



**WILLIAM JAMES
COLLEGE**

Fall 2024 Newsletter

Quarterly Newsletter



MVP and TVTV Newsletter

Your newsletter for all important updates related to Military and Veterans Psychology and the Train Vets to Treat Vets Programs.

Welcome to William James College! Whether you are an incoming student or a fourth-year student, we encourage you to take part in the Military and Veteran Program (MVP) if you have any interest working with the military or veteran population. The MVP and TVTV have come a long way over the last several years and we are looking for student leaders to join our team! The available resources in this concentration are valuable to students by fostering leadership skills and preparing you for a career catering to military members. Keep reading to see how you can become involved!



Military Community Members at William James College

Announcements

American Psychological Association 2024 Presentations

Critical Conversations - Veteran Suicide Prevention: An innovative and depolarizing approach to Lethal Means Counseling

Presented by Dr. D'Olympia, PsyD

Congratulations! Dr. Jenny D'Olympia delivered her first critical conversation and continuing education presentation at the APA 2024! Dr. D'Olympia presented the Veterans Suicide Prevention Safer Storage Model to a national audience, and the William James community couldn't be prouder!



Read the abstract here! This skill-building session offered a holistic approach to lethal means counseling, involving several key components, each tailored to enhance overall safety and contribute to suicide prevention efforts with servicemembers, veterans, and their families (SMVF). The introduction included

a brief examination of the relationship between veterans and firearms ownership as well as an overview of the statistics related for death by suicide with firearm in the SMVF community. Then the elements of safer storage were introduced along with research showing efficacy of the intervention in suicide prevention. Attendees learned a tailored format that follows specific research-based guidelines for lethal means counseling. They were taught to comprehensively assess an individual's firearm access, purpose, and storage practices, gathering valuable information to tailor safety recommendations. The session included investigating alternative security measures, ensuring individuals are better prepared to address specific safety challenges when firearms are not immediately available. Attendees learned a leveled approach to safer firearm storage for suicide prevention, emphasizing the importance of adding time between thoughts and actions through physical barriers to deter impulsive use during moments of crisis. Additionally, they learned about myths surrounding suicide risk factors, providing a more accurate understanding of the relationship between firearm access and suicide. The session also addressed potential emotional and physical pain and life changes that might be warning signs, indicating that additional steps might need to be taken to add time between thoughts and actions. Finally, the session discussed how to empower SMVF by promoting an active safety plan and help-seeking behaviors as responsible force protection measures. Additional suggestions for continued understanding of firearms and safer storage were included in the session.

Critical Conversations - Understanding Variation in Well-being Among Women Veterans in the United States

WJC Staff and Students had the unique opportunity to share their stories surrounding wellness and the reintegration experiences of women veterans through a panel discussion moderated by Dr. Angela Taveira-Dick, Ph.D at the APA Conference.

*WOMEN WARRIORS NOT DAMSELS IN DISTRESS: INTERSECTIONAL
ISSUES IN THE WELLBEING OF WOMEN VETERANS*

Panel Moderator: Angela Taveira-Dick, PhD

Panel Members: Jenny D'Olympia, PsyD, Patricia Matlock, M.A., Mary Polanco, M.S., Latisha Bright, MBA

APA CONFERENCE 2024



ANGELA TAVEIRA-DICK, PHD



JENNY D'OLYMPIA, PSYD



PATRICIA MATLOCK, M.A.



MARY POLANCO, M.S.



LATISHA BRIGHT, MBA

Read the abstract [here!](#) Our research seeks to better understand challenges to well-being women veterans face. We used a modified snowball sample to recruit participants to our web-based survey, targeting self-identified women veterans – 4,705 women veterans from every state in the U.S. and every branch of service completed the survey, and 42% of them answered the last question of the survey “Please tell us what you see as the top 3 needs for women in your community who served in (the) armed forces.” Among the women who responded to this question, the largest category of responses by far was the need for health and well-being services support and services. Approximately 50% reported being isolated, feeling unsupported and unhealthy, lacking a sense of purpose, and not finding their role in community and family to be a source of self-worth and connection. Most felt their transition was difficult and that they needed more time to figure out civilian life. Overwhelmingly, respondents desired women-specific support services to address these needs. We will present how those responses vary by critical demographic and service-related factors, service pre or post 9/11, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability status. This presentation will explore what distinguishes women veterans who do not report being well from those who do, and how we can help them. Women veterans need tailored support services that recognize

their unique experiences both in the military and once they transition back to civilian life. These services must be provided in spaces/contexts where they feel safe and valued. Extensive research is still needed to better understand what “well-being” means to women veterans and how we can help them thrive.

New England Psychological Association 2024 Poster in the Works for October!

Upcoming! A group of military oriented students and staff from TVTV program have taken part in analyzing data from a survey conducted by the University of Alabama examining what women veterans believe to be their main areas of need.

Poster members working on this project include: Sara Wall, MA; Mary Polanco; Erica Merrill, MA, MS; Tanjira Spaulding, MA; Jenny D'Olympia, PsyD; Sonia Suri, PhD & Patricia Matlock

Alumni Highlight - Brenda Kurtyka

Kudos on your remarkable achievement! William James College and the MVP/TVTV Team would like to recognize Brenda Kurtyka, a 2016 Master's in Organizational Psychology graduate.

Brenda, a Lieutenant Colonel from the Rhode Island Air National Guard retired after a nearly 25 year career serving our nation. Her retirement remarks were precious, capturing deep appreciation and pushing a message of "never giving-up," perseverance! We are proud of Brenda and all that she has accomplished for our military and Nation, but, most importantly for her kindness and compassion, in which she has helped so many service members on this complex trail.

Congratulations again, Lieutenant Colonel (RET) Brenda Kurtyka. You have left our nation's military a better place. Your colleagues were very emotional seeing you retire! Blessings to you and your family!

Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP) Scholarship

What is this? The Army, Navy and Air Force and the Veterans Affairs (VA) HPSP Scholarship covers up to four years of graduate school tuition and provides a monthly stipend for living expenses as well as compensation for books. In return, recipients pursuing graduate education at William James commit to a length of active-duty service as psychologists. Once each student earns their PsyD, the Army, Navy and Air Force will promote the graduates to the rank of O-3.



Time2Track Tags



Tag! Tag! Tag! When it comes to entering your clients on Time2Track, we are emphasizing the importance on adding tags for our military community! Adding tags that indicate military affiliation allows for students to highlight their clinical training with a population that is underserved, highlighting the importance of social justice issues and the responsibility to meet the mental health needs of a diverse society. For any students in specific concentrations such as Military and Veteran Psychology (MVP), tags are critical to ensuring that students are meeting with clients who are part of this population, hence allowing students to develop competencies

(under supervision) in working with and treating these special groups.

Get Involved!

Experiential Groups

JOIN NOW! Experiential groups are a great way to connect and network with fellow students and faculty with military interests. This is a great first step to get involved with the MVP concentration or if you are just curious about the military population. The MVP concentration students are required to participate in an experiential learning group, but all students in the William James College community are invited to participate! These are a unique opportunity for added support and learning about military culture. Groups meet weekly for 1-hour throughout the academic year. These groups are facilitated by MVP faculty and consist of non-military and military and veteran students in our community.

Meetings for Fall 2024 will be held on Mondays starting at noon in room 311. These are informal sessions so students should feel free to bring their lunches. Please contact Dr. Haddad at David_Haddad@williamjames.edu to let him know of your interest, or if you have any questions. The first meeting will be on Monday, September 9th.

Consider joining us for Fall 2024!

“I’m thankful for this group as it provides me with a safe space to feel connected with other military and veteran students.”
—student feedback

MVP Experiential Group Zoom Link

Division 19- Society for Military Psychology

What is Division 19? The Society for Military Psychology (Division 19)



encourages research and the application of psychological research to military problems. WJC has many student members who are HPSP military scholarship recipients or are interested in working with the military as a civilian practitioner. Division 19's WJC chapter has done extensive work presenting at local and national conferences, assisting in military and veteran research, and educating local clinicians about military clients' needs.

[APA Division 19 Link](#)

Recent Engagement

Student Veteran Engagement and Impact. Explore where our students have been and how they have made a difference!

We are happy to announce how much of an impact William James College students are making in the Veteran community. From August 2023 to April 2024, WJC students have logged over 16,500 hours of support and 8,250 hours of direct service with over 600 Veterans across 17 Veterans sites nationwide!

56

Total Military and Veterans Enrolled Fall 2023



24

New Veterans Enrolled in 2023



14

Veteran Student Graduates June 2023



*the data above reflects WJC 2023-2024 academic year

Upcoming Events & CE Credits

Keep in touch by attending our upcoming events and gain CE credits! The tentative schedule is as follows:

November:

- 12 November Veterans Day Event 12:00pm - 1:00pm
- 15 November- Lethal Means Counseling for Suicide Prevention training 9:30-3:30. Find the link here: **[Suicide Prevention - Further Information and Register Here](#)**

December:

- 12 December- Lethal Means Counseling for Suicide Prevention training. Registration date Nov 1

January:

- CE - Motivational Interviewing *Specific date TBD*

February:

- CE - TBI - (New interventions and Innovations - a wider perspective of who is at risk) *Specific date TBD*

March:

- March - CE- Womens' Study Review and Panel. *Specific date TBD*

April

- CE - Peer Support Groups (How to find one for your client, the benefits of them etc) *Specific date TBD*

Contact Us!

Still have questions about the MVP/TVT TV programs?

Watch our recent MVP/TVT informational video and get to know Dr. Jenny D'Olympia, Associate Chair and Assistant Professor in the Counseling and Behavioral Health Department, and Director of the Military and Veterans Psychology and Train Vets to Treat Vets Programs. Dr. D'Olympia shares her personal experience as an Air Force Veteran, and provides information about our Military and Veterans Psychology program for military, veterans, and civilians. The program will provide students with the tools, hands-on experiential learning, and cultural awareness to deliver services to the military, veterans, and their families. For more information, please visit www.williamjames.edu/mvp

Watch the Video Here!

Connect with Us on LinkedIn

Join our Military and Veteran community on by following us on LinkedIn!

[Follow Us Here](#)

If you are interested on how to become a part of our military programs at WJC or have any inquires, please view the MVP and TVTV points of contact below or email mvp@williamjames.edu

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We hope you will join us for our future training events. We provide quarterly newsletters, so please stay tuned for our next edition. Thank you for following us and being a part of our community!

[Visit our MVP Website!](#)

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