



March 26, 2016 Minutes

Present: Amber Alexander, Terry Allebaugh, Claudia Baker, Archie Barrow, Cindi Basenspiller, Glenn Batten, Ann Marie Beall, Susan Bennett, Michael Bishop, Blake Bourne, Judy Bruhn, Erica Buckley, Joshua Cain, Ray Celeste, Jr., Ray Cerda, Nancy Chastain, Jennifer Chauncey, Eric Crawford, Ph.D., Karen Creech, Justin Davis, Hank Debnam, Lisa Delgado, Paul Dillon, Scott Dorney, SGT Khan Eakin, Patrice Epps, Li Fang, Ph.D., Regina Ford, John Freudenberg, Ralph Gildenhaus, Karen Goetz, James Gorham, Miriam Gray, Daniel Hackley, Judy Harmon, Aaron Harper, Angela Harper, John Harris, Justein Henry, Troy Hershberger, Phil Hewett, Jim Hoffman, CPT Ron Hogard, Jordan Huffman, Charlene Irvin, Andrew Jackson, Tori Johannigsmeier, Duggie Johnson, Susan Johnson, Robert Jones, Meg Jordan, Stan Kimer, Jessi LaCosta, Wilson Lester, John Lewis, Brad Lienhart, Jennifer Love-Pennell, Ron Mangum, Bud Martin, Enrique McClymont, Mike McMichael, Bill McMillian, Mike McNeely, MAJ Sarah Miller, Dr. George Millsaps, Brian Minga, Kendra Monden, Brenda Monforti, Sandy Moonert, Henry Moore, Jeff Motley, Nyi Myint, Terry Nichols, Stephanie Nissen, Ilario Pantano, Toni Pinkston, David Porter, Jim Prosser, Joe Rapley, Cheryl Rawls, Kimrey Rhinehardt, Dave Roddenberry, Stuart Ruffin, Dr. Lisa Sacco, Steve Sedahl, Rob Sherwood, Jeff Smith, Tony Sowards, Belivia Spaulding, Bruce Sprecher, SGT Cornelia Stahlhut, Flo Stein, Annette Stevenson, Robert Tabares, Doug Taggart, Jillian Thompson, Gary Tillman, Curt Torrell, Dr. Kimberly Tran, Eric Truesdale, Linda Vettrus-Nichols, Kathleen Vollandt, Lucas Vrbsky, Dr. Joe Westcott, Jan White, Lyn Widener, Kyle Winder, Branden Wilson, GEN Cornell Wilson, Laressa Witt, Alisha Wood, Woody Woodson, Larry Yates, Diane Yelverton, Shadia Young, and Julia Ziegler,

GEN Wilson welcomed everyone and spoke of his appreciation for the support of everyone in the room. He noted that the Governor is trying to establish a cabinet level position to head the new Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. The Governor sees that veterans represent a priority for North Carolina. Everyone in the room and on the phone then introduced themselves.

Karen Goetz, Director of the Military and Families Program, Duke Evidence-based Practice Implementation Center (EPIC) presented on *Welcome Back, Veterans*, an initiative that started in Charlotte/Mecklenburg in 2011. The initiative includes three projects—the Veteran Culture and Clinical Competence (V3C) Learning Series; the Resource Parenting Curriculum Learning Collaborative; and the Cognitive Processing Therapy Learning Collaborative. Through these projects, the goal is to improve access and quality of care for veterans and their families.

Mr. Pantano announced that the NC Division of Veterans Affairs (NC DVA) has formed a partnership with Duke EPIC to train Veteran Service Officers (VSOs).

Dave Roddenberry, also with Duke EPIC, works on V3C project and the Veteran Peer Support Specialist Program. In terms of the latter program, he has also been partnering with Ron Mangum at the UNC Behavioral Health Resource Program that has a certificate program for peer support specialists and with John Harris at the NC Division of Mental Health. Mr. Roddenberry is working with NC DVA VSOs

and call center and community-based organizations such as Outside the Wire (e.g., Mike McMichael and Sam Hargrove). Those who go through the program will be certified as NC State Peer Support Specialists.

Bill McMillian, Transitions Services Manager, Fort Bragg noted that one of the incentives for the Army having transition services is that it has to pay unemployment costs. The State sends the bill to the branch of services from where the veteran was discharged. Since the Army doesn't put aside monies for unemployment, they have to take it out of their training budget. For the first quarter of FY 2015, they have already paid \$7M. Thus, the Army helps soldiers prepare for civilian life through partnerships with the community. They need at least 12 months prior to a separation to help service members in their transition to civilian life. Known as the Soldier for Life Transition Program, they provide services such as resume writing, interview techniques, and financial planning. They work with each soldier to develop an individual transition program. He noted that hiring events have taken the place of job fairs. Soldiers now develop targeted resumes based on positions announced by employers. Programs include Operation Re-invent, Posse Foundation scholarships for Fort Bragg high school students, and Operation Boots to Business. They partner with the Wounded Warrior Project, community colleges, and CVS (they are building a pharmacy on installation and training pharmacy students for future careers with CVS).

MAJ Sarah Miller, Yellow Ribbon Program, US Department of Defense. She is located in the National Guard Claude T. Bowers Building. Since it was first mandated in 2007, it has become more structured and comprehensive. There are three phases with four events: (1) pre-deployment with an event for the soldiers and their families and an event for families only, (2) 30-day post-mobilization event with soldiers and family, and (3) the soldier being administered the post-deployment health reassessment. MAJ Miller reviewed services that were provided as part of the Yellow Ribbon Program such as informational meetings and briefings (e.g., TRICARE, benefits), family counseling, legal assistance, financial counseling, employment opportunities, and suicide prevention.

Jillian Thompson, VA music therapist and Kendra Monden, VA recreation therapist, are co-chairs for the 2015 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, which will be conducted on October 12-19 in Durham. The festival will feature the arts, music, drama, and creative writing (53 categories in visual arts and 120 categories in performance arts). Competitions will occur at the local level, with first place entries sent to national judges in June. The Durham VAMC must raise \$130K to bring the 150 contestants to North Carolina. They would like community participation in the silent auction wine tasting to take place in April. On May 2 a walking, running, or rolling event will occur. On Sunday, October 18, there will be a stage show, free to public.

On September 12, the NC National Guard will host the 5th annual 5K Gratitude Walk to celebrate the lives of soldiers. Enrique McClymont, NC National Guard Resilience, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention (R3SP) Program encouraged participation from members of the GWG and the community. He also noted that they had 14 vendors in 2014 and would like to increase that number.

Mr. Pantano unveiled the NC4VETS website (<http://www.nc4vets.com/>). He said it also can be accessed through a mobile app.

Attendees announced the following events:

- 3/28 Wake Tech northern campus, noon to 5 pm
- 3/28 from 9 am to 2 pm, with VBA to do the scheduling and enrollment. This is the third VA claims session to occur this year in Winston-Salem; 450 were reviewed in October; 569 were reviewed in January – 9 to 2 VBA to do scheduling and enrollment
- April is Month of the Military Child
- 5/16: Military Appreciation Day at the Carolina Field of Honor in Kernersville to help veterans access their benefits (fun-filled day which will also give the public an opportunity to express their gratitude)
- 5/19-5/21: Valor Games (May 19 Dean Smith Arena; May 20 Cameron Indoor Stadium; May 21 cycling at Lake Crabtree)