

**DIRECTORY OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL RESOURCES
FOR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES IN VERMONT**

Latest Update: 23 May 2016

1. Introduction

According to the US census (2014) there are 626,562 Vermonters. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs 2014 data, approximately 49,000 veterans live in Vermont. Otherwise stated, more than 1 in every 13 Vermonters is a military veteran. Over 7,200 of Vermont veterans receive disability compensation. 3,000 of Vermont veterans are women.¹

Governmental entities have listings of largely governmental services for veterans in Vermont. Apparently, however, there is no overall directory of non-governmental rehabilitative, spiritual and social resources for veterans and their families in Vermont. This initial draft of a Directory of such non-governmental organizations (NGOs) Resources is a work-in-progress. While the envisioned Directory will include spiritual resources, it is not limited to spiritual or religious resources. Rather it is envisioned as a user-friendly directory of non-governmental resources for the benefit of veterans and their families in Vermont. Toward that end it is also envisioned as a readily accessible resource for service organizations, medical centers and other providers of healing services, and individual Vermonters who are interested in lending a hand.

2. Some Governmental 24-Hour Lines and Links

Although it is not the purpose of this initiative to duplicate governmental directories, it may be useful to include links to some major directories of governmental resources for veterans in Vermont, including:

Veterans Crisis Line, also called National Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-8255, Press 1, or text 838255.

Vermont National Guard Family Assistance Centers, also called the Vermont Outreach Hotline, inquiry or crisis, joint 24 Hour Call Line: 1-888-607-8773. There are six Family Assistance Centers in Vermont, located in Bennington, White River Junction, Berlin, Colchester, Swanton and Newport. Their services include Community Information and Outreach.

¹ See, http://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/State_Summaries_Vermont.pdf

Vermont National Guard @ 789 Vermont National Guard Road, Colchester, VT 05446-3099; Lt. Colonel David Leonard, State Family Program Director, dave.leonard@us.army.mil and Miriam G. Boyle, Family Programs Coordinator Miriam.g.boyle.ctr@mail.mil
802-338-3364 or Cell 802-310-5609. Or call above 24-hour joint Family Assistance Centers Hotline, 1-800-607-8773

<http://veterans.vermont.gov/> Vermont Office of Veterans Affairs, 118 State Street, Montpelier, VT. 888-666-9844

<http://www.va.gov/> Or call 866-687-8387

http://www.va.gov/vetdata/Quick_Facts.asp

<http://s3.amazonaws.com/castleton/files/resources/veterans-outreach-guide.pdf>

The Vermont Department of Labor has trained staff, including veterans, who help veterans find work and provide assistance with training needs and funds for training. <http://veterans.vermont.gov/transitions/employmentassistance>

The Vermont Department of Labor also has a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program with a small staff who travel throughout the State to work with disabled veterans and veterans with barriers to employment at any of its 12 regional offices to find suitable employment:

<http://labor.vermont.gov/workforce-development/career-resource-centers/>

Dial 2-1-1. Dialing this number is a free and confidential connection to many resources in Vermont, including for everyday needs and difficult situations. It is not an emergency number like 9-1-1, nor is it directory assistance like 4-1-1. *See, www.vermont211.org.* Language interpretation available.

3. **Non-Governmental Organizations in Vermont which are Resources for Veterans.** Some of these organizations are also resources or provide services for non-veterans; for example, Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports provides trained volunteers and organization for individuals with disabilities, including wounded warriors, to participate in skiing and other sports.

Name of Organization	Description and Website	Contact Information
Vermont Adaptive Ski & Sports	<p>Vermont Adaptive Ski & Sports is a nationally recognized organization with many skilled volunteers empowering people of all abilities through inclusive sports, recreational programs and more, regardless of ability to pay. Vermont Adaptive works with persons who have a variety of disabilities, including amputations, traumatic brain injuries, muscle weakness and wounded veterans' programs.</p> <p>http://www.vermontadaptive.org/</p>	<p>Erin Fernandez, Executive Director director@vermontadaptive.org P.O. Box 139, Killington, VT. 05751</p> <p>802-353.8129</p>
Vermont Bar Foundation, Vermont Veterans Legal Assistance Project (VVLAP)²	<p>Katelyn Atwood (Vermont Law School 2011) is the Poverty Law Fellow for the VBF through 2016 and is focusing on direct representation by Vermont attorneys for Vermont's military veterans, including helping access to benefits, family law and civil matters. Also through collaboration with other organizations including Vermont Legal Aid for enhanced representation of veterans and their families.</p> <p>http://www.vtbarfoundation.org/news/2014-vermont-poverty-law-fellow-selected/</p>	<p>The program operates through the South Royalton Legal Clinic, 190 Chelsea St., PO Box 117 South Royalton, VT 05068-0117</p> <p>802-831-1500</p>

² This project is funded through August 2016 by the Vermont Bar Foundation in conjunction with the Access to Justice Campaign. VVLAP represents veteran clients with state civil law issues in Windsor, Orange and Washington counties, and on veterans statewide with veteran law specific issues, such as VA disability benefits or upgrading a service member's discharge so that benefits can be accessed. In addition to direct legal representation, a holistic program to serve the veterans is also a focus. Every month there is a child support clinic held at the VA in White River Junction to assist veterans with a range of legal issues surrounding child support.

<p>Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS)</p>	<p>COTS provides services and emergency shelter for veterans (single adults and families). COTS also provides homelessness prevention services and assistance through its Housing Resource Center. And, COTS' Canal Street Veterans Housing provides veteran-specific, two-year transitional housing, not shelter, for formerly homeless veterans. Learn more about Canal Street here:</p> <p>http://cotsonline.org/our-mission/cots-housing/canal-street-veterans-housing/</p>	<p>Administrative office is at 179 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401 802-864-7402; www.cotsonline.org; info@cotsonline.org</p> <p>Executive Director: Rita Markley ritam@cotsonline.org</p> <p>beckyh@cotsonline.org</p>
<p>Episcopal Diocese of Vermont</p>	<p>Rt. Rev. Thomas Ely, the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont, has assigned Deacon Stephen Reynes, who is a veteran, for a diocesan ministry for assisting veterans in Vermont through collaborative development and promotion of a Directory of non-governmental resources for veterans, especially those who have been wounded in some way. This effort is to include, but is not limited to, spiritual resources from the various faith traditions which choose to participate in some way.</p> <p>http://www.diovermont.org/</p>	<p>Rev. Stephen Reynes, Deacon 64 State Street PO Box 1514 Montpelier, VT 05601-1514 sreynes@vtlanduselaw.com 802-249-7380</p>

<p>Purple Hearts Reunited</p>	<p>Purple Hearts Reunited was established in Vermont in 2012 as a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit foundation with this Mission: To return lost or stolen military medals of valor to veterans or their families, in order to honor their sacrifice to the nation. It performs its mission at no cost to the veteran or their family. Purple Hearts Reunited also takes time to enroll these heroes into the Purple Heart Hall of Honor and has successfully enrolled over 1500 recipients.</p> <p>Purple Hearts Reunited founder Zachariah Fike is currently a Captain in the Vermont Army National Guard. He has served in the military for 17 years with combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, and he earned a Purple Heart on 11 September 2010 in Afghanistan.</p> <p>http://purpleheartsreunited.org/about-us/</p>	<p>mail:</p> <p>Purple Hearts Reunited P.O. Box 2121 Georgia, VT 05468</p> <p>Email: purpleheartsreunited@gmail.com</p> <p>Purple Hearts Reunited is also on Facebook and Twitter.</p>
<p>Silver Dove Institute</p>	<p>The Silver Dove Institute, an educational non-profit, provides professional training to become a spiritual care specialist. Its graduates serve as chaplains, spiritual directors, spiritually oriented counselors as well as spiritual and faith leaders in diverse settings. The Silver Dove Institute supports spiritual well-being and renewal through retreats and special programs. Its faculty and alumni provide soul care supporting the overall well-being and spiritual resilience of people in military service, family members, veterans and non-military personnel.</p> <p>The Silver Dove Institute affirms the strength and wisdom of our multi-faith, multicultural diversity as well as the uniqueness of each soul's journey.</p>	<p>Carol A. Fournier, MA, MS Director</p> <p>Silver Dove Institute</p> <p>1233 Shelburne Rd.</p> <p>So. Burlington, VT 05403</p> <p>802-865-2600, Ext. 2.</p> <p>info@silverdoveinstitute.org</p>

<p>Rhythm of the Rein in partnership with Wounded Warrior</p> 	<p>Rhythm of the Rein Therapeutic Riding and Driving Program, located at the Water Tower Farm, 386 US Route 2 in Marshfield.</p> <p>http://rhythmoftherein.org/</p> <p>See http://rhythmoftherein.org/about-us/our-volunteers/ regarding volunteers for Equine Services for Veterans Program and Horses for Heroes.</p>	<p>Dianne Lashoones Program Director</p> <p>rhythmoftherein@aol.com</p>
<p>Vermont Barn Door Project</p>	<p>Steven DePalma of Hardwick is an Army veteran who served in Afghanistan and suffered PTSD upon his return to Vermont. A horseman of long experience, he found that returning to horses, grooming them and connecting with them, was healing. He has also found that has helped other vets experiencing PTSD, and he wants to establish a Therapeutic Riding Center where his brothers and sisters in arms can come and heal the hidden wounds of war. See the web site of the Vermont Barn Door Project for further information:</p> <p>http://www.veteranbarndoor.com/</p> <p>See also, http://www.wcax.com/story/28233393/horse-therapy-program-aims-to-help-veterans</p>	<p>Steven DePalma 1908 Mountain View Road East Hardwick, VT. 05836</p> <p>802-917-3550 sdepalma@vermontbarndoor.com</p>

<p>Fowler’s R&R Ranch Corp. Whiting, Vermont</p>	<p>According to its website, Fowler’s R&R Ranch Corp. is a Vt. non-profit corporation with IRS 501(C)(3) status. The Ranch provides a “respite for veterans” where they may gain skills including the operation of farm machinery, woodworking, and the growing and preparation of food. It is meant as a transitional place and resource for vets, in the company of other vets. www.Fowlersranch.org</p> <p>This facility was the subject of a Rutland Herald article on 23 March 2015, <u>Farmer launches initiative to help returning vets</u>. The article includes interesting comments by Burlington, Vermont attorney Kurt N. Mehta, who is a member of the Board of Directors of Fowler’s Ranch, to the point that the operation may be duplicated in Vermont and serve as a model that may be replicated around the country.</p>	<p>Bruce Fowler 38 So. Main St. Whiting, VT. 05478 802-598-0940 Email: info@fowlersrandr.org</p> <p>[Board member Atty. Kurt N. Mehta, 255 S. Champlain St., Ste. 13, Burlington, VT (802) 242 -1492]. mehtalawoffice@gmail.com</p>
<p>The Veterans’ Place in Northfield</p>	<p>The Veterans’ Place is a community-based, 501 (c) 3 non-profit, 26 bed, male, transitional housing program located in central Vermont, dedicated to reducing the Vermont Veterans homeless population. TVPI in conjunction with the White River Jct. VA, provides both secure and sober housing along with supportive services and programs to homeless Veterans. The Veteran may stay up to 2 years utilizing TVPI as a stepping stone toward fulfilling their potential regaining their dignity and transitioning to independent living.</p>	<p>Karen Boyce, Administrative/Case Manager 220 Vine Street Northfield Tel. 802-485-8874 Karenmhb@trans-video.net</p>

Blue Star Mothers of Vermont	<p>The Vermont Chapter of the Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. is composed of mothers who now have, or have had, children honorably serving in all branches of the United States Military, and associate members including dads, relatives, friends, and other supporters. Its mission is to provide emotional support to our members in times of uncertainty, to support our military sons and daughters, our troops, our veterans, and the families of our fallen.</p> <p>The Vermont 1 Chapter of Blue Star Mothers was chartered on February 4, 2011. The Blue Star Mothers of America is a Congressionally-chartered, non-partisan, not for profit organization (501[c]3) formed for the purpose of supporting America's military, veterans, and their families, and to foster patriotism. http://bluestarmothersofvermont.org/</p>	<p>Blue Star Mothers of Vermont P.O. Box 195 Bakersfield, VT. 05441</p> <p>BlurStarMothersofVermont@gmail.com</p>
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<p>American Legion, Department of Vermont</p>	<p>The American Legion is a service organization for veterans, military personnel, families and communities, including civic projects. The headquarters of the American Legion Department of Vermont is located at 126 State Street (PO Box 396), Montpelier, VT 05601-0396. The American Legion has numerous posts in Vermont and nearly 14,000 posts nationwide. The Legion, established by an act of Congress in 1919, was instrumental in getting the original GI Bill through Congress and the creation of the Department of Veterans Affairs. The organization is active throughout the United States, supporting current military personnel and veterans, sponsoring American Legion Baseball, Boys State, Oratorical Contests and other activities for youth. http://vtlegion.org/</p>	<p>126 State Street, PO Box 396 Montpelier, Vermont 05601-0396</p> <p>Tel: 802-223-7131</p>
<p>Veterans of Foreign Wars in Vermont</p>	<p>The Vermont Veterans of Foreign Wars has a tradition of serving veterans, military families and their local communities. Its website has portals to many areas of interest to veterans. http://vtvfw.org/</p>	<p>126 State Street, Montpelier, Vt. 802-223-5368</p>
<p>Wounded Warrior Project</p>	<p>The mission of the Wounded Warriors Project is “to honor and empower wounded warriors.” Its medical center partners include Massachusetts General Hospital. http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org http://vtdigger.org/tag/wounded-warrior-project/ http://vtdigger.org/2015/06/30/don-keelan-vermonts-wounded-warriors-2/</p>	<p>The Wounded Warrior Project does not have a facility in Vermont, but has connection with several Vermont organizations and has sponsored several golf tournaments in support of Vermont wounded warriors.</p>

4. **Not Based in Vermont but a Resource You May Find Helpful**

Soldier's Heart, Inc.
500 Federal Street, Suite 303
Troy, N.Y. 12180
<http://www.soldiersheart.net/our-story/>

The Rev. Chris J. Antal, Staff Chaplain, leads workshops that aid the capacity of faith communities to tend moral injury and provide care for Veterans and their families in faith based contexts. Rev. Antal led a memorable program sponsored by the Burlington Area Ministerial Association and the Silver Dove Institute hosted by the First Unitarian Universalist Society, Burlington, VT for spiritual and clergy leaders in May 2015.

5. **Bulletin Board and Other Links of Potential Interest**

- Final Salute Website - <http://www.finalsaluteinc.org/>
- Homeless Women Veterans Initiative. See <http://video.pbs.org/video/2365491868/>.
- Wounded warriors singing *Hallelujah* at Walter Reed hospital: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ppnxofjnn8> (3 minutes).
- Wounded warriors sing *Hallelujah* in concert: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ppnxofjnn8> (7 minutes).
- Country singer Jamie Lee Thurston from Montpelier, Vermont has taken on the issue of vets committing suicide, on average 22 a day. Documentary, music and video on vets' suicides. <http://jamieleethurston.com/> (whole video is 17 minutes).
- "Buddy Check on 22!", *Veterans Use Social Media to Fight Suicide*, article in the New York Times, published 21 April 2016. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/22/us/veterans-suicide-22-social.html?module=WatchingPortal®ion=c-column-middle-span-region&pgType=Homepage&action=click&mediaId=wide&state=standard&contentPlacement=1&version=internal&contentCollection=www.nytimes.com&contentId=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2016%2F04%2F22%2Fus%2Fveterans-suicide-22-social.html&eventName=Watching-article-click>
- National Public Radio StoryCorps, friendly-fire fatality, broadcast 9 April 2016: <http://www.npr.org/series/4516989/storycorps> (3 minutes 27 seconds)

- K9s for Warriors is dedicated to providing service dogs to warriors suffering from Post –traumatic Stress Disability, traumatic brain injury and/or military sexual trauma. <http://www.k9sforwarriors.org/>
- Veterans are eligible for benefits for costs associated with furthering their education. See <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>
For example, see <http://www.champlain.edu/admissions/undergraduate-admissions/financial-aid-undergraduate/military-and-veterans>

6. **Books which have exceptional recommendations:**

- *Warrior’s Return * Restoring the Soul after War*, by Edward Tick, PhD (2014), Publ. by Sounds True, Boulder Colorado. Dr. Tick, with his wife Kate Dahlstedt, co-founded the nonprofit Soldier’s Heart: Restoring Our Warriors and Communities.
- *Welcome Them Home – Help Them Heal*, produced by the Elim Lutheran Church (ELCA) in Minnesota with a grant from Wheat Ridge Ministries. <https://www.wheatridge.org/welcome-them-home-help-them-heal/>
This book is available at Hopkins Bookshop, 2 Cherry St., Burlington, VT. 05401. 802-658-6223.
- *Matterhorn, A Novel of the Vietnam War*, by Karl Marlantes,(2010), Publ. by Grove Press, 154 West 14th St., New York, NY.
The author served as a highly decorated combat Marine in Vietnam.