



MEETING AGENDA

9:00 am	Check-In
9:30 am	Welcome & Agenda Anthony Hassan, Director, CIR Margaret Thomas, Collaborative Coordinator, CIR
9:40 am	Announcements <ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Survey♦ Recruitment
10:00 am	Working Group Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Behavioral Health♦ Career Advancement♦ Families & Children♦ Housing & Homelessness♦ Legal & Re-Entry♦ Faith Based
11:00 am	Review of Working Group Sessions
11:25 am	Administrative Items & Closing Remarks Margaret R. Thomas
11:30 am	Collaborative Meeting Adjourns

I. Welcome & Agenda

Margaret Thomas welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

II. Working Group Breakout Sessions

The working groups then met for one hour. The working groups that convened were:

- **Behavioral Health**
- **Career Advancement**
- **Families & Children**
- **Housing & Homelessness**
- **Legal & Re-Entry**

III. Working Group Session Summaries

All attendees then re-convened to review the discussions from each working group.

a. Behavioral Health Working Group

Discussed and continued to work through their six month action plan and behavioral health policy letter.

b. Career Advancement Working Group

LTC Steven Cole presented the Soldier For Life slides to the veterans employment working group at the USC School of Social Work - LA Veterans Collaborative. After the formal portion of the briefing the floor opened for questions. The following notes are the questions and challenges raised by the group they felt should be brought to the attention of the SFL staff.

Central challenge facing these groups:

The various groups at the meeting would like the Army to identify veterans who are coming back to LA County. From their perspective, veterans don't know that there are groups who exist to help veterans and the groups don't know that the veterans are here. If there was a way to find out who was coming to LA County and when, VSO/MSO groups could reach out to them before the veteran had a problem. The data on where soldiers are going when they ETS could come from household goods shipment addresses, unemployment rolls, or captured as part of the ACAP process.

Questions:

Government entities (Dept of Labor and the VA) already exist to help veterans get access to employment and health care, and so do a number of NGOs and non-

profit groups, where does SFL fit into these existing groups? What can SFL do for them that they aren't already doing?

If Soldier for Life is designed to help connect transitioning soldiers with groups that want to help veterans, how does SFL get the contact information for these groups? ie: How can they (NGOs, non-profits, etc) get their information to the SFL staff so that soldiers can find out about their organizations?

When a soldier ETS's from the Army what is the mechanism to link that soldier up with employment/education/healthcare resources when he/she arrives in the city where they relocate?

Is there a Military One Source type website that helps veterans know where to go for help?

Is there an existing mechanism out there to help veterans know which organizations are out to help them and which ones are only out to take advantage of them?

Has the Army considered letting veterans come back to ACAP programs after they ETS? (The group identified that sometimes soldiers aren't ready to learn at ACAP because they are focused only leaving the military. Perhaps if veterans are able to come back when they are ready to learn they might get more out of the program.)

Has the Army considered making ACAP counselors more like case managers – people who a veteran can call/consult even after he/she ETS's?

Challenges:

Soldiers should be encouraged to seek assistance for healthcare, employment, and education from groups before they find themselves in trouble. One way to do this might be to give them toward state/city specific resources at ACAP.

The stigma of asking for help is one of the biggest barriers preventing veterans from getting the help they need.

c. Families & Children Working Group

In attendance - Debbie Nichols Co Chair, Jessica Cross, Rebecca Lucier, Huber Sutton, Erica Trejo, Marina Cunin Boer, Jennifer Cowan

Prior to our meeting Roberto Reid / Field Development Coordinator /USC School of Social Work requested to speak to our group. He shared the availability of USC School of Social Work interns able to provide support for military connected children within schools, faith based organizations and non profits addressing and supporting military connected children. Roberto shared the USC School of Social Work would like to reach out into additional communities, counties Inland empire and additional surrounding Counties. Erica shared with how DiDi Hursh has a USC intern and how her company has enjoyed the support this intern has provided.

Debbie Nichols opened the meeting welcoming our newcomers and shared the Collaborative Groups vision for supporting military connected children and their families

Discussion began with the Awareness letter status- We received support from the LA Veterans Collaborative Sub Groups, a final draft will be sent to Margaret. Margaret will then have the content of the letter placed on the LA Collaborative

letter head stationary. We will then be able to submit to Los Angeles County Pediatrics.

Orange County Article- Published article Oct 28, 2013 in the Orange County Register newspaper titled- "Schools need to be educated on working with military kids". Article shared the importance of self identifying the military connected children in schools. Debbie Nichols was interviewed and mentioned in the article about how Military Childrens Collaborative Group was formed and begun supporting the Orange County Dept of Education.

Orange County Department of Education was looking for a video to share with their schools. Military Childrens Collaborative group created an Awareness video- sharing the challenges children face when their service member loved one returns from a deployment. This video was approved by the Orange County Dept of Education and in honor of Veterans Day, was distributed to their schools. MCCG shared they have two versions, for public viewing and for schools.

You can view this video on: www.militarychildrenscollabortivegroup.com

Discussion on how Los Angeles County schools need to be contacted in order to provide, awareness, community resources and support.

San Marcos – Warrior Wives Conference- Addressing the wives of husbands experiencing visible and invisible wounds. Debbie Nichols was on the expert panel discussion. This group of wives shared their challenges and ways to cope when their husbands returned from combat. These wives discussed supporting their husbands, methods of resiliency, their challenges and keeping their children safe. Debbie Nichols shared the Resource Lists Deborah Hayes developed and discussed the importance of the schools' awareness and tools available. Suggesting their children's school principals to download the "Salute the Kids" Toolkit creating an assembly to acknowledge military connected children and presenting a certificate.

Debbie opened the floor for discussion having each attendee share why they came to the meeting. Jill shared she was exploring how her company First 5 LA, would like to address military connected preschoolers. Jessica and Rebecca representing Healthy Start /San Diego Collaborative wanted to know more about our awareness letter, LASurvey, our resources and how we can collaborate together. Hubert a veteran and has gone back to school and is helping other veterans in the transitioning process. He feels there is a strong stigma with those transitioning out and not wanting to seek help. He is trying to remove that stigma. Erica shared DiDi Hirsh is presenting to legislatures regarding the needs of the children. She shared how she has worked with 3 LA school districts bringing awareness and support. She is assisting in creating military friendly schools. These school districts have committed to change their student enrollment forms to include self identification for military connected children for fall 2014. Marina shared that there is a stigma about military life and war within selected college faculty. She is working on addressing how to overcome this stigma, show support to Veterans with those teaching in certain colleges.

Updated Resource lists- Shared Deborah Hayes updated Resources Guides

Survey- Dissemination- Shared how we have notified the contacts at local Air Force, National Guard, Military One sources, Operation Homefront and all the agencies

within our Family & Childrens group. Suggestion was made we should have this survey mentioned by those having a twitter account. Jessica shared San Diego Collaborative sent out a survey and received a great response. They used Facebook and Twitter to get their message out.

d. Housing & Homelessness Working Group

The group meeting was small. They discussed the HUD VASH distribution.

Discussed the challenges for women and families in obtaining housing.

Also discussed looking for safe and sensitive housing for women and families such as Didi Hirsch new bed opportunities.

e. Legal & Re-Entry Working Group

Discussed work and action required toward accomplishing group goals.

Discussed justice for veterans regarding the DC conference on treatment courts.

Discussed working with family courts to improve issues facing military communities.

Discussed LE cards for contact with veterans with resources.

The ticket advocate program is moving along.

P.C 11.70.9 alternative has been sent for veterans.

Also beginning to brainstorm legal initiatives.

IV. Administrative Details

a. Upcoming Collaborative Meetings

The Collaborative meets on the second Wednesday of each month. The three upcoming meetings are as follows:

- December 11, 2013
- January 8, 2014
- February 12, 2014

b. Closing Remarks

Margaret Thomas thanked everyone for coming and reminded everyone again about the survey and to pass along any information and ideas to CIR.

c. Collaborative Mailing List

To join the Collaborative's mailing list, or any of the working group mailing lists, please contact Margaret Thomas at Margaret.thomas@usc.edu

V. Next Meeting

Wednesday, December 11, 2013

9:30 - 11:30 am

USC CIR Office

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