

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY | 2026

Happy New Year! This year the Veteran Family Wellbeing Center (VFWC) continued our commitment to serve Veterans and their families through resilience-based programming that strengthens relationships. We have been able to deliver more than 800 resilience training sessions, helping participants build lasting skills for wellbeing and growth.

We are excited to share that group programming has expanded on the West Los Angeles VA (West LA VA) campus, with over 180 sessions engaging 1,700 participants. In addition, the VFWC supported 54 community-building events alongside our many partners, including resource fairs, luncheons, and our signature *Recreation and Wellbeing Expo*, which welcomed over 300 attendees.

As we look ahead to 2026, we are committed to deepening and broadening these efforts, by continuing to strengthen our Veteran community through connection and resilience.

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

 OVER 800 Individual/family sessions

180 Groups → OVER 1700 Attendees

54 Events → OVER 2600 Attendees

VFWC PROGRAMS

TUESDAYS

EXPRESSIVE ARTS GROUP

- BLDG. 220 MULTIPURPOSE ROOM
- 10AM-11:30AM
- OPEN TO ALL VETERANS

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

- BLDG. 701
- 2:30PM-3:30PM
- OPEN TO 701 RESIDENTS

WEDNESDAYS

EXPRESSIVE ARTS

- BLDG. 116 NEW DIRECTIONS
- 12:30PM-2:00PM
- OPEN TO NEW DIRECTIONS RESIDENTS

THURSDAYS

DOMICILIARY

- AT DOMICILIARY
- 1:00PM-2:00PM
- OPEN TO DOMICILIARY RESIDENTS

VETERAN VOICES: EXPRESSIVE WRITING

- VETERAN PEER CENTER
- 4:00PM-5:00PM
- OPEN TO ALL VETERANS

In 2025, the VFWC reached a record number of Veterans through our expanding small group programs. The year saw continued success of our two expressive arts groups—one held in Building 220, and another supporting residents at New Directions.

Our long-standing *Building Relationships* curriculum, serving the Domiciliary since 2018, grew to include Veterans residing in Building 701, bringing essential wellbeing services directly to those living in the new permanent supportive housing community. In collaboration with the new Veteran Peer Center in Building 306, the VFWC also launched two exciting initiatives: ongoing monthly support for the Women Veterans Support Group and Veteran Voices, a weekly expressive writing program designed to help Veterans share their stories and explore their creativity.

As the Veteran community on the West LA VA campus continues to grow, the VFWC remains committed to developing meaningful and accessible small group programming that promotes connection, creativity, and overall wellbeing. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our partners at VA Whole Health, New Directions, U.S. Vets, the Veteran Peer Center, and the Arts and Healing Initiative for their continued collaboration, and to the St. John's Health Foundation for their generous support that helps make this programming possible.

VFWC IN THE COMMUNITY

The VFWC proudly took part in 54 community events throughout 2025, connecting with more than 2,600 Veterans and community members. Highlights from the year included an inspiring showcase of Veteran-made art at the annual *Themes in Behavioral Health* conference held in May. The exhibition, held at UCLA's Luskin Center, featured works created in VFWC's two ongoing Veteran art groups, celebrating creativity and healing through artistic expression. In addition, this year's Recreation and Wellbeing Expo in July drew a record turnout of over 300 participants. The Expo hosted 25 provider organizations, a mindfulness and massage area, free food, and a lively drum circle, creating an atmosphere of wellness and community. Heartfelt thanks go to our many partners, especially the LA Veterans Collaborative and the Boeing Company, whose support made the event possible. Through continued collaboration with our VA partners and Veteran-serving organizations, the VFWC remains dedicated to strengthening the wellbeing, connection, and community of Veterans living and working on the West LA VA campus.



MEET OUR NEW STAFF

What do you enjoy about working at the VFWC?

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“One of the things I love the most about working at the VFWC is the opportunity to provide much-needed support to Veteran populations. It's a special honor to be able to give back and be of service to those who have been of service themselves.”

- Joanna Lord



“As the child of two Army Veterans, I enjoy being part of a close-knit unit like the VFWC that supports Veterans and their families. The support and guidance I receive from VFWC personnel help me thrive within my community engagement role and show up fully for Veterans during our skills building groups.” - Jorge Merlos

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