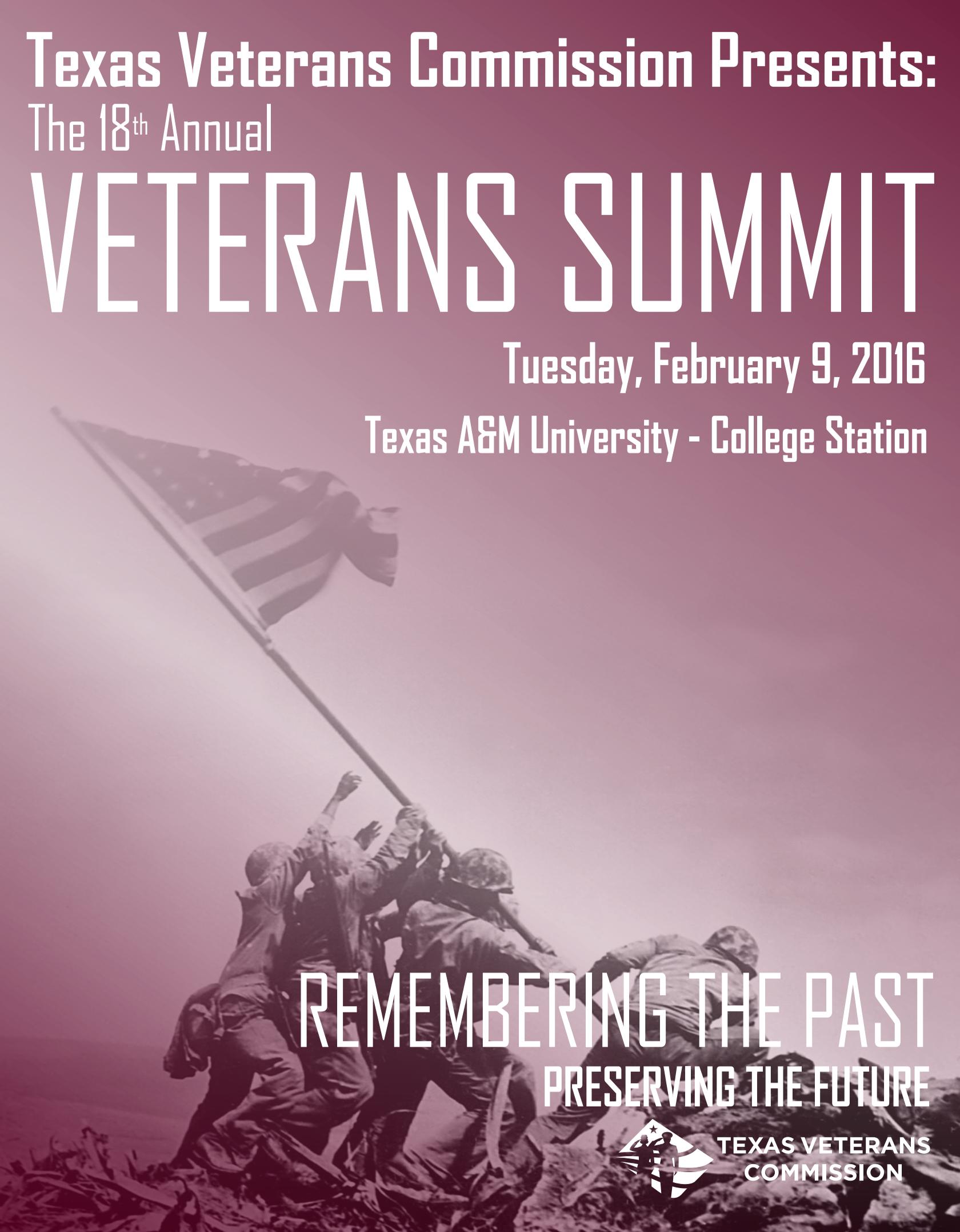


Texas Veterans Commission Presents:  
The 18<sup>th</sup> Annual

# VETERANS SUMMIT

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Texas A&M University - College Station



REMEMBERING THE PAST

PRESERVING THE FUTURE



TEXAS VETERANS  
COMMISSION



# PANEL SUMMARIES

## STATE LEGISLATIVE PANEL

### ***Building Partnerships for Progress***

Key state legislators discuss Veteran related priorities they believe will be addressed in the upcoming 85th Legislative Session. The panel will address legislative and budgetary priorities, the role of Veteran Service Organizations in the legislative process, and how organizations can contribute to policy discussions.

**Moderator: Sean Hanna**, Director, *Military Veteran Peer Network, Texas Veterans Commission*

#### **Panel Members:**

**The Honorable Donna Campbell**, Chair, *Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs and Military Installations*

**The Honorable Susan King**, Chair, *House Committee on Defense and Veterans' Affairs*

**The Honorable Cesar Blanco**, *House Committee on Defense and Veterans' Affairs*

**The Honorable John Raney**, *House Committee on Higher Education*

## MENTAL HEALTH PANEL

### ***Beyond the Battlefield: Mental Health Services for Service Members, Veterans and Families***

Recent conflicts are causing a wide range of impacts to Service Members, Veterans and their Families (SMVF). The effects of war reach beyond those directly involved and spill over to family members and those closest to Service Members and Veterans. Discussions will include the current state of mental health services, areas for improvement, and how federal, state, and local agencies are striving to meet the need for mental health care in the SMVF community.

**Moderator: Sean Hanna**, Director, *Military Veteran Peer Network, Texas Veterans Commission*

#### **Panel Members:**

**Sonja Gaines**, Associate Commissioner for Mental Health Coordination, *Health and Human Services Commission*

**Dr. Stephen Holliday**, VISN 17 Chief Mental Health Officer, *Veterans Health Administration*

**Tony Solomon**, Director of Veterans Behavioral Health Initiative, *Mental Health of America*

**Waymon Stewart**, Executive Director, *Andrews Center*

## CLAIMS REPRESENTATION & COUNSELING PANEL

### ***Joining the Front Line: Federal and State Partnerships to Beat the Appeals Backlog***

In 2012, the Texas Veterans Commission and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) partnered to take immediate action to address the growing federal backlog of Veterans' claims for disability benefits. Recently, the number of appeals has grown at an alarming rate. This panel will discuss the shifting focus from disability claims backlog to the increase of appeals and how the VA is working to combat the situation.

**Moderator: Victor Polanco**, Operations Manager, *Claims Representation & Counseling, Texas Veterans Commission*

#### **Panel Members:**

**Robert Manchester**, Director, *Houston Regional Office, Texas Veterans Commission*

**Dale Moyer**, Director, *Waco Regional Office, Texas Veterans Commission*

**Marlan P. Waldrop**, Director, *Houston Regional Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*

**John Limpose**, Director, *Waco Regional Office, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*

## EDUCATION PANEL

### ***Investing in our Future: Student Veterans in Focus***

The growing number of student Veterans in Texas has highlighted new needs, issues, and obstacles in the progression from service member to student Veteran and life beyond. The panel will include student Veterans from across Texas as they discuss the evolution of student Veteran services, the impact of the Post-9/11 GI Bill on campus culture, and importance of military transition services.

**Moderator: Murel Miller**, Deputy Director, *Veterans Education, Texas Veterans Commission*

#### **Panel Members:**

**Fontaine Wilson**, Student Veterans of America Chapter President, *University of Houston*

**Rose Cavazos**, Student Veteran, *Texas A&M University*

**Ben Taggart**, Student Veteran, *Texas A&M University*

**Ivan Vazquez**, Student Veteran, *University of Texas- Austin*

## WOMEN VETERANS PANEL

### ***Women Veterans Program is Official: Intent and Implementation of HB 867***

Recent legislation has provided a platform for the Texas Veterans Commission to engage and advocate for women Veterans in the state of Texas. Discussions will include how the new program aims to reach out to women Veterans, increase public awareness of gender specific issues, and provide direct assistance.

**Moderator: Edith Disler, PhD**, Director of External Relations, *Texas Veterans Commission*

#### **Panel Members:**

**The Honorable Ana Hernandez**, State Representative, *Author of HB 867*

**Anna Baker**, Women Veterans Program Manager, *Texas Veterans Commission*

**Judy Hooper Davis**, *Vietnam Veteran*

# PANEL SUMMARIES

## HEALTH CARE PANEL

### **Community of Care: Proactive Strategies to Meet the Health Needs of Veterans**

State and federal partnerships aim to create a continuum of care to address the evolving health care needs of today's Veterans. The panel will discuss methods of strengthening collaboration within communities and advancing emerging health technologies.

**Moderator: Jose Silva**, Supervisor, Health Care Advocacy Program, Texas Veterans Commission

#### **Panel Members:**

**Joseph Dalpiaz**, Director, Heart of Texas Health Care Network, Veterans Health Administration  
**Dr. Adam Walmus**, Director, Michael E. DeBakey Medical Center, Veterans Health Administration  
**Gary Lee**, Program Specialist, Health Care Advocacy Program, Texas Veterans Commission

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## FUND FOR VETERANS' ASSISTANCE PANEL

### **Keys to Building a Strong Organization**

An organizational foundation is crucial to gaining and sustaining grant funding. The panel will discuss the overall process of building, strengthening, and sustaining a grant funded organization that provides services to Veterans and their families.

**Moderator: Charles Catoe**, Director, Fund for Veterans' Assistance, Texas Veterans Commission

#### **Panel Members:**

**Larry Hobbs**, Workforce Readiness Director, San Antonio Human Resource Management Association  
**Erika Bitar**, Supervisor, Retention and Veterans Services, Goodwill Industries of Central Texas  
**Natasha Jackson**, Specialty Court Grant Manager, Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division  
**Michelle Lugalía-Hollon**, Director, Program Initiatives, San Antonio Area Foundation

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## CRIMINAL JUSTICE PANEL

### **Texas and the Sequential Intercept Model: Targeted Strategies for Diversion**

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) GAINS Center published the Sequential Intercept Model as a guide for identifying and treating Veterans who become involved with the criminal justice system. The panel will discuss the role of this model and the current landscape of Justice Involved Veteran initiatives in Texas.

**Moderator: Sean Hanna**, Director, Military Veteran Peer Network, Texas Veterans Commission

#### **Panel Members:**

**B.J. Wagner**, Director of Smart Justice, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute  
**Lisa Howard**, Deputy Director of Reentry and Integration Division, Texas Department of Criminal Justice  
**Ashley Griffin**, Training Coordinator, University of Texas Police Department  
**Karen Janda**, Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

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## EMPLOYMENT PANEL

### **Strategies for Transitioning to Employment**

Navigating the employment process can be a daunting task for transitioning service members and Veterans. The panel will discuss services available to student Veterans transitioning from campus to the workforce, how to prepare for the challenges of public employment opportunities, and entrepreneurial ownership.

**Moderator: Stan Kurtz**, Manager, Veterans Employment Services, Texas Veterans Commission

#### **Panel Members:**

**Tim Shatto**, Veterans Employer Liaison-Public Entity, Texas Veterans Commission  
**Duncan McGhee**, Veteran Entrepreneur Program Manager, Texas Veterans Commission  
**Col. Jerry Smith**, Director, Veteran Resource Center, Texas A&M University  
**Jared Lyons**, Acting President & CEO, Student Veterans of America

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## HOMELESSNESS PANEL

### **Ending Veteran Homelessness: A Roundtable Discussion**

Participants will be given the opportunity to join experienced service providers and administrators in the fight against Veteran homelessness. Conversations will focus on improving the effectiveness of Texas' approach to addressing homelessness among Veterans and to discuss policy recommendations for state programs and legislation to better serve Veterans who are experiencing homelessness.

#### **Facilitators:**

**Naomi Trejo**, Coordinator for Homelessness Programs and Policy, Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs  
**Pam Maercklein**, Women Veteran Coordinator, Texas Veterans Commission