

**St. Cloud VA Health Care System
St. Cloud, Minnesota**

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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St. Cloud VA proclaimed a “Yellow Ribbon Company”

St. Cloud, Minn: The St. Cloud VA Health Care System was proclaimed a Yellow Ribbon Company by the State of Minnesota at a ceremony conducted on Monday, Sept. 17, at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center in St. Cloud. A formal proclamation signed by Governor Mark Dayton was presented to the St. Cloud VA by Minnesota Secretary of State Steve Simon and Major General Neal Loidolt, Deputy Adjutant General, Joint Force Headquarters, Minnesota Army National Guard.

The St. Cloud VA is the first federal entity in Minnesota to receive this designation and is the 63rd organization across the state to achieve Yellow Ribbon Company designation. In the greater St. Cloud area, other Yellow Ribbon Companies include Rasmussen College and St. Cloud State University.

“Taking care of those who are serving or have served requires many more hands than are available in the VA,” said St. Cloud VA Director Stephen Black.

Black emphasized that this is not a new idea in the greater St. Cloud area, but becoming a Yellow Ribbon Company will allow the St. Cloud VA to expand the bonds with community members and organizations serving Veterans.

As an example, Black noted the contributions of the Central Minnesota Warrior to Citizen Initiative and Yellow Ribbon Community, which has united area cities on behalf of service members, families and Veterans since 2007.

Black noted that the local communities of St. Cloud, St. Augusta, Sartell, Sauk Rapids, St. Joseph, Waite Park, Cold Spring, Rockville and Richmond are better because of their efforts, and that their example of service and partnership motivated the St. Cloud VA to pursue Yellow Ribbon Company status.

Sponsored by the State of Minnesota, the Yellow Ribbon Company network is comprised of broad, organizationally structured companies with national, regional or statewide influence that unite all areas of the company in connecting and coordinating resources, education, outreach and support to meet the needs of Servicemembers, Veterans, and military families.

In presenting the proclamation, Annette Kuyper, Director of Military Outreach for the State of Minnesota, noted that Yellow Ribbon Companies “develop a formal action plan and establish a steering committee to unite all key areas of the company to create a workplace culture that supports service members, Veterans and military families.”

St. Cloud VA Associate Director Cheryl Thieschafer, Chair of the St. Cloud VA’s Yellow Ribbon Steering Committee, also noted that the proclamation “is only a beginning.”

“We now are charged with continuing actions to support Veterans recruiting, hiring and retention, military employee support, and military connected community support.”



Major General Neal Loidolt, Deputy Adjutant General, Joint Force Headquarters MN Army National Guard; Steve Simon, MN Secretary of State; Stephen D. Black, FACHE, Director, St. Cloud VA Health Care System; and Annette Brechon Kuyper, Director of Military Outreach, State of MN, display a banner in a proclamation ceremony at the St. Cloud VA on Sept. 17, 2018, welcoming the St. Cloud VA Health Care System as a new Yellow Ribbon Company, which are organizations that connect and coordinate resources, education, outreach and support to meet the needs of Servicemembers, Veterans, and military families

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