Cultural Understanding of Military Personnel and Veterans
Presenters

David Donaldson
- Military Liaison
- 2 Operation Iraqi Freedom Combat Deployments / U.S. Army Infantry / SGT
- AZ State Peer Support Certified Trainer / ASIST / safeTALK / Wounded Warrior Project Peer Mentor

Rebeccah Sinclair
- Clinical Coordinator of Rally Point Az
- 16th person in family to join Marine Corps / daughter, wife, and sister of Marines
- Served 8 years in the Marine Corps / two Deployments
- BS in Theological Studies / Masters in Social Work
Objectives and Training

- Audience will be able begin identifying cultural differences between civilian and military personnel

- Military branch differences and Military Occupational Specialties (MOS)

- Military rank system, ethics and values, and cultural differences between commissioned officers and enlisted personnel
Objectives and Training

- How to develop trust with military cultures to better serve community capacity building and establishing a continuum of care for veterans and their families

- Common language barriers and common military acronyms that are used by Post 9/11 veterans when returning from combat zones

- Common mistakes made when providing services to Veterans
Military culture is about more...

Than war
Than deployments
Than non-stop action
What’s the difference between the Army National Guard and the Army Reserves?
Occupational Specialties

Army:
- Band, Infantry, Artillery, Crewmembers, Special Forces, Engineer, Military Police, Intel

Marine Corps:
- Admin, Intel, Infantry, Logistics, Comm, Artillery, Motor T., MP, Aviation, Recon

Air Force:
- Aircraft, Health, Intel, Engineering, Computers, Nursing, Special Ops

Navy
- Media, Aviation, Legal, Chaplain, Engineers, Healthcare, IT, First Response, Navy Seals, Seebees
More About Jobs

- Specialty jobs include: DI/DS, Recruiters
- White Collar vs. Blue Collar
- Green Side vs. Blue Side
**Rank System:**

- **Recruit:** Someone going through training who has not yet earned their title/rank

- **Enlisted:** E1-E9

- **Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO):** E4-E5

- **Staff Non-Commissioned Officer:** E6-E9
Rank System:

- **Senior Enlisted:**
  - Sergeant Major of the Army, Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard

- **Officers:** O1-O10

- **Warrant Officers:** W1-W5
Exercise: Do your coworkers know...

- How long you’ve been at your job?
- Whether you are married, single, have kids?
- Your birthday?
- Your kids’ birthdays?
- Whether you worked out today?
- When you have car problems?
- When you last went to the dentist?
- How much money you make?
Military Culture is...

- “Unity that sets aside everything else and makes it a priority”
- “Brotherhood”
- “Learning disciplines and fundamentals that can help you further along in life”
- “One word - family”
- “Family - thicker than blood, military life is purposeful with lifelong rewards”
- “Getting goosebumps and teary eyed when the National Anthem plays”
Military Cultural is...

“I would say family or brotherhood. I know a few people who absolutely can’t stand one another. But... if they were on the front lines, they would both take a bullet for the other. It’s the uniform.”

“Matriarchal Chaos”

“Structure”

“It’s like explaining childbirth. You can tell them but it doesn’t mean a thing until you go through it.”
What is missed the most?

- “The 96’s... just kidding, the camaraderie of course!”
- “I miss being with everyone.”
- “I miss the brotherhood amongst all branches regardless of rank.”
- “The level of involvement with each other even outside the working hours. You may spend time with coworkers or friends in civilian life but not nearly to the degree that you do when living in the barracks.”
What is missed the most?

“I can’t think of a single thing I miss.”

“Sometimes I think I miss it but then I remember the stuff I don’t miss. Then I no longer miss it. When I do miss it, I miss the challenges the most. The constant push to do better, and be better, knowing that others around me have high expectations of me. If you mess up in the military everyone gives you a hard time because they expected more. In the civilian world everyone sugar coats things and you don’t know where you stand.”
Misconceptions:

“‘It’s not at all like the movies and there’s a lot of waiting around at times.’”

“Not every service member is ‘crazy’ or ‘hardcore’ or ‘look at me I’m a veteran, give me free stuff!’ We earned our way.”

“Most people believe we enlist just to kill other people, they don’t understand we enlist to help protect.”
“We are not all the same, or even similar. People in the military come from every walk of life and although we may wear the same uniform and have a similar haircut, the way we were raised, our values, likes, dislikes, ext. are completely different from person to person.”

“You can’t hold the little guys responsible. They joined to serve their country but the big cheeses make the plan. They just execute.”
Recruit Training

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-nSy1MTP1Os

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AZG10w9DiCg

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpFpHfFbAPI
What similarities did you identify?

TEAMWORK
REPETITION
UNIFORMITY
PHYSICAL FITNESS
MARCHING
Always Remember

Military culture can vary:
- Time frame served
- MOS/Rate
- Active Duty/Reserves
- Females/Males

Not every veteran saw combat, not every veteran deployed

There is a difference between Veteran’s Day and Memorial Day
Knowing the difference

- Acronyms: OEF/OIF/OND, LOD, FOB, INF, CO, 1SG, NCO, IED, EFP...
- Commonly Used Terms: DD214, MDay, Veteran, Enlisted vs. Commissioned
- Iraq vs. Afghanistan
- Training
  - Basic/AIT/MCT
  - Stateside Missions vs. Foreign Deployments
Mottos: Which goes Where?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>Motto</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>Semper Fidelis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine Corps</td>
<td>“This we’ll defend”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>Semper Paratus (Always Prepared)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>Aim High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coast Guard</td>
<td>&quot;Non sibi sed patriae&quot; (Not Self, but Country)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Values: Which goes Where?

Branch
- Army
- Marine Corps
- Navy
- Air Force
- Coast Guard

Values
- Integrity First, Service before Self, Excellence in all we do
- Honor, Courage, Commitment
- Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, Personal Courage,
- Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty
Other military facts

- National Guard: December 13, 1636
- Army: June 14, 1775
- Navy: October 13, 1775
- Marine Corps: November 10, 1775
- Coast Guard: August 4th, 1790
- Air Force: September 18, 1947

Wish veterans a happy birthday on their service birthday!
ONLY A FEW UNDERSTAND

WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE 19 AND WRITE YOUR OWN WILL
Once a SOLDIER

ALWAYS a SOLDIER
Many Veterans feel they are under-appreciated
Leaving an “Us” world for an “I” world
Losing the connection
Work Hard, Play Hard
QUESTIONS?