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WDVA Secretary-designee Kolar Announces Leadership Team

Secretary-designee Mary M. Kolar announced today the leadership team of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs.

“The WDVA leadership team brings a diverse set of experiences and a wide range of expertise to the Department,” Secretary-designee Kolar said. “I am confident that this team will help move Wisconsin’s veterans community forward in the best way possible.”

James Bond, 56, has been named Deputy Secretary. Bond has overseen a wide range of veterans programs at the WDVA, having most recently served as the department’s Administrator of the Division of Veterans Benefits. He has also served as Administrator for the WDVA’s Division of Veterans Services. Prior to employment with the WDVA, Bond was employed by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development as its Deputy Division Administrator in the Divisions of Employment and Training and Family Supports, and also as Bureau Director of Management Services in the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Bond received his Bachelor of Science and Masters of Science degrees from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He served on active duty in the United States Marine Corps from 1983-1988 with assignments at home and abroad. He lives in Madison with his husband, Todd Crouch. They have one son.

Kathy Still, 53, will serve as Assistant Deputy Secretary. Since joining the department in 2013, Still has served in various assignments, overseeing many of the department’s programs, benefits and services. Prior to joining the WDVA, she worked for more than a decade as an aide in the Wisconsin State Legislature. She retired from military service after more than 24 years in the Army Reserve and National Guard, including several years of activated service. Her active duty service included the establishment and command of one of the Army’s first-in-the-nation units designed to provide command and control, administration, medical case management, and transitional services to wounded, injured, and ill reserve component members.

Still is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee and the University of Wisconsin Law School. She resides in Madison with her husband Tom.

Carla Vigue, 44, will serve as Communications Director. Vigue has been the WDVA’s Communications Director since 2011. Prior to joining the Department of Veterans Affairs, Vigue was Communications Director for the Wisconsin Department of Administration, as well as Communications Director and spokeswoman for Governor Jim Doyle. Prior to her work in Wisconsin, she worked in Washington, D.C. in the areas of federal relations and media and public relations.

Vigue holds a Master of Arts degree from Loyola University in Chicago. A native of Oneida, Wisconsin, Vigue lives in Madison with her husband, Brian, and their two sons.

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Chad Koplien, 52, will serve as Chief Legal Counsel, a position he has held since 2013. Koplien previously served as the administrator/top prosecutor at the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services and prior to that worked in the private sector focusing on business litigation.

Koplien is a veteran with more than 16 years of military experience. He currently serves as the command judge advocate for the 64th Troop Command, Wisconsin National Guard. He previously served as the command judge advocate for the 157th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, and as judge advocate for both the 32nd Infantry Brigade and the 64th Troop Command. He served as an active duty Airman in the U.S. Air Force, 820th RED HORSE Squadron.

Koplien is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison with bachelors' degrees in political science and public administration and nursing home administration. He earned his law degree from Marquette University and graduated from the U.S. Army Judge Advocate's Legal Center and School with distinction. He resides in Waunakee with his wife and their two daughters.

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