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## **LEBANON VA MEDICAL CENTER HONORS WOMEN VETERANS**

LEBANON – May 11, 2012 –

The Lebanon VA Medical Center, Women’s Health Program, in conjunction with the South Central Pennsylvania Dress for Success, Community Action Program (CAP) hosted a Mother’s Day Tea to celebrate and honor female Veterans from Lebanon, Berks, Dauphin, Lancaster and Schuylkill counties.

The theme of the event was “Patriotism Knows No Gender” with the attendees being entertained with stories, music and poetry from other Veterans. Staff Sergeant Amanda Blanton shared her poignant story of going from soldier, wife, and mother to widow by the age of 21. SSG Blanton became widowed when her Marine Corps husband was killed in action in Iraq during her simultaneous deployment to Afghanistan. She is currently serving in the Army National Guard and assigned to the Legal Branch at Fort Indiantown Gap. Jocelyn Mushala shared poetry that she composed on her first deployment. She believes that her poetry was the thing that allowed her to successfully cope with the difficulties of being away from home.

The event honored Veterans from each branch of the military. Comfort kits containing beauty products, books and journals were given to outpatient and homeless Veterans.

“It is my hope and dream that this will become an annual event. We look forward to being able to reach even more Veterans next year.” Elizabeth Miller, Lebanon VA Medical Center, Women’s Veterans Program Manager.

(CAPTION: SSG Amanda Blanton shares her personal story with attendees of the Mother’s Day Tea for Veterans recently held at the Lebanon VA Medical Center)



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