

Macomb Veterans Action Collaborative Minutes  
Monday, February 5, 2018  
Macomb Community Action Training Room  
21885 Dunham Road, Clinton Township, MI

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Laura Rios at 9:00A.M.

**Attendees:**

Charlene Myers, NCOA/DAV	Kate Logan, MVAA
Chae Williams, MyCare Health Center	Katie Page, Macomb County Vet Center
Chris Reilly, Macomb/St. Clair MI Works	Kyle Pollet, Office of Congressman Sander Levin
Daun Reven, Volunteers of America	Lisa Marie Duncan-Edwards, Macomb Veteran Services
Dr. Angie Miller, MFLC	Laura Rios (Co-Chair), Macomb Veteran Services
Dr. Rodney Tolbert	Madeline Habib, MCCMH/HSBC
Hine wove Rodriguez, Congressman Sander Levin	Mark Kilgore, Care of SE Michigan
Gary Purcell, VVA 154	Mark Meadows, VA Medical Center
Gerald Fisher-Curley, John D. Dingell VA Medical Center	Sue Walker, Salvation Army Harbor Light
Joanne Stern, Macomb County Crisis Center	Susan Casadei, Harbor Health Home Care
Jonathan Drake, Simply Blessed Catering Veteran Owned	William Schranz, MCCMH
Julie Patterson, Macomb Veteran Services	William Upshaw, Selfridge/Yellow Ribbon
Kara Fields, Macomb Community College	

**II. INTRODUCTIONS**

Attendees of the meeting introduced themselves and stated what agency or business they represent.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes were approved with the following changes: yoga groups start at 9:00A.M. and 11:00A.M.; HSBC Traveling Tours are taking place in May on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>.

**IV. OLD BUSINESS**

No old business discussed.

**V. SPECIAL SPEAKER**

**FEBRUARY SPECIAL SPEAKER:**

Gillian Bentley is from Disability Network of Oakland and Macomb and presented information on elder abuse. Elder abuse is defined as intentionally causing harm or serious risk of harm to a vulnerable adult, someone over the age of 18 who relies on someone else to meet their daily needs. The categories of abuse are physical, psychological/emotional, sexual, financial and neglect. Neglect is broken down into three categories: active neglect, passive neglect and self-neglect. Active neglect is actively neglecting a vulnerable person's needs. Passive neglect is not knowing how to care for the needs of a vulnerable person or not being able to physically provide care for the vulnerable person. Self-neglect is not caring for one's self, such as not bathing or not taking medications, etc. Visible signs of physical abuse can include bruising,

scaring, fractures and also bleeding scalp from hair pulling or finger prints on the back of the neck. Behavioral warning signs of physical abuse include being withdrawn, depression, feelings of helplessness and anxiety. Psychological and emotional abuse is the hardest category to prove. Victims may experience manipulation, verbal assaults, threats, intimidation, humiliation and physical isolation. Behavioral signs of psychological and emotional abuse include depression, being withdrawn, fearfulness, feeling helpless, nervousness and extreme weight loss. Signs of sexual abuse can include complaints/reports of sexual abuse, not being able to change in private and explicit photographs. Behavioral signs of sexual abuse can include subtle change in personality or signs of depression, fearfulness and feelings of helplessness and anxiety. Financial abuse can include unpaid bills when that was never an issue, someone threatening to withhold money, withholding access to financial accounts, lack of necessities and/or being forced to sign things the person doesn't understand. Behavioral signs of financial abuse are confusion, disorientation, nervousness, fearfulness and depression. Physical signs of neglect are untreated medical conditions, malnourishment/dehydration, poor personal hygiene and uncleanliness of the home. Behavioral signs of neglect: memory loss and disorientation. The speaker presented statistics on elder abuse in Michigan and on a national level. She advised everyone in the audience to call if abuse is suspected as it often takes multiple calls to corroborate a complaint.

## **VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Benefits/Communication Committee: Laura Rios/Mary Beth Ryan**

Laura informed the group that the veteran referral pilot program between veteran services and DHHS has ended and best practices are being implemented across the state. Additionally, the VA Red Carpet project committee is recruiting for volunteers to meet veterans at the VA and walk them through the registration process. They are also looking for volunteer drivers to transport veterans to the VA. Another agency, Legal Aid in Mount Clemens, is also recruiting volunteers with office experience to answer calls. Finally, M.A.T.R.I.X. kiosks are being installed at multiple sites throughout the county and can link people in need to services that can help. When the pilot is finished, more information will be added to the kiosks.

### **Jobs Committee: Crystal Bersche/Mark Meadows**

Mark reports that there are great things going on in the employment community, newsletters are going out on Mondays and Fridays this year. The newsletter includes job development leads for veterans as well as developments in the civilian job markets. Job seekers are welcome to email Mark if they need help getting to companies for employment. Chrysler will be hiring 800-1200 people late this year or in 2019. He advised the group of a company in St. Clair Shores looking to hire thirty veterans immediately at \$10.00/hour for warehouse and quality assurance, those interested in applying must be ready to start work and can email their resume to Mark.

### **Services Committee: Madeline Habib**

Madeline reported that they are in the process of creating a script to go with a fingerprint identification form that homeless shelters will be trained on. They will help guests complete this form to be held on file in the event someone passes away and can't be identified. It will help the county be able to identify the person and release their body for burial or cremation.

### **Membership Committee: Shaun Taft**

Laura advised the group that new attendees who wish to be members must complete a membership form to be added to the roster. Members will initial next to their name to sign in for the meeting and new attendees will add their name to a sign-in sheet.

## **Faith Based Committee:**

Rodney reported he will be meeting with Bill to develop this committee. He also reported that his food pantry is full and clients can be referred to him for food assistance.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS/IDEAS FOR FUTURE PRESENTATIONS**

MARCH SPEAKER: Nicole Stromberg, MD, Psychiatrist, ACOS, Mental Health Services

APRIL SPEAKER: TBD

## **VIII. ROUND ROBIN**

Kara spoke on the Forever GI Bill. She advised there are multiple COEs being sent out since the system is changing. Students should not worry if they receive multiple COEs. Students can call the VA or Kara with their questions. The Forever GI Bill will also give time back to students who went to ITT Tech. The Forever GI Bill only impacts the post 9/11 GI bill.

Crystal Bersche reports that she is now a Veteran Employment Representative and will be working with employers, apprenticeship programs and unions to make connections for veterans. Her new contact number is 517-249-0026. She also informed the group that the next VCAT is March 23<sup>rd</sup>; veterans, employers and service providers are being invited for a story telling session.

Madeline Habib reminded the group that the HSBC Traveling Tours will be on May 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. The tours are free and offering two sessions on human trafficking. Continuing education credits are available to those who attend the tours.

WW2 Veterans are eligible for the French Legion of Honor Medal if they served in France.

A member shared a success story of a female veteran. She was a retired medic but couldn't find a job in the medical field because she didn't have a Michigan license. She was referred to a training program, got her license and was hired immediately.

Dr. Angie Miller is a Military Family Life Counselor. Family counseling services are provided to the service members, spouses and children. She is currently at Selfridge and her phone number is 586-424-7284. Services can be provided to active, guard and reserve.

William Upshaw reports that the Yellow Ribbon program is for the guard and reserve after they have returned from a ninety day or longer deployment. The next event is being planned in March. Many service providers are interested in having an information table at the event.

A member informed the group that the command chief from Selfridge is interested in coming to an MVAC meeting and presenting the five-year plan.

The facebook group has been started and has about 84 members.

Kate Logan reports that she helps with outreach and getting veterans connected to resources. She can host an information table if anyone is planning an event and is interested. Their website is [www.michiganveteran.com](http://www.michiganveteran.com) and those in need can contact 1-800-MICH-VET for resources.

The month's Veteran Employment Boot Camp is in full swing and at capacity. Any veterans in transition to civilian life and in need of employment services should visit Michigan Works in Clinton Township.

John Drake: Simply Blessed Catering is hosting a dinner theatre titled Celebration of Love at Meadowbrook Congregational Church, \$35 for adults, \$24 for children 12 and under. This event includes an evening filled with love songs and Italian cuisine on February 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> at 7P.M. He advised the group he'd be happy to cater any of their events.

Mark Meadows reports that the Hire our Heroes job fair event will be on March 10<sup>th</sup> at the VA hospital in Detroit. They had 400 participants and 27 hired directly from the job fair. Veteran service organizations will have information tables and Kelly Services will be available for resume review. A Suits for Soldiers event is also being planned. A free haircut day for homeless veterans will be every 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month at 10A.M. in room 1290 at the VA Hospital. Mark will let members know where they can donate suits in the newsletter.

Laura Rios informed the group that she has been looking for free storage to store donations within the county. She also reported that free tax preparation service is available at the Macomb County Family Resource Center for individuals and families who qualify. Services are available Tuesday and Thursday evenings by appointment and walk ins are accepted on Saturdays from 10am-2pm. Appointments are also available on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Thompson Center in Warren. Virtual tax return drop off is also available, people can drop off their tax returns and they will call and let them know when the return is ready. They cannot help with rental properties, trusts and bankruptcies.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next MVAC meeting will be begin at 9:00A.M. on March 5, 2018. The meeting will be in the Macomb Community Action Training Room at 21885 Dunham Road, Clinton Township, MI.

### **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40A.M. by Laura Rios.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen Palmer