

PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

May 2022

A Life of Service: Arlene Turner MaGee



A tribute by PVA VCP Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Genia Hachenberg: *This is not your traditional success story, but I felt compelled to share what I am calling a tribute story. I never met Arlene in person, nor did I help her get employment.*

I did, however, see a beautiful person exemplify what makes PVA's Veterans Career Program so vital and unique.

Arlene was a PVA member who had an active life before and after her spinal cord injury. I learned about her advanced degrees, extensive business acumen and leadership. I also heard about her involvement in adaptive sports including PVA's Wheelchair Games.

There was so much more to her, but when I was introduced by NSO Mitch Hinkle, Arlene was a woman battling Stage 4 colon cancer who was told by VA VR&E that – likely due to her already having advanced degrees - they were unable to support her goal of a Master's in Divinity at that time. There were no hard feelings, she simply wanted to explore more options for funding. VCP does not determine who is feasible or allowed services. If volunteering, education or employment brings a veteran a higher quality of life – we are going to go on that journey with them.

Arlene and I researched and shared various financial aid for her classes, grants, scholarships, veteran discounts and more. She also described her desire to start a non-profit facility for veterans who were struggling with housing, mental health and employment. Resources specific to female veteran entrepreneurs were introduced, in addition to SBA programs and Veterans Career Live sessions.

Arlene had such a strong impact on me as a Counselor and person. She would answer my calls while in the hospital, ever praising the nurses and staff around her and spreading her joy. In her last email to me she wrote, "These classes have been a lifeline to me. I'm in bed 12 out of 14 days when I'm sent home after endless hours of chemotherapy. I'm battling stage four colon cancer and learning how to study God's Word at Regent University has been a huge blessing to me. Thank you so much for your assistance." Arlene passed on April 1, 2021.

IMPACT + OPPORTUNITIES

18 Client Placements

- 15 Paid Employment
- 3 Education/Training
- 0 Volunteer
 - 16 Veterans
 - 2 PVA Members
 - 2 Family Members
 - 1 Caregiver



Find Your Voice – Tell Your Story



Through storytelling, comedy, improv and the arts, veterans, military spouses and caregivers can find new ways to transition and reconnect.

It helps them start real conversations, build confidence, break down emotional walls, strengthen relationships, and advocate on behalf of themselves and others. They gain a voice, and their communities get the opportunity to hear them.

The Armed Services Arts Partnership serves as a creative community where veterans thrive through the arts. They provide free storytelling, comedy, improv and art classes to veterans, service members, military family members, and caregivers. And right now they have upcoming classes and workshops early this summer. Learn more at www.asapasap.org.