

Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center



One-Stop for Veterans & Military

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Beacon of Support

During the uncertainty of these challenging times, Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center is committed to being a beacon of support for military, veterans and their families.

We can't do it alone! We are honored to be a conduit of services to our military and veteran community through the financial support of many organizations, foundations and individual donors. Locally owned Wire Nut Home Services is one of Mt. Carmel Veteran Service Center's most recent financial partners. Trent Urban, owner of Wire Nut Home Services, selected Mt. Carmel as its nonprofit-of-the-month in both April and June during Fox 21's "3 Degree Guarantee" weather challenge sponsored by Wire Nut Home Services and Fox 21. I was grateful to accept a check in-studio from Mr. Urban on behalf of our dedicated team who serve our clients daily.



It's funding like this that allows our team to serve military, veterans their families in need -- veterans like Navy vet Amy Schell. Amy had been homeless off and on for four years. She connected with us at Springs Rescue Mission. Amy set a goal for herself to be off the streets within 60 days, and with the help of Mt. Carmel and Volunteers of America, she achieved her goal! Amy is now settling into her own apartment, working part-time and pursuing full-time employment.

Let us never underestimate the security and respite our homes provide. We want to ensure that all veterans have a place to call home. If you, or a veteran you know, is experiencing financial hardship and needs assistance covering rent or mortgage, we'd like to see if we can help. We have partnered with the Division of Local Affairs to provide housing assistance to those in need. I invite you to call (719) 772-7000 to see if you qualify. Remember, while you may not personally be in need, a veteran you know could be.

Here at Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center, we are putting our creative minds to work by seeking innovative ideas and ways to engage with our community and are eagerly looking forward to the second half of 2020. We are stronger together!

*By Col. Bob McLaughlin, U.S. Army, Retired
Chief Operating Officer*

Staff

Col (R) Robert McLaughlin
COO

Leslie Abrams
Executive Assistant

Paul Price
Director of Operations

Savannah Cuning
Org Dev & Process Coord.

Janet Farley
Dir, Transition & Emp.

Peer Navigators

Amy Demenge

Richard Gagne

Mark Smith

Tandi Zerfoss

Katie Travis
Dir, Vet & Family Resources

Darrel Walker
Vet Climb Peer Mentor

Kirsten Belaire
Dir, Behavioral Health Prog.

Bob Ehrhart
Behavioral Health Counselor

Kayla Prior
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Audrey Marshall-Harris
Supportive Svcs. Case Mgr

Liz Foster
Financial Wellness Program

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Greet & Connect/Office Mgr.

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Melodie Owens
Resource Dev & Events Mgr

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Marcia Mitchell
Controller

Dana Henkle
Staff Accountant

Missy Ward
Dir, Comm. & Marketing

Chris McGeorge
Facilities Coordinator

Randy Gradishar
Outreach Coordinator

With a Little Help from Our Friends

Mt. Carmel is a non-profit organization that provides low/no cost services to ALL veterans, military and their families without restriction or eligibility requirements and without a steady stream of earned revenue such as fees or insurance reimbursements. This means we rely on fundraising to support programs and serve clients. We are very thankful to the generous foundations, government agencies, individuals and corporations who support Mt. Carmel. We couldn't serve clients without your generous and ongoing support! In the last two months, we have received financial support from:

The Albertsons/Safeway Foundation
Northrop Grumman
COSTCO

The Colorado Springs Health Foundation
The State of Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
Pikes Peak United Way
The Adolph Coors Foundation
U.S. Bank
The City of Colorado Springs
The Denver Broncos
Wells Fargo Bank
Many others who prefer to remain anonymous

We thank you all for your continued support!



Are You Listening to the Award-Winning Veterans Voice?

The Mt. Carmel Veterans Voice Podcast was awarded first place in 2019 at the Colorado Broadcaster Association Awards of Excellence in the Best Use of New Media Category! The bi-monthly radio show is a podcast broadcast on KRDO Radio. Veterans Voice is hosted by KRDO personality and Navy veteran, Mike Lewis, and is presented by USAA in partnership with Star Dental Institute.

Follow this link to listen:

<https://krdonewsradio.podbean.com/p/the-mt-carmel-veterans-voice-with-mike-lewis/>



2020 Charity Golf Tournament

Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center will host our 5th annual Charity Golf Tournament on **Wednesday, August 12, 2020**. This will take place at the prestigious Sanctuary Golf Course in Sedalia, CO. Sanctuary is an exclusive course, played only by invitation.

Enjoy a memorable golf experience with proceeds directly benefiting local military, veterans and their families through Mt. Carmel VSC. Join us as a sponsor, a golfer, or sponsor a veteran to golf.

Our event is expected to draw approximately 120 supporters and participating businesses. All donations are greatly appreciated!

We look forward to seeing you on the links!

For more information visit: <https://VeteransGolf.givesmart.com>

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Unable to Attend or Sponsor the Golf Tournament?

If you are unable to attend or sponsor the golf tournament but would still like to contribute to help provide vital services, programs and resources to our military heroes and their families, **please donate today.**

Visit veteranscenter.org to Donate

Behavioral Health Still Going Strong

Kayla Prior joined our team in May as the new Administrative Assistant! We celebrated the successful graduation of interns and are welcoming a new cohort this fall. Our team has been utilizing telehealth to provide services to our clients. We are still providing in-person sessions, ensuring we follow safety standards per the Governor's orders and other regulations. The end of June brought an increase in calls for behavioral health services, as some restrictions were lifted. We are continuing to provide screenings and warm handovers for our clients based on their clinical needs. In addition, with gracious funding from Colorado Springs Health Foundation, we are completing our new buildout of four additional behavioral health offices, which will expand access to care for our clients. Our Director of Behavioral Health, Kirsten Belaire, has continued to be active in community and VA suicide prevention initiatives, focusing on internal practices at Mt. Carmel as well as community collaborations to reduce suicide rates in Colorado Springs.



Kirsten Belaire
Director of Behavioral Health

New Transition & Employment Director Named



Janet Farley
Director of T&E

Transition & Employment (T&E) continues to meet the needs of our clients and expand our partner relationships, despite the inherent challenges of COVID-19. Our Veterans Service to Career Program (VSCP) ended its third year surpassing all goals by conducting over 400 intakes and placing over 120 clients in jobs. Combined with our Veterans Integration Program (VIP) and the Milspouse Program, the T&E team had over 560 placements for the program year, setting a new record. Due to the new "normal," our service model has transitioned to a more virtual delivery system with our peer navigators now doing a large majority of our intakes and providing career coaching and mock interviews via the Zoom platform. We've also started hosting virtual job fairs by partnering with DeVry University, and several of our corporate partners have joined with us in connecting with transitioning service members, veterans and spouses in finding employment opportunities. After pausing for several weeks, we've also begun returning to the military installations to conduct briefings with transitioning personnel. Our Prep Connect 360 workshops have adjusted to a smaller class size and more virtual interaction with presenters and companies. We now have over 780 graduates! Lastly, we have a new Director of Transition & Employment as Janet Farley rejoins the Mt. Carmel family. Janet was previously our Program Manager for the Milspouse Career Program before moving over to UCCS' Career Center, but she now takes the reins of T&E as Paul Price has transitioned into the Director of Operations role.

Veteran & Family Resources Welcomes New Director

Since our last update, the Veteran and Family Resources (VFR) team has been working diligently to ensure the basic needs of our military community are being met, especially in the face of COVID. We have received COVID-specific grant money, which allows the team to assist with crucial needs such as rent, mortgage, utilities, and other essential items including groceries and fuel. To ensure the safety of our clients and case managers by limiting potential exposure, we have gone primarily to virtual intakes. While this proved a little tricky at first, with poor phone connections and technical difficulties, we seem to have found our groove and are determined to ensure everyone gets the support and hand-up they need and deserve in these trying times.

Our Financial Wellness Program is up and running. Originally slotted to start up in April, we had to put this program on hold due to group restrictions. Since those restrictions have lifted somewhat, we have been able to successfully implement this program. This program offers courses in money management, credit repair, debt consolidation, savings, and other financial tools to allow our veterans and their family members to become more fiscally responsible and stable. These courses are offered during two evening slots weekly. (continued on next page)



Katie Travis
Director of VFR

VFR has recently made some staffing changes. Abbey Westphal has stepped away from the director position to focus on her private practice but remains part of the team by providing supervision for our BSW and MSW interns. Katie Travis has moved from the position of Lead Case Manager to Director of Veteran and Family Resources. Liz Foster has taken on a more integral role in ensuring the success of our Financial Wellness Program. We have also hired a new Supportive Services Case Manager, Audrey Marshall-Harris, and are in the process of hiring an additional case manager to assist with the CLIMB program. Darrel Walker has been added to the team to assist as a Peer Mentor with the CLIMB Program. Grant writer Denise Patrick has become more involved with our team and will be providing assistance in securing and managing our various funding streams.

Overall, there have been many challenges and changes during the past few months, but we are still here and ready to assure that all veterans in our community have access to the support and resources they need to not only survive but to THRIVE. If you know of a veteran in need, please connect them with the Veteran and Family Resource team.

Patriot Day Give Back

Friday, September 4th is Mt. Carmel's annual Patriot Day Give Back! This event is a community outreach effort to support veterans and families with free nonperishable and perishable food, toiletries and youth sports equipment. Through our partnerships with Care and Share Food Bank of Southern Colorado, the Coalition to Salute American Heroes and 4KidzSports, we are able to provide more than 400 qualified families in the Pikes Peak region with essential goods.

The day begins at Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center with a breakfast at 7:00 am, followed by our opening ceremony at 8:00 am where local dignitaries, VIPs and military personnel will be on hand to welcome our Patriot Day partners and to pay tribute to our military, veterans and their families. At 9:00 am, the giveaway will commence in the Norris Penrose Event Center parking lot, just off Moreno Ave. Our goal is to hand out more than 400 boxes of food to military-connected families in need!

We would be honored to have you in attendance for the opening ceremony! Additionally, this day-long event provides you with an opportunity for sponsorship to promote your organization by providing a brochure or literature to the recipients of the Give Back, as well to those who are in attendance at the opening ceremony.

To take advantage of sponsorship opportunities for your organization or to volunteer for Patriot Day, contact Melodie Owens at (719) 309-4771 or visit <https://Patriotday.givesmart.com>.



King Soopers Community Rewards Help Veterans

SPREAD THE WORD:

Help Veterans just by using your King Soopers or City Market card - after you select us online (in just a few clicks)...and there is no impact to your fuel points.

Visit <https://veteranscenter.org/king-soopers-community-rewards> for details.

SHOP. SAVE. SWIPE. SUPPORT.
To support veterans through the King Soopers Community Rewards Program!

PROVIDE A HAND-UP TO VETERANS, MILITARY AND THEIR FAMILIES SIMPLY BY SHOPPING AT KING SOOPERS OR CITY MARKET!

ENROLL IN THE KING SOOPERS COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM AND SELECT

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Veterans Climb

Serving Those Who Served
In Community Partnership

Career & Transition Services • Supportive Services • Health & Wellness

El Pomar Foundation

PIKES PEAK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PIKES PEAK WORKFORCE CENTER
A proud partner of the American Job Center network.

The Journey

WELLNESS • TRANSITION • RESOURCES

Veterans Tribute Walkway



Honor a loved one or show your support of a veteran friend or family member by purchasing a brick or paver, featured as part of our Veterans Tribute Walkway on the Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center campus.

The proceeds are used to continue providing our essential veterans services. Bricks range from \$175 - \$200; Pavers from \$750 - \$850. They can even be personalized with military emblems.

To order your brick or paver, or for additional information, visit www.thatsmybrick.com/mtcvsc



Upcoming Events

(All events at Mt. Carmel unless noted - additional events at veteranscenter.org)

Events are subject to change due to COVID-19 restrictions, so please call to confirm.

Art Expression
Mondays at 5:30 pm

Bible Study
Tuesdays at 11 am

Spiritual Connection Group
Tuesdays at 12 pm

PTS Group
Thursdays at 10 am

Free Food Fridays
1st and 3rd Fridays of the month
11 am until supplies run out

Tai Chi
Saturdays at 10 am

Are you following us online and on social media?

For the latest Mt. Carmel information, events and services, visit veteranscenter.org.
Follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Twitter; and listen
to our weekly [Veterans Voice Podcast](http://KRDO.com) at KRDO.com.

