



Veterans open workshop to help others

'Graduates' of FHCC Homeless Dom pledge service to fellow Veterans

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

In his new Antioch apartment last fall, Navy Veteran Bruce Kaminski and a couple of "the guys" he met through the Lovell Federal Health Care Center Homeless Veterans Program began packing old banana boxes with utensils, dishes, cookware and other kitchen essentials.

The "kitchen kits" went to fellow Veterans participating in the Housing and Urban Development/Veterans Affairs Supported Housing (HUD/VASH) program through the FHCC. The Veterans were recently settled into their own places after graduating from FHCC rehabilitation programs, including the Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program for Homeless Veterans, also known as the Homeless Domiciliary, or "Dom."

But Kaminski and fellow Homeless Dom "graduate" Paul Swanson, a Marine Veteran and FHCC



On the left, Navy Veteran Bruce Kaminski shows former Marine Paul Swanson how to fix a flat screen television in their Veterans Workshop, a non-profit entity they incorporated in Antioch, Ill. last year to help Veterans in need. The two hashed out their plan for the workshop while they were undergoing treatment through the Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program at Lovell FHCC. They wanted to create a place where homeless Veterans graduating from residential treatment programs could go for resources, furnishings for their new homes, and friendship. (Photo by Jayna Legg)

volunteer, didn't stop there. They already were working with Open Arms Food Pantry, so they thought, "Why not do more?"

They decided to carefully tuck soap, razors and other hygiene items into Ziploc bags and give those away. Then they started picking up broken appliances here and there, cleaning and fixing them

up, and those, too, went to the Veterans for their new homes.

Those efforts more than a year ago were the beginning of what today is known as the Veterans Workshop, an incorporated non-profit located in a garage, pole barn and shack behind the Antioch Packing House.

In addition to being a source of free

furniture and a variety of household goods for area Veterans, it's a place where one usually finds an inviting fire burning in a portable pit out front and friends inside with advice and answers to questions of how to function successfully in life again after addiction, homelessness and mental illness.

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Lt. Matthew Arnold practices basic life-saving skills in the new Voice-Assisted Manikin (VAM) room at Lovell Federal Health Care Center. The new equipment in the room, which is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, gives providers the option of completing their required training after clinic hours or other times convenient to them. (Photo by Hospitalman James Stewart)



New voice-assisted manikin takes life-saving training to new level

By Hospitalman James Stewart
Lovell FHCC Communications

Clinicians who need to complete their basic and advanced life-saving (ALS, BLS) training at Lovell FHCC no more have to wait for classes to be available, or sit through long lectures.

Thanks to advancements in simulation technology, the FHCC now has a Voice-Assisted Manikin (VAM) room that makes the process go much more smoothly. The new VAM room in Building

133EF, Room 2-F101, is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for staff members to get hands-on training – at their convenience.

The VAM is part of a comprehensive e-Learning program from the American Heart Association. The multi-step training course starts with an online course available through the Talent Management System (TMS) and concludes with the use of the manikin for hands-on training.

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From the Desk of the Director

Navy Medicine, VHA patient-centered care goals are aligned



By **Dr. Stephen Holt**
Lovell FHCC Director

A few weeks ago, I was fortunate enough to be able to accompany FHCC Deputy Director/Commanding Officer Capt. Robert Buckley to the Navy Surgeon General's Annual Symposium. This was the first time a Department of Veterans Affairs director has been invited to this meeting of all senior Navy medical leaders, including all Navy hospital commanders and command master chiefs.

In his opening remarks, Navy Surgeon General Rear Adm. Forest Faison made several laudatory comments about the FHCC and its past and present leadership. This parallels the remarks made by VA Secretary Robert McDonald during his visit several months ago, when he stated the FHCC is a model for future government health care.

During the symposium, many of the Admirals made it a point to introduce themselves and

compliment us on the work we have done at the FHCC. What this says, is that the incredibly hard work you have done during the five years of the demonstration project and into the first year of sustainment have not gone unnoticed and are appreciated by both agencies. Bluntly put, and to paraphrase Star Trek, you have boldly and competently gone where no other federal agency has gone before. You have set the standards, produced the winning culture and shown what outstanding medical professionals you are. I could not be prouder of you and can never thank you enough all you have done.

During the two-day symposium, Surgeon General Faison reviewed the current climate, the challenges ahead, the culture needed to meet the challenges and his plan for the future. Before I summarize some of the key points, I want to say that Navy Medicine is facing pretty much the same challenges as the Veterans Health Administration, trying to produce the same results and same culture.

Like the VHA, Navy Medicine has to provide care to an expanding beneficiary pool with limited dollars and personnel. They must provide world-class medicine 24/7 around the world. They are providing health care and support for Sailors who will become Veterans in the future. Like the VHA, Navy Medicine must continually justify its existence (in their case, at the current size and funding levels) and why more of their functions cannot be privatized (just like the VHA). The surgeon general fully realizes

the importance of establishing a strong culture as the essential key to accomplishing the Navy's global mission. This culture has to be reinforced with strong values and the selection of only the finest new members to the team.

As for the culture, Rear Adm. Faison had several important points. First, we need to treat every patient and every team member the way we would want our own family members to be treated. He emphasized this repeatedly as the key that would differentiate Navy Medicine and create the greatest value for the Navy and the nation. Second, he emphasized the need to improve the patient and family experience.

One key area of emphasis was access and the goal of same-day access (this sounds familiar to what the Under Secretary for Health Dr. David Shulkin has been saying for the VHA). A second key aspect of access is the provision of processes that address patients' needs without requiring them to come to the clinic or hospital. He cited statistics that 75 percent of Primary Care, Urgent Care and ER visits required some medical intervention but did not require face-to-face visits. He strongly emphasized the use of telephone, secure messaging and other forms of contact to meet these needs.

The third area of emphasis was readiness: the maintenance of skills needed to support the fleet underway and the deployed Marines. He pointed out that nearly 75 percent of the medical care given underway and in

deployed settings is provided by Hospital Corpsmen – medical professionals unique to the Navy. Ensuring Hospital Corpsmen are used aggressively in clinical settings, where they maintain and enhance their medical skills, is a major concern. I'm proud to say Hospital Corpsmen at the FHCC can, and do, serve in significant clinical roles that help ensure their readiness to save lives in harm's way. This is an area where we must continue to improve and continue to set the example.

In conclusion, I was struck by how similar, in fact, almost identical, the goals of Navy Medicine are to those of the VHA. They want to improve the patient and staff experience, like they would treat family. Access is a key imperative, and we must explore ways of meeting patients' needs that make getting health care easier and more convenient. Culture and core values are keys to success. Staff development is essential. It is almost perfect alignment of the two agencies! The FHCC is where the two cultures are brought together as one, every day. Thanks for the great work you do in caring for our patients and their families, and our coworkers.

Dong named federal employee of the year

By **Jayna Legg**
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

Thirty-three years of dedicated federal service – with a focus on helping women Veterans get the health care services they deserve – was recognized when Lovell FHCC Primary Care Acting Assistant Director Kathy Dong stepped up at the monthly employee awards ceremony recently.

Dong was selected as Employee of the Year - Career Achievement Award by the Chicago Federal Executive Board in May. FEB Executive Director Jean Brown presented the award.

"This is an extremely prestigious award," Brown told the audience in Bourke Hall. "Ms. Dong has been instrumental in transforming health care services for women. Thank you for your legacy to the community."

Dong was submitted for the award based on her "dedication, innovation and passion for improving health care for women Veterans," read her nomination form, written by Primary Care Associate Director Navy Cmdr. Kathaleen Smith.

"Under her leadership, health care for women Veterans was transformed from a patchwork of outsourced care and in-house pap clinics into comprehensive, state-of-the-art Women's Health Clinics staffed by designated women's health providers proficient in the provision of comprehensive gender-specific care," Smith wrote.

Dong thanked the many fellow federal government employees she worked with along the way. "I consider myself fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with people who have a passion and dedication to improve women's health care," she said.



Kathy Dong was named Federal Employee of the Year - Career Achievement, by the Chicago Federal Executive Board in May. (Photo by Stephanie Caccamo)

"There is no better job than taking care of Veterans and active duty and their families, and I am tremendously grateful for all of the opportunities provided to me during my 33 years of federal service," Dong said.

The Apollo

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From the Desk of the Commanding Officer

Buckley: ‘It has been an honor, privilege to serve with you’

Future will hold increasing pressure to watch costs and prove FHCC model provides the best health care



By Captain Robert G. Buckley
Lovell FHCC Deputy Director/
Commanding Officer

As my tour at Lovell FHCC winds down, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on my last two years here and

to thank you all for your tireless care for our patients and support for each other. I am so proud of what has been accomplished here at our nation’s first fully integrated Department of Veterans Affairs/ Department of Defense hospital, and I will always consider my tour here as one of the best since joining the Navy 33 years ago.

The merger of two separate activities inside of a governmental department is never easy. To integrate two hospitals from completely separate departments within the federal government – without disrupting the daily patient care mission – is unprecedented.

The work for all 3,400 staff members in the last decade has been challenging. But to paraphrase the words President John F. Kennedy spoke regarding the

daunting space mission: “We chose to do things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard ...”

The hard work of *Readying Warriors and Caring for Heroes* is not likely to get any easier. As we now are well into our next five

“I would simply like to say thanks to all of our active duty, federal employee, contractor and volunteer staff for the wonderful service you provide.”

Capt. Robert G. Buckley
Lovell FHCC Deputy Director
and Commanding Officer

years as a jointly funded hospital, there will be increasing budgetary pressures and demands to prove to Congress and the American

people we can continue to provide high quality health care without increasing costs.

Everything I have seen from our staff at Lovell reassures me that we will succeed in meeting these expectations.

As I look forward to the arrival of Capt. Brad Smith to take over as Lovell’s next Commanding Officer and Deputy Director this July, and look toward my retirement from naval service later this fall, I would simply say thanks to all of our active duty, federal employee and volunteer staff for the wonderful service you provide.

It has truly been an honor to serve alongside you. God bless you all, and keep up the good, hard work. Our active duty military members, their families and our Veterans are worth our best effort.

FHCC’s hundreds of volunteers honored, thanked at annual luncheon

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

Former NASA astronaut and Retired Navy Capt. James A. Lovell once said, “There are people who make things happen, there are people who watch things happen, and there are people who wonder what happened. To be successful, you need to be a person who makes things happen.”

Our volunteers at the Lovell Federal Health Care Center make things happen, whether it’s greeting and escorting patients, sharing pet therapy dogs, or manning library carts and sponsoring events. We can’t do what we do here every day without our volunteers. We’re truly indebted to them and thankful for them and every single minute and

“Volunteers are a major part of Lovell FHCC, and their valiant dedication makes everything run smoothly here at the facility.”

Capt. Robert G. Buckley
Lovell FHCC Deputy Director
and Commanding Officer

every dollar they contribute to help us provide the best patient-centered care around to Veterans, military members and military families.

This year is especially important, because the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Voluntary Services is celebrating the 70th anniversary of volunteerism within the VA.

The annual FHCC volunteer luncheon every spring during national Volunteer Appreciation

Week is one way we can express our appreciation. This year, about 250 attended, and many were honored for the hours they have selflessly given to benefit our patients.

“Volunteers are a major part of Lovell FHCC, and their valiant dedication makes everything run smoothly here at the facility,” said FHCC Deputy Director Capt. Robert Buckley at the lunch.

Nearly 800 volunteers gave approximately 45,000 hours at Lovell FHCC during Fiscal Year 2015. If their service is translated into dollars, the total impact is worth approximately \$1 million. Monetary and non-monetary donations bring that total up to more than \$1.5 million. At the FHCC, donated funds and supplies have helped support essential programs that don’t have a budget, such as the Military Sexual Trauma program, the Walk-in Center for Homeless Veterans, the Caregiver Support Center, and the “No Veteran Dies Alone Program.”

In addition to dozens of Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs), many school and church groups regularly visit and volunteer (running bingo for example). The Special Education District of Lake County (SEDOL), in particular, provides student volunteers who assist in daily operations in many departments.

Volunteer Michael Hiley was recognized for the most volunteer hours, at 22,500. Monica Ply and Robert Sittler were honored for each volunteering 12,500 hours. Other top honorees were Craig Reuse, 7,500 hours; Donald Nys

and Robert Patterson, 6,250 hours; Kenneth Bradley and Denis Parker, 3,750 hours and Neil Donachie, 2,500 hours.

The 1,750-hour appreciation award went to Bohdan Chalus, John Pearce and Julien Bloom. Maria Axotis, Enoch Cox, Arnold Gorospe, Laura Kim, Leo Larson, Robert Lewis, Floyd Nobler, George Rodriguez and Lillian Toliver were given the 1,000-hour appreciation award.

Years of service and hours were listed in the program. The person who has volunteered the most



Volunteer Craig Reuse has given 7,500 hours. (Photo by Hospitalman James Stewart)



Volunteers (not all are pictured) who received an award for 750 hours: Harold Aichholzer, Edward Danahy, Ann Darraugh, Virginia DeAcetis, Jeannette Eames, Douglas Leffler, Richard Murawski, Richard Payne, Jay Reed, Lillian Toliver and Rochelle Weber. (Photo by Hospitalman James Stewart)

years is David Hymes, at 48 years. Harriet Tiahnybik has volunteered at the FHCC for 43 years; John Stoffle, 42 years; Richard Chamernick 41 years. Nick Angelopoulos, Ann Bedford, Floyd Eubanks Jr., Alvie Green, Steve Kolas and Tony Martino have all

given more than 10,000 hours. Even our canine volunteers were recognized with dog treats and gifts: Bella, Cami, Elsie, Mason, Grover, Nikko, Sasha, Harvey, Vinny, Gloria, Bloomberg, Loomis, Jessi and Monty.

ONE TEAM *Extra*

News Employees Can Use

FHCC Sailors of the (2nd) Quarter honored

Sailors of the Quarter, second quarter, were honored by the Lake County Council of the Navy League at the FHCC June employee awards ceremony.

Senior Sailor of the Quarter was Hospital Corpsman 1st Class (HM1) Ryan Allen, who works in the Facility Support Directorate, in Managed Care.

Sailor of the Quarter was HM2 Stephanie Hadley, who works in the Dental Directorate at USS Red Rover. The Junior Sailor of the Quarter was HM3 Garret Bergstrom, who is a Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) Course instructor.



FHCC Command Master Chief Thomas Moore (SW/AW); James Tiernan, Navy League Lake County Council; HM1 (FMF) Allen, HM2 (SW) Hadley; HM3 (FMF) Bergstrom; Theodore Rock, Navy League Lake County Council president; FHCC Deputy Director/Commanding Officer Capt. Robert Buckley; FHCC Director Dr. Stephen Holt. (Photo by Hospitalman James Stewart)

The Blue Jacket of the Quarter was Hospitalman Jason Banania, who works in the Geriatrics and Extended Care/Mental Health Directorate. Congratulations to all!

Congratulations!

- Lt. Sharon M. Hoff, NC, USS Red Rover, was named Junior Officer of the (first) Quarter, and she was honored as the outstanding Navy Nurse during Nurses Week in May.
- Dr. Stuart Richer, staff optometrist, was named Senior Civilian of the (first) Quarter.
- Mr. Gilberto Diaz, administrative specialist in Primary Care, was named Junior Civilian of the (first) Quarter.
- Michael Hanley accepted his Years of Service award for 40 years.
- RNs Liezl Payawal, Jane Trojanco, LPN Shirley Guevarra were named FHCC Nurse Preceptor of the Year during Nurses Week.
- LPN Melesa Robel, Nursing Assistant Angela Window received Nursing Excellence Awards.
- RN Kristen Frey received the FHCC Staff Nurse award at a Nurses Week event.
- RN Kenneth Nickles received the Nurse in an Expanded Role award.
- Audrey Velis, Jonathon Amador, SPS technicians at USS Osborne, completed the level 2 certification exam from national Office of Sterile Processing.

FHCC earns Practice Greenhealth award

The FHCC was awarded the “Partner Recognition” Award from Practice Greenhealth. The award is one of the Environmental Excellence Awards given each year to honor environmental achievements in the health care sector.

The FHCC has implemented several energy and environmental sustainability initiatives. Small electric vehicles have replaced gas-guzzling shop vehicles, and LED lighting has improved energy efficiency, for example.

The FHCC’s Green Environmental Management System (GEMS) Program Manager Joe F. Bozeman III chaired the VHA’s GEMS Advisory Group, which helped usher in a record number of Practice Greenhealth award winners nationwide. This resulted in regional award honors for Veterans Integrated System Network 12 and a System for Change Award for the entire VHA.

“We are humbled to have won this award and are very proud to have directly assisted in the regional and national honors,” Bozeman said.



(Photo by MC2 Darren M. Moore)

- Lovell FHCC received the 2015 Health, Safety and Fitness Flagship Award, (large) Shore Command Category, for having “the best programs encouraging health and fitness to military members as well as the surrounding civilian community.”

Sailors again help with Soldier Field 10-Mile Run

Volunteering at race is an “unforgettable event” to honor the fallen



More than 50 Lovell FHCC Sailors donated their time Memorial Day weekend at the Soldier Field 10 Mile in Chicago. “The Soldier Field 10 Mile is more than just a race; it is an emotional experience shared between the racers and our uniformed personnel in honor of those who gave their lives as the last full measure of their devotion to our great nation,” said Lt. Cmdr. Shannon Lorimer, who created this photo collage of the event. The race is held annually over Memorial Day weekend, beginning outside the historic Soldier Field Stadium and ending on the 50-yard line, Lorimer said, “where more than 10,000 racers were met by FHCC uniformed Sailors to award them with a medal of completion to commemorate this unforgettable event.”

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Lovell FHCC honors nurses during Nurses Week 2016



Happy 118th Birthday Navy Hospital Corps!

- Volunteers hold patient carnival
 - Minority Veterans Outreach staff go to Zion Nostalgia Days
 - McHenry CBOC staff, FHCC color guard celebrate Memorial Day
- ... and many more stories and photos!

Or Visit Our Website
@ lovell.fhcc.va.gov

Recovering Veterans want to help their fellow Veterans (cont.)

Continued from page 1

“Paul and I came up with the idea while we were patients at the hospital,” said Kaminski, who became homeless in 2013 after a broken marriage and job loss left him destitute.

“Veterans don’t know what’s available to them. If they knew they had outside support, there would be a whole lot of different thinking,” Kaminski said.

Kaminski, Swanson and fellow Veteran Ricky Dillon envisioned a place where not only could Veterans learn about community resources and get what they needed for their new homes but they might also learn a skill, such as how to woodwork, how to refurbish and repair items, or even how to cook.

“When the guys are at the dom, they don’t know how to get Social Security cards, birth certificates, cards for public transportation, etc.,” Kaminski said. “We tell them, ‘Come here, and we’ll help you with your paperwork, all in one place.’”

“Veterans don’t know what’s available to them. If they knew they had outside support, there would be a whole lot of different thinking”

Bruce Kaminski
Veterans Workshop founder,
formerly homeless Veteran

“We’re kind of like a bridge between the hospital and civilian life,” he said. “We’ve helped many.”

Julie Tevenan, FHCC HUD/VASH coordinator, characterizes their story one of resilience and determination to give back. “They decided that no Veterans should

have to go through the pain and suffering they experienced, and they vowed to make a difference once they were back in the community.”

They know how to make things happen, Tevenan said, such as successfully bartering for goods in exchange for doing odd jobs, soliciting donations, using the internet to promote their cause and finding a place for the workshop.

Kaminski tells the story of how they found an address in Antioch. He took a shortcut while out walking one day last year and noticed some dilapidated, vacant buildings along the railroad tracks behind the packing house. He talked to owner Frank Beranek, who generously gave the workshop use of the structures, free of charge.

“I believe that their recovery, which is an ongoing process for all our Veterans, continues to manifest itself in the work they are doing for other Veterans,” Tevenan said. “When they give back to the community, they are helping themselves become more self-sufficient and proud of who they are.”

Kaminski calls Tevenan “a Godsend,” whose support of the workshop has helped make it possible. “She takes her job very seriously,” he said. “She allows us to bounce ideas off her.”

Swanson, too, praises Tevenan. He credits Tevenan with making it possible for him to get a place to live. “Julie pushed me through HUD-VASH,” he said.

Kaminski and Swanson keep in contact with Veterans enrolled in residential treatment programs at the FHCC, and Swanson even picks them up to bring them to the workshop, where Kaminski has been



FHCC outpatients Paul Swanson, left, and Bruce Kaminski, talk at the Veterans Workshop in Antioch, Ill. They met while undergoing treatment in the FHCC Homeless Domiciliary, where they brainstormed a plan for the workshop to help formerly homeless Veterans. They started by packing the “kitchen kits” below. (Photos by Jayna Legg)

known to cook meals for visitors.

“We get them out there to be with other Veterans,” Kaminski said. “It’s like a retreat ... I laugh so much with these guys.”

The two, along with whatever Veteran friends who wandered in, extended a herculean effort clearing brush and debris from the site, uncovering existing pavement for a parking lot, and cleaning up the buildings to make them useable. They use generators for heat and electricity. A donated pickup truck will help them pick up furniture – once they get it running.

Their ultimate goal is simple. “I would like our organization to become self-sufficient like other Veteran organizations in the community,” Kaminski said.

“Veterans need a place to go,” he said. “They need to know there is a safe place where all Veterans can meet. I want to teach Veterans to relax, since I was once in



their shoes and could not. I want Veterans to feel as if this is their retreat. We are a bridge between those Veterans who hit bottom and self-sufficiency back into the community.”

To help or get more information, contact the Veterans Workshop at 847-788-8886 or find them online at veteransworkshopcorp.org.

VAM makes BLS and ALS training more convenient, quicker (cont.)

Continued from page 1

The VAM will guide and assist the trainee with feedback on their CPR methods, which eliminates the need to have an instructor standing by. It is a pass-fail system that updates to the trainee’s training record once the VAM CPR course is completed successfully.

“The VAM is surely a more efficient training method than the traditional BLS classes simply because it eliminates the chance of human error or preference to a certain way of teaching,” said FHCC BLS Program Director Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Parker Spencer.

“CPR is very difficult to do correctly, and with the new VAM program, it will make sure the trainee’s methods are correct,”

Spencer added. “And if you want to go back and improve certain portions of the training, you can. The VAM saves time, money and man hours as well because you can set up your training around your schedule.”

Mark Bisbee, assistant department head FHCC Education and Training, said both Department of Veterans Affairs civilian employees and Department of Defense employees are using the VAM room and finding it helpful.

“The Heartcode VAM saves just over one hour but the learner can do the computer-based learning whatever time they choose is best, and many times staff pick times during patient care ‘down time,’ which really helps the work center or unit.”

Use of the VAM room has steadily



BLS Program Director Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Parker Spencer instructs FHCC staff members on the proper techniques and methods of basic life-saving skills. (Photo by Hospitalman James Stewart)

increased since it opened in the early spring. About 100 staff members used the technology to

complete training in May, Bisbee said. For more information, contact HM2 Spencer at 224-610-4556.

FHCC nurses teach DePaul University nursing students

Academic affiliation allows nursing students to train on inpatient floors

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

Since the fall of 2013, one academic affiliation program in particular at Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC) has thrived and grown.

DePaul University School of Nursing students started out by training on the Medical/Surgical floor at Lovell FHCC, and in inpatient mental health. At the beginning of fiscal year 2015, the program expanded to include Critical Care and the Emergency Department, and 65 DePaul nursing students participated.

Groups of five to six nursing students are assigned a DePaul clinical instructor to guide their experience at Lovell FHCC, said RN Mark Bisbee, assistant department head for education and training.

“One of the main reasons I have been so excited about DePaul nursing students being here is the ‘spill-over’ teaching that occurs from our FHCC bed-side staff nurses,” Bisbee said. “The students are unlicensed, so they are eager to learn directly from our nursing staff.”

Bisbee said the affiliation has given Lovell FHCC nurses professional development opportunities. “I have heard from our nurses who admit to not having a lot of experience of teaching other nurses,” he said. “But this relationship has brought on that growth from within ... the added learning environment for our nurses is something I’m most happy about.”

The nursing students work with patient assignments as early as 7 a.m., and some work as late as 9 p.m., Monday through Friday. They learn alongside their DePaul clinical instructor and work with FHCC medical professionals to learn daily routines, tasks, and policies and procedures. Each student group works for eight



In the above photo, DePaul University nursing student Jennifer Alcock checks a FHCC patient's vital signs. Below, DePaul nursing student Kristin Rakstang trains in the Critical Care Unit under the direction of RN Mylene Apigo, who works at the FHCC and is also a clinical instructor at DePaul. (Photos by Jayna Legg)

hours at a time, except for Critical Care, where they work 12-hour shifts.

DePaul nursing student Kristin Rakstang jumped at the opportunity to train at Lovell FHCC. “My Dad is a veteran, and I volunteer with ‘No Veterans Dies Alone,’ here,” she said.

“This is the population I want to serve, hands down,” Rakstang said.

RN Lori Thuente, assistant director of DePaul’s Rosalind Franklin University site, said, “It has been an excellent learning opportunity from our vantage point. Our students have learned a tremendous amount from both staff and the patients. Learning how to care for our veterans is a vital component to their education, and we are so pleased to be able to partner with Lovell FHCC.”

FHCC RN Mylene Apigo, who also is a clinical



instructor for the DePaul nursing program, said the arrangement is “a very good alliance.

“One of the positive benefits of the affiliation is that we empower the nurses here at the FHCC, especially bedside nurses, to grow and teach future nurses,” said Apigo, who works in the ICU. “It helps us become good future leaders for nurses.”

Rosalind Franklin donation sponsored one Veteran wheelchair athlete

Lovell Legends Veterans Wheelchair Games team headed to Salt Lake City for national competition June 27-July 2

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science Executive Vice President for Research Robert Kaplan and Vice President for Institutional Advancement Chad Ruback delivered a check of \$1,500 to Lovell Federal Health Care Center Director Dr. Stephen Holt, and Chief of Voluntary Services Kenny List in May.



Pictured left to right is Rosalind Franklin Vice President for Institutional Advancement Chad Ruback, FHCC Voluntary Services Chief Kenny List, Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science Executive Vice President Robert Kaplan, FHCC Director Dr. Stephen Holt, volunteer Mrs. Monica Ply, Lovell Legends Coach Karen Fleming. (Photo by Jayna Legg)

The donation defrayed the cost for one FHCC Veteran wheelchair athlete to compete in the 36th Annual National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Salt Lake City, Utah, June 27-July 2.

“We’re very pleased to make this donation,” Kaplan said. “When we learned about the Wheelchair Games, we knew we wanted to help.”

The FHCC Lovell Legends team participates every year in the national games, which are co-sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Paralyzed Veterans of America.

This year, a team of eight wheelchair athletes competed in the national contest, said Karen Fleming, who coaches the team with fellow Recreation Therapist Susan Brown. Both coaches travel with the team and assist athletes with everything needed to have a successful experience. The team relies on donations to defray costs and holds its own fundraisers, namely a bake sale at the FHCC, to raise money.

Volunteer Monica Ply, a long-time supporter of Lovell FHCC and the Veteran wheelchair athletes, said, “What a wonderful relationship this is with Rosalind Franklin and the Veterans Wheelchair Games at Lovell FHCC.”

The Legends were honored at a send-off party

at the FHCC June 24 before the team left for Salt Lake City. This year’s team members were Lovell FHCC Veteran patients Ramon Calderon, Daniel Dorsch, William Watson, Steve Aoyagi, Edward Tolliver, Joel Van Cleve, Babette Peyton and Karen Van Benschoten.

This year was the eighth time Air Force Veteran Steve Aoyagi of Des Plaines, Ill., participated. Aoyagi, who has MS, already competed and won medals in the Valor Games Southeast and Endeavor Games in the spring. “By doing this, I often surpass what I thought I could do, and if I couldn’t, I will know I gave it my best,” he said. “I live by this rule every day that I am blessed to be able to get up in the morning.”

Army Veteran Peyton, too, competed and medaled in the Valor and Endeavor Games and was trying out to be a paralympian in archery. She suffered a stroke-like injury while in the military that left her partially paralyzed. “I’m so excited. The games is the one event per year where you not only get a chance to meet new friends and old, you get energy that you can store like a battery all year long,” said Peyton, who uses her teeth to pull back the bow string.

Rosalind Franklin is an academic and research partner of the FHCC. The college is located adjacent to the FHCC in North Chicago, Ill.