



Returning Veterans Project

Free counseling and other health services for
Post-9/11 warzone veterans and their families
in Oregon and SW Washington.

Good friends like you enabled RVP to deliver more than 4,500 hours of free, confidential counseling and healthcare services to hundreds of veterans and military family members in Oregon and Southwest Washington last year. THANK YOU!

2015 Annual Service Report

Pro Bono Mental Health and Somatic Provider Recruitment: In 2015, outreach by staff added **46** new pro bono practitioners to our network; at years-end **187**, independent licensed/insured mental health and somatic service providers and three university clinics were available to provide free, confidential healthcare services to post-9/11 war zone veterans and their families across Oregon and Southwest Washington.

Program and Client Service Outcomes: In 2015, our network of pro bono providers delivered **4,507** hours of free, confidential mental health services as well as acupuncture, massage, chiropractic and naturopathic care, physical therapy, and more, to **452** post-9/11 war zone veterans and family members:

- ❖ **324 Veterans:** 244 Men, 68 Women, 1 Transgender; 11 Male Active Duty
- ❖ **129 Military Family Members:** 102 Female Spouses/Intimate Partners, 1 Male Spouse/Intimate Partner, 9 male children and 7 female children, 5 Mothers, 4 Female and 1 Male Other Relatives e.g. siblings, grandparents, etc.

Innovative New Service Partnerships: Our expertise in building and maintaining partnerships enabled us to increase the scope of free healthcare services we're now able to provide to post-9/11 war zone veterans and their families in the Portland Metro Area!

- **University of Western States' Chiropractic/Massage Campus Clinic** – University of Western States joined RVP in May 2015, by providing free chiropractic & massage services at their Campus Clinic for post-9/11 war zone veterans who come through RVP. Services are delivered by, students nearing graduation, supervised on site by clinical staff. The 88 students, who staffed the two, clinics first completed our *New Provider Orientation*, which informed them about our mission, the need for our services in Oregon, military culture, signature injuries of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, reintegration challenges and the impact on military families.
- **Pacific University - Pacific Psychology and Comprehensive Healthcare Clinic** (Hillsboro & Portland) joined RVP in July 2015. Clinic services were delivered by more than, 90 masters and post-doctoral level students, clinically supervised on-site. They also first completed our Orientation and viewed a 14-hour VA military culture video. The free confidential services available to RVP clients include: counseling for individuals/couples/families/children, alcohol/drug counseling, and new services including primary care and physical therapy, plus speech/language therapy and occupational therapy for the treatment of traumatic brain injuries an often undiagnosed and untreated signature injury of the Iraq/Afghanistan Wars.

Military Family Outreach in 2015: Our outreach coordinator and other staff attended multiple Oregon National Guard Yellow Ribbon Pre/Post deployment events around the state, at Stand Downs for homeless veterans, military ceremonies and health fairs. This outreach enabled us to share information about our free confidential services with 1,063 post-9/11 war zone veterans, Guard and Reservists, service members, military spouses and parents.

Information/Referral Services in 2015: Staff responded to **197** information/referral and crisis calls resulting in resources and referrals given to 98% of callers. Requests included: veterans and spouses seeking individual, couples or family counseling, parents seeking mental health services and suicide interventions for a veteran son/daughter,

veterans seeking services related to legal child custody, assault and DUII charges; housing, and employment, as well as staff at social service and county clinics, hospitals and universities seeking counseling and other resources for veterans.

Additional Innovative Services and Projects Implemented:

- *Returning Veterans Art Therapy Project* continued to meet weekly. Staffed by two, pro bono mental health/art therapists, nine individual veterans participated at some point during the year. The three-hour sessions were held weekly. The therapists and participating veterans met first in The Portland Art Museum (sometimes a museum volunteer also participated) to discuss and learn about and be inspired by works by a particular artist. Then they moved to a space we rent at First Congregational Church, where the veterans made their own works of art for the next two hours (pastel and watercolor paintings, masks, ceramic works, etc.)
- RVP sponsored an 8-week *Writing Group for Women Veterans* in Eugene. The writing group was facilitated by, Army veteran Jamie Broady, MFA, and attended by 5 women veterans. They met weekly to write and share stories about their military service experiences. One veteran told us: ***“When other people read what I’ve written, the darkness and secrecy of it is gone and light shines in on it. The pain of it can only live in the dark shadows, so once the light shines in, the pain dies.”***

Clinical Trainings: RVP planned and hosted 7 clinical continuing education trainings across Oregon in 2015 attended by over **300** community-based practitioners, VA staff, county/state employees, social service agency staff, and university students.

Training topics:

- Military Sexual Trauma: Contextually-based Treatment Options and Methods to Heal Traumatic Memories (held in Bend and Medford)
- Combat PTSD and Soul Loss (Portland)
- Enhancing the Military Sexual Trauma (MST) Consultative Process (hosted in Vancouver)
- Preventing Veteran Suicides (Salem)
- Preventing Veteran Suicides (Clackamas County)
- Using Ortho-Bionomy to Treat Combat PTSD (Beaverton)

Events:

- We co-sponsored a, women veterans’ writing & performance series in 2015/2016 with, *Well Arts, Inc. & Wise Counsel & Comfort*. In fall 2015, five women veterans met weekly for 10-weeks with a Well Arts’ writing coach, to write about their military service. (In January 2016, Well Arts’ staff & veteran writers combined their stories into a play they called, *“Breaking Rank,”* performed seven times by local, professional actors at Milagro Theatre in early 2016.)
- We brought Dr. Paula Caplan to Portland, the author of, *“When Johnny and Jane Come Marching Home.”* We hosted the two workshops that she facilitated focused on her Listening Project; and that evening screened her documentary, *“Is Anybody Listening?”* More than 80 community members attended the workshops and documentary screening.
- We sponsored a *Veterans Dragon Boat Team* for American Legion Post 134, led by Post Commander Sean Davis. ***(An Iraq War veteran on the Dragon Boat team contacted us later, to say thank you. He told us that this experience on the water with his “buddies” allowed him to finally leave his house twice a week, and to get help for his PTSD from an RVP therapist.***

Thank you again, on behalf of the **453** veterans and family members RVP was honored to serve in 2015.

With warm regards,



Belle Landau
Executive Director