



DMVA

North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

ON POINT NEWSLETTER

May 2021 Newsletter

Thank you for Subscribing...

In this month's edition of On Point, COVID-19 remains the top priority and a main focus as the Department aims to point veterans, active duty service members, and their families towards the resources they need.

DMVA On Point Newsletter highlights the Department's month of activities and profiles partner agencies, departments, and community activities centered around helping North Carolina's active duty military community and veteran population. Learn more at www.milvets.nc.gov

DMVA VSO's Participate in "Stand Downs" Across the State

This month, NC DMVA partnered with Veterans Services of the Carolinas, NC Serves, the Veterans Healthcare Administration, DHHS, and the Department of Commerce's NC Works program to host SIX "Veteran Stand Downs" across the state with our last event taking place on April 29th.

These Stand Downs offered benefits assistance, mental health screenings from the Mobile Vet Center, employment assistance as well as gear and supplies such as shoes, towels, toiletries, and blankets in back packs from Veterans Services of the Carolinas to an estimated 340 veterans in attendance.

The Veterans Healthcare Administration also administered an estimated 130 COVID-19 vaccines to attendees who wished to receive them.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

Secretary Gaskin Continues Listening Tour Across NC

Since arriving at NC DMVA, Secretary Gaskin has made it a priority to visit each of the state's major military installations and



Bladen County Stand Down: Veterans Bridge Home Regional Network Director Paul Berry and NCDMVA Region III Manager Robert Johnson. (Left to Right)

host communities. So far, Sec. Gaskin and the NCDMVA team have visited every major installation except for Cherry Point, which is scheduled for later this month.

Visiting each installation in person has allowed leadership at the Department to learn firsthand about the issues facing our military installations and host communities from those who live and work there every day.

Whether it be issues like education or housing costs, the NC DMVA team is committed to understanding the quality of life and practical mission-impact issues the installations are confronting on daily basis.

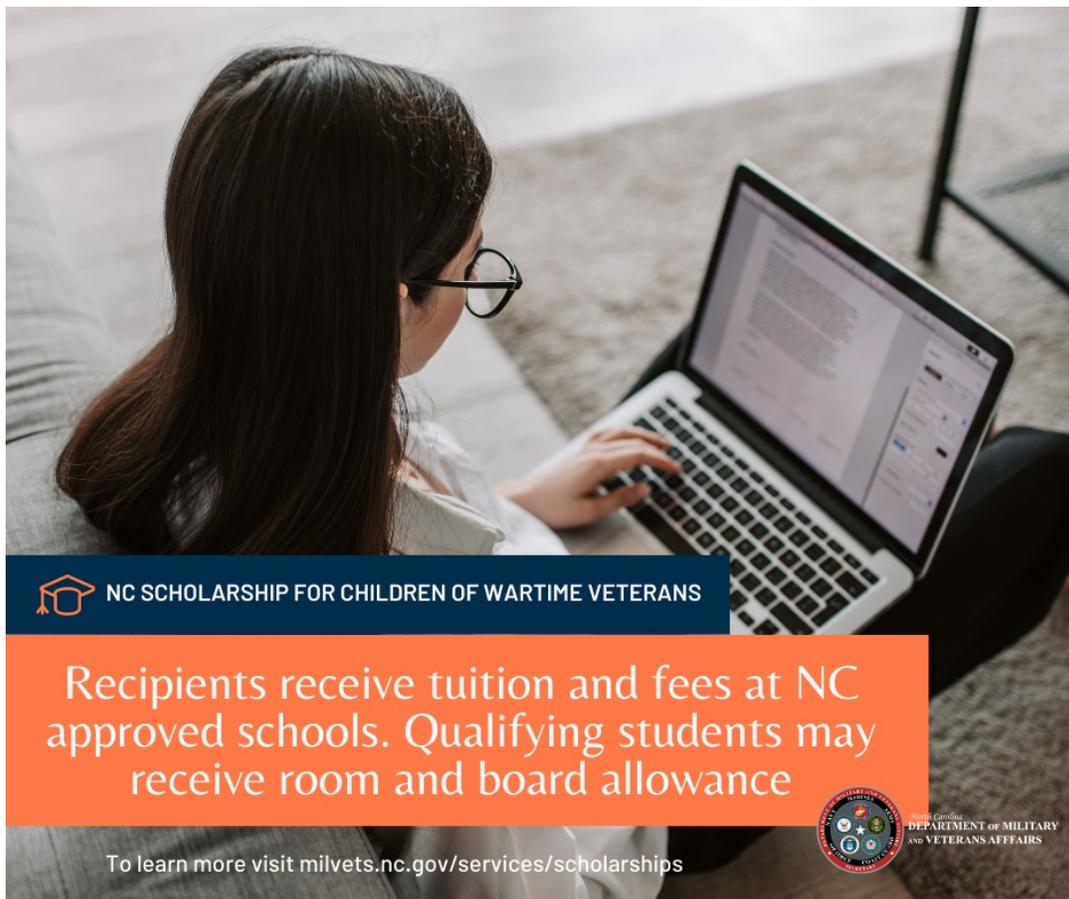
One of Secretary Gaskin's chief priorities is to align the Department with our installations and state and local government, ensuring we are maximizing our efforts to support the mission of the Armed Forces in NC.

[Click here to see photos from these visits.](#)



Here DMVA Sec. Gaskin met with University of North Carolina Wilmington Chancellor, Sartarelli and leadership where he visited the newly constructed Veterans Hall on the campus of UNCW.

DMVA Scholarships



 NC SCHOLARSHIP FOR CHILDREN OF WARTIME VETERANS

Recipients receive tuition and fees at NC approved schools. Qualifying students may receive room and board allowance

To learn more visit milvets.nc.gov/services/scholarships



North Carolina
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY
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[Learn More!](#)

Month of the Military Child:



First Lady Kristin Cooper, SGT 1st Class Justin Dixon, his wife Tawni, their son Cameron and NC DMVA Secretary Walter Gaskin pose for quick picture on the lawn of the NC Executive Mansion.

DMVA Honors Outstanding Contributions of Fort Bragg Military Family

DMVA Honors Fort Bragg's Dixon Family to their selfless service to their community.

To close the Month of the Military Child, [NC DMVA welcomed](#) the [2020 Fort Bragg Family of the Year](#) SGT 1st Class Justin Dixon, his wife Tawni, and their son Cameron to Raleigh to recognize them for their selfless service and contributions to the Fort Bragg and surrounding community.

The Dixon's were named the Fort Bragg Family of the Year in December for their contributions to military families and single soldiers during a no-notice deployment and for their volunteer service to the surrounding community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

NC DMVA planned a full day of activities for the family including a behind-the-scenes tour of the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences and meet & greet with First Lady Kristin Cooper at the NC Executive Mansion.

[See photos here.](#)

Drive-through Veteran Resource Fair

In April, The Joel Fund hosted a drive-through Veteran Resource Fair in Durham. Service members, veteran families, and more than 20 organizations made up the resource fair including: Veterans Bridge Home, Lone Survivor Foundation, Veterans Healthcare Administration, Vet Center Mobile Unit, Vets to Vets United, NC Serves Central, Veterans Life Center, Barry Robinson Center, American Red Cross, and NC DMVA, Region III Manager, Robert Johnson.

[Learn more.](#)

#ThisIsOurShotNC





Angela Heilig



Wes Kyatt



Jessica Coscia



Terry Westbrook

Big shoutout to NC DMVA employees for doing their part to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

Learn more about how you can #TakeYourShotNC at <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/vaccines>

NC DMVA Profiles

May is characterized by [six national observances](#) highlighting the contributions of those who have served. Not only do we pause on Memorial Day to remember the sacrifice and service of those who gave all, but the month also holds several other military anniversaries and events, including Military Spouse Appreciation Day and Armed Forces Day.

In this month's newsletter, we profile two NC DMVA team members who embody the service, sacrifice and contributions that we honor each May.

MSG (Retired) Ramona K. Robertson



Ramona served on US Army Active Duty, US Army Reserves and retired from the North Carolina National Guard. As a member of the NC Guard, she served in a full-time capacity at Joint Force Headquarters, Raleigh, NC, as a Military Technician. In this position Ramona was a Family Programs Specialist. She identified and advised on issues affecting the quality of family life for Service Members and their family members.

Another position Ramona held was an Equal Opportunity Advisor (EOA) at the 139th Regiment at Ft Bragg, NC. She is also a certified Mediator and a Master Resiliency Trainer. She consistently evaluated the overall climate of the organization fostering an overall healthy, inclusive, diverse, environment.

Ramona is currently working here in the Military Affairs Division. She is the Service Member/Family Programs Coordinator. She appreciates the opportunity to still serve

Service Members and apply all her Family Programs and EOA training and experience to her new position

Andrea Allard

Andréa Allard was born in Munich, Germany, the daughter of a career military father who served in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.



The Army played a large part in family life even leading her older brother to join and retire after 20 years, her sister to join and become a Russian linguist, and even she joined to become a Polish linguist, interrogator, and psychological warfare specialist.

After meeting her husband at DLI-FLC in Monterey, CA, in 1984 they married and now have 2 grown sons. Travel was integral to her existence as a military child, soldier, and then wife of a Baptist pastor enabling her to spend time in Europe and crisscross the U.S. numerous times.

Employment covered careers in sales, office management, and customer service operations before finally coming to work for the State of North Carolina. Having earned a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Masters in Counseling, her position as the Assistant to the Deputy Secretary/Chief of Staff of the NC Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and as an accredited Veteran Service Officer taps into a lifetime of service and serving others.



Special Attention



File your taxes online for
FREE!

Most North Carolinians qualify for NCfreefile or other free filing options.
Available only through NCDOR.gov!



To qualify, you must access
eFile for Free at

www.NCDOR.gov/NCfreefile

Available for current year returns and payments. File using a free online eFile software provider, otherwise fees may be assessed – eligibility requirements vary each year. Visit www.ncdor.gov for eligibility requirements.

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Upcoming Events

NC DMVA

- May 11 – 13: VA/SAMHSA Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families Virtual Implementation Academy.
 - For more information, contact Crystal Miller at crystal.miller@milvets.nc.gov.
- May 6 at 1pm: NC STRIVE (Student Transition Resource Initiative for Veterans Education).
 - For more information, please visit <https://strive.ncgwg.org/>
- May 18 – 20: VA/DoD Joint Suicide Prevention Conference.
 - Register Now at <https://2021-dod-va.com>. Use the registration code: DODVA2021
 - Contact the Conference Support Team at dodhra.mc-alex.dspo.mbx.spconference@mail.mil.
- May 27 at 2pm: NC Governor's Working Group. Register for email updates at <https://ncgwg.org/newsletter/>
 - Join by live stream at www.facebook.com/govinst

[Visit our website for updates.](#)

May Observances

- National Military Appreciation Month
- 1 – Silver Star Service Day, Loyalty Day, VE Day
- 6-12 – National Nurses Week
- 7 – Military Spouse Appreciation Day
- 13 – Children of Fallen Patriots Day
- 15 – Armed Forces Day
- 31 - Memorial Day

More May Events

- May 12-13 [USO Operation Jump Start Virtual Entrepreneurial & Employment Summit](#)
- May 12 [Hire Our Heroes Military Spouse Employment Summit](#)
- May 13 [Children of fallen Patriots Day](#)
- May 15 [Armed Forces Day](#)
- May 12 [NC4ME Hiring Event](#)
- May 18 [Veterans Resource Fair, Guilford Co](#)

- May 20 [Feeding Independence, Charlotte VA Health Care Center](#)
- May 23-Jun 5 [VALOR GAMES SOUTHEAST 2021 Remote Cycling Time Trial](#)
- May 25 [Valor Games Southeast 2021 Veteran Resource Fair, Durham](#)
- May 26 [Valor Games Southeast 2021, Sports](#)
- May 26 [Drive Veterans Resource Fair, Guilford Co](#)
- May 27 [NC Governors Working Group, Raleigh](#)
- May 31 [Memorial Day](#)

Share your photos and stories with us at dwight.collins@milvets.nc.gov to commemorate Military Appreciation Month observances.

DMVA Public Service Announcements

Cemeteries

Interments scheduled after March 26, will be offered the option of a committal service at the time of interment. Military funeral honors, customarily provided by the Department of Defense and volunteer honor guards, will be based on local availability.

Listed below are guidelines to follow until further notice. Please advise your local funeral homes regarding these changes.

- Services are 30 minutes, Monday – Friday, at 10am, 12pm, 2pm. Family and attendees must exit the cemetery at the conclusion of the service.
- Caskets & urns must be thoroughly disinfected before entering the cemetery.
- Up to 100 attendees are permitted at committal services. This does include funeral staff or Military Honor Guards.
- Cemetery chairs or podium will not be placed at the committal area.
- Next of Kin information will be given to funeral staff.
- Attendees aren't permitted to handle or touch caskets or urns before, during or after the service.
- Attendees not of the same household must maintain a physical distance of 6 feet from each other. Masks and frequent use of hand sanitizer are required. Sick individuals are asked not to attend.
- Funeral flower arrangements are not permitted to be left during the committal service, but, families or funeral staff may place one arrangement after all services for the day.
- Attendees must depart the cemetery at half past the hour.
- Families may continue to choose direct interment and opt for a memorial service at later date when restrictions have been lifted.

NC DMVA Coronavirus (COVID-19) Operations & Procedures

The NC Department of Military And Veterans Affairs (NCDMVA) is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all veterans, their families, our staff and the general public during this pandemic. The Department is committed to providing updates on a continuing basis and will make changes to operations and procedures as needed.

See here direct links to [Governor Cooper's office](#), and the North Carolina's Department of Health and Human Services [COVID-19 dashboard](#). Please continue to monitor these websites and stay vigilant.

[Click Here](#)

The North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (NC DMVA) supports both active and reserve uniformed military personnel and their



North Carolina Department of Military
and Veterans Affairs

families; military installations and communities; and military veterans and their families in North Carolina. The Department seeks to provide timely and responsive engagement to enhance NC's current military and veteran friendly environment. In addition, the Department also seeks to foster and promote business, technology, transportation, education, economic development, and healthcare for the above communities. Lastly, the Department works to accomplish these services by providing assistance and coordination between the Federal Government, the State of NC, its political subdivisions, and collaborative and supporting agencies.

NC DMVA | www.milvets.nc.gov

