

# The Communicator

January – March  
2022

Hello CACVSO Members!  
Happy Holidays and Happy  
New Year to all of you.  
What a year this has been!  
I hope that all of you find  
time this holiday season to  
be with your families, rest  
and relax, and nurture and  
nourish your passion for  
the work that you do.

I want to congratulate all  
of the newly elected  
officers to our board. They  
will all be sworn in during  
our February conference in  
Sacramento, and I am  
particularly excited to be  
swearing in the first  
woman President in the  
history of our organization.  
With her many years of  
experience, and a strongly

elected board, the  
future of our association  
is in very good hands!

I wish to highlight our  
funding process  
committee. As many of  
you know, our workload  
units and the process of  
how state funds are  
distributed, is very  
important to the  
success of a County  
Veterans Service Office.  
Many of you even have  
strong opinions as to  
how the new additional  
funding should be  
distributed. If this is  
something that interests  
or excites you, I  
recommend you reach  
out to Grant Gautsche

(Riverside CVSO) to join  
this committee. Thank  
you, to Grant and his  
team, for all their hard  
work!

I look forward to seeing  
everyone next year.  
Thank you, for all that  
you have accomplished  
on behalf of Veterans  
this year!



Nathan D. Johnson  
President

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## Inside this issue:

CACVSO President Message  
Featured County- Yuba Sutter  
Women Veterans License Plate  
Recourses for Women Veterans  
A Note from Katrina Eagle  
Merced County ATLAS  
Key Legislation 2022  
Veterans Services Positions

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## Featured County: Yuba - Sutter

In the early 1800's, the area  
now known as Sutter  
County was inhabited by  
the native Maidu Indians.  
Members of various  
Spanish expeditions in  
search of mission sites,  
and fur trappers lured by  
the abundant wildlife,  
traveled through in 1841.  
The bulk of the territory was  
deeded by the Mexican  
Government to the  
County's namesake, John  
Sutter. Established in  
1842, John Sutter's Hock

Farm was the first large-scale  
agricultural settlement in  
Northern California, composed  
of grain, cattle, orchards and  
vineyards.  
Steamship on the Feather River  
near Yuba City Sutter County  
was incorporated by the  
California State Legislature on  
February 18, 1850, as one of  
the state's original 27 counties.  
At that time it included the  
southwest portion of what is now  
Placer County and a piece of  
what now belongs to Colusa  
County. Boundaries were fixed

in their present locations around 1856.  
The first County Seat was proclaimed  
by Senator Thomas J. Green to be "a  
noble city of broad streets, imposing  
buildings, and splendid public  
squares." He convinced the state to  
declare the land he had bought from  
John Sutter, which he called "Oro," as  
the County Seat. However, Senator  
Green neglected to mention that the  
grand town of Oro existed paper and,  
in fact, only consisted of one 20 x 20  
foot zinc building. Wanting more  
substantive County Seat, the town of  
Nicolaus, a bustling trading post and  
ferry crossing, was selected. After  
several short-term changes in location,  
in 1856 the people of Sutter County  
voted to proclaim Yuba City as the  
permanent County Seat.  
<https://www.suttercounty.org/community/visitors/county-history/sutter-county-history>

# WOMAN VETERAN LICENSE PLATE



WOMAN VETERAN

<https://foundationforwomenwarriors.org/>

## Foundation for Women Warriors

We are pleased to announce the California Department of Veterans Affairs has approved our proposed Woman Veteran decal for the Honoring Veterans License Plate. This means for the first time ever in the state of California, women veterans will be recognized with their very own license plate.

To make the woman veteran license plate available to all California women veterans through the DMV, we must first collect a minimum of 50 paid applications for the license plate with special decal. The license plate is \$50 with an additional \$2 payment processing fee.

This Woman Veteran License Plate purchase will include the woman veteran decal and the bottom "HONORING VETERANS" red stripe.

**Please download the application ([DMV License Decal Application- Foundation for Women Warriors](#)), process payment and send your completed application to Shaeli Chapman at [schapman@f4ww.org](mailto:schapman@f4ww.org).**

On the application, steps 1 through 4, and 8 are required. Steps 5, 6, and 9 do not need any additional information. Step 7 is only required if you are requesting personalized characters on your plate.

Special thanks to Jan Kays, Air Force veteran and decal artist.

### "HONORING VETERANS" LICENSE PLATE APPLICATION

Current license plate number of vehicle the HONORING VETERANS plate will be assigned to:

Plate owner:

Last Name First Name Middle Name

Mailing Address City Zip

Phone Number with area code E-mail address

Type of vehicle:  Auto  Truck  Trailer  Motorcycle\*

Type of HONORING VETERANS plate you are ordering:

- New Sequential license plate - \$50 (plate number will be assigned by DMV)  
 New Personalized license plate - \$78 (select your own characters, limited to availability)  
\*Motorcycle plates are limited to 5 characters and will not contain a red stripe with HONORING VETERAN.

Personalized Choice #1              
 Please explain meaning

Personalized Choice #2              
 Please explain meaning

- Conversion of existing Personalized plate to HONORING VETERANS plate - \$78  
See instructions on reverse side of this form.

(5) Go to [www.cacvso.org](http://www.cacvso.org). Click on the Veterans License Plate graphic. Click to view available logos. Note the "V" or "W" designation of desired logo and indicate that designation in (6) below.

(6) Service branch or veterans organization decal you want on your plate:  
See instructions in (5) above.

"V" or "W" number:    Foundation for Women Warriors  
Name of service branch or veterans organization

(7) Sequential plates will be mailed to the driver's address of record. Personalized plates must be picked up from a DMV field office when they are ready. View DMV field office locations at <http://apps.dmv.ca.gov/fo/offices/fo.htm> and indicate preference.

(8) Signature

I certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California, the information I have provided is true and correct.

Signature Date

(9) Mail application with check payable to "DMV" to: Special Processing Unit, Mail State A-238  
 (For payment amount, see (4) above) P.O. Box 932345, Sacramento, CA 94232-3450

# Resources for Woman Veterans

## Foundation for Women Warriors

<https://foundationforwomenwarriors.org/guiding-principles/>

Often overshadowed by their male counterparts, our programs honor, empower and support the women who answered our nation's call to serve.

## Female Veterans Network

[http://femaleveteransnetwork.org/?fbclid=IwAR3Te2rUTsZum0JfcwEvwW\\_OIUtLF2UzCQChTPMAIxH0QqwVGKUE2lBa1n8](http://femaleveteransnetwork.org/?fbclid=IwAR3Te2rUTsZum0JfcwEvwW_OIUtLF2UzCQChTPMAIxH0QqwVGKUE2lBa1n8)

Female Veterans Network was formed to unite female veterans and develop camaraderie. We provide a place to meet where we can discuss the issues and causes that are important and unique to female veterans.

To develop solutions to them, as well as promote the sharing, gathering of knowledge and information regarding female veterans from all branches of the military. Recognize and thank all the women who have served and are serving in the military today.

We seek to help female veterans in need as well as be involved in our community. We honor our past and are focused on our future.

## Woman Veterans of California

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/105118339582096>

We are active-duty women, veteran women and women in service to women veterans. This is a place to share resources, events, legislative news relevant to our members and provide a safe and familiar community. Any member may add other women veterans and active-duty ladies.

## CalVet Women's Vets

<https://www.calvet.ca.gov/WomenVets/Pages/Women-Veterans-Reception.aspx>

## Women Veteran Organizations

- The Women's Memorial.org
- American Women Veterans.org
- Grace After Fire.org
- Foundation for Women Warriors.org
- Mindful Veteran Project.org
- National Association of Black Military Women.org
- Service Action Women's Network.org
- United States Army Women's Foundation.org
- Women Veterans Rock.org
- United States Army Women's Museum-.mil
- Veterans Yoga Project.org
- Women in Military Service for America.org
- Women's Army Corps Veterans Association.org
- Women Marine Association.org
- Women Veterans Alliance.org
- Women Veteran's Initiative-FB
- Women Vets On Point.org



Representing *Only* Veterans  
& Their Families Since 1996

# Happy Holidays to CACVSO Members!

In the October 2021 newsletter, we reported about the July 30, 2021 ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit (CAFC) regarding VA's Intent to File (ITF) form, VA Form 21-0966. Essentially, the CAFC ruled that ITFs apply to **both** new claims and supplemental claims. Since the CACVSO Fall Conference in Redding, we have learned more details as to how VA is applying the Court's ruling to ITFs previously filed as well as those filed in the future. For example:

- The CAFC's ruling only applies to ITFs filed since July 30, 2020 (i.e., one year prior to the Court's ruling) but no earlier.
- The CAFC's ruling only applies to supplemental claims received on or after July 30, 2021.
- If a Veteran files an ITF and then files both a new claim and a supplemental claim during the one-year period provided by the ITF (but not on the same day), the ITF filing date will only be applied to the first claim submitted after the ITF.
- If a Veteran files an ITF and then files both a new claim and a supplemental claim on the same day during the one-year period provided by the ITF, the ITF filing date will be applied to both claims filed on the same day.

As these examples make clear, things can get mighty confusing very quickly when it comes to determining whether VA assigned the correct effective date to an award. One suggestion CACVSO members might consider doing is to make a note in your office files as to which claim the ITF is intended to cover. That way, if you need to file multiple ITFs within a 12-month period, you will be able to go back and track which ITF pertains to which claim and hopefully ensure that VA assigns the correct effective date.

We also learned about another important change that has been quietly implemented by VBA; that is, effective in October 2021, routine future examinations (RFEs) will only be requested when an RFE is required by VA's Schedule for Rating Disabilities (such as malignant neoplasms of the genitourinary system like prostate cancer) or is needed to assess whether a Veteran's disability has improved such that VA may propose to reduce the rating currently assigned. In other words, according to VA Compensation Service Policy Letter 21-01 (dated 10/7/2021), RFEs will no longer be established when service connection has been granted except in these two scenarios. This rule change should alleviate a lot of Veterans' stress and anxiety. However, it is worth noting that as of today (12/19/2021), it appears as though the VA's M21-1 manual has not been updated to reflect this change. So, it is quite possible that individual VA raters and adjudicators may not be aware of this new guidance and may still be scheduling Veterans for RFEs. Use the VA Policy Letter we circulated in late-November to remind them of this important rule change (and if you don't have it, email us at [cacvso@eagleveteranslaw.com](mailto:cacvso@eagleveteranslaw.com) for a copy).

On a personal note, we want to thank the CACVSO leadership for the privilege of serving as your Education Consultants and encourage members to reach out to us any time you have a question pertaining to VA compensation and benefits.

Here's to a Happy and Healthy 2022; we look forward to seeing everyone at the Sacramento Conference in February 2022! Cheers!!

Katrina Eagle and Jim Radogna



# Merced County VSO

The Los Banos VFW Post 2487 and American Legion Post 166 hosted an open house at the Veterans Hall in Los Banos on Saturday to showcase a recent addition.

Available since this spring for local veterans is an ATLAS telehealth system, which provides veterans in Los Banos the opportunity to be seen by medical specialists without leaving their hometown.

Veterans can step into a soundproof booth and have a video conference with medical professionals.

“Veterans will be able to access their doctors, their nutritionists, pharmacists and their mental health providers to help them so they don’t have to drive to Fresno, Merced, Palo Alto or wherever their doctors are at,” said local VFW commander Mike Hughes.

Hughes and local American Legion Post 166 commander Alan Cotta spearheaded the project.

“This part of the county we kind of get left out things,” Cotta said. “This project has been one of our pet ones. This is the accumulation of a lot of time, a lot of effort of a lot of people.”

The ATLAS system in Los Banos has been in the works for five years. Lead company engineers and executives from Phillips Medical Electronics first met with Hughes and Cotta in 2016.

“If the pandemic has taught us anything it’s that we don’t have to drive to see our doctors,” said Nathan Naynor, who is the vice president of Veteran Health Care for Phillips. “Everyone has already experienced telehealth. Now people will be able to visit their doctors without leaving Los Banos.”

ATLAS is intended to address the challenges of accessing healthcare in rural areas by providing comfortable, private spaces equipped with reliable internet for VA providers to securely meet with veterans. There are 12 active ATLAS locations across the U.S. so far.

The Los Banos location is the only one in the state of California.

The system even features a high-tech camera system. By reading a person’s eyeball can, the system can display vital signs like temperature and blood pressure.

Several months ago was the first time a local veteran participated in the Los Banos ATLAS system, and the experience was a success. Since then, 25 veterans have been ATLAS patients.

“With COVID everybody is used to calling their doctor, but this is one step up, they can see the doctor and the doctor can see them,” Hughes said

During the open house members from VA Central California Healthcare Systems, Los Banos Parks & Rec, CAL Vet, American Legion Post 166 and Los Banos VFW Post 2687 were all on hand to showcase services available to veterans. Veterans were also able to receive free COVID vaccinations and flu shots.

The Los Banos High school choir also provided music, and there was also a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the ATLAS telehealth system.

“This is a godsend for Los Banos,” Hughes said. “We’re here to service the Los Banos veterans. That’s what we’re here to do. That’s our whole goal in life.”



**ATLAS (Accessing Telehealth through Local Area Stations)** makes Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care easier for Veterans like you to access by establishing convenient locations for you to receive VA care, reducing obstacles such as long travel times to appointments and poor internet connectivity at home.

As part of ATLAS, VA has teamed up with public and private organizations — including **Walmart, Phillips, The American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)** — to offer comfortable, private spaces at select locations for you to have video appointments with your VA providers.

Video Telehealth Services at ATLAS Sites

• ATLAS sites provide care with a **private** • An **on-site attendant** is available at ATLAS sites

ATLAS is part of a telehealth program by the U.S. Department of Veteran’s Affairs that seeks to aid the nearly 9 million veterans who receive care through the VA (<https://connectedcare.va.gov/partners/atlas>).

The Los Banos Veterans Memorial Hall is home to the **only** ATLAS site in California.



# Key Legislation Platform 2022

*Thanks to the \$5.4 million local assistance funding increase from the state budget provided by the Legislature and Governor in 2021, the CVSOs are eager to increase “boots on the ground” by hiring new Veterans Service Representatives who can help process claims and provide outreach to underserved populations of veterans. In addition to ensuring CVSOs have appropriate funding for their vital services, the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers (CACVSO) also advocates for state policies and programs which will benefit California’s veterans and their families, as well as active-duty service members, reservists, and National Guard personnel. The CACVSO also works closely with Veterans Service Organizations to sponsor and support legislation in support of this goal.*

## **LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

### **• Homelessness**

In early 2020, the CACVSO realigned its priorities to focus on getting homeless veterans off the street and into housing, including transitional and permanent supportive housing. The key to assisting homeless veterans is outreach and building trust among a population which usually eschews contact with social workers, including CVSOs. The pandemic severely, if not completely, curtailed CVSOs’ abilities to engage with the homeless. Once the spread of the virus is brought under control, CVSOs hope to resume working with CalVet to record and track all homeless contact, outreach activities, and successful entry into a housing environment.

### **• Accreditation**

Support legislation that would require an individual who is assisting a veteran with filing a claim for benefits to notify that veteran if they are not a VA-accredited representative, and make it a criminal offense to intentionally misdirect or mislead a veteran, or anyone acting on a veteran’s behalf, concerning benefits or entitlements for their own monetary gain.

### **• Veterans license plate fee waiver**

Support legislation that would grant the license plate fee waiver to all veterans rated at 100 percent disability or through Individual unemployability. Also, change the language on the DMV form to eliminate the requirement that the veteran have a single disability rated at 100%. Also, separate the disabled placard and make it an option for veterans with a mobility impairment.

### **• Restore veterans-only license plate**

Support legislation that would restore the veterans-only specialized license plate, making two veteran plates available for sale — “Veteran” and “Honoring Veterans.”

### **• Jobs**

*Support legislation that would streamline and/or provide affordability to veterans seeking occupations after their military service. In addition to veterans receiving their earned VA benefits and procuring housing, obtaining a job in an occupation which provides stability and self-reliance is of the utmost importance to financial and mental well-being.*



## Veterans Service Representative I/II

**Salary**

\$41,142.40 - \$54,974.40 Annually

**Location**

Placerville, CA

**Job Type**

Full Time

**Veteran Population**

13,779



## Veterans Service Representative I/II

**Salary**

\$37,608 - \$54,216 Annually

**Location**

Redding, CA

**Job Type**

Full Time

**Veteran Population**

15,267

If your county has a position you would like added please feel free to submit for the next newsletter.

## Key Legislation continued:

### **OTHER LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

- Support the legislative priorities of the state Veterans Service Organizations that are in line with our own legislative priorities.
  - Support legislation that would promote state income tax exemption on military retirement pay for military retirees.
  - Support legislation that would reform the current system of property tax relief for disabled veterans by raising the current state dollar limitation on property tax relief for disabled veterans.
  - Support legislation that would promote the awarding of state grants through CalVet to Veterans Service Organizations and veterans service *providers* that provide claims assistance and outreach to California veterans.
  - Support legislation that would require that California Disabled Veterans Business Enterprises (DVBES) hire more disabled and non-disabled veterans. Currently, there is no requirement for DVBES to hire veterans.
  - Support legislation that would continue to encourage expansion of veterans treatment courts to more counties by providing state funding of veterans treatment courts in California.
  - Support legislation that would reduce property tax assessment on Veterans Service Organizations' posts and chapters.
  - Support legislation that would expand laws to prevent dishonest vendors and businesses that prey on or scam veterans and active-duty military personnel by criminalizing their activities.
  - Support legislation that would create a Governor's Memorial Certificate similar to the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC). Include information directing survivors to the CVSOs. (PMC is a signed certificate by the President to the family of deceased veterans.)
- ### **CACVSO FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**
- Support legislative, regulatory or policy changes that would create a federal/state/local government partnership to reduce the United States Department of Veterans Administration (USDVA) veterans claims backlog and expand outreach services to veterans. medical system will only provide prescription

medication to eligible veterans if the prescription is written by a USDVA physician.

- Support legislation that would eliminate the • Support legislation that would authorize USDVA pharmacies to honor prescriptions written by non-USDVA physicians. Currently, the USDVA Means Test for veterans to qualify for USDVA medical care. These income limitations have excluded some veterans who would otherwise qualify for enrollment from obtaining their primary healthcare through the USDVA.

## **WINTER CONFERENCE Will be held Virtually**

February 23<sup>rd</sup>

March 2<sup>nd</sup>

March 9<sup>th</sup>