

2021 Annual Report

# Calumet County Veterans Service Office

“Connecting Veterans with their Benefits”

WISCONSIN  
**Calumet  
County**

Veterans Service Office

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**Veterans Service Officer:**

Gregory T. Brittnacher- Accredited with National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO), Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), American Legion (AL), Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs (WDVA), and Disabled American Veterans (DAV).

**Assistant Veterans Service Officer:**

Michelle A. Wynveen – Accredited with NACVSO, WDVA, AL, VFW, and DAV.

**Accreditations:**

The Veteran Administration (VA) accreditation is for the sole purpose of providing representation services to claimants. Yearly education requirements are required by our staff in order to maintain accreditation. The accreditation also allow our staff with full access to federal databases and files to further assist our veterans, dependents, and widows.

- Formal studies prove Veterans receive 50% more benefits and larger awards by using professional Veterans Service Representation (i.e., Calumet County Veterans Services) than if he or she file individually or with a non-professional.



# Calumet County Veterans Service Office

## Mission Statement:

The mission of the Veterans Service Office is to support Veterans, their dependents, and surviving spouses by providing advocacy and professional services to assist Veterans in pursuing all obtainable benefits. We will be there to guide them through the complexities of the application process with the intent to maximize benefits.

## Our Vision:

Improving the quality of life for Calumet County Veterans and their dependents through accessing all available local, state and federal benefits that were earned by the sacrifice and service to their country.

## County Veterans Service Office History

The first County Veterans Service Offices were self-appointed concerned Veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) who took it upon themselves to aid and assist the Veterans, dependents, and survivors of their counties.

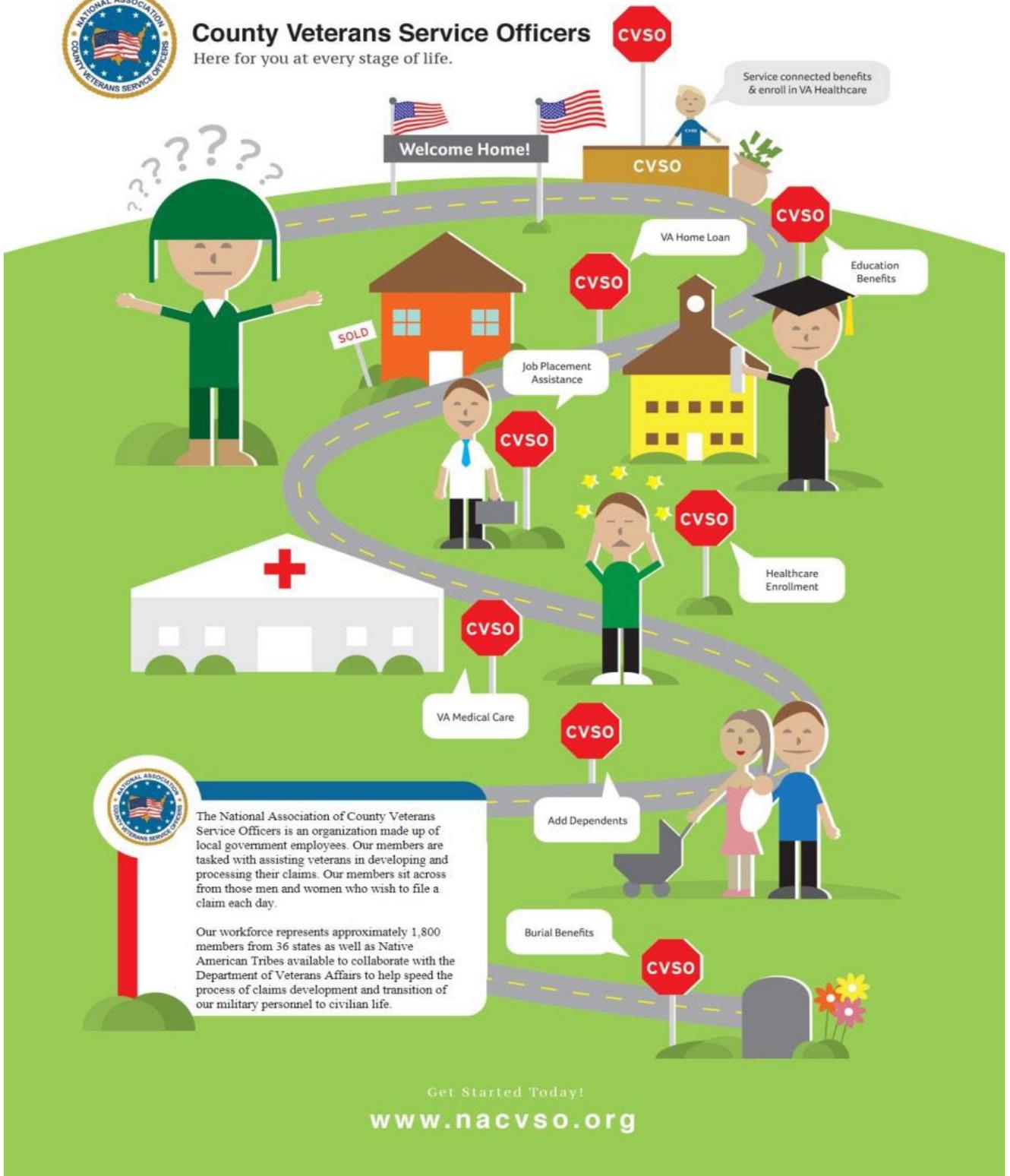
- The first CVSO, Leo Promen, was appointed in Fond du Lac County in 1932.
- The WI CVSO Association was established in 1935.
- Legislation was passed in 1946 requiring each county to have a CVSO and required each CVSO to have served in a branch of the Armed Forces (State Statute 45.80).
- Legislation was passed in 1973 authorizing a state grant for the CVSO office.





## County Veterans Service Officers

Here for you at every stage of life.



Get Started Today!  
[www.nacvso.org](http://www.nacvso.org)

**Goal I:** Continue to improve the economic impact of the county by increasing the number of Veterans and dependents who qualify for compensation and pension benefits.

**Objective I:** By the end of the year, expand the foot print of the Veterans Service Office by promoting programs and benefits for Veterans, their dependents and survivors by expanding outreach with stakeholders in the community such as Veterans Service Organizations (American Legions, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Disabled American Veterans), job fairs, e-mail, newsletter, website, Facebook page, senior fairs, Calumet County fair, Assisted living facilities and other meetings and outreach events.

**Objective II:** By the end of the year, established relationships with local medical and mental health providers that would assist Veterans in obtaining private medical opinions for VA compensation claims.

**Objective III:** By the end of the year, obtain retroactive benefits totaling \$500,000 from VA compensation and pension claims.

**Goal II:** Continue to enhance technology capabilities and steam line the process to increase office proficiency and further enhance services for our Veterans.

**Objective I:** By the end of the year, digitally migrate all records to the VetPro database.

**Objective II:** By the end of the year, redesign the Veterans Service Office web page to further enhance the usability for clients and to promote federal, State and County benefits.

**Objective III:** By the end of the year, generate and analyze various Veterans' rosters (Blue Water, Camp Lejeune, 100 percent/Individual un-employability service-connected Veterans, and Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC)) recipients to ensure they are aware of all potential federal and State VA benefits.

**Goal III:** Continue to improve the Administrative Associate's job knowledge of federal and State VA benefits.

**Objective I:** Have the Administrative Associate engage in at least three professional development opportunities (NACVSO, WICVSO, WDVA, and NVLSP) to maintain National Accreditation and increase comprehension of VA benefits.

## 2021 Goals Continued

**Objective II:** By the end of the year, completed 20 compensation and 10 pension claims from beginning to end and if necessary guide the Veterans and/or Dependent through the VA's appeals process.

**Goal IV:** Actively engage in professional development opportunities necessary to enhance services for our Veterans and dependents.

**Objective I:** Participate in quarterly County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) meetings with Congressman Gallagher to remain current on best practices to further educate and assist our Veterans and dependents.

**Objective II:** Engage in professional development courses to improve competency of the VA appeals process in order to represent more Veterans and their dependents in Board of Veteran Appeals (BVA) hearings.

**Objective III:** Maintain Veteran Service Organization Accreditations by engaging in two National or State accreditation trainings that are offered throughout the year

**Our Impact:**

Our office tracked over \$1,009,775 in retroactive non-taxable cash payouts to Veterans and their dependents. Calumet County monthly compensation and pension benefits totaled \$541,500 with an annual total of \$6,498,000. Veterans and their dependents use these non-taxable payouts to pay taxes as well as purchase goods and services within Calumet County.

CVSO Measure of Efficiency in Delivering Federal DVA Benefits		
Calumet County Total CVSO Budget Investment	Projected 12 Month VA Compensation & Pension Payouts	Return on Investment
\$188,986 (.29% of Total County Expenditures)	\$6,498,000	3,338%

**Note:** The CVSO office budget investment consists of .29 percent of the total Calumet County expenditures for 2021.



## STATE BENEFITS

### WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

The office assists Veterans and dependents in applying for Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs provides benefits. Application for various benefits are received, adjudicated and awarded or denied based on eligibility requirements.

<u>Type of Benefit</u>	<u>Applied</u>	<u>Amount</u>
▪ Aid to Needy Veterans Grant	10	\$4,019.61
▪ WI Property Tax Credit	95	\$349,628.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$353,647.61</b>

In 2021 our office received an \$11,500 CVSO Grant from the WDVA. This money was used to enhance services to our Veterans.

In 2021 our office also received a \$228.36 Transportation Grant from the WDVA. This money was used to fund Veterans rides to medical appointments using the ADRC transportation program.

In 2021 the office received donations of \$1,600 from outside organizations and individuals to assist with the needs of our office and Calumet County Veterans.

## FEDERAL BENEFITS

### US DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Calumet County Veterans and their dependents have received a total disbursement of combined Federal VA benefits of \$15,911,000 for 2021.

<u>Type of Benefit</u>	<u>Amount</u>
▪ Compensation & Pension	\$5,692,000
▪ Readjustment & Vocational Rehabilitation	\$307,000
▪ Insurance & Indemnities	\$147,000
▪ VA Health Care	\$9,765,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,911,000</b>

## Feedback from those we have served

“Thank you for all your assistance and support with my claim. It was greatly appreciated.”  
-Paul & Marilyn

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“Thank you so much for all your help. It has made our lives so much easier!!” – Jerry & Jean

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“With most sincere thanks for making a Veterans dream come true!! From the bottom of our hearts thanks many times over!” -Ron & Mary

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“Thank you so very much for the assistance.” -Robert

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“Thank you so much for helping me with my mother. I was so frustrated with the automated process with the VA. We are grateful for all you have done.” –Marilyn

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“Thank you again for all your help and dedication with my claim.” Donald

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“Just saying thanks for all you’ve done for Paul, you never gave up. Words cannot express our gratitude for all you’ve done and your kindness.” –Paul & Sara

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“Thank you for all the help in clearing up medical billing issues with Calumet Hospital and their Medical Billing Department. I’m grateful for your ability to prevent me having to pay a bill I should never have received.” – Tom

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