

## VSACT 12/ 21/22 Meeting Notes

### **Presenters**

Theophilus Watson – VA Suicide Prevention Program Central Texas VA,  
[theophilus.watson@va.gov](mailto:theophilus.watson@va.gov)

If you're a Veteran in a mental health crisis and you're thinking about hurting yourself or you know a Veteran who's considering this get help right away. You're not alone. If you're a Veteran in crisis or concerned about one, connect with our caring, qualified Veterans Crisis Line responders for confidential help. Many of them are Veterans themselves. This service is private, free, and available 24/7.

### **Learn to Recognize Signs**

Signs of Crisis follow link; <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/signs-of-crisis/>

To connect with a Veterans Crisis Line responder anytime day or night:

- ❖ Call [988](tel:988).
- ❖ Text [838255](tel:838255).
- ❖ [Start a confidential chat](#).
- ❖ If you have hearing loss, call TTY: [800-799-4889](tel:800-799-4889).

Greg Gutierrez MHFA, AS+K and CALM Suicide Prevention Training Peer Service Coordinator Military Veteran Peer Network Bring Everyone in the Zone [beitz.mvvpn2@gmail.com](mailto:beitz.mvvpn2@gmail.com) (254)813-5834; Bring Everyone In The Zone is a non-profit organization made up of trained professional facilitators who volunteer so they can help people. We are not counselors but look at ourselves as travel companions, helping you to get back in the zone. Their purpose is to provide Peer Support in a myriad of ways to Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF), especially those suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress, Traumatic Brain Injury, Military Sexual Trauma and other traumatic events in their lives. The benefits from our programs and services: Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF).

### **Additional resource information**

- **George Butry**, Ft Hood Area Habitat for Humanity Aging in Place Coordinator, (254) 423-2447 [Serve@fhahfh.org](mailto:Serve@fhahfh.org). The Aging in Place program, Habitat helps older adults age at home and in communities of their choice. The local Habitat affiliates collaborate with human services organizations to evaluate individual needs and provide critical home repairs, modifications and community services specific to each homeowner's lifestyle to preserve their home and their independence.
- Veteran Spouse Network will have a couple of virtual groups running through the holidays - a weekly Friday afternoon Coffee Chat for military/veteran spouses, and

family members, a travel club, and a brunch for deployed spouses led by a military spouse at Ft Hood - <https://veteranspousenetwork.org/events/>

- **Savannah Bridges** SMVS Veteran's Case Manager, Catholic Charities of Central Texas. Catholic Charities of Central Texas is a faith-based social services organization serving individuals and families across 25 Central Texas counties. We provide a holistic set of programs and services to engage, educate, and empower Central Texans out of poverty now and into the future. The counties that are covered; - **Hamilton, Brazos, Bell, McLennan, Limestone, Coryell, Falls, Washington, Mason, Llano, Hays, Caldwell, Fayette, Lee, Bastrop, Blanco, Burnett, Lampasas, San Saba, Mills, and Robertson**
  
- **Ken Buchanan** Project Director Workforce Programs SCSEP  
900 Austin Avenue, Suite 303 Waco, Texas 76701 Office: 254-730-4190  
Fax: 254-732-0479; AARP Foundation first matches eligible older job seekers with local nonprofits and public agencies so they can increase skills and build self-confidence, while earning a modest income. Based on their employment interests and goals, participants may also receive supportive services and skills training through an educational institution. Their SCSEP experience most often leads to permanent employment.
  
- **April Sullivan** Art Spark Texas [www.artsparktx.org](http://www.artsparktx.org) [april@artsparktx.org](mailto:april@artsparktx.org) two new monthly groups on 2nd Thursday's. Texas Veterans Strong networking group for vet and arts organizations to connect. And a women vet group as well.
  
- **Stephanie Preciado**, Help Heal Veterans Craft Care Specialist at Help Heal Veterans Cahill Center 819 S. 5th Street Temple, TX 76504. Free therapeutic craft kits for veterans and service members. Classes and volunteer opportunities. Monday-Friday 9am-5pm 254-773-8900.
  
- **Patrick Hannigan** Veterans Career Advisor Texas Veterans Commission 1416 S. New Rd. Waco, Texas 76711 [Patrick.Hannigan@tvc.texas.gov](mailto:Patrick.Hannigan@tvc.texas.gov) Office (254) 296-5236.
  
- **Eliseo Torres** TVC [eliseo.torres@tvc.texas.gov](mailto:eliseo.torres@tvc.texas.gov) Employment Services.
  
- **Angela Bodnar**, VA Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program Coordinator for southern counties (including Travis and Williamson), LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinator (254-987-1828, [Angela.Bodnar@va.gov](mailto:Angela.Bodnar@va.gov))
  
- **Melinda Bonds** Peer Services Coordinator position in Waco  
<https://theapplicantmanager.com/jobs?pos=ht2732> or call Melinda Bonds 903-390-1863

Opening at Heart of Texas Behavioral Health Network- Supervisor I or II 1537 (Waco, TX)

\*This Position is responsible for providing oversight of peer related services in the veteran's services program and ensures achievement of all grant and contract agreement requirements\*

- **David Farris**, Veteran Engagement and Construction Resource Specialist (VECRS) at Fort Hood Area Habitat for Humanity. My contact is [vets@fhahfh.org](mailto:vets@fhahfh.org) 254-441-5956
  
- **Joan G, Vanicek**. [joan.vanicek@va.gov](mailto:joan.vanicek@va.gov) for Health Promotion & Disease Prevention and Whole Health, at the Central Texas VA.
  
- **Rhoda Louise Hacker**, Intimate Partner Violence Coordinator ,The VA's **Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program (IPVAP)** is committed to helping Veterans, their partners, and VA staff who are impacted by IPV. If you, or someone you know could be experiencing and/or using IPV - help is available. [rhoda.hacker@va.gov](mailto:rhoda.hacker@va.gov); 254-400-6239
  
- **Ashley Montez**: STARRY Counseling 254-213-2035 Free counseling for children and families. Available for military families.
  
- **Dee Stewart**: Texas Veterans Commission, Family Career Advisor, [deirdra.stewart@tvc.texas.gov](mailto:deirdra.stewart@tvc.texas.gov)
  
- **Tami Olvera**: Craft Care Specialist with Help Heal Veterans. We provide therapeutic craft kits as well as arts and crafts classes and groups at our facility located in Temple, TX. 819 S 5th St, Temple, TX 76504 (254-773-8900 Monday- Friday 9am-5pm.
  
- **Dino Wilson** Transition Patient Advocate with the Post 911 M2 VA. Case Management Program here at the CTVHCS, Please don't hesitate in reaching out to for assisting Veterans in navigating the Veterans Health Care System. Cell 254-624-1370, Wilson, Dino A. [Dino.Wilson@va.gov](mailto:Dino.Wilson@va.gov).
  
- **Luis Vallejo**: Independent Medicare Broker, Special Enrollment Periods are available for Veterans that did not enroll during Open Enrollment. [luis@simpleseniorbenefits.org](mailto:luis@simpleseniorbenefits.org), 512-379-8277.
  
- **Hannah K. O'Brien**: Veteran Spouse Network will have a couple of virtual groups running through the holidays - a weekly Friday afternoon Coffee Chat for military/veteran spouses, and family members, a travel club, and a brunch for deployed

spouses led by a military spouse at Ft Hood - <https://veteranspousenetwork.org/events/>  
Veteran Spouse Network

- **Paul Bilunas and Shelia Brown:** Success Coach, at the Heart of Texas Goodwill Inc. [successcoach@hotgoodwill.org](mailto:successcoach@hotgoodwill.org) Operation Good Jobs Program, is a program dedicated to assisting veterans and their immediate family members by connecting them to sustainable employment opportunities while exploring ways to increase their skills, continue their education, or connect to other community services.