



Carl Vinson VA Medical Center, 1826 Veterans Blvd., Dublin, GA 31021



# Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Dublin VA's Patriot Day ceremony honors 9/11's fallen and American spirit of excellence**

*Dublin, Ga.* – The Carl Vinson VA Medical Center hosted its 21<sup>st</sup> annual Patriot Day and Day of Service and Remembrance ceremony Monday, Sept. 11 at 8 a.m. to honor the memory of those who died in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, those who rendered aid in the aftermath of the tragedy, and to celebrate the enduring spirit of American excellence.

The ceremony was held by the medical center's main flagpole on its front lawn and started with a formal flag raising by the Carl Vinson VA Police Department led by Lt. Jeffery Deal and assisted by Sgt. Kennetris Wright and Sgt. Dale Emmons. As the officers raised the national standard, a concentrated beam of sunlight pierced the scene, dramatically highlighting the solemnity of the event.

After the raising of the flag, Chaplain Angelika Mitchell of VA Chaplain Services offered an invocation emphasizing the indomitable spirit of the American people.

"Let us never forget what this day represents. It is, indeed, a memorial to the loved ones that we have lost, but it is also forever and always a testament to the strength of our country and our collective resilience," Mitchell said.

VA communications director Dr. Frank Jordan welcomed attendees and reminded them that the event would continue as long as the Dublin VA continued.

"We started this event to ensure that everyone has a place to gather each year to recall the sacrifice of some and the remarkable bravery of others. We're going to meet here every year as long as we're here. We hope everyone will join us and bring others with them. We are not born with a patriotic spirit, it must be grown and nurtured, and it is critical that we develop a patriotic spirit in our children so that they know what this great nation stands for," Jordan said.

U.S. Army and Vietnam War veteran and longtime VA volunteer Gus Allbritton led the Pledge of Allegiance which was followed by a rendering of the Star-spangled Banner by Jamie Cox of the VA Canteen Service.

Acting medical center director Scott Reesman gave official remarks, underscoring the importance of keeping our national history always foremost in our minds.

“While we remember those we’ve lost and honor the devotion of those who stood up in the wake of these events, we must always remember that our nation has grown stronger since 9/11. While many of us recall very well where we were when the tragedies of September 11, 2001, occurred, we’ve since raised two generations of Americans who only have our testimony for what happened and its significance. Many of these new generations have gone on to serve in our military services. They now make the sacrifices needed to maintain the vigilance that keeps our nation safe. Our job is to never forget, and teach those who come after us,” Reesman said.

Jordan closed out the ceremony with encouragement to those assembled.

“This nation is never subjugated. Our country always returns stronger and more committed. But this happens through eternal vigilance and an unswerving commitment to our values and to each other. Never forget—we are the United States of America. As long as we stick together, we will endure and continue to grow stronger.”

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Photo credit: Greg Swars

Photo caption:

- 1) VA Police Lt. Jeff Deal and team raise the national flag
- 2) Acting VA director Scott Reesman speaks at Patriot Day ceremony
- 3) Jamie Culver sings at VA 9-11 event
- 4) Dublin-Laurens community joins VA staff for Patriot Day event









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