

QNS Op-ed | The Wall That Heals: A tribute to healing, unity and reflection



By James Hendon, Commissioner, Department of Veterans' Services

Posted on [September 21, 2023](#)

Earlier this year, March 29, 2023, marked the 50th anniversary of the end of U.S. combat operations in Vietnam. A commemorative act that provided all Americans with an opportunity to reflect on the lasting impact of this pivotal moment in history.

For many Vietnam veterans, the scars and memories of that time remain ever-present. However, littered amidst these memories, another opportunity presents itself as a beacon of healing and remembrance in the form of "[The Wall That Heals](#)." The Wall That Heals will be in [Flushing Meadows Corona Park](#) from Sept. 28 to Oct. 1. This traveling replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial serves as a powerful symbol of tribute and reconciliation for those who answered the call, choosing to don the uniform in a time of war and defend this nation. For those Veterans who may not have had the opportunity to visit the original memorial in Washington, D.C., having The Wall That Heals in their own city provides an invaluable chance to heal and find solace. It offers a sacred space where they can honor their fallen comrades, reconnect with their own experiences and share their stories with others who can truly understand.

However, the impact of The Wall That Heals extends far beyond the Veteran community. This exhibit holds immense importance to all members of the body

public, as it provides a glimpse into one of the more challenging conflicts in our nation's history—from the Sailor, Soldier, Marine and Airman to the supporter to the anti-war activist—the impact of the Vietnam War remains key to unraveling the complex relationships between the military and the community at-large. [\[READ MORE...\]](#)

The Wall That Heals Visit to NYC

 September 28th - October 1st

 Flushing Meadows Corona Park

131-04 Meridian Road, Queens, NY 11368

(The field on the southwest side of the World Ice Arena)

Learn more about The Wall That Heals and plan your trip at nyc.gov/vetwall.

[Join The Wall That Heals Motorcycle Escort](#)

[Volunteer Registration Form for The Wall That Heals](#)

[Read More About The Wall That Heals](#)

NYC Boss Up Veterans Entrepreneurship Program



The **NYC Boss Up Veteran Entrepreneurship Program** focuses on veteran entrepreneurs living in New York City. SBS will provide the program's technical training components and all applicants will be provided with information about SBS's free business support services. SBS will provide the education, training, support, and mentorship necessary for professional growth and long-term success through its FastTrac® GrowthVenture™ for Veterans. This course helps veterans apply skills they developed in the military to grow a successful and profitable business.

The **NYC Boss Up Veteran Entrepreneurship Program** will provide seven to 10 veteran entrepreneurs each with a grant of \$20,000 and enrollment in SBS's small business mentorship program to help build and grow their businesses. Applicants must apply to the program through the [online portal](#) by **11:00pm on October 6th, 2023**. Applicants must be a military veteran and a current small business owner.

Eligible applicants will be reviewed in three rounds, culminating in a pitch and panel interview featuring SBS Commissioner Kim, DVS Commissioner Hendon, veterans, and stakeholders in the philanthropic and veteran communities. A virtual information session will be held on **Friday, September 22, 11 am – 12 pm**. Interested applicants can [register on Eventbrite](#).

[NYC Boss Up](#) is a philanthropic program committed to encouraging excellence in entrepreneurship across New York City. The Ron and Kerry Moelis Family Foundation committed \$200,000 to support the veterans' cohort, which follows the successful NYC Boss Up Entrepreneurship Program partnership with the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) that provides \$1 million in grants over five years to budding entrepreneurs living in NYCHA residences.

The NYC Boss Up Veteran Entrepreneurship Program builds on the successful recovery of the New York City economy in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. By connecting military veteran entrepreneurs with grants and access to the world-class FastTrac® mentorship program, NYC Boss Up will prepare selected business owners to take their enterprises to the next level.

**NYC Boss Up Veteran Entrepreneurship Program Information Session
Registration**

NYC Boss Up Veteran Entrepreneurship Program Application

Blue Star Welcome Week



Every year, approximately 600,000 military-connected families—or roughly 33% of the All-Volunteer Force—relocate. Most of these families move to new duty stations, while some transition out of the military and others transition in. And most of these moves take place during the summer. While more than 70% of military families live off base in their local civilian communities, according to Blue Star Families' 2022 Military Family Lifestyle Survey, only 33% of military family respondents reported they felt a sense of belonging in their local community.

That's why we're declaring September 23rd through October 1st Blue Star Welcome Week! This exciting week is an opportunity for our community to welcome our military-connected families and show them our appreciation for their service. Throughout the week, **Blue Star Families** will help ease their transition through events, messages and actions of welcome, and opportunities to make meaningful connections. Learn more about how you can participate in Blue Star Welcome Week at bluestarwelcomeweek.org.



Industry City Family Day - October 1st

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

You and your family are invited to enjoy the afternoon out at Industry City which is a one-stop destination of experiences, eateries, shopping and everything in between.

Join Blue Star Families for a special afternoon at Industry City Courtyard 1/2 during Blue Star Welcome Week. They'll provide the fun and entertainment — all you need to bring is your family!

This event is the perfect opportunity to meet other military families in the New York Tri-State area. You can listen to folk music by Michael Daves and other special guests, enjoy the outdoor lawn games, play arcade games courtesy of The Frying Pan, enjoy some Hometown BBQ and ice cream from Ample Hills. Come make memories that will last a lifetime. Whether you're a seasoned military family or brand new to the community, you're sure to feel welcome and included.

[View more Blue Star Welcome Week Events](#)

VETERAN NEWS

Missing F-35 stealth jet presumed to have crashed was seen 'almost going inverted' before disaster: witness



By [Isabel Keane](#), New York Post

Published Sep. 21, 2023, 9:16 a.m. ET

The [missing F-35 stealth jet](#) presumed to have crashed in South Carolina over the weekend was spotted “almost going inverted” as it flew about 100 feet above the treetops just before the disaster, according to a witness.

Adrian and Stephen Truluck were celebrating their son’s 7th birthday at their Williamsburg County, South Carolina, home on Sunday when they spotted a low-flying aircraft — before hearing a “boom” sound.

“Our kids always give a little salute, so we said, ‘Look at the plane. Oh my gosh, it’s so low,’” [Adrian told NBC News](#). “And it was kind of probably 100 feet above the treetops, and almost going inverted.”

“It was probably three-quarters of the way,” her husband Stephen added, noting that they could “see the canopy” of the jet.

Soon after witnessing the jet, they recalled hearing a “boom sound,” which they said at the time they chalked up to stormy weather.

The couple said they didn’t think much of the low-flying plane, as Shaw Air Force Base is about 60 miles from their home.

Only the next day when they learned that a debris field was discovered mere miles from their home did they realize they had seen the missing jet, likely moments before it crashed.

“We were thinking it was rolling thunder in the distance and didn’t give it another thought until we saw the plane was missing,” Adrian said, “and we were like, ‘That had to be the plane.’” [\[READ MORE...\]](#)

More Veteran-related Headlines

CBS News (Video): [Exclusive: Pentagon to review cases of LGBTQ+ veterans denied honorable discharges under "don't ask, don't tell"](#)

VA | News: [VA awards \\$52.5 million in Veteran suicide prevention grants, announces key updates in the fight to end Veteran suicide](#)

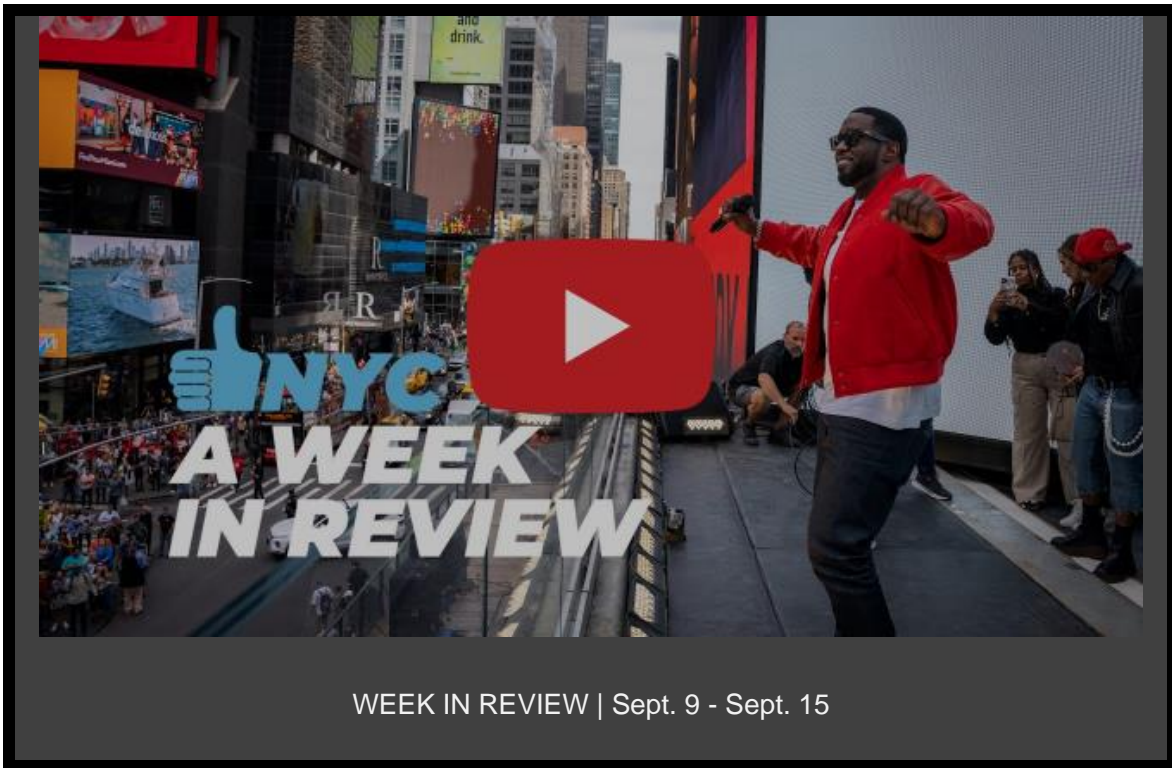
NBC News: [Their babies died when Camp Lejeune's water was poisoned. But justice has been hard to find](#)

Military.com: [You Can Now Own Air Force Vet Bob Ross' First Original Work from 'The Joy of Painting'](#)

A Message From Mayor Adams:

Each week DVS shares a brief update about how our administration is getting stuff done for New Yorkers.

We've managed this city through crisis after crisis, and we continue to innovate and excel in delivering goods and services to New Yorkers who are counting on us. Here at NYC DVS, we are constantly working to reach more members of the New York City Veteran community. Last year, we successfully reached more of our veterans than ever—this was part of a concerted effort to meet our Veterans where they are as evident by initiatives like the upcoming visit of The Wall That Heals—a traveling replica of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. meant to honor our New York City Vietnam Veteran community.



The Adams administration is dedicated to cutting through the noise and delivering information directly to you and all New Yorkers.

Sign up to "Hear From Eric" and get direct messages from City Hall, tailored to your interests and neighborhood, sent directly to your inbox – at [nyc.gov/hearfromeric!](https://nyc.gov/hearfromeric)

[Mayor Adams Launches Historic Effort to Build "A Little More Housing in Every Neighborhood"](#)

[Mayor Adams, Hertz Announce Partnership to Create Green Jobs, Provide Workforce Training, Electrify Vehicles](#)

[Mayor Adams, Sanitation Commissioner Tisch Announce Next Phase of War on Rats: All Businesses Must Place Trash in Containers](#)

Honoring Veteran Community Changemakers



The DVS Veteran Community Changemaker Series is our way of highlighting Veterans, spouses/caregivers, civilian volunteers, and other practitioners who actively support the NYC Veteran community. Each month DVS will honor two New York City Veteran champions with a Certificate and feature in this newsletter and on social media.

This month's Veteran Changemaker Honorees are **Mercedes Elias** and **Wilfred L. Cotto**. **Mercedes Elias** served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 2007 to 2016, completing a combat tour in Afghanistan in 2011. Afterwards, she quickly found her place in finance, becoming CEO of AmeriVet Securities—a service disabled, Veteran-owned broker-dealer on Wall Street. In 2020 she was appointed by the Mayor to serve a 3-year term on the Veteran Advisory Board. **Wilfred L. Cotto** served in the Navy from 1977 to 2005 completing multiple deployments in support of Operations **DESERT SHIELD**, **DESERT STORM**, **ENDURING FREEDOM**, and **IRAQI FREEDOM**. Currently he serves as the Manager of Borough of Manhattan Community College's (BMCC) Veterans Resource

Center coordinating outreach, recruitment and retention efforts, programs and services for the college's student Veterans population.

We thank them for all the work they've done and continue to do for our Veterans!



We are looking to highlight Veterans in the arts community! Whether it's an upcoming free exhibition, performance, or piece/installation you've created, we want to showcase your work and help spread the word. Submissions will be reviewed on a rolling basis and promoted at our discretion. We want this to be a space for Veteran artists to express themselves in an authentic way.

Please email submissions to connect@veterans.nyc.gov with a brief bio, an artist statement, art medium, and your affiliation to the Veteran community.

Join Our Team! Be Part of the Mission!



Current DVS Job Openings

Being part of our team is a great way to continue to serve.

[Visit NYC.gov/jobs](https://www.nyc.gov/jobs) and select “Veterans’ Services” from the agency menu to learn more [about and apply to the job below.](#)

College Aide - IT Operations - DVS seeks a College Aide hire to play a key role in the agency’s Information Technology team, while gaining IT experience during their college experience.

College Aide - HR Specialist - DVS seeks a College Aide hire to play a key role in the agency's HR team, while gaining HR experience during their college experience.

Community Outreach Assistant - The Community Outreach Assistant will help the Department of Veteran Services engage the roughly 210,000 Veterans and their families who reside throughout the five boroughs of New York City. This position will help the Assistant Commissioner of Outreach engage and educate the Veteran community about information and resources, develop and manage outreach programs, represent the agency at outreach events, and plan public events.

Network Engineer - The Network Engineer will play a key role for DVS Information Technology (IT) Team and report directly to the Chief Information Officer. This position will support and develop the agency’s core business applications while providing secured network connectivity, asset management, and technical support for a highly mobile team.

Senior Veterans Benefits Advisor - DVS seeks a highly qualified candidate to join the Client Services team as a Senior Veterans Benefits Advisor. The Senior Veterans Benefits Advisor will be responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of a team responsible for processing Veteran's claims with the VA. This role will be a subject matter expert in processing VA claims for Veteran benefits and train up staff as well as provide guidance and advice in this area. VA accreditation to process claims will be provided by New York State Department of Veterans Services.

VA Work Study Positions at DVS

The NYC Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) supports VA Work-Study Positions! Here is a current list of available VA Work-Study openings:

- [Administrative Intern](#)
- [Benefit Intern](#)
- [Care Coordination Intern](#)
- [Data Analyst Intern](#)
- [Information Technology Intern](#)
- [IT Support Intern](#)
- [Legal Intern](#)
- [Outreach Coordinator Intern](#)
- [Veteran Business Promotion Intern](#)

If you are interested in applying for a DVS-specific Work-Study position and meet eligibility requirements, please submit the following to VAWorkStudy@veterans.nyc.gov:

- Resume
- Job Specific Cover Letter
- Supporting Documents found in the Job Description

[Check Here for VA Work-Study Postings](#)

NYC Civil Service Job Openings and Exams



Open Competitive Exams

Addiction Counselor (NYC Health + Hospitals) - Addiction Counselors (NYC H+H), under supervision, with latitude for the exercise of initiative and judgment, participate in the development and implementation of clinically sound, culturally relevant, and medically monitored treatment programs, case management, care coordination and other supportive and consultative services for patients in Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment (e.g., medicated assisted treatment (MAT), ancillary withdrawal, etc.) and promote the notion of recovery and self-sufficiency, as a goal of treatment. To read more, visit the posting [here!](#)

Mechanical Engineer - Mechanical Engineers, under general supervision, perform responsible supervisory work, or difficult and responsible work in mechanical engineering. To read more, visit the posting [here!](#)

School Safety Agent - School Safety Agents patrol designated areas of school buildings and surrounding areas; identify and prevent infiltration of unlawful or prohibited items through scanning; give routine information to visitors and direct them to the proper personnel and offices; request identification of, and remove from the premises, any unauthorized persons and more. To read more, visit the posting [here!](#)

To view more job listings, visit the exam board [here!](#)

To receive monthly updates on upcoming civil service exams click the button below to be directed to the Subscribe to the DCAS Newsletter page. On the registration form, select "City Jobs and Civil Service Announcements".

[Subscribe to the DCAS Newsletter Here](#)

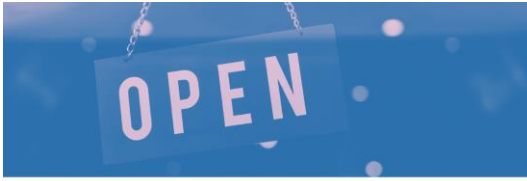
Programs and Initiatives

Affordable Housing For Veterans



The [NYC Department of Veterans' Services \(DVS\)](#) maintains a list of federal, state, and city programs that offers a limited, but selective list of affordable housing options for veterans seeking financial relief for their housing arrangements. Visit our [Affordable Housing for Veterans](#) page to learn more.

Empowering Veteran Business Owners



The primary mission of the [VBLA](#) is to serve Veterans seeking support and assistance with running a business and in their pursuit of New York City Government contracting opportunities. Our leadership association engages with the private sector, government, advisory board, and local partners to build a consortium that facilitates the growth and development of Veteran Businesses.

VetBizNYC: Supporting Veteran Entrepreneurship

DVS has launched [VetBizNYC](#), an interactive map that identifies Veteran-owned businesses across the five boroughs. New Yorkers can use our interactive map to find and support Veteran-owned businesses in their community.



Are You Getting the Benefits You Deserve?

The [NYC Department of Veterans' Services \(DVS\)](#) represents NYC Veterans in claims for benefits from the [U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs](#). Our team is also qualified to assist with PACT Act related claims. If you had a toxic exposure during your service, time is crucial for you to get the benefits you deserve. To file a claim, fill out the [VetConnectNYC.org](#) form and select **Benefits Navigation** as your preferred service.



VetConnectPro: A First-in-the-Nation Employment Tool



[VetConnectPro](#), is a new employment tool designed to help Veterans find employment within NYC government. The platform features a military skills translator that can match your service experience and Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) to City jobs and civil service exams. Upload your resume and get started today: nyc.gov/vetconnectpro.

Newsletter Sign-up

If you received this newsletter by way of a friend or colleague and have yet to sign-up on your own, click [here](#), and stay up-to-date with the latest news impacting the community, updates on city services, info on DVS programs, Veteran-specific resources & more.

Contact Us

- Complete a service request form at vetconnectnyc.org
- [Message the Commissioner](#)
- [Partner with DVS](#)
- [Press Inquiries](#)
- [Event Request Form](#)

Stay tuned on our website www.nyc.gov/vets and social media platforms [@nycveterans](#), or via email at connect@veterans.nyc.gov.