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STATE OF THE AMERICAN VETERAN IN CALIFORNIA
September 15-16, 2016

USC Social Work
*Center for Innovation and Research
on Veterans & Military Families*



State of the American Veteran In California: Myths and Facts about Veterans

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Outline

- Welcome
- About this presentation
- What is a myth?
- Myths and Facts about veterans
- Conclusion



About This Presentation

- This presentation is intended to provide a BALANCED narrative about veterans.
- This presentation contains NO data or theory, although I love theory and data.
- The Myths come from what folks have said to me, and what I have read in the paper or heard on TV or the radio.
- The Facts come from my own research or the research of others.



Welcome

- Thank you for coming!
- How many of you are veterans?
- How many of you work with veterans?
- Thank you for everything you do for veterans and their families!



What is a Myth?

A myth is something we believe that's not true.



There are a lot of things that
we believe that ain't so.



Myth #1

All veterans suffer from PTSD or some other mental health disorder.



Fact #1

While many veterans have a mental health problem, most of their symptoms are normal responses to combat.



Myth #2

All veterans are suicidal or homicidal.



Fact #2

While veterans die every day due to suicide, a vast majority will never attempt suicide.



Myth #3

It is easy transitioning from the military back to military life.



Fact #3

Many veterans feel like they don't fit in with civilians.



Myth #4

All veterans are ready to become leaders in your civilian organization.



Fact #4

Many veterans are
unprepared for the civilian
workforce.



Myth #5

Communities know when
their veterans are coming
home.



Fact #5

No one tells communities
when service members are
coming home.



Myth #6

California is a veteran
friendly state.



Fact #6

California ranks in the middle of the peak in supporting veterans.



Myth #7

The number of homeless veterans is increasing.



Fact #7

The number of homeless veterans is decreasing.



Myth #8

Most veterans are disabled.



Fact #8

The vast majority of
veterans have no disability
rating.



Myth #9

If veterans have a health issue they will go to the VA.



Fact #9

Only about half of veterans
use the VA.



Myth #10

The VA supports the family
of veterans.



Fact #10

The VA is prohibited from providing care to veteran families.

Conclusions



- Many service members leaving the military are not prepared for the transition.
- Many military veterans have a wide range of needs that cannot be easily provided by a single organization.
- Veteran engagement is not organized to provide holistic support to returning veterans and families.
- Most veteran support organizations are focused on meeting acute and chronic needs. Very little attention is given to **preventing** these conditions or **intervening early** to prevent them from becoming chronic.



Questions?

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Rules for Engagement

- Listen, Listen, Listen
- Focus on Adaptive Solutions

ADAPTIVE
PROBLEM
SOLVING

VS.

TECHNICAL
PROBLEM
SOLVING

- Be Bold
- Pay attention to relationships



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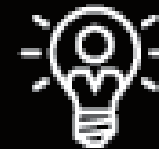
Tracks



Policy

Collaboration

Innovation





Rhea Mac
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Policy *Facilitators*



Seyron Foo
SoCal Grantmakers



Collaboration

Facilitators



Chase Milsap
USC CIR



Lisa Anderson
*Salvation Army Haven
LAVC Co-Chair*



Innovation

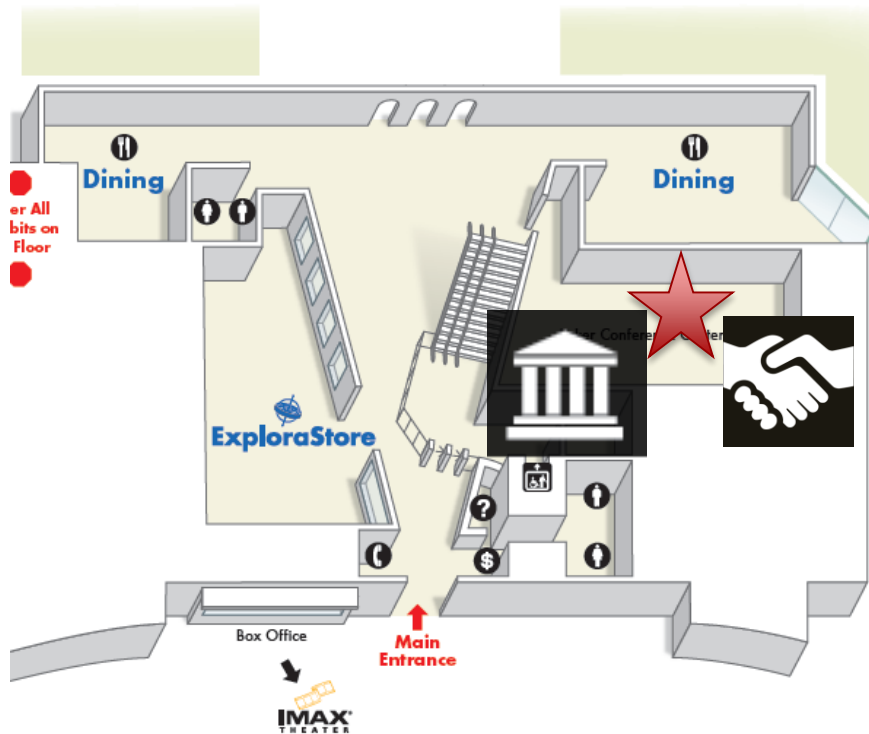
Facilitators



Nathan Graeser
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Mike Dowling
We Are The Mighty



Tracks

Session #1

10:30am-12:45pm