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#### **I. PROGRAMS: *Overview***

- A. In accordance with the AVVA Mission and Purpose, National AVVA operates a number of programs that are designed to render assistance to Vietnam Era Veterans, Veterans of other eras, the families of those Veterans and the communities in which they reside. Programs may be added as the need arises. Likewise, programs may be discontinued if it is felt that they are no longer effective.
- B. National AVVA recognizes that groups associated with VVA Chapters, incorporated AVVA Chapters, and AVVA State Associations may have programs applicable to their level of the organization, that are designed to meet the needs of their local area.
- C. AVVA members also actively participate in supporting VVA programs to fulfill our purpose of working in conjunction with VVA and to give them assistance.
- D. Programs may be added, modified, or cut based on new developments, evaluation of feasibility and usage, or other criteria as the National Board of Directors deems to be necessary.
- E. Please refer to the Policy and Procedure Manual, Section 11 for details of the AVVA programs, how they work, and how people or circumstances qualify.**

#### **II. PROGRAMS: *Current Programs***

##### **A. AVVA HELPING HANDS GRANT**

- 1. The Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. (AVVA), as part of its ongoing service to Veterans and their families, offers funding in the form of grants to projects that specifically help Veterans and their families, the homeless, or other qualifying projects in America, as determined by the AVVA National Board of Directors.
- 2. These grants are up to \$1,000 per project.
- 3. The project must be sponsored, supported, or endorsed by the AVVA National Board of Directors, State Councils and chapters of Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc., and/or state or chapter subsidiaries of Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.
- 4. Priority is given to matching funds projects.
- 5. AVVA provides funding solely for scientific, charitable, and educational purposes.



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6. Grants are scheduled for a one (1) year period and are considered for one (1) time, or start-up projects.
7. The one (1) year period shall begin at the time of grant acceptance.
8. Applications may be received at any time. The instructions and form for applying for this grant are available in the Forms section of the Policy and Procedures Manual, F-PROG08.01.

#### **B. (AVVA) VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America)**

1. AVVA Recognizes that VA Clinic hours are already being counted, and that procedure remains intact. The VISTA program is designed to encompass those countless hours *not* recognized or counted by the VVA's Veterans Administration Volunteer Services (VAVS).
2. The Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America give innumerable hours of service to our veterans and our communities. In an effort to capture the totals and recognize those who have committed their time to AVVA's service, we have created the *VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE TO AMERICA (AVVA VISTA)* Program.

#### **C. CONDOLENCE PROGRAM**

1. This program is conducted by the AVVA National Chaplain or, if no National Chaplain is in place, the individual Regional Directors.
2. The VVA National Chaplain forwards to AVVA the information regarding any AVVA or VVA member who has passed away as they receive it from other members, from family members, or other sources.
3. The AVVA National Chaplain or the appropriate Regional Director sends a sympathy card, under the name of the Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America and Vietnam Veterans of America, to the best-known family member who survives the deceased member, as soon as he or she is able to do so.
4. This program is intended to ensure that, to the best of our ability, our members will be comforted in the knowledge that AVVA knows and cares about some of the difficulties that they face in their daily lives.



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##### **D. LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY**

1. Learning how to advocate for legislation that will improve the life of Veterans and their families is an important part of AVVA's work.
2. Much can be accomplished with pen and paper and/or a computer when one knows how to conduct the research, write well-stated and meaningful letters to legislators, and how to communicate with others.

##### **E. PAPER SAFES**

1. The AVVA Paper Safe is a document that provides a venue for a Veteran to record personal information, information about his or her service to America, investments and their location, where important documents are filed, last wishes, and more.
2. This is a valuable tool for any family members who may be called upon to care for a loved one who has become ill and unable to conduct their own business affairs, or in the event the loved one passes on.

##### **F. PROJECT FRIENDSHIP**

1. Each year when AVVA meets, either for its National Convention or Leadership Conference, members come together to assist another non-profit organization.
2. It is common for Project Friendship to benefit a charity in the local area of the meeting, as well as a National Charity that works either with Veterans, Homeless, the wounded, or those who have lost a loved one in service to America.
3. AVVA feels it is important that as a non-profit organization, we in turn reach out to help other organizations whose mission touches on the Mission and Purpose of AVVA.
4. Project Friendship is announced annually and is the choice of the National President with approval of the National Board.

##### **G. SECONDARY PTSD**

1. The Secondary PTSD Program is designed and intended for the spouses and families of the Veterans who may return home a changed person; one that his/her family does not recognize. It is envisioned to bring awareness to the existence of secondary PTSD and to recognize the symptoms associated with PTSD, and hope for recovery.



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##### H. VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS

1. In July 2009, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recognized AVVA as a Veterans Service Organization (VSO).
2. That recognition authorized AVVA to develop and operate a Veterans Service Officer Training Program.
3. Candidates who successfully complete the training are accredited by AVVA to work as Veterans Service Officers to assist Veterans and their families applying for benefits they qualify for from the VA.
4. Members who are interested in becoming accredited AVVA Service Officers may obtain further information from the Director of the program, whose name and contact information can be found on the AVVA Website, [www.avva.org/s\\_o\\_program.html](http://www.avva.org/s_o_program.html).
5. Due to the sensitivity and nature of this program, the application will not be part of the Forms section of the Policies and Procedures Manual and can only be obtained from the Director of the program.
6. Non-AVVA members accepted to the Service Organization must join as an AVVA member for three years.
7. AVVA also requires that the applicant must have successfully completed the NVLSP Training Course prior to attending the AVVA training class.
8. A panel of experienced Service Officers and Special Advisors to the Veterans Benefits Committee will review the applications and select the trainees.