



President's Message

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President-
Elect 2

Past Presi-
dent 4

Strategic Plan 7

Trainings 9

ACA Confer-
ence 12

*Winter issue
deadline: Jan 2nd*

Editor:
Cheyenne Carter

Hello ACEG Members!

I am very excited about the direction ACEG is heading this year! We have already made plans for our next ACA Conference in Orlando. Our Professional Development Institute (PDI) has been organized in conjunction with National Employment Counseling Association (NECA), and a fabulous Reception is in the works, being sponsored by the American Military University, thanks to the help of our own Board Member, Grey Edwards. Please take the time to check out our Conference link and start making plans to join us next March, 2014.

While you are on our site, also check out our new and returning Board Members. We are here for you, to help with any questions you may have, and to take any suggestions or ideas that you can share.

We are still working toward our new name change. At our last Quarterly Fall Board meeting, the Board voted to use the name Military and Government Counseling Association. Many ACEG members felt the word "Government" should be added to fully identify our counseling population. The final membership approval vote will take place in March, and with your approval, our new name will officially be changed on July 1, 2015.

Thanks to our Board Member, Angie Waliski, we have formed many committees that address important area within ACEG which will further our ability to reach a wider segment of our membership and offering you, the members, the opportunity to take a more active role, and share ideas and work toward goals that interest each of you. Congratulations Angie on a job very well done. Please contact Angie at ADWaliski@uams.edu if you would like information about our committee opportunities and want to join our other members in working toward our ACEG future goals.



Lynna Meadows Morton,
MS, SLPC, NCC
President, 2014-2015

Continued on p. 3

President-Elect's Message



Ben Noah, PhD
President-Elect
2014-2015

One of General George S. Patton, Jr's principles for command and management is "leaders always do what they ask their followers to do." As ACEG moves forward to the new name, Military and Government Counseling Association, revised bylaws, and (hopefully) increased visibility in the counseling profession – I will keep this principle in mind. ACEG has a high number of Veterans in our ranks who have leadership experience and Lynna and I want to call on that experience and will be asking you to "volunteer." In keeping with Patton, I will not ask you to do anything I've not already done.

ACEG's members are all volunteers – no one made you join. I'm sure that, like me, you joined because you believe in our mission. However, one of the greatest weaknesses in an organization like ACEG is that too many choose to sit on the sidelines either because they are too busy in other areas of their lives or believe they have nothing to offer. Many of the counseling associations are in serious trouble because folks do not step up to leadership. I see this also in the Veteran groups I belong to (VFW and American Legion).

In the last newsletter, I asked for volunteers to help establish a Public Policy and Legislation (PPL) Committee. If you are a bit of a "policy wonk," or just interested in promoting counseling in legislative efforts – this is a great way to help the association and the Veterans we want to serve. I would also invite graduate student members to volunteer. There are also vacancies on other committees and the ACEG board. When you are asked to set into a leadership position, I hope you will say "yes." If you are interested, contact me (Benjamin.noah@capella.edu).



President's Message (cont)

Did You Know?

My informational section this quarter first addresses the problems of confidentiality, privacy and trust as it applies to our military, veterans, and their families.

Military and Privacy Issues

One of the most important things to recognize when working with military service members or their families is what has been termed the "warrior ethos." Service members and their families pride themselves on their strength and ability to successfully confront challenge. The notion of asking for help or support often carries with it the stigma of weakness. Service members have reported concerns about appearing weak in front of their peers or commanders and commanders have reported concerns of appearing weak to their subordinates. No one wants to be considered the "weakest link" and many believe their families to be

a direct reflection on them. These beliefs, which help make our military strong, can also place service members in a double bind when they do find themselves in need of support, especially when that support entails mental health services.

Many military members believe the culture of the military is that you don't talk about feelings or emotions. Even when counseling is available, there's no guarantee that troops will take advantage of it, as there are still a lot of military people who think that if you go to see a mental health professional, you're not going to get promoted. I have worked with many military that shared the feelings and beliefs that if they present for counseling and share problems, they could lose their VA disability, VA benefits, could have their careers destroyed and even be discharged. This belief is even present with retired Veterans who believe they will lose their benefits.

Because of this fear of disclosure, it is of utmost importance that your military clients feel confident sharing with you, the counselor. They need you to assure them that their visit to you and anything they confide in you cannot be released to anyone, including their military superiors or anyone connected with the military. Of course there are the known exceptions of protecting the patient or the public from harm, domestic violence, abuse or neglect of a child or the elderly/disabled.

Online Websites for Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline have joined with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention to create the Veterans Self-Check Quiz. This is a safe, easy way for Veterans to learn whether stress and depression might be affecting them. Using this service is completely voluntary and confidential.

www.vetselfcheck.org/welcome.cfm

Continued p.6

Past President's Message



Seth Hayden, PhD
Past President 2014-2015

Turning the Calendar

Well, it is that time of year when the calendar year changes which often has me contemplating both the past and the future. Reflecting on what has transpired and considering what lies ahead elicits both gratitude and excitement for the work of the Association for Counselors and Educators in Government. While this past year has offered several successes, multiple opportunities lie ahead.

This past year provided an informative ACEG professional development institute in conjunction with the American Counseling Association conference in beautiful Hawaii.

It was great to connect with fellow members as we learned innovative ways in which to support military service members and their families. There were also many productive discussions as to ways in which we can enhance the functioning of the organization. A solid foundation was laid to guide our future efforts.

This past year also solidified a significant accomplishment with the continued publication of the journal. Extending the reach of the organization into the scholarly realm has enhanced our visibility to human service professionals while also providing valuable strategies for ACEG members to employ in their work. While it has been a substantial undertaking, it appears to have provided a several benefits to ACEG and its members. These are a few highlights of the work of ACEG over the past year.

Many opportunities lie ahead for our organization. Building off the success of the journal, we are considering other resources such as electronic delivery of information to further support members and non-members in their efforts to assist military service members and their families. Significant work in terms of advocacy is also occurring to ensure the voice of members is heard. Surveying the membership to inform these efforts is also in the works to learn more about each of you and how ACEG can best assist you in your work. Finally, ensuring that our guiding documents such as by-laws are reflective of the current status of our organization is also underway. This and other efforts will transpire as we look to the future of ACEG.

To those of you active in this work, I say thank you for your time and dedication to ACEG. To others, I hope you will consider actively engaging with the organization to continue this good work. All the best for a blessed and safe holiday season.

Regards,

Seth

The Mission Continues empowers veterans to serve their country in new ways by engaging them in innovative and action-oriented programs within their own communities. The programs help veterans refocus a sense of camaraderie and purpose they may have lost after leaving the military.

The Fellowship Program provides opportunities for veterans to serve nonprofit organizations through six month fellowships by harnessing the strengths, skills, and compassion of veterans with a passion for continued service. By volunteering, veterans gain professional experience that empowers them to achieve full-time employment, enroll in higher education and secure a life-long position of service.

Service Platoons are teams of veterans working together with non-profit organizations and local volunteers to help address tough challenges like homelessness, obesity, and issues faced by at-risk youth. Service Platoons help veterans find a new unit: members work together not only to solve community challenges, but also support one another as they reintegrate into civilian life. Explore www.missioncontinues.org to see if a service platoon is in your city or to explore how to start one!

The Mission Continues has been a great way to rediscover my purpose in life and I love working with veterans who have walked in my shoes (or boots). The peer support I have received has really helped me get through difficult times and set goals for myself. Overall, it the organization has reignited my passion for serving and giving back despite my difficult emotional problems.”

– Mission Continues Platoon Member

I have achieved more than I thought possible, I am excelling in school and I am on the road to success and finding a job that I feel I am happy and passionate to do, I am very hopeful for the future and know that I can achieve anything as long as I put some effort into it.

-Mission Continues Fellow Alum

Visit The Mission Continues at <https://www.missioncontinues.org/>



President's Message (cont)

Military Acronyms

As with any culture, the military has its own set of acronyms and terms that flow throughout their everyday conversations. While it is not necessary to become completely fluent in “military-ese,” an understanding of common terms can go a long way in establishing a therapeutic alliance. Check out the following website for a list of terms and their meanings: <http://www.militaryfamily.org/get-info/new-to-military/military-culture/>

Thanks to everyone who is working hard to make this and next year one of growth and innovative programs for all our ACEG members! Keep up the good work!

Lynna

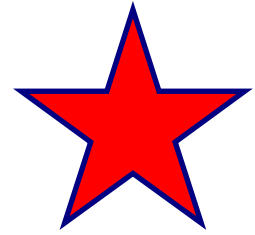
lynnameadowsmorton@comcast.net

CULTURALLY COMPETENT BEHAVIORS CHECKLIST

http://www.deploymentpsych.org/system/files/member_resource/MCT_M04_Culturally_Compentent_Behaviors_final-8oct13.pdf

*A valuable tool to assess your cultural competence with
military clients!*

2014-2015 Strategic Plan



The specific aims described below focus on the activities discussed by ACEG members and leaders at the 2014 ACA Conference. Each aim includes a suggested leader for that aim based on the discussion or previously delegated responsibilities.

Specific Aim:

- SA1:** Review and revise for board approval all bylaws and procedural manuals.
Objective 1: Develop a policy and procedure manual, and update bylaws.
Objective 2: Using the Arkansas Counseling Association policy and procedure manual as a guide, develop a manual to inform division leaders on their roles and responsibilities.
- SA2:** Develop a standing Conference Committee lead by the President Elect to organize all ACEG activities at the Annual ACA Conference.
Objective 1: Organize a group of 4-8 members to organize and lead ACEG activities at the annual ACA conference.
Objective 2: Develop a procedure guide for PDI and ACA conference activities.
Objective 3: Review 2014 ACA Conference activities of each branch, region, and division to develop opportunities to collaborate in the future.
- SA3:** Enhance membership and membership, communication, and service to members.
Objective 1: Develop a plan to improve current methods of communication among the current members (newsletter, website, conference, etc.).
Objective 2: Develop new methods to improve membership communication and discussions.
Objective 3: Conduct a members survey.
Objective 4: Increase membership by 25 people over in 2014-2015.
Objective 5: Welcome the Women's Interest group and Trauma, Veteran and Military interest groups to join our group and lead committees that meet their organizational needs.

You can always amend a big plan, but you can never expand a little one. I don't believe in little plans. I believe in plans big enough to meet a situation which we can't possibly foresee now.

-Harry S. Truman-

Strategic Plan (cont)

- SA4:** Develop and implement an action plan to advocate for the employment of LAC's/LPC's in government positions.
- Objective 1: Inform ACA and it's regional, division, and branch members of our goal to lead a grass roots effort increase LPC/LAC employment in government positions and encourage membership.
 - Objective 2: Network with state branches to organize awareness campaign.
 - Objective 3: Special Journal issue to discuss barriers and facilitators to integrate LAC/LPC's into VA on state levels.
 - Objective 4: Analyze the data received from the state branches to provide a report to lobbyists, VA, and Congress as well as published in the JCD.
 - Objective 4: Recruitment of members among states utilizing the ACA branch presidents.
- SA5:** Collaborate on project with ACA, its branches, divisions, and affiliates to improve the visibility of counselors and educators employed in government settings.
- Objective 1: Increase communication with key members of the ACA leadership.
 - Objective 2: Collaborate on various grant projects to create support for military personnel, Veterans, and their families.
 - Objective 2: Develop project protocol to develop a practice based research network for ACA and its regions, divisions, and branches. Apply for the VA Center of Innovation grant for suicide prevention.
 - Objective 3: Develop project protocol and apply for the VA ORH grant to allow ACA counselors to participate in VA webinar series.
- SA6:** Compile ACEG archived information electronically and make this information available to all members through the ACEG website.
- Objective 1: Have Don Hill mail all AECG information to Angie.
 - Objective 2: Scan information onto SharePoint.
- SA7:** Establish a collaborative network between AECG and the ArCA interest group for AECG.

Spotlight on Training !!!

In an effort to support ACEG membership in their continued education, we hope to highlight high quality training opportunities, both online and in person. Please email training opportunities to carterc@wfu.edu.

Military Culture

Title: Military Cultural Competence

Hosted by: Center for Deployment Psychology

<http://www.deploymentpsych.org/online-courses/military-culture>

Overview: Basic introduction to military culture, focusing on demographics, structure of the military, and common stressor of active duty and reservist families.

Duration: 75 minutes

Cost: Free with no CEs; \$30 for CE credit (approved by NBCC and a host of other organizations, state boards)

PTSD

Title: Epidemiology of PTSD in Military Personnel and Veterans

Hosted by: Center for Deployment Psychology

<http://www.deploymentpsych.org/online-courses/ptsd>

Overview: Research on combat trauma survivors from WWII to Vietnam to the present wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has contributed to our understanding of the etiology of PTSD as well as the development of empirically-based treatments for this disorder. This interactive online training course traces this history and provides an overview of the prevalence of trauma and PTSD, specifically related to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Diagnostic criteria, assessment strategies and treatment options for PTSD are also reviewed to assist mental health providers in increasing their competence in working with Service members and veterans exposed to trauma.



Helping Heroes

Carrie Haight, MBA

Graduate Student, Capella University

Helping Heroes was established in 2010 in Moundsville, WV. The primary goal of Helping Heroes is to assist Veterans with the process of reintegration into society, as men and women who often feel excluded from the benefits of productivity and self-sufficiency as a result of the physical and emotional wounds they carry. Additionally, Helping Heroes will provide assistance and guidance for Veteran benefits, as well as provide local and VA referrals necessary to assist Veterans and their needs.

Veterans have been struggling to adjust since the beginning of warfare. It's no secret that many of our servicemen and women return from service with multiple serious issues including financial, marital, work, mental health, and substance abuse. Because of these problems, many veterans have found themselves with nowhere to call home, or are on the verge of homelessness, even though many agencies exist to provide benefits and services to assist veterans in need. Helping Heroes is committed to assisting Veterans who need the help.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) says the nation's homeless veterans are mostly males (four percent

are females). The vast majority are single, most come from poor, disadvantaged communities, 45 percent suffer from mental illness, and half have substance abuse problems. America's homeless Veterans have served in World War II, Korean War, Cold War, Vietnam War, Grenada, Panama, Lebanon, Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan), Operation Iraqi Freedom, or the military's anti-drug cultivation efforts in South America. Forty-seven percent of homeless veterans served during the Vietnam era. More than 67 percent served our country for at least three years and 33 percent were stationed in a war zone. Far too many veterans are homeless in America, between 130,000 and 200,000 on any given night, representing between one fourth and one-fifth of all homeless people. Additionally, three times that many Veterans are struggling with excessive rent burdens and, thus, are at increased risk of homelessness. The staff of Helping Heroes is dedicated to the fundamental belief system that is instilled in many veterans, "I will never leave a fallen comrade." Visit Helping Heroes at www.helpingheroesinc.org.

Note: ACEG wishes to highlight community organizations that are doing great work for our veteran and government populations. Send your brief spotlights to carterc@wfu.edu for inclusion in upcoming newsletters.

Trainings (cont)

Traumatic Brain Injury

Title: What If There's a Traumatic Brain Injury?

Hosted by : Dr. John Corrigan ; Sponsors are Give an Hour, Brain Injury Association of America, The Ohio Brain Injury Program

<http://ohiovalley.org/informationeducation/whatif/>

Overview: Dr. Corrigan provides an overview of TBIs and introduces participants to a simple screening tool to assess for a history of TBIs.

Duration: 1 hour

Cost: Free; CEs offered through APA and for Ohio mental health disciplines. See link for specifics.

Misc

Coming Home Project

http://www.cominghomeproject.net/chp_training-videos

Overview: Collection of videos available for public viewing

Duration: Varies per video. Most are approximately 1 hour.

Cost: Free with no CEs

Topics:

1. PTSD and Substance Abuse Overview
2. PTSD and Substance Abuse: Part II Treatment Options-Dr. Robyn Walser
3. Treating Children of Military Families: Dr. Alicia Lieberman
4. Therapy for War-Related Trauma: John Briere, Ph.D.
5. Therapies for War Related Trauma, II: John Briere, Ph.D.
6. Physical and Mental Health Needs of Returning Veterans: Karen Seal, M.D.
7. Military Cultural Competency: LTC David Rabb, LICSW
8. OEF and OIF Veterans and Couples Therapy: Keith Armstrong, LCSW
9. Spirituality and Combat Trauma: LTC Steve Torgerson
10. PTSD & Family Therapy: Erica Curran, LCSW
11. TBI & Clinical qEEG: BG Steven Xenakis, M.D.
12. Combat to Community: Mai Ling Garcia
13. Treating Female Veterans of War: Darrah Westrup, Ph.D.

American Counseling Association

<http://www.counseling.org/continuing-education/webinars>

Title: Counseling our Troops, Veterans, & Military Families: Cutting Edge Strategies

Overview: Series of presenters preparing counselors for the highly specialized field of military counseling.

Cost: Non Member Price: \$159; ACA Member Price: \$119; 7 CE credits



March 12-15, 2015

ACEG Sponsored ACA Education Sessions

90 minutes – Angie Waliski, PhD, LPC, NCC and Lynna Meadows Morton, MS, SLPC

Counselors Assisting Military Veterans Engage in Services: Building a Partnership with the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Defense. WE NEED YOU! Are you a counselor, a Veteran, a military service member, or family member of a Veteran or military service member, a friend of a military service member, Veteran, or family member. If so this presentation is for you. This ACEG sponsored and led presentation will identify their strategies to advocate for counselors as mental health providers within the VA. This presentation includes several leaders of ACA division and branches to all counselors to unite for the recognition of our clinical abilities and expertise.

60 minutes – Dixielynn Johnson, MA, CMHT

Embracing the Suck of Combat: Suicide in the Ranks. Military suicide numbers are increasing to one suicide every 65 minutes; however, prevention programs are not targeting veteran's life experiences to heal their anguish. Therapists must change their way of working with vets. This session creates a framework for counselors to help our nation's veterans.

Poster Session

Jennifer Sztalkoper, PhD and Benjamin V. Noah, PhD, LPC, NCC, NCCC, ACS – *Left Behind: Army Wives' Afghanistan Deployment Experiences.* Army wives describe their personal experiences during an Afghanistan spousal deployment and the supports that they use in order to cope during the spousal separation.

Our PDI will be a joint effort with the National Employment Counseling Association (NECA). Thus, ACEG will provide half of the sessions and NECA the other half. We will be having an Awards Lunch. More information and registration details will be posted as it becomes available.

PDI Sessions

Tami Frye, PhD, LMSW – *Grief Experiences of Young Recent War Widows and How Effective Current Counseling Strategies Meet Their Needs.* Widows between 18-25 who were widowed as the result of wars in Iraq or Afghanistan are resulting in higher numbers than any previous wars. Prior research on widows was with much older women. Our counseling theories driving grief counseling is not adequately meeting the needs of widows at these stages of development. More research and a change in strategies is necessary to adequately help these women.

Judith Mathewson, MEd, MS, RMFT-I and Emily Hain – *Introducing i-Rest as a Stress Reduction Tool for Veterans.* Counselors will experience an adjunctive therapy to assist veterans with combat trauma symptoms. I-Rest is a simple tool for *healing*, creating deep relaxation and meditative practices that release negative emotions and thought patterns, calms the nervous system, and a positive capacity to meet distressing circumstances.

Leigh Green, PhD, LPC, NCC and Laura Dawson, PhD, LPC, LPCDC – *Group Interventions for Military Members and Veterans with PTSD and TBI.* Group counseling is an effective and efficient modality to provide counseling interventions for military members with TBI and PTSD. This program will share and demonstrate group therapy techniques with this growing population.



The purpose of ACEG is to encourage and deliver meaningful guidance, counseling, and educational programs to all members of the Armed Services, their family members, and civilian employees of State and Federal Governmental Agencies. Encourage development of professional monographs and convention/conference presentations by any of these agencies. Develop and promote the highest standards of professional conduct among counselors and educators working with Armed Services personnel and veterans. Establish, promote, and maintain improved communication with the nonmilitary community; and conduct and foster programs to enhance individual human development and increase

COPYRIGHT 2014, ASSOCIATION FOR
COUNSELORS AND EDUCATORS IN GOVERNMENT

*Visit us on the web at
www.acegonline.org*

*Submit newsletter articles to
Editor, Cheyenne Carter, at
carterc@wfu.edu*

2014-2015 Executive Committee

President – Lynna Meadows Morton
(lynnameadowsmorton@comcast.net)

President Elect – Ben Noah
(Benjamin.noah@capella.edu)

Immediate Past President – Seth
Hayden (haydensc@wfu.edu)

Secretary – Monica Reider
(Monica.Reider@va.gov)

Treasurer – Linda Parker
(Linda.Parker4@va.gov)

Governing Council Representative –
Sharon Guild-Stitt (ssees1@msn.com)

Graduate Student Representative –
Daniel Marsh (danny.marsh@live.com)

Directors

Angie Waliski (adwaliski@uams.edu)

Judy Mathewson
(judith.mathewson@ang.af.mil)

Miles Sakaguchi
(miles.t.sakaguchi.civ@mail.mil)

Grey Edwards (grey.edwards@us.army.mil)

Tracy Luoma (tluoma7@msn.com)

Michael Keim (mkeim@westga.edu)

Natosha Monroe (natoshakm11@gmail.com)

Leigh Green (legreen@mail.wtamu.edu)

Jennifer Sztalkoper
(innocencelost7@hotmail.com)

Eric Price (EricPrice@my.unt.edu)