

	Vets to Vets: The Veterans Resource Center Project
	Gaeir Dietrich • Director Myra Lerch • AT Specialist/Consultant High Tech Center Training Unit (HTCTU)
	AHEAD Conference – July 2010

	Overview
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ What Is the HTCTU?■ Veterans: A Few Numbers■ The Veterans Resource Center Project■ Three Central Components■ Consistency & Creativity■ What Happens Next?

	What Is the HTCTU?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Grant Program<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Funded by the Chancellor’s Office of the California Community College (CCC) system– Located at De Anza College in Cupertino, California– Serve 112+ California community colleges

	Training Areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Alternate Media and Legal Issues<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Gaeir Dietrich ■ Web Accessibility and Assistive Computer Technology<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Jayme Johnson

	Our Role
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Train staff and faculty of the CCCs to use technology to assist students with disabilities<ul style="list-style-type: none">- We use a "train the trainer" model ■ Act as a resource<ul style="list-style-type: none">- We have a _____ (blind, deaf, etc.) student! What do we do?

	Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Trainings<ul style="list-style-type: none">- First for CCC, others welcome as space/capacity is available ■ Listserves<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Various topics related to disability and access ■ Manuals<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Some available online, others by request

	Free!
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ All our trainings are free■ Some held at our Cupertino location (De Anza College)<ul style="list-style-type: none">– www.htctu.net■ We will also come to you at your CCC campus!<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Work with campus disability office and contact us to arrange trainings

	Some Areas of Interest
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Web accessibility■ Accessible documents<ul style="list-style-type: none">– PDF, Word, PowerPoint■ Captioning/accessible podcasting■ Math accommodations■ Speech recognition<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Dragon NaturallySpeaking■ Complying with Section 508

	What characteristics might returning veterans have?

	<h3>A Few Numbers: Gulf War Legacy¹</h3>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Of the 697,000 Gulf War veterans, 53% (370,600+) are receiving compensation for service-connected disabilities ■ The disability rate for the last century was <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5% before Vietnam - 10% in Vietnam <p><small>¹U.S. News and World Report, www.usnews.com, and <i>The Cedars of Lebanon Weep</i></small></p>

	<h3>A Few Numbers: California¹</h3>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Of 1.42 million men and women in active military force, about 11% (175,000) are stationed in California <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Another 25,000 people serve in the Reserves in California ■ Education benefit is the main reason many people serve in the military <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approximately 200,000 are eligible for admission to California campuses ■ Approximately 26,000 veteran students receiving GI Bill benefits in CCCs (2007-2008)² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enrollment expected to increase dramatically <p><small>¹Thomas E. Church, 2/27/2008</small></p> <p><small>²Timothy P. Bonnel, Chancellor's Office, CCCs</small></p>

	<h3>A Few Numbers: Suicide Risk</h3>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Military suicides increasing at high rate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 87 in 2005 - 102 in 2006 - 115 in 2007 - 128+ in 2008 - Source: MSNBC.com, January 2009 ■ Male U.S. veterans have twice the suicide rate (2.13%) of nonmilitary people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Source: Portland State University ■ Probable higher suicide risk with more permanent, serious mental and physical disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Source: Kaplan study, funded by NIMH

	A Few Numbers: Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ TBI has been termed the "signature injury" of these wars■ According to current estimates:¹<ul style="list-style-type: none">– IEDs account for 65% of combat injuries– Of all exposed to IED, 60% have TBI– Therefore, estimate that approximately 10,000 have TBI<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ As of September 2007, VA has seen approximately 500 <p>¹Harriet Zeiner, Sept 2007</p>

	Educational Impact of TBI?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Cognitive deficits<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Attention, organization, memory– Sequencing, judgment/decision making– Slowed information processing■ Emotional difficulties<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Depression– Lower frustration tolerance■ Sleep disturbances


	A Few Numbers: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Approximately 1/8 of returning soldiers suffer from Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)¹<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Of those, approximately 2/3 do not seek treatment <p>¹www.msn.com, 9/10/2007</p>

	Educational Impact of PTSD?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Re-experiencing trauma<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Flashbacks, nightmares, intrusive thoughts, etc.■ Arousal<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Hypervigilance, irritability, attention deficits, etc.■ Avoidance<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Detachment, social withdrawal, etc.

	Disabled Veteran or Wounded Warrior?

	The Veterans Resource Center Project
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Background:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Veterans Resource Center (VRC) established by Butte College in Spring 2008- <i>Staffed by vets</i>- <i>Collaborative effort</i>- <i>Included Assistive Technology</i>■ Goal:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Provide central entry point for student veterans as they navigate the civilian and academic worlds

Veterans Resource Center (VRC) – Butte College	
	
■ www.butte.edu/services/veterans/vrc.html	

Introducing the VRC Project	
	
■ High Tech Center Training Unit (HTCTU) ¹ sparks the idea: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Establish VRCs on other CCC campuses– In coordination with Chancellor's Office of CCCs	
■ Assistive technology (AT) will play significant role	
¹ www.htctu.net	

The VRC Vision	
■ Easing transition for returning student veterans <ul style="list-style-type: none">– One-stop center on CCC campuses	
■ Providing the tools for success	
■ Serving as a focal point for collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none">– On-campus resources– Off-campus resources (Veterans Administration, etc.)	
■ Serving as a resource on TBI for students & staff	


Collaborative Task Force	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Core team : – Veterans Certifying Official – Financial Aid – Disabled Student Programs & Services – Student veteran – Health Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Additional members: – Admissions & Records – Academic Counseling – Faculty – VA representative – Others

HTCTU Effort: Pilot Sites	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Initial grant for VRC pilot sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Selected 15 CCC campuses to participate – Minimum of 1 site in each of 10 DSPS regions – Will serve as training hub and example for other campuses in their region ■ HTCTU will provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 2 computers/pilot site – Assistive technology – Trainings, training guides, job aids 	

VRC Pilot Sites	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Butte College ■ City College of San Francisco ■ Chaffey College ■ Cuesta College ■ El Camino College ■ Foothill College ■ Grossmont College ■ Las Positas College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Long Beach City College ■ Merced College ■ Mt. San Antonio College ■ Pasadena City College ■ Riverside City College ■ Sacramento City College ■ Santa Monica College

	Data Collection
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Conduct survey re: what services CCCs currently provide student veterans ■ Collect data from VRC pilot sites<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Data will be collected at end of each semester during 2-year pilot project

	Three Central Components
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ VRCs: More than a vets lounge ■ Provide services in three key areas:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Academics– Camaraderie– Wellness

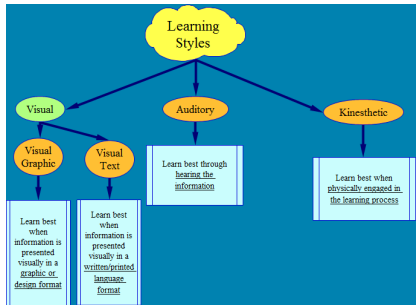
	Academics
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Offering tools & strategies that provide scaffolding for academic success<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Learning Styles Profile<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ . . . and learning strategies– Assistive Technology

Learning Styles Profile¹

- Identifies two strongest learning styles
- Recognizes pivotal importance of:
 - Combining learning styles
 - Being actively engaged in learning process
- Results:
 - Represented in graphic format
 - Guide recommendations
- Traditional vs. nontraditional learners?

¹ Myra Lerch, Butte College

Learning Styles Profile: Four Learning Styles



Traditional & Nontraditional Learners?


- Traditional:
 - Visual text
 - Auditory
- Nontraditional:
 - Visual graphic
 - Kinesthetic
- Student veterans:
 - Often indicate preference for nontraditional learning modalities

	Academics: Implications for Students?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Importance of understanding individual learning profile<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Applying the strategies that work for them■ Learn to use organizational tools<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Graphic organizers, day planner■ Combine input modalities to increase retention<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Text-to-speech technology

	Academics: Implications for Instruction?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Provide opportunities for active participation<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Small-group activities– PowerPoint slides posing questions■ Avoid cognitive overload to reduce frustration<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Present information in manageable units■ Represent concepts in multiple formats<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Lecture: Auditory & visual– Handouts: Concept map & outline form

	Assistive Technology (AT)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Kurzweil 3000 & Kurzweil 1000<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Donated by Cambium Learning Technologies■ Inspiration<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Donated by Inspiration Software, Inc.■ ZoomText<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Donated by ai squared■ Screen reader & speech recognition<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Referral to DSPS for training

	<h2>Learning Styles Profile & Assistive Technology</h2>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Visual graphic:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Concept mapping: Kurzweil 3000 / Inspiration■ Visual text:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Kurzweil 3000 / ZoomText■ Auditory:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Kurzweil 1000 & 3000 / NaturalReader / ZoomText / MP3■ Kinesthetic:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Concept mapping: Kurzweil 3000, Inspiration– Highlighting: Kurzweil 3000


	<h2>Camaraderie</h2>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ It starts when a vet walks through the door:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Staffed primarily by vets (minimum 70%)■ Provides a safe place where vets connect with other vets<ul style="list-style-type: none">– We've got your back■ Builds on shared values & experiences:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– People already know what you've been through

	<h2>Quote: Mike O., USMC, 2 tours Iraq</h2>
	<p>The hardest part of transitioning to civilian life has been the lack of camaraderie in the civilian world. The great people I served with have now gone their separate ways.</p> <p>Having the VRC on campus has returned to me access to a circle of friends I feel I can be open with, rely on, and turn to in times of crisis. I can honestly say the VRC is sometimes the only thing that saves me from "burning out" on school and keeps me coming back.</p>

	Camaraderie: Implications for Students?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Military culture centers on camaraderie<ul style="list-style-type: none">- VRCs reflect that culture, provide a safe place- Vet-to-vet mentoring may aid retention■ Provides support system as challenges arise<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Peer mentoring■ Shared activities promote a sense of belonging<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Outward Bound, paintball, etc.

	Camaraderie: Implications for Instruction?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Faculty and staff can build on something student veterans already know: camaraderie<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Pair students for group projects at beginning of semester to establish sense of security- Mix student groups through time■ Encourage vet-to-vet study groups<ul style="list-style-type: none">- . . . and group office hours

	Examples of Camaraderie Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Outward Bound team building (Pasadena)■ Weekly vet-to-vet social hour (Grossmont)■ Vets Alliance Club on Facebook (City College San Francisco)■ Bowling, paintball (Long Beach City College)■ World map competition between military branches (Butte)

Wellness	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify on- and off-campus resources ■ Refer to appropriate resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ideally, a seamless process – Recognize stigma associated with asking for help ■ Provide training for staff on veteran-specific issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dealing with TBI, PTSD, depression – Addressing stress – Family issues

Wellness: Implications for Students?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ VRCs provide support in seeking assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Encourage student vets to get beyond the stigma – “Here at home, as well as over there, how you deal with the effects of war is a tribute to your bravery.”¹ ■ Refer to on- and off-campus resources ■ Help student vets build their own “coping toolbox.”² <p>¹ <i>Courage After Fire</i>, K. Armstrong ² <i>Ibid.</i></p>	

Wellness: Implications for Instruction?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ VRC is practical resource on campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Refer student veterans to VRC ■ Leave personal view about the war outside classroom & other interactions with student vets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide non-hostile learning environment – Avoid displaying negative images of American flag 	

Examples of Wellness Services	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ VA clinician on campus (CCSF, Las Positas, Merced & Sacramento)■ Health/fitness course for vets (Las Positas)■ Redeem coupon for "goody bag" at Student Health Center (Mt. San Antonio)■ Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training (Foothill)■ Also address financial wellness: workshops (Pasadena)

Consistency & Creativity	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Consistency:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Name: VRC- Assistive Technology- Collaboration: Creating VRC Task Force■ Creativity:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Staffing: American Legion grant- Fund-raising: Car magnets- Activities: "Lioness" documentary on women in combat

What Happens Next?	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Two-year pilot project■ Equipment & AT: Summer 2010<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Campuses retain equipment & AT■ Trainings: Summer 2010<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Pilot sites = training/demonstration hubs■ VRC to be functional in Fall 2010

	Contact Us
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Gaeir ("rhymes with fire") Dietrich<ul style="list-style-type: none">- gdietrich@htctu.net- 408-996-6043 ■ Myra Lerch<ul style="list-style-type: none">- lerch29@att.net- 530-521-9626

	Thank you!
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ http://www.htctu.net/vrc/index.html
