

Hospice of the Plains recognized as partners of "We Honor Veterans"

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

It may surprise many people to learn that 25 percent of those who die every year in the U.S. are veterans.

To help provide care and support that reflect the important contributions made by these men and women, Hospice of the Plains has become a national partner of We Honor Veterans, a pioneering campaign developed by National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization in collaboration with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

As a We Honor Veterans partner, Hospice of the Plains will further its ongoing veteran-centered education for staff and volunteers to improve the care they provide to the veterans they proudly serve. The nation is seeing many of the veterans who served in World War II and Korean die, and the number of deaths of Vietnam veterans is beginning to rise.

The We Honor Veterans campaign provides tiered recognition to organizations that demonstrate a systematic commitment to improving care for veterans.

"Partners" can assess their ability to serve veterans and, using resources provided as part of the campaign, integrate best practices for providing end-of-life care to veterans into their organization. By recognizing the unique needs of the nation's veterans who are facing a life-limiting illness, Hospice of the Plains is better able to accompany and guide veterans and their families toward a more peaceful ending.

In cases where there might be some specific needs related to the veteran's military service, combat experience or other traumatic events, Hospice of the Plains will find tools to help support those they are caring for.

"All hospices are serving veterans but often aren't aware of that person's service in the armed forces," said J. Donald Schumacher, NHPCO president and CEO. "Through We Honor Veterans, we are taking a giant step forward in helping hospice and palliative care providers understand and serve veterans at the end of life and work more effectively with VA medical facilities in their communities."

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"VA shares a common goal with our nation's hospices, and that is to provide the best possible care specifically tailored for veterans, meeting their goals of care in their preferred setting. As we focus on working together and unite our services and skills, We Honor Veterans will channel our combined strengths directly to veterans—wherever they are receiving care."

The resources of We Honor Veterans focus on respectful inquiry, compassionate listening and grateful acknowledgment, coupled with veteran-centric education of health care staff caring for veterans. To learn more about We Honor Veterans or to support this important work via a secure, online donation, please visit www.wehonorveterans.org.

"America's veterans have done everything asked of them in their mission to serve our country, and we believe it is never too late to give them a hero's welcome home. Now it is time we step up, acquire the necessary skills and fulfill our mission to serve these men and women with the dignity they deserve," added Schumacher.

Hospice of the Plains volunteer coordinators Peggy Jones and Valori Romero encourage veterans throughout their six-plus county service area to join as volunteers to work with other vets who share similar experiences. Only those who have served fully understand the sacrifices one has made and share a bond that cannot be broken.

Those interested in serving as a veteran volunteer are thanked for serving the country and are asked to contact Peggy Jones at 970-332-4116 or Val Romero at 970-526-7901 or 970-842-6060.

Holyoke Enterprise May 17, 2012