DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Washington DC 20420

July 20, 2000

VBA Letter 20-00-21

Director (00)
All VACO Services and Offices and Regional Offices and Centers

Subj: Announcement of Leadership VA 2001

1. I am pleased to announce the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Leadership VA (LVA) 2001 Program. Employees at or above the GS-13 grade level are eligible to apply. VA Notice 00-4, Announcement of Leadership VA 2001, dated July 5, 2000, is enclosed for additional information. Please note the requirement in Paragraph 2a. that field facility directors are required to ensure that this announcement is prominently posted for a minimum of 30 days.

2. I support VA's strong commitment to equal opportunity and I want to personally encourage all qualified minority, female, and disabled employees to apply.

3. Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Central Office and field employees may obtain LVA application forms through VA's Intranet at **http://vaww.va.gov/forms/dotindex.asp** or the VA Internet at **http://www.va.gov/forms/dotindex.htm**. You may also request forms by contacting Linda Laganas of the Employee Development and Training (ED&T) Staff (20T) at (202) 273-7121. Field employees should contact their local Human Resources Management Liaison for forms, or contact Linda at the above telephone number.

4. Completed applications should be forwarded to the Office of ED&T for receipt by close of business Wednesday, October 18, 2000.

5. If you need additional information concerning this program, please feel free to contact Linda Laganas.

/s/
Joseph Thompson

Enclosure

Department of Veterans Affairs
Washington, DC 20420

VA Notice 00-4
July 5, 2000

ANNOUNCEMENT OF LEADERSHIP VA 2001

1. **PURPOSE**. Leadership VA (LVA) is designed to identify 70 leaders in the Department of Veterans Affairs and to provide an enrichment of their career development through an intense leadership training experience. The program's general goals are to:

a. Identify unusually fine leadership talent in VA;

b. Expand the participants' leadership skills and provide them with the opportunity to become acquainted with VA's top leaders and to develop keener insight into the internal and external forces, which affect the Department;

c. Provide for an exchange of information and viewpoints, which will broaden personal and professional perspectives and lay a foundation for a network of VA leaders who share a deep commitment to the Department of Veterans Affairs and to public service in its broadest sense.

2. **GENERAL**. Administration Heads, Assistant Secretaries, Other Key Officials, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, and field facility Directors are responsible for the following actions:

a. Ensuring that the program is called to the attention of all employees who occupy positions at or above grade GS-13 and equivalent Title 38 levels (includes Veterans Canteen Service employees). For example, employees who occupy Nurse Grade IV and V positions are eligible for LVA. Additionally, field facility Directors are required to ensure that this announcement is prominently posted for a minimum of 30 days.

b. In keeping with the Department's strong commitment to equal employment opportunity, taking affirmative action to ensure that qualified minority, female, and disabled employees are encouraged to apply.

3. **APPLICATION CRITERIA**

a. Any employee occupying a position at or above grade GS-13 and equivalent Title 38 levels may apply. Applications are specifically invited from qualified minority, women, and disabled employees. LVA seeks individuals from all elements of VA who are having or who may have significant impact on the future of the Department. Applicants should be high achievers who have demonstrated unusual career progression and success, and who are active contributors to the community of which they are a part.

b. Because of the limited program capacity (approximately 70 participants), competition will be keen. Those who believe personal or work considerations will necessitate their missing a program session should not apply this year.

4. **TRAVEL FUNDING AND EXPENSES**. As agreed by the LVA Board of Trustees, sponsoring offices in VACO will be paying travel, lodging and per diem for their participants, except for VHA participants. Based upon decentralization of VHA travel funds, VHA sponsoring facilities are expected to provide travel funding for their LVA participants. Additionally, LVA operates on limited resources, therefore applicants are advised that if they are selected, each LVA participant and staff are required to contribute incidental fees for each one week session of LVA. These fees are non-reimbursable via travel vouchers and cover activities such as coffee breaks at hotels and non-contract meals.

5. **APPLICATION PROCEDURES**. Any eligible VA employee may apply by submitting an application. Procedures for obtaining, completing, and submitting applications follow:

a. Applications for the 2001 program (VA Form 5-9987) are available for field employees from their Human Resources Office. VACO employees may obtain forms in room 227A, VACO.

b. A MS Word 6.0 template of this form is available for download from the VA Intranet pages at http://vaww.va.gov/forms/dotindex.asp and from the VA Internet pages at http://www.va.gov/forms/dotindex.asp. As these templates are "protected" documents, applicants using these templates are encouraged to read the sections "About these Forms" and "Instructions" prior to downloading. Previous years' application forms may be used, but should be marked 2001.

c. Applicants should forward completed, printed applications to their supervisors.

d. Supervisors should complete the section of the application on page 6 entitled "Supervisor's Endorsement," to include signature and date.

e. All completed application packages from both field and Central Office personnel should be forwarded to their respective Central Office element (i.e., not to Leadership VA) for receipt by October 25, 2000. For example, Regional Counsel employees will forward their applications to the General Counsel (02). Applications received after October 25, 2000, will not be considered. (Please do not send applications that have not been signed or completely filled out.) The Central Office address (810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420) should be used and also please insert the respective Central Office element's routing symbol from the following listing:

(1) Office of the Secretary (00B).

(2) Veterans Health Administration (102). Note: VHA requires that employees in the field route their applications through the field facility Director prior to being sent to (102) in VACO. VHA employees must also attach a copy of the final (summary) rating page from their most recent performance appraisal. A copy of the application should also be forwarded to the appropriate Network Director.

(3) Veterans Benefits Administration (20T).

(4) National Cemetery Administration (402D).

(5) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Financial Management (004).

(6) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology (005).

(7) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Analysis (008).

(8) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration (006).

(9) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs (002).

(10) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Affairs (009).

(11) Office of the Inspector General (50).

(12) Board of Contract Appeals (09).

(13) Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (00SB).

(14) Office of the General Counsel (02).

(15) Board of Veterans' Appeals (01B).

6. **SELECTION PROCEDURES**. Applications generated within each organization will be ranked by the appropriate Administration Head, Assistant Secretary, or Other Key Official; all applications and the related ranking will be forwarded to the Leadership VA Selection Committee (053) by December 5, 2000. The selections recommended by the LVA Selection Committee will be forwarded for final approval. Selectees and non-selectees will be notified in January 2001.

7. **PROGRAM DATES AND LOCATIONS**. We anticipate having four one-week sessions at different sites. Sessions generally begin on Sunday evening at approximately 5 p.m. and conclude on Friday at 9:30 p.m. We make every effort to coordinate these session dates so as not to conflict with major VA meetings; sessions are currently tentatively planned as follows:

I. Baltimore, MD	April 1 - 7, 2001
II. Philadelphia, PA	June 3 - 9, 2001
III. Washington, DC	September 9 - 15, 2001
IV. Williamsburg, VA	December 2 - 8, 2001

8. **INQUIRIES**. Inquiries about Leadership VA may be directed to the LVA Executive Director, Jim Mayer, or LVA Program Analyst, Trenna Carter, (053), at (202) 273-4946, or LVA Secretary, Karen L. Kelly (053) at (202) 273-9764, or via e-mail.

9. **RESCISSION**. VA Notice 99-5, dated August 19, 1999. This notice is rescinded April 30, 2001; however, the information reflected will remain in effect.

CERTIFIED BY:

Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Information and Technology

BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:

Eugene A. Brickhouse
Assistant Secretary for
Human Resources and
Administration

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THE UNDER SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR BENEFITS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20420

July 21, 2000

VBA Letter 20-00-22

All Service and Office Directors

Subject: Division Leadership and Management Training Course (DLMT) Development

1. The Division Leadership and Management Training course will be held November 27, 2000 to December 8, 2000 at the Veterans Benefits Academy in Baltimore. In preparation for this year's course a planning meeting to determine what should be included in the 2000 version of the course is being held at the Academy in Baltimore on August 8, 2000 from 1 - 4 p.m. Your participation in that planning meeting is requested.

2. The last DLMT course was held in August of 1998. Since then many of the challenges and requirements facing a "newly" appointed Division Chief have changed. With that in mind, the DLMT Course Facilitators are reviewing and re-vamping the course from the ground up. Their goal is to make sure that the 2000 version of the course is in line with VBA's Core Competencies matrix and that it meets the needs of today's mid-level mangers.

3. One area that will receive increased interest in this year's course will be Business Skills. This is a training area that's beginning to receive some long overdue attention and which may best be covered by breaking the class up by business lines. As in past courses, a CO Experience Day, where course participants travel to Central Office to meet with their respective Business Lines is also an option. Your involvement in both of these efforts will be crucial to their success.

Patrick Nappi
Deputy Under Secretary for Operations

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Washington DC 20420

July 24, 2000

VBA Letter 20-00-~~21~~23

Director (00)
See List of Addressees

SUBJ: White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders – Fiscal Year 2001 Plan

1. On June 7, 1999, the President signed Executive Order 13125, White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The purpose of the Executive Order is to improve the quality of life of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) through increased participation in Federal programs where they may be underserved. To fulfill the goals of the Executive Order, the White House requires that each Federal agency complete a Federal Inventory and an Integrated Federal Plan (FY 2001 Plan) documenting efforts to improve the quality of life of AAPIs. VBA submitted its AAPI Federal Inventory to the Office of Equal Opportunity (06) on June 26, 2000. A copy of our submission is attached for your information.

2. The Office of Equal Opportunity has now forwarded a draft of the FY 2001 Plan outline which provides instructions for identifying strategic goals, objectives, strategies, time frames, and performance measures for accomplishing the objectives of the Executive Order. The FY 2001 Plan will be a foundation upon which the more comprehensive 3-year FY 2002-2004 Plan will be built. Your station was selected to complete the White House Initiative on AAPIs Fiscal Year 2001 Plan based on the census count of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in your State.

3. I have attached an advanced draft copy of the instructions and template for completing the FY 2001 Plan. Please complete Parts A and B of the Plan, as well as the Fiscal Year 2001 Plan template. Your initiatives should incorporate any activities you will undertake during FY 2001 to promote AAPI access to government services (especially outreach activities of your Minority Veterans Program Coordinator). If your station plans no AAPI initiatives during FY 2001, please provide a negative response. Please submit the requested information to Angelo E. Aguilera, Equal Opportunity Specialist, (20A1E) no later than close of business August 1, 2000.

4. If you or your staff have any questions regarding this report, please contact Mr. Aguilera on (202) 273-6617.

/s/
Patrick Nappi
Deputy Under Secretary for Operations

Enclosures

Addressees:

Director, Los Angeles VARO (344/00)
Director, San Diego VARO (377/00)
Director, Oakland VARO (343/00)
Director, Honolulu VARO (459/00)
Director, Seattle VARO (346/00)
Director, New York VARO (306/00)
Director, Waco VARO (349/00)
Director, Newark VARO (309/00)
Director, Baltimore VARO (313/00)
Director, St. Petersburg VARO (317/00)
Director, Chicago VARO (328/00)
Director, Portland VARO (348/00)
Director, Boston VARO (301/00)
Director, Philadelphia VARO (310/00)
Director, St. Paul VARO& IC (335/00)

White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

FISCAL YEAR 2001 PLAN

DRAFT

Background and Purpose:

On June 7, 1999, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13125 to improve the quality of life of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) through increased participation in Federal programs where they may be underserved. To fulfill the mandate, the Executive Order establishes the President's Advisory Commission on AAPIs and an Interagency Working Group, and instructs both to meet the following goals:

- Develop, monitor and coordinate federal efforts to improve AAPI participation in government programs;
- Foster research and data collection for AAPI populations and subpopulations; and
- Increase public and private sector and community involvement in improving the health and well-being of AAPIs.

In order to meet these goals, agencies are required to complete a federal inventory and agency plans. These agency plans will contribute to an Integrated Federal Plan, documenting efforts to improve the quality of life of AAPIs.

The following strategic goals should be used as a framework from which agencies should develop activities for FY 2001:

1) Institutionalize an agency-wide mechanism to address AAPI issues.
2) Improve research and data collection on the AAPI population and its sub-populations.
3) Promote AAPI access to governmental services.
4) Develop and/or enhance programs and initiatives directed at unmet needs of AAPIs.
5) Increase participation of AAPIs in government sponsored training programs.
6) Ensure adequate representation of AAPIs in the departmental workforce and its operations.
7) Increase outreach to AAPI communities to establish public-private partnerships that will promote appropriate linguistically and culturally competent services.

For the FY 2001 Plan, an emphasis should be placed on the first two goals listed above, which aim to build the agency infrastructure necessary for supporting implementation of Executive Order 13125. Examples of activities include:

- Establishing an agency-wide steering committee that focuses on AAPI issues and emphasize its importance by designating an agency official to chair the committee.
- Designating an FTE to oversee coordination of the Initiative within agencies.
- Establishing a funding goal for the AAPI population/Initiative.
- Ensuring involvement of all sectors of the agency: budget, program, personnel, data evaluation, etc.
- Establishing AAPI community advisory councils to the Secretary/Director.
- Developing partnerships with federal AAPI employee groups.

Activities related to data collection, analysis and reporting for AAPI populations and subpopulations need to be included to ensure future availability of data for program planning, as well as to track progress and impact of Initiative activities. Under the new standards for the classification of Federal data on race and ethnicity, the Office of Management and Budget directs agencies to collect a minimum of five categories for racial data. AAPIs are now separated into two categories: "Asian" and "Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (NHOPI)." Because aggregated data often masks the substantial differences that exist amongst AAPI subpopulations, agencies are encouraged to begin collecting and reporting disaggregated data to the full extent possible.

Of the remaining five goals, each agency should select those that are relevant to and appropriate for their respective missions. The emphasis for the FY 2001 Plan should be on new and/or expanded activities that are targeted and strategic. Agencies should be selective when including existing or ongoing initiatives or program activities.

To the extent possible, the agency plan should be linked to agency indicators developed in response to the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) to ensure that AAPI Initiative activities are measurable and monitored on an ongoing basis.

The FY 2001 Plan will be a foundation upon which the more comprehensive three-year FY 2002-2004 Plan will be built. The FY 2002-2004 Plan will incorporate priorities that will be set by the President's Advisory Commission later this year.

Completing the Fiscal Year 2001 Plan:
Detailed instructions for completing the FY 2001 Plan are enclosed.

Please submit the FY 2001 Plan in a hard copy and electronic file using Microsoft Word or WordPerfect on a diskette, by August 15, 2000 and forward to:

Ms. Shamina Singh, Executive Director
White House Initiative on AAPIs
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 10-42
Rockville, MD 20857.

Please direct questions to Ms. Charmaine Manansala at (301) 443-2492.

FISCAL YEAR 2001 PLAN INSTRUCTIONS

DRAFT

A. Please address the following questions using the attached template. A sample is attached.

Step 1 – Strategic Goal(s)

On the template, list the goal that is being addressed:

1) Institutionalize an agency-wide mechanism to address AAPI issues.
2) Improve research and data collection on the AAPI population and its sub-populations.
3) Promote AAPI access to governmental services.
4) Develop and/or enhance programs and initiatives directed at unmet needs of AAPIs.
5) Increase participation of AAPIs in government sponsored training programs.
6) Ensure adequate representation of AAPIs in the departmental workforce and its operations.
7) Increase outreach to AAPI communities to establish public-private partnerships that will promote appropriate linguistically and culturally competent services.

Step 2 – Objectives

Develop objective(s) to support the goal. Objectives should be time specific and measurable. They should be delivered to correspond to the agency's mission and may be designed to address specific AAPI subpopulations or geographic regions.

Step 3 – Strategies

Strategies are activities that support the achievement of stated objectives. Provide a concise description of the strategy by listing:

- Activities that will meet the objectives; and
- Major agency programs or services that will be utilized in order to meet objectives.

Step 4 – Time Frame

List a time frame to implement each strategy.

Step 5 - Performance Measures

Set a benchmark against which progress towards meeting the objectives will be measured. These measures can be outcome or process measures. For example, the progress towards accomplishing a certain objective can be monitored by the percentage of AAPI participation, an achieved funding level, etc.

Step 6 – Lead Entity and Contact Person

List the organizational entity within your agency that will have the lead for implementing the strategy and for evaluating the progress towards meeting the objective. List contact information including the following:

Name
Title
Office
Address
Phone Number
Fax
E-mail

B. Monitoring Official

Identify the official who will monitor and assess progress in meeting the objectives in part A on an ongoing basis and include the following contact information:

Name
Title
Office
Address
Phone Number
Fax
E-mail

White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

FISCAL YEAR 2001 PLAN TEMPLATE

DRAFT

STRATEGIC GOAL:_____

Objective	Strategy	Time Frame	Performance Measure	Lead Entity and Contact Person

Monitoring Official: _____

White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

FISCAL YEAR 2001 PLAN TEMPLATE

SAMPLE

STRATEGIC GOAL: Institutionalize an agency-wide mechanism to address AAPI issues.

Objective	Strategy	Time Frame	Performance Measure	Lead Entity and Contact Person
1. By July 2001, identify additional staff support for AAPI Initiative activities	a. Hire 1.0 FTE to focus on implementation of Initiative activities	a. Aug. 2000	a. FTE hired	a. Office of Human Resources John Kim HR Specialist Department of _____ XXX Independence Ave., SW Washington DC 20008 (202)123-XXXX
	b. Hire an Intern to assist on implementation of Initiative activities	b. July 2001	b. Intern hired	b. Office of Human Resources John Kim HR Specialist Department of _____ XXX Independence Ave., SW Washington DC 20008 (202)123-XXXX

White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

FISCAL YEAR 2001 PLAN TEMPLATE

SAMPLE

STRATEGIC GOAL: Institutionalize an agency-wide mechanism to address AAPI issues (continued).

Objective	Strategy	Time Frame	Performance Measure	Lead Entity and Contact Person
2. By November 2000, develop an Intra-agency reporting structure on Asian American and Pacific Islander activities.	a. Create intra-agency committee with representatives from each Operational Division	A1. Sept. 2000 A2. Sept. 2000	a1. First meeting convened on 9/15/00 a2. Agency official designated to chair the committee	Office of the Secretary Jane Nguyen AAPI Initiative Analyst Department of _____ XXX Independence Ave., SW Washington DC 20008 (202)123-XXXX
	b. Develop guidelines for reporting on AAPI activities	b. Nov. 2000	b. Plan for reporting structure developed	Office of the Secretary Jane Nguyen AAPI Initiative Analyst Department of _____ XXX Independence Ave., SW Washington DC 20008 (202)123-XXXX

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Washington DC 20420

AUG - 9 2000

VBA Letter 20-00-24

In Reply Refer To:

All VACO Services and Offices and VA Regional Offices and Centers

Subj.: Windows 2000 Update

1. The purpose of this letter is to provide the status of our plans for the possible use of Windows 2000 in the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA).

2. Currently, we are systematically evaluating the ramifications of introducing Windows 2000 into VBA. The Office of Information Management (OIM) has established teams to conduct an evaluation of Windows 2000 and to identify and evaluate alternatives.

3. These teams are comprised of information technology (IT) personnel from the regional offices, the Network Support Centers and Hines, Philadelphia and VACO.

4. So far, it is our understanding that migration to Windows 2000 would be a very complex undertaking. Conversion of the applications used by all VBA business lines would require much effort and expense. That is why we will be emphasizing the importance of making our final decision for business reasons, not just technological comparisons. Another major factor being examined in this evaluation process is compatibility with VBA's information technology architecture.

5. Based on OIM's initial review, VBA will not begin its migration to the Windows 2000 operating environment until at least late FY 2001. However, there are many details requiring further research before decisions on our final strategy will be made. We will continue to keep you informed as these projects progress.

6. Please share this information with interested members of your staff and all of the veterans service organizations your office works with. VSOs must be notified so they can plan their future software purchases. Technical questions or requests for additional technical information should be directed to Bill Miller, Chief, Systems Implementation Division, on (708)-681-6809. All other questions should be referred to John Muenzen, Director, Field Liaison Staff at (202) 273-6947.

for

Nora E. Egan
Deputy Under Secretary for Management

Patrick Nappi
Deputy Under Secretary for Operations

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Washington DC 20420

August 18, 2000

In Reply Refer To:

VBA Letter 20-00-25

Director (00)
All VA Regional Offices and Centers

Subject: Network Support Centers Charter

1. The enclosed Charter is to inform you of the new Network Support Centers (NSCs) purpose, accountability, authority, responsibilities, and conduct of operations. Effective January 1, 2000, the Sector Service Centers located at San Diego, St. Paul, and St. Petersburg were designated NSCs.

2. If you have any questions regarding the NSCs, please contact them directly or Brad Mayes in the Office of Field Operations at 202-273-5893.

Patrick Nappi
Deputy Under Secretary for Operations

Nora E. Egan
Deputy Under Secretary for Management

Enclosure

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

NETWORK SUPPORT CENTERS
CHARTER

PURPOSE

VBA's Information Technology (IT) structure reflects a nationwide network with sophisticated system components and applications requiring increased levels of technical support. To meet VBA's need, a new structure has been implemented to ensure quality and consistent IT service. Three Network Support Centers (NSCs) located at the San Diego, St. Paul and St. Petersburg Regional Offices will provide first line support for their Service Delivery Network (SDN) client sites for initial installations of hardware and software. The NSCs will implement and support VBA's approved and standardized architecture for local networks, hardware, software, telecommunications, video conferencing, and applications platforms. The Network Support Center Managers (NSCMs), manage a fully trained staff that is available to provide immediate telephone and/or on-site support to client sites and the host Regional Office.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND AUTHORITY

The Systems Implementation Office (SIO) located at the Hines Benefits Delivery Center is responsible for the installation and management of VBA's information processing platforms and ensures successful nationwide compatibility of the implementation of hardware, software and applications. The SIO Chief, serves as the Network Support Center Coordinator (NSCC). The NSCC is the focal point of technical direction, guidance, communication, and leadership to the NSCs. The NSCC provides performance evaluation of the NSCs to the Office of Field Operations (OFO) as well as sponsorship and support of new technology development.

The OFO is responsible for the supervision and administrative support of the NSCs. The Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Operations serves as the direct line authority for the three NSCs. The OFO will serve as the point of contact for all non-technical matters affecting the NSCs, such as budgetary support, funding, resource allocation, organization approval, staffing actions, and business planning model/initiatives.

The NSCs are given full authority to carry out the activities and responsibilities described in this Charter and as assigned by OFO. The NSC Managers function as senior field IT advisors to the OFO, the Service Delivery Network (SDN) leaders and the Regional Office (RO) Directors.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide first line support for hardware installation involving pre-install environmental concerns, computer room preparation issues, post installation, systems software, application installation involving server space assessment, and routine problem resolution.

- Serve as subject matter experts for the Information Technology Service Center (ITSC) located within the Philadelphia Benefits Delivery Center in Local Area Network (LAN) management.

- Manages the host station's IT resources utilizing additional NSC staff provided by OFO for host station system management.

- Implement and maintain VA/VBA standards for local network, hardware, software, telecommunications, video conference, and applications platforms.

- Identify and assist in maintaining a standard level of technical expertise for client site IT staff.

- Provide comprehensive security advisory programs for client sites.

- Perform on-site client visits using a specific site visit protocol or provide needed emergency on-site assistance.

- Provide training services for their client sites.

- Perform Beta testing of applications for the SIO prior to nationwide rollout and provide SIO with technical resources and support for special IT project and initiatives.

- Prepare and submit NSC budget and operating plan to OFO.

DURATION

The Network Support Centers serve as permanent structure until such time that reorganization or restructuring is determined to be necessary.

CONDUCT OF OPERATIONS

The conduct of operations for the Network Support Centers is as follows:

The NSC Managers will conduct meetings as needed or at the request of the NSCC or the Deputy Under Secretary for Operations.

Meetings may be conducted in person, via teleconference or video as determined by the NSCC or the Deputy Under Secretary for Operations.

An agenda will be prepared for every meeting and the meeting deliberations will be documented.

Patrick Nappi
Deputy Under Secretary for Operations

Nora E. Egan
Deputy Under Secretary for Management

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Washington DC 20420

AUG 28 2000

VBA Letter 20-00-26

Director (00)
All VACO Services and Offices, VBA Human Resource Centers, and VA Regional Offices and Centers

SUBJ: The Office of Personnel Management's FY 2001 Management Development Center Seminars

Enclosed is a listing of Management Development Center courses most frequently attended by Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) employees over the last 3 years, along with a brief overview of each course.

VBA is considering purchasing these courses for FY 2001. Course locations are at the Management Development Center's facilities in Denver, Colorado, or Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

How Do You Select Participants to Attend These OPM Courses?

Please review the courses and the overview and identify an employee(s) at your station whose career development would benefit from one of these training programs. When identifying an employee, please consider the following:

- How will the program meet the identified needs of your employee?
- How will developed skills derived from participation in the program be applied to your employee's current position or to a position the employee will likely fill in the near future?

Hopefully, by identifying potential participants prior to the distribution of the Office of Employee Development and Training's (20T) letter of solicitation, the participants will be matched to a seminar most beneficial to them and their present and anticipated duties. Early identification will also help VBA be more effective in succession planning and budgeting.

What If You Have an Employee Who Needs a Class Not Listed on the Attached Course List?

A more detailed overview, learning outcomes, competencies, targeted audience, and course length can be reviewed on OPM's Web Page at *http://www.opm.gov/mdc*. If, after your review of the site, you identify a course not included on the attached course list but would be of value to one of your employees, please notify us with the name of the course.

Director (00)
All VACO Services and Offices, VBA Human Resource Centers, and VA Regional Offices and Centers

Who Pays for Your Employee(s) to Attend an OPM Course?

Funding for these training programs, and required travel, will be paid for by Central Office 20T. Every effort will be made by the Office of Field Operations and the Chief of Staff to fairly distribute these training opportunities among those employees that best meet the criteria.

Who Do You Contact for Additional Information?

If you need additional information regarding any of these programs, please contact Linda Laganas of the 20T staff at 202/273-7121, or via e-mail.

Nora E. Egan
Deputy Under Secretary
for Management

Patrick Nappi
Deputy Under Secretary
for Operations

Enclosure

cc: SDN Training Coordinators

Management Development Seminar: Leading Organizations -Experienced managers, typically GS-13/14 or equivalent, step into the world of dynamic thinking, creativity, and innovative, results-getting implementation. Managers bring live problems to the seminar. They use them to develop the skills and knowledge needed to deal more effectively with the rapidly changing Federal environment. *This is a 2-week seminar.*

Management of Information Technology – For Federal managers involved with the acquisition and management of information technology (IT). Participants learn how to develop appropriate criteria for assessing and determining their organization's IT requirements. Managers at the GS-13 level and above or equivalent, who have involvement with the acquisition and management of IT.. *This is a 1-week seminar.*

Managing Project Teams – For team/project leaders and managers at GS-11 or equivalent and above who want to focus on project team results. This session provides participants with project management and team leadership skills to better plan, organize, lead, and control work in today's changing work climate. It enhances a manager's ability to influence others where there is no direct control and to assure that work is done on time, on budget, and satisfies the customer. *This is a 1-week session.*

Seminar for New Managers: Leading People – For highly motivated new managers, typically GS-13 and above or equivalent. Participants learn and hone the essential skills necessary for successful transition into entry-level management. It is also appropriate for more experienced managers who have not yet had the opportunity for formal development of these skills. This seminar uses the Hersey-Blanchard Leadership Model to diagnose participants' preferred leadership styles and their appropriate use. Participants also develop skills in conflict resolution, customer service, diversity, problem solving, and communication. *This is a 2-week seminar.*

Supervisory Leadership Seminar – This seminar provides the new government supervisor, typically at GS-11 and above or equivalent, with basic administrative and human resource skills and the knowledge necessary to succeed. Attendees participate in case studies, small group discussions, personal and group assessments, and directed study to facilitate the transition from employee to supervisor. *This is a 2-week seminar.*

Team Building and Team Leadership –This seminar focuses on the fundamental team skills necessary to work effectively in a team-oriented environment. It examines how to apply basic team process and tools to foster commitment, increase trust, empower people, and create synergy for accomplishing organizational goals. Team leaders, facilitators, and supervisors at GS-11 or equivalent and above who are beginning the transition to a team environment. *This is a 1-week seminar.*

Team Facilitation Skills Workshop – This workshop provides strategies, processes, and tools to facilitate successful teams. This program presumes a basic understanding of teams and is designed to build on the competencies learned in the Team Building and Team Leadership Seminar. Team leaders, facilitators, and supervisors at GS-11 or

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT CENTER COURSES FOR FY 2001

Developing High Performing Teams – Experienced team leaders and for leaders committed to using teams to improve organizational performance. Participants, typically at GS-11 and above or equivalent, should have a working knowledge of the fundamentals of team behavior and process. *This is a 1-week session.*

Executive Development Seminar: Leading Change – This seminar focuses on developmental activities designed to enhance their ability to communicate orally in a variety of settings, interact positively with external constituencies, identify and deal effectively with the internal and external politics that impact their missions and organizations. This seminar is for highly effective managers, typically those at GS-15 or equivalent and fast track GS-14s. The seminar is specifically designed to meet the interagency training requirements for SES Candidate Development Program enrollees. *This is a 2-week session.*

Executive Supervisory Skills –This course covers the role of the new leader as coach, counselor, and mentor while examining leadership preferences and styles. Personnel actions will be explained. The new supervisor will obtain other practical leadership skills necessary to create an effective and energized workplace that embraces diversity and encourages everyone to peak performance. This course is designed for high-level, seasoned professionals who are first-time supervisors at the GS-13 through GS-15 or equivalent. *This is a 1-week session.*

Leadership Potential Seminar – This seminar assists agencies in their managerial succession planning through early development of current and future managers and leaders. Participants are program specialists, typically at GS-11 and above or equivalent, with identified potential for transition to supervisory responsibilities or managers/supervisors who want a better understanding of the power of leadership. *This is a 2-week seminar.*

Leadership Skills for Non-Supervisors and Non-Managers – This course concentrates on informal leadership skills necessary to influence positive organizational success without positional authority. Participants engage in experiential learning rather than in a lecture format. Participants are technical specialist, analysts, project leaders, and professional staff who are currently not supervisors or managers typically at the GS-13 or above and equivalent but wish to learn more about increasing their leadership abilities. *This is a 1-week seminar.*

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Washington DC 20420

AUG 29 2000

VBA Letter 20-00-27

Director (00)
All VACO Services and Offices and VA Regional Offices and Centers

SUBJ: Solicitation of Mentors for the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (SESCDP)

1. Mentors are being solicited for the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (SESCDP), a 12-18 month program which begins in October 2000. Mentoring is an extremely effective method:

- of identifying and promoting talent from within the organization;
- building on and learning from one's particular skills and experiences; and,
- ensuring continued growth for the organization.

The mentoring element for the SESCDP will be a collaborative approach with mentor and candidate developing a learning partnership. The ultimate goal of this partnership is the development of one of our most important resources - effective leaders.

2. Selection is limited to Directors at the GS-15 or SES level. Applicants must be willing to become:

- a coach, to motivate;
- a consultant, to identify problems and aid in finding solutions;
- a teacher, to support skill and competency development; and,
- a relationship builder, to facilitate and further interpersonal communication skills and relationships for our candidates.

3. The role of a mentor is a time-consuming and energy intensive activity but the benefits that you and VBA will accrue make it worth the investment. As a mentor, you will be sharing organizational insight, providing feedback, acting as a sounding board, and building and fostering the candidates' strengths and weaknesses. Mentors will be required to work closely with their candidate throughout the entire program; attend an orientation/training session; and sign a Mentoring Agreement. Every effort will be made to limit your travel requirements by utilizing the VBN Satellite System and Video Teleconferencing technologies.

Director (00)
All VACO Services and Offices and VA Regional Offices and Centers

SUBJ: Solicitation of Mentors for the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (SESCDP)

4. If you are interested in becoming a mentor for the SESCDP program, please complete the enclosed application. Also required is a one page biography profile which includes a brief overview of your qualifications and characteristics (e.g., years of experience, areas of expertise, special skills, why you are interested in participating in the program as a mentor). Candidates will also be completing a profile. To aid in the matching process, mentor profiles will be shared with candidates and vice versa.

5. Applications and profiles are due by Monday, September 11, 2000. Please E-mail applications and profiles to: **VAVBAWAS/CO/SESProgram**. Questions may be addressed to Luisa Hill, Project Team Leader, Office of Employee Development and Training (20T), who can be reached on 202-273-6828.

Joseph Thompson
Under Secretary for Benefits

Enclosure

Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program

Mentor Application Form

Name: _____
Position: _____
Station: _____
Phone Number:

EXPERIENCE:

Describe your current job and area of experience:

_____
_____
_____

Number of years in the federal sector: _____
Number of years as a supervisor: _____
Number of years at VA/VBA: _____

WHY DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD BE A GOOD MENTOR? _

I have a good understanding of career paths in the following fields: (Claims Examiner, Legal Instrument Examiner, Veterans Benefits Counselor, Accountant, Loan Specialist, Counseling Psychologist, Management Analyst, etc.)

_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

I am active or hold a position in the following professional associations: (Please spell out acronyms)

_____

I have had the following positive experiences in developing others:

_____

I am recognized for the following community accomplishments:

_____

_____

WHAT SKILLS MAKE YOU ESPECIALLY QUALIFIED TO SERVE AS A MENTOR?

(CHECK ANY OR ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐leadership skills
- ☐confidante/sounding board
- ☐committed to helping people grow
- ☐team building/player
- ☐listening skills
- ☐interpersonal skills
- ☐communication skills
- ☐understand the VA Business Process
- ☐writing skills
- ☐political/organizational savvy
- ☐networker
- ☐public speaking skills
- ☐analytical skills
- ☐supervisory experience

HAVE YOU EVER HAD A MENTOR? ____ HAVE YOU EVER BEEN A MENTOR? ____

Why are you interested in being a mentor?

_____

Was your career enhanced by mentoring? [] Yes [] No

If yes, was it a formal or informal partnership? [] Formal [] Informal

Realistically, how much time can you invest in the mentoring partnership?
[] 1 hour per week [] more than 1 hour per week

Are you willing to dedicate personal time to this mentoring process?
[] yes [] No [] Maybe

What type of obstacles would stop you from meeting the goals of this mentoring program? (i.e. work load, travel)

_____

Supervisor's Signature: **Date:**
(when appropriate)

_____ _____

Please attach a one-page profile or biography. Be sure to include a brief overview of your distinguishing qualifications and characteristics: years of experience, areas of expertise, community accomplishments, special skills, publications, why you are interested in participating in the program as a mentor, etc.

_____

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR BENEFITS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20420

SEP - 5 2000

VBA Letter 20-00- 28

Director (00)
All VBA Services and Offices and All VBA Regional Offices and Centers

Subj.: Delegation of Authority for Special Contribution Awards

1. This letter delegates authority to approve Special Contribution Awards. The delegation supersedes VBA letter 20-98-9 dated June 19, 1998, which is hereby rescinded.

2. Effective immediately, Facility Directors, Program and Staff Office Directors and the Associate Deputies for Operations (East & West) now have the authority to approve Special Contribution Awards up to $5000 for an individual and up to $10,000 for a group so long as no one employee receives more than $5000.

3. The Deputy Under Secretaries for Management and Operations are delegated authority to approve individual special contribution awards of up to $7500 and group awards up to $25,000 so long as no one employee receives more than $7500.

4. All special contribution awards within VBA will normally be signed at two approval levels. However, Facility Directors, and Deputy Under Secretaries may act as both recommending and approving officials as necessary.

5. All special contribution award nominations exceeding monetary approval limits will be sent through channels to the appropriate approval level.

Joseph Thompson

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Washington DC 20420

SEP - 7 2000

VBA Letter 20-00- 29

In Reply Refer To:

Director (00)
All VACO Services and Offices and All Regional Offices and Centers

Subj: Exemplary Service Award

1. The Leadership VA Alumni Association is inviting VA employees at the GS-12 level and below, including wage grade and equivalent Title 38 employees to apply for the Exemplary Service Award.

2. The Exemplary Service Award is designed to honor employees who demonstrate exceptional potential for increased leadership and managerial responsibilities through out their performance in carrying out VA's mission. The Award is divided into two awards of $500 each: one for employees in grades GS-8 and below, and the other for employees in grades GS-9 through 12.

3. I have enclosed the award application and fact sheet. Please submit the completed application and five copies to the Office of Human Resources (20A2), 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC by September 25, 2000. If you have questions, please contact Francene Shelton via e-mail or call on (202) 273-5913.

Joseph Thompson
Under Secretary for Benefits

Enclosures

APPLICATION FOR EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARD SPONSORED BY THE LEADERSHIP VA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

FACT SHEET

Title:	Leadership VA (LVAAA) Alumni Association Exemplary Service Award.
Eligibility:	Department employees in two groups: grades up to GS-8 and GS-9 through GS-12 grade levels (including wage grade and Title 38 equivalents).
Application:	Solicited from all eligible VA employees.
Evaluation/Selection:	By a panel of LVA alumni through established selection criteria.
Award Amount:	$500.00 to an employee selected in each category.
Funding:	Solely from the treasury of the Leadership VA Alumni Association.
Note:	No additional documents are needed and, if submitted, will not be considered with the application.

Transmit an electronic copy to: Teresa.Jacobs@med.va.gov

Mail original copy plus five copies to:

Teresa Jacobs, CHE
Awards Chair, Leadership VA Alumni Association
HSTMVH (CS)
800 Hospital Drive
Columbia, MO 65201
Attention: Exemplary Service Award

Application For

EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARD

Sponsored by the

LEADERSHIP VA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

GENERAL

(Please print or type)

Last First Middle Initial

Name: _____

Grade Level: _____ Years in VA: _____ Organizational Symbol: _____

Office Mailing Address:

Telephone Number:

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Present Job Title/Assignment/Responsibility:

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY (CONT.)

List former positions in VA or other agencies and all previous employment in reverse chronological order beginning with your current position.

EMPLOYER	TITLE, GRADE OR RESPONSIBILITY	DATES
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

INTER/INTRA-ORGANIZATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

List any Inter/Intra-Departmental Committees or facility level working groups on which you have served.

NAME OF COMMITTEE	YOUR ROLE	DATES ACTIVE
1.		
2.		
3.		

ACHIEVEMENT/LEADERSHIP

What do you consider your strongest skill or your outstanding career achievement thus far in service to veterans and/or the Department? Please specify any leadership role you may have played.

POTENTIAL FOR ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Please describe how or why your past leadership/achievement prepares you for increased responsibilities in service to veterans and/or the Department.

EDUCATION

Begin with high school, then college(s), business or trade schools and/or other specialized training.

	NAME AND CITY OF SCHOOL	DATES	DEGREE	MAJOR
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Extracurricular activities and special honors or awards for leadership activities while in school (please indicate school):

DEPARTMENT ISSUE

In your judgement, what is the most pressing issue we face in carrying out the Department's mission, generally, and/or in your particular area of specialty? Explain why and give any recommendations you may have for approaching and resolving the problem.

(Please **use this space and only this space** for your answer)

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: (this application must be signed for it to be considered)

Signature _____ Date _____

PRIVACY ACT ADDENDUM – AWARDS NOMINATION

The nominee should review information requested. None of the information is required by law and is, therefore, disclosed voluntarily. It will be used in considering the nominee for the award, publicity and related purposes. Not providing all or part of the requested information may result in a nominee not being fully considered for this award.

AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION: Except as specified below, all personal information contained in my nomination for the Leadership VA Alumni Association (LVAAA) Exemplary Service Award may be used by the Alumni Association for promotion and publicity.

Exceptions: (specify personal information, which you **do not** want released.)

_____ _____

Signature DATE

VA Form 3496
August 2000

SUPERVISOR'S ENDORSEMENT

As applicant's immediate supervisor, please review information submitted by the applicant. Endorse the applicant by checking the appropriate box below, then sign and date your endorsement in the signature block. Any comments you wish to submit to support your endorsement should be included in the space provided below. Your comments will be very helpful in determining the applicant's qualifications.

_____ Highly Recommend

_____ Recommend

_____ Do Not Recommend

This applicant for the Leadership VA Alumni Association _____ Exemplary Service Award.

NARRATIVE COMMENTS:

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE AND TITLE

DATE

Mail Supervisor's Endorsement to:

Teresa Jacobs, CHE
Awards Chair, Leadership VA Alumni Association
HSTMVH (CS)
800 Hospital Drive
Columbia, MO 65201
Attention: Exemplary Service Award