



Department of  
Veterans Affairs

Medical Center

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## Health Headlines

For Immediate Release  
February 12, 2010

### **James J. Peters VA Hosts Valentines for Veterans 2010**

During the week of February 7-14, the James J. Peters VA Medical Center celebrated the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans. The National Salute is a week-long celebration of special thanks that occurs during the week marked by Valentines Day. During this time, VA Medical Centers across the country invite local celebrities, elected officials and school children to visit veterans and to bring them some Valentines Day cheer. This year, the Medical Center hosted Miss Universe 2009 Stefania Fernandez; Miss USA 2009 Kristen Dalton; and Miss Teen USA Stormi Henley; along with State Senator Jeff Klein and members of the SUNY Maritime Color Guard.

"The National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans gives everyone a chance to let our veterans know just how very much they are appreciated," said Medical Center Director, MaryAnn Musumeci, "We're excited to welcome Miss Fernandez, Miss Dalton, Miss Henley and Senator Klein. Their participation just heightens the celebration and brings a special note of cheer to our veterans."

Musumeci said she hopes visitors will also learn more about the important roles volunteers play at the medical center throughout the year and perhaps pursue volunteer opportunities.

"Our medical center's 464 volunteers are an important part of our health care team and donate over 85,000 hours of their precious time to our veterans. The National Salute program is a

great way for people to learn more about helping the veterans we serve," Musumeci said.

"Visitors are surprised at how varied our volunteer opportunities are."

Individuals interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities within VA are encouraged to call the office of Voluntary Services at 718.584.9000, ext. 5473 or 5474.

For more information related to this story or the James J. Peters VA Medical Center, please contact Jim Connell, Public Affairs Officer, at 718.584.9000, Ext. 6620.

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Photos follow:



L-R Miss Universe, Stefania Fernandez; Miss USA, Kristen Dalton; State Sen. Jeff Klein; and Miss Teen USA, Stormi Henley pose for a quick picture.



Miss USA, Miss Universe and Miss Teen USA visit with Veteran, John Mareello



Miss USA listens intently to Veteran Andrew Proietti