

Ovi Rivera, Outreach Director

Steven Cohen Military Family Clinic at Endeavors in Killeen (Non-Profit Organization)

254-415-8382

orivera@endeavors.org

There are 14 clinics nation-wide and the goal is to have 25 by 2020.

Mr. Rivera has gone through similar experiences and shared how everything got started. Retired from the Army in 2012 after spending 22 years in service. From 1998 – 2010 it was all success. I was selected for promotion 3 times, selected and rated as the best Drill-Sergeant organization, earned my recruiting ring and undergraduate degree and while that was happening in 1998 we lost our first born daughter. The high demand of the military I did not get a chance to grieve the loss of my daughter. Stations in Iraq while there our location was hit by a mortar and a couple of soldiers was badly wounded. Came back from Iraq and was sent to recruiting school. While in recruiting school I was hit by a drunk driver and received a mTBI which caused a loss of memory. After the accident and my graduating from recruiting school I was sent to Afghanistan. While there a rocket about 300 meters behind us hit, and killed 8 coalition soldiers. In 2010 when I got out of the military it took a LCSW to help me find my footing. Because of the stigma, I did not want to go see anybody. Because of the help from the LCSW I celebrated 20 years of being married. Pursued a Master's Degree in computer information systems. Even though my degree does not have to do with social work, I chose to do what I do to help all the veterans live the same quality of life that I have then I have done my job. I don't have a job I have a passion. The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Killeen, Mr. Cohen is a billionaire, from New York and is linked to the military because his son enlisted in the military in 2009 after college. His dad was shocked. When his son returned from Afghanistan, he was fine but he was transformed. Mr. Cohen, invested 275,000,000 to open all of these clinics.

The funding for the Killeen clinic comes from Mr. Cohen and the State of Texas. We provide Mental Health Services to veterans and their families:

- Provides Mental Health services for Veterans and their families.
- We service all veterans, but our focus is post 9/11 veterans
- Regardless of role, discharge status, or ability to pay
- Need 214 or ID card some proof that he or she is a veteran
- Whether you served one day in the military or 30 years every veteran will be seen
- Family members can be seen low to no cost
- Veteran decides who his family is because often some families are not related
- If veteran stated he or she is my family they will be seen at the clinic
- Children, siblings, spouses, co-partners, caregivers,
- Intake is done the same day you call the clinic
- First appointment within the first week
- No waiting, No waiting list, that first week

Within two weeks of opening our doors which will open 03/19/2018

- Within 2 to 3 weeks we had to hire 2 more clinicians

- With lots of room to grow
- We have 2 other clinics in El Paso, San Antonio reach capacity within a few months
- Next big thing for veterans
- Its only been around for 2 years
- Because it is low to no cost services regardless of discharge status it has open the doors for a lot of veterans
- Everyone know some veterans that returned from the war and did certain things that got them into trouble and was thrown out of the service
- There is a lot of veterans out there that needs help
- Numbers show there use to be 22 suicides a day now down to 20
- What it shows that 14 out that 20 never seek help whether had the benefits or chose out to see anyone or did not want to see anyone

We provide Mental Health counseling

- PTSD
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Anger issues
- Relationship issues
- Transitioning Issues
- Case Management to connect vet to local services
- Long-term acute services or emergency services
- 70% of staff are Veterans or direct related to veterans

Staff:

- Lead Clinician is a Army Vet
- Data manager is a Navy Vet
- 3 counselors/ Clinicians
- 1 recently retired Chaplain for Army
- Other 2 Clinicians military dependents
- Each potential person for hire had to give a strong why they wanted to be hired
- Hire based on passion first, experience second, and credentials third
- If a vet is given a prescription and don't have VA benefits we can help with little or no cost
- All therapy used is evidence based practice
- 12 to 16 session
- Life skills and wellness classes
- Recent Marriage retreat for free
- Provide Caregivers on site for those with children
- Provides transportation
- No excuse type of system
- No active military personnel due to Tricare, but they can come in with a family member and participate in life skills classes
- We also have a room for that can be used for holding meetings and trainings

Questions from audience:

Life skills can refer to anything:

- Financial classes
- Job search
- Marriage retreat, etc

Office covers 61 counties all the way to Houston

What do you do to break down stigma?

- Most important sharing your story

While during a session I figure out that the non-Veteran spouse has mental issues do you continue to see that spouse?

- Yes, does not have to be a veteran