

SAN FRANCISCO VA MEDICAL CENTER



CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF
SERVING AMERICA'S VETERANS

The 75th Anniversary of the San Francisco VA Medical Center is a time to celebrate our long and honored history of providing high quality care and service to America's Veterans.

From our earliest beginnings we have been at the forefront of medical innovation, serving as a resource for the nation. The San Francisco VA Medical Center has long been recognized for conducting cutting edge research, establishing innovative medical programs, and, above all, providing compassionate care to Veterans.

Our 49-year affiliation with the University of California, San Francisco has allowed us to recruit some of the best and brightest clinicians in the world. This successful collaboration has facilitated advances in medicine and research, and is the cornerstone of our reputation for excellence in health care. It is because of the commitment and dedication of our loyal staff, volunteers and community leaders that we have been able to sustain our high level of excellence throughout the years.

As we celebrate our 75th Anniversary, we also look forward to a future that will build on our proud legacy. Together let us honor our distinguished history, and let us rededicate ourselves to our unique and important mission of providing world class health care to Veterans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L H Carroll". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and "H".

Lawrence H. Carroll
Medical Center Director



Lieutenant Colonel John D. Miley

1774

Father Francisco Palou, the Diarist of the River Expedition, described the mouth of a bay which is recognized as the entrance to San Francisco Bay. The area which today comprises Fort Miley first served as a semaphore signal location for ships entering San Francisco Bay during the Gold Rush period.

1867

The area bounded by 33rd Avenue, Clement Street, 48th Avenue and the sea was acquired by the city of San Francisco. The 200-acre tract was designated as the City Cemetery Reservation and was used for this purpose until 1883.

1893

The U.S. Army selected the site of what is now the San Francisco VA Medical Center for a defense battery.

1897

The State of California granted the Federal Government exclusive jurisdiction of the area and this land became a subpost of the Presidio, known as "Reservation at Point Lobos." Lieutenant Colonel John D. Miley was in charge of installing defense guns throughout the San Francisco Bay. Bunkers built in the early 1900s may still be seen on the east corner of the present campus.

1900

Seven months after the death of Lieutenant Colonel Miley in the Philippines, a War Department general order changed the name from "Reservation at Point Lobos" to "Fort Miley" in his honor.

1930

The Veterans Administration (VA) was established to consolidate and coordinate government activities affecting war Veterans. The VA incorporated the functions of the former U.S. Veterans' Bureau, the Bureau of Pensions of the Interior Department and the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers.

1931

The Federal Board of Hospitalization chose Fort Miley for hospital construction. One of the original Fort Miley army buildings, currently known as Building 18, is still standing at the site of the VA Medical Center and continues to be in use.

1933

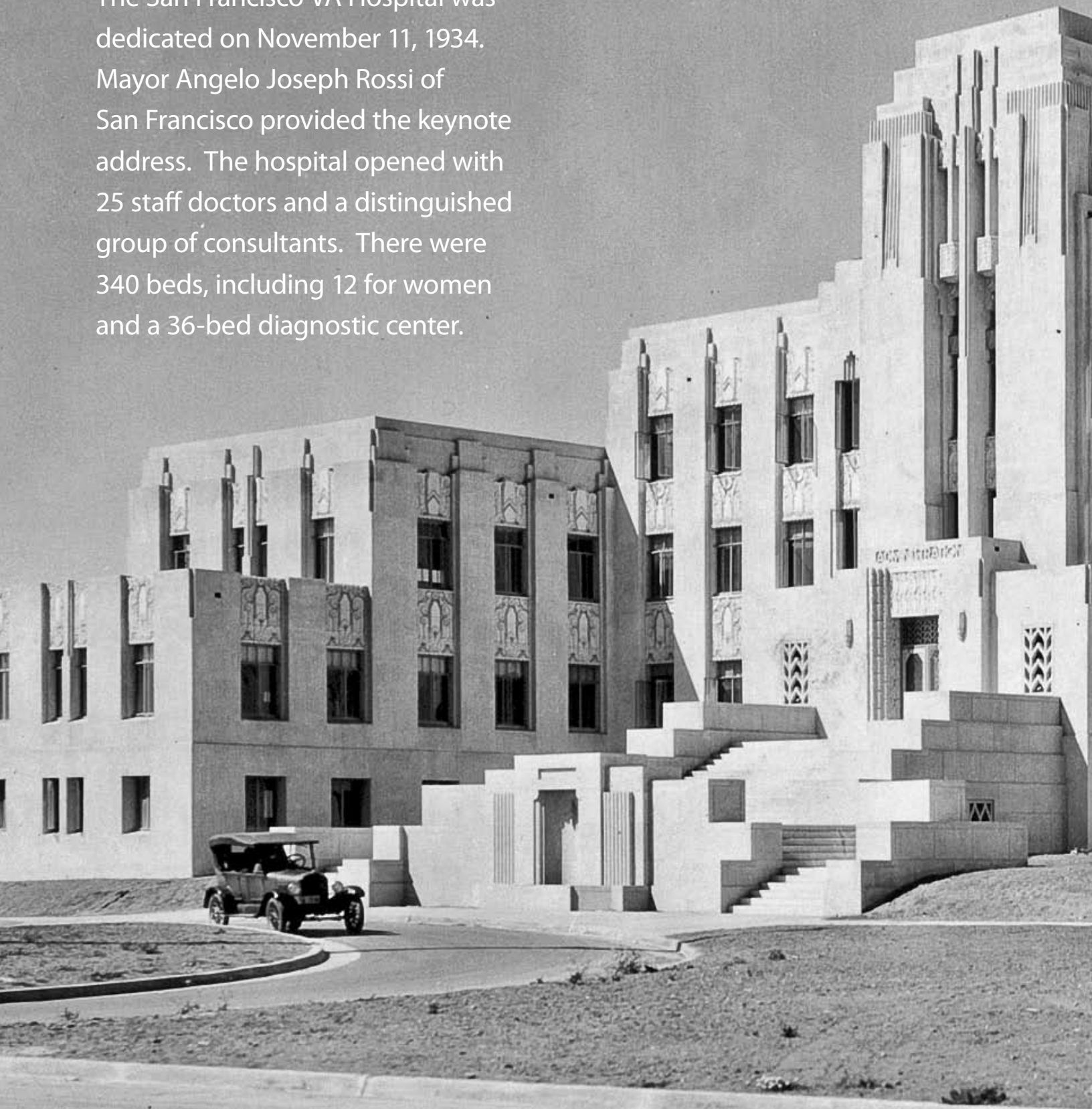
Construction of the hospital began. The original plan called for 21 buildings and a hospital with 500 beds, but it was completed with 340 beds. It was architecturally designed in a California-Spanish-Mayan style at a cost of \$1.25 million.

Barracks at Fort Miley were torn down to make way for the VA Hospital.



1934

The San Francisco VA Hospital was dedicated on November 11, 1934. Mayor Angelo Joseph Rossi of San Francisco provided the keynote address. The hospital opened with 25 staff doctors and a distinguished group of consultants. There were 340 beds, including 12 for women and a 36-bed diagnostic center.



Pictured: A Model T Ford in front of Building 1.



PRICES THEN AND NOW

| | 1934 | 2009 |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Average Wages | \$1,600/year | \$52,910/year |
| House Rental | \$20/month | \$2,326/month |
| New Car | \$625 | \$28,400 |
| One Gallon of Gas | 10 cents | \$2.83 |
| Movie Ticket | 25 cents | \$10.50 |
| Admission to Baseball Game | 35 cents | \$25.40 |
| Postage Stamp | 3 cents | 44 cents |
| DOW Average | 104 | 9,300 |
| Man's "Arrow" Shirt | \$2.50 | \$35.50 |
| Loaf of Bread | 8 cents | \$2.79 |
| Pound of Hamburger | 12 cents | \$3.89 |
| Gallon of Milk | 45 cents | \$3.89 |
| Pound of Coffee | 35 cents | \$9.10 |
| Tuition to UCSF (CA Residents) | \$277/year | \$27,129/year |

WHAT HAPPENED IN HISTORY: 1934

| | | | |
|-----------------|---|------------------|--|
| January | <p>The first Flash Gordon comic strip is published.</p> <p>The Apollo Theater opens in Harlem, New York City.</p> | July | <p>Joe Louis wins first professional boxing fight.</p> <p>Babe Ruth hits 700th homer.</p> <p>“Public Enemy No. 1” John Dillinger is mortally wounded by FBI agents outside Chicago’s Biograph Theater.</p> |
| February | <p>Frank Capra’s “It Happened One Night,” starring Clark Gable and Claudette Colbert, is released.</p> | August | <p>Adolf Hitler designated Führer of Germany, becoming head of state, as well as Chancellor.</p> <p>Alcatraz maximum security prison opens in San Francisco Bay.</p> <p>The comic strip “Li’l Abner” is first published.</p> <p>The first All-American Soap Box Derby is held in Dayton, Ohio.</p> |
| March | <p>The Philippine Commonwealth established, allowing for increased self-government independent of the United States.</p> | September | <p>RCA Victor releases first 33^{1/3} rpm recording—“Beethoven’s 5th Symphony.”</p> <p>Bruno Richard Hauptmann is arrested in connection with the Lindbergh kidnapping case.</p> |
| April | <p>Shirley Temple appears in her first movie “Bright Eyes” and sings “On the Good Ship Lollipop.”</p> | October | <p>The Long March of the Chinese Communists begins.</p> |
| May | <p>San Francisco Waterfront Strike begins.</p> <p>Bank robbers Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow were ambushed near their hide-out in Black Lake, Louisiana, and both were killed.</p> <p>The Dionne quintuplets were born near Callander, Ontario, becoming the first quintuplets to survive infancy.</p> | November | <p>Cole Porter’s musical “Anything Goes,” starring Ethel Merman, premieres in New York City.</p> <p>San Francisco VA Hospital was dedicated.</p> |
| June | <p>U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs the Securities Exchange Act into law, establishing the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.</p> <p>The Indian Reorganization Act is enacted.</p> | December | <p>New York Giants defeat Chicago Bears 30-13 for NFL Championship.</p> |

1941

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, leads to immediate reactivation of the Fort Miley batteries. On December 11, more than 300 veterans were evacuated from the VA Hospital due to the possibility of an air attack against San Francisco. The hospital was then surrounded by mobile guns and Fort Miley was placed on alert throughout the remainder of World War II.

1946

Patients were returned to the San Francisco VA Hospital after the Fort Miley batteries were decommissioned and the hospital reopened.

Patients gathered in the solarium which was located in Building 7 circa 1949.



1948

Additional beds for the hospital were authorized, increasing the maximum patient accommodations to 396 beds.

1960

The affiliation with the University of California, San Francisco was established.

1963

A three-phase modernization program began. The first phase consisted of the construction of Building 200, which would serve as the new home for administrative services, clinical and anatomical laboratories, and the Radiology Department.

1967

Building 12 was substantially enlarged and converted into a research center. It had originally served as the hospital's fire station.

1973

The second-phase of the modernization program began with the construction of a new 440-bed replacement hospital (Building 203), at a cost of \$15 million. This building was designed by William L. Pereira & Associates, the same firm that designed the Transamerica Pyramid Building in downtown San Francisco.



Building 200 circa 1964.



Building 12 was originally a fire station.



Construction of Building 203 began in 1973.

1976

Construction of Building 203, which was a 440-bed replacement hospital, was completed.





1983

San Francisco VA Medical Center (SFVAMC) Researcher Millie Hughes-Fulford, Ph.D., was selected as a payload specialist by NASA. She was the first VA employee to be selected as a science astronaut.

1984

The San Francisco VA Medical Center established the first VA MRI research program.

1986

The Cheryl Anderson-Sorensen Child Care Center was established on the Medical Center campus.

The San Francisco VA Medical Center received the first human MRI scanner devoted to clinical research.

1988

The Northern California Institute for Research and Education (NCIRE), a private nonprofit research corporation, was founded on the Medical Center grounds. NCIRE was created to administer research funding (excluding VA grants) and facilitate expanded support to the Veterans health research mission at SFVAMC.

1989

President Ronald Reagan signed legislation creating a new federal Cabinet-level Department of Veterans Affairs to replace the Veterans Administration.

The third phase of the modernization program began with the construction of a four-level parking structure.

1990

The 13th & Mission VA Comprehensive Homeless Center opened in downtown San Francisco, one of the first programs of its kind in the country. This was established to provide outreach, therapy, housing and employment to San Francisco's homeless Veterans.

1992

The new 120-bed Nursing Home Care Unit was dedicated.

*The Nursing Home Care Unit
was dedicated in 1992.*



MEDICAL CENTER DIRECTORS

1934 -1957

James Donnelly, M.D.

1957 -1964

Thomas P. Crane, M.D.

1964 -1968

Ralph S. Metheny, M.D.

1969 -1970

Daniel R. Robinson, M.D.

1970 -1974

Oren T. Skouge, M.D.

1974 -1977

Hugh R. Vickerstaff

1978 -1986

Laurance V. Foye, Jr., M.D.

1986 -1988

John W. Ditzler, M.D.

1988 -1997

Lawrence C. Stewart

1998 - 2008

Sheila M. Cullen

2009 -

Lawrence H. Carroll

1993

The Women Veterans Comprehensive Health Center – one of eight national sites – was established to provide comprehensive primary health care services to women veterans.

The San Francisco VA Medical Center was awarded one of VA's first research fellowships in women's health.

1994

Vice President Al Gore recognized the San Francisco VA Medical Center's internet site as being the first in the Department of Veterans Affairs. The site featured an online registration form for Veterans applying for VA medical benefits.

1996

The Santa Rosa Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) was opened.

San Francisco VA Medical Center became the first VA medical center to offer brachytherapy, a minimally invasive procedure using implanted radioactive "seeds."

San Francisco became the only VA medical center to repair abdominal aortic aneurysms using minimally invasive endovascular techniques.

1997

San Francisco VA Medical Center became the first VA to provide surgical therapy for epilepsy through the establishment of the Comprehensive Epilepsy Center.

1998

The Center for the Surgical Treatment of Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders was established. This was VA's only referral center for the surgical treatment of Parkinson's disease, and the first to perform the innovative treatment of deep brain stimulation, a "pacemaker for the brain."

The SFVAMC established a Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC), one of only six national sites. The program's primary objective was to improve clinical care for Veterans suffering from mental illness with a focus on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and behavioral, cognitive and functional problems associated with dementia.

*Center for the Surgical Treatment of
Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders*



1999

SFVAMC began using digital radiology and began moving toward converting from standard X-rays to total digitalization.

Building 210 was increased by two stories.

Pharmacy Service inaugurated the OptiFill System which automatically counts, labels and dispenses pharmaceuticals every 30 seconds.

SFVAMC began treating Veterans at the new Outpatient Clinic in Eureka.

The San Francisco VA Medical Center installed an innovative new clinical information system in the 18-bed Intensive Care Unit (ICU). The computer-based system allows for real-time, two-way communication of patient data.

SFVAMC established a Hepatitis C Center of Excellence to coordinate treatment and research efforts, as well as to educate patients and their families, health care providers and counselors.

The Clinical Research Center was dedicated as part of a joint venture between SFVAMC and NCIRE to provide a resource for researchers performing studies that involve human subjects.

SFVAMC was selected by VA Central Office as a Clinical Center of Excellence in Cardiac Surgery, Home Based Primary Care, Hepatitis C and HIV Services.

A new outpatient clinic opened on the first floor of the existing 13th & Mission VA Comprehensive Homeless Veterans Center, allowing for increased services.



Building 210

2000

The Moving Wall (a half scale replica of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C.) came to the Medical Center as part of a week-long commemoration.

The Ukiah CBOC officially opened.

The PTSD Program was selected by VA Central Office as a Clinical Center of Excellence.

2001

The San Francisco VA Medical Center established the Parkinson's Disease Research, Education, and Clinical Center (PADRECC) – one of six designated national sites.

The Moving Wall is a half scale replica of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C.





Dedication of the San Bruno VA Outpatient Clinic.

2002

SFVAMC established VA's first 3D Imaging Laboratory and conducted novel research on virtual colonoscopy (CT colonography) as a new technique for colorectal cancer screening. SFVAMC was one of the first in the country to make virtual colonoscopy available to Veterans.

VA Central Office selected the following programs as Clinical Centers of Excellence: Renal Dialysis, Epilepsy Monitoring Unit, Cardiac Surgery, HIV and PTSD.

2004

The renovation of the Operating Rooms (OR) was completed creating larger, state-of-the-art ORs, with dedicated endovascular, cardiac and laparoscopic rooms.

The San Francisco VA Medical Center received a Siemens 4 Tesla MRI, a state-of-the-art imaging system fully dedicated to studying neurodegenerative disorders of the brain.

The Ukiah CBOC moved to a new, larger clinic building.

2005

A new CBOC was opened in San Bruno. Secretary of Veterans Affairs R. James Nicholson provided the keynote address at the dedication ceremony.

SFVAMC's Research Program became the largest funded program in the VA system with \$67 million in research expenditures.

NCIRE established the Neuroscience Center of Excellence, a unique research partnership among NCIRE, the Department of Defense and VA.

2006

SFVAMC began an active robotic surgical program, utilizing the “da Vinci Surgical System” in the following specialties: cardiac (coronary artery bypass grafting, mitral valve repair or replacement) and urology (robotic prostatectomy). Powered by state-of-the-art robotic technology, a surgeon’s hand movements are scaled, filtered and seamlessly translated into the precise movements of the surgical instruments. This minimally invasive surgery allows physicians to perform many kinds of major surgery with less patient trauma and pain, minimal scarring, faster recovery and shorter hospital stays.

Surgeons operate using the da Vinci Surgical System.





Senator Dianne Feinstein (second from right) presented two Purple Heart medals.

The Center for Imaging of Neurodegenerative Diseases was constructed. The Center uses the most advanced brain imaging technology, especially MRI, to investigate the cause, progression and effects of neurodegenerative diseases, and to develop effective treatments, diagnoses and methods for early detection and prevention.

The new SFVA Downtown Clinic opened. The new clinic provides expanded primary care services to all veterans, in addition to outreach and services for homeless Veterans.



Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi holds a news conference at the Nursing Home Care Unit.

Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) visited San Francisco VA Medical Center and presented the Purple Heart medal to two California National Guard members who were wounded in Iraq.

2007

The Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) Integrated Care Clinic was established. This clinic co-locates Primary Care, Mental Health, and Social Work Services and is designed specifically to meet the health care needs of returning veterans.

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) spent the Veterans Day holiday at the Medical Center. She visited residents of the Nursing Home Care Unit.

2008

The San Francisco VA Medical Center took a major step in its efforts to reduce petroleum consumption by installing an ethanol fueling station.



The ribbon-cutting at the dedication of the ethanol fueling station.

Urological surgeons at the San Francisco VA Medical Center performed a robotic-assisted laparoscopic partial nephrectomy, the first such operation in the VA system.

The Nursing Home Care Unit was officially renamed the Community Living Center (CLC) as part of a VA-wide initiative to implement cultural transformation by providing resident-centered care in all VA CLCs.

Construction was completed on a \$35 million seismic upgrade and renovation of Building 203, the main acute care building on the campus. Inpatient wards were modernized and patient privacy was improved.

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) was the keynote speaker for the Medical Center's Veterans Day ceremony. Following the ceremony she met with patients on the inpatient units.

2009

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki visited the Medical Center and received an overview of the SFVAMC's research program.

The San Francisco VA Medical Center was selected as the site for an Epilepsy Center of Excellence – one of six national sites.

The 75th Anniversary of the Medical Center was celebrated.



Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi visits with a patient.



Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki (right) meets a medical center employee.





MILESTONES

Throughout its 75-year history, the San Francisco VA Medical Center has been a leader in the establishment of new programs, initiatives and innovations.

- 1983** Millie Hughes-Fulford selected as VA's first science astronaut.
- 1984** Established the first VA MRI research program.
- 1988** The Northern California Institute for Research and Education is founded. They are the largest of the 86 non-profit research institutes associated with VA nationwide.
- 1990** Established the VA Comprehensive Homeless Center.
- 1993** Established the Women Veterans Comprehensive Health Center.
Awarded one of VA's first research fellowships in women's health.
- 1994** Credited for creating VA's first internet site.
- 1996** Began VA's first Brachytherapy Program.
First VA to repair abdominal aortic aneurysms using minimally invasive endovascular techniques.
- 1997** Established the Comprehensive Epilepsy Center and became first VA to provide surgical therapy for epilepsy.
- 1998** Established the Center for the Surgical Treatment of Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders.
First VA to perform deep brain stimulation.
Established the Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center.
- 1999** Clinical Centers of Excellence established in: Cardiac Surgery, HIV Services, Hepatitis C and Home Based Primary Care.
- 2000** PTSD Program selected as a Clinical Center of Excellence.
- 2001** Established the Parkinson's Disease Research, Education and Clinical Center.
- 2002** Established the 3D Imaging Laboratory and only VA to begin novel research on virtual colonoscopy.
VA Central Office selected the following programs as Clinical Centers of Excellence: Renal Dialysis, Epilepsy Monitoring Unit, Cardiac Surgery, HIV and PTSD.
- 2004** Became the only VA to install a 4 Tesla MRI, a state-of-the-art imaging system fully dedicated to studying neurodegenerative disorders of the brain.
- 2005** Became VA's largest funded research program.
Established the Neuroscience Center of Excellence.
- 2006** Established the Center for Imaging of Neurodegenerative Diseases.
Became one of the first VA's to begin an active robotic surgical program in Cardiac and Urology.
- 2008** Urological surgeons performed a robotic-assisted laparoscopic partial nephrectomy – the first in the VA.
- 2009** Established the Epilepsy Center of Excellence – one of six national sites.

**“...TO CARE FOR HIM WHO
SHALL HAVE BORNE THE
BATTLE AND FOR HIS WIDOW,
AND HIS ORPHAN...”**

– ABRAHAM LINCOLN, VA MOTTO



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