**MORE ABOUT VA OFFICE.....**

Because our veterans are being assisted by multiple agencies, whether that be county, state or federal, it is important for the team to have at the very least, a working knowledge of Social Security benefits, financial institutions, County Tax requirements, SSI Disability. Know available resources to veterans such as CareerLink Job Development, Community Action Partnership, Mercer County Food Bank, etc.

Veteran deaths are tracked by our office (within Mercer County) and are mandated by the County and State to ensure families are aware of any benefits – again, County, State and/or Federal.

Outreach and event participation includes Memorial Day, Veterans Day, networking meetings with community agencies, monthly breakfasts, in the summer, local fairs and festivals, and so much more. We always enjoy the opportunity to speak at events or meetings if an organization requests.

## Team Members:

**Tammy McLaughlin, Director**, Gold Star Spouse, Accredited Veterans Service Officer. My passion for veterans and their families runs deep. After her husband, LTC Michael McLaughlin was KIA on 05 January 2006, that passion grew stronger. On May 10, 2021, Tammy was hired as the Assistant Director. In February of 2024, she was appointed to the position of Director. Tammy's own experience with filing for benefits after her husband's death brings a unique perspective when helping spouses and surviving family members. Direct supervision and training of 3 team members, all veterans, as well as interns and volunteers. As an accredited VSO, she assists veterans and family members with applying for County, State and Federal benefits

**Bernard "BJ" Grenier, Assistant Director,** CSM (Ret.), Accredited Veterans Service Officer (PA DMVA). Hired in March of 2024. BJ served over 32 years first with the US Marine Corp (6 years) and then the Army National Guard, both PA and WV. Upon being hired, BJ took on the task of flag distribution for Memorial Day 2021. He was simultaneously working on his accreditation training, completing it within a few months of employment. Originally from Maine, BJ and his wife currently reside in Hermitage

**Venti Cozart or "V" as we call him, is our Administrative Assistant. "V"** retired in January 2024 from the US Air Force as a TSGT . His employment with the County began on March 24, 2025. His last duty station was in Alaska, so he has many great stories to share. He and his family returned to the Valley after his retirement.

**Tanner Powell rounds out our team as Office Assistant.** Tanner served 8 years in the US Air Force, earning the rank of SSGT. Ironically, Tanner's last duty station was Alaska as well. So again, a lot of great stories about Alaskan adventures. Tanner and his fiancé moved back to the area as well. Tanner's focus since starting on May 19th has been on our veteran death benefits. He has been able step up and take charge, and within a week, was able to get those files up to date. In addition, Tanner has created trackers allowing easier access to information in one spot. Primarily, Tanner will be helping with County and State benefits. The redistribution of tasks allows the office to be more efficient assisting veterans and families.