

# *Heroes* FLORIDA VETERAN HEALTH



NOVEMBER 11, 2015



# *Mission*

TO BE THE HEALTHIEST STATE IN THE NATION.

# *Vision*

TO PROTECT, PROMOTE AND IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ALL PEOPLE IN FLORIDA  
THROUGH INTEGRATED STATE, COUNTY AND COMMUNITY EFFORTS.

# *Values*

## INNOVATION:

WE SEARCH FOR CREATIVE SOLUTIONS AND MANAGE RESOURCES WISELY.

## COLLABORATION:

WE USE TEAMWORK TO ACHIEVE COMMON GOALS AND SOLVE PROBLEMS.

## ACCOUNTABILITY:

WE PERFORM WITH INTEGRITY AND RESPECT.

## RESPONSIVENESS:

WE ACHIEVE OUR MISSION BY SERVING OUR CUSTOMERS AND ENGAGING OUR PARTNERS.

## EXCELLENCE:

WE PROMOTE QUALITY OUTCOMES THROUGH LEARNING AND CONTINUOUS  
PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT.

# Veterans

## Special Tribute



As Florida's economy has grown, so has its population. Florida now has the country's third largest veteran population and is home to over 231,000 veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. The Florida Department of Health recognizes the sacrifices made by members of our military and their families and works to make Florida the most veteran-friendly state in the nation. Our goal is to simultaneously decrease regulatory burden and increase health care career opportunities, so veterans choose Florida as their place to live, work and practice.

To ensure a smooth transition back into the workforce, the Department provides several licensure support services such as its Florida Veterans Application Licensure Online Response System (VALOR) and fee waivers for veterans seeking licensure in a health care profession. We work to ensure that the licensure experience is one that reflects our appreciation and gratitude.

Furthermore, we are proud to present this year's publication of *Florida Veteran Health Heroes*. In these pages, we honor veterans who worked tirelessly to protect and ensure the health of others while serving our great nation. Our military veterans are well-trained and hardworking. They have demonstrated a willingness to serve and have been indispensable to both our military and our state.

Thank you for your service to the people of Florida and the United States.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John H. Armstrong".

John Armstrong, MD, F.A.C.S.  
State Surgeon General and Secretary

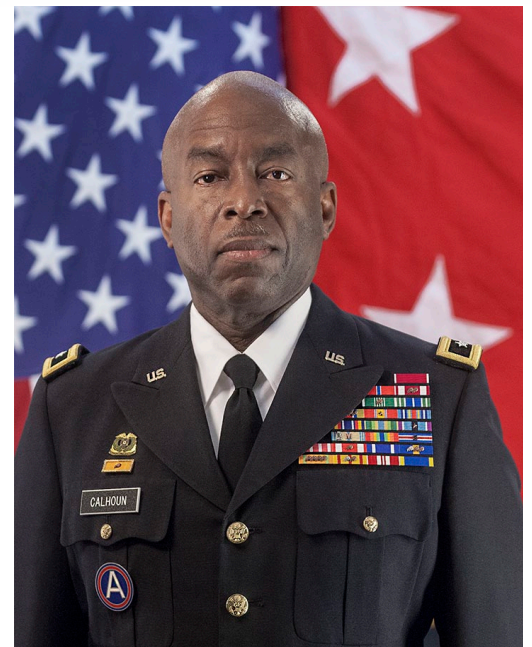


# *Our* Heroes

As of March 29, 2015, Major General Michael Calhoun assumed his duties as the Adjutant General of Florida. As Adjutant General, he serves as senior military advisor to the governor of Florida and is responsible for the overall management, readiness and mobilization of both U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force elements of the Florida National Guard. General Calhoun said he is honored to be appointed and have the opportunity to continue serving his state, nation and the fellow men and women of the Florida National Guard. “It’s very humbling,” said General Calhoun. “Any time you are in a position that immediately affects 12,000 Soldiers and Airmen, and the protection of the citizens of Florida, it is significant.”

General Calhoun earned a bachelor of science in pharmacy from Florida A&M University (FAMU) in 1976, and enlisted as a Private in the Florida National Guard in 1977. After a six-year break in service, he received a direct commission and appointments to 1st Lieutenant in the Medical Service Corps in 1989. His follow-on assignments include Chief of Pharmacy Services, 131st Mobile Army Surgical Unit (MASH), and Executive Office, 131st MASH among others. General Calhoun has over 30 years of experience and provides unwavering commitment and dedication to safeguarding Florida’s families.

General Calhoun is a recipient of the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, the Humanitarian Service Medal, the Florida Cross, the Florida Distinguished Service Medal, the Alabama Commendation Medal, and the Mississippi State Emergency Medal. He is the Army National Guard recipient of the Department of Defense African American History Month Recognition Award for 2008, for his contributions to the Global War on Terrorism, and a recipient of the Ancient Order of Saint Barbara. In addition to a bachelor’s in pharmacy, he holds a master’s in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College. General Calhoun is a registered pharmacist in the state of Florida, and was an active member of the Florida Pharmacy Association in the 1990s.



MAJOR GENERAL  
**MICHAEL**  
**CALHOUN**



Dr. Harry Frank Farmer, Jr., former Florida State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health, entered the medical field in 1976 after being honorably discharged from the U.S. Army where he served on active duty in Vietnam. “I always had an interest in medicine, really starting with my doctoral dissertation which was on the development of public health agencies in the south,” Dr. Farmer said. After earning his medical degree from the Medical College of Georgia and completing a residency in Internal Medicine at University Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida, Dr. Farmer reentered military service in 1984 and served in the Florida National Guard as a Battalion Surgeon until 1994, achieving the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. From 1994 until his retirement, he served as a Flight Surgeon in the U.S. Air Force. He retired from the military in 2004 as a Colonel, having received three Meritorious Service Medals and numerous honors.

Dr. Farmer’s service to public health was exemplified not only in the military but in his various civilian roles as well. He served as the President of the Florida Medical Association during one of our nation’s most harrowing times, September 11, 2001. During this time, he served an integral role in preparing Florida’s leaders and physicians for potential bioterrorism attacks, using his military expertise and his public health savvy to protect the public from any and all threats. In 2004, Dr. Farmer was appointed to the Florida Board of Medicine where he was elected to serve as Chairman from 2007 to 2008. In 2011, Dr. Farmer was selected by Governor Rick Scott to serve as Florida State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health. During his tenure with the Department of Health, he focused his efforts on combating Florida’s pill mill and prescription-drug abuse epidemic. He directed the setup of the state’s Prescription Drug Monitoring Program and provided essential oversight for the closure of hundreds of illegal pill mills throughout the state. He also pushed through integral legislation that changed the landscape of pain management clinic regulation, making Florida a safer place to live, work and visit.



**DR. HARRY FRANK  
FARMER JR.**



**MAJOR  
MAUREEN  
DANIELS-TREMEL**

Maureen Tremel joined the U.S. Air Force (USAF) after graduating with a Bachelor's of Science in Nursing from Seton Hall University following the Vietnam War in 1976. Having grown up in a patriotic household with a father who was a World War II veteran, Maureen felt a strong desire to serve her country. She began her military career as a clinical nurse on the Gynecology unit at Wilford Hall Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. While serving in the USAF and the USAF Reserve, she earned an OB/Gyn Nurse Practitioner Certification and a Flight Nurse Certification. Currently, Maureen is studying to earn a PhD in Nursing at the University of Central Florida.

After serving on active duty in the USAF, Maureen settled in Florida and has been a nursing educator for the past 29 years. She is currently a fulltime nursing professor and Leader of Experiential Learning/Simulation for the Nursing Program at Seminole State College in Altamonte Springs. She is also a member of the planning team for the Altamonte Springs Campus expansion with plans to include a simulation hospital for nursing students. In 2014, Maureen was one of sixteen educators worldwide to first be recognized as Certified Healthcare Simulation Educator-Advanced (CHSE-A) by the Society for Simulation in Healthcare. Her innovative teaching strategies and sustained commitment to nursing education led to her being named a Fellow of the National League for Nursing's (NLN) Academy of Nursing Education.

In addition to a robust teaching career, Maureen is a contributing author for several publications, conducts research to advance the nursing educational field, and has presented at over 60 national and international conferences. Maureen actively works to make positive gains to providing health care to veterans with a focus on training future health care providers. Currently, she is working on a grant funded project called "Advancing Care Excellence for Florida's Veterans: Using Simulation to Educate Future and Current Nurses and Other Healthcare Professionals," sponsored by the Florida Blue Foundation.

*"Our military veterans are well-trained and hardworking. They have demonstrated a willingness to serve and have been indispensable to both our military and our state."*

*- John Armstrong, MD, F.A.C.S.  
State Surgeon General and Secretary*



## CAPTAIN JEANNE GRUSHINSKI-RUBIN

Captain Jeanne Grushinski-Rubin was a Polish-American registered nurse working at Bellevue Hospital New York City when she joined the U.S. Navy at the start of World War II in 1942. She felt a strong desire to enlist and took the opportunity to serve the country that accepted her immigrant parents and provided her with an education. Jeanne was stationed at several U.S. Navy hospitals, including Philadelphia, Pensacola, San Leandro, and finally the Pacific Islands where she worked with a small team of nurses and corpsmen to provide medical relief after the war. The team made their way from island to island, until they reached Okinawa, where they took charge of a makeshift fleet hospital.

In 1947, Jeanne married a U.S. Navy pharmacist and was required to retire. However, Jeanne returned to the Navy Reserves where she stayed until she became a captain in 1978. During her time, Jeanne received many awards including the American Theater Ribbon Medal, the Asiatic Pacific Theater Medal and the World War II Ribbon.

After retiring from the U.S. Navy, Jeanne volunteered with several community organizations and served as a dedicated advocate for veterans and civilians. She joined the Elderhostel organization, now known as Rhodes Scholar, and participated in over 75 international special projects. Jeanne has also been a member of the American Red Cross since 1941 where she served as a nurse during times of crisis. Most notably, Captain Grushinski-Rubin was stationed in Dade County following Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

Additionally, Jeanne dedicated hours of volunteer service on behalf of veterans and received numerous awards for her work at VA hospitals and clinics. Her awards include the President's Volunteer Service Award, the Department of Veterans' Affairs Voluntary Service Certificate, and the Polish Legion of American Veterans Voluntary Service Award.

Most recently, Jeanne was inducted into the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame in 2013. When asked about her time in the military and her dedicated volunteer service, Jeanne stated: "It was a matter of doing what I loved to do, being in contact with people, and helping."



Following his graduation from Asbury College, Dr. Daniel Bower started his military career as a United States Marine, earning accolades such as honor man and honor graduate. Before continuing his military career with the Navy, Dr. Bower attended the Southern Illinois School of Dental Medicine where he obtained his doctor of medicine in dentistry degree. He then returned to the military and practiced dentistry at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Camp Pendleton, California, and at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Guam before attending the Ohio State University Medical Center as an oral and maxillofacial surgery resident.

Following his residency, Dr. Bower worked as an oral and maxillofacial surgeon at three different naval hospitals including the U.S. Naval Hospital in Guam where he also served as department head. During his time in Guam, Dr. Bower also received the Naval Hospital Guam Customer Service Wall of Heroes Award in 2013 for exceptional care and customer service as evidenced by numerous comments from patients. He has been known to treat patients as if they were members of his own family and has been praised for his compassionate bedside manner, advocacy and his willingness to both teach and listen. Dr. Bower continued his practice at Guam until entering the private sector in 2015.

After his time in Guam, Dr. Bower worked to transition back in to the civilian work force but said getting licensed in a state can be difficult for his profession. Fortunately he was able to utilize the Department's armed forces health care licensure support services and said it has made all the difference. "The license that I got helped me out so much," said Dr. Bower. "My mom and dad live in Georgia, so I wanted to live near them. The VALOR system provided the perfect opportunity for me to practice in Florida. This helped me out tremendously."



**DR. DANIEL  
BOWER**



*The Florida Department of Health  
salutes our veterans for their hard  
work and dedication.*

# Armed Forces

## Health Care Licensing Support Services

The Florida Department of Health is committed to honoring veterans, members of the military, and their families. We are sensitive to the many challenges military families face when required to relocate.



### **Florida Veterans Application for Licensure Online Response System (VALOR)**

With the beginning of fiscal year 2014-2015, Florida lawmakers expanded the program as part of the Florida GI Bill, extending the fee waiver period to 60 months after honorable discharge and including military spouses. If you are a military veteran seeking licensure in a health care profession, Florida offers expedited licensure processing. In order to qualify, you must apply for the license six months before or six months after your honorable discharge from the United States Armed Forces. There is no application fee, licensure fee, or unlicensed activity fee for veterans who qualify for this type of license.

### **Military Veteran Fee Waiver**

If you are a military veteran, you may be eligible for a waiver of the initial application and licensure fees for all health care professions. Your application must be submitted within 60 months of discharge from any branch of the United States Armed Forces. The initial license fee, initial application fee, and initial unlicensed activity fee will be waived for veterans returning from service. This waiver does not include examination fees.

### **Reimbursement for Veterans' Professional Examination Costs**

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs will reimburse eligible applicants for the cost of licensing and certification examinations, not to exceed \$2,000 per test. These licensing and certification examinations must be generally deemed necessary to pursue a trade or profession. Please see <http://www.fdva.org/saa/LiCert.asp> for potential reimbursement for examination costs.

### **Temporary Certificate to Practice in an Area of Critical Need**

If you are an active duty member of military veteran who served at least 10 years in the United States Armed Forces, you may be eligible to practice in an area of critical need. This certificate limits you to practice in designated areas of critical need, and is only available to physicians who have a license in another jurisdiction of the United States. There is no application fee for physicians seeking this certificate. This certificate is not limited to physicians who will not receive compensation for their service.

# Renewal Exemption

You may be eligible for exemption from certain license requirements if you meet the following requirements:

- You are an active duty member, or the spouse of an active duty member, of the Armed Forces of the United States
- You hold a Florida license as a health care practitioner who is in good standing
- You were entitled to practice or engage in your profession prior to joining the Armed Forces

If exempt, you will not be required to renew your license, pay license renewal fees, update your address, or perform any other license maintenance act. The exemption extends through the duration of your active duty service and for a period of six months after discharge.

The spouse of an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States may be exempt from all license renewal requirements as long as the licensee is absent from the state because of his/her spouse's active duty assignment. This license does not permit you to practice your profession in the private sector for profit.

## **Initial Licensure Fee Waiver for Military Spouses**

If you are a spouse of a military veteran, you may be eligible for a waiver of the initial application and licensure fees for all health care professions. This year, veterans and their spouses who used the fee waiver system saved more than \$120,000. Your application must be submitted within 60 months after your spouse's honorable discharge from any branch of the United States Armed Forces. The initial license fee, initial application fee, and initial unlicensed activity fee will be waived for you at the time of your spouse's discharge, provided you apply for licensure within 60 months after your spouse is discharged from any branch of the United States Armed Forces. This waiver does not include examination fees.

## **Temporary License for Military Spouses**

If you are a spouse of an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States, you may be issued a temporary license to practice your health care profession in Florida. The purpose of the temporary license is to allow you the opportunity to work in your respective profession while your spouse is assigned to a duty station in Florida. If you desire to practice beyond the expiration of the "temporary license," you should begin the regular licensing application process as soon as possible.

The temporary military spouse license is valid for one year. To qualify for a temporary license, your spouse must be on active duty and assigned to a duty station in Florida and you must hold a valid license as a health care professional in another state, the District of Columbia, any United States territory or possession.

To apply for a license or learn more about licensing option for veterans, members of the military, and their families, visit [www.floridahealth.gov/licensing-and-regulation/armedforces/active-duty/index.html](http://www.floridahealth.gov/licensing-and-regulation/armedforces/active-duty/index.html).



# Our Commitment

*Veterans and their spouses who used the fee waiver system saved more than \$120,000.*

The Division of Medical Quality Assurance (MQA) seeks to create a veteran-friendly regulatory environment to encourage military service members to choose Florida for their health care practice after active duty. A fee waiver program began in fiscal year 2013-2014 to ease most of the financial burden of applying for licensure, and participation has steadily grown. More than \$120,000 was saved during fiscal year 2014-2015, three times as much as the previous fiscal year.

With the beginning of fiscal year 2014-2015, Florida lawmakers expanded the program as part of the Florida GI Bill, extending the fee waiver period to 60 months after honorable discharge and including military spouses. In addition, the Veterans Application for Licensure Online Response (VALOR) system was developed for veterans who apply for licensure within 60 days of honorable discharge.

VALOR expedites the licensure process and is designed to issue licenses for all qualified initial applicants within one day. MQA is committed to helping ease the transition of military health professionals into civilian life, and seeks to encourage them to practice in Florida by making the licensure process one that reflects our gratitude for their service.

APPLICATIONS APPROVED IN FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015: 113  
THESE APPLICATIONS LED TO A TOTAL SAVINGS OF: \$43,753.00  
TEMPORARY LICENSES FOR MILITARY SPOUSES: 24

## Military Fee Waivers Approved

### Fee Waiver Applications Approved Fiscal Year 2014-2015

First quarter	235	\$29,113.00
Second quarter	204	\$25,860.00
Third quarter	234	\$25,926.00
Fourth quarter	336	\$39,839.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,009</b>	<b>\$120,738.00</b>

