patient and Community Living Center Rights and Responsibilities and the Transgender/Intersex Veteran Care Policy )
2. Hospital Visitation Policy (Hospital Visitation Memo)
3. Anti-discrimination for LGBT Staff (VA Equal Employment Opportunity Policy)

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**Diversity is Our Strength!**

VAPAHCS LGBT Programs are on the web!  
Visit us at  
<http://www.paloalto.va.gov/lgbtsa.asp>

The VAPAHCS LGBT Staff and Allies is a group of over 30 VA employees who began meeting in April, 2012. The purpose of LGBTSA is to raise awareness about LGBT Veteran and employee experiences at VAPAHCS through a public relations campaign, staff training and resource development for the hospital system. Through community outreach, LGBTSA strives to increase VA enrollment among LGBT Veteran Patients and encourage employment applications from LGBT civilians and Veterans.

LGBTSA members work in a variety of departments across the VA Palo Alto Healthcare System including Social Work, Psychology, Medicine, Recreation Therapy, Engineering, and Housekeeping to name a few. Members identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and as allies to the LGBT community. LGBTSA welcomes anyone who is interested in making VAPAHCS the choice for LGBT Veterans seeking care and LGBT people seeking employment.

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### **LGBT Veteran Video Project “The Camouflage Closet: LGBT Veterans, Trauma and Recovery”**



Beginning February, 7, 2013, Heliana is joining forces with a professional filmmaker and Stanford Medical Student Michael Nedelman in a Video Voice Project entitled “The Camouflage Closet: LGBT Veterans, Trauma and Recovery.”

This groundbreaking project will meet weekly with Veterans who are taught to use video cameras to document their experiences as LGBT Veterans with histories of trauma and recovery. Veterans will be loaned video cameras from Stanford University and will share their footage with peers at weekly meetings on the Menlo Park VA campus. Participants will also provide critical feedback to inform a final product of a 10-15 minute video. The final video will be shown at public film

screenings for the purposes of increasing awareness among medical staff, LGBT civilians and non-LGBT Veterans regarding the experiences, strengths and needs of LGBT Veterans recovering from trauma.

If you know an LGBT Veteran who you think might be interested in this project, please invite them to contact Heliana at 650 444-8586 for an eligibility screening.