

COUNTY MANAGER'S ANNUAL REPORT



SUCCESS STORIES | 2015

VETERANS SERVICES

Seminole County is home to an estimated 35,000 veterans. The County's Veterans Services Division is dedicated to improving the health and economic well-being of honorably-discharged Seminole County veterans, as well as their dependents and survivors, through education, advocacy, and the attainment of benefits and long-term health services. This Division is led by Ed Burford, the Seminole County's Veterans Services Officer. As a testament to the exemplary services provided to our veterans, the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs recognized Ed as the County Veterans Service Officer of the Year for 2015. He was also identified as a Veteran of Influence by the Orlando Business Journal in September. Mr. Burford was selected to receive these honors based on his impact on the



community. After serving 22 years in the United States Army, and achieving the rank of Chief Warrant Officer 3, Ed began a career advocating for veterans with the State of Florida, working as a Disabled Veteran Outreach and Placement Specialist. Mr. Burford has been assisting Seminole County veterans in his current capacity since August 2009.

In addition to their other advocacy efforts, Ed and his staff diligently work to increase clients' self-sufficiency in handling their own issues with the United States Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA), the Defense Finance and Accounting Center (DFAS) and other government agencies. These services are offered free of charge to clients, their dependents, and their survivors, and can be accessed by appointments or during triage.

Close to 3,600 of Seminole County's estimated 35,000 veteran residents are military retirees with an annual military retirement income of almost \$97 million. Seminole County has a cumulative total of \$2,626,944,025 in VA Home Loans. In 2015, the Seminole County Veterans Services Division supported 725 unique clients with 12,067 client contacts that have resulted in \$20,591,000 in additional VA funding coming into Seminole County. During fiscal Year 2014-15, Seminole County veterans received \$213,628,000 in benefits from the VA.

FAST FACT



IN FY 2014-15, SEMINOLE
COUNTY VETERANS SERVICES
SUPPORTED **725** UNIQUE
CLIENTS WITH **12,067** CLIENT CONTACTS
RESULTING IN **\$20,591,000** IN
ADDITIONAL VA FUNDING FOR
SEMINOLE COUNTY VETERANS.