



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Henrico County

Program Title: Veterans Brunch

Program Category: Parks & Recreation

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Monica Smith-Callahan

Title: Deputy County Manager for Community Affairs

Signature: 

Program Overview

Henrico County Recreation and Parks' (HCRP) Veterans Brunch is a program idea created in partnership with the Henrico County Advocate for the Aging and JenCare Senior Medical Center. This program aids in recognizing its participants' outstanding service to the United States. We invite vendors that provide pertinent information. Examples include the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, Veterans Helping Veterans, Carrington Insurance, JenCare Senior Medical Center, Tech for Troops, and the American Legion. Veteran attendees can personalize their experience by bringing a photo to display and share their stories with the audience. This program has given HCRP, and its partners a prestigious and historic opportunity to recognize and appreciate veterans in our community.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

The inspiration for this program arose from the lack of current offerings for our veterans. I wanted to create a meaningful free community program for veterans in honor of Veterans Day, recognizing all those who have served in the United States Armed Forces. Additionally, the goal was to provide veterans with information about updated benefits and educational opportunities, as well as a chance to share their stories.

Veterans deserve more recognition for their service to our country. Their dedication and sacrifices to protect the freedom and safety of the United States are truly commendable. Veterans put themselves in harm's way to defend our nation, and they play a crucial role in preserving our freedom. They not only protect our rights but also provide valuable lessons about our history, often risking their lives for individuals they have never met. These brave men and

women have fought to safeguard the freedoms that Americans cherish, such as the right to vote and free speech. Events like the Veterans Brunch offer us a chance to express our gratitude. We should seize every opportunity to thank and recognize our veterans for their dedication, loyalty, and commitment to service.

How The Program Fulfilled Award Criteria

The Veterans Brunch demonstrates HCRP's commitment to providing inclusive programming through collaboration with other agencies. The program has successfully run for three consecutive years, showcasing valuable content, achieving maximum attendance, fostering community engagement, and establishing strong partnerships for future initiatives. This program is also replicable by other localities.

How The Program Was Carried Out

Objectives for Veterans Brunch

- Provide a new innovative program for Veterans to honor their service to our country, enable socialization with other veterans, receive recognition for outstanding service, enjoy good food, and have fun.
- Provide updated information to attendees through vendors. For example, the Virginia Department of Veterans Services presents a PowerPoint on updated benefits. Carrington Insurance assisted a veteran who was paying for an additional insurance policy she didn't need, resulting in a refund of \$1,000+ from a supplementary Medicare policy.

- Provide an educational opportunity for the audience to learn about the branches of all the armed services and their family sacrifices.

Advanced Planning

HCRP schedules meetings with its partners beginning in September. The agenda includes collaborative planning of the brunch, assignments, vendors, menu, and additional staff required to assist with check-in and serving the food. HCRP recruits additional staff to help serve food, and check-in attendees and their guests.

The program is typically scheduled on a Thursday before the Veterans Day holiday for two hours at the Eastern Henrico Recreation Center. The maximum number of attendees is 60. Staff is encouraged to wear red, white, and blue in honor of the holiday.

Committee Assignments

HCRP is responsible for scheduling meetings with partners, contract vendors, performing guests, and the marketing department. The marketing section aids with flyers, advertisements, social media posts, and door prizes. Additional recreation staff solicit donations for military items through recruitment connections such as t-shirts, hats, cups, key chains, and bags with engraved logos featuring the armed services branches for door prizes. To promote the Veterans Brunch flyers are distributed to Henrico County libraries, neighborhoods churches, posted at recreation centers, and partner mailing lists and postings. Red, white, and blue decorations are borrowed from our Special Events inventory.

The Henrico County Advocate for the Aging has aided in multiple ways throughout the years.

Examples include:

- Marketing assistance

- Food service
- National Anthem groups
- Covered catered food expenses

Additionally, JenCare Senior Medical Center has aided in multiple ways throughout the years with providing décor and giveaways for participants.

Financing and Staffing

The operating costs for the Veterans Brunch are specified below. The food was the largest cost, and the Henrico Advocate for the Aging volunteered to accept this expense. HCRP covers marketing and advertising in their annual budget.

In 2022, Henrico Advocate for the Aging spent \$990.49, JenCare Senior Medical Center spent \$159, HCRP spent \$77.16 for a grand total of \$1,308.49

In 2023, Henrico Advocate for the Aging spent \$840.96, JenCare Senior Medical Center spent \$148, HCRP spent \$52.92 for a grand total of \$1,041.88.

In 2024, Henrico Advocate for the Aging spent \$934.09, JenCare Senior Medical Center spent \$200, HCRP spent \$147.22 for a grand total of \$1,281.31.

Program Results

The first Veterans Brunch was held on November 9, 2022. HCRP, Henrico Advocate for the Aging, and JenCare Senior Medical Center have continued this program annually because of its popularity, attendance, and support of our armed services. It is viewed as a rewarding and appreciative program by veterans and the community. Registration is required due to the capacity of the room, entertainment, vendors, and food area. In 2022 attendance was 31, and the attendance doubled in 2023 and 2024 to 60. The program's success is attributed to engaging the veterans, presentations, selective vendors, and committed partnerships. Listed below is the program outline for each year:

2022

At the 2022 event, the Henrico Concert Band performed and played the National Anthem as well as a mix of patriotic songs. Vendor presentations were provided by John Henry, Virginia Department of Veterans Services, Henry Mack, Veterans Helping Veterans, Delores Kimbrough, and Dreaming Home Project. Carrington Insurance and JenCare Senior Medical Center also participated as vendors.

2023

In 2023, the Henrico Fire Choir sang the National Anthem, and Highland Springs MJROTC Color Guard marched in before the choir sang. Vendor presentations were provided by John Henry, Virginia Department of Veterans Services, and Mark Casper, Tech for Troops representative. An additional table was set up for JenCare Senior Medical Center.

2024

In 2024, the Henrico Fire Choir sang the National Anthem, Highland Springs MJROTC Color Guard arrived after the Henrico Fire Choir sang the National Anthem. Vendor presentations were provided by John Henry, Virginia Department of Veterans Services, Terri Bradbury Founder of The Senior Savvy, and Chuck Talley, The American Legion representative. JenCare Senior Medical Center, and The Compass at Springdale Park also participated as vendors.

Executive Summary

Henrico County Recreation and Parks' Veterans Brunch was created in partnership with the Henrico County Advocate for the Aging and JenCare Senior Medical Center and recognizes local veterans for their outstanding service to the United States. Guests are provided an opportunity to interact with vendors such as the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, Veterans Helping Veterans, Carrington Insurance, JenCare Senior Medical Center, Tech for Troops, and the American Legion. The experience is personalized, when veterans bring a photo to display and share their stories with the audience. This program has given HCRP, and its partners a prestigious and historic opportunity to recognize and appreciate veterans in our community.

Veterans Brunch

