



P.O. BOX 953663
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Democratic Veterans Caucus of Florida

Newsletter

January - March 2022



The Mercy Foundation Receives an SUV to support Homeless Veterans

By Dr. R. LeWayne Johnson

The Mercy Foundation appointed Dr. R. LeWayne Johnson as their new Executive Director of their Homeless Veterans Program. Dr. Johnson and Dr. Patel (Director of The Mercy Foundation) received an SUV from the Osceola County Sheriff's Department. This vehicle will be used to transport Veterans to and from their various appointments. The Mercy Foundation was officially

incorporated as a Florida 501c3 nonprofit in 2018, but the group's founders have been doing community work in Osceola and Orange counties for more than 20 years. As Central Florida grows, the Mercy Foundation is building the community's capacity for compassion through service projects, one act of kindness at a time. Serving the Underserved is a catchphrase that underscores Mercy Foundation's core principle: All people deserve dignity, safety, healthcare, and education, regardless of their life circumstances.



Osceola County Sheriff Department Creates Veterans Advisory Committee

By Dr. R. LeWayne Johnson

The Osceola County Sheriff's Department created a Veterans Advisory Committee. The Osceola County Democratic Veterans Caucus aided the Sheriff's department in creating the advisory committee. All members of the Advisory Committee are

veterans. The aim of the committee is to assist identified veterans who need financial assistance to repair their home or car, they aid homeless veterans and identify arrested veterans that may need medical or mental help. The advisory committee directs veterans in need to the appropriate veterans' resources.



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“Remembering And Celebrating Veterans Day 2021”

By Danny Fuqua

For the months of October and November 2021, Danny Fuqua, Vice-Chair of the DVCF was very active with several community Veteran events. On October 26th, he partnered with the Veteran’s Outreach Group of Our Lady of Lords to feed the homeless. Their mission is to feed the homeless and provide warm clothes for them. On November 7th, the Veterans Outreach Group of Our Lady of Lords along with Danny conducted a religious mass to fellowship and present Branch of Service flags.

On November 10th, Danny was the guest of the Volusia County DEC President, Jewel Dixon, also a member of the Volusia County Tiger Bay Club. This was a luncheon to honor veterans. The guest speaker was Lt. Col. (Ret) Oakland McCullough.

On November 21st Vice Chair Fuqua was a guest speaker for the Daytona State College Veterans Day event. The title of his speech was “The True Meaning of Veteran’s Day.” He spoke about the many freedoms we have, from Freedom of Speech and Religion to the right to due process. He reminded the audience that we have those freedoms because of the brave men and women who served our country. He also told them our mission at home is to now support Veterans in any and every way possible, from building and donating accessible, modified, custom homes, to anything that is needed to help rebuild their lives back to normalcy.

On November 16th, Danny was the keynote speaker for the Port Orange Korean War Veterans Group. He shared his 29-year military journey and talked about the different timings of when he served, and compared what he did to what the audience did when the audience served. He also compared those times to the military today.

The months of October-November were very productive, Vice Chair Fuqua looks forward to how he can continue to be more engaged in our community and continue to pay it forward for our veterans.



Trip to FAMU

By Reuben Sparks

Reuben Sparks, President of the Bay County Democratic Veterans Caucus headed a group of adults who took some Middle and High School students to the Florida A & M University (FAMU) Spring Preview in Tallahassee, FL on Saturday, March 26, 2022. The FAMU Spring Preview is a day the university sets aside and has staff and students show prospective FAMU students around the campus. The university had presentations by staff and students, tours of the campus and presentations from campus organizations. The day was held to encourage students to begin their adult career FAMU. There were presentations and tours in the morning. The orientation and presentations began in the basketball gymnasium. Different colleges, offices and programs within the university were present in the auditorium recruiting and passing out information about their program. The FAMU Band performed at the orientation. After lunch the university had a sort of block party in the tail gating area. Many vendors and others were present. The football team was scrimmaging and many students watched the team practice. The program began at 830AM and the block party lasted until late in the afternoon. This was an excellent opportunity for the young people.



DVCF Donates to Veterans at the Holidays

In December, the DVCF Board voted to make donations from the treasury of \$500 each to two food pantries specifically providing services to veterans. DVCF Vice President Danny Fuqua represented the DVCF in the presentation of our donation to Veterans Outreach of Lourdes Pantry in Daytona Beach, FL. Dr. R. LeWayne Johnson, DVCF Board member and president of the Osceola County DVCF, joined VP Fuqua in presenting another donation to the Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida. This donation was made in support of Soldiers' Angels, a nonprofit organization which has many programs serving veterans and military families, including food distribution events.



THE DEMOCRATIC VETERANS CAUCUS OF FLORIDA CONGRATULATES THE SEMINOLE COUNTY DEMOCRATS AND BLUE RENDEZVOUS GALA HONOREE

MARIAN WILLIAMS

**DVCF TREASURER & FOUNDING MEMBER
FORMER SEMINOLE STATE COMMITTEEWOMAN**

For more information, please visit DEMETSFL.ORG
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Marian Williams 2022 SemDems Gala Honoree

Honoree Marian Williams began her volunteerism with the Seminole Democratic Party in 1998 when she and her late husband Major General Enoch Williams decided to relocate to Florida. Her service has been exemplary. As a political activist, Marian has volunteered countless hours within Seminole County and across the state. She mentors candidates seeking office by sharing her experience as a former candidate. In 2004 and 2006, she ran for Supervisor of Elections and became the first African American to run in a county-wide election.

Representing the SemDems as State Committeewoman from 2007 to 2020, serving as the Congressional District 7 chair. She is currently president of the SemDems Black Caucus and president of the Seminole County Branch of the NAACP. In 2009, Marian established many clubs and caucuses currently associated with the SemDems. On the state level, she and her husband were founding members of the Democratic

Veterans Caucus of Florida (DVCF). She has been an office holder since its inception and is currently the caucus treasurer. She established the first county caucus of the DVCF in Seminole County. She is serving her second term with the Florida Democratic Party as chair of the Committee of Clubs, Organizations and Caucuses, which is responsible for the certification of all the clubs and caucuses throughout the state.

Nationally, she was elected a Democratic National Committee member and was a delegate for former President Obama, current President Biden and presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. It is not possible here to list all of Marian's volunteer positions. Today, Marian Williams continues to support the Seminole Democratic Party, the Democratic Veterans Caucus of Florida, and the Florida Democratic Party as volunteer and organizer. She resides in Heathrow where she enjoys her two children, Derick and Yolonda, and her four grandchildren.

VA promotes greater access to voter information to Veterans and families

03/30/2022 10:18 AM EDT

The Department of Veterans Affairs unveiled a series of measures, March 24, promoting greater access to voter information for Veterans and their families as part of the department’s proposed designation as a voter registration agency under the National Voter Registration Act. In accordance with Executive Order 14019: Promoting Access to Voting, these steps are part of VA’s “whole health” approach to care, ensuring Veterans and their families are able to exercise the right to vote which Veterans fought and served to protect. “We’re doubling down on the voting support we already provide — expanding access where we can and looking to do even more,” said Deputy Secretary for Veterans Affairs Donald Remy. “We’re providing assistance with the voting process for tens of thousands of inpatients and residents at our hospitals, nursing homes and treatment centers, along with homebound Veterans and their caregivers. This is a major undertaking as VA expands this effort, putting voting access right at the fingertips of all Veterans who may need it.” VA launched a survey to over 12 million Veterans and their families in a first-of-its-kind effort to better understand Veterans’ experience with the voter registration process, and to better assist Veterans in addressing and overcoming any challenges. VA also developed a website for Veterans with nonpartisan information about voter registration and elections. By summer 2022, VA plans to seek designation, by state officials in six states, as a voter registration agency under NVRA and to launch a pilot voter assistance program at VA facilities in those states — with an eye to the geographic and demographic diversity of the Veteran population. To learn more or to take the survey, please visit VA.gov/vote.

