

**Mt. Carmel
Veterans
Service
Center**



**One-Stop
for Veterans
& Military**

**Board of Trustees
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Mt. Carmel Team



We Will Be Here for Them Also

The arrival of Memorial Day 2018 put an exclamation point on our activities over the previous weeks. For the Mt. Carmel team, clients and community partners, this was a sacred day. We were honored to join the nation and our community to take a knee, remove our hat and remember those who lost their lives in military service to our nation.



For many, the day was poignant and personal – a time to remember Americans who answered the call. Some of us attended large public events, others attended smaller ones with a somber tone. For others, the day was brighter – a moment to celebrate the greatness, vitality and fortitude of our nation as a result of great sacrifice by a friend, family member or neighbor.

At Mt. Carmel, we focus on military members, veterans and their families every day. In recent weeks, we deployed with two veterans and one employer – all clients – to testify before the Colorado State Legislature in support of legislation helping veterans and their families. Following client testimonials and hearing our pilot program data, legislators voted to continue the program for five years. We proudly joined Gov. John Hickenlooper and our Pikes Peak Workforce Center partners for the ceremonial bill signing on May 11 in Colorado Springs.

In recent weeks, we honored Retired Army MSG Hank Sheeks, a combat Veteran of WWII, Korea and the national atomic tests in Nevada -- he was nuked eight times. Sheeks had lost his medals over 40 years ago. With our partners, we proudly and properly re-issued them to him.

We also kicked off National Mental Health Awareness Month by hosting a national training conference on behavioral and mental healthcare. And, we hosted community partners and representatives of ten nations for the U.S. State Department International Visitors Leadership Program for discussion encouraging other countries to be more

inclusive to individuals with disabilities. In addition, The Gazette newspaper invited us to join others with concerns for veterans in a town hall discussion on the future of veteran healthcare.

As always, we're encouraged by the Mt. Carmel family. In fact, this past Saturday, Paul, Jessica and Daniel participated in a 30K ruck march carrying food donations as part of local Memorial Day activities.

Lastly, a final thought on the circle of service of which we're a part. As we present the very best in transition and wellness programs to veterans, their families and military members concluding their service locally, it's notable that our Air Force Academy graduated the Class of 2018 last week. I'm heartened by a firm belief that as those 984 new Airmen complete their service, Mt. Carmel will be here for them also.

Bob McLaughlin
COL, US Army Ret, COO

We Were Live on KRDO Radio!



Mt. Carmel was featured on "The Extra" with host Renae Roberts on May 21 as part of local Military Week activities ahead of Memorial Day. Listen [here](#) !

Peer Navigators: Meet the Clients



Meet Daniel:

Congratulations to Veteran Daniel! Working closely with our community partner, the Pikes Peak Workforce Center (PPWFC), the Marine veteran landed a carpentry position with veteran-owned Maverick's Construction and Repair. After a year of homelessness and unemployment, Daniel was referred to Mt. Carmel through a partner agency. Since then, Mt. Carmel provided the former infantryman temporary housing, job search networking,

financial management training, and therapeutic yoga classes. Through PPWFC, he is receiving financial management counseling, workforce training, certifications, tools and work boots. "Mt. Carmel changed my world. You've provided a foundation to repair my story and start a new chapter," said Daniel. "It's difficult to do this alone from the street. Your team, community partners, encouragement and motivation gave me a launch pad to a new life. You helped me break tall barriers I'd established that delayed my own success." Above, Daniel meets therapy dogs provided by Canine Defined Dog Training with owner Ciera Wilson.

Meet David:

Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center is excited for client David. An Army veteran, David is seeking new opportunities in the areas of victim advocacy and social services complimenting similar experience in uniform. David completed Prep Connect 360 in March, a premier five-day advanced jobseeker skills course. "I also attended your last networking event and learned about the law enforcement recruiting event today," said David. "I researched attending employers and found an opportunity matching my background perfectly." David visited Mt. Carmel ahead of the event, received feedback on his current resume and met the employers. "The nature of this small, personal recruiting event, effective employer research, and the skills and confidence from Prep Connect 360 and the Peer Navigators has made this a successful day. I'm excited for my next steps." Ten law enforcement and security agencies attended the Mt. Carmel event.



Meet Brett:

Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center is excited for client Brett Tedor! Peer Navigator Adam Baker, and our LeaderQuest community partner, George Winn (at right), are directly assisting Brett (at left), as he begins his transition from the U.S. Air Force. Following a career in telecommunications, Brett is beginning his journey toward a post-service career. He has completed the Transition Assistance Program and visited Mt. Carmel to consider his next moves. "I learned about IT certification and employment opportunities through a partnership between LeaderQuest Colorado Springs and Mt. Carmel," said Brett. "I've realized there are more open doors for me than I anticipated. I had no idea many of these opportunities existed, and it has really eased my anxiety about transitioning out of the military."

4th Annual Charity Golf Tournament

Join us for our 4th Annual Charity Golf Tournament on Wednesday, August 15, 2018 at the prestigious Sanctuary Golf Course in Sedalia, CO.

Please consider becoming a sponsor and helping us continue to provide the highest quality support in transition services and wellness programs for our military, veterans and their families. The proceeds from your participation provide funding for our support of these heroes - 25% of all veterans in this state live in El Paso and Teller counties, the areas we service.

Come join the fun! For more information, contact Melodie Owens at (719) 309-4771.



SANCTUARY
GOLF COURSE
INVITES YOU



BENEFITING VETERANS, MILITARY AND THEIR FAMILIES

CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15, 2018

PRESENTED BY: **RE/MAX** **HOLE IN ONE WINS BRAND NEW CAR** HERO SPONSOR LEVEL: **PHIL LONG**

FOR SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION CONTACT **MELODIE OWENS, 719-309-4771 MOWENS@MTCARMELCENTER.ORG**

We Proudly Honored Hank!



On May 9, the community joined us at Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center to honor 92-year old Retired Army Master Sgt. Harlen L. “Hank” Sheeks. A veteran of WWII, the Korean War and Atomic Energy Commission nuclear tests, Hank was nuked eight times! Previously lost service awards, decorations and badges were re-issued and presented through efforts of the El Paso County Veterans Service Office, and his retirement flag was flown over the U.S. Capitol by Congressman Doug Lamborn. Special thanks to EPC VSO Carl McDaniel for leading the Pledge of Allegiance; Ret. Army CSM Terrance McWilliams for presenting career highlights; U.S. Army Fort Carson Garrison Commander Col. Ron Fitch, Garrison CSM David Burton and EPC Associate VSO David Donohew for presenting the awards. Thank you for your service, Hank!

View the full story [here](#) .

Exciting Program Updates

Employment & Transition Program

Governor Extends Veteran, Spouse Job Program Five Years

- On May 11, we proudly joined Gov. John Hickenlooper and our Pikes Peak Workforce Center partners for the ceremonial bill signing in Colorado Springs. Ahead of the signing of House Bill 18-1343 into law, we deployed with two veterans and one employer – all clients – to testify before the Colorado State Legislature in support of this crucial legislation helping veterans and families. The veterans testified how their lives were positively impacted, and the employer testified how business benefited from the pilot program conducted by Mt. Carmel over the past year. Without duplicating existing efforts, the legislation continues programs for veterans and their family members seeking employment, paid internships and more. Following client testimonials and hearing our pilot program data, legislators voted to continue the program for five years! View the KOAA News story [here](#).



The Big Job Fair!

- Our Peer Navigator team prepared hundreds in the community for success ahead of the Military, Veterans and Spouses Employment Expo. Weeks of resume reviews, interview skills training, networking events and more paid off as 125 employers representing more than 1,500 employment opportunities met with nearly 650 job seekers.



Behavioral Health Program

National Behavioral Health Month

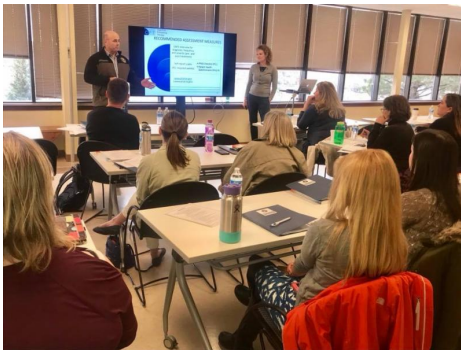
May was National Mental Health Awareness Month, and Mt. Carmel's Behavioral Health Program deserves a strong mention. Led by Behavioral Health Program Manager Kirsten Belaire, our programs for veterans, military and their families include

individual, group and couples therapy, therapeutic retreats, trauma-focused yoga, Tai-Chi and PTSD-focused support.

Increased demand for counseling services has made Mt. Carmel a popular referral for community partners. Currently, we're conducting therapeutic retreats that can include fly fishing, skiing, equine therapy, horseback riding, camping and more. Alternative programs include PTSD-focused yoga, Tai-Chi and art therapy. Services are confidential and provided to service members, veterans (regardless of discharge, duty status/era) and to immediate/extended family members.



Kirsten Belaire
Behavioral Health Program Mgr.



During the month, Mt. Carmel Chief Operating Officer, Ret. Army Col. Bob McLaughlin, welcomed behavioral and mental healthcare providers from across the nation. The counselors who treat veterans and families were at Mt. Carmel for two days of Strong Star Training in evidence-based treatments for PTSD and Cognitive Processing Therapy. The nationally-acclaimed training is affiliated with San Antonio-based UTHealth and funded by Stand4Heroes with the Bob Woodruff Foundation.

Supportive Services

Outreach to At-risk Veterans

Our supportive services team visited the El Paso County Criminal Justice System Center on April 13 to meet with incarcerated veterans. More than 70 veterans are currently in the male and female wards. Their awareness of employment, transition, behavioral health services and more through Mt. Carmel has proven useful for their eventual reintegration to the community.



Staff Updates



Welcome, Jessica Griser - Peer Navigator

Jessica served in both the Army and Army National Guard for over nine years. She has extensive experience in communications, Defense Department data projects and with VA medical claims. She holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration with specialization in public affairs, leadership development and non-profit management. Outside of work, she supports the military and veteran community through a variety of events and organizations. Jessica is an avid runner, always looking for the next race or team-competition.

Welcome, Dean Miller – Peer Navigator & Outreach Specialist

Dean served the U.S. Air Force in Public Affairs for 26 years in Colorado and around the globe. Since 2003, he has served as a communications leader at the U.S. Air Force Academy, Peterson AFB, the Pikes Peak Workforce Center, and the 5th U.S. Congressional District. As a Peer Navigator, he represents the people, programs and impact of the Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center through direct outreach, special events, and social media. He earned his Bachelors of Science in Communications from Excelsior College and believes telling our story effectively promotes the honor, dignity and accomplishments of our clients and the team members who serve them.



Welcome, Nicole Holling - Director of Veteran & Family Resources



A former Mt. Carmel Peer Navigator, Nicole now serves as Director of Veteran and Family Resources. Nicole is an Air Force Veteran and spouse of an active duty member. Originally from Lorain, Ohio, following her military service, she pursued her Masters in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of Kentucky. She considers herself fortunate to have lived and traveled extensively, but the United Kingdom remains a favorite! Since moving to Colorado in 2016, she has fallen in love with the beautiful sights Colorado has to offer. Outside of work, Nicole loves to take road trips, exploring new places and is a foodie at heart – welcoming good dining recommendations!

Welcome, SaCorra Ned - Employment Specialist

SaCorra is a U.S. Navy veteran, originally from Lake Charles, Louisiana. As a Yeoman, she served as an administrative assistant at NAS Whiting Field, Florida, supporting Naval Aviation Training. Following uniformed service, she led administrative functions for VA Denver's Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation section. Her military and government service ignited a life-long passion for learning and today she holds a Bachelors of Science in Sociology from UCCS and a Masters in Social Work from Walden University. SaCorra's transition from military service led to her dedication to directly help other veterans and their families succeed.



Farewell, Cheryl Christie!

The team bid farewell to longtime team member Cheryl Christie, who served on our team for more than two years. Cheryl has accepted a position as the USO Director at Fort Drum, New York. We wish her well and thank her for the enormous impact she has made on our organization.

Congratulations, Nick Palarino!



Congratulations are extended to Mt. Carmel's own, Nick Palarino, on acceptance of his new position as Director of Operations!

Wounded Warrior Games Coming to Colorado Springs



Colorado Springs will host the 2018 Wounded Warrior Games June 1-9, with an opening concert by Kelly Clarkson. Please visit the [website](#), reserve your free event tickets, mark your calendars and be sure to cheer on these incredible athletes!

Veterans Tribute Walkway



Show your support of our Veterans or pay tribute to a loved one by having a brick or paver engraved in their honor. They will be featured as part of our Veterans Tribute Walkway on the Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center campus.

Your contribution helps us to continue providing our essential services to Veterans and their families. Engraving ranges from \$175 - \$200 for bricks and \$700 - \$850 for pavers. They can even be personalized with military emblems.

To personalize a brick or paver,
or for additional information, visit
www.thatsmybrick.com/mtcvsc.

Remember, as a 501(c)(3), your donation may qualify for a tax credit.



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Help Support Veterans, Military and their Families Today!

Please consider supporting our local area Veterans and their families by donating to Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center. Your contribution will allow us to continue to support these heroes in the following critical areas:



Employment &
Transition Support



Job Placement &
Internships



Non-Clinical Case
Management &
Resource Navigation



Behavioral Health
Counseling

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