

2020 Annual Report

# Brown County Veterans Service Office

“Connecting Veterans With Their Benefits”



Joseph G. Aulik, Director  
JOE.AULIK@BROWNCOUNTYWI.GOV  
(920) 448-4450

# Table of Contents

Brown County Veterans Service Office (CVSO) Staff & Accreditation.....	Page 2
Brown County Veterans Service Office Mission Statement & Vision.....	Page 3
County Veterans Service Office (CVSO) History.....	Page 3
Serving Those Who Served: Why We Do What We Do.....	Page 4
Brown County CVSO Impact.....	Page 5
State and Federal Veteran Affairs Benefits.....	Page 6
Economic Impact Study.....	Page 7
Veteran Testimonials.....	Page 8

**Veterans Service Director:**

Joseph G. Aulik- Accredited with National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO), Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), American Legion (AL), Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs (WDVA), American Veterans (AMVETS), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), and The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA)..

**Senior Benefit Specialist:**

Matthew Franklin - Accredited with NACVSO, VFW, AL, and WDVA.

**Veterans Benefit Specialist(s):**

Krina Christensen - Accredited with AL and WDVA.

Nathan Thomas - Accredited with NACVSO, AL, WDVA.

**Veteran Benefit Specialist/ Administrative Assistant:**

Mike Keon – Accredited with NACVSO, AL, and WDVA.

Gail Nohr – Accredited with NACVSO, AL, and WDVA (Volunteer funded by the WISE Women’s Program)

**Accreditations:**

The Veteran Administration (VA) accreditation is for the sole purpose of providing representation services to claimants. Yearly training and education requirements are required by the VA 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 and allows the staff to file claims and appeals up to the Board of Veterans Appeals in Washington D.C.

- Formal Studies prove veterans receive 50% more benefits and larger awards by using professional veterans service representation (i.e., Brown County Department of Veterans Services) than if he or she file independently or with a non-professional.



## Brown County Veteran Service Office Mission Statement:

“We believe in strengthening the lives of our veterans and their families by connecting them with their earned benefits.”

## Our Vision:

“Improving the quality of life for Brown County Veterans and their dependents through assessing all available 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.



**Why we do what we do:** Pure numbers cannot quantify the value of what Brown County Veterans Service Office does, although we do bring a great deal of additional federal funding to the county every year. There is a real, human value, to the service we provide, which is seen and felt by the Brown County veterans and families we help. **Behind the numbers are real lives that have sacrificed mentally and physically to serve their country.**

This is just one of the many stories:

#### **Disabled Veterans Unable to Work, Isolated and Suicidal**

Veteran was suffering from his service-connected conditions he incurred while serving in combat in Afghanistan. He was injured by a roadside explosion and had 15 screws inserted into each ankle. Several soldiers died in the explosion and several others are double amputees. He is the only soldier from the explosion that did not lose both legs. This veteran was isolated and suffering from PTSD. His mother finally convinced him to allow her to bring him to our office. We immediately entered him into counseling at the Green Bay Vet Center and filed a claim for 100% service-connection for his injuries. After navigating the VA Compensation process and staying in touch with him and his mother, every step of the way, he was awarded 100% for his injuries and received a \$9,000 retroactive payment and will receive \$3,100 per month and a myriad of other benefits. All VA payment are tax free. This has opened the door for him to receive the WI Veterans Property Tax refund, and FREE healthcare and college education for his future spouse and children. These benefits alone can reach into the thousands of dollars. The veteran will now apply for Social Security Disability and use the VA documentation to win his claim. He will receive this payment in addition to his VA payment. This will allow him to now focus on stabilizing his health and quality of life. Without our direction this veteran would not have received this benefit.



**Our Impact:**

Brown County veterans and their dependents have received a total disbursement of Federal VA benefits of \$114.3 million in 2020, this is an increase of \$10 million over 2019.

Furthermore, our office tracked over \$4 million in retroactive non-taxable cash payouts in 2020 to veterans and their dependents. This is an increase of \$2 million over 2019. Veterans and their dependents use these non-taxable payouts to pay taxes and purchase goods and services within Brown County.

CVSO Measure of Efficiency in Delivering Federal VA Benefits		
Brown County Total CVSO Budget Investment	Projected Twelve Month VA Benefits Payout	Return on Investment
\$401,000	\$10,000,000	2,393%



## 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>Amount</u>
▪ Aid to Needy Veterans Grant	\$5,650
▪ WI Property Tax Credit	<u>\$1,303,061</u>
<b>Total State Benefits</b>	<b>\$1,308,711</b>

In 2017 our office received a \$13,000 CVS0 Grant from the WDVA. This money was used to enhance services to our veterans.

## FEDERAL BENEFITS US DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

<u>Type of Benefit</u>	<u>Amount</u>
▪ Compensation & Pension	\$57,461,000
▪ Education & Vocational Rehabilitation	\$5,893,000
▪ Insurance & Indemnities	\$997,000
▪ Grave Markers & Flags	\$129,000
▪ VA Health Care	\$49,972,000
▪ Federal VA Home Loans (400 Loans)	<u>\$84,518,129</u>
<b>Total Federal Benefits</b>	<b>\$198,970,129</b>
<b>Total of Federal and State Combined Benefits (Increase of \$17.7 million over 2019)</b>	<b>\$200,278,840</b>



The University of Wisconsin-Madison office performed an analysis of the economic impact Veterans Administration expenditures had on the economy of Brown County for 2019. UW-Madison used the following economic metrics (e.g., jobs, labor income, etc.) and nature of the multipliers (direct, indirect, induced and total) to determine totals. The impacts are summarized as follows:

### Brown County VA 2019 Impact

Impact	Employment	Labor Income	Total Income	Industry Sales
Direct Effect	269	\$57,460,700	\$50,460,700	\$114,322,900
Indirect Effect	83	\$4,380,900	\$6,494,600	\$12,407,200
Induced Effect	<u>651</u>	<u>\$30,395,300</u>	<u>\$53,045,400</u>	<u>\$92,371,600</u>
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>\$90,236,900</b>	<b>\$117,000,700</b>	<b>\$219,101,700</b>

State & Local Government Revenues: **\$7,245,500**

**TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT: \$433,584,800.00**

- Employment: Jobs, *not* full-time equivalent
- Labor Income: Wages, salaries, proprietor income
- Total Income: Labor income plus all other sources of income (e.g., social security, pensions, etc)
- Industry Sales: Industry revenues
- Direct effect: VA spending
- Indirect effect: Multiplier effect from business to business expenditures
- Induced effect: People (labor) spending income.
- Total effect: Direct plus Indirect plus Induced

## Feedback from those we have Served

**Our passion is driven from the feedback we received from those we serve because what we do not only improves the quality of life for the veteran but their families and those affects are felt for many generations. Following are just a few testimonials we received this year:**

“I can't thank the two of you enough for your hard work and diligence in representing my disability claims case with the VA. The last couple of years have been difficult for me as it felt like my life was falling apart and I didn't know what was happening. When I started seeing a therapist at the Vet Center, she eventually told me that I had PTSD and it was largely related to dealing with large organizations. I share this because without you fighting for me there is no chance this would have happened. The result is better than I could have imagined and I'm incredibly grateful for the work you do.” John

---

“It was so nice working with you and your staff on our mother's Survivor Pension with the VA. We really appreciate all the work that you did on getting her the benefits that her husband earned for her by serving in the military in World War II. When the VA wanted more documents after that, you worked at getting in touch with the VA to help them figure out that they had all the documents they needed to decide the claim. We can't say enough how thankful we are to you and your staff for the diligent work at getting our mother the help she needs in her twilight years. The payments are one less thing we need to worry about. You are doing a wonderful job at helping our veterans and their loved ones in their time of need.” Rick and Susan

---

“I can't even begin to explain how grateful I am to you for helping my son. This is all bittersweet. I'm happy for him that he is finally receiving the assistance that he desperately needed but yet sad because it's difficult for me to come to terms that my son will never again experience the self-worth that comes with being employed due to his disabilities he incurred while serving his country. So again; thank you so much! I couldn't have achieved the VA hurdles thus far without your dedication and commitment to helping my veteran!” Rebecca

---