Connection Corner

Anyone who shared organization/contact information within the chat during the October VRCN Monthly Connect (October 15, 2026)

Megan Warren (VEO VRCN)

- Email: Megan.Warren@va.gov or at VetResourcescommunitynetwork@va.gov

Andi Martinez, Special Assistant, Veterans Benefits Administration

- Email: andrea.martinez2@va.gov
- Office of the Under Secretary for Benefits
- Questions on VA benefits or how to collaborate with VBA? Send an email to andrea.martinez2@va.gov

Cory Boatwright, President & CEO, Student Veterans of America (SVA)

- LinkedIn: Student Veterans of America

Faisal Sulman, Manager of Government Affairs, SVA

- Location: Washington, D.C.
- Email: faisal.sulman@studentveterans.org
- Website: Student Veterans of America®

Jacquelyn Bengfort, Program Marketing Manager, Scholarship America

- Location: Twin Cities
- Email: jbengfort@scholarshipamerica.org
- Website: Scholarship America
- Information to Share: DLA Piper's BRAVO Scholarship for Veterans planning a career in law is open now, and the Scholarship America Veteran Scholarship for Educators will open this week! Visit Scholarships for Veteran and Military Students to learn more.

Kristen Ferullo, Founder/Executive Director, The Six Strong Foundation Inc. (formerly Partners In Purpose)

- Email: Kristen@sixstrongfoundation.com
- Website: The Six Strong Foundation Inc.
- Information to Share: The Joint Services Scholarship Database has over 1000 scholarships specifically for the military and veteran community. Covering all branches, status and relation to service member including active duty, national guard, reserve, and veterans, The Database is and will always be free to use!

Allison Williams, Training Manager, America's Warrior Partnership

- Location: Augusta, GA
- Website: America’s Warrior Partnership

Paul Berry, Director of Strategic Partnership, Veterans Bridge Home

- Email: pberry@veteransbridgehome.org

Chris Newsome, EVP Government Services, RecruitMilitary

- Location: Cincinnati, OH, but operate nationwide
- Email: cnewsome@recruitmilitary.com
- Website: Recruit Military
- Information to Share: RecruitMilitary helps veterans, transitioning service members, and military spouses connect with employers who value their experience and skills. We provide career opportunities, hiring events, placement services, and resources designed to help the military community build meaningful civilian careers.

Erin Stangland, Sr. Manager, Partnerships, ExpertVoice

- Location: Austin, TX
- Email: erin.stangland@expertvoice
- Info: We currently have 4 remote positions open, including one on my team, specifically looking for someone with ties to the military. Please share! → Job Postings | Expert Voice
- LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/erinstangland

Erin Nosal, Community Outreach Coordinator with Community Action for Veterans

- Location: Sioux Falls, SD
- Website: http://www.sdvets.org
- Email: erin.nosal@sdvets.org

Brian Evichin, Owner/founder/Developer of Veteran Advocacy Group and Founder of Veterans Legacy Vault App for Veterans and their families

- Location: From Lake Wallenpaupack area in PA
- Website: www.veteranslegacyvault.com & www.veteranadvocacygroup.com

Marion Fera, Health Consultant

- Location: Washington, DC
- Email: mfera@vfw.org
- Website: VFW.org

Laura Eiklenborg, Grants Manager

- Location: Atlanta, GA
- Email: grants@catalystsports.org
- Website: www.catalystsports.org

Duane K. L. France, Co-Director, SAMHSA SMVF TA Center

- Email: dfrance@prainc.com
- Website: https://www.samhsa.gov/technical-assistance/smvf

Angel L. Lugo, COL (Ret), U.S. Army; Chief Strategy Officer, Warriors Heart Healing Center

- Email: angel.lugo@warriorsheart.com

Rosemarie Hirata, VP Military and Veteran Partnership

- Location: Northern Virginia
- Email: rosemarie.hirata@sensiblecare.com
- Website: Sensible Care: Sensible Care | Online Therapy and Psychiatry

Sara Eckhouse, Director, Food Is Medicine, The Rockefeller Foundation

- Location: New York City
- Email: seckhouse@rockfound.org

Angie Cherikos, Senior Coordinator of Community Engagement, Elizabeth Dole Foundation

- Location: Washington DC
- Email: angie@elizabethdolefoundation.org

Carole Turner, Senior Advisor, PsychArmor

- Location: Hawaii
- Email: cturner@psycharmor.org
- Website: psycharmor.org

Liz Hooper, Outreach Coordinator, USD Tele-Mental Health Clinic: Veterans Initiative

- Website: www.sandiego.edu/telehealthclinic
- Email: lizhooper@sandiego.edu

Rob Storey, Owner Amada Senior Care

- Location: NW Indiana and Chicago SW Suburbs
- Website: www.AmadaOrlandPark.com
- Information: We provide non-medical care and have been serving veterans through the Homemaker benefit for about 7 years.

Angela Ruona, Executive Assistant, Veterans Counseling Veterans,

- Location: Tampa, FL
- Email: angela@vetscounselingvets.org
- Website: www.vetscounselingvets.org

J. Lee Abersold, Director of Veteran Services, North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

- Location: North Carolina
- Email: john.abersold@milvets.nc.gov
- Website: milvets.nc.gov
- Information to Share (optional): medically retired USMC

Josh Golden | Executive Director, Brave Little Heroes

- Childcare Support for Military
- Website: https://www.bravelittleheroes.org/
- Information: We provide short-term childcare support at licensed childcare centers for veterans, so they can attend job interviews, VA medical appointments, and other important needs!

Haley Bannister, Program and Outreach Coordinator, Mission Belonging

- Location: Maryland
- Email: haley@missionbelonging.org
- Website: https://missionbelonging.org/

Kristy Gilbert, Senior Director of Operations, Our Military Kids

- Location: San Diego, CA
- Email: KristyGilbert@ourmilitarykids.org
- Website: https://www.ourmilitarykids.org/

Rachel Schwenk, LOTR, Clinical Director Bastion

- Location: New Orleans, San Antonio, North Carolina
- Email: Rachel@joinbastion.org

Shamala Boodoo Capizzi, Assistant National Legislative Director — Benefits; Disabled American Veterans

- Location: Washington D.C.
- Email: scapizzi@dav.org
- Website: How to advocate on legislation for veterans

Fatima Aguilar, Program Development, Vets4Warriors

- Location: Piscataway, NJ but we're a National Program
- Email: Fatima.Aguilar@rutgers.edu
- Website: www.vets4warriors.com
- Information to Share: 24/7 Confidential, Free Peer Support. Celebrating our 15-year anniversary in December!

Jordan Huffman Sr Director of Strategic Alliances, Hope For The Warriors

- Email: jhuffman@hopeforthewarriors.org

Donnie Freyberger, Senior Program Manager, Sidekick Platform

- Email: DF@Sidekickwellness.com
- Website: Sidekick Platform | AI Knowledge Platform for Enterprises and Expert Creators
- Information to Share: I lead initiatives focused on supporting Veterans, First Responders, and their families through Sidekick's conversational AI platform. Our work includes collaborating with the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Service Organizations, and other partners to improve access to trusted information, resources, benefits, and support services.

Larry Provost, Outreach Officer, VSO Liaison for National Cemetery Administration (NCA)

- Location: Washington, DC.
- Email: lawrence.provost@va.gov
- Website: https://www.cem.va.gov/
- Information to Share: Providing free information as to Veterans earned burial and memorial benefits that help Veterans leave a financial legacy, a legacy of peace and a legacy of memorialization through utilization of burial/memorial benefits.

Jamela Davis, Outreach Manager, Veteran Spouse Network, The University of Texas at Austin, Institute for Military and Veteran Family Wellness

- Email: jamela.davis@austin.utexas.edu
- Email: vsn@austin.utexas.edu
- Location: Austin, TX
- Website: Home - Veteran Spouse Network
- Visit our calendar to see the full list of events at https://veteranspousenetwork.org/events/

Colleen Shine, Senior Advisor, Sons and Daughters in Touch (SDIT)

- Email: colleencshine@gmail.com
- Website: SDIT.org
- Info: We provide care, community and connections to Gold Star Families from the Vietnam War and empower them to honor and serve veterans.

Kelly Hruska, Executive Director, Office of Survivors Assistance, US Department of Veterans Affairs

- Location: Washington DC
- Email: Kelly.Hruska@VA.gov
- Website: VA.gov | Veterans Affairs
- Next Survivor Series program will focus on the Caregiver to Survivor Transition. Join us on Wednesday, October 28 at 1pm ET for this important discussion. VA.gov | Veterans Affairs

Bill Johnson, Director of Programs, Merging Vets and Players (MVP)

- Location: Dallas, TX
- Email: bjohnson@vetsandplayers.org
- Website: MVP | Merging Vets & Players
- Information to Share: MVP empowers veterans and former professional athletes through structured peer-to-peer support, focusing on mental and physical wellness, community connection, and rediscovering purpose beyond service. We bring Peer Support & Camaraderie including weekly huddles where veterans and athletes connect with others who understand the challenges of high-performance careers and life transitions. We also bring Mental & Physical Wellness by combining workouts with facilitated conversations to build trust, resilience, and accountability.

Lee Becker, Advocate for Veterans, families, caregivers and survivors

- Location: Fairfax County, Virginia
- Email: Lee.Becker1@gmail.com
- American Council of Technology and Industry Advisory Council, American Legion Post Chaplain, Medallia
- Veterans Day event at Post 139 event. Also robust arts program for Veterans and more. American Legion Post | American Legion Post 139

Michelle Tran, Director of Combat Injured Program, Our Military Kids

- Location: DC Metro Area
- Email: mntran@ourmilitarykids.org
- Website: Www.ourmilitarykids.org
- Information to share: We provide awards for extracurricular activities to children of combat injured Service Members and Veterans.

Lucy Robinson, VP Franchise Development, Veteran Service Brands

- Location: Raleigh, NC but we're national
- Email: lucy@veteranservicebrands.com
- Website: https://www.veteranservicebrands.com/
- Information to Share: We are a franchise organization exclusively for Veterans, helping them build and launch their own businesses within one of our five franchise brands, with no prior trade or entrepreneurial experience required**.**

Leigh Edmonds, Director, Strategic Partnerships and Special Projects, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)

- Location: Arlington, VA
- Email: leigh.edmonds@taps.org
- Website: https://www.taps.org/
- Information to Share: TAPS is the national nonprofit organization providing compassionate care and comprehensive resources to all those grieving a death in the military or veteran community. TAPS provides comfort and hope 24/7 through a national peer support network and connection to grief resources, casework and benefits assistance, and events and programming (online and in-person) national and worldwide, all at no cost to surviving families and loved ones. TAPS provides a variety of programs to survivors nationally and worldwide. We are available 24/7/365 Via our National Military Survivor Helpline at 800.959.TAPS (8277).

Eduardo Eddie Ramirez, Commander Post 505, Dept. of Air Force Retiree Council Rep., Area II, California

- Exchange (AAFES) Retiree Advisory Board
- Location: San Francisco, California
- Email: eduardo.ramirez415@gmail.com
- Organization: American Legion Post 505/Bay Area CVEB
- Phone: (415) 244-7100

Danielle Bracco, Director of Operations for Onward Ops

- Email: danielle@hq.onwardops.org
- Info: We are always looking for volunteer sponsors (mentors) and community partners.
- Website: onwardops.org

Katie Civiletto Stenger, MHA, Tactical Recovery Program Excellence Manager, Summit Behavioral Healthcare, LLC | Tactical Recovery

- Location: Nationwide
- Email: katie.civilettostenger@summitbhc.com
- LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/katie-e-civiletto-stenger/
- Website: https://TacticalRecovery.com
- Information to Share: Tactical Recovery, a program of Summit Behavioral Healthcare, LLC, connects Veterans, service members, and first responders nationwide with behavioral health and substance use treatment resources. Our mission is to help those who serve access appropriate care and support their long-term recovery.
    - Through our partnership with **PsychArmor**, we support education and initiatives that strengthen understanding of military and Veteran culture and improve how organizations serve these populations.
    - Continuing Education Opportunity for Professionals Serving Veterans: We encourage behavioral health professionals, Veteran-serving organizations, service members, first responders, and community partners to explore this continuing education (CE) opportunity. It offers an opportunity to expand knowledge and strengthen the skills needed to better support Veterans and those who serve.
    - Access the CE opportunity: View the LinkedIn post and event details. Please share this resource with colleagues and professional networks who work with Veterans, service members, first responders, and their families.

Your feedback is important to us! Please complete the VRCN Monthly Connect Pulse Check → **Pulse Check.** Thank you for attending the VetResources Community Network (VRCN) Monthly Connect! Your feedback will help us shape future sessions.