



Nature's Grace: America's Veterans and the Healing Power of Nature

November 13-15, 2019

Presented by Parks, Recreation, and Tourism
University of Utah

Held at the
University Guest House & Conference Center
Officers Club

150 S. Fort Douglas Boulevard
Salt Lake City, Utah 84113

Welcome! In September of 2014 we hosted the 1st International Symposium, "This Land Is Your Land: Toward a Better Understanding of Nature's Resiliency-Building and Restorative Power for America's Armed Forces Personnel, Veterans, and their Families" at the University of Utah. We published the symposium proceedings in a book by the same name (Sagamore-Venture Publishing.) Five years later, it is now time to revisit what we have learned in the intervening years about the healing power of nature for America's veterans and their families.

We will be learning from a variety of service providers and scholars who are furthering our understanding of nature's healing power for veterans and their families, including presenters from Aquanauts Adaptive Aquatics, Clemson University, Cornell University, Grand Canyon Warriors, Higher Ground/Los Angeles, Indiana University, National Parks Conservation Association, OUTWARD BOUND USA, Sacramento State University, Sierra Club, Team Rubicon, University of Arizona, University of Utah, University of Washington, the Veterans Affairs Program, Portland, Oregon, the Veterans Administration, Salt Lake City, and Warriors on Cataract.

There will be 3 keynote presentations, 20 plenary sessions, and 2 special sessions focusing on suicide prevention among veterans. The symposium spans one evening and two full days, including sessions focusing on a variety of outdoor

recreation pursuits (backpacking, fly-fishing, hunting, nature walks, river running, SCUBA, etc.) as well as expanded themes, including cognitive behavioral therapy interspersed with family recreation, homeless veterans, mobilization of veterans to continue their service, educational films, and innovative therapeutic recreation delivery models. The symposium promises to be a highly worthwhile educational experience.

We encourage you to take advantage of this rare opportunity to expand your professional network, make new friends, learn from one another, and return home energized to continue the good work you are doing. We are a community united by our passion for serving veterans and their families who have given so much in defense of our nation. It is the least we can do.

Daily Schedule

Location: Officers Club

Wednesday, November 13th, 2019

Registration (4:00-6:00 PM)

Conference Opening (6:00-7:00 PM)

Welcome (Dr. Dan Dustin)

Presentation of Colors (University of Utah Air Force ROTC);



Introduction of Dr. Kelly Bricker, Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Program Director (Dr. Dustin); *Introduction of Dr. David Perrin, Dean, College of Health* (Dr. Bricker); *Introduction of Opening Keynote Speaker* (Dean Perrin)

Opening Keynote Address

Dr. Bill Krissoff

Opening Social (7:00-9:00 PM)

Thursday, November 14th, 2019

7:00-8:00 AM

Continental Breakfast (University Guest House, Guests only)

7:30-9:30 AM

Registration (Officers Club)

7:00-8:00 AM

1st Special Session “Suicide Prevention among Veterans” (Officers Club, East Room)

Fred Solheim, Warriors on Cataract

Cristal McGill, Professional Training Facilitator in Crisis Intervention

Kristi Ruben, VA Recreational Therapist, Whole Health Coach

Educational Sessions (Officers Club)

8:00-8:40 AM

Building Lives on Meaning and Purpose: Towards Wholistic Wellness that Transcends the Legacy of Pathology and Isolation

Andrew Smith, University of Utah

8:45-9:25 AM

Military Veterans and Natural Landscapes: Where Are We Now and Where Do We Need to Go?

Suzanne Bott, University of Arizona; Alan Ewert, Indiana University; Aaron Leonard, Sierra Club

9:30-10:10 AM

Mother Nature and Recreation: Utilizing the Great Outdoors to Facilitate Healing for our Nation’s Veterans on their Path to Reintegration

Kris King, Higher Ground, Los Angeles

10:10-10:30 AM (Morning Break)**10:30-11:10 AM**

Sierra Club Military Outdoors Women's Program

Aaron Leonard, Sierra Club; Joanna Bettmann Schaefer, University of Utah; David Scheinfeld, Austin, Texas; Leslie Hoellger, Sierra Club; Adam Handley, University of Utah

11:15-11:55 AM

Therapeutic Horticulture and Agricultural Training Program

Scott Hoffman, Carmen Caraballo, and David Greaves, Veterans Affairs Health Care System, Portland, Oregon

12:00-1:30 PM Lunch (Officers Club)

12:45-1:15 PM Special lunchtime conversation: "Outdoor Experiences for Veterans and Federal Funding Initiatives: Outward Bound's Experience on Capitol Hill" *Katie Newsom and Josh Brankman, OUTWARD BOUND USA*

1:30-2:10 PM

Recovering a Sense of Place: River Environments and Veterans with PTSD

Kelly Bricker, University of Utah, Matt Brownlee, Clemson University, Russell Hicks, University of Utah

2:15-2:55 PM

Rivers of Recovery: Research Updates on Fly fishing and Therapeutic Outcomes

Keith Tidball, Cornell University

3:00-3:40 PM

Grand Canyon Warriors: A Therapeutically Effective River Rafting Program for Marine Corps Veterans

Henry “Hank” Detering, Grand Canyon Warriors

3:40-4:00 PM (Afternoon Break)

4:00-4:40 PM

Building Camaraderie through Nature-Based Recreation: A Case Study of Veterans with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

Deborah Tysor, Clemson University

4:45-5:25 PM

Combining an Arts-Informed Parent Education Program with a Family Nature Outing: Preliminary Findings from the Hill Air Force Base Initiative

Kevin Rathunde, University of Utah

6:00-7:30 PM

**Mid-Symposium Keynote Address
and Dinner (Officers Club)**



**Marine Corps Major General
Anthony Jackson and 19th
Director of California State Parks**

7:30-9:00 PM

National Parks Conservation Association screening of the short film, *Constant Thought*, followed by a panel discussion

Larissa Walker (NPCA, moderator), Jacqueline Cruet (NPCA), Brandon Kuehn (veteran), Matthew Mikkelsen (Spruce Tone Films), Palmer Morse (Spruce Tone Films), Karen Quiles (The Mission Continues), Serena Barghahn (Aquanauts Adaptive Aquatics)

Friday, November 15, 2019

7:00-8:00 AM

Continental Breakfast (University Guest House, Guests only)

7:30-9:30 AM Registration (Officers Club)

7:00-8:00 AM

2nd Special Session “Suicide Prevention among Veterans” (Officers Club, East Room)

*Fred Solheim, Warriors on Cataract
Cristal McGill, Professional Training Facilitator in Crisis Intervention
Kristi Ruben, VA Recreational Therapist, Whole Health Coach*

Educational Sessions (Officers Club)

8:00-8:40 AM

How Can We Determine Whether Hiking Helps Veterans with PTSD and What Do We Know So Far?

Alyson Littman, Gregory Bratman, University of Washington

8:45-9:25 AM

Diving Into Possibilities: SCUBA’s Contributions to Healing Veterans

Worth O’Brien, AQUANAUTS ADAPTIVE AQUATICS, ADAPTIVE SCUBA PROGRAMS

9:30-10:10 AM

The Chase as Therapy: Benefits of Hunting Programs as Reported by Participants

Keith Tidball, Cornell University

10:10-10:30 AM (Morning Break)**10:30-11:10 AM**

Placing Nature for Military Veterans Facing Homelessness: Understanding Potential Health Benefits of Nature-Based Recreational Experiences

Jeff Rose, University of Utah

11:15-11:55 AM

Team Rubicon: Mobilizing Veterans to Continue their Service

Michelle Seage, Team Rubicon, Salt Lake City, Utah

12:00-1:30 PM Lunch (Officers Club)**1:30-2:10 PM**

Metahabilitation: A Strengths-Based Rehabilitation Model Guiding Posttraumatic Growth in Recreational Therapy Practice

Joyce-Mikal Flynn and Jamie Hoffman, Sacramento State University

2:15-2:55 PM

Effectiveness of an Intensive, Two-Week Treatment Program for Military Personnel and Veterans with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

Craig Bryan, AnnaBelle Bryan, Feea Leifker, David Rozek, Kelsi Rugo, and Nicolas Oakey, University of Utah

3:00-3:40 PM

Nature, Recreation, and Recreational Therapy: Creating Distinctions, but Working Together to Support our Veterans and their Families

Brent Hawkins, Jasmine Townsend, Clemson University

3:40-4:00 PM (Afternoon Break)**4:00-4:40 PM**

The Veterans Health Care System Whole Health Model of Care: Empowering Veterans to Live Healthy and Active Lives in Nature

William Marchand, Clinical Director, Whole Health, Salt Lake City VA

4:45-5:25 PM

“Outdoor Alliance for Veterans?” Roundtable Discussion

Rob Vessels, Sierra Club

6:00-7:30 PM**Closing Keynote Address and Dinner (Officers Club)**

Stacy Bare, Principal, Bare LLC and Adventure Health Lab

7:30-8:30 PM

Evening Entertainment



Andrew Wiscombe

8:30-10:00 PM Symposium Wrap Up and Social

One of the biggest challenges for veterans and their families is staying connected to encourage, help, and support one another after their nature-based outings. Let's not let that be said about us. Make sure you have contact information for every kindred spirit you met at this symposium, and commit yourself to staying in touch with them for your own benefit as well as the benefit of the military family we serve.

On behalf of the program planning committee, I would like to thank you for attending and for all the good work you are doing on behalf of our nation's veterans and their families. This is important work and I cannot think of a better group of people to carry it forward. Best wishes for continued success in all you do!

Sincerely,



Daniel L. Dustin, Professor of Outdoor Recreation Studies
Parks, Recreation, and Tourism
University of Utah

Notes: