

C PERATION

Bob & Barbara Zielinski,
Executive Directors

Marriage Management’s Mission is to Keep Veterans’ Marriages from becoming a Hidden Casualty of War!

Current Grants

MMC is currently operating under two grants: **Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) Fund for Veterans Assistance** and **United Way Tarrant County (UWTC) Veterans Fund**. Both run from 1 July, 2016 to 30 June, 2017.

TVC allows for 20-25 programs statewide, depending on attendance, to serve 280 persons (Military, spouse, children). It is a reimbursement grant which requires monthly reports for attendance levels spending and reimbursement. We maintain a bank line of credit to pay expenses pending reimbursement which currently takes more than 90 days.

To date, we have taught 10 classes for the TVC Grant with 168 persons served. We have 10 classes scheduled so far for 2017.

Programs held under the Fund for Veterans’ Assistance

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| July 16- Belton TX | October 26 – Ft. Hood |
| July 23 – El Paso | October 29 – San Antonio |
| August 17 – Ft. Hood | November 5 - Denton TX |
| October 1 – Amarillo | November 30 – Ft. Hood |
| October 8 – La Porte | December 2&3 – Addison TX |

UWTC allows for 10 local programs to serve 100 persons. We receive 1/12 of the grant amount monthly and report to United Way each quarter.

With the UWTC Grant, we have taught 4 classes and served 84. We have one additional class for 7 January. We are currently scheduling the remainder of 2017.

Programs held under the United Way Tarrant County Veterans Fund:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| July 30 – NAS-JRB, Ft. Worth | Oct. 15 – Recovery Resource at UTA |
| Sept. 24 – Stay the Course, Fort Worth | November 12 – NAS-JRB Fort Worth |

Our 2017-2018 application for renewal of the TVC Grant was due and filed November 3. We will testify to the TVC Commission in Austin on January 26, 2017 to report to the Commissioners on the necessity of the programs we offer.

We have applied for a grant from Elizabeth Dole's Hidden Heroes Fund that will allow us to do caregiver retreats outside the confines of Texas. We will apply again in January for the Meadows Foundation Grant to build MMC's infrastructure.

New Staff

Due to the current workload, we have interviewed and contracted 3 new facilitator couples to help us present program. They are: Michelle & Cedric White, Lavidia and Kenneth Davison and Nissa and Mark Salas. Cedric served in the Army, Kenneth in the Navy and Mark is a Marine. MMC purchased the facilitator training materials for them with a special gift from the Lovelaces. Dr. John Van Epp, author of the Couple Links-Military curriculum, will be here Jan 19 to finish their training. We will co-teach with them until we feel comfortable about their capabilities. Then they will take over many of the travel/teaching duties so we can concentrate on development, marketing and expansion of our outreach.

New Partners

One of our contacts from Grace After Fire introduced us to the people at the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic in North Dallas (Addison). This enterprise is funded by multi-billionaire Steven Cohen. His son is a Veteran who shared his frustrations getting mental health services and educated his dad on what returning soldiers really need. Thus, Mr. Cohen began funding these clinics. The Addison Clinic is partnered with Metrocare Services and offers free counselling for Veterans and their families. We will do a program for them December 2-3. They are providing the facilities, food and childcare.

In turn, the Addison Clinic introduced us to the Cohen Clinic in San Antonio, partnered with Family Endeavors. We met with their Outreach Coordinator there last month and scheduled a program at the San Antonio location for January 14, 2017. They would like us to schedule quarterly programs there.

Eventually there will be 12 Cohen Centers around the U.S. We hope to have enough funding to grow our partnership with Cohen Clinic and present programs at all their future locations.

Conferences

June 24-24, we attended the **Family Readiness Group** (FRG) for the National Guard in Round Rock, Texas. We met and talked with most of the regional leadership. We networked and corresponded with several new partners and hope to schedule classes in new areas for 2017 as we expand our service area.

We attended the **R4 Alliance Conference** October 18-21 in the Villages, Florida. R4 vets and certifies Military Service Providers to qualify as Programs of Excellence and then supports and helps promotes their organizations. Please see the video they made for us on YouTube at: <https://youtu.be/hEAXUGYIbYg>. We made several important contacts there and learned a

lot. We have been invited to offer programs in Idaho and Tampa. We will raise funds for those endeavors with our application to the Elizabeth Dole Foundation. We will also be contacting the Rosalind Carter Foundation for information.

Website

Our website needs to be updated and expanded as it is written in an outdated computer code that we will soon be unable to update. We contacted Go Daddy who wanted \$2500+ for the work. We met another organization at the R4 Conference, Challenge America, who offered to get it done for about 1/3 of that cost. The new platform will allow us to easily update class dates, to add testimonials, evaluations and pictures. Look for a fresh, new site in early 2017.

Combined Federal Campaign

CFC, SECC (State) and DCC (Dallas) held their kick-off in September for the 2016 Campaigns. Because of our heavy teaching schedule, we have been unable to attend the number of speaking engagements we normally attend. We did sign up for the on-line campaign and the overseas donors' funds. We will learn the pledge amounts in March, 2017. Donations from those sources normally supply less than 5% of MMC's income. Due to changes in the program that begin 2017, MMC will be unable to be part of the campaign which will begin charging application and processing fees that are beyond our budget.

We will need to find a way to replace those donations. We will be focusing more on corporate and private donations.

Growth

We have been attending free Development classes from Mission Advancement and talked with a non-profit lawyer to work on a Development Plan which will allow MMC to expand capacity, reach out beyond Texas borders and purchase additional infrastructure. We also want to establish a private or corporate donor base that allows us to survive between grants. (When our grant was not renewed in July, 2015-16 we were only able to do 2 programs.)

We would like to have more active input and ideas from our board and donors. In January we will begin to have computer call in Board meetings. We will contact you about best days and time for these meetings. Agendas will be e-mailed and topics of interest to you will be placed on that agenda.

We are also working with Dr. Van Epp to develop a clinically eligible evaluation for our program. Our current evaluation provides anecdotal feedback but limits what kind of grants that MMC can apply for. A clinical evaluation will give us researched based data.

We have also talked with Bernice Smoot of SaintWallStreet.com, who spoke at the NARME conference we attended two years ago. She contacted us regarding a Program Return on Investment a (PROI) to add value to the outcomes from our programs. PROI covers seven categories of impact measurement with dozens of value indicators for five key socioeconomic drivers. This data will give our program additional impact data and make us more attractive to potential donors.

Evaluations

We currently collect two kinds of evaluations: a Likert Scale and free field subjective responses. After each program, we type up both evaluations. If the program is held on base or we have a sponsor, we prepare an After-Action Report. They include participant comments and you may read any or all reports. Just e-mail us and we will send them.

Testimonials

Attached is a wonderful testimonial sent to us after the Denton program by a licensed therapist attending with a veteran. We are so blessed to be able to offer this service to Veterans.

November, 2016

My husband, Michael, a multiple-tour combat veteran, and I recently attended Bob & Barbara Zielinski's marriage and relationship enrichment class for military and veteran couples. The Zielinskis are a veteran couple who personally understand the stressors military and post-military life can place upon couples. The curriculum used was a military version of Couple Links created by Love Thinks, LLC. It was based upon Dr. John Van Epp's Relationship Attachment Model (RAM). The class was tailored to meet unique needs and challenges of veteran and military couples. Bob and Barbara, having been married for many years, shared their own relational mistakes and successes in route to a healthy, happy and lasting marriage. Practicums during the course gave couples the opportunity to rehearse the relational skills being taught, and coursework included materials to take home. The class offered tools that are instrumental in building strong relational bonds and ensuring lasting and fulfilling commitment. With the exceptional strains upon military and veteran couples due to current and/or past service, the skills taught are particularly necessary in maintaining and growing their relationships. Personally, I noticed a substantial improvement in constructive communication between Michael and me immediately upon completion of the course. The RAM now serves as an explicit relational barometer for us. These two key factors, being able to gauge the health of a relationship and the use of constructive, healthy communication, are essential in maintaining and improving any relationship. But they are especially essential for those relationships that may be stressed by exceptional factors, such as time apart, frequent assignment changes, and/or a partner's post-traumatic stress and potential for vicarious or secondary stress in the significant other. As a therapist, I highly recommend the Zielinski's course to every military and veteran couple, whether or not they are troubled by relational strife. If we expect those in the military to render so great a service and for them and their families to make such great sacrifices, then we owe it to them to ensure the emotional and relational wellbeing of them and their families. The Zielinski's course serves to accomplish this goal.

Robin R. Meier, PsyD

McKinney, TX

940.577.1630

Thank you for your continued support. Have a great Holiday Season!

Bob and Barbara

info@MarriageManagement.org

www.MarriageManagement.org

682-730-1818

