

Delaware Veterans Cemetery Team Earns Top Honors from VA

BEAR – The staff of the Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Bear were recognized Tuesday by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for their outstanding service to the state's veterans and their families.

Gov. John Carney joined the Bear team and the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs in accepting the Operational Excellence Award from Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Randy Reeves of the VA's National Cemetery Administration. The award places the Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery among the top five percent of state veterans' cemeteries in the nation.

✘ “The Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery truly is hallowed ground for those Delawareans who served their country in our armed forces, and for the loved ones who carry on the legacy of their deeds,” said Governor Carney. “I’ve always been extremely proud of the dedicated team that works every day to ensure that this resting place is maintained to the highest standards of excellence, and I congratulate them on earning the recognition they deserve.”

The VA established the Operational Excellence Award program for state and tribal cemeteries in May, 2018 to recognize outstanding service to veterans and their family members in all areas of operations. The Bear cemetery met or exceeded 82 of 90 applicable performance measures for a combined score of 91 percent in the areas of Interment Operations, Grounds Maintenance, and Headstone, Marker, and Niche Cover Operations.

“Cemeteries like the Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Bear are a model of excellence, on par with some of the best national cemeteries in the country,” said Under Secretary

Reeves. "The dedication to maintaining this cemetery as a shrine truly commemorates veterans' service and sacrifice to our nation."

In 2016, the VA awarded a \$3.67 million expansion grant for the Bear cemetery, which provides a final resting place for 45,000 Delaware veterans and their eligible family members. The Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery is administered by the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs.

"The whole team at the Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Bear does outstanding work to honor the memory of our state's veterans, and to support their families in their times of mourning," said Larence Kirby, executive director of the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs. "Our mission is support those who served, and I can't think of a better group of individuals who embody that goal."

For more information on U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Administration, contact Richelle Taylor, Public Affairs Specialist, at richelle.taylor@va.gov or call (202) 632-8011.