**Veterans Affairs Committee Meeting Notes**

**Friday 20 April 2012**

*Jefferey Gordon took notes due to Gina Doty’s absence.*

**Action items on Bold**

Meeting called to order at 12:05

The notes from the last meeting were read- Jacqui Bergers’ committee would like to work with this committee to include us in the handbook.  People on this committee need to let Gina know they wish to participate with this soon. **Norm said he would contact Jacqui to find out what she needed from us.**Jeff Gordon gave Tom H. a paper on the “invisible veteran.” He will share it with the group. Tom reported on his efforts to get veterans together on his campus. Tom is having trouble getting veterans to come to any functions. He spent $300 on food and drink, and only 2 veterans showed up. Tom went to a consortium at Syracuse University where the Director of NYS Veterans affairs gave a talk on how veterans outreach. There were about 100 in attendance. They spoke about how to raise veteran’s awareness on campuses.

SUNY Alfred had a meeting at 7:00 on veterans day. Veterans were invited to read poetry and short stories of whatever they wanted. The campus President supported the event, and it was well attended- about 250. The success was attributed to creating an atmosphere that got them together for a common cause, where you chose the level of participation you were comfortable with.

Ed pointed out that we should make sure we are not creating a problem by trying to solve a problem. We should not force vets to come out and be visible if they do not feel like it.

Tom H. will investigate a way to get our committee to become members of the AFL-CIO Union veterans organization. The group feels like we need to belong to some professional organizations to have access to resources and speakers that we need to help us with our mission.

The group spent a lot of time talking about how we need to be more visible. We need to put forth resolutions that are relevant to our constituents. It was agreed that we need to put paper on the tables on Saturday morning. We need resolutions.
A list of bills in the house that deal with Veterans will be sent out before our next meeting. We should read the bills over and make resolutions in support of them.
An example of bills in the house:

1 . Tinnitus Research and Treatment Act of 2012 (Introduced in House - IH)[H.R.4327.IH][PDF]
2 . Protecting the Health Care of Veterans Act of 2012 (Introduced in Senate - IS)[[S.2128.IS](http://S.2128.IS" \t "_blank)][PDF]
3 . Quality Housing for Veterans Act (Introduced in House - IH)[H.R.4299.IH][PDF]
4 . Veterans Co-Pay Fairness Act (Introduced in House - IH)[H.R.4245.IH][PDF]
5 . To amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the definition of homeless veteran for purposes of benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. (Introduced in House - IH)[H.R.4287.IH][PDF]
6 . Help Veterans Return to Work Act (Introduced in House - IH)[H.R.3860.IH][PDF]
7 . Veterans Gardens Employment and Opportunity Act (Introduced in House - IH)[H.R.3905.IH][PDF]
8 . Recognizing Excellence in Veterans Education Act of 2012 (Introduced in House - IH)[H.R.4052.IH][PDF]
9 . Protect VA Healthcare Act of 2012 (Introduced in House - IH)[H.R.3895.IH][PDF]
10 . Commercial Drivers Licenses for Veterans Act (Introduced in House - IH)[H.R.4288.IH][PDF]

It was agreed that we need to get noticed, the more resolutions we put forward, the more respect we will get. Most were in agreement that we did not appreciate the way our last resolution was dissected.  The group discussed the way we should go about putting forth resolutions. We should get them through Phil to have him give us a feeling of how it might be received by the Executive board, and ask for his advice.

As we were talking, Louis S. came up with a great resolution. He read it to the group and we all agreed he had something we could all get behind. He asked us if we would help him craft it by sending it out as an attachment to an email and have everyone comment.

We discussed that we should start looking at attending conferences once we become members of a professional organization. Many other committees have budgets to go places, and we should be no different. Someone mentioned a goal of attending the memorial in Pearl Harbor.
The group adjourned at 1:30 as people due to the next meeting were coming in.