

## VSACT 18 January 2017 Notes

**\*\*Meetings normally take place the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month from 10AM – Noon at the Belton Goodwill Learning Center (2601 Commerce St., Belton, TX 76513)\*\***

**10:00AM** Welcome

- Briefing/Discussion of Steering Committee findings
  - Steering committee determined that it would be helpful for everyone to brainstorm both the best things about the VSACT along with the major barriers that continue to plague our region
    - Two “Post-It” notes in front of everyone; one to list the Top 3 “best items” and the other to list each individual’s Top 3 “worst items”
    - Everyone took about 5 minutes to complete this and stuck the post it notes in corresponding areas in the back of the room. During the guest speaker’s presentation, Katie Martin then compiled all items on large, sticky chart to discuss at the end of the meeting
  - Also determined that a simple flyer needed to be created in order to try to grow and expand outreach to other Service Organizations within the community
    - Katie Martin created this and will email it to everyone along with today’s notes
- Quickly introduced everyone in the room
  - Had 25 individuals present

**10:15AM** Guest Speaker: Kurt Rager, Regional Family Readiness Coordinator – Army OneSource

**Kurt A. Rager**

**Regional Family Readiness Coordinator – USACE SWD**

**State Community Support Coordinator – Texas**

**Army OneSource**

**505-269-6470 (Mobile)**

**[krager@afsc.com](mailto:krager@afsc.com); [kurt.a.rager@usace.army.mil](mailto:kurt.a.rager@usace.army.mil)**

- Started in 2007; Initiative developed by the Secretary of the Army
  - Funded by the Army. The primary initiative is to assist regionally dispersed Military members in supportive services once they are no longer near a major Army installation
- What Army OneSource does

- You can access it in three different ways:
  - Brick & Mortar
    - Involved heavily with Army Community Service
    - Soldiers, family members, Veterans can access these sites
      - Locations on Army One Source site
  - Website
    - [www.myarmyonesource.com](http://www.myarmyonesource.com)
      - Essentially a virtual installation
      - Can access virtually all of the same services as if one were to be on Fort Hood, etc.
        - MWR
        - ACS
        - Virtual FRG groups
        - Military Matters
          - Specific program for financial awareness
          - <https://www.myarmyonesource.com/FamilyProgramsandServices/FinancialReadiness/Default.aspx>
        - Clinics, etc.
          - Have webinars on a wide variety of subjects
          - Also have developed a mobile app titled “Money Matters” that can be downloaded on any Smart Phone
            - Can create budget, track spending
            - Military expense budgets
            - TSP accounts, etc.
  - Other states (as Texas is pretty far advanced) develop particular alliances regarding the gaps in services
    - Some locales don’t even have a basic military competency understanding, avoiding asking the simple question of “have you ever served in the military?”
    - Mr. Rager’s colleagues in other states then bridge those particular gaps, providing trainings and connections to other resources to help military members in that region
      - All staff are also provided training to be community connections, per se
    - In Texas, Behavior Health, Financial Management, and Transition are the key foci
- Works extensively with agencies in the state of Texas, mining, categorizing, and obtaining data

- Only major organization in the state that has this data in the state
  - Will then partner with organizations to provide specific data for grant funding, legislative purposes, etc.
    - For example, the TVC is receiving data on the MOS' that are transitioning out of the Army and where they're transitioning to
      - Will eventually be able to obtain what their education level is as well
      - Working to get this same information for family members as well
  - Also partner with organizations to get the word out on major grant funding opportunities and the concurrent need
    - Trying to utilize data to better target where money could be best spent/needed for grant funding purposes
  - Has a number of national partnerships
    - One more recent one, in particular, is PsychArmor
      - National non-profit for Veterans. Web-based classes (free) that are written by lead professionals pertaining to particular mental health topics, resiliency, etc. For both family members and the individual with the diagnoses
      - <http://psycharmor.org/>
- Questions

**10:45AM** Updates & Events between Now & February 15<sup>th</sup>

- Mega Job Fair @ Ft. Hood on 24 Jan
- 28 Jan Health Fair in downtown Killeen (215 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.) from 10AM – 1PM
  - POC is Nate Brown; open to all
- Hood Howdy is 10 February on post
- 25 Jan. Brainstorming meeting for major Bell County Veterans event at CTCOG Building (2180 N. Main St.) at 9:30AM. Room A1
- 19<sup>th</sup> Annual TVC Veteran Summit 6 February at the Doubletree Inn in Austin
- 20 Jan (Waco) and 31 Jan (Killeen) Heart of Texas Goodwill Job Fairs
  - Over 20 employers expected at each event
- BEITZ will be providing training/facilitation for Texas-recognized Peer Support Certification the last two weekends in February
  - Maureen Jouett will send out flyer once it's created

**10:55AM** Shout Out for Help

- Veteran/Veteran Family Needs

- If Searching for Particular Resources, etc.

**11:00AM** 2017 VSACT Direction Activity

- Determined the Best Practices that VSACT provides
  - Steering committee will continue to focus on these and continue implementing these concepts as the Alliance expands:
    - Best
      - Networking
      - Communication
      - Meeting new people and organizations
      - Learning resources for referral
      - The discussion of important issues
      - Access point for “faces to places”
      - Problem Solving contribution
      - Materials and information presented from all types of organizations
      - Relationship building
      - Conquers/overcomes barriers
    - For the barriers, each person within the meeting picked their top 5 barriers that they believe are most applicable and prominent within the region. After tallying votes, these were determined:
      - Transition assistance: integration of civilian life and work
      - Public transportation
      - Obtain services for family members of Veterans
      - Lack of financial aid resources (housing, utilities, etc.)
      - Obtaining information on services for families that are no longer active duty
    - These top 5 will be VSACT’s primary focus for the duration of 2017. However, with the others listed, the steering committee will choose guest speakers and specific discussion topics in order to combat/alleviate the following:
      - Veterans knowing, or willing, to seek mental health services
      - Combating underemployment of Veterans/Spouses
      - Veterans Health/VA enrollment assistance
      - Length of time required for resources; seemingly no sense of urgency
      - Employment (viable) for Veterans with criminal backgrounds
      - Financial counseling on a regular basis
      - Empowering Veterans to work harder for their situation than provider
      - Overall awareness of resources

- Too much information/too many VSO's (not sure of who provides what/what is accurate)
- Resources that serve Veterans with Other Than Honorable Discharge Status
- Lack of coordination/crosstalk with present organizations
- Strict qualification/eligibility requirements
- Distance/size of Bell County & Fort Hood region
- Quick access to housing
- Healthcare for otherwise ineligibles
- Warm handoffs for success
- Community recognition of valuable Veteran skills
- Mental health diagnoses
- Case management issues: Veterans move quickly & address changes, etc.
- Organizations caring more about numbers than actual need of Veterans
- Veterans unaware of true Labor Market information
- The "service seeking" mentality

**11:30AM**      Networking Portion of Meeting

**12:00PM**      Adjourn