VETERAN NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

TOF THE TOR INTOFINE STATES OF MIRE STATES OF MIRE

JUAN M. GONZALEZ VETERAN NAVIGATOR 311 E. ALCOTT ST. KALAMAZOO, MI 269-548-9304





Veteran Navigators was created to assist Veterans and military families of ALL eras and discharge types. They work to connect Veterans and their families to federal, state and local resources to ease issues regarding mental health, substance abuse, housing and other common issues that impact veterans in order to support healthier lifestyles and provide support.

- 2018 15 Veteran Navigators throughout the state
- 2024 35 Veteran Navigators and continued growth in the future
- As Michigan is 'Guard and Reserve State', many of those that serve in the guard or reserve do not know what they may be eligible to receive due to their military service. We can connect them resources in their area to ascertain eligibility for assistance.
- Work with Michigan Army National Guard, Air National Guard, Navy, and Marine units returning from deployment with resources available through the state Yellow Ribbon Integration Program.

KALAMAZOO COUNTY VETERAN SERVICE OFFICE

VETERAN POPULATION 2023 – 12,566

VSO AVERAGES ABOUT 600 NEW VETERANS A YEAR

MILLAGE PASSED NOVEMBER 2023 FOR \$1 MILLION TO BE ADDED TO THE KCVSO

FUNDING WILL HELP SUPPORT SENIOR VETERANS, PROVIDE BENEFITS AND ALLOW FOR HIRING OF ADMIN AND ADDITIONAL VETERAN SERVICE OFFICER

GREAT COLLABORATION WITH COUNTY!!!



VETERAN NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

Mental Health Medical **Dental Veteran Benefits** Education **Employment** Jail Incarceration Housing

MENTAL HEALTH

Post Traumatic Stress

Depression

Anxiety

Substance Use (Vet Only AA)
Gambling



KALAMAZOO COUNTY JAIL



Jail Incarceration

Covid restrictions and jail staffing halted in-person meeting with incarcerated veterans from 2020 to 2023. In-person meetings reinstated February 2024

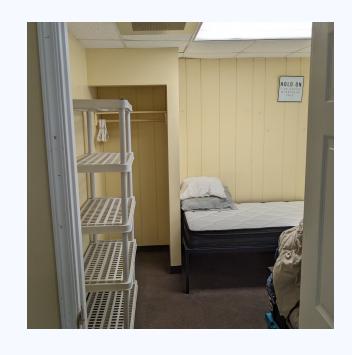
Assist with any VA or other benefits that individual may be eligible to receive Provide no legal advice

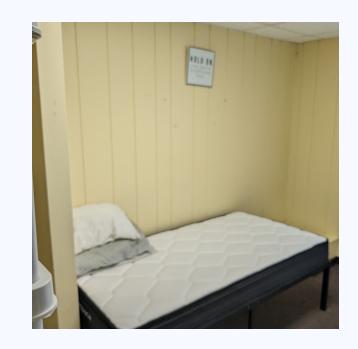
If necessary, will connect with VA Veteran Justice Outreach Coordinator (Heather West)

Crisis Intervention Training with area law enforcement agencies covering PTSD, Traumatic Injury and Moral Injury

KEYSTONE VETERAN TRANSITIONAL HOUSE







DAY ROOM

FEMALE ROOM

FEMALE ROOM



KEYSTONE Opened June 2020 422 E. Stockbridge

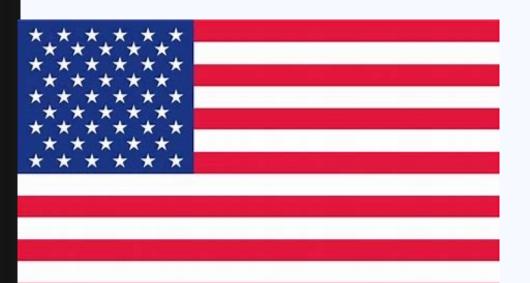
- 1. 75 Service Members and Veterans have been housed at the facility
- 2. Currently, we have ten veterans living at the facility (all male)
- Eleven veterans have been identified as chronically homeless
- 4. 68 male guests and 7 female guests
- 5. Forty-nine veterans have exited into permanent housing situations
- 6. Primary voucher resources used HUD/VASH (VA), Volunteers of America, ISK Housing Voucher,



Mental Health FIRST AID

from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR MENTAL WELLBEING

MILITARY, VETERANS, AND THEIR FAMILIES



Veterans Mental Health First Aid

Along with ISK Training Department, have taught Six Veteran MHFA Courses.

VFW Posts, Kalamazoo County, Indiana University AgriAbility Program, 110th Wing Battle Creek Air National Guard Base. Class schedule with Veterans Housing Program with Ingham County.

Over 100 students have participated in the course

Collaboration with the 110th Wing BC ANGB and working with Fort Custer to have them provide classes in the future

Goal is to teach three courses per year

Integrated Services of Kalamazoo: Military Cultural Competency Training

ISK and Community Training

- Bridge the gap between military and civilian culture
- ISK required training for staff
- Open to community and organizations
- First class in 2020. Offered quarterly and over 300 individuals have attended
- ISK, Bronson Hospital, Borgess Hospital, WMU, Kalamazoo County

VETERAN COMMITTEES

CO-CHAIRPERSON (VETERAN) FOR THE BATTLE CREEK VA VETERAN AND FAMILY ADVOCACY COUNCIL – PROMOTE WORK OF THE BC VA AND ASSIST IN BEING A 'VOICE' FROM VETERANS TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF CARE FOR THOSE THAT ARE PATIENTS AT THE FACILITY.

CHAIRPERSON FOR THE VETERAN COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM (VCAT) REGION 8 QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE. COMMITTEE

AREAS OF CONCERN

FEMALE VETERANS – LACK OF CONNECTION DUE TO TIME IN SERVICE AND ACTION(S) WHILE IN SERVICE

FAMILY HOUSING – LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING, NOT JUST FOR SINGLE INDIVIDUALS, BUT WITH THOSE WITH FAMILY

QUESTIONS?

