Green Zone Training
Develop An Understanding and Support for Student Veterans
Introductions

• What brings you here?
• How might a student veteran connect with you?

http://www.siue.edu/~lyjohns/introductions.html
Objectives

Participants will:

- Understand the expectations of a Green Zone Ally
- Become familiar with the military experience and emotional cycle of deployment
- Become familiar with the potential issues facing student veterans and active service members as they transition from the military to campus
- Become aware of the resources available to student veterans and active service members on our campus and off campus.
What is a Green Zone Ally?

• Staff, faculty, and students who identify themselves as:
  • Someone who knows something about the issues and concerns facing student veterans
  • Someone who can help students find appropriate resources
  • An understanding ear

• Not expected to be experts
Commonly Used Terms

• **Active Service Members (ASM)**
  • Generic term that encompasses Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserves personnel

• **Veteran**
  • Any individual who served in the U.S. military

• **OEF- Operation Enduring Freedom**
  • War in Afghanistan

• **OIF- Operation Iraqi Freedom**
  • War in Iraq
Why Join the Military?

Here’s why:
Name that Branch!
Name That Branch!

Air Force!
Name That Branch!

Army!
Reserves/ National Guard

Reserves
• Managed by the Federal Government

National Guard
• Managed by the State
• President or Secretary of Defense can activate during times of need.
Name That Branch!

Coast Guard!
Name That Branch!

Marine Corps!
Name That Branch!

Navy!
Background on the US Military

Video
The Military & South Carolina

- Fort Jackson (Columbia)
- Shaw Air Force Base (Sumter)
- Charleston Air Force Base (Charleston)
- McEntire Joint National Guard Base (Eastover)
- Marine Corps Recruiting Depot Parris Island (Beaufort)
- Marine Corps Air Station (Beaufort)
- Naval Weapons Station (Charleston)
- Coast Guard Sector (Charleston)
Fort Jackson

• Largest and most active Initial Entry Training Center in the U.S. Army
• Trains 50 percent of all Soldiers and 70 percent of the women entering the Army each year
• Home of the Army’s only Drill Sergeant School
• Home to an education center

http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/-images/2009/01/09/28142/
GI Bill

1. Aid is limited, students may feel anxious about completing their degree
2. Refer all specific questions on benefits to the campus certifying official (Dr. Jacob Rivers, Veterans Services)

GI Bill Quick Facts

1. 15 year clock starts once a service member separates from service
2. Does not need to be used all at once- can take time off of school as needed
3. Post 9/11 pays based on several factors including number of months served and number of credits pursued.
4. Can include things like housing allowance, book stipends, money for tutors, etc.
5. Can be transferred to dependents.
Who is a Student Veteran/ASM?

• Diverse group of individuals
  • From all branches of the military
  • Range in age, race/ethnicity, and gender
  • Served during times of war and peace
  • Different education goals
  • More likely to have families
  • Not all using GI Bill
Takeaway

One key takeaway you could use in your role

http://www.messagehouse.org/increasing-the-takeaway-ability-of-your-presentations/
The Military Experience
Military Experience:

Deployments

• Deployments last from 6-18 months
• Multiple deployments
  • Some serve more than one deployment before being discharged from the military
    • Over 350,000 have experienced two or more deployments
• Emotional Cycle of Deployment:
  • Pre-Deployment, Deployment, Sustainment, Re-Deployment, Post-Deployment

***(Savych, 2009)
Emotional Cycle of Deployment

Pre-Deployment

Deployment

Post-Deployment

Re-Deployment

Sustainment

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*(Savych, 2009)*
Pre-Deployment

• Training with long hours away
• Getting affairs in order
• National Guard and Reservists
  • Added stress during semester because of anticipation, may be called to duty while enrolled in classes, having to file paperwork to withdraw from classes and stop GI payments

*** (Franklin, 2009)
Emotional Cycle of Deployment

Pre-Deployment

Deployment

Sustainment

Re-Deployment

Post-Deployment

*(Savych, 2009)*
Deployment

• Adjusting to being in a combat zone, on a ship, or aircraft
• Adjusting to new climate, terrain, and language
• Dealing with emotions regarding separation from family, friends, and partners
  • “Dear John/Jane” letters
• Maintaining a strong sense of awareness
  • Hypervigilance
• Must maintain some level of emotional control
  • May not be able to react immediately to loss/trauma but are encouraged to deal with loss/trauma while deployed and upon return

*** (Franklin, 2009)
Deployment

- Persistent hypervigilance and arousal
- Sleep deprivation/fatigue
- Periods of intense boredom
- Some have experienced
  - Firefights
  - Buddies wounded or killed
  - RPGs: Rocket Propelled Grenades
  - IEDs: Improvised Explosive Devices
  - Car bombs
  - Suicide bombings
  - Crowd control

*(Hoge et al., 2004)*
Emotional Cycle of Deployment

Pre-Deployment

Deployment

Sustainment

Re-Deployment

Post-Deployment

*** (Savych, 2009)
Sustainment

• New routines established, new sources of support
• Feel more in control, independence
• Confidence: “I can do this!”

http://westoop.com/2014/04/21/confidence-cologne-life/

**(Hoge et al., 2004)**
Emotional Cycle of Deployment

**(Savych, 2009)**
Re-deployment

- Anticipation of homecoming that is now gone
- Excitement
- Apprehension

http://www.dvidshub.net/image/1046883/b-battery-3-27-far-himars-redeployment-ceremony#.VFJ2k_nF91Y
Emotional Cycle of Deployment

(Savych, 2009)
Post-Deployment

• Homecoming
  • The “honeymoon” stage
  • Difficult adjustment phase for both ASM and family
    • Family has adapted to life without ASM and now has to re-establish roles
  • Adaptive behaviors for war are maladaptive at home
    • Aggressive driving = Road Rage
    • Tactical Awareness = Hypervigilance
• Develop a “New Normal”
  • Adjusting to life after it has changed
• Dealing with the emotions of war
• Dealing with injuries from war
Family Members/Dependents

• Family members or dependents of Veterans/ASM may need support, too

• Examples?
Reflection

How might understanding this cycle help you support a student veteran?
Takeaway

One key takeaway you could use in your role

http://www.messagehouse.org/increasing-the-takeaway-ability-of-your-presentations/
Transitioning from Base to Campus
Student Veteran Voices
Reflection

What strengths do veterans bring to campus?
What challenges do you believe veterans face as they transition to college?
Veteran Students Strengths

• Veterans/ASMs transitioning out of the military onto college campuses bring a unique perspective
  • Military training
  • Life experience
  • Established identity
  • A more worldly view

http://profalbrecht.wordpress.com/2009/12/30/on-developing-a-worldview/
Veteran Students Strengths

• Skills taught in the military help students to be successful
  • Leadership
  • Motivation
  • Time management
  • Work ethic
  • Stress management

Marketable Skills

1. Accelerated learning curve
2. Understanding of leadership
3. Ability to work on a team
4. Experiences with diversity and inclusion
5. Efficient performance under pressure
6. Respect for procedures
7. Experience with advanced technology and international trends
8. Integrity
9. Consciousness of health and safety standards
10. Triumph over adversity
Transition Challenges

The military teaches you to read on the lines.

College teaches you to read between the lines.
Transition Challenges

• Issues during transition MAY become barriers to success
  • Translating military skills into a new profession or into college credits
  • Adjusting to a new focus unrelated to military experience
  • Course articulation difficulty
  • Using the GI Bill
Transition Challenges

• Being an older student
  • Freshman 24+ years old with 18 year old classmates
• Living off campus
  • Feeling isolated from classmates
• Alienation
  • Life experiences within the military differ significantly from most other students and faculty
• Insensitivity of classmates, faculty, and others on campus in regards to discussion of war and military
  • Veterans/ASMs may not agree with discussions or may feel attacked when asked about their experience
Transition Challenges

• Things to keep in mind about student veterans in the classroom:

  • Some MAY:
    • Have difficulty relating to classmates
    • Find loud noises disturbing
    • Become anxious with changes in the classroom
    • Have excessive absences
    • Have PTSD or TBI

***(Pfeffer, 2010)
Students with Disabilities

• It is estimated that 23% to 31% of Veterans/ASM of OIF/OEF have PTSD symptoms and 20% have mild TBIs.

• SOME of those are coming to our campus.
  • New disability
  • May not want to identify as having a disability

*** (Jones, Young & Leppma, 2010; Thomas et al., 2010)
Wounds of War

• Spinal Cord Injury (SCI)
• Military Sexual Trauma (MST)
• Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
• Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
Spinal Cord Injury (SCI)

- “Communication between the brain and other parts of the body is disrupted, and messages no longer flow past the damaged area.”
- Student may have difficulty with mobility around campus
Military Sexual Trauma (MST)

• Psychological trauma, which in the judgment of a VA mental health professional, resulted from a physical assault of a sexual nature, battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment which occurred while the Veteran was serving on active duty or active duty for training.
Symptoms

• Strong emotions
  • Depression, Irritability

• Trouble sleeping

• Problems in relationships
  • “I lost all trust in people. Even with family members and loves ones.”
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

• PTSD occurs after an individual has seen or experienced a traumatic event that involved the threat of injury or death

• PTSD is experienced by *some*, but certainly not all Student Veterans/ASMs

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FQM-GJ1NfA
Symptoms

• Repeated "reliving" of the event, which disturbs day-to-day activity
  • Flashback episodes, where the event seems to be happening again and again

• Avoidance
  • Emotional "numbing," or feeling as though you do not care about anything

• Arousal
  • Excess awareness (hypervigilance)

*** (American Psychiatric Association, 2000)
In the Classroom

• Student MAY:
  • Sit in the back of the classroom
  • Be easily startled by noises
  • Be withdrawn from class discussion
  • Have difficulty maintaining emotional control during difficult topics
  • Have a service animal for support
PTSD

Remember:

Although many veterans/ASMs may have stressful or traumatic experiences, **not all develop Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.**

Help end this assumption!
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

- A blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating head injury that disrupts the function of the brain.
  - Severity of injury can vary
    - Mild: brief change in mental status or consciousness
    - Severe: extended period of unconsciousness or amnesia after the injury

http://thejointblog.com/

(Traumaticbraininjury.com, 2010)
TBI

• Top three causes
  • Car accidents
  • Firearms
  • Falls

• TBI often goes undiagnosed because symptoms may not appear until weeks later
  • Especially emotional or personality changes which are difficult for strangers to identify
  • Difficult to differentiate between TBI and PTSD because they have several overlapping symptoms
Symptoms

• Cognition
  • Motor/Sensory Disturbances
  • Impairments in:
    • Communication
    • Concentration/ Memory
    • Speed of Information Processing
    • Judgment
    • Decision-Making
    • Problem-Solving
In the Classroom

- Students MAY:
  - Have difficulty expressing themselves
  - Constant fidgeting and tapping pens or feet
  - Becoming aggressive, easily irritated, agitated, or insensitive to others in the classroom
  - Be withdrawn or not participating in class discussion
  - May need info repeated or written down
PTSD & TBI

PTSD
- Flashbacks
- Nightmares
- Attentional Problems
- Depression
- Anxiety

TBI
- Irritability
- Headaches
- Dizziness

A veteran’s worst wounds may be the ones you can’t see.

20% of people who die by suicide in the U.S. are vets.
Takeaway

One key takeaway you could use in your role

http://www.messagehouse.org/increasing-the-takeaway-ability-of-your-presentations/
Conversation for Action
SCASFAA Annual Conference 2017

Share your experiences

http://www.mdc.edu/main/vsi/
Final Thoughts

• What Green Zone volunteers should know:
  • Do not ask or suggest that the student veteran/ASM has a disability but inquire about their issues and concerns
  • Become familiar with information provided by the Student Disability Services and Campus Counseling for those who may request such services
  • Students may need extra help navigating the system and understanding what help is available to them
  • Some students may be averse to seeking help due to stigma and issues with continued military service.
Remember - A Green Zone Ally is:

• Staff, faculty, and students who identify themselves as:
  
  • Someone who knows something about the issues and concerns facing student veterans
  • Someone who can help students find appropriate resources
  • A sympathetic, understanding ear

• Not expected to be experts
References


References


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