

DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN AFFAIRS OFFICE OF INSPECTOR

The Veterans Administration (VA), which has since become the Department of Veteran Affairs, was established in 1930. As far back as World War I, however, there was an agency responsible for providing assistance to our veterans. Likewise, there was a small cadre of professionals assigned to the "Inspection/Investigation Service" to investigate what is currently referred to as "waste, fraud and abuse." In the mid-1950s the "Service" was redesignated "Investigation Service" - a designation it retained until 1978, when the Inspector General Bill (PL 95-452) was enacted into law establishing the Offices of Inspectors General.

Prior to the passage of PL 95-452, all VA investigations were conducted by a small group of special investigators (1810 series), whose assignments were centrally directed from the Washington, DC, office of the Director, Investigation and Security Service. The first woman investigator was hired in 1975, having previously worked for VA as a Hospital Police Officer.

Special investigators conducted a variety of investigations involving employee misconduct issues, selected beneficiary and program fraud cases, and occasionally participated in joint task force efforts with federal and local law enforcement agencies to investigate crimes on VA stations. In early 1980, the VA-OIG decentralized its investigative operations by opening regional investigative offices in eight major cities across the United States; hiring additional personnel; and converting its administrative investigators to 1811 series criminal investigators.

During the past ten years, the VA-OIG has broadened the scope of its investigations, which now include fraud in all VA programs (procurement, construction, home loan guar-

antees, health services, and veterans' benefits.) In the past ten years, the number of women agents has increased. Today, women are being recruited to fill positions at all levels and are serving in all major regions where they make up 22 percent of the special agent workforce.

Quite a few women special agents employed by the VA-OIG began their careers in the federal government as secretaries or administrative clerks. After becoming criminal investigators and completing the Criminal Investigative Training Program at FLETC, they quickly progressed to journey level positions. There are currently three women special agents who were previously secretaries. One of the VA-OIG's women special agents is now a GM-15 Supervisory Special Agent assigned as the Special Agent in Charge of an OIG field office in Washington, DC.

The VA/OIG is extremely pleased to report that women special agents have served this nation's veterans well with dignity, pride and the highest degree of professionalism. One of these women is profiled below.

Rebecca J. Kiser
Special Agent VA-OIG



Rebecca Kiser has been a special agent with the VA Office of Inspector General, Kansas City office, since September 1986.

During her tenure, she has risen through the ranks from a GS-5 to her present position of GS-12. She returned to school and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in May 1989 from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, majoring in Criminal Justice. She also served in the Air Force Reserve with the rank of Tech. Sgt.

Agent Kiser has handled major cases involving sensitive issues and displays exceptional ability in analyzing and investigating complex "paper trail" cases. She is currently deputized as a Deputy U.S. Marshal in connection with one of her cases where the indicted subject is a fugitive.

Kiser is well-versed in the various computer programs serving the Department of Veterans Affairs and frequently assists other agents in inquiries. She is a member of the Federal Investigator's Association and the Missouri Police Officers Association.