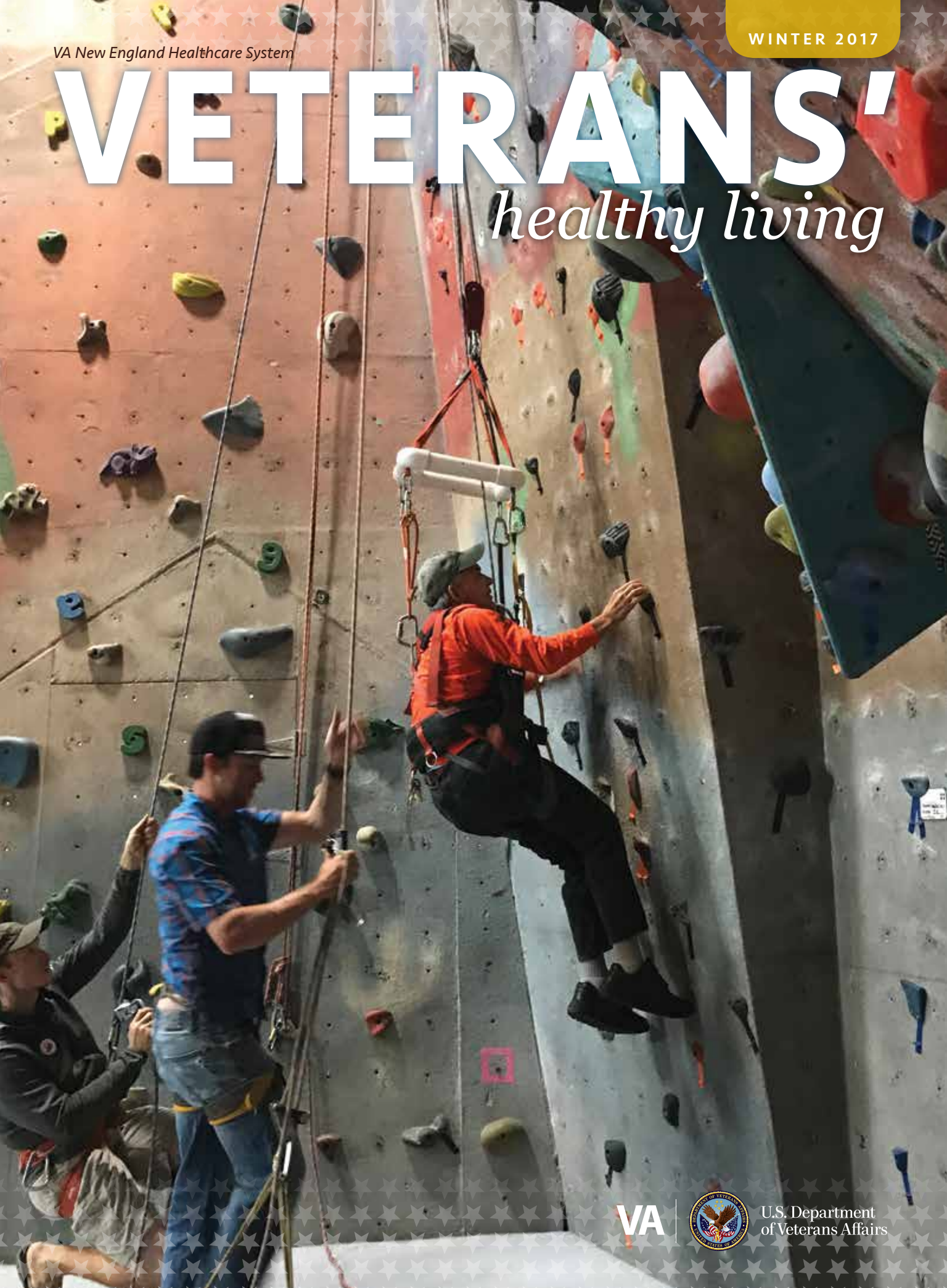


VA New England Healthcare System

WINTER 2017

VETERANS'

healthy living



VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



A Message from the Network Director

*Michael Mayo-Smith, MD, MPH
Network Director*

Dear Veterans,

At Veterans Affairs, we are always looking for ways to make your experience with VA even better. Through developing programs and partnerships, we constantly seek opportunities to provide you with the best care possible.

Our recreation therapy programs are just one way we provide innovative approaches to care. This year, we held our first Fall Adaptive Sports Retreat in Burlington, VT. For three days, Veterans with various disabilities from throughout New England had the chance to enjoy fun physical activity without limitations. Learn more about this exciting event on page 3.

Helping Veterans goes beyond our backyard and extends throughout the world. When natural disaster hits, VA is ready to deploy staff and personnel to help the hurting. When Hurricanes Irma and Maria hit Puerto Rico, VA was ready to step in and help those most in need. Read more about it on page 4.

Another way we help is through unique partnerships with other hospitals and organizations. Manchester VA recently partnered with Catholic Medical Center to provide same-day endoscopies and surgeries. This ensured that Veterans could receive uninterrupted care while repairs were made to Manchester VA. Read more on page 7.

Lastly, we love celebrating our Veterans and especially those who hit milestones in their lives! Read more on page 6 about two Veterans who are celebrating triple-digit birthdays!

Thank you for your service. Now let us serve you!

Michael Mayo-Smith, MD, MPH
Network Director



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ON THE COVER:

Veteran David Santamore scales the rock climbing wall at Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports — part of the Recreation Therapy program at White River Junction VAMC. Read more about it on the next page.



Scaling New Heights during the *Fall Adaptive Sports Retreat*



Veterans from the White River Junction VA and Boston VA experienced three days without limitations during the Fall Adaptive Sports Retreat. Here, Veterans have fun at Petra Rock Climbing in Burlington, VT, on Oct. 11.

Throughout the three days, the Veterans encouraged, coached and pushed each other to test their limits. The Veterans cycled further than they thought possible on the Stowe Bike Path, sailed on the cold and windy Lake Champlain, and made sure everyone made it to the top of the rock wall at Petra Cliffs.

Recreation Therapy has a way of impacting each person in a very specific way. Having Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist® professionals on hand to help Veterans is important, as it helps with tailoring and adapting the activities to each Veteran's unique needs.

Veterans from White River Junction VAMC and VA Boston partnered with Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports and other community partners, October 10-12, to provide a three-day Fall Adaptive Sports Retreat in the Burlington, Vermont area. Twelve Veterans from across New England participated in adaptive cycling, sailing and rock climbing.



Vermont Adaptive's Program Coordinator Olivia Joseph, CTRS; Jennifer Stark, CTRS, White River Junction VA; and Jenny McLaughlin, CTRS, VA Boston organized the event. They provided activities to help increase the Veterans' knowledge of adaptive sports, challenge them physically and emotionally, and provide opportunities to create lifelong friendships.

"This form of therapy does not just focus on one specific part of a person," says Jennifer Stark, CTRS from White River Junction. "For one person, the social aspect may be their focus to improve their mental health. For another, they may focus on increasing their ability to participate in a sport they enjoyed prior to their injuries."

If you or a Veteran you know wants to learn more about recreation therapy or experience a day of adaptive fun at Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sport, contact the Recreation Therapy program at your local VA.



Restoring Health and Hope

VA Boston assists in Puerto Rico recovery efforts



Dr. Michael Charness (third from the left) joined about 75 VA personnel from around the nation to serve at the Manati Federal Medical Station from Oct. 1-14, providing vital medical services for the island's residents.

The 2017 hurricane season will go down in history as one of the most active and devastating on record. Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria left deep marks, cutting destructive paths across wide swaths of U.S. territory. Texas and Florida certainly felt the strong sting of these storms, but none so much as Puerto Rico.

One month after Hurricane Maria, at least 48 people had died in the country. And, Puerto Rico still struggled to restore basic utilities, reopen roadways and airports, and rebuild infrastructure. Nearly 60% of the small island still had no electricity six weeks after the hurricane. Out of 3.4 million residents, more than 1.2 million still had no access to safe drinking

water. Many waited in long lines to fill up buckets from tank trucks or mountain streams. In the face of such daunting obstacles, it became very difficult to provide other vital services, such as medical care.

About 19,000 civilian and military personnel traveled to Puerto Rico to support federal relief missions. About 75 healthcare VA staff members from around the country gave their time and talents to help the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) run a federal medical station (FMS) between Oct. 1-14. Among those was Dr. Michael Charness, Chief of Staff at VA Boston. Charness and other VA

personnel provided acute and chronic care to help support and sustain health and well-being. VA medical professionals aided the largest and busiest FMS in Puerto Rico: Manati FMS, located on the north shore of the island.

"The Manati FMS was established in an indoor sports arena centrally located in Manati. Services were free. Hundreds of prescriptions were rewritten and filled at selected pharmacies without co-payment, courtesy of FEMA," said Dr. Michael Charness, Chief of Staff at VA Boston.

During their two-week stay, VA personnel treated more than 1,300 patients.

Living a Life of Service

Featured: Jason Gray, Chief, Voluntary Service and Recreation Therapy, VA Boston



Veteran Jason Gray is proud to serve his country, first as an enlisted soldier and now as Chief of Voluntary Service and Recreation Therapy at VA Boston.

This photo was taken in 1993 while he was on active duty, just before his deployment to South Korea.

"We provided a temporary medical shelter for patients with home ventilators and oxygen concentrators, feeding tubes, and complex home-care needs, saving many from certain death."

Charness said he and his team marveled at the resilience of the Puerto Ricans and their tenacity in the face of such calamity.

"We arrived to a disaster, expecting despair and resignation," said Charness. "Instead, we found faith, hope and gratitude. So many Puerto Ricans had so little and lost everything. That people so ravaged by this catastrophe could summon such optimism gives hope that with the right help, Puerto Rico will recover."



2017 hurricanes Irma and Maria devastated Puerto Rico infrastructure, making recovery slow and life difficult for the island's 3.4 million residents.

For Veteran Jason Gray, public service is in his blood. Jason was inspired to enlist like many in his family. Even after leaving the Army, the desire to serve his fellow Americans has followed him throughout his career.

Jason's life of service started in Virginia, where he grew up and later served as an Army Civilian at Fort Lee in Prince George County, Virginia. He then joined Army Aviation as an aeroscout observer, learning to fly helicopters and flying missions while stationed at Fort Carson in Colorado and Fort Stuart in Georgia. He was stationed in South Korea between 1991-1996.

Following the Army, Jason finished his degree at Penn State and worked first for a U.S. congressman, and then moved on to Veterans Affairs. Having now served within the federal government for over 20 years, Jason says it's been well worth it.

"Working in the VA has been the best job I've ever had," said Jason.

Today, he serves as the Chief of Voluntary Service and Recreation Therapy at VA Boston. He oversees the recruitment, training and placement of volunteers to supplement the VA medical center staff. His department also manages any donations the VAMC may receive.

"We're really focused on customer service – we're there to make the Veterans experience a pleasant one," said Jason.

His department oversees 1,000 volunteers, which include Veterans and civilians. "We provided an equivalent of 48 full-time employees," said Jason.

Hitting the 100s

Two World War II Vets mark milestone birthdays

Veteran Herbert Philbrick



Veteran Herbert Philbrick (center) is visited by former Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner Sean Connolly (left) and Senator Richard Blumenthal (right) to celebrate his 100th birthday with the VA Support Group for Legally Blind Veterans. He turned 100 on July 9, 2017.

Veteran Philbrick served during World War II from 1940 to the end of the war in the Navy as a Chief Machinist Mate. He sailed throughout the Pacific. He witnessed the battle of Iwo Jima and the raising of the American flag on Mount Surabachi from his ship, the U.S.S. Oceanus. Recently, Veteran Philbrick received the Connecticut Wartime Service Medal and other special certificates in honor of his service during World War II. He lives in Rocky Hill, Conn.

Veteran George Leighton



U.S. Representative Gerry Cassidy talks with Veteran George Leighton on Oct. 20, 2017, at the Community Living Center (CLC) at the Brockton Campus of VA Boston during Veteran Leighton's birthday party. He celebrated his 105th birthday on Oct. 22, 2017.

Veteran Leighton, the son of immigrants from the Portuguese Cape Verde Island, was born in New Bedford, Mass. He had an impressive academic career, entering Harvard University in 1940. He left school to serve in World War II in December 1941. He served in the Pacific Theaters with the Army's 93rd Infantry Division for almost three years as a logistics officer. After the war, he finished school and had a distinguished career as a lawyer and judge, eventually being appointed to the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois in 1976. He retired from the bench in 1987, then returned to private practice until 2011, when he retired at 99. He lives at the Brockton Campus of VA Boston.

Prioritizing Veteran Care

Catholic Medical Center (CMC) and Manchester VAMC partnership a success

Manchester VA Medical Center and Catholic Medical Center (CMC) recently cooperated in a first-of-its-kind partnership to provide high-quality care for Veterans. A major flood incident made several areas of the hospital inaccessible. So, Manchester VA Medical Center partnered with Catholic Medical Center (CMC) to provide endoscopies and other same-day procedures. This ensured that Veterans would receive uninterrupted, convenient care while repairs were made at Manchester VAMC.

Through this partnership, Manchester VA providers could continue to meet Veterans' health care needs, using dedicated space and resources at CMC. This type of collaboration is expected to continue between CMC and Manchester VAMC, and across New Hampshire. These types of advancements help pave the way for similar partnerships in the future.



"Veterans deserve nothing but the best, and this is just one step toward ensuring Veterans' needs are met," said Alfred Montoya, Acting Director of Manchester VAMC. "Our partners at CMC are committed to Veterans and ensuring their well-being."

CMC Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Alex Walker echoed similar thoughts.

"CMC looks forward to continuing to serve our Veterans," said Walker. "We reached out to Mr. Montoya and the VAMC to offer help after the recent building flood, but we look forward to being a resource long after repairs are made."

Upcoming Events around VISN 1



Boston RV Show

January 12-15, Boston, Mass.
www.bostonrvexpo.com



New England Saltwater Fishing Show

March 9-11, Providence, R.I.
www.nesaltwatershow.com



Northeast Hunting & Fishing Show

April 6-8, Hartford, Conn.
www.fishinghuntingshow.com

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VISN 1 Communications
Department of Veterans Affairs
200 Springs Road
Bedford, MA 01730

VA MEDICAL CENTERS

CONNECTICUT

VA Connecticut Healthcare System

Newington Campus
555 Willard Avenue
Newington, CT 06111
(860) 666-6951

West Haven Campus
950 Campbell Avenue
West Haven, CT 06516
(203) 932-5711

MAINE

VA Maine Healthcare System

1 VA Center
Augusta, ME 04330
(207) 623-8411
(877) 421-8263

MASSACHUSETTS

Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hosp.
200 Springs Road
Bedford, MA 01730
(781) 687-2000

VA Boston Healthcare System

Brockton Campus
940 Belmont Street
Brockton, MA 02301
(508) 583-4500

Jamaica Plain Campus
150 S. Huntington Avenue
Boston, MA 02130
(617) 232-9500

West Roxbury Campus
1400 VFW Parkway
West Roxbury, MA 02132
(617) 323-7700

VA Central Western MA Healthcare System

421 North Main Street
Leeds, MA 01053
(413) 584-4040

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Manchester VAMC
718 Smyth Road
Manchester, NH 03104
(603) 624-4366
(800) 892-8384

RHODE ISLAND

Providence VAMC
830 Chalkstone Avenue
Providence, RI 02908
(401) 273-7100
(866) 590-2976

VERMONT

White River Junction VAMC
215 North Main Street
White River Junction,
VT 05009
(802) 295-9363

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7 Germantown Road
Danbury, CT 06810
(203) 798-8422

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4 Shaw's Cove, Suite 101
New London, CT 06320
(860) 437-3611

Stamford CBOC
Stamford Health System
1275 Summer Street
Stamford, CT 06905
(203) 325-0649

Waterbury CBOC
95 Scovill Street
Waterbury, CT 06706
(203) 465-5292

Willimantic CBOC
1320 Main Street
Tyler Square (next to
Social Security Office)
Willimantic, CT 06226
(860) 450-7583

Winsted CBOC
115 Spencer Street
Winsted, CT 06098
(860) 738-6985

MAINE

Bangor CBOC
35 State Hospital Street
Bangor, ME 04401
(207) 561-3600

Lincoln CBOC
99 River Road
Lincoln, ME 04457
(207) 403-2000

Calais CBOC
50 Union Street
Calais, ME 04619
(207) 904-3700

Caribou CBOC
163 Van Buren Road, Ste. 6
Caribou, ME 04736
(207) 493-3800

Fort Kent CBOC
Medical Office Building
197 East Main St.
Fort Kent, ME 04743
(207) 834-1572

Houlton CBOC

Houlton Regional Hospital
20 Hartford Street
Houlton, ME 04730
(877) 421-8263, ext. 2000

Lewiston/Auburn CBOC

15 Challenger Drive
Lewiston, ME 04240
(207) 623-8411 Ext. 4601
(877) 421-8263 Ext. 4601

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Bingham, ME 04920
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144 Fore Street
Portland, ME 04101
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Lowell, MA 01852
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Lynn CBOC
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Lynn, MA 01904
(781) 595-9818

Martha's Vineyard Hosp.

One Hospital Road
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557
(508) 771-3190

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175 Elm Street
New Bedford, MA 02740
(508) 994-0217

Pittsfield CBOC

73 Eagle Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 499-2672

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116 Long Pond Road
Plymouth, MA 02360
(800) 865-3384

Quincy CBOC

110 West Squantum St.
Quincy, MA 02171
(774)-826-3070

Springfield CBOC

25 Bond Street
Springfield, MA 01104
(413) 731-6000

Worcester CBOC

605 Lincoln Street
Worcester, MA 01605
(508) 856-0104

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71 Hobbs Street
Conway, NH 03818
(603) 624-4366, ext. 3199
(800) 892-8384, ext. 3199

Keene CBOC

640 Marlboro Street
Keene, NH 03431
(603) 358-4900

Littleton CBOC

264 Cottage Street
Littleton, NH 03561
(603) 575-6700

Portsmouth CBOC

302 Newmarket Street
Portsmouth, NH 03803
(603) 624-4366, ext. 3199
(800) 892-8384, ext. 3199

Somersworth CBOC

200 Route 108
Somersworth, NH 03878
(603) 624-4366, ext. 3199
(800) 892-8384, ext. 3199

Tilton CBOC

630 Main Street, Ste. 400
Tilton, NH 03276
(603) 624-4366, ext. 3199
(800) 892-8384, ext. 3199

RHODE ISLAND

Middletown CBOC

One Corporate Place
Middletown, RI 02842
(401) 847-6239

VERMONT

Bennington CBOC

186 North Street
Bennington, VT 05201
(802) 440-3300

Brattleboro CBOC

71 GSP Drive
Brattleboro, VT 05301
(802) 251-2200

Burlington Lakeside CBOC

128 Lakeside Ave., Ste. 260
Burlington, VT 05041
(802) 657-7000

Newport CBOC

1734 Crawford Farm Rd.
Newport, VT 05855
(802) 624-2400

Rutland CBOC

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Rutland, VT 05701-2850
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