



# THE REGISTER

September 2019

## Director Addresses the American Legion's 101<sup>ST</sup> National Convention

Director Benton addressed the American Legion's National Convention in Indiana, IN. Speaking before the large audience, the Director thanked the American Legion for its support of Selective Service and for all of the work its members do for our great Nation. He said that Legionnaires are patriots who have served their country honorably in uniform and continue to serve to this day. Director Benton mentioned that one way men and women can serve is by being a local board member for the Selective Service. He explained that local board members are volunteers nominated by state governors or equivalent officials, and appointed by the Director of the Selective Service System on behalf of the U.S. President. They play an important community role closely connected with our nation's defense. For those interested in volunteering for our local board program please go to: [www.sss.gov/Volunteers/Board-Member-Program](http://www.sss.gov/Volunteers/Board-Member-Program).



Director Benton explained the importance of raising registration awareness and noted that an excellent way to do that is by volunteering to be a speaker through the agency's Speakers Bureau program. As a member of the Speakers Bureau, participants inform young men about the registration requirement, and positively influence a young man's future by ensuring he registers and remains eligible for the many benefits tied to that requirement. For additional information about the Speakers Bureau program please see: [www.sss.gov/Portals/0/Resources/Speakers%20Bureau/Speakers%20Bureau%20Booklet%20-%202006-10-19.pdf](http://www.sss.gov/Portals/0/Resources/Speakers%20Bureau/Speakers%20Bureau%20Booklet%20-%202006-10-19.pdf)



Director Benton at the SSS Exhibit at the convention. Pictured with the Director is Major Stephanie Sandoval Region I Detachment 11N, and Major Michael Mitchell Region I Detachment 11N

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## Automatic Driver's License Legislation Becomes Law in Puerto Rico

Dr. Michelle Fraley, State Director of Puerto Rico, led the effort to pass automatic driver's license legislation in Puerto Rico. Previously, Puerto Rico law required Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) offices to provide DMV applicants with the option of registering with Selective Service. The new law will help boost registration rates by automatically registering those who are required to register with Selective Service when they are applying for – or renewing – a driver's license or state-issued identification card. Now that the law is on the books, Dr. Fraley will spend the next couple months working with the Puerto Rico DMV, Region II, National Headquarters, and the Data Management Center to enact the new law.

## Agency Accomplishments

During Director Benton's tenure, the agency has realized many accomplishments and generated new initiatives to assist in meeting the agency's goals and priorities. Some of the highlights follow:

- SSS secured a fiscal year 2019 budget increase – the first since 1983. It allows the agency to make investments in our aging infrastructure and implement the Executive Order for technology modernization-investments that are already paying off.
- For the first time in over 15 years, the agency successfully completed a series of mobilization exercises to demonstrate we can perform our mission of delivering manpower to DoD effectively and efficiently. The agency's IT connectivity now supports the automatic generation of induction letters.
- SSS added an email address and telephone numbers box to the registration form. Capturing this data will save tens of thousands of dollars as SSS continues to modernize. Furthermore, it will enable us to reach out directly to registrants and engage with them – encouraging them to serve, to instill pride in registration and to enable them to be an agent to register others.
- Selective Service rewrote the agency's strategic plan and updated the vision, mission, goals and objectives to set the course of the agency for years to come. This was done with input from every agency employee.

- Dramatically improved the agency's IT capability to register millions of men more quickly and efficiently.
- Increased SSS social media presence significantly, moving from only two platforms to nine and breaking all-time agency records for our digital outreach. For example, an increase occurred in FY 2019 from 30 twitter followers to 50,000.
- Direct mailed SSS education and promotion packets to every high school principal in the country and followed up with emails to each school (a first).
- Conducted major public service and paid advertising campaigns to raise registration awareness. This included social media advertising streaming radio PSAs, and print ads in and on buses, kiosks, and airport terminals in some of the lowest registration cities in the country.
- Conducted dozens of new outreach visits to regions with lower-than-average registration rates.
- The agency had incredible success with legislation in 2019, the best year for SSS since it initiated Driver's License legislation:
  - North Dakota now has DLL.
  - Puerto Rico updated their DLL from opt-in to opt-out.
  - Illinois and Texas signed legislation requiring high school seniors to fill out the FAFSA form. We will capture all those registrations - and this is going to become the new model for SSS-related legislation.
  - Pennsylvania DLL was introduced to the State legislature.
  - The District of Columbia Government is boosting registration by establishing new partnerships with all aspects of criminal justice, ensuring that juveniles and former inmates entering the workforce are registered. We hope to make this a national model.
- During this year of Alternative Service, Selective Service signed eight new MOUs and during September will sign the first-ever MOU with the Tennessee Valley Authority. The ASP team has done outreach with dozens of Federal Agencies and Peace Churches.

As a result of these efforts Selective Service is now more prepared to carry out its mission and to respond to a national emergency in a fair and equitable manner.



## DMC Implements Cost Savings Mail System

A major cost-saving action was approved and funded by Director Benton and has been fully implemented by the DMC! Every year the Data Management Center (DMC) processes several hundred thousand pieces of mail. A percentage of the outgoing mail, approximately 170,000 pieces annually, is deemed undeliverable and returned for a variety of reasons. It can be costly and labor intensive for the DMC to process this volume of returned mail. The DMC believed that there had to be a better way to process the returned mail and had engaged in discussions with the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) on possible solutions.

Recent advances in technology and changes in USPS processes have made it possible for the DMC to use Full Service Intelligent Mail Barcoding (FSIMB). This refers to the bar codes printed on mail pieces. These barcodes contain information that includes who sent the mail piece, the recipient's address, delivery tracking, and electronic notification from USPS if the mail is undeliverable.

The DMC Mail Center and Headquarters IT personnel were able to successfully integrate Pitney Bowes software designed to make those changes to our mail processes. The project was implemented in three phases. The first phase required changing SSS National Change of Address verification contracting from Experian to Pitney Bowes' VeriMove product. This system verifies the letter is being sent to the best and most current address possible according to USPS. This results in fewer undeliverable letters leaving DMC. Phase two was adding FSIMB capability to the DMC mail process which will ensure all the correct information is added to the barcode printed on the letter. DMC also receives a separate discount from USPS for using FSIMB. And the final implementation phase is that the FSIMB system allows automated mail forwarding and electronic return mail data through USPS which will eliminate the physical handling and processing of returned mail.

The project was very complex and required many hours of DMC staff working with IT personnel to implement, but the results will be realized for years to come. This is expected to save taxpayers more than \$60,000 per year and this savings will be used to further modernize the agency's technology without asking taxpayers for more money!

## DMC Initiates Complete Re-Organization

Under the Director's guidance, the Data Management Center is currently going through a transformational process based on the future operations plans. The reimagining of the organizational structure will support and follow the agency's concept of operations, as outlined in the Strategic Goals, as well as other Executive-level guidance. The re-organization will also right size the labor force, while allowing increased individual growth and professional mobility within DMC. This will be completed in three phases, the first of which is already complete and continues on through the end of FY 2020.

Prior to this re-organization, DMC had operated under the same structure for several decades. DMC is now shifting to a mission-oriented structure, with separate Administrative, Operations, and Support Operations functions, creating a more flexible and forward-thinking design. As part of this effort, Position Descriptions have been re-written to account for actual duties currently performed by employees. This also credits employees for accretion of duties, which makes them more competitive when applying for other positions within SSS and improves the overall federal workforce.

The re-organization is part of Director Benton's commitment to continuous process improvements, increased employee morale and retention, and reduced costs by keeping a highly trained and motivated workforce. Motivated and highly trained employees ultimately translates to increased efficiency and better customer service!

## Selective Service and Tennessee Valley Authority MOU

Director Benton designated 2019 "The Year of Alternative Service". The Alternative Service Program allows men, granted classification as conscientious objectors by their local boards, to fulfill their service obligation in a civilian capacity contributing to the maintenance of the national health, safety or interest. The staff of the Alternative Service Program have been pursuing Federal, State, Local governmental agencies, as well as private, non-profit, and peace church organizations who agree to provide jobs to Alternative Service Workers (ASWs) in a national emergency. One of the organizations is the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). Recently, Selective Service System signed it's first

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*From Left to Right: Thomas Devine, Operations Directorate, Director Donald Benton, Ms. Kim Napier, TVA and Kenneth Montgomery, ASP Manager*

new provisional agreement in 30 years, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the TVA. Just like the SSS, the TVA has a long and rich history of supporting this nation when needed. This new partnership will allow the Alternative Service Program to place Conscientious Objectors in positions vacated by military Reservists and National Guards that have departed to answer the “call of duty” to serve their nation during a national emergency. The TVA now knows it can count on SSS to help fill those vacancies and continue to support the nation as they always have done.



*Director Donald Benton and Ms. Kim Napier, TVA, sign the MOU*

## 63<sup>RD</sup> Readiness Division's Leadership Meeting

The 63<sup>rd</sup> Readiness Division's Leadership Meeting briefed the Army Reserve Ambassadors who are assigned to the 63d RD about the Selective Service System's operations and mission. The Army Reserve Ambassadors (ARA) Program is one of the Army Reserve's key outreach programs. ARAs are influential volunteers with significant ties to their communities who operate at state and local levels and voluntarily represent the Chief of the Army Reserve (CAR). They develop awareness and advocacy campaigns for the Army Reserve and are vitally important bridges to communities across the Nation. Army Reserve Ambassadors are a powerful means of message delivery to the American people and they provide invaluable connections for centers of influence to engage local stakeholders. ARAs have the advantage of strategic timing, long-term relationships, and continued dialogue with persons of influence to achieve the desired outcomes to stay relevant in today's Army challenging operating environment.



*LTC (R) Brett Williams Operations Manager briefs the 63d Readiness Division's leadership in San Diego, California on the Selective Service System agency.*



*CWO4 (R) John Arbogast, California Deputy State Director; LTC Daniel Oelke, USAR, DET 3-4, San Diego CA; Brig. Gen. Stacy Babcock, Deputy Commanding General for the 63rd Readiness Division; LTC (R) Brett Williams, Region III Operations Manager.*



## California NOSD

Region III held a California NOSD (New Officer State Director) training at the California Army National Guard's JFTB Los Alamitos.



*From Left to Right: Top - CDR Johnathan Liddle, USNR; LTC Daniel Oelke, USAR, MAJ Jason Valencia, USAR; LTC (R) Paul Villegas California State Director, Bottom – Maryann Rangel, Region III Admin Officer/ NOSD Instructor, LT Dustin Schultz, USNR; LT Tabitha Stephens, USNR; LTC (R) Brett Williams, Region III Operations Manager/ NOSD Instructor*

## Selective Service Briefs D.C. JROTC Leadership for Upcoming School Year

Jacob Daniels and Victoria Briggs from National Headquarters briefed the Washington, D.C. JROTC leadership on August 21, 2019 at the request of retired Colonel Martin Compton. JROTC leaders from 13 schools were present. At the briefing, Daniels reminded attendees of the importance of registration, including the consequences of failing to register, answered questions, and presented a Certificate of Recognition designed by PIA's Lee Alexander to be given by JROTC leaders to students who register with Selective Service. The agency plans to continue working with D.C. JROTC to raise registration awareness and also plan to develop a Certificate of Recognition for female students who help with registration efforts.



## Reaching the Milestone of 50 Years

Mr. John Cumicek, Region 1 Wisconsin State Director, is hanging up his hat after 50 years with the Selective Service System. Before becoming State Director, Mr. Cumicek was assigned as Wisconsin Reserve Force Officer for 19 years, in Madison, WI. He retired as a LTC from the National Guard after 22 years of service.



He became the Wisconsin State Director on July 27, 1989. Mr. Cumicek served as the Wisconsin State Director for 30 years. He was a very valuable member of the team, supporting the mission through community outreach events such as Wisconsin Badger Boy State, American Legion events, and conferences. Mr. Cumicek persistently supported and pushed DLL through the legislature on April 22, 2002, Wisconsin was the fifth state in Region 1 to adopt the Driver's License Legislation. Mr. Cumicek focused on board member recruitment. During his 50 years with Selective Service, he appointed 456 board members through his term as a State Director leaving board member fill rate at 97 percent. His philosophy, "No mission to great, No mission too Difficult."

## Local Board Member Retires

Congratulations to Louis D. Owens on serving 20 years on Local Board 32 in Tennessee. We wish him all the best and extend our sincere appreciation to Mr. Owens for his patriotic service to our agency and to the Nation.

## Contributors

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*The Register* welcomes any news of interest to the Selective Service System employees. Send article submissions to Editor, *The Register*, Selective Service System, National Headquarters, Arlington, VA 22209-2425