

# VETERANS BENEFITS & BEYOND

DECEMBER 2019

**JAN DILS**   
ATTORNEYS AT LAW, L C



## VA Awards Millions in Adaptive Sports Grant Funding for Disabled Veterans

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The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) awarded \$14.8 million in grants for adaptive sports programs benefiting Veterans with disabilities and disabled members of the Armed Forces at the end of September.

Of the total, \$1.5 million is being used to support organizations that offer equine-assisted therapy to support mental health.

"Adaptive sports help Veterans thrive both physically and mentally as they challenge their inner strength and open pathways to community integration," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "We are honored to partner with over 120 organizations dedicated to providing adaptive sports and equine-assisted activities to help Veterans discover what's next, not just in sports, but also in life."

The VA awarded 126 grants to national, regional and community programs, which

**"Adaptive sports help Veterans thrive both physically and mentally as they challenge their inner strength and open pathways to community integration"**

-VA Secretary Robert Wilkie

will reach about 11,000 Veterans and service members from every state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

The VA awarded the grants to Veterans Service Organizations, city and regional municipalities, and other community groups to provide a wide range of adaptive sports

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## Jan's Letter

There is "able" in "disabled." At Jan Dils, Attorneys at Law, we have the great privilege of seeing so many Veterans come into our office with next to nothing, and after they get their deserved benefits, a whole new world opens up. One of the reasons we offer these newsletters is to share additional services available to our heroes. In the first article, we are pleased to spread the word that the VA is awarding millions in adaptive sports grant funding for disabled Veterans. A healthy body gives hope for a healthy mind.

The second article is not so positive. The Department of Defense's Annual Suicide Report - Calendar Year 2018 shows a suicide rate, per 100,000 service members, of 24.8 for active duty personnel in 2018, which is an increase of 2.9% from 2017. But we do want to continue to report any positive responses to this epidemic. Recently the VA partnered

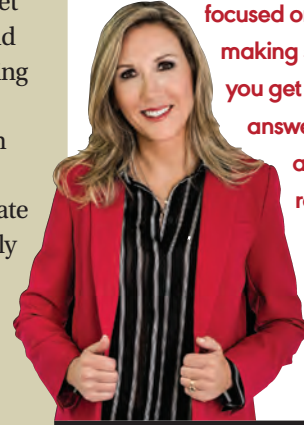
with the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) to assist current and former members of the National Guard.

Anyone who has honorably served our country is never left behind. These men and women - and their families - sacrificed so much. It's their dedication that drives ours. The Jan Dils team will work relentlessly to get our Veterans the benefits they've earned and deserve. Please don't be a statistic. It's amazing how compassionate assistance can change lives. If you're a family member or a Veteran stuck in the maze of the VA, contact us at [Fight4Vets.com](http://Fight4Vets.com). amazing how compassionate assistance can change lives. If you're a family member or a Veteran stuck in the maze of the VA, contact us at [Fight4Vets.com](http://Fight4Vets.com).

Sincerely,  
Jan Dils

Jan Dils brings her expertise to issues that affect you and millions of other Americans every day. While her knowledge spans the critical areas pertaining to Personal Injury, Veterans' benefits, Social Security disability benefits and related appeals and claims, her practice remains

focused on people, making sure you get the right answers and, above all, results.



### Spotlight Employee

#### KAYLA WENTZ

Kayla Wentz grew up and still resides just 20 minutes away in Marietta, Ohio, where she enjoys spending time outdoors with her four kids, Maddyson (11), Ayden (6), Jordan (5) and Chase (6 mo.). Kayla joined the Jan Dils team in May of 2017.

"The thing I like the most about my position as a VA Disability Case Manager is the relationships I get to build with my clients. The VA process is very lengthy and confusing. It is very rewarding to be able to get to know our clients and provide peace of mind to them throughout the process. They deserve to feel confident in knowing that we have their best interests at heart."

Kayla continues with a quote from Steve Jobs: "If you are working on something that you really care about, you don't have to be pushed. The vision pulls you."

When she's not busy working directly with clients and the rest of her team, she enjoys listening to music and cooking.



### Community Spotlight



Each December we hold our annual Christmas Party / End of the Year Award Ceremony, allowing the firm to let loose and look back on another successful year. Here, we also take the opportunity to shine light on certain employees' individual achievements. Last year Mary-Michael McClung, our Human Resources and Culture Manager, was named our Rookie of the Year. Bobbie Sheppard, a Case

Manager in our VA Department, won our Community Spirit Award for excellence in community service. Last but not least we recognized three employees who have been with our firm for at least 10 years: Tammie McGee from reception, Nancy Flanders from our Case Development POD, and Heather Vanhooose, our lead VA Attorney (pictured).

# VA and Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States Partner to Increase Access to Suicide Prevention Resources for its Members

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently partnered with the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) to promote the availability of vital VA-developed education resources for suicide prevention, substance use and abuse, and mental health education to current and former members of the National Guard.

Since August 12, the partnership has explored opportunities for identifying and contacting Veterans who are not enrolled in the VA healthcare system to provide them with information about enrollment.

“VA engaging members of the National Guard is a priority set in the National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “This partnership enhances the access to these resources for current service members and Veterans already connected with VA.”

“This collaboration will provide access to VA-developed education resources for current and former National Guard members who otherwise do not qualify for VA services, especially when it comes to mental wellness, substance use struggles

and necessary emotional support,” said retired U.S. Army Sgt. Maj. Frank Yoakum, EANGUS executive director.

VA will share these resources with 414,000 EANGUS members in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, as well as the U.S. territories of Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands. Additionally, it will discuss potential mental health educational

initiatives with colleges and universities.”

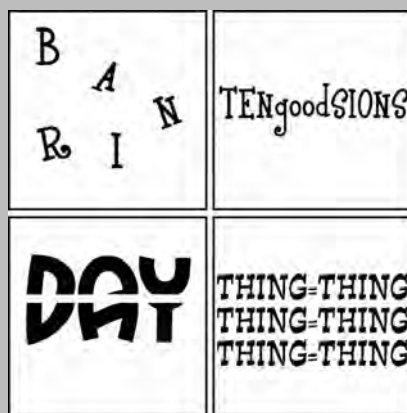
Veterans who are in crisis or having thoughts of suicide, and those who know a Veteran in crisis, can contact the Veterans Crisis Line for confidential support 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Call 800.273.8255 and press 1, send a text message to 838255, or chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat.



Source: [www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5337](http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5337)

## Brain Game

A wuzzle is a saying/phrase that is made up of a display of words, in an interesting way. The object is to try to figure out the well-known saying, person, place, or thing that each wuzzle is meant to represent.



Answers: Scatter Brain, Good Intentions, Daybreak, All Things Being Equal

**FESTIVE DIP!** *A party on a chip or a cracker! And a definite family favorite of VA Case Manager, **Bobbie Shepard**. “It’s mandatory that I bring this to all family functions.”*



### Ingredients:

1lb. pepper jack cheese shredded or 2 bags of pre-shredded pepper jack cheese

8 ounces sour cream

1 can of mild or original Rotel® tomatoes with chilies (it can also be the store brand, which is what I use), drained

8 ounces Miracle Whip

1 package of Knorr® Leek Soup mix

**DIRECTIONS:** Mix cheese and tomatoes with chilies in a bowl. In a separate bowl mix sour cream, Miracle Whip and leek soup mix, then add mixture to the cheese and tomatoes. Chill and serve with crackers and Tostitos®.



## Important Veterans Benefits News For Everyone

1.877.VETERAN / FIGHT4VETS.COM



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*Continued from cover story*

opportunities. The grants will also benefit national governing bodies which prepare high-level athletes for Paralympic competition.

Grant recipients may use the funds for planning, developing, managing and implementing adaptive sports programs. In addition to equine therapy, the grants will support well-known adaptive sports such as cycling, kayaking and archery, to less traditional sports like

hiking, hunting and paragliding.

Information about the awardees and details of the program are available at [www.va.gov/adaptivesports](http://www.va.gov/adaptivesports) and @Sports4Vets on social media.

At Jan Dils, Attorneys at Law, we work to help disabled Veterans to get the benefits they need to live fulfilled lives. It does our hearts good to see Veterans out and about attending our events - including this year's annual Freedom 5K Fun Run. Of course, there are many Veterans still left in the shadows. If you or a family member need help navigating the VA system, don't hesitate to give us a call at 877.526.3457. Your first consultation is always free.