

VETERANS IN CRISIS; A C.I.T. SPECIALTY

CAPTAIN C. BLAIR MYHAND
APEX POLICE DEPARTMENT

VETERAN

History: *What we know already*

- ⦿ Veteran issues are real;
- ⦿ Encounters between veterans in crisis and law enforcement can be dangerous and potentially deadly;
- ⦿ People empathize, but few actually recognize the difficulties many veterans experience from military service;
- ⦿ We know more can be done to mitigate the dangers and help veterans connect with available resources.

Concept

- Shared consciousness is an important aspect of this training;
- Veteran connections span racial, cultural, ethnic, and gender gaps;
- A heavy emphasis is placed on connecting with the veteran and coordinating available resources;
- Officers learn to “bridge the gap,” develop rapport, and apply CIT skills utilizing veteran specific resources.

What was initially proposed:

- A post CIT specialty class for all interested combat veteran law enforcement officers.
- The class would consist of 16 hours of additional CIT training with on-site visit to a veteran crisis center or VA hospital.
- The creation of a pool of qualified officers to assist agencies who do not have this resource within their own ranks.
- Close coordination and buy-in from agency leaders to support this mission is critical.

As things progressed, things changed:

- The “combat” was dropped from the title;
- Mental health experts were tasked with specific blocks of instruction;
- The “site visit” changed to a “resource fair”;
- All volunteers and role players were veterans;
- Major support was garnered from the North Carolina Chapter of the American Legion.



Wake County Veterans CIT Training

Class #1

September 23-24, 2015

Wednesday
9/23/2015

Thursday
9/24/2015

<p>Welcome, Icebreaker, Introductions 8:00a-8:45a Captain Blair Myhand Roosevelt Richard</p>	<p>Resource Fair 8:00a-10:00a Participants: WellPath Acupuncture, Durham VA Hospital, NC4Vets, American Legion, Stop Soldier Suicide, and Healing Transitions</p>
<p>Substance Abuse 9:00a-9:45a Ed Fairfax, Healing Transitions</p>	<p>Anti-Stigma Rethink Campaign 10:00a-10:45a Terri Kachur Alliance Behavioral Health</p>
<p>Trauma Part II 10:00a-12:00p Ann Oshel Alliance Behavioral Health</p>	<p>Veterans Justice Outreach 11:00a-12:00p Jeremy Brogden Durham VA</p>
<p>Veterans Homelessness 1:00p-1:45p Passage Homes</p>	<p>Role Plays 1:00p-3:00p</p>
<p>Veterans Suicidality 2:00p-2:45p Dr. Juleanne Erickson Raleigh Police Department</p>	<p>Wrap Session 3:15p-4:00p All Students</p>
<p>Survivors Guilt 3:00p-3:45p Dr. Gregory Inman Raleigh Vet Center</p>	<p>Graduation 4:00p-5:00p</p>
<p>Crisis Hotline: Veterans Press 1 4:00p-4:45p HBO Video Presentation</p>	

Class Statistics

- Twenty-two (22) veterans were trained over two days;
- Six (6) county agencies participated;
- Students are now ambassadors within their own agencies;
- Media was present and interviewed participants and volunteers.

Lessons Learned: Sustain

- Role player preparation is critical;
- Using veterans as role players added value;
- Using veterans to speak about their own experience with law enforcement, before and after a crisis, drove home the importance of the training;
- Having the Resource Fair on site saved time and added value to the training.

Lesson Learned: Improve

- Not all classes worked as planned (*changes are being made*);
- Instructors must have veteran specific experience and must know their audience;
- Ensure all training and/or resources are veteran specific;
- Increase time of training class by adding a four (4) hour site visit post graduation.

Going Forward

- Adjustments are being made based on student evaluations;
- A steering committee is being created to maintain course standards and student selection criteria;
- A second class is being offered in February 2016 (*future classes are TBD*);
- A train-the-trainer course will be developed to assist other agencies.

Comments / Feedback

