

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

**Investigation of Allegations of Lack of Oversight and
Accountability by the Veterans Assistance Commission of Will
County Regarding the Contract with Hey G Consulting for the
Strategic Marketing Campaign**

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I. Introduction and Executive Summary of the Results of the Investigation

The Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County (“the VACWC”) retained the undersigned to investigate allegations arising out of its agreement with Hey G Consulting (“Hey G”) for services related to a “strategic marketing campaign” undertaken in 2020-2021. Specifically, several complaints have been made to the VACWC, the Will County Board, and veterans’ groups throughout the state alleging that the former VACWC superintendent, Kristina McNichol, requested and received \$495,000.00 in federal CARES Act funds related to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency that were then paid in the form of a no-bid marketing contract paid in full before any work was performed and without formal approval by the VACWC Executive Board. Further allegations include lack of oversight by the VACWC Executive Board and former Superintendent McNichol in how appropriated funds were spent, in that they were diverted from funds more properly spent on veterans’ benefits. These complaints also allege a lack of oversight over Hey G in the provision of services in accordance with the contract.

The investigation found that the services provided did not conform to the Memo of Understanding (“MOU”) between Hey G and the VACWC. (See “Memo of Understanding, Veterans Assistance Commission Time Frame: 12/2020-12/2021,” attached hereto as Exhibit “A”). This MOU was incorporated into the contract entered into by McNichol and Geriann Wiesbrook of Hey G. (See “Social Media Agreement with Geriann Wiesbrook of Hey G! Consulting” dated April 12, 2021, a

copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit “B”). According to the MOU, \$425,000.00 out of the entire \$495,000.00 was to be paid to third-party vendors for graphics creation, advertising, and video creation. However, there is little evidence that these vendors were paid anything and no evidence that they were paid the amounts specified in the MOU.

The VACWC meeting minutes do not show that marketing campaign updates were ever shared at any meetings until Wiesbrook made her PowerPoint presentation during the “Marketing Campaign Wrap-Up” portion of the January 11, 2022 Executive Board meeting. Wiesbrook presented a spreadsheet to the Executive Board demonstrating that despite the fact that the contract between the VACWC and Hey G ended on December 31, 2021, roughly \$275,000.00 out of the original \$495,000.00 remained unspent. (See “Project Invoices” spreadsheet, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit “C”). A slide in the presentation states, “About halfway through the timeframe of the project, it became apparent that the organic content on social media was having as much of an impact as our paid content. After conversations with VACWC staff, we shifted our paid focus to print and radio ads, formalizing commitments with AlphaMedia and Farmers Weekly Review.” (See “Marketing Campaign 2020-2021 Report” a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit “D”) However, none of the staff that was interviewed recalled any conversations with Wiesbrook regarding a shift in focus. The marketing campaign wrap-up was approved at the meeting held on February 8, 2022. To date, there is no

evidence that any steps have been taken in order to recover the apparent unspent funds.

The investigation found that former superintendent McNichol exercised no oversight over the funds that were appropriated by the Will County Board for the marketing campaign. In accordance with the Military Veterans Assistance Act, the superintendent is vested with executive powers and has oversight over funds appropriated by Will County. The funding appropriated for marketing and advertising intended for the benefit of military veterans and their families. McNichol negotiated the MOU with Hey G that formed both the basis of the funding request and resulting services contract. After the marketing campaign began, the services provided by Hey G did not conform to the MOU, yet McNichol never raised this issue with Wiesbrook, nor did she bring any concerns about the marketing campaign to the VACWC Executive Board.

The investigation also found that the VACWC Executive Board did not exercise oversight over its superintendent in accordance with its bylaws and the Military Veterans Assistance Act. Kristina McNichol solely determined both the amount of the request and the scope of the marketing campaign with input from Geriann Wiesbrook. While the Executive Board may have informally reviewed and considered the marketing campaign, it neither reviewed the contract with Hey G nor did it ever recommend the agreement to the full VACWC. As a result, the VACWC never reviewed and approved the MOU or the contract.

The investigation found that no funds were diverted from veterans' benefits for the strategic marketing program. The Will County Board unanimously approved the VACWC's request for \$495,000.00 by Resolution dated February 18, 2021. (See Resolution of the County Board, Will County, Illinois No. 21-44, February 18, 2021, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit "E"). The Resolution directed the Finance Department to make the necessary line item adjustments taking the funds from the County Board Anticipated New Expenses and adding it to the "Professional Services" line item in the VACWC's FY2021 budget. While the request was originally brought before the Will County Board's Ad Hoc CARES Act Committee, this committee took no part in the recommendation for its approval. The Resolution came after the Will County Board's Executive Committee reviewed the request and recommended its approval. Unlike previous payments for its work performed for the VACWC, Hey G was paid from an account controlled by Will County, in one lump sum, on May 1, 2021.

Finally, the Will County Board specifically appropriated the funding for "professional services" which are not subject to the competitive bidding requirements of the Illinois Procurement Code.

II. Scope of the Investigation

We obtained and analyzed multiple requests that were received by the VACWC pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act and all documents produced in response to those requests. In addition, we also examined the Agendas, Minutes, and handouts to every meeting of the VACWC between January 2020 and October

2022, emails, and computer records of former Superintendent Kristina McNichol, relevant meeting minutes of the Will County Board and the Will County Ad-Hoc CARES Act Funding Committee, and the available recordings of meetings of the VACWC, Will County Board, and CARES committee.

We also conducted voluntary interviews with the following VACWC Executive Board members and current and former staff members:¹

- 1) Jack Picciolo, VACWC President, 2021-2022
- 2) Nicholas Barry, VACWC Vice President 2021
- 3) Denise Williams, VACWC Secretary, 2020-2022
- 4) Amanda Koch, VACWC Sergeant at Arms, 2020-2021, Will County Board, 2020-2022, Will County Ad-Hoc CARES Act Funding Committee, 2020-2021.
- 5) Jim Singler, VACWC Chaplain, 2020-2022
- 6) Tom Mlynek, VACWC Executive Committee, 2021-2022
- 7) Janet Blue, VACWC Executive Committee, 2021-2022
- 8) Steve Benicke VACWC Executive Committee, 2021-2022
- 9) Vic Martinka, VACWC Board Member and Past Chairman of the Executive Committee, 2020-2022
- 10) Wayne Horne, VACWC Board Member and Past Chairman of the Executive Committee, 2020-2022
- 11) Lisa McGlasson, VACWC Judge Advocate, 2021-2022
- 12) Jen Solum, VACWC Assistant Superintendent
- 13) Eric Papineau, VACWC Veteran Service Officer
- 14) Amy Georgiakopoulos, VACWC Veterans Service Officer
- 15) Annamarie Deneen, VACWC Executive Assistant
- 16) Joseph Martin, VACWC Veterans Peer Support Specialist

¹ Geriann Wiesbrook of Hey G! Marketing did not respond to a written request for an interview.

- 17) Rick Montgomery, VACWC Driver
- 18) Elisa Medina, VACWC Administrative Assistant
- 19) Greg Wiza, VACWC Senior Veterans Service Officer
- 20) Kristina McNichol, VACWC former Superintendent

III. Relevant Statutes, Regulations, and Policies

1. The Illinois Military Veterans Assistance Act

The VACWC is organized in accordance with the Military Veterans Assistance Act^{2 3} (“MVAA”) and is composed of delegates and alternates from a majority of the posts of military veterans’ organizations in Will County. The VACWC’s duty is to provide needed assistance to honorably discharged veterans of the U.S. armed forces in Will County and their families.

The Will County Board provides the funding to be drawn by the superintendent upon the recommendation of the VACWC. Section 2 of the MVAA sets forth the respective powers and duties of a duly organized Veterans Assistance Commission, superintendent, and a county board under the Act:

The supervisor of general assistance or the county board shall provide such sums of money as may be just and necessary to be drawn by the commander, quartermaster or commandant of any post, ship, camp, chapter or detachment of any congressionally chartered or state chartered veterans organization, in the city or town, or the superintendent of any Veterans’ Assistance Commission of the county upon the recommendation of the assistance

² 330 ILCS 45/et seq.

³ Although the MVAA has been amended, effective January 1, 2023, all of the events leading to this investigation took place prior to the amendment. None of the amendments to the Act affect either the conclusions in this report, or its recommendations going forward.

committee or the post, ship, camp, chapter or Veterans' Assistance Commission.⁴

The executive powers of the commission are vested in a superintendent elected by the commission from among those who served in the armed forces of the United States.⁵ The superintendent has oversight of money appropriated for the benefit of veterans and must comply with all procedures and regulations adopted by the Veterans Assistance Commission and the Department of Human Services.⁶ The superintendent is not considered to be an employee of the county and is exempt from civil service acts and laws of the State of Illinois.⁷

2. VACWC Bylaws

The stated purpose of the VACWC is to “promote the welfare of honorably discharged military members and their families.”⁸ It is a volunteer organization made up of delegates and alternates from the recognized veterans' service organizations in Will County.⁹ The officers of the VAC include its President, Vice President, Secretary, Chaplain, and Sergeant at Arms.¹⁰ The officers, along with past presidents of the VACWC, make up the Executive Committee. The VACWC also has an Executive Board made up of the five elected officers of the commission

⁴ 330 ILCS 45/2

⁵ 330 ILCS 45/10

⁶ 330 ILCS 45/9(b)

⁷ See *Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County v. Will County Board*, 274 Ill. App. 3d 32, 654 N.E.2d 219, 210 Ill. Dec. 920 (3d Dist. 1995).

⁸ See “Commission By-Laws of the Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County, Illinois,” Article II, Section 1.

⁹ Bylaws, Article V, Section 1.

¹⁰ Bylaws, Article VI, Section 1.

along with three members elected at large whose task it is to provide oversight of the Superintendent in the interim between regular meetings of the commission.¹¹

IV. Results of the Investigation

1. Background

The VACWC retained the undersigned to investigate allegations of lack of oversight and accountability at the VACWC regarding a contract entered into between the VACWC and Hey G Consulting, a digital marketing services company, in the amount of \$495,000.00. The allegations followed a series of Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") requests served on the VACWC for documentation involving the bidding and contracting process for social media marketing and advertising and the scope of the paid consulting work performed by Hey G for the VACWC. Certain FOIA requests involved documents concerning communications between then VACWC Superintendent, Kristina McNichol, and the founder of Hey G, Geriann Wiesbrook.

These allegations were brought to the VACWC, the Will County Board, and to multiple veterans' organizations throughout Illinois. They generally involved concerns over (1) the propriety of payment of such a large sum of money to a marketing company instead of direct payments for veterans welfare; (2) how Hey G was able to enter into an agreement for services with the VACWC without a competitive bidding process; (3) why Superintendent McNichol was able to award this contract without approval of either the VACWC or its Executive Committee; (4)

¹¹ Bylaws, Article VIII, Sections 1 and 4.

why the contracted amount of \$495,000.00 was paid to Hey G in full before any work was performed; (5) why the VACWC continued to request and receive grant money for marketing and advertising during the contractual relationship with the VACWC and Hey G; and (6) various unanswered questions regarding inconsistencies and missing information about how Hey G utilized the money it was paid. The investigation was conducted in order to address these allegations, determine whether any rules or laws were violated by the VACWC in the undertaking of the marketing campaign, and to make recommendations to the VACWC moving forward.

2. The Services that Hey G Provided were not Performed in Accordance with Either the Memo of Understanding or the Contract

The contract between the VACWC and Geriann Wiesbrook of Hey G! Consulting was signed on April 12, 2021.¹² The term of the contract was to run between April 30, 2021 and December 31, 2021.¹³ The VACWC agreed to pay Wiesbrook \$495,000.00 “for services rendered per the previously agreed upon Memo of Understanding.”¹⁴ The services contained in the MOU expressly stated that third-party vendors would be engaged and paid as follows:

- Kiwi Avenue Graphic Creation (\$25,000)
- Best Practice Media Advertising Campaign (\$350,000/year)
- Digital Squid Video Creation (\$50,000)

¹² See “Social Media Agreement with Geriann Wiesbrook of Hey G! Consulting.”

¹³ Social Media Agreement, Section 1.2.

¹⁴ Social Media Agreement, Section 1.3.

The MOU also specified for “\$70,000/year” to be paid for social media awareness posts. These included:

- Creating and maintaining social media posts pertinent to VAC mission and outreach
- Social listening for trending veteran issues
- Co-ordinate graphics and advertising campaign to present cohesive messaging
- Oversight of affiliate agencies deliverables and KPI’s

The MOU specified that the full payment of \$495,000.00 was due on December 20, 2020. However, the contract was not signed until April 12, 2020, and Wiesbrook was paid by Will County on May 1, 2021.

There are no invoices or receipts showing payment by Wiesbrook to any third-party vendors named in the MOU. Instead, invoices show that media outlets such as Farmers Weekly Review and Alpha Media were paid amounts that were a small fraction of those quoted in the MOU. Hey G’s 2020-2021 Marketing Campaign Report contains a spreadsheet ostensibly showing the expenses associated with the marketing campaign. The spreadsheet is largely indecipherable, but there is nothing to suggest that the terms of the MOU were met. There are expenses including salaries and office expenses that are not provided for in either the MOU or the contract.

One possible explanation for this discrepancy may be found in a longer version of Hey G’s Marketing Campaign 2020-2021 Report contained in the FOIA materials. Under “Significant Decisions and Actions” it states:

“About halfway through the timeframe of this project, it became apparent that our organic content on social media was having as much of an impact as our paid content.

After conversations with VACWC staff, we shifted our paid focus to print and radio ads, formalizing commitments with AlphaMedia and Farmers Weekly Review.”

It is unclear what is meant by this. None of the VACWC current or former staff recalled discussing a shift in paid focus regarding paid advertising with Wiesbrook, although McNichol was aware that Hey G was paying Alpha Media and Farmers Weekly to distribute content. Several emails were exchanged between McNichol, Wiesbrook, and representatives of these outlets during the marketing campaign. In addition, Wiesbrook and McNichol held a Zoom meeting with a representative from Farmers Weekly in March 2021. Still, there is nothing in the materials to show anyone associated with the VACWC agreed that the terms of either the MOU or the underlying contract should be altered.

Perhaps most importantly, according to the spreadsheet, 2020-2021 expenses totaled \$230,413.00 with projected expenses of \$274,587.00. This would appear to be in clear violation of the contract that expired on December 31, 2021. Despite the fact that out of the \$495,000.00 that was originally agreed upon, almost \$275,000 remains outstanding and unaccounted for, Wiesbrook considers her obligation to the VACWC to be fulfilled. (See email from Geriann Wiesbrook to Amy Georgiakopoulos dated February 22, 2022, attached hereto as Exhibit “F”).

3. **Former VACWC Superintendent McNichol Exercised No Oversight Over the Appropriations Made for Marketing and Advertising.**

Pursuant to the Military Veterans Assistance Act, Superintendent McNichol retained general oversight over the distribution of the money appropriated by the Will County Board for the benefit of military veterans and their families. She spoke for the VACWC when she wrote to the CARES Committee that “reaching as many people as possible that need help is an integral response mitigating the negative effects of COVID-19 in the County of Will”. (See Letter from Kristina McNichol to Ad Hoc CARES Committee, dated December 9, 2020, attached hereto as Exhibit “G”). She obviously felt that a strategic marketing campaign was needed to help Will County veterans and community members recover from COVID-19, and she requested the additional appropriation of \$495,000.00 in funds. Through her efforts, the Will County Board appropriated the funds for the strategic marketing campaign.

McNichol negotiated the agreement with Hey G and executed the contract on the VACWC’s behalf. Email conversations between McNichol and Wiesbrook in November 2021 resulted in a “Memorandum of Understanding” (MOU) between Wiesbrook and the VACWC that was included in the request for CARES Act funds for the strategic marketing campaign. Wiesbrook originally quoted \$1,000,000.00 for the campaign, but later pared it down to \$495,000.00 upon request from McNichol. (See emails between Kristina McNichol and Geriann Wiesbrook from November 17, 2021, attached hereto as Exhibit “H”) The MOU identified third-party

vendors that Wiesbrook would retain and pay as part of her services. The MOU also provided that Hey G would receive \$70,000.00 for social media posts it would create. The MOU was specifically referred to and incorporated into the Social Media Contract between Wiesbrook and the VACWC.

The VACWC received no invoices or receipts that show that the third-party vendors named in the MOU were ever paid the specified amounts. Emails, texts, and phone records that we reviewed show no evidence of any contact with these vendors whatsoever. There is little communication between McNichol and Wiesbrook regarding whether the terms and objectives of the contract were being met. On August 2, 2021, McNichol sent an email to Wiesbrook requesting a spreadsheet in order to share the campaign's accomplishments at the August VACWC Meeting. (See Email from Kristina McNichol to Geriann Wiesbrook, dated August 2, 2021, attached hereto as Exhibit "I"). It is not clear whether Wiesbrook ever provided a spreadsheet in response, and the minutes of the August 2021 VACWC Meeting make no mention of a campaign update. None of the members of the VACWC Executive Board recall ever receiving an update on the campaign before January 2022.

Once the marketing campaign was funded, McNichol showed little concern about how the money was actually being spent. After negotiating to pay Hey G \$350,000.00 for media advertising, she requested additional DCEO grant money for media advertising. Similarly, the VACWC paid Alpha Media for radio advertising, despite McNichol's knowledge that Wiesbrook was also paying Alpha Media as part

of the marketing campaign. McNichol made sure that Wiesbrook was paid the money up front before services were rendered even after she knew that the money was not coming from CARES Act funds and was likely not subject to its spending deadlines. She did not request receipts from Hey G, and there is no evidence that she had much of an idea on how the money was being spent. While McNichol may be satisfied with the work that Wiesbrook performed, as superintendent, she had a responsibility to ensure that Hey G adhered to the terms of the contract. If there, in fact, was a change in focus, McNichol should have brought the matter before the VACWC. As a result, the investigation found that McNichol exercised no oversight over the money appropriated by the Will County Board for the strategic marketing campaign, contrary to her responsibility under the Military Veterans Assistance Act.

4. The VACWC Executive Board Exercised No Oversight of its Superintendent

While the MVAA provides that a VAC superintendent has executive power, both the Act and the VACWC bylaws make it clear that the VACWC has oversight over the superintendent. According to the bylaws, the VACWC has general oversight of “all relief, supplies, and services that may be appropriated for the benefit of veterans and their families.”¹⁵ The bylaws also state the “Executive Board shall provide oversight of the Superintendent in the interim between the regular meetings of the Commission.”¹⁶

¹⁵ Bylaws, Article II, Section 3.

¹⁶ Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 4.

Examination of the minutes and available video show no evidence of any exercise of oversight of the marketing campaign by the VACWC. While there was a discussion at the November 12, 2020 Executive Board meeting on ways to enhance visibility and participation in the VACWC, and a discussion on using CARES Act funds for advertising, no formal plan was discussed or agreed upon. The minutes provide no evidence that this discussion was little more than a brainstorming session. It is difficult to understand exactly what the purpose of this marketing campaign was. The VACWC never determined the amount that was going to be requested or what the marketing would entail. It appears that these decisions were left entirely to McNichol with input from Wiesbrook. Most importantly, nothing was ever put up to a vote by the full VACWC. It was not until after the end of the contract that any member of the VACWC raised objections over the marketing campaign.

After the money was awarded and the marketing campaign was funded, the VACWC Executive Board never requested or received from Superintendent McNichol any progress updates until after the end of the contract. The marketing campaign was not discussed at any meetings until after the FOIA requests started coming in and members started raising objections. The Executive Board never made any inquiries why Hey G was selected or why Wiesbrook was paid \$495,000.00.

5. Veterans Benefits Funding was not Diverted for the Strategic Marketing Campaign

The VACWC is funded in accordance with the Military Veterans Assistance Act. The Act mandates that upon recommendation of the VACWC, the Will County

Board “shall provide such sums of money as may be just and necessary” to assist veterans and their families.¹⁷ The funds are to be drawn upon by the superintendent upon the recommendation of the VACWC. The VACWC submits a proposed budget setting forth the amount of money it deems “just and necessary,” and the Will County Board makes the final decision regarding the funds to be expended.¹⁸ The VACWC superintendent may seek a writ of mandamus when the county board fails to appropriate just and necessary amounts for veterans’ benefits.¹⁹ While the Will County Board has no discretion regarding the threshold “just and necessary” sum, it may provide additional funds in its discretion.²⁰

The marketing campaign was funded by Will County Board Resolution 21-44, which was passed unanimously on February 18, 2021. (Exhibit “E”) The resolution plainly states that the Will County Board did not take away funding intended for veterans’ benefits and added it to the marketing campaign. It directed the Will County Finance Department to transfer the funding from the County Board Anticipated New Expenses to the VACWC FY2021 budget. Put another way, the Board actually increased the VACWC’s budget. Furthermore, Superintendent McNichol made additional requests for CARES Act funds for benefits completely unrelated to the marketing campaign. In the same letter to the Ad Hoc CARES Committee where she requested funding for the marketing campaign, she also made requests for veterans’ housing and mental health. (Exhibit “G”). As a result, the

¹⁷ 330 ILCS 45/2.

¹⁸ See *Lavite v. Dunistan*, 58 N.E.3d 1270 (5th Dist. 2016).

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ See *Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County v. Will County Board*, 274 Ill. App. 3d 32, 35, 654 N.E.2d 219, 221, 210 Ill. Dec. 920, 922 (3d Dist. 1995).

investigation found that funding for the marketing campaign had no effect on veterans' benefits funding.

6. The Superintendent was not Required to Consider Multiple Bids for The Marketing Campaign

In providing the funding for the marketing campaign, the Will County Board specifically increased the line item for professional services in the VACWC's FY2021 budget, knowing that the money was intended for Hey G. VACWC Executive Board members and staff stated in interviews that Hey G was selected due to Wiesbrook's professional skill, particularly in the area of social media marketing. The contract with Hey G was expressly for professional services and not subject to competitive bidding.

V. Recommendations

1. The VACWC Must Recover All Unspent Funds from Hey G! Marketing and Geriann Wiesbrook.

According to Wiesbrook's own reports, as much as \$275,000.00 out of the \$495,000.00 that she was paid remains outstanding and unaccounted for. None of the VACWC members or staff that we interviewed can account for this deficiency. Some seem to be satisfied with the work that Wiesbrook performed and the fact that the VACWC retains the logos and graphics she created. However, the MOU and resulting contract are clear that there were services that were agreed to but not performed. We therefore urge the VACWC to take all necessary measures to recover all the funds that are unaccounted for.

2. All Budget Requests Must be Considered by the VACWC Executive Board as Just and Necessary and Formally Approved by a Vote of the Full VACWC Before Recommended to the Will County Board

The Military Veterans Assistance Act provides that the Will County Board shall approve such sums as may be just and necessary to be drawn by the VACWC upon the recommendation of the VACWC.²¹ Here, there was never a determination by the VACWC that it was “just and necessary” that it receive an additional \$495,000.00 in its budget for the strategic marketing campaign. Moving forward, all budget requests should be approved as “just and necessary” by the full VACWC before they are submitted to the Will County Board.

3. The VACWC Must Exercise Greater Supervision over its Superintendent

Although the executive powers of the VACWC are vested in its superintendent, it is clear that both the MVAA and the VACWC Bylaws mandate that the superintendent serves under the direction of Commission. The superintendent is elected by the Commission and must comply with the procedures and regulations it adopts. There were no requirements that the superintendent obtain approval for all vendor contracts, obtain receipts, or provide updates to the Commission about the marketing campaign’s progress. These failures resulted in a lack of transparency and questions regarding misspent government funds. These failures resulted in a lack of transparency and questions regarding misspent government funds. Therefore, we recommend that, moving forward, all contracts be

²¹ 330 ILCS 45/2(1).

approved by the VACWC, and, if necessary, updates be provided to the Commission on a contract's progress, or lack thereof.

VI. Conclusion

In closing, we would like to state that both staff of the VACWC and each member of the Executive Board have fully cooperated throughout this entire investigation. There has never been any evidence of malice or self-dealing by anyone at the VACWC and it should be beyond dispute that the VACWC Officers, Executive Committee members, and Executive Board are volunteers who dedicate valuable time to the VACWC are fully and completely committed to the service of the veterans of Will County. COVID-19 thrust the Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County into unfamiliar circumstances where its past practices of informality in both its meetings and day-to-day operations were ill-suited to deal with the emergency. We hope that the conclusions and recommendations contained in this report will assist the VACWC in the better fulfillment of its mission.

Prepared by:

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EXHIBIT A



MEMO OF UNDERSTANDING

VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION
TIME FRAME: 12/2020-12/2021

SERVICES

Demographic Specifics

- Cold War Era to Gulf War Era veterans
- Post 9/11 Era veterans
- Female veterans
- General veterans
- Mental Wellness call out (In conjunction with Mental Wellness proposal)

Kiwi Avenue Graphic Creation (\$25,000)

- Includes:
 - Ad graphics for the following demographics, coordinating with Best Practice Media
 - Seasonal graphics for key civilian holidays, key veteran/military holidays

Best Practice Media Advertising Campaign (\$350,000/year)

- Includes:
 - Prospecting Ads on Google platforms, Facebook platforms and LinkedIn
 - Monthly Report
 - Ad spend included in quote

Digital Squid Video Creation (\$50,000)

- Includes:
 - 5 - Videos tailored to demographics stated above
 - 3 - Case Study Videos
 - 12 - More FAQ/Ad Videos

Social Media Awareness Posts (\$70,000/year)

- Includes:
 - Creating and maintaining social media posts pertinent to VAC mission and outreach
 - Social listening for trending veteran issues
 - Co-ordinate graphics and advertising campaign to present cohesive messaging
 - Oversight of affiliate agencies deliverables and KPIs

Payment due 12/20/20

\$495,000



G@HEYG.CONSULTING



HEY G CONSULTING



815-603-1490



GERIANN WIESBROOK

EXHIBIT B

SOCIAL MEDIA AGREEMENT

WITH GERIANN WIESBROOK OF HEY G CONSULTING

This Contract is between Veterans Assistance Commission (the "Client") and Hey G Consulting (the "Marketer"). The Contract is dated [4/12/2021].

1. WORK AND PAYMENT.

1.1 Project. The Client is hiring the Marketer to do the following: The Marketer will assist the Client with social media services.

1.2 Schedule. The Marketer will begin work on April 30, 2021 and ends December 31, 2021 and can be ended by either Client or Marketer at any time, pursuant to the terms of Section 6, Term and Termination.

1.3 Payment. The Client will pay the Marketer \$495,000 for services rendered per the previously agreed upon Memo of Understanding.

2. OWNERSHIP AND LICENSES.

2.1 Client Owns All Work Product. As part of this job, the Marketer is creating "work product" for the Client. To avoid confusion, work product is the finished product, as well as drafts, notes, materials, mockups, hardware, designs, inventions, patents, code, and anything else that the Marketer works on—that is, conceives, creates, designs, develops, invents, works on, or reduces to practice—as part of this project, whether before the date of this Contract or after. This means the Marketer is giving the Client all of its rights, titles, and interests in and to the work product (including intellectual property rights), and the Client will be the sole owner of it. The Client can use the work product however it wants or it can decide not to use the work product at all.

2.2 Marketer's IP That Is Not Work Product. During the course of this project, the Marketer might use intellectual property that the Marketer owns or has licensed from a third party, but that does not qualify as "work product." This is called "background IP." Possible examples of background IP are pre-existing code, type fonts, properly-licensed stock photos, and web application tools. The Marketer is not giving the Client this background IP. But, as part of the Contract, the Marketer is giving the Client a right to use the background IP to develop, market, and support the Client's products and services. The Client may use this

background IP worldwide and free of charge, but it cannot transfer its rights to the background IP. The Client cannot sell or license the background IP separately from its products or services. The Marketer cannot take back this grant, and this grant does not end when the Contract is over.

3. COMPETITIVE ENGAGEMENTS. The Marketer won't work for a competitor of the Client until this Contract ends. To avoid confusion, a competitor is any third party that develops, manufactures, promotes, sells, licenses, distributes, or provides products or services that are substantially similar to the Client's products or services. A competitor is also a third party that plans to do any of those things. The one exception to this restriction is if the Marketer asks for permission beforehand and the Client agrees to it in writing. If the Marketer uses employees or subcontractors, the Marketer must make sure they follow the obligations in this paragraph, as well.

4. NON-SOLICITATION. Until this Contract ends, the Marketer won't: (a) encourage Client employees or service providers to stop working for the Client; (b) encourage Client customers or clients to stop doing business with the Client; or (c) hire anyone who worked for the Client over the 12-month period before the Contract ended. The one exception is if the Marketer puts out a general ad and someone who happened to work for the Client responds. In that case, the Marketer may hire that candidate. The Marketer promises that it won't do anything in this paragraph on behalf of itself or a third party.

5. REPRESENTATIONS.

5.1 Overview. This section contains important promises between the parties.

5.2 Authority To Sign. Each party promises to the other party that it has the authority to enter into this Contract and to perform all of its obligations under this Contract.

5.3 Marketer Has Right To Give Client Work Product. The Marketer promises that it owns the work product, that the Marketer is able to give the work product to the Client, and that no other party will claim that it owns the work product. If the Marketer uses employees or subcontractors, the Marketer also promises that these employees and subcontractors have signed contracts with the Marketer giving the Marketer any rights that the employees or subcontractors have related to the Marketer's background IP and work product.

5.4 Marketer Will Comply With Laws. The Marketer promises that the manner it does this job, its work product, and any background IP it uses comply with applicable U.S. laws and regulations.

5.5 Work Product Does Not Infringe. The Marketer promises that its work product does not and will not infringe on someone else's intellectual property rights, that the Marketer has the right to let the Client use the background IP, and that this Contract does not and will not violate any contract that the Marketer has entered into or will enter into with someone else.

5.6 Client Will Review Work. The Client promises to review the work product, to be reasonably available to the Marketer if the Marketer has questions regarding this project, and to provide timely feedback and decisions.

5.7 Client-Supplied Material Does Not Infringe. If the Client provides the Marketer with material to incorporate into the work product, the Client promises that this material does not infringe on someone else's intellectual property rights.

6. TERM AND TERMINATION. Either party may end this Contract for any reason by sending an email or letter to the other party, informing the recipient that the sender is ending the Contract and that the Contract will end in 7 days. The Contract officially ends once that time has passed. The party that is ending the Contract must provide notice by taking the steps explained in Section 11.4. The Marketer must immediately stop working as soon as it receives this notice, unless the notice says otherwise. The following sections don't end even after the Contract ends: 2 (Ownership and Licenses); 3 (Competitive Engagements); 4 (Non-Solicitation); 5 (Representations); 8 (Confidential Information); 9 (Limitation of Liability); 10 (Indemnity); and 11 (General).

7. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR. The Client is hiring the Marketer as an independent contractor. The following statements accurately reflect their relationship:

- The Marketer will use its own equipment, tools, and material to do the work.
- The Client will not control how the job is performed on a day-to-day basis. Rather, the Marketer is responsible for determining when, where, and how it will carry out the work.
- The Client will not provide the Marketer with any training.
- The Client and the Marketer do not have a partnership or employer-employee relationship.
- The Marketer cannot

enter into contracts, make promises, or act on behalf of the Client.- The Marketer is not entitled to the Client's benefits (e.g., group insurance, retirement benefits, retirement plans, vacation days).- The Marketer is responsible for its own taxes.- The Client will not withhold social security and Medicare taxes or make payments for disability insurance, unemployment insurance, or workers compensation for the Marketer or any of the Marketer's employees or subcontractors.

8. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.

8.1 Overview. This Contract imposes special restrictions on how the Client and the Marketer must handle confidential information. These obligations are explained in this section.

8.2 The Client's Confidential Information. While working for the Client, the Marketer may come across, or be given, Client information that is confidential. This is information like customer lists, business strategies, research & development notes, statistics about a website, and other information that is private. The Marketer promises to treat this information as if it is the Marketer's own confidential information. The Marketer may use this information to do its job under this Contract, but not for anything else. For example, if the Client lets the Marketer use a customer list to send out a newsletter, the Marketer cannot use those email addresses for any other purpose. The one exception to this is if the Client gives the Marketer written permission to use the information for another purpose, the Marketer may use the information for that purpose, as well. When this Contract ends, the Marketer must give back or destroy all confidential information, and confirm that it has done so. The Marketer promises that it will not share confidential information with a third party, unless the Client gives the Marketer written permission first. The Marketer must continue to follow these obligations, even after the Contract ends. The Marketer's responsibilities only stop if the Marketer can show any of the following: (i) that the information was already public when the Marketer came across it; (ii) the information became public after the Marketer came across it, but not because of anything the Marketer did or didn't do; (iii) the Marketer already knew the information when the Marketer came across it and the Marketer didn't have any obligation to keep it secret; (iv) a third party provided the Marketer with the information without requiring that the Marketer keep it a secret; or (v) the Marketer created the information on its own, without using anything belonging to the Client.

8.3 Third-Party Confidential Information. It's possible the Client and the Marketer each have access to confidential information that belongs to third parties. The Client and the Marketer each promise that it will not share with the other party confidential information that belongs to third parties, unless it is allowed to do

so. If the Client or the Marketer is allowed to share confidential information with the other party and does so, the sharing party promises to tell the other party in writing of any special restrictions regarding that information.

9. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY. Neither party is liable for breach-of-contract damages that the breaching party could not reasonably have foreseen when it entered this Contract.

10. INDEMNITY.

10.1 Overview. This section transfers certain risks between the parties if a third party sues or goes after the Client or the Marketer or both. For example, if the Client gets sued for something that the Marketer did, then the Marketer may promise to come to the Client's defense or to reimburse the Client for any losses.

10.2 Client Indemnity. In this Contract, the Marketer agrees to indemnify the Client (and its affiliates and its and their directors, officers, employees, and agents) from and against all liabilities, losses, damages, and expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees) related to a third-party claim or proceeding arising out of: (i) the work the Marketer has done under this Contract; (ii) a breach by the Marketer of its obligations under this Contract; or (iii) a breach by the Marketer of the promises it is making in Section 5 (Representations).

10.3 Marketer Indemnity. In this Contract, the Client agrees to indemnify the Marketer (and its affiliates and its and their directors, officers, employees, and agents) from and against liabilities, losses, damages, and expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees) related to a third-party claim or proceeding arising out of a breach by the Client of its obligations under this Contract.

11. GENERAL.

11.3 Modification; Waiver. To change anything in this Contract, the Client and the Marketer must agree to that change in writing and sign a document showing their contract. Neither party can waive its rights under this Contract or release the other party from its obligations under this Contract, unless the waiving party acknowledges it is doing so in writing and signs a document that says so.

11.4 Notices.

(a) Over the course of this Contract, one party may need to send a notice to the other party. For the notice to be valid, it must be in writing and delivered in one of the following ways: personal delivery, email, or certified or registered mail (postage prepaid, return receipt requested). The notice must be delivered to the party's address listed at the end of this Contract or to another address that the party has provided in writing as an appropriate address to receive notice.

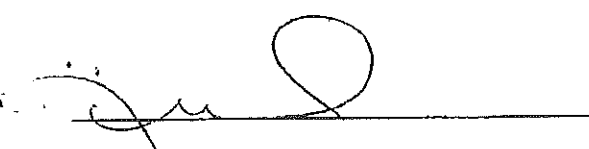
(b) The timing of when a notice is received can be very important. To avoid confusion, a valid notice is considered received as follows: (i) if delivered personally, it is considered received immediately; (ii) if delivered by email, it is considered received upon acknowledgement of receipt; (iii) if delivered by registered or certified mail (postage prepaid, return receipt requested), it is considered received upon receipt as indicated by the date on the signed receipt. If a party refuses to accept notice or if notice cannot be delivered because of a change in address for which no notice was given, then it is considered received when the notice is rejected or unable to be delivered. If the notice is received after 5:00pm on a business day at the location specified in the address for that party, or on a day that is not a business day, then the notice is considered received at 9:00am on the next business day.

11.5 Severability. This section deals with what happens if a portion of the Contract is found to be unenforceable. If that's the case, the unenforceable portion will be changed to the minimum extent necessary to make it enforceable, unless that change is not permitted by law, in which case the portion will be disregarded. If any portion of the Contract is changed or disregarded because it is unenforceable, the rest of the Contract is still enforceable.

11.6 Signatures. The Client and the Marketer must sign this contract. Electronic signatures count as originals for all purposes.

11.7 Governing Law. The laws of the state of Illinois govern the rights and obligations of the Client and the Marketer under this Contract, without regard to conflict of law principles of that state.

11.8 Entire Contract. This Contract represents the parties' final and complete understanding of this job and the subject matter discussed in this Contract. This Contract supersedes all other contracts (both written and oral) between the parties.



Veterans Assistance Commission, Client

4/12/2021
Date



Gerlann Wiesbrook, Marketer

Date

EXHIBIT C

Project Invoices

Phase I	\$ 10,000.00	
Phase II	\$ 485,000.00	
Total Project Cost	\$ 505,000.00	

EXPENSES

Salaries @70% of year	\$ 90,000.00
Subcontractors/Prof Fees @70% of year	\$ 79,384.00
Advertising direct costs	\$ 39,532.00
Meetings, Office Expenses @70% of year	\$ 9,344.00
Supplies & Software	\$ 4,873.00
Video production	\$ 7,500.00
Salaries 2022	\$ 148,000.00
Subcontractor/Professional Services 2022	\$ 110,000.00
Meetings, Office Expenses & Supplies 2022	\$ 22,000.00
Supplies & Software 2022	\$ 7,587.00

Total 2020-2021 Expenses

\$ 230,415.00

Total 2022 Projected Expenses

\$ 274,587.00

505,000.00

Adv DC AlphaMedia	\$ 13,470.00	
Adv DC FVR	\$ 18,800.00	
Adv DC BPM	\$ 5,900.00	
Adv DC Postnet MB, Etc	\$ 1,057.10	
Adv DC FB	\$ 704.50	\$ 39,532.00
VP Videographer	\$ 5,000.00	
VP Video Edits	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 7,500.00
Sub OS	\$ 32,500.00	
Sub PPino	\$ 10,000.00	
Sub KM	\$ 1,000.00	
Sub SML	\$ 1,764.00	
Sub JQ	\$ 4,000.00	
Sub JA, SG	\$ 29,900.00	\$ 79,384.00
	\$ 125,156.00	

EXHIBIT D



Marketing Campaign 2020-2021 Report



→ See what we've
accomplished

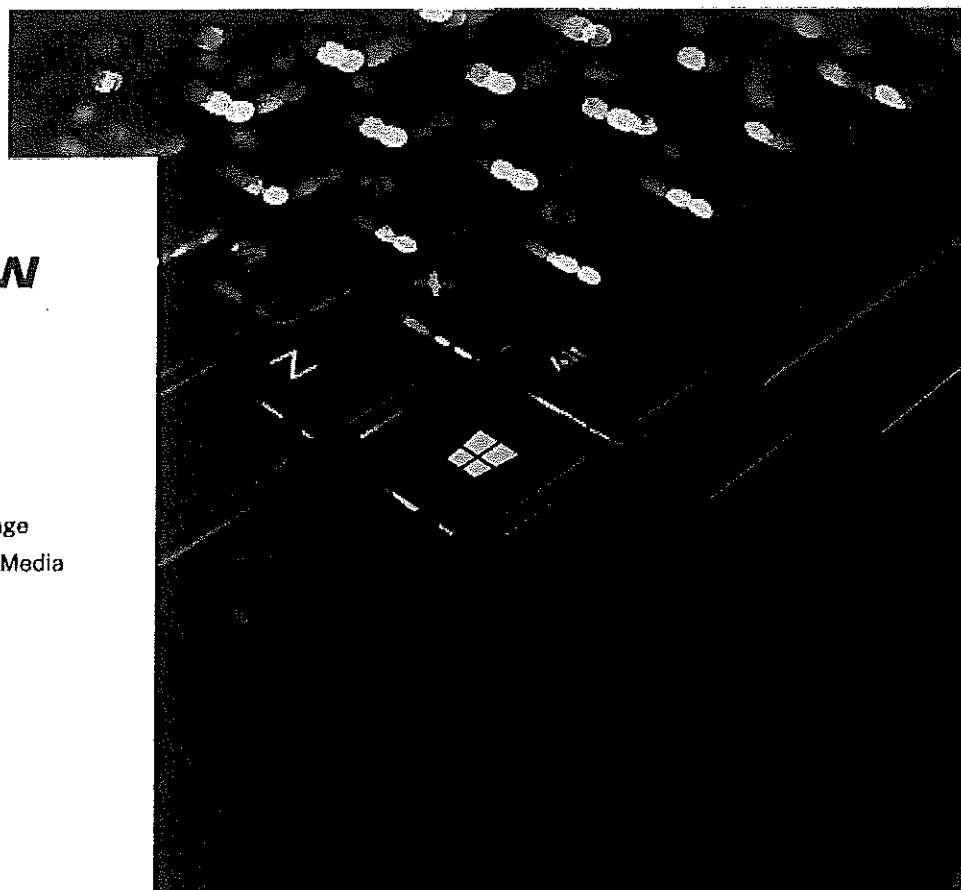
Project Overview

Phase I Tasks

5/2020-12/2020

- Update and maintain Facebook VACWC page
- Create on brand graphics for use in Social Media
- Post strategic content
- Train for successor**

****Not fully completed due to COVID restrictions**



CARES FUNDING/COVID ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Created COVID specific graphics for informational updates

Shot, edited and posted onsite photos of outreach work as it occurred

Created and maintained Facebook Notes with **daily** updates referencing national, state, county and other local evolving information

Trained staff, edited videos and created playlists for Staff Chats to assist veterans accessing pertinent information while VAC staff was working remotely



- **Update and Maintain Facebook page**

- Remove ineffective posts Completed 5/4/2020
- Create graphics and header with proper sizing Recurring completions 5/4-12/31/2020
- Set culture of page Completed 5/4/2020 as well as ongoing upkeep through 12/31/2020
- Create five graphics to be used for future posts, such as:
 - Community News, Where is VAC?, Partnership News, How you can help, Impact Stories
 - Graphics Created: Resources (state/local/national), Daily Update, Latest Information)
- Create maximum of five notes to capture static information Completed
 - Such as: Board and Staff members, Partners/Affiliates, Impact Stories Completed
 - When Facebook Removed the Notes Feature on Pages
 - Created thumbnails and playlists for Staff Chats, Benefits for IL Veterans
 - Shifted Impact stories and Partners/Affiliate news to post format for continued coverage

- **Social Listening**

- Recurring completions 5/4-12/31/2020
- Approximately 15 hours monthly
- Various sources (pages, websites, news updates) for relevant news
- Post appropriate resources to VAC page, M-F as merited
- Information will be shared as a post, not notes or videos, playlists nor include any additional graphics

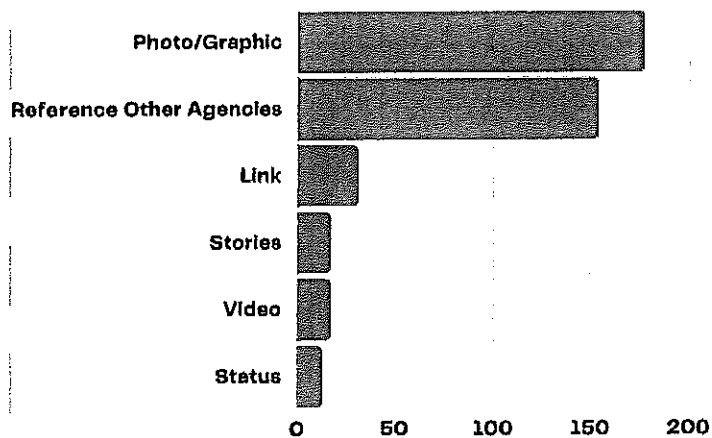
- **Page Management**

- Discover, post and strategize content for VAC Recurring completions 5/4-12/31/2020
- Posting daily M-F as merited Recurring completions with frequent weekend posts as needed
- Creating graphics, playlists and strategic content to maintain relevance on Facebook Recurring completions 5/4-12/31/2020
- Page growth and engagement insights Completed
- Training for successor Trained current staff members how to self-produce and submit video tutorials for Staff Chats feature

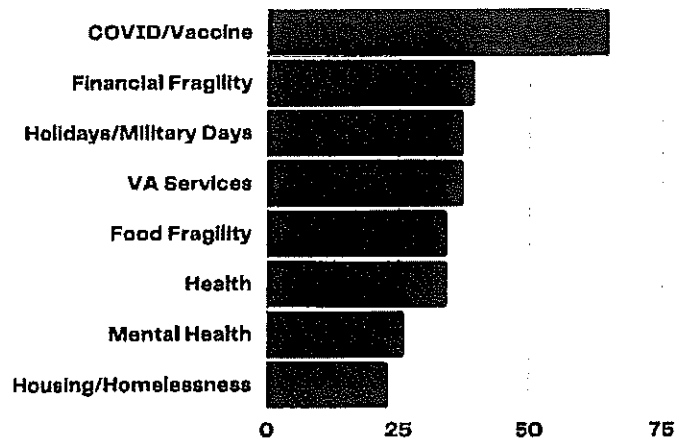
Social Media Specific Expectations

Content Overview

Post by Type



Post by Major Topic Areas



Notes and Page Headers (10+)



Graphics for posts (10+)

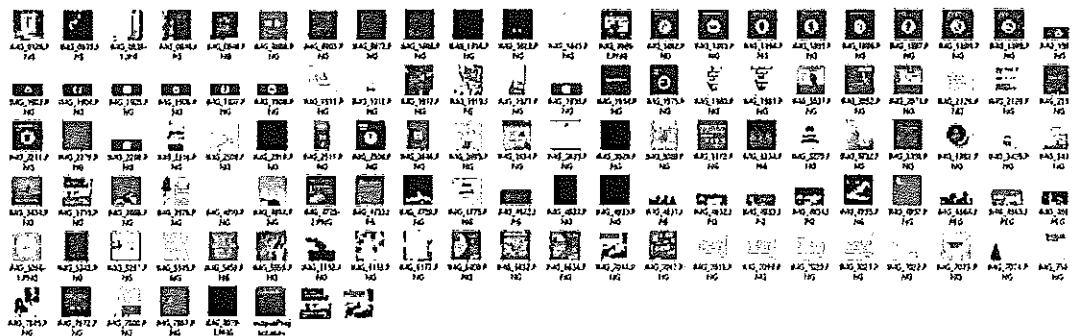


Graphics and Headers with Proper Sizing Samples

Social Media Graphics

Committed to Per MOU: 5

Delivered: Over 100

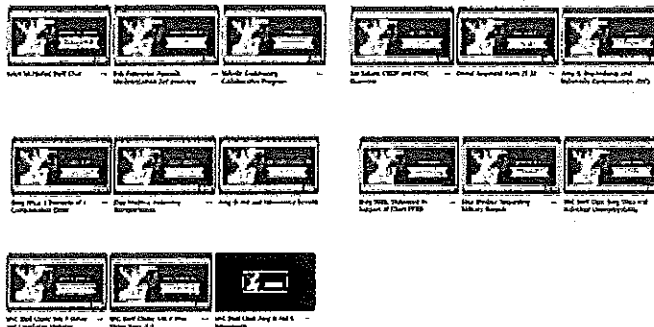


Videos and Video Cover Graphics

Committed to Per MOU: 0

(Additional services when Facebook discontinued Notes feature)

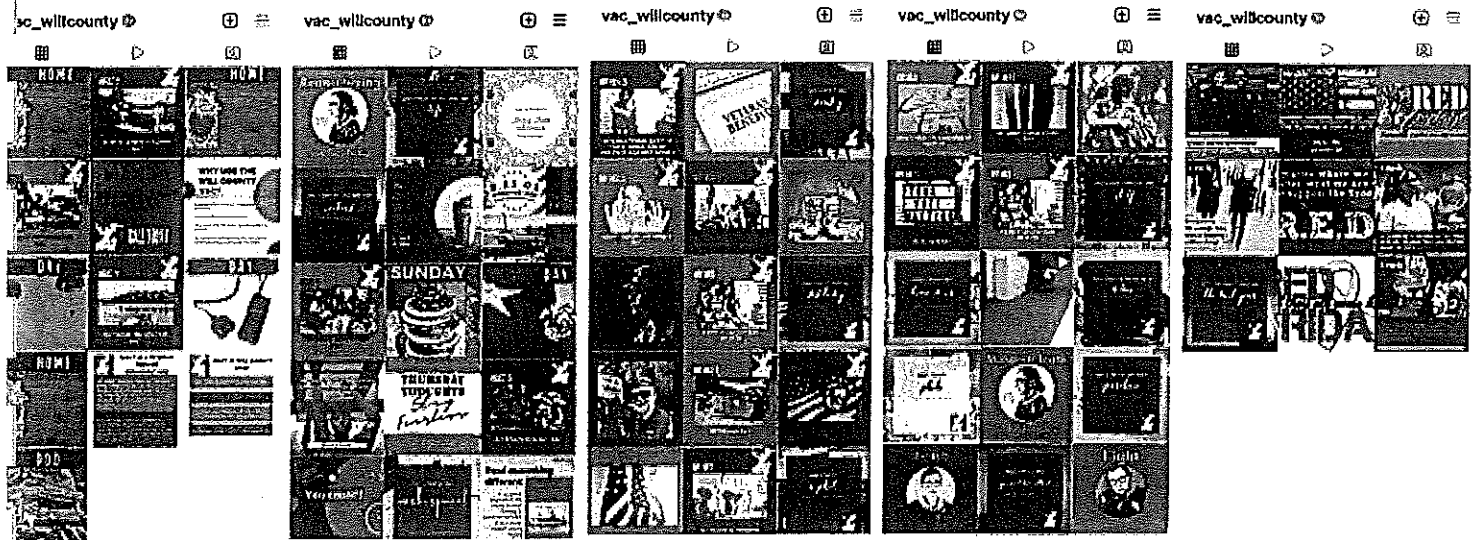
Delivered: 15



Instagram Graphics and Posts

50+ Posts

15+ Stories

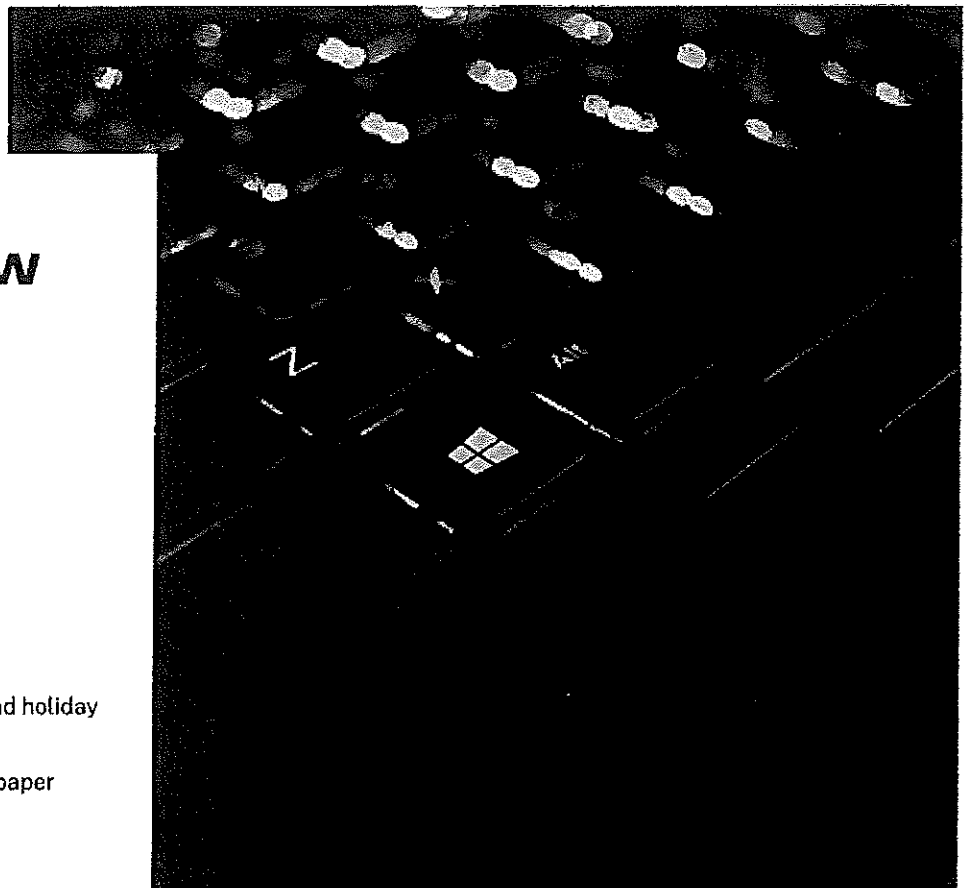


Project Overview

Phase II

12/2020 – 12/31/21

- Targeted Demographics:
 - Cold War Era to Gulf War Era veterans
 - Post 9/11 Era veterans
 - Female veterans
 - General veterans
 - Mental Wellness call out
- Graphic Creation (ad graphics, seasonal and holiday graphics)
- Advertising on Facebook, Radio and Newspaper
- Video Creation (18 total)
- Post strategic content



SIGNIFICANT DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

About halfway through the timeframe of this project, it became apparent that our organic content on social media was having as much of an impact as our paid content.

After conversations with VACWC staff, we shifted our paid focus to print and radio ads, formalizing commitments with AlphaMedia and Farmers Weekly Review.

AlphaMedia content will continue until February 28, 2022

Farmers Weekly Review content ended December 31, 2021

Content was created over the course of this contract; since the pandemic is still impacting our veterans, our support of VACWC will continue into 2022. Social media content produced in 2021 will continue to be posted during the pandemic, in spite of our contractual obligations being met.

- **Demographic Specifics**

- **Cold War Era to Gulf War Era veterans** Targeted via Social Media content, radio and print ads
- **Post 9/11 Era veterans** Targeted via Social Media content and radio ads
- **Female veterans** Targeted via Social Media content and radio ads
- **General veterans** Targeted via Social Media content, radio and print ads
- **Mental Wellness call out (In conjunction with Mental Wellness proposal)**
 - Mental Wellness proposal was scrapped prior to contract being finalized; we continued to discuss mental wellness, directing veterans to local and VA resources

- **Graphics**

- Ad graphics for the above demographics, coordinating with Facebook ad team Completed
- Seasonal graphics for key civilian holidays, key veteran/military holidays Completed

- **Advertising Campaign**

- Prospecting Ads on Google platforms, Facebook platforms and LinkedIn Completed with adjustments
 - Advertising spend shifted to include Radio and newspaper in lieu of LinkedIn and Google, per request of VAC
 - Built out partner campaigns for Habitats for Humanity, We Will Build, CDBG and local events such as Veteran breakfasts

- **Video**

- 5 - Videos tailored to demographics stated above Completed
- 3 - Case Study Videos Included with FAQ/Ad Videos
- 12 - More FAQ/Ad Videos Completed

- **Social Media Awareness Posts**

- Creating and maintaining social media posts pertinent to VAC mission and outreach Completed
- Social listening for trending veteran issues Completed
- Co-ordinate graphics and advertising campaign to present cohesive messaging Completed
- Oversight of affiliate agencies deliverables and KPIs Completed

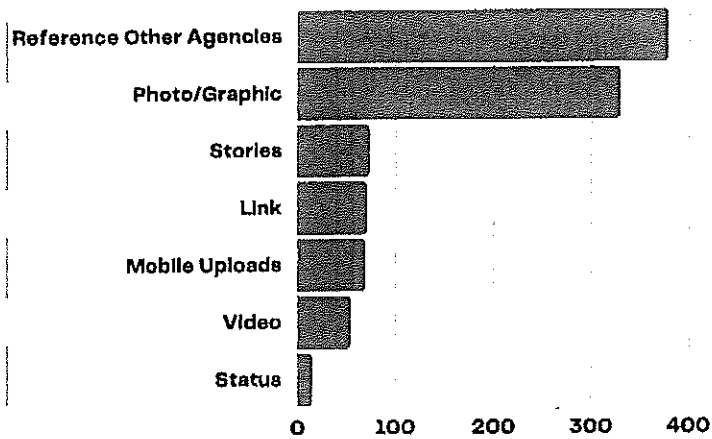
Memo of Understanding Specific Expectations

Overview

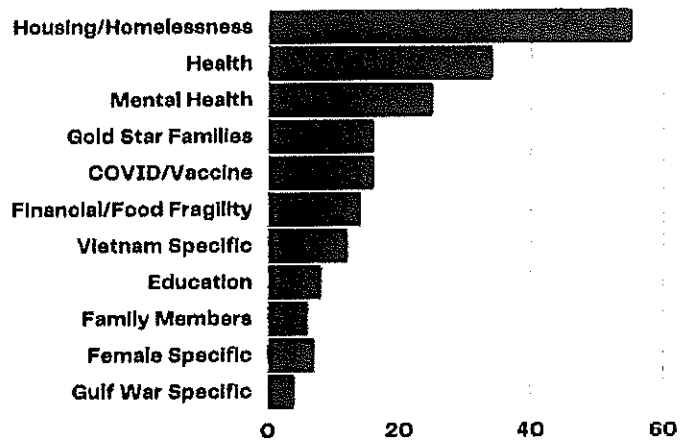
**December, 2020 -
December 31, 2021**

Content Overview
1/1/2021-12/31/2021

Post by Type



Post by Topic



Phase II

Photo and Video Content Creation

March 9,
2021

Photo Shoot

In house, casual setting

Staff and Volunteers at
desks for introductory
posts

Office Resources for
ongoing content creation

May 18,
2021

Photo/Video Shoot

In house, casual setting

9 Staff/Volunteers, photos and
edits at desks for topical posts

Office Resources for ongoing
content creation

Videos up to 1 minute length

6 videos created

May 26,
2021

Photo/Video Shoot

Professional photographer,
videographer and sound
team

Staff and Volunteers in
Arden for Summer Content

Interview available staff and
volunteers for future
content

May-July,
2021

Photo/Video Editing

Rough Cut editing

Story and content editing

Overlays created

30, 60 second videos

18 photo videos created

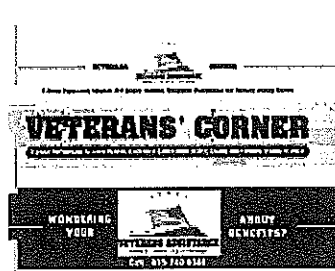
16 videos used for ads and content

Branding Work Committed to Per MOU: 5

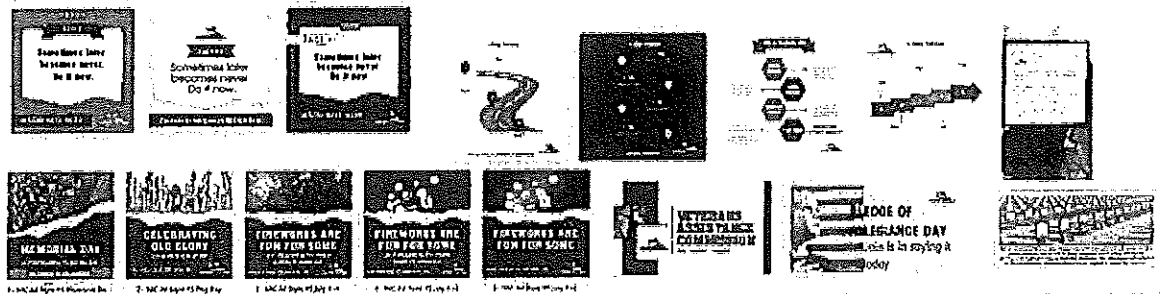
Delivered: Over 100

See Samples Blow

BANNERS FOR PRINT AND FACEBOOK CONTENT



STATIC CONTENT FOR PRINT AND DIGITAL MEDIA



Update Logo

Committed to Per MOU: 0

(Update name and sizing to digital and print specifications)

Delivered: 5

BRANDING GUIDELINES



1 - full color white background



2 - full color no background



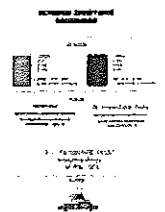
3 - full color circle background



4 - white logo white background



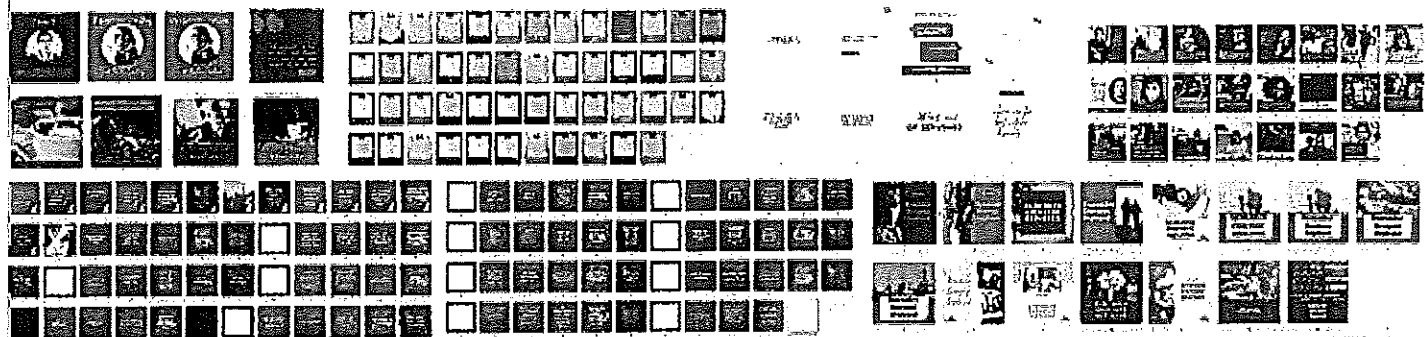
5 - black logo no background



Social Media Graphics

Committed to Per MOU: Unspecified

Delivered: 150+

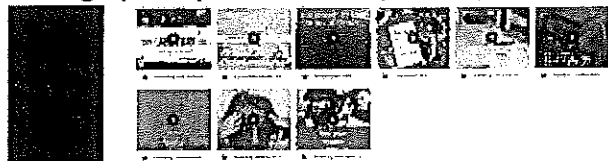


Videos

Committed to Per MOU: Max 18 (Demographic, Case Studies, FAQ/Ads)

Delivered: 30+ to be posted on social media continuously

Demographic Specific Videos (totalling 10+)



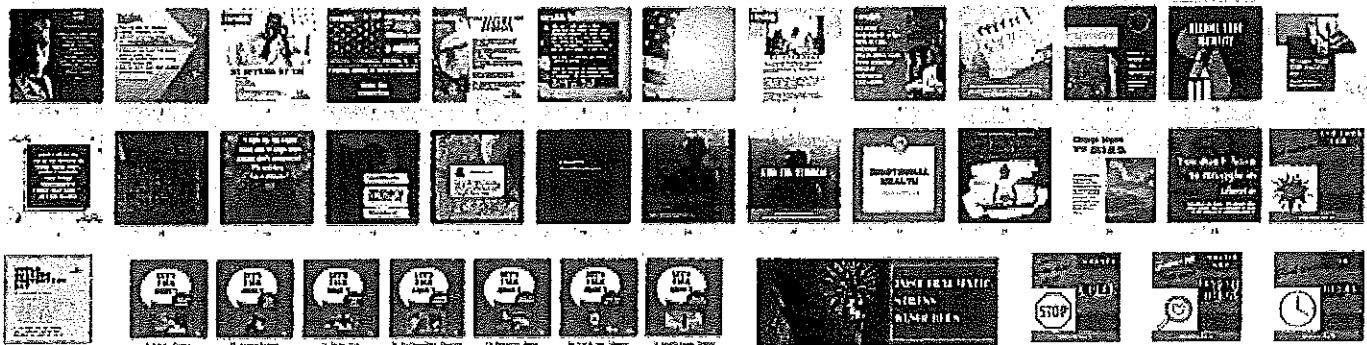
FAQ/Ad Videos (totalling 30+) Samples below



Mental Health Graphics

Committed to per MOU: Unspecified

Delivered: 40+



1 - SAC All Style #1



2 - SAC All Style #1

Suicide Prevention Month

Suicide Prevention Month

Just say the word... the support is there.

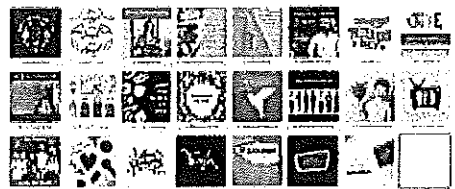
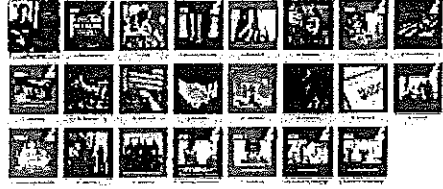
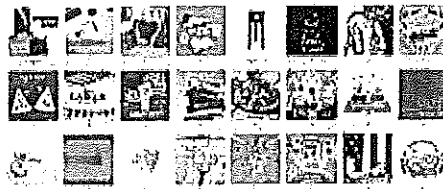
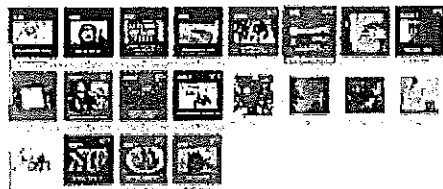
1. Reach out
2. Get help
3. Don't stay alone



Holiday Graphics

Committed to Per MOU: Unspecified

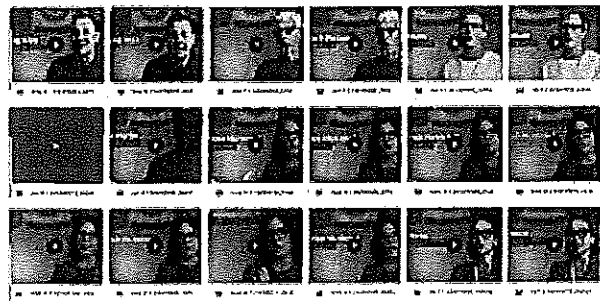
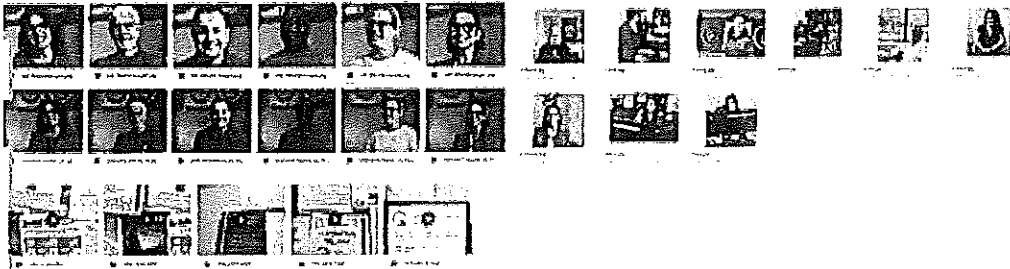
Delivered: 100+



Staff Photos and Videos

Committed to Per MOU: 0

Delivered: Over 100 to be posted on social media throughout 2022



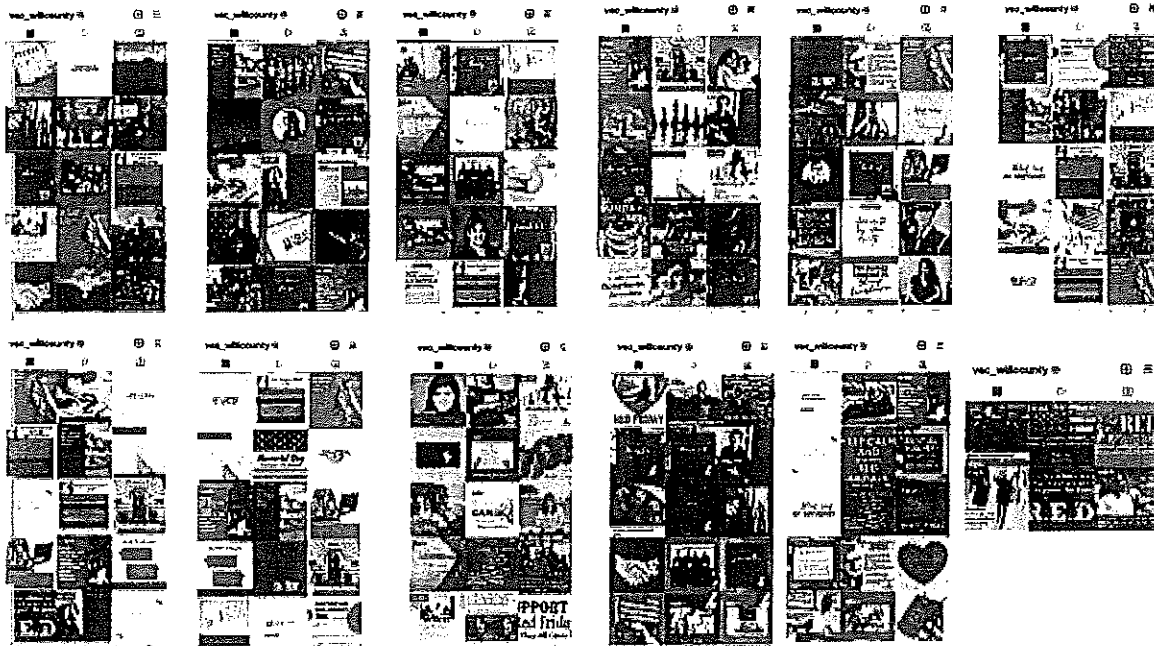
Instagram Graphics and Posts

170+ Posts

50+ Stories

Jan 1, 2021 -

December 31, 2021



Placed Social Media Advertising

MAY 2021-SEP 2021

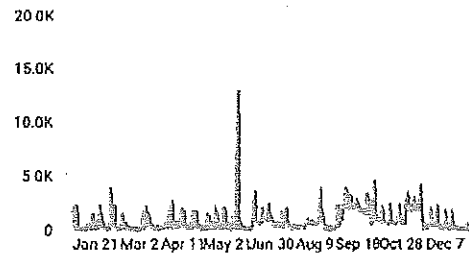
- **Saturation Ads**
 - **VAC Staff introductions (July-Sept)**
 - **Overview of VAC/VSO services**
- **Boosted content posts**
- **Special Profile posts on**
 - **Memorial Day**
 - **Veterans Court**
 - **July 4th**
 - **Battle Buddies program**
 - **Property Tax Programs**
 - **Mental Health/PTSD**

1/1/2021-
12/31/2021

Social Media Impact Statistics

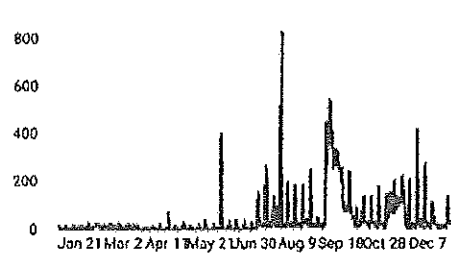
Facebook Page Reach ⓘ

127,063 \uparrow 126.1%



Instagram Reach ⓘ

9,442 \uparrow 358%



New Facebook Page Likes ⓘ

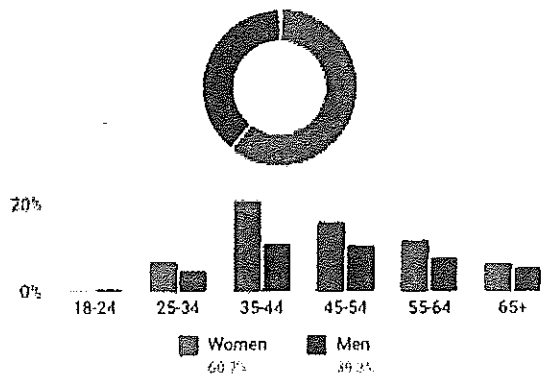
254 \uparrow 37.3%



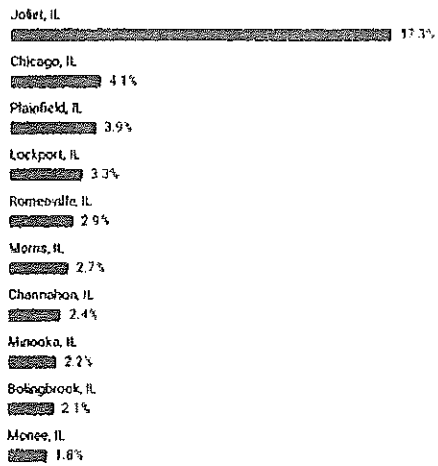
12/31/2021

Social Media Audience Demographics

Age & Gender



Top Cities



Full page ads
Banner Ads
Sponsored Pages

JULY 2021 DEC 2021

[illegible]

የዕ ዲረ ጠዕቅ ሃዕደቲ ሃዕ ዲረታይ ሃዕቲያ ሺሊጊ ገዳፅ ያረፈሃደኛታ ሆ
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**WE APPRECIATE
YOU**



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ES LINGUISTICS

FORD

- **Content Places Created**
 - **9 VAC Overview (July)**
 - **5 Generic Full page to be used intermittently**
 - **5 Special Profile places such as**
 - **Veterans Court, Battle Buddies program**
 - **Property Taxes, Mental Health/PTSD**
 - **Month specific content such as**
 - **National holidays**
 - **Branch birthdays**
 - **Military History days of importance**
 - **Verbiage for significant content such as**
 - **Warrior Care Month**
 - **Day of the Deployed**
 - **Gold Star Family Day**
 - **Produced monthly May-December**
 - **75+ photos for use in content as needed**

Farmers Weekly Review Graphic Samples

Committed to per MOU: 0

Delivered: 25+



Alpha Media

Radio Ads Sponsored Content

MAY, 2021-DEC, 2021

The Message

ALPHA MEDIA

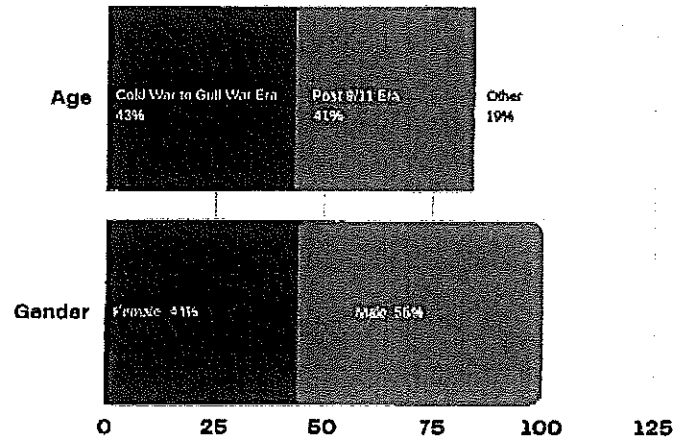
12 Spots Produced, aired on 1340-WJOL and Q Rock 100.7:

- Memorial Day (how to celebrate, and how the VAC can help): May
- General Benefits (let the VAC help you tap into your benefits, housing, employment): June, July, Oct
- Summer Holidays (think of our Veterans as you celebrate the 4th, and how the VAC can help): June-July
- Property Tax Season (help with tax exemptions): June-July
- 9/11 (honor our Veterans and come together): Aug-Sept
- Suicide Prevention (where to turn for help): Sept
- Will Co Recorder (Honor Rewards Program): Oct
- Returning Veterans Homestead Exemption Program: Oct
- Veterans Day (Ceremony & how to honor our Veterans): Nov
- Holiday Giving (where to donate to Veterans causes this holiday season): Nov-Dec
- Holiday Support (turn to the VAC if you're struggling around the holidays): Nov-Dec
- Rental Assistance Program: Dec-Jan

Will County VAC reached an estimated 170,000 weekly listeners, 2 weeks per month May - Dec 2021



Audience Demographics by Percentage Categories per Targeted Demographics



Reminder to Vote

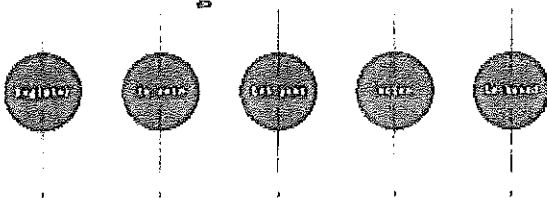


Figure 1 displays 12 small thumbnail images of web page designs, arranged in a 3x4 grid. Each thumbnail shows a different layout, including headers, footers, and full-page designs with various elements like text, images, and graphics.

Support of Local Events and Outreach

Committed to per MOU: 0
Delivered: 30+

DECEMBER, 2020-DEC, 2021

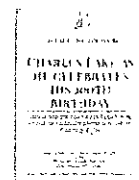
• Veterans Day (15+)

- Invitations
 - Facebook ads, posts and stories
 - Instagram posts and stories
 - Print ready
- Programs
- Onsite Photos and Social Media Coverage



• Other Events

- Lunch and Learn Events (5+)
 - Facebook ads, posts and stories
 - Instagram posts and stories
 - Print ready
 - Onsite Photos and Social Media Coverage
- Senior Services of Will County
- Veterans Breakfast (8+)
 - Invitations
 - Facebook ads, posts and stories
 - Instagram posts and stories
 - Print ready
- Veteran specific celebrations



Support of Partner Agencies

Committed to per MOU: 0

Delivered: 80+

MAY, 2021-DEC, 2021



- Partnership Content Pieces (50+)
 - Valentine's For Veterans video production
 - Facebook ads, posts and stories
 - Instagram posts and stories
 - Standardize content from variety of formats
 - Veteran's Court



- Partnership Content Places (15+)
 - Workshop slides
 - Facebook posts and stories
 - Instagram posts and stories
 - Criteria slides and videos
 - Facebook posts and stories
 - Instagram posts and stories



- Updated Facebook Page and Branded Graphics
 - Facebook header and thumbnails
- Updated Logo for ESG/CDBG/HOME
- Partnership Content Places (35+)
 - Equal Opportunity Housing Graphics
 - Facebook posts and stories
 - Nat'l Community Development Week
 - Facebook posts and stories
 - Affordable Housing and related Webex events
 - Thank you to local leaders



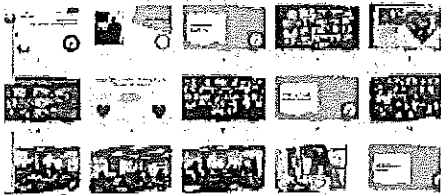
- Partnership Content Pieces (15+)
 - Will County Assessor programs benefiting veterans
 - Joliet Police Department Battle Buddy program
 - Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans
 - Local American Legion events and sponsored programs

Partner Agency Graphics Samples

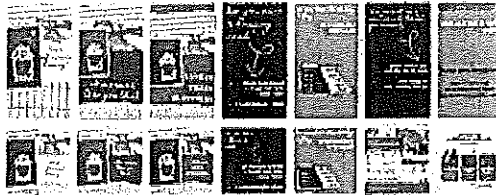
Committed to per MOU: Unspecified

Delivered: 100+ Static and Video content for Facebook, Instagram and Stories

State's Attorney Office



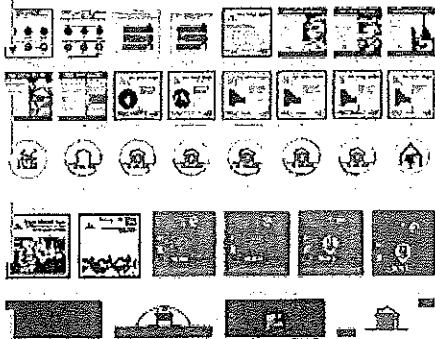
Habitat for Humanity



Midwest Shelter



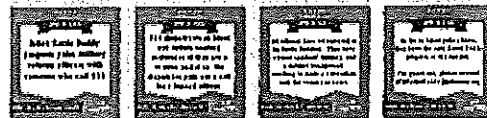
We Will Build



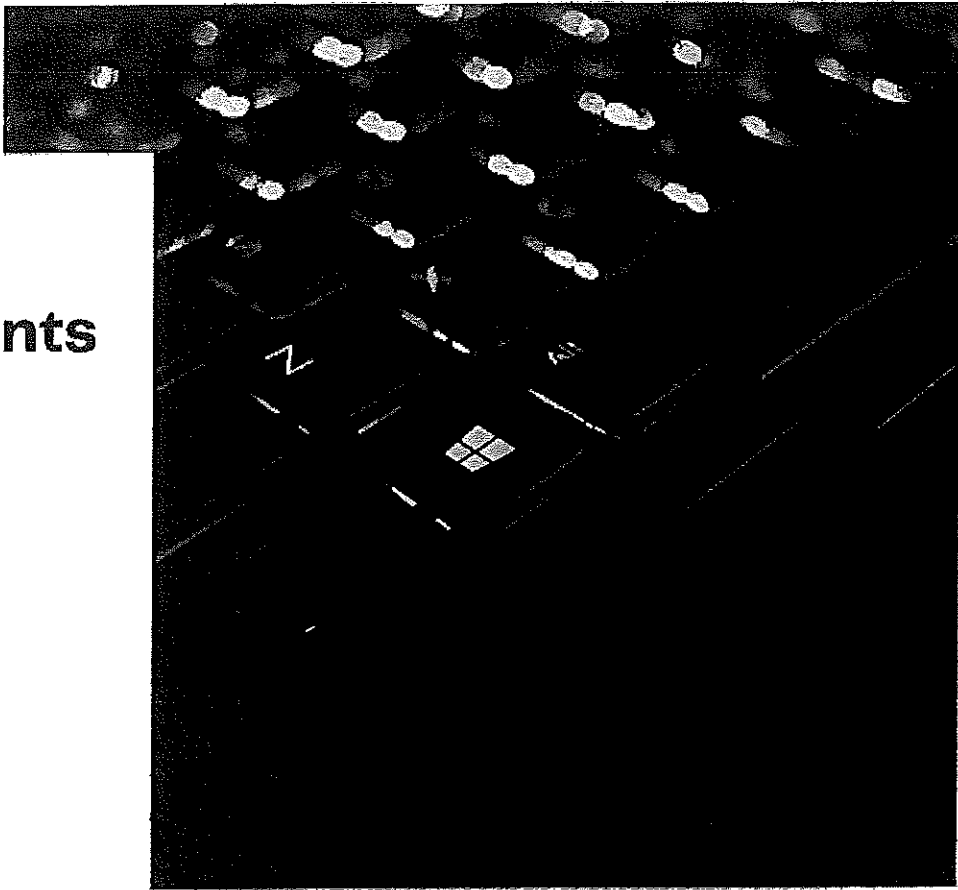
Supervisor of Assessors Office

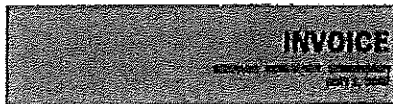


Joliet Police Department Battle Buddy



Project Documents





SERVICES TO BE RENDERED 5.1.2020 - 12.31.2020

Update and Maintain Facebook page	\$15,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove ineffective or inappropriate posts Create graphics and header with proper sizing Set culture of page Create five graphics to be used for future posts, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community News, Where is VAC?, Partnership News, How you can help, Impact Stories Create maximum of five notes to capture static information, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board and Staff members, Partners/Affiliates, Impact Stories 	
Social (Articles)	10,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 10 hours monthly Various sources (pages, websites, news updates) for relevant news Post appropriate resources to VAC page, M-F as needed Information will be shared as a post, not notes or videos, playlists nor include any additional graphics 	
Page Management	\$20,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discover, post and strategize content for VAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires conversations with key leaders Desirable to have conversations with collaboration partners to capture and tell your best impact stories Posting daily M-F as needed Creating graphics, playlists, additional notes and strategic content to maintain relevance on Facebook Page growth and engagement insights Training for successor 	

Total Services Rendered	\$40,000
2020 Discount	\$30,000
Total due (2 installments)	\$10,000



HAY O CONSULTING



HAY O CONSULTING



815-603-1150



GERARD WILSBROOK



SERVICES RENDERED 5/1/2021 - 12/31/2021

Graphic Creation	\$70,000
Multi-Advertising Campaign	\$350,000
Video Creation	\$200,000
Social Media Awareness Posts	\$70,000
Payment due Upon Receipt	\$455,000

Submit payment to:
Hay O Consulting
3247 W Al Williams Dr
Johannesburg, MO 64501



HAY O CONSULTING



HAY O CONSULTING



815-603-1150



GERARD WILSBROOK



MEMO OF UNDERSTANDING

between H&M Consulting and the VA Medical Center

SERVICES

Demographic Specifics

- o Cold War Era to Gulf War Era veterans
- o Post 9/11 Era veterans
- o Female veterans
- o General veterans
- o Mental Wellness call out (in conjunction with Mental Wellness proposal)

Print Awareness Graphic Creation (\$25,000)

- o Includes:
 - o Ad graphics for the following demographics, coordinating with Best Practice Media
 - o Seasonal graphics for key civilian holidays, key veteran/military holidays

Best Practice Media Advertising Campaigns (\$350,000/year)

- o Includes:
 - o Prospecting Ads on Google platforms, Facebook platforms and LinkedIn
 - o Monthly Report
 - o Ad spend included in quote

Digital Squad Video Creation (\$50,000)

- o Includes:
 - o 5 - Videos tailored to demographics stated above
 - o 3 - Case Study Videos
 - o 12 - More FAQ/Ad Videos

Social Media Awareness Posts (\$10,000/year)

- o Includes:
 - o Creating and maintaining social media posts pertinent to VAC mission and outreach
 - o Social listening for trending veteran issues
 - o Co-ordinate graphics and advertising campaign to present cohesive messaging
 - o Oversight of affiliate agencies deliverables and KPIs

Payment due 12/30/20

\$435,000



H&M CONSULTING



H&M CONSULTING



813-603-1490



DEBRA WISERSON

EXHIBIT E



**RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY BOARD
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS**

***Appropriating Funds in the Veterans Assistance Commission FY21 Budget for
COVID-19 Marketing Campaign***

WHEREAS, the Governor has declared a Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation for the entire State of Illinois, which includes Will County, due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a novel severe acute respiratory illness that can spread among people through respiratory transmissions and present with symptoms similar to those of influenza; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic requires an immediate emergency response to adequately respond to the adverse impact it has had on all aspects of society, but especially on the health and economic welfare of Will County, its local governments and its residents; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Assistance Commission believes reaching as many people that need help is an integral response to mitigating any negative effects of COVID-19 in the county; and

WHEREAS, a strategic marketing campaign is needed to help our community become informed, help our service providers expand their reach and help Will County Veterans and community members recover from COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Assistance Commission has requested the additional appropriation of funds in the amount of \$495,000.00 into the Veterans Assistance Commission FY2021 budget from the County Board Anticipated New Expenses, as attached, for their marketing campaign; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Committee has reviewed and recommends approval of this request; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 55 ILCS 5/6-1003,Transfers from one appropriation of any one fund to another of the same fund, not affecting the total amount appropriated, may be made at any meeting of the board by a two-thirds vote....By a like vote the board may make appropriations in excess of those authorized by the budget in order to meet an immediate emergency.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Will County Board hereby amends its FY2021 Budget by increasing appropriations in the Veterans Assistance Commission, as attached.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Will County Finance Department is directed to make the necessary line item and fund adjustments, in accordance with the above-referenced statutory

authority.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Preamble of this Resolution is hereby adopted as if fully set herein. This Resolution shall be in full force and effect upon its passage and approval as provided by law.

Adopted by the Will County Board this 18th day of February, 2021.

AYES: Newquist, Ogalla, Koch, Moustis, Mitchell, Tyson, Harris, Traynere, Fritz, Mueller, Gould, VanDuyne, Balich, Fridlone, Brooks Jr., Winfrey, Parker, Ventura, Coleman, Marcum, Berkowicz, Cowan, Pretzel, Weigel, Freeman, Kraididis

Result: Approved - [Unanimous]

Lauren Staley Ferry (SEAL)
Will County Clerk

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2021.

Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant
Will County Executive

EXHIBIT F

Amy Georgakopoulos

From: Amy Georgakopoulos
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 1:54 PM
To: Jen Solum
Subject: FW: FOIA

From: Geriann Wiesbrook (G) <g@HeyG.Consulting>
Sent: Tuesday, February 22, 2022 1:01 PM
To: Amy Georgakopoulos <ageorgakopoulos@willcountyillinois.com>
Cc: Kristina McNichol <kmcnichol@willcountyillinois.com>
Subject: Re: FOIA

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Amy
In January I submitted a comprehensive final report to the VAC board, who took a month to review it and then approved unanimously at their February meeting. With that approval, my obligations to VAC have been fulfilled. Per attorneys I've consulted, I am not expected to produce documentation beyond what I have already produced. To Chris' point, I am not a contractor, and we had no contractual language in place regarding the interior workings of how Hey G functions or how we completed the work agreed upon between Hey G and the VAC.

Geriann Wiesbrook, Founder
Hey G Consulting

From: Amy Georgakopoulos <ageorgakopoulos@willcountyillinois.com>
Sent: Friday, February 18, 2022 2:10:07 PM
To: Geriann Wiesbrook (G) <g@HeyG.Consulting>
Subject: RE: FOIA

Good afternoon,

I was just taking a minute to follow up on the request I forwarded to you on Wednesday morning. Per the State's Attorney, we need to submit receipts for costs from the contract dated 4/30/21-12/31/21. I am working on the FOIA today, and would like to satisfy this.

Please see below per Chris Wise: Under FOIA, any records kept by a contractor who does work for a government body subject to the Act are also subject to the Act. So we need to ask Geriann if she has any documents that satisfy the request of Mr. Hammond's second paragraph requesting documents.

Thanks,
Amy

EXHIBIT G



Veteran Assistance Commission of Will County

Kristina McNichol – Superintendent
Glenwood Center 2400 Glenwood Ave. Ste 110 Joliet, IL 60432
Ph: (815)740-8389 Fax: (815)740-4329



9 Dec 2020

Good Morning CARES Committee –

I wanted to send an email to address any questions and give further detail on VAC second request of CARES funding.

1. Marketing Campaign

With the uncertainty of COVID-19 effect on the community, the VAC believes reaching as many people that need help is an integral response to mitigating any negative effects of COVID-19 in the County of Will. In March, VAC partnered with *Hey G Consulting*, who assisted the VAC with FaceBook & Instagram content. The results of our partnership doubled our social media outreach & helped maintain VAC clientele numbers throughout the shutdown. *Hey G Consulting* created custom graphics, staff videos, and shared collaborative partner agency programs. The VAC has prepared a google doc to send to partner service providers & program managers so we can effectively include ALL Will County agencies & help educate not only veterans, but spouses, children, and neighbors of veterans.

VAC marketing program includes YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, along with traditional avenues like newspaper and radio. Most of our Non-For-Profit partners do NOT have an advertising/marketing budget. VAC believes, when the tide comes in, all boats shall rise for the greater good of the community.

Furthermore, Will County is home to 30,005 veterans (2019) of which only 26.2% eligible veterans are enrolled in VA Healthcare. Currently, 11,165 veterans have utilized VAC services, resulting in \$58Million of federal dollars procured.

A strategic marketing campaign is needed to help our community become informed, help our service providers expand their reach, and help Will County veterans and community members recover from COVID-19.

2. Four Unit Building

The VAC, by state mandate, offers emergency financial assistance to Will CO veterans. The VAC Veterans Financial Assistance Program allows single veterans to qualify for 6 months of:

- \$350 towards rent
- \$185 towards utility
- \$50 towards personal needs/food

Attachment: VAC_CARES2 (21-44 : Appr Funds in VAC FY21 Budget for COVID-19 Marketing Campaign)

You also have the right to seek judicial review by filing a lawsuit in the State Circuit Court. 5 ILCS 140/11. If you choose to file a Request for Review with the PAC, you must do so within 60 calendar days of the date of this letter. 5 ILCS 140/9.5(a). Please note that you must include a copy of your original FOIA request and this letter when filing a Request for Review with the PAC.

If you need additional assistance with your request, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Amy Georgakopoulos

ageorgakopoulos@willcountyllinois.com

Veteran Service Officer and FOIA Officer

Veteran Assistance Commission of Will County



EXHIBIT H

From: Geriann Wiesbrook (G) <g@HeyG.Consulting>
Sent: Tuesday, November 17, 2020 10:20 AM
To: Kristina McNichol <kmcnichol@willcountyillinois.com>
Subject: Re: Proposals for 2021 Ad Campaign

You can pay up front and receive the services in 2021

Gerian Wiesbrook, Founder
Hey G Consulting

From: Kristina McNichol <kmcnichol@willcountyillinois.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 17, 2020 10:11:12 AM
To: Geriann Wiesbrook (G) <g@HeyG.Consulting>
Subject: RE: Proposals for 2021 Ad Campaign

Ask them to trim it up and I need to spend the \$ by Dec 31. So paid in full by end of year. That would eliminate the virtual video.

Respectfully,

Kristi McNichol
Superintendent
2400 Glenwood Ave, STE 110
Joliet IL, 60435
(815)740-8389 (Office)
(815)740-4329 (Fax)



Only Dead Fish Go With the Flow

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From: Geriann Wiesbrook (G) <g@HeyG.Consulting>
Sent: Tuesday, November 17, 2020 8:55 AM
To: Kristina McNichol <kmcnichol@willcountyillinois.com>
Subject: Proposals for 2021 Ad Campaign

FB and other platform ads	\$1,000,000	
Graphics for ads	\$25,000	
Social Media Awareness Posts	\$40,000	

This will include

1 year of static ads focusing on:

- Cold War — Gulf War Veteran awareness of VAC
- Post 9/11 Veteran awareness
- Female Veteran awareness
- Mental Wellness treatment option awareness

1 video series focusing on benefits of VAC involvement from the veteran perspective

See attached for ad roll out proposal

Geriann

EXHIBIT I

From: Kristina McNichol <kmcnichol@willcountyillinois.com>
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 12:08 PM
To: Geriann Wiesbrook (G) <g@HeyG.Consulting>
Subject: Marketing Spreadsheet

Our VAC Commission Meeting is next week. It's the first one since officially starting our marketing campaign.

I would like to share what has been accomplished thus far w/ Hey G – do you have the spreadsheet ready?

Respectfully,

Kristi McNichol
Superintendent
2400 Glenwood Ave, STE 110
Joliet IL, 60435
(815)740-8389 (Office)
(815)740-4329 (Fax)



Only Dead Fish Go With the Flow

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