



2018 Statewide Symposium in Support of Service Members, Veterans & Their Families

EVENT OVERVIEW



April 18 & 19, 2018 – Phoenix, Arizona

Special thanks to our 2018 Symposium Event Sponsors!

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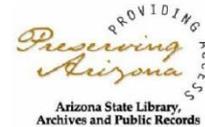
Special thanks to the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family for their continued partnership in building support for all who serve and their families.

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The Symposium opened with the national anthem sung by **Garland Miller** of **Military OneSource**. This is the 9th consecutive time that he has sung the anthem at the Symposium.

The invocation was given by **CH (COL) Elmon Krunpnik** of the **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs** and the **New Mexico National Guard**.



“This event was very well organized and a true commitment to veterans.”

“This was the most inspiring and motivating conference I have attended in a very long time and I look forward to returning next year! The energy was truly amazing!.”

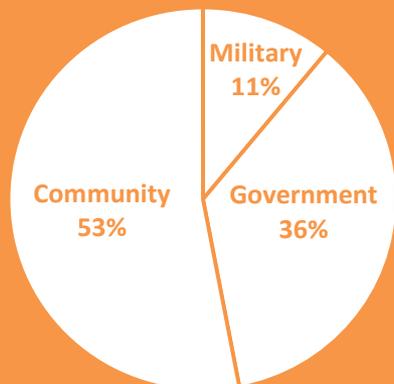
Our day two general session began with a blessing by **Clark Tenakhongva**, Vice Chairman of the **Hopi Tribe**.





Over **550** representatives of military, government and community organizations participated in the 9th annual Symposium.

ATTENDEES BY SECTOR



The estimated collective reach of Symposium attendees is over **13,600** service members, veterans and family members **per week**.

ATTENDEES BY AFFILIATION





With the support of our **Symposium sponsors**, **over 100 scholarships were provided to attendees and volunteers.** These are individuals who would not otherwise have been able to attend the event or who traveled from other parts of the state to participate.

40% of event attendees were from outside Maricopa County.

“Excellent symposium! Exceeded my expectations.”



*“I just wanted to thank all involved for the great event last week! I received a scholarship and was pleased as punch with everything! **Please let the sponsors know that their contributions to the scholarships truly help the veteran community** as my knowledge base is so enriched now! And my inbox is jam packed with folks I networked with!”*



One of the special guest speakers on day one of the Symposium was **Jake Leinenkugel**, Senior White House Advisor for the **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**. He spoke about ten things he believes need to happen for veterans, including the replication and expansion of Arizona's Be Connected program.

“It was a great event. I am excited by the value and momentum of Be Connected for Arizona and the nation!”

“Truly inspirational!”

“Motivational speakers don't usually get me pumped, but LTC Constantine was amazing.”

On day two, the keynote address on leadership and overcoming adversity was delivered by **LTC (Ret) Justin Constantine, USMC**.



The Symposium included **36** distinct breakout sessions across **11** tracks over two days. There were over **100** presenters and panelists from around Arizona. Continuing education units were provided for multiple disciplines.



-  Veterans in the Workforce
-  Basic Needs, Benefits & Beyond
-  Veterans in Higher Education
-  Women Veterans
-  Faith & Spirituality
-  Tribal Veterans
-  Military/Veteran in AZ
-  Family Matters
-  Legal, Vet Courts & Incarcerated Veterans
-  Clinical Practice & Skills
-  Be Connected

*“The **impact** of the speakers that share their experiences and motivate us cannot be highlighted enough.”*

*“**Presenters were knowledgeable** and I learned a lot of valuable information.”*

*“The real life stories shared by numerous veterans both in the overall session as well as in the break out sessions were so valuable. **Truly amazing!**”*



The 2018 Symposium marked exactly one year since the launch of **Be Connected**, Arizona's statewide suicide prevention initiative that focuses on how we equip our community to help and how we connect service members, veterans & their families to resources. Be Connected was a theme throughout the event, including a stellar panel of public and private sector stakeholders.



Be Connected swag was available for attendees to take and share. The table centerpieces included small and large cards, posters and displays. And every attendee received a Be Connected bag to store all their event materials and exhibitor swag.

The Symposium also included a track focused on **Be Connected**, including three breakout sessions. This session was focused on teaching attendees to use the online Resource Match Tool to connect people and families to resources. Another session included an incredible panel of veterans sharing their stories.



*“Thank you so much to you all for sharing your stories of recovery and resiliency. Knowing I am not alone and that there is light at the end of the tunnel was all I needed to hear. You wouldn't have known this at the time, but **attending this event and panel probably saved my life.** Thank you.”*



One of the unique breakouts at the Symposium is an interactive session on the military lifecycle. A cadre of current and former military members take participants through exercises and experiences that provide them with a deeper understanding of military life and new perspectives on how to help the service members, veterans and families they encounter.

*“Your team continues to deliver each year... **I’m better because of your service!** Keep up the great work...thank you.”*



*“Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone for **another great event!**”*





The event once again included a military memorabilia display, shared by a collector from southern Arizona.



45+ organizations exhibited at the Symposium, including military, government and community organizations. Participants were encouraged to visit every exhibitor with a bingo card that earned entries into a gift card raffle.

*“I leave with a **wealth of knowledge and resources** I can share with my veterans.”*



*“Hands down **the most helpful part of the event was the networking.** Being new to new my position, this was what I enjoyed the most.”*



Day two of the Symposium included a Veterans in the Workforce track. Day two also served as a time for the **Arizona Corporate Council on Veteran Careers** to convene. The council is a partnership of corporations focused on helping veterans grow their careers.

*“I have always appreciated the military, but **the symposium has made me appreciate those who fought and are still fighting for our country a lot more.**”*

Day one of the Symposium included a convening of Arizona’s three **Military/Veteran Community Networks** from northern, central and southern Arizona. These networks bring together public and private sector stakeholders from throughout the state and convene on a quarterly basis.





Attendee surveys rated the Symposium at 4.76/5.0 and 99% indicated they would likely attend a similar event in the future and would potentially recommend the Symposium to a colleague.

*“I commend the planning committee on an event that was well run and well thought out. It provided a great opportunity for networking and was very motivational. One of the other participants that I talked with said “I have to do more” and that was a feeling shared by many. **Only good things can come out of this very exciting event.**”*



*“Thank you all for putting together this amazing event!! Every year **it gets better and better.**”*



Special thanks to our Symposium planning team and partners!

Arizona Coalition for Military Families
Arizona Department of Economic Security
Arizona Department of Veterans' Services
Crisis Response Network
Governor's Council on Spinal and Head Injuries
Greater Valley Area Health Education Center
University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Join us again next year for the
10th annual Statewide Symposium!

April 17 & 18, 2019 – Phoenix, Arizona