Willa Farrell comes from a long line of American patriots in her extensive family tree. "My ancestors have served in four major American conflicts – the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War … and yours truly, during World War II," she said. Ironically, her great-great uncle, Thomas Jefferson Henderson, was a Brevet Colonel in the Civil War and ultimately served on the board of directors at the US Soldiers' Home. The very same establishment where Willa lives today. She knows all about her family history because she's an avid genealogist. All told, Willa has been researching her family's decorated military past for 12 years now. And she was ready and willing to share her personal wartime photos and letters with us. Willa originally joined the Marine Corps in 1944 because she wanted a challenge. "I drove trucks out in El Toro, California. I drove all kinds of rigs, too – some of which were pretty big." That's a pretty tall order for a woman who stands but five feet tall. Still, where there's a Willa … there's a way.
The Challenges to Overcome

Management Challenges:
The IG identified the top challenges now facing the Home. As we overcome them, our workforce, partners and contractors are accountable for AFRH Trust Fund dollars. Naturally, oversight and enforcement is needed to ensure progress and fiscal responsibility.

Executing the Washington Master Plan
Throughout the Home’s history, we have financed operations with interest from the AFRH Trust Fund. Yet, we must supplement this to ensure fiscal stability for future Veterans. So, Congress provided AFRH (via DoD) the authority to sell or lease real estate (per the FY02 National Defense Authorization Act). We intend to capitalize by offering portions of our valuable real estate for development. Our 272-acre campus has buildings and land that no longer serve AFRH operations. So, we created our Master Plan to address development – and a competitive process to choose partners is underway. A sound plan with regular due diligence is a must if we are to generate new and reliable revenue streams.

Deploying the Gulfport Master Plan
Congress just appointed GSA as the agent to rebuild Gulfport. So AFRH and GSA must form a good working relationship. AFRH must also maintain good stewardship over the Congressional rebuild funds and be helpful advisors as GSA oversees construction.

Handling operational, financial and human capital strategies
As we discussed, our strategies for operational, financial, and human capital have not been fully realized. So we must press forward in these areas. We will push to integrate our strategies with our budget. Implement our new performance plans. And work on our capital improvement plans. With consistent oversight and our new Internal Control measures, we expect progress in FY07.
Improper Payments Information Act (IPIA)

In concert with BPD, each AFRH business program was reviewed to estimate potential improper and erroneous payments. In separate scenarios, AFRH had three incidentals that caused a total of 30 improper payments in FY06.

Much attention has been focused on this area, because these incidents eclipse last year’s single improper payment. The Home and its partners are committed to catching erroneous payments, making corrections and raising awareness – especially in resident fees. We have emphasized the importance of doing so and have taken steps to ensure that these types of problems won’t happen again.

With the launch of our RIS in FY06, and the financial module in FY07, we will soon have more detailed and accurate information. So next year, the ability to manipulate and track our data will give us a tremendous advantage in spotting problems.

Improper Payments:

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<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
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The Community to Serve

For years, the Home has prided itself on active staff and resident volunteering. Community involvement enriches the lives of everyone involved. And it reaffirms the spirit of giving and self-sacrifice that has made America such a great nation.

AFRH Volunteer Service

According to Executive Order 13401 in May 2006, each Federal agency must support and encourage volunteer community service in its Federal workforce. An annual report must be submitted that affirms this service. The first report is due in early FY07 and must designate annual performance indicators and measurable objectives. As such, we have developed our yearly requirements.

Annual Volunteer Requirements:

- Employees in grade GS9 & above must serve 10 hours
- Staff members in GS-8 & below must perform 5 hours

These hours may be served in each employee’s local community – whether it is DC, Maryland or Virginia. To ensure this service, our above requirement will be incorporated into each individual’s performance plan. In the end, our staff will do more than help our Veterans prosper. It will also help the community thrive.

AFRH employee volunteers like management analyst Tim Bourgeois serve our residents at an ice cream social. Ms. Tommie Lucas-Peterson (Navy Veteran) ponders, “If you think I want that topping, you’re nuts.”
We'd like to thank you

The management and staff would like to send sincere appreciation and heartfelt thanks to all who helped in the Katrina recovery. From local officials and volunteers, to our workforce and business partners.

Special appreciation goes to all those who donated time, money, clothing and personal items. We appreciate your generous support. And many kudos go to our former staff members of Gulfport, MS.

In reality, you’ve all given us a lot more than just support. You’ve helped us all believe that now truly is …

... The Time to Thrive

We’d like to hear from you

Thank you for reviewing our 2006 PAR. Did we present information in a useful way? Where did we succeed in this Report? What can we improve for next year? We welcome your input. Simply contact us:

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