

Macomb Veterans Action Collaborative Minutes
Monday, May 7, 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 9:10 am.

Attendees:

Christopher Golema, 127 W61 FRG	
Crystal Bersche, SOM Veterans Employment Services	
Bill Walby, MSGCU	Kara Fields, Macomb Community College
Kelsy Snook, Intern Vet Services	Mason Turrell, MCC
Joyce Moultrie, Macomb Veteran Services	Katie Bonham, Macomb Veteran Services
Charlene Myers, NCOA/DAV	Laura Rios (Co-Chair), Macomb Veteran Services
Chris Franklin, American Indian Vets of MI, Inc.	Lisa Marie Duncan-Edwards, Macomb Veteran Services
Jessica Judson, Michigan Schools & Gov	Kim Kimler, VAMC
Teena Sawicki, VAMC	Madeline Habib, MCCMH/HSBC
A.C. Giles, TTI	Mark Kilgore, CARE of Southeastern Michigan
Christy Koons, Region 10 PIHP	Wendy Martindale, St. Clair CMH
Mark Meadows, VAMC	Stacia Miller, Veteran Access Center
Katie Page, Vet Center	Sama Harp, Macomb Community
Chris Reilly, Michigan Works!	Shaun Taft, What Works
Joann Sterne, McCrisis Center	William Upshaw, Selfridge ANG
Gerald Fisher-Curley, VAMC	Yolanda Spencer-Dandridge, VAMC

II. **INTRODUCTIONS**

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

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Proposed changes: A motion to approve the minutes with these changes was made by Chris Reilly, it was 2nd by Lisa Marie Duncan-Edwards and was approved by the collaborative.

IV. **OLD BUSINESS**

New MVAC Welcome Letter – approved by collaborative. Motion to approve the letter was made by Gerald Curley, it was 2nd by Kara Fields.

V. **SPECIAL SPEAKER**

MAY SPECIAL SPEAKER: Kimberly Kember, VAMC Suicide Prevention Team
Suicide is complex; no single event or factor leads to suicidal behavior. Transition points and major life events can increase risk such as: divorce, job loss, financial issues, or death of a loved one. Eighteen percent of all deaths by suicide among U.S. adults were Veterans. Veterans are more likely than the general population to use firearms as a means for suicide. Twenty Five percent of Veteran suicides have a history of previous suicide attempts. Veteran – Specific Risks include: frequent deployments to hostile environments, exposure to

extreme stress, physical/sexual assault, length of deployment, service related injury. Female Veteran Specific Risk include: Mental Health Diagnosis, Traumatic Brain Injury, Homelessness, Interpersonal Stressors, and limited Social Supports. Suicide Prevention is "Everyone's Business." Pay attention to signs including: hopelessness, worthlessness, and despair, increased alcohol or drug abuse, withdrawing from family or friends. Protective Factors that may decrease the risk for suicide include: positive social support, spirituality, sense of responsibility to the family, children in the home, life satisfaction, and positive problem solving skills. When an individual's usual and customary coping skills are no longer adequate to address a perceived stressful situation, suicide could be a risk. How to respond to a suicide risk: lessen the intensity, duration, and presence of a crisis, engage the individual in a safety plan including improving the safety of the environment and means restriction. For more information or to consult an expert on Suicide Risk Management, contact: SRMconsult@va.gov or visit www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/consult/index.asp.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Benefits/Communication Committee: Laura Rios/Mary Beth Ryan

Tax Season is over. The program did over 1,200 tax returns. There was one day set aside for veterans only to have their taxes done.

Jobs Committee: Crystal Bersche/Mark Meadows

Ford will training 200 veterans on May 9, 2018 for positions at the plants in the local area. In the fall, Ford will be re-opening one of their plants for the new Ford Ranger for production starting in 2019. Chrysler has been posting jobs on My Talent Connect for a new facility in Sterling Heights. They will be looking for Material Handlers and/or Warehousing people to start moving into the facility. GM has been cutting back on production so we are waiting to see what they decide to do. But they do have a new line coming out this fall. Please keep sending in veteran contacts to me to fill these upcoming positions. Cyber Security is a very hot job market right now, the Federal Government is looking for over 200 positions to be filled in this market. If you know of a veteran who is in the I.T. program at one of the colleges, send them to USA.jobs.com or send their contact information to me. Skilled Trades and Construction is also very hot right now.

Services Committee: Madeline Habib

A draft of the legal flow chart will be presented at the next Steering Meeting. She hopes to have it available to the collaborative at the next meeting.

Membership Committee: Shaun Taft

If you are a member of the collaborative, please remember to initial the roster to designate your presence at the meeting. If this is your first time here or if you are not a member, please sign in on the sign in sheet. Please print and write clearly so we can read the spelling of your name and/or contact information.

Faith Based Committee: Dr. Rodney Tolbert

No updates.

Higher Education: Kara Fields

June 2, 1st Annual Student Veteran Leadership Symposium will be held in Detroit
Hosted by Consortium of Michigan Veterans Educators (CMVE)

Free for student veterans; some will get free hotel stay via sponsorship

Kara will report back to MVAC about any lessons learned or next steps from CMVE in future meetings

Grassroots Community Outreach (GCO): Great Lakes Army Recruiting Battalion initiative for leaders in education (K-12 and higher education) to learn more about Army careers and soldiers. They are asking leaders to pledge support and join a working group as advocates to maintain the formal connection between the Army and the local community. This will remain a quarterly initiative moving forward.
September 20-21; CMVE hosts the 6th Annual Conference for educators. This conference will be held in Kalamazoo and is themed, Beyond the Veterans Lounge.
Forever GI Bill: Reminder that there are changes to the Post 9/11 GI Bill and the timing of these changes may impact books/supply payments and housing payments for the fall semester.

VII. NEW BUSINESS/IDEAS FOR FUTURE PRESENTATIONS

All meeting minutes through April 2018 and rosters are posted on the MVAC website.

VIII. ROUND ROBIN

Crystal Bersche – for the new attendees, she gave a brief summary of her job responsibilities. She works with Michigan Works! and employers to get veteran's jobs.

Mark Meadows – for the new attendees, he gave a brief summary of his job responsibilities and mentioned the employment news letter.

Rachel Price – spoke about Career Dress, a program to help female veterans “dress for success.” She will send the contact information to Laura who will send it out to the collaborative.

Stacia Miller – There is a volunteer orientation Saturday May 12th at 10:00 a.m. It will be held at the center 176 South Main in Mt. Clemens.

Chris Franklin – still pushing the Smoking Cessation. Please have any veteran (or non veteran) that smokes, or has ever smoked fill out the form to be included in this program. They are also working with DHHS to get the word out about their program for anyone who would like to stop smoking. Free posters regarding the Smoking Cessation were available to pick up after the meeting.

Kara Fields - introduced Mason Turrell as a new staff member and Office POC in my Veteran & Military Services office.

Some of the Round Robin participants do not speak loudly or clearly enough to get their information into the minutes.

NEXT MEETING

June 4, 2018 – David Maczik from The Standing Company will be speaking

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 am by Laura Rios.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Urban