Representatives from the Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Veterans, and community members gathered May 20, to cut the ribbon on the latest clinical addition in the Northern Virginia area, and open the doors to a new 10,000 square-foot space for Veterans.

The Fredericksburg Community Based Outpatient Clinic at Southpoint brings an additional four primary care teams and expands services to area Veterans. This addition, located on the third floor of the Lee’s Hill Medical Plaza, complements the original Veterans clinic located approximately five miles to the north. The two clinics, which belong to the McGuire VA Medical Center in nearby Richmond, Virginia, bring the total to 20,000 square feet of clinical space for Veterans.

The Fredericksburg area is among the fastest growing regions for Veterans, stated Joseph P. Edger, Deputy Network Director, Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network. Between 2010 and 2015, the number of Veterans accessing care in Fredericksburg has more than doubled. The increase presented a challenge and in two years the idea went from paper to reality. Edger said to those in attendance at the ceremony, “What you’re going to see here is our answer to that challenge.”

In addition to primary care access, the new clinic doubled the Home Based Primary Care program and expanded the Mental Health team to serve new and existing patients in their own community. The new clinic is equipped with an audio booth and, currently, part-time audiology is offered. Full-time audiology services are due later in the year. One of the largest benefits to area Veterans is the reduction in travel to Richmond for services in audiology and podiatry, said Lisa Gregory, Chapter Commander of General Washington Chapter 7 for the Disabled American Veterans and Chairperson for the local Fredericksburg area Veterans Council. Gregory said the increase in general and mental health access should benefit area Veterans by reducing wait times and travel.

“This area is famous for people retiring and staying, so I’d like to see this clinic fill up,” Gregory said. “And then get another.”

A $16,500 check is presented to the adaptive sports program at the McGuire VA Medical Center at the end of the 2nd Annual Ride for Rise and Conquer event, April 30. VAMAC, a Richmond-based, family-owned plumbing company, donated 100 percent of the proceeds from the event, and bottled water sales, to McGuire. In total, the adaptive sports program received $17,258 to fund adaptive sports activities for area Veterans.

What branch of service did you serve in? Army
Years of service. 13 years (1998-2013)
What was your most memorable experience while serving active duty? My most memorable experience while on active duty was when I helped locate a missing aircraft when I was stationed in Korea.
Tell us something about you that most people would not know. My first job in the Army was Air Traffic Control.
What does being a Veteran mean to you? Being a veteran means I’m part of something bigger than myself, a band of brothers in defense of the country we love.

On May 20, VA leadership and Veterans from the local community cut the ribbon on the latest clinical addition for the Veterans of the Fredericksburg, Virginia, area. Pictured from left to right: Alan Lombardo, Associate Director, McGuire VA Medical Center; Lisa Gregory, Chapter Commander, Disabled American Veterans, General Washington Chapter 7; Lt. Col. Chris Sloan, Deputy Commander for Administration, McGuire VA Medical Center; John A. Brandecker, Medical Center Director, McGuire VA Medical Center; Dr. Deborah Panebianco, Section Chief for Community Based Ambulatory Care, McGuire VA Medical Center; Dr. Sagayabama Rajakone, Physician, McGuire VA Medical Center.
WELCOME to our NEW EMPLOYEES

Frances, Conte  
Cook, Kara  
Turner, Ricky  
Waddy, James  
Willis, John  
Reaves, Leah  
Wheeler, Lisa  
Bryant, Krystal  
Duman, Amanda  
Gaines, Theresa  
Mallory, Marva  
Rebold, Nicholas  
Bradshaw, Rhonda  
Edmondson, Desiree’  
Branch, Kelly  
Griffin, Hyla  
Twitchell, Patricia  
Johnson, Janiece  
Willoughby, Vickie 
Dorsey, LaTonya 
Minor, Dusty 
Narayanan, Radha 
Alvarex, Damalis 
Goodman, Mary 
Tatum, Stephanie 
Johnson, LaTonya 
Latta, Pamela 
Boisseau, Kristol 
Engram, Chris 
Robinson, Tyrese 
Zaleski, Nancy 
Stewart, Crystal 
Washington, Cynthia 
Robinson, Thomas 
Anderson, Sarah 
Weaver, Kelly

MCGUIRE RECENT EVENTS....

MAY LEADERSHIP FORUM
YEARS OF SERVICE AWARDS
35  • Larry Dunn, Grounds Maintenance
30  • Charles Dabney, LPN Polytrauma
• Claudia Snipes, Pharmacy Tech

ACCOMPLISHMENTS and AWARDS
LEAN SIX SIGMA
YELLOW BELT CERTIFICATION
Elisha Barnette-Jones
Keisha Perry

McGUIRE BASEBALL NIGHT
JUNE 29 • START TIME: 6:35pm
We invite all McGuire staff to join us for baseball night with the Richmond Flying Squirrels. The Richmond Flying Squirrels will be facing off against Akron University Wednesday Night, June 29. Tickets will be for sale starting June 3 up until the event. Contact Ryan Ballon, Wellness Coordinator at ext. 6210.

NATIONAL NURSES WEEK
Kathy Colbert, RN

IT’S YOUR NEWSLETTER!
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!
Please share your department news with us: vhricpublicaffairs@va.gov

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

MCGUIRE TOTAL BODY FITNESS
4:30 pm - Tuesdays in MPR and Thursdays in the Fitness Center

YOGA
4:30 pm - Mondays in MPR

ZUMBA
4:30 pm - Tuesdays and Thursdays in MPR

COMING SOON
BASKETBALL LEAGUE - sign up and registration starting May 26
Contact Ryan Ballon, Wellness Coordinator at ext. 6210

National Nurses Week is devoted to highlighting the diverse way that nurses work to improve health care. From bedside nursing in hospitals, ambulatory care and long-term care facilities to the halls of research institutions, state legislatures, and Congress, the depth and breadth of the nursing profession is expanding health care of the community and its veterans. McGuire VAMC recognized and celebrated the contribution of nurses with activities throughout the week. Nurses shared in the celebration—enjoying a taco bar, pancake and waffle breakfast, fashion show, ice cream social and spending some time getting a manicure, massage or new hairdo at the wellness fair. The festivities were filled with laughter, comradery and the music of DJ Ginger music. Nurses from the Specialty Care Clinics also collected food donations for the Central Virginia Food Bank.

This year’s theme for National Nurses Week was “Culture of safety: It starts with YOU.” McGuire VAMC nurses embraced this theme and shared best practices with poster presentations and learning activities. The posters highlighted the diversity of the McGuire VAMC nursing staff and their commitment to the ICARE values and keeping our veterans safe.

Nursing staff that emulate the ICARE values of Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect and Excellence were also recognized at the annual Excellence in Nursing Awards Ceremony. Recipients of these awards are nominated by their peers and role model daily devotion to Excellence in Nursing and the ICARE values. Recipients for the 2016 VHA Secretary’s Awards for Excellence in Nursing were: Gregory Williams, RN; Bridget Vetere Kmetz, RN, APN; Jesse Sturdifen, LPN; and Tyrone Turnbull, NA. In addition, Bridget Vetere Kmetz, RN, APN, was selected for the Mid-Atlantic VISN Excellence in Nursing Award. McGuire VAMC is proud to recognize them for their dedication and commitment to caring for veterans. They were joined by the 2015 recipients of these prestigious awards and celebrated by their colleagues and families.

National Nurses Week gives us the opportunity to celebrate nursing staff and their contributions to quality care for veterans. McGuire VAMC is honored to recognize the dedication and commitment of our nursing staff.

2016 Nursing Award Recipients

TOP LEFT: Bridget Vetere Kmetz, RN, APN • 2016 Registered Nurse – Expanded Role, Excellence in Nursing Award and Mid-Atlantic VISN Excellence in Nursing Award

TOP RIGHT: Jesse Sturdifen, LPN • 2016 Licensed Practical Nurse Excellence in Nursing Award

LEFT: Tyrone Turnbull, NA • 2016 Nursing Assistant Excellence in Nursing Award

RIGHT: Gregory Williams, RN • 2016 Registered Nurse Excellence in Nursing Award
T he McGuire VA Medical Center recently held a recognition ceremony to honor a select group of people who are essential to the VAs mission of caring for Veterans.

On May 6, the facility held its annual Volunteer Luncheon and Recognition Ceremony to thank and honor those who devote such a precious resource—their time.

John A. Brandecker, Medical Center Director at McGuire, expressed his gratitude for the seemingly endless tasks Volunteers are asked to perform—which amounted to approximately 77,615 hours for fiscal year 2015.

“While we can count hours, the value is immeasurable,” Brandecker said.

This year marks the 70-year anniversary for VA Volunteers Service, and since its inception volunteers have donated 782 million hours to VA.

Among those recognized was Linda Katzer. Katzer was the only volunteer to reach the 10,000 hour mark during 2015.

She said she started volunteering at McGuire in 1999 and nowadays spends her time here within the facility’s Chaplain Service.

“I feel honored,” Katzer said immediately following the ceremony. “I just love serving our Veterans. I just love serving the men and women.”

If you are interested in volunteering at the McGuire VAMC, please visit: www.richmond.va.gov/giving

The RVA Beard League recently held the Mid-Atlantic Beard & ’Stache Championships competition to benefit the Richmond Fisher House.

On May 9, Wayne Walker, Richmond Fisher House Manager, accepted a check for $15,165.00 from four well-bearded individuals with the RVA Beard League.

It is often said, “Graduation is not the end, it’s the beginning.” This sentiment was felt during the recent graduation of McGuire VAMC’s inaugural class of the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program, held on May 3, 2016. During the ceremony, the medical center’s chapel was packed with proud family members and supportive staff, all present to witness the six graduates’ accomplishments.

CPE is designed for people at various stages of life: clergy seeking continuing education; laity wanting to explore/develop themselves as pastoral caregivers; and seminarians preparing for ministry. The course has two formats: a full-time, 11-week summer internship from May to August, or a part-time, 30-week extended internship that runs from September to May.

McGuire’s CPE Program operates as a satellite of Virginia Commonwealth University, which is accredited to offer CPE (Levels I/II) and Supervisory CPE by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. The curriculum uses various educational frameworks to train the participants in various areas of clinical pastoral care.

Subjects covered during the training include: visitation skills; reflective listening; spiritual assessment; grief and loss counseling; and non-directive ministry. The participants also participate in case studies, one-on-one meetings with the CPE supervisor, and lead religious services.

During the graduation ceremony, each graduate had an opportunity to reflect on their experience as a chaplain intern. The graduates varied in age, gender, and pastoral experience; however, they all expressed moments when they felt challenged during the CPE program. The graduates also expressed how the program yielded great spiritual and emotional growth in their lives.

When reflecting on his CPE experience, Arthur Slavinski stated that although he had done many things in his life, his role as a chaplain intern had been the most enriching. Slavinski, a Navy Veteran, was overcome with emotion during his speech. During their individual speeches, several of the chaplain interns expressed the notion that the people they were sent to help, were actually helping them. CPE graduate, Unique Clary, a McGuire Employee, who worked full-time while completing her part-time chaplain internship, summed up what the program meant to her, “CPE is about self-discovery. It forces you to deal with your own personal issues. Doing so, best helps you program to geriatric.”

Following their speeches, the graduates received a certificate of completion and a gift. The graduating class also presented a gift to the CPE supervisor, Chaplain Kenneth Linder and the staff chaplains. The ceremony was followed by lunch and fellowship.

Again, it is often said, “Graduation is not the end, it’s the beginning.” As this chapter closes in the lives of the CPE graduates, a new adventure awaits them. Each going their separate way, properly trained to provide skilled, clinical pastoral care to those in need.

To discover more about the CPE program, please visit: www.richmond.va.gov/Clinical_Pastoral_Education.asp

CPE GRADUATES

Arthur Slavinski
Brad Bradley
Brenda Phillips
Cathleen Pierce
James Ginter
Unique Clary

CPE graduate and McGuire employee, Unique Clary, continued to work full-time while completing the part-time chaplain internship.