

STAND DOWN 2025 After-Action Report

May 16-17, 2025

OVERVIEW

STAND DOWN (SD) 2025 was a collaborative event led by the Tallahassee Veteran Organization (TVO) and various community social, health and human service organizations, which was held on May 16 - 17, 2025, at the Florida A&M University, Alfred B. Lawson Multi-Purpose Center, at 1800 Althea Gibson (Wahnish) Way, Tallahassee, FL 32310. Two hundred and seventy (270) Veterans received a multitude of services. Spouses, Gold Star Mothers and Caregivers were invited to attend. Thirty nine (39) agencies/organizations partners provided a full range of services with more than 1,400 interactions between the participating partners and Veterans. These services include financial guidance and support; housing; medical, mental health, dental and other health related needs, personal hygiene, and legal aid, etc.

EVENT

Registration (Veterans/Vendors/Volunteers)– Pre-Registration for Veterans wishing to attend SD 2025 was conducted online and most of those participating Veterans registered in-person. Volunteer registration was completed online using Bookwhen. website. Pre-registered veteran applications were forwarded to VA Enrollment and Eligibility for pre-screening; assisting with expediting some of the participants registration although most registered in-person. Volunteer registration was completed online using the Bookwhen website. Vendors were registered throughout the planning process. Pre-registered veteran applications were forwarded to VA Enrollment and Eligibility for pre-screening ; assisting with expediting some of the participants registration during the two-day event

Transportation –Metro, the City of Tallahassee provided fare free services to Veterans and their families to ride on regular fixed buses to and from the Stand Down at the Al Lawson Center..

Medical – Medical related services were provided by Neighborhood Medical Center, FSU School of Nursing, Keiser University School of Nursing , Palmer College of Chiropractic College and Magnolia Wellness Center. Neighborhood Medical Center committed their mobile unit to be on site for Friday, May 16, 2025.

Dental - Dental care/services were provided off- site at the First Baptist Church of Tallahassee, FL. The First Baptist Convention dental unit, staffed by volunteer dentists, dental assistants and hygienists partnered with volunteers from the First Baptist Church of Tallahassee to provide dental care/services to the residents of the Tallahassee community and graciously included serving our Veterans .

Food – All parties enjoyed the delicious meals prepared for the Veterans, vendors and volunteers. The culinary delights were very much appreciated at both breakfast and lunch meals that were served on both days. Meals were prepared by Fryson's Kitchen, Lindy's Fried Chicken and Sonny's Barbecue Restaurant and complimented by Krispy Kreme donuts, Wing Stop, Community Coffee

and Blue Bell Ice Cream. Food contracts were established with Sonny's Barbecue, Fryson Kitchen and Catering and Lindy's Chicken. Food related donations were made by Blue Bell Ice Cream, Sam's Club, Community Coffee, Wing Stop, Labor Ready.

Services (Veterinary/Barber/Chiropractic Massages) Veterinary services including annual shots, medications and preventative care were provided by Northwood Animal Hospital. Barber services were provided by Lively Barber School to 39 veterans Palmer College of Chiropractic provided chiropractic evaluations and treatments including soft tissue and mechanical massages for 76 veterans.

HUD VASH/Housing-

Second Harvest of the Big Bend- Three hundred Individual pre-packed non-perishable meal items were distributed during SD 25.

Employment-

Leon County Veterans Services (Claims/Benefits)-

Bicycles – Veterans whose name was selected from a drawing received one of the 15 refurbished bicycles, helmets and u-locks.

Legal/Court – Legal Services of North Florida provided legal services to 48 Veterans.

Photographer – Maria Renzulli provided candid photographs of the many Veterans, providers and volunteers during this two-day event. Photos of SD 2025 are available for viewing on the TVO website at: tallahasseeveteranorganization.org.

Sponsorships/Monetary Donations - This endeavor was made possible because of our sponsors (both financial and in-kind donations) whose services and tangibles supported the efforts of TVO to host SD 2025. Tallahassee Ford and COMCAST signed up as new sponsors for the event, with COMCAST providing both money and donation of bags that were used by Veterans to carry items they picked up at the event. We are thankful to them for their ongoing support in honoring our Veterans. We are thankful to them for their ongoing support in honoring our Veterans. Leon County, City of Tallahassee and Tallahassee State College are the Gold Star sponsors.

Sponsors/Providers –

1. US Veterans Administration
2. Leon County Government
3. City of Tallahassee
4. Florida A&M University
5. Tallahassee State College
6. WellCare
7. BPOE Elks
8. Tallahassee Ford

9. COMCAST
10. Cumulus Radio
11. Wave 94.1
12. Palmer Chiropractic College
13. Northwood Veterinary Hospital
14. Second Harvest of the Big Bend
15. Community Coffee
16. Blue Bell Ice Cream
17. Action Labor & Staffing
18. First Baptist Convention Dental Bus

Opening Ceremony – Began at 12:30 p.m. on Friday, May 16, 2025, at the FAMU Lawson Center. Dr. & LTC (Retired) Ray Mobley served as the Master of Ceremony.

All of our local elected officials and the three University Presidents (FAMU, FSU and TSC) were extended an invitation to attend the Opening Ceremony. The Leon County High School Jr. NROTC detail under the direction of Gunnery Sergeant Anthony Reeves provided the Color Guard; SFC (Retired) Terrence Milton prayed the invocation; SFC (retired) Dale Landry led the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance; and Ms. Natalie Word sang the National Anthem. COL (retired) Washington Sanchez Jr., extended a Welcome/greetings. Speaking officials were the Leon County Commissioner Carmen Cummings, and John Dailey, Mayor of the City of Tallahassee.

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Donna Carroll Barron
2025 Director

COL Washington J. Sanchez, Jr. USA (Ret)
SD 2025 Assistant Director

Event Coordinator, Dale Landry