


Spring 2018

# UA35/8 Reveille, Vol. 26, Issue 1

WKU Veterans Upward Bound

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# REVEILLE

## VUB SUCCESS STORY



Veterans Upward Bound wishes to extend our congratulations to Philip Parsons, a former participant in our program. Philip joined VUB in September, 2011. During his time with us, his driving goal was to become a social counselor for veterans suffering from PTSD. Philip completed his Master of Social Work in May of 2017 at Western Kentucky University. In February of this year, Philip joined the staff at the local Bowling Green VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic as a counselor. We are extremely proud of Philip and, for all of us that worked with him, there was never a doubt that he would succeed in his goal. All of us here at VUB wish him the best and have no doubt that he will advance rapidly in his career.

## VA Launches Telehealth Program for Rural Vets With PTSD

With a focus on improving access to mental health care for Veterans living in rural areas, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs announced it has launched a pilot telehealth program that will give rural Veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) remote access to psychotherapy and related services.

VA's Office of Rural Health, in partnership with VA's Quality Enhancement Research Initiative, is supporting the Telemedicine Outreach for PTSD (TOP) program to deliver therapy and other care through phone and interactive video contact.

"Our researchers have worked diligently in recent years to establish the safety and efficacy of PTSD psychotherapy delivered remotely, ensuring Veterans will get the same quality of PTSD care as if they were in a doctor's office at a VA medical center," said VA Secretary David Shulkin. "We are excited to see this program help greater numbers of Veterans living in rural areas and pleased that it will save them time and effort to get to a VA facility that is far from their homes."

Dr. John Fortney, a research health scientist at the VA Puget Sound Health Care System in Seattle, Washington, is leading the project.

"Long travel distances to urban areas can be a major barrier to care for rural Veterans," Fortney said. "In a prior trial, we were able to use telehealth technologies successfully to engage Veterans in evidence-based, trauma-focused therapy without their having to travel to a distant VA medical center."

To date, more than 500 rural Veterans who are not receiving specialty PTSD care have enrolled in the study. The participants may choose between the two main forms of evidence-based, trauma-focused psychotherapy used in VA: cognitive processing therapy and prolonged exposure therapy.

Veterans participating in the program receive frequent phone calls from a care manager who helps them

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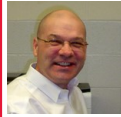
Davy Stone  
Director  
(270) 745 6876  
davy.stone@wku.edu



Bertha Hunter  
Office Associate  
(270) 745 5310  
bertha.hunter@wku.edu



Beth England  
Adult Education Specialist  
(270) 745 5024  
mary.england@wku.edu



Rick Wright  
Counselor/Coordinator  
(270) 745 5008  
rick.wright@wku.edu



David W. Angle  
Adult Education Specialist  
(270) 745 6570  
david.angle@wku.edu



access services provided by off-site psychiatrists and psychologists. The psychotherapy is delivered via interactive video from a VA medical center to a community-based outpatient clinic (CBOC) or to the Veteran's home. The telephone care manager also monitors the Veterans' progress and helps them overcome barriers to care.

The program includes 12 CBOCs across the nation in Charleston, South Carolina; Iowa City, Iowa; Little Rock, Arkansas; Denver, Colorado; San Diego, California; and Seattle. The results, which will be available in 2020, will lay the groundwork for national implementation of the TOP program.

To learn more about VA research on PTSD, visit [www.research.va.gov/topics/ptsd.cfm](http://www.research.va.gov/topics/ptsd.cfm).

### **VA Partners With Cohen Veterans Network to Increase Access to Mental Health Services**

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Cohen Veterans Network, Inc., (CVN) announced a new partnership to increase Veterans' access to mental health resources to reduce Veteran suicides.

The partnership will allow VA and CVN to work together to advance and improve Veterans' mental health and well-being and expand and promote community collaboration to increase Veterans' access to mental health resources.

"VA and CVN have a shared goal to improve Veterans' health and access to mental health services to reduce Veteran suicide," said VA Secretary David J. Shulkin. "With 14 out of the 20 Veterans who take their own lives per day not engaging VA care, partnerships such as this help those Veterans, as well as their families, receive care where they live."

As part of the collaboration, VA and CVN will:

Work together on potential mental health education initiatives, consumer marketing and public health messaging

- Discuss potential locations for Cohen Clinics in regions believed to have underserved Veterans in need of mental health care services
- Collaborate to share publicly available, VA-developed educational resources for health care providers, such as military culture training and suicide prevention training with CVN staff and clinic employees.

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### **MILITARY APPRECIATION DAY, MEMORIAL DAY, MAY 28**

We invite all veterans and their families to come out to the Hot Rods ballpark on Memorial Day. All military personnel (active or retired) will receive a complimentary game ticket with ID and family and friends in attendance with them may purchase tickets for \$5.

The Bowling Green Hot Rods will be playing the Dayton Dragons. Game time is 12:05pm. It will also be Buck Monday where fans can enjoy \$1 Pepsi products and popcorn.



“This partnership will help us save lives by getting care to Veterans faster and, therefore, preventing suicides,” said Dr. Anthony Hassan, president and CEO of CVN. “We are excited about partnering with VA and advancing the field through innovative clinician training initiatives and public messaging. This partnership adds another layer of depth and quality to our robust network of Cohen Military Family Clinics.”

For more information about VA mental health services, visit [www.mentalhealth.va.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov). Information about the Cohen Veterans Network may be found at: <https://www.cohenveteransnetwork.org>.

Veterans in crisis or having thoughts of suicide — and those who know a Veteran in crisis — should call the Veterans Crisis Line for confidential support 24 hours a day 365 days a year. Call 800-273-8255

### **VA Launches Concierge for Care Program**

Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs announced the launch of Concierge for Care, a health-care enrollment initiative that connects with former service members shortly after they separate from the service.

“Our goal is to give transitioning service members one less thing to worry about,” said VA Secretary David J. Shulkin. “We know that more than a third of Veterans who haven’t yet visited our facilities indicated they are not aware of VA health care benefits, while a quarter reported they do not know how to apply.”

As part of Concierge for Care, VA staff members are personally contacting recently separated service members to answer questions, process their health-care enrollment applications over the phone and help schedule eligible Veterans’ first VA medical appointment, if needed. Each week, VA receives a list of separating service members from the Department of Defense. The goal is to make contact with them within a month of discharge.

Certain Veterans who served in a theater of combat operations are eligible to enroll and receive cost-free health care for medical conditions related to their military service during the five-year period after discharge.

Information about VA health care and the application process can be found at <https://www.vets.gov/health-care/>



## **MILLION VETERAN PROGRAM**

MVP reached a major milestone last September, 2017 when the program welcomed its 600,000th veteran partner joined the program. The achievement was the result of years of planning, foresight, and determination to build a genomic research database to improve health care for veterans and all Americans.

The beginnings of the program was in 1999 when a DNA Bank was created by the VA’s Cooperative Studies Program. Then in 2006, the VA Genomic Medicine Program opened the door for personalized medicine—health care tailored to individuals’ needs, based on genetic markers.

The Million Veteran Program began pilot work in 2009 to evaluate methods and survey instruments for recruitment and enrollment. In March 2011, MVP launched with 11 vanguard sites. Since then, MVP has continued to expand its footprint across the country having added 7 new sites as well as 8 satellite sites.

MVP researchers have begun to share their findings with the broader research community. The work has generated enthusiasm from the communities about the potential for meaningful findings from MVP and projects using the information from it. The studies are the first step of impacting clinical care. It is a discovery phase needing verification or replication before having the ability to impact clinical care. Speeding up the process from discovery to implementation is an important goal of MVP.



## REVEILLE

**Veterans Upward Bound**  
Western Kentucky University  
1906 College Heights Blvd.  
#11098  
Bowling Green, KY 42101-1098  
www.wku.edu/vub  
facebook.com/vubwku



# WKU



Kent Johnson (left) presenting award to Rick Wright

Rick Wright was presented with a "Lifetime Distinguished Service Award" for his dedication and commitment in service to veterans. VUB alumnus Kent Johnson, who is the current president of the Southern Kentucky Veterans Council and the Assistant at WKU's Military Student Services, presented the award on behalf of the Southern Kentucky Veterans Council and MOAA's Cumberland Trace chapter. Congratulations Rick!



## Important Numbers and Dates

**Catherine McKee, WKU VA Certifying Official**  
(270) 745-3732  
**Stephanie Gabbard, VA Voc-Rehab, B.G. Office**  
(270) 846-2092  
**Military Student Services, WKU**  
(270) 745-2180  
**Shawn Stovall, SKYCTC VA Certifying Official**  
(270) 901-1188  
**Department of Employment Services, Bowling Green**  
(270) 746-7425  
**VA Regional Office, Louisville**  
(502) 566-4482  
**VA Regional Office, Nashville, TN**  
(615) 695-6384  
**BG VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic**  
(270) 782-0120  
**VA Medical Center, Louisville**  
(800) 376-8387  
**VA Medical Center, Nashville, TN**  
(800) 228-4973  
**Military Records Branch, Frankfort**  
(502) 607-6041  
**American Legion, Bowling Green**  
(270) 781-3574  
**Veterans Service Officer**  
**Veterans of Foreign Wars, Bowling Green**  
(270) 781-1872

May 4	ACT Registration Deadline for June
May 28	Memorial Day, VUB Closed
May 28	Hot Rods Military Appreciation Day
June 9	ACT Test Date
June 15	ACT Registration Deadline for July
June 21	First Day of Summer
June 30	Federal FAFSA Deadline
July 4	Independence Day, VUB Closed
July 14	ACT Test Date
August 10	VUB Annual Awards Banquet
September 3	Labor Day, VUB Closed

\*Please call early for information on test dates. VUB may pay testing fees, but to do so we must have your application at least six weeks prior to the registration postmark deadline.