



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: February 8, 2016

Contact: Evangeline Conley, Public Affairs Officer
Phone: (716) 862-8753 office, (716) 512-9338 cell
E-mail: Evangeline.Conley@va.gov

National Salute to Veteran Patients
VA Western New York Healthcare System Open House

During Valentine's Week many of us think about those who have personally touched our lives in a special way. At VA we show our admiration, respect and honor Veterans with our National Salute to Veteran Patients. The Salute offers VA's and communities across the nation the opportunity to partner together to honor Veterans with special visits, cards and mementos during their hospitalized stay or outpatient visit.

VA Western New York Healthcare System invites local celebrities and community leaders to visit with Veterans at the Buffalo site, 3495 Bailey Avenue, on **Friday, February 12**. Introductions and welcome of local celebrities, civic officials and group leaders will take place in Freedom Hall, Room 301 at 1 p.m.

During this year of VA Voluntary Service's 70th Anniversary, we'll be kicking off the week's festivities on **Tuesday, February 9** with a performance by The Orleans Niagara BOCE's North Tonawanda High School Bell Choir, who will perform at 10 a.m. in Freedom Hall for Veterans, employees and the public.

For the thirty-eighth consecutive year, the nationally syndicated column started by Ann Landers, now called "Annie's Mailbox" has devoted a column to the National Salute, asking readers to send Valentine cards and letters to hospitalized Veterans at VA medical centers. "Valentine cards made by local school children will be displayed and given to our Veterans," said VA Medical Center Director Brian G. Stiller. "The messages in these cards are symbolic of the community's heartfelt affection for our Veterans," said Stiller.

Director Stiller wants Veterans to know we are here to serve their health care needs, and encourages Veterans to stop in to the Veterans Service Center to enroll in VA health care. Additionally, the public can learn about volunteer opportunities by calling 761-862-8671. "Our medical center's volunteers are an essential component of our health care team. The National Salute is a great way for everyone to learn more about helping the Veterans we serve, and how Veterans can access VA health care, which meets the Affordable Care Act." Stiller said.

#