



**ORANGE COUNTY
VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE**

A CELEBRATION OF SERVICE

2015: A year of Achievement

MESSAGE



2015 was an exciting year for the Veterans Service Office (VSO). We saw a huge increase in the number of Veterans assisted. We reduced wait times and transformed the waiting area into a place where all Veterans could feel a sense of pride and dignity.

Gone are the days of status quo experiences one comes to expect of a government office. In are the days of efficient and friendly service, which is delivered with in-depth knowledge and certainty.

As Veteran advocates we will continue our patriotic duty in assisting our fellow Veterans in dispelling stereotypes and navigating the ever complex rules, regulations and laws that govern veteran's benefits.

I look forward to 2016, as we strive to achieve more great things by increasing staffing and outreach activities and implementing innovative programs while staying mission focused to serve those that served.

Please take a moment to learn more about the VSO's 2015 accomplishments referenced in this pamphlet.

Sincerely,
Marco Martinez, Sergeant USMC (OIF I)
Orange County Veterans Service Officer & Remains Officer

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VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE**
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ORANGE COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

January

Annual Accomplishments

* Total Veterans served: 32,122

INCREASED ACCESS

* Decreased wait times at from 3 hours to an average of 68 minutes.

COMPLIANCE

* State audit reports submitted flawless for two consecutive reporting periods.

OUTREACH

* Assisted over 280 clients at outstations locations (Brea, Mission Viejo, Laguna Hills)

February

COLLABORATION

Orange County Veterans Cemetery

Members of the Orange County Veterans Service Office joined Governor Brown visited the designated site of the future Orange County veteran's cemetery at the Great Park.

Properly retired over 100 American flags

March

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Trained California Highway Patrol (CHP) Officers

Marco Martinez, Veterans Service Officer, lectured California Highway Patrol (CHP) officers on best practices, when interacting with Veterans and how to identify Post Traumatic Stress Disorder & Traumatic Brain Injury indicators resulting from combat deployments. He also informed CHP officers of benefits and resources available through the Veterans Service Office and other County agencies.

April

GROWTH

Staffing

* Hired 3 new Claims Officers.

- Increased coverage at main phone line from 1 to 5 full time operators.

Compliance

- Creation of HIPPA/PII complaint room.

May

NEW INITIATIVES

New Window Display

Unveiled a new window display, which pays tribute to veterans who served in Vietnam. The display showcased a mannequin outfitted as a grenadier in a rifle squad, donning actual Vietnam era gear, including original issued uniform and jungle boots. The display also contained rare items which were actually issued by the military, including insect repellent, lubricant and food rations.

June

EDUCATING COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Presentation to Veterans at Fullerton College

Veteran Service Officer, Marco Martinez gave a presentation to over 50 veterans at Fullerton College. Martinez focused on the ever emergent Post 9/11 entitlements and instructed veterans on the benefits of utilizing the Orange County Veterans Service Office (VSO) and sound methods of navigating the complexity of submitting a claim to the Department of Veterans Affairs.



2015: A YEAR OF ACHIEVEMENT

July

GOVERNMENT to GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT

Serving our Heroes Program

The Veteran Service Office worked in collaboration with Orange County Veterans Advisory Council and Orangewood Children and Family Center to distribute thank you cards to veterans through the "Serving our Heroes" program. Children/youth residing at Orangewood Center handmade over 125 thank cards that were distributed by the Veterans Service Office.

August

PROGRAM LAUNCH

Appointment of County Veterans Remains Officer

On August 25, 2015, the Orange County Board of Supervisors appointed Marco Martinez as the County Veterans Remains Officer. State law requires Board of Supervisors of each County to designate an honorably discharged veteran of the United States military who shall interred the body of any indigent, abandoned, or unclaimed veteran.

September

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Veterans Resource Fair

The VSO participated in Senator Patricia C. Bates and Assemblyman William P. Brough's Veterans Resource Fair. Over 350 participants were able to connect with various agencies and organizations who serve veterans.

October

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Orange County Stand Down

After nearly a year of planning the Orange County Veterans Service Office, along with more than 100 sponsors, participated in the 5th annual Orange County Stand Down. Homeless veterans were provided with help, support, resources, health care and benefits. More than 500 attended.

November

STATE RECOGNITION

Achievement Award

The Orange County Veterans Office was selected to receive a 2015 Achievement Award by the National Association of Counties, for our Veterans Resource Directory, which comprehensively and systematically links veterans and their families to a multitude of services provided by the County and other organizations.

December

OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

Achievement Award

The Orange County Veterans Service Office, was recognized with a statewide award for our Veterans helping Veterans work study program. With help and funding from the Veterans Administration, the County gets several veteran workers at no cost. They put them in meaningful jobs helping others get through the intake/claims process.