

**UNM  
VETERANS  
RESOURCE  
CENTER**

**Developing a Veteran  
Focused Campus**

**July 2013**



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University of New Mexico

# Presentation Overview



- University of New Mexico Overview
- UNM Veterans Resource Center Overview
- Elements of a Veteran-Focused Campus Model
- UNM Veterans Resource Center Initiatives

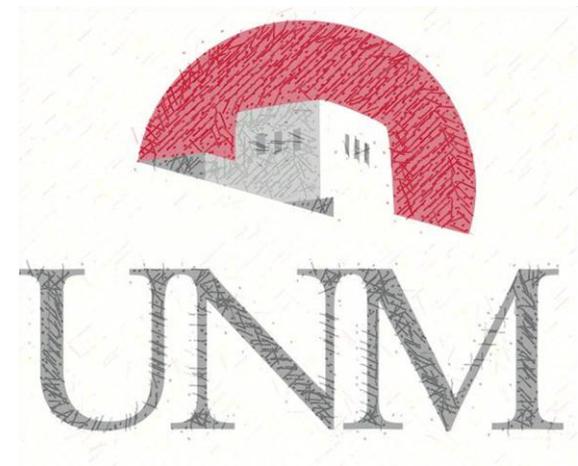
# University of New Mexico



- Nearly 800 acres in the heart of Albuquerque
- Less than 5 miles from Kirtland AFB
- Over 27,000 students at main campus
- Another 8,000 students at branch campuses
  - Gallup, Los Alamos, Taos, and Valencia County
  - UNM West: extension campus in Rio Rancho

# University of New Mexico

- Over 50% of students identify themselves as Hispanic, African American, American Indian, Asian, Native Hawaiian, or multiracial
- Hispanic-Serving Institution
  - over 35% of students
- Three ROTC units
  - Army, Air Force, Navy



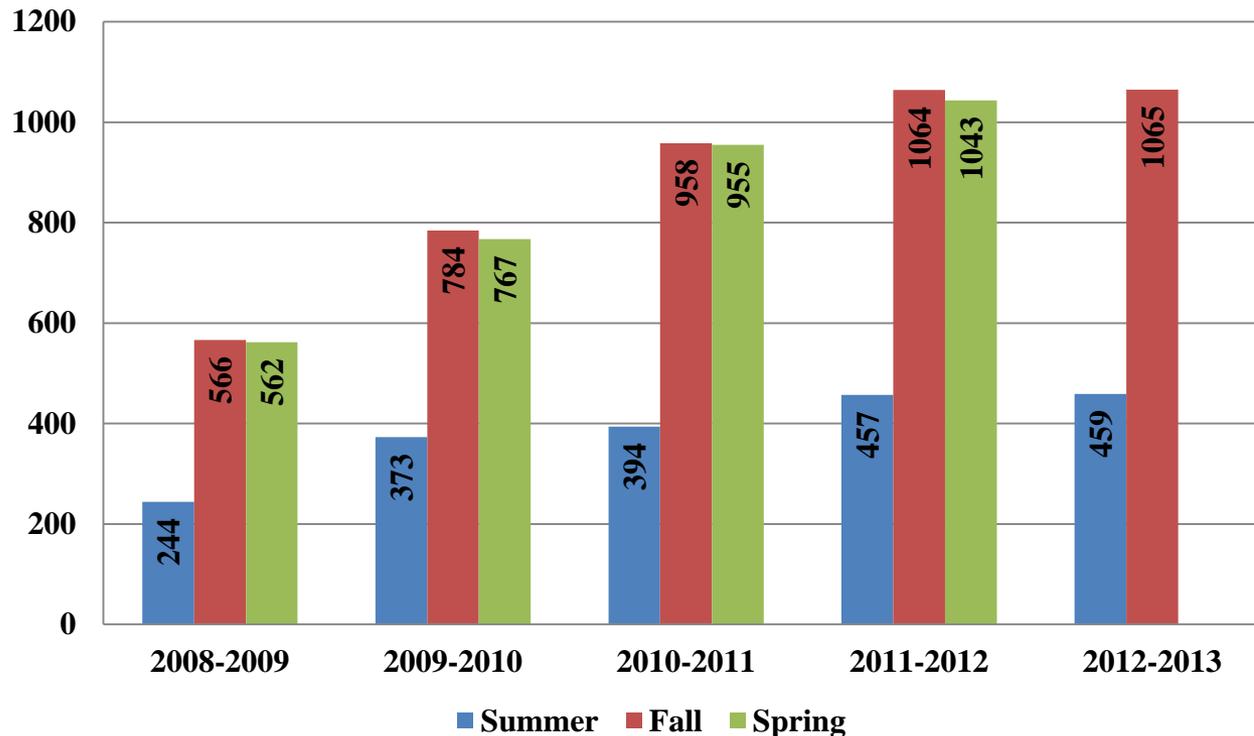
# Student Veterans at UNM

- More than 1,260 student veterans utilizing G.I. Bill or other military education benefits at main campus
  - 150 at branch campuses
- 70% undergraduate
- 37.5% female, 62.5% male
- Over 55% Hispanic; African American; American Indian; Asian; Native Hawaiian; or multi-racial



# Student Veterans at UNM

UNM Main Campus  
Military GI Education Benefits Enrollment



Student veteran enrollment is increasing due to troop draw downs overseas: UNM saw an increase of nearly **88%** in fall term enrollment between 2008 and 2012.

An additional 200 student veterans are using other military education benefits at UNM for Fall 2012.

# UNM Veterans Resource Center



## Mission

We are dedicated to providing the highest quality and comprehensive support to student veterans, service members, and their families in an atmosphere that fosters commitment, respect, and academic excellence.



# UNM Veterans Resource Center

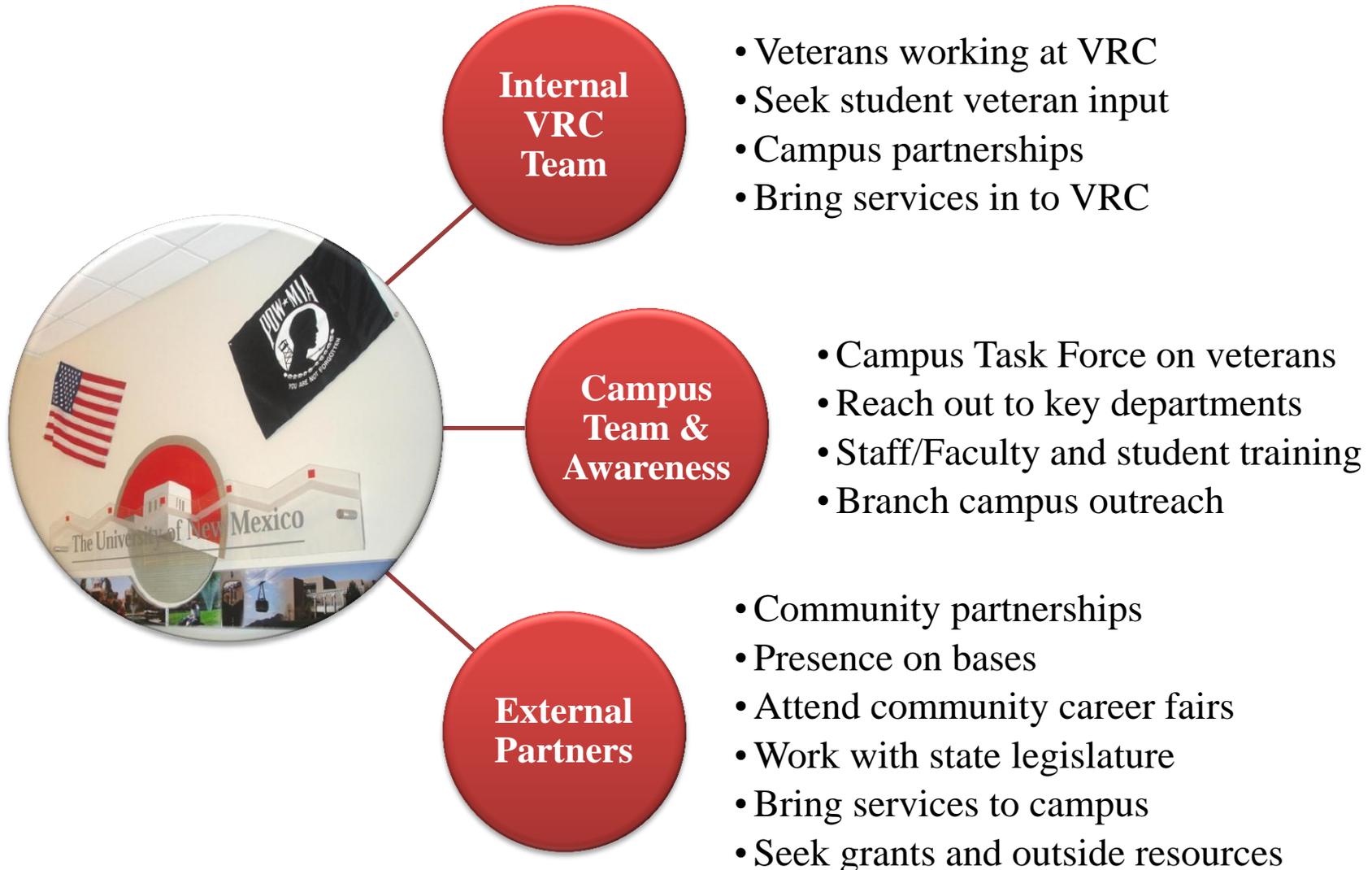
## Staff:

- Three (3) Full-Time Staff
  - Director
  - Two (2) VA certifying officials
- Eight (8) VA work study students
- Three (3) student employees
- Two (2) AmeriCorps volunteers

## Services:

- VetSuccess on Campus
- VA Services
- Disabled American Veterans
- Scholarship/job leads
- Campus partnerships
  - Career services
  - Tutoring
  - Accessibility Resource Center
- Referrals
  - Campus resources
  - Community resources
- Outreach
  - Branch campuses
  - Military communities

# Veteran-Focused Campus Model



# Four Elements of a Veteran-Focused Campus Model

1. Embrace framework of transitional, comprehensive, coordinated services
2. Develop programs based on needs-assessments that are veteran-centered
3. Develop partnerships that help VRC respond to identified needs of student veterans
4. Conduct active outreach and follow-up that engages student veterans in various and highly visible means

# Element #1: Transitional, Comprehensive, Coordinated Framework

## Holistic Framework for Understanding Student Veterans

### Military Experience

- Combat and deployments
- Trust other veterans
- Career specialty
- Academic and soft skills
- College credits

### Health/Mental Health

- Attitude towards accessing resources
- Test anxiety, hypervigilance
- Combat Stress, PTSD, TBI, MST
- Sleep-related challenges
- Physical injuries

### University Environment

- Connecting with other veterans
- Veteran student support services
- Military-friendly environment
  - Faculty/Staff support

### Family

- Financial challenges
- Child care/visitation arrangements
- Adjustment to veteran's transition
- Health/mental health needs of family

### Career

- Academic preparation and major
- Translate military skills into civilian skills
- Prepare for job search

# Element #1: Transitional, Comprehensive, Coordinated Framework

## Transitional Services for Student Veterans

### Warrior to Student Veteran

- Military Unit's Transition Program
- Department of Veteran Affairs
- Campus Orientation
- Veterans Resource Center
- University Seminar / Transitions Course
- Student Veterans Organization

### Student Veteran

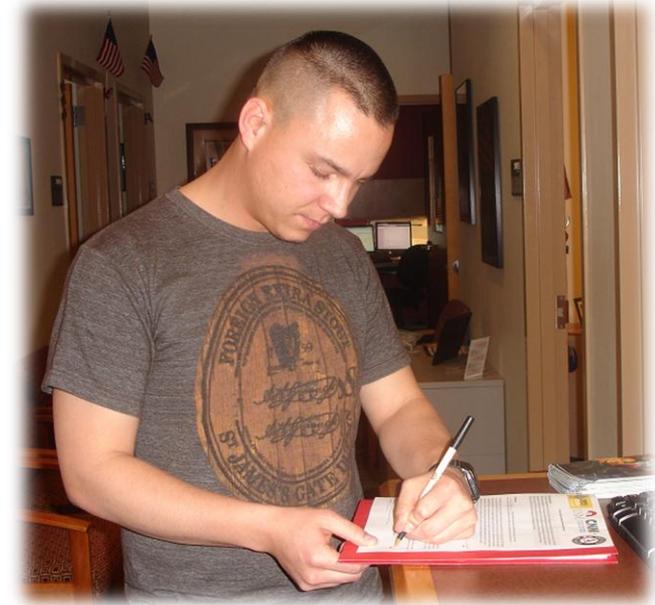
- Veterans Resource Center
- Academic Advising
- Student Services
- Academic Success Programs
- Campus Mentorship Programs
- Veterans Task Force
- Faculty/Staff and Student Training

### Student Veteran to Civilian Worker

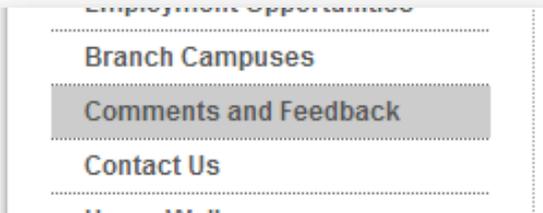
- Career Services
- Workshops
- Resume Rescue
- Job Postings
- Career Fairs
- Community Resources

# Element #2: Veteran-Centered Needs-Assessments & Program Development

- Research must be useful!
- Student veteran participation in research:
  - Question design
  - Research implementation
  - Participants
  - Outcome interpretation
- Research methods:
  - Focus groups
  - Individual interviews with student veterans
  - Online and in-person needs-assessments (surveys)
  - Research-based veterans transition course



# Element #2: Veteran-Centered Needs-Assessments & Program Development



- Comments and Feedback section added to VRC website
- Section includes links to online surveys
- Comments and Feedback submitted is sent to VRC email for follow-up

## Student Surveys

### Transitions Course (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/YZDMHPC>)

Should UNM offer a course for credit that focuses on transitioning leadership skills from the military into those required for academic success? The survey is only one yes/no question and takes a few seconds to complete!!

### Tutoring (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HZLRF2K>)

Please fill out this survey regarding your tutoring needs for Spring 2013 semester. The survey is 10 questions long and takes less than 5 minutes to complete!!

### Veteran Campus Housing (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JD6GHGY>)

This is a short survey concerning the possibility of designated UNM student housing for veterans and their dependents. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential but will help guide university policy.

## Comments And Feedback

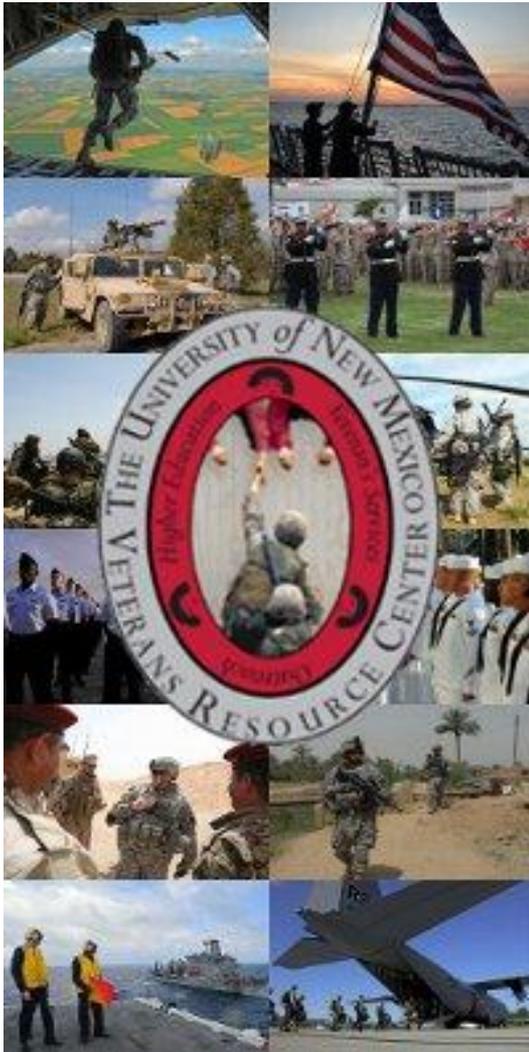
Your feedback is important for determining how we can better our website for your benefit. If you have any suggestions or comments please share them with us as we are eager to improve our ability to help you. By omitting your email address and name you will remain completely anonymous.

Submit My Request

Clear Form

# Research Example: UNM Student Veterans are at Risk



- Online Student Voice Survey
- Emailed survey link out to students
- 175 students participated
- Findings:
  - 70% health-related challenges
  - 61% sleep-related challenges
  - 45% financial challenges
  - 38% report feeling depressed

# Element #2: Veteran-Centered Needs-Assessments & Program Development

## Program Development Based on Needs of Student Veterans



# Element #3: Partnerships that Respond to Identified Needs

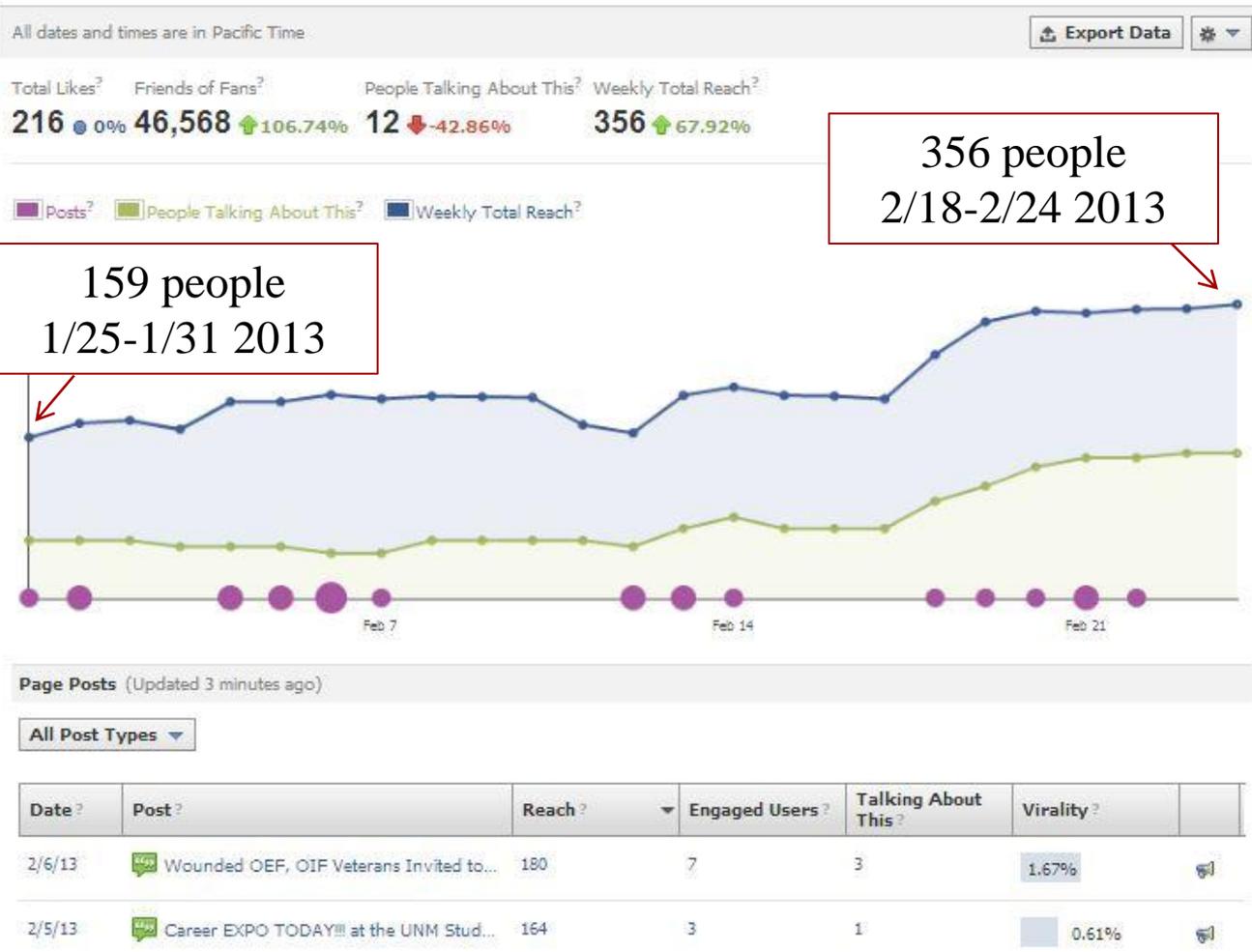
- Community outreach to recruit veterans
  - Military bases, career fairs, other schools, non-profits, etc.
- Develop partnerships to serve veterans in all areas
- Example partnerships:

<b>Community</b>	<b>Campus</b>
American Widow Project	Academic Success Program
Disabled American Veterans	Accessibility Resource Center
National Roll Call	Career Services
Military Friendly Schools	Peer Mentoring
Operation College Promise	Student Health and Counseling
Wounded Warrior Project	Tutoring
Yellow Ribbon Program	

# Element #4: Active Outreach and Engaging Follow-Up

- Multiple and various approaches are key!
  - Campus visibility: t-shirts, signage, event participation
  - Luncheons and social events
  - Campus events: National Roll Call, Veterans Day, Graduation
  - Speakers and workshops
- Follow-up with student veterans
  - Emails, phone calls, etc.
- Student veterans trained as peer mentors
- Technology!
  - Facebook, website, monthly newsletter, etc.

# Element #4: Active Outreach and Engaging Follow-Up



- All Facebook pages have access to data
- VRC began posting once a day
- More than doubled users who see VRC page's content in less than a month
- Potential posts:
  - Jobs
  - Scholarships
  - Career Fairs
  - Campus Events
  - Reminders

# Element #4: Active Outreach and Engaging Follow-Up

## Student Veteran Organization

- Support Network
- Training for officers/members
  - Self-care
  - Peer-to-peer mentoring
  - Campus/community resources
- Social events, speakers, volunteerism
- Refer members to campus/community resources
- Student Veterans of America Chapter
- Get a logo!



# Overview of UNM's Veteran-Focused Campus Model

- I. Academic Support
- II. Health/Mental Health Support Services
- III. Career and Employment Services
- IV. Community Outreach and Training

# I. Academic Support

- Accessibility Resource Center
  - Designated counselor for veteran students
  - Office hours in VRC one day a week
  - Test anxiety, hypervigilance, comprehension
- Tutoring
  - Partnership with campus tutoring program
    - Center for Academic Program Support
  - Link on VRC Website / veterans tab on tutoring website
  - Conducted tutoring needs assessment
    - Math, writing, statistics
    - One-on-one sessions in quiet location
  - Location: Accessibility Resource Center
- Grade monitoring



# I. Academic Support

- Contacting all students
  - Email and phone
  - Check in how semester is going
  - Refer to services
- Branch campuses
  - Training for certifying officials and faculty/staff
  - Research academic success points of contact
  - Contacting all branch campus students
  - Unique resource guide for each branch on website
- Central New Mexico Community College
  - Points of contacts established
  - Familiar with where to refer students on campus
  - Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP)

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# I. Academic Support



- Attendance at Student Orientations
- VRC Graduation Ceremony
  - Cord, coin, certificate
- Women Veterans Leadership Group
  - In development
- Advocacy
  - Departments, Dean of Students, Faculty/Staff, Campus Intervention Team, Advisors
  - Faculty/Staff tab added to VRC webpage
- Campus Training
  - Faculty, Staff, and Students
  - In-person, Kognito (online training)

# I. Academic Support: Kognito Campus

## Higher Ed



### **At Risk: Faculty & Staff**

Gatekeeper & suicide prevention training

### **At-Risk: Students & RAs**

Peer-to-peer gatekeeper training

## **At-Risk for College Students**

- Identify common psychological distress indicators
- Approach and talk to at-risk student
- Motivate student to visit mental health support office

## Veterans & Military



### **Family of Heroes**

PTSD & Resilience training for military families

### **Veterans on Campus: Faculty & Staff**

Training educators to support student veterans

### **Veterans on Campus: Students & RAs**

Training students to support student veterans (available Q2/13)

## **Veterans on Campus**

- Understand common challenges student veterans face
- Learn various on-campus referral points
- Manage classroom discussions around issues sensitive to veterans
- Learn common indicators of PTSD/TBI

# I. Academic Support: Kognito Campus



**VETERANS**  
★ ON ★  
**CAMPUS**

**Online Interactive Training**

Help create a supportive campus  
environment for student veterans

[www.kognito.com/demos](http://www.kognito.com/demos)

1. Select “At-Risk For College Students” or “Veterans on Campus”
2. Fill out requested information
3. Access key will be emailed to you (24 hour access)
4. After 24 hours, repeat 1-3

# I. Academic Support: Future Goals



- Supportive Education for the Returning Veteran (SERV)
- Orientation addendum for veterans
- Military housing on campus
- Veteran-to-veteran peer mentoring
- UNM Veteran Alumni Organization
- Resiliency training for student veterans
- Kognito campus-wide
  - Faculty/Staff, Students/RAs, Family of Heroes

# II. Health and Mental Health Support Services

**\*\* Service members, veterans, and family members!!\*\***

- UNM Student Health and Counseling
  - Health services
  - Individual and group counseling
  - Free workshops
  - Student Veteran Retreat
- Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center
- Albuquerque Vet Center
- Presbyterian Medical Services
  - New Mexico Veteran and Family Support Services (VFSS) Program



PRESBYTERIAN MEDICAL SERVICES  
*Building a Healthier State*®

# II. Health and Mental Health Support Services

- Wounded Warrior Project
- AGORA
  - Help Line, Walk-in Clinic
- Student Veterans Organization
- Advocacy for student veterans on campus
- Campus/community training
- Future Goals:
  - Kognito: Family of Heroes



# III. Career and Employment Services

- UNM Career Services
  - Dedicated career counselor for vets
  - Office hours in VRC once a week
  - Translate military skills into civilian skills
  - Resume, Mock Interview, Personality and Skills Assessment, Job Search
- Community Partnerships
  - NM Workforce Solutions
  - Sandia National Laboratory
    - Wounded Warrior Project
  - Companies who hire vets



# III. Career and Employment Services

- Job Postings
  - Facebook, website, bulletin board, VRC monthly newsletter
- Online Resources
  - VA Career Center
    - Translate Your Military Experience
    - Resume Tool
    - [vaforvets.va.gov/careercenter](http://vaforvets.va.gov/careercenter)
  - O-NET
    - Skills Assessments, Job Searches
    - Crosswalks > Military
    - [www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org)



# IV. Community Outreach and Training

- Advocacy
  - In-person meetings, phone, email support
  - Departments, Dean of Students, Faculty/Staff, Campus Intervention Team, Advisors
  - Faculty/Staff tab added to VRC webpage
- Campus Training
  - Faculty, Staff, and Students
  - In-person by request
  - Kognito



\*Some photos are courtesy of the U.S. Military.

# IV. Community Outreach and Training

- Branch Campuses
  - Training for certifying officials and faculty/staff
  - Attendance at Transfer Fairs
- Military Bases/ National Guard and Reserve Armories
- Attend Career Fairs
- Present state-wide and nationally
- Support other campuses in becoming more veteran focused
- Future Goals
  - Veteran-focused sticker/award



# Preliminary Outcomes

- **Operation College Promise** Pilot Study Participant
- **VA VetSuccess on Campus** counselor at VRC
- Signed **Got Your 6** Education Pillar Commitment
- *GI Jobs Magazine* ranked as a Military Friendly School, 2013
- *Military Advanced Education* ranked as a Military Friendly University, 2013
- *Albuquerque Business First* named VRC Director, Marilyn Dykman, as a 2013 Women of Influence Honoree

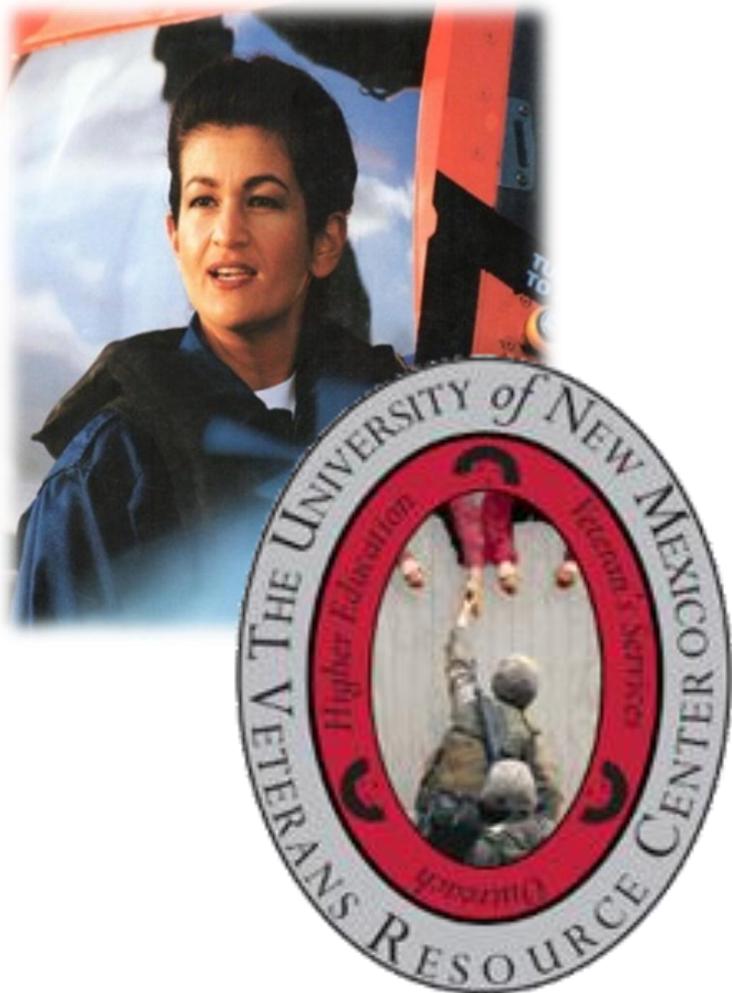


# UNM Veterans Resource Center

## Questions



# Contact Information



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**Veterans Resource Center**

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 UNM Veterans Resource Center