

Major Ofelia Alvarez-Willis

Major Ofelia Alvarez-Willis grew up in East Los Angeles and received her medical degree from Loma Linda University. For more than 32 years, Major Willis has treated our California Veterans at the Jerry L. Pettis Memorial Veterans Medical Center in Loma Linda, California. She currently serves as the chief medical doctor for the Department of Emergency Medicine and Ambulatory Care. Major Willis' work treating Veterans over the years inspired her to join the California National Guard in 2012, where she currently serves as brigade surgeon at the 224th Sustainment Brigade. In her role as a military medical officer, she also trains medics and soldiers and supports missions assisting the Santa Ynez and Round Valley Native American Medical Clinics.

In addition to this work, Major Willis has contributed to international efforts to ensure preventative medicine programs and care in many underserved communities, including those in Mexico, Latin America and Romania. She also served as a gubernatorial appointee to the California Medical Board.

In 2014, Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. appointed Major Willis to serve as a Commissioner on the Commission on the Status of Women and Girls. She is the first Commissioner appointed under new legislation that required that an appointee be a veteran or a member of the military. In her role as Commissioner, Major Willis works to ensure the full potential of the more than 19 million women and girls in California, with a special focus and understanding of women Veterans, women in the military and military families.

Major Willis says "Women Veterans are in my heart. We need to increase our advocacy for our women Veterans, communicate through social media for our younger generations and bring awareness to the public and Veterans that are unaware of the resources available for them. CalVet's recently published California Women Veterans Outreach Toolkit is an example of the information that needs to reach all our women Veterans."