

# Military/Veteran Resource Network Application

<b>Submission Date</b>	2014-01-28 10:56:43
<b>Organization Name</b>	Purple Mountain Institute
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<b>What sector is your organization part of?</b>	Community
<b>Type of Organization (check all that apply)</b>	Child & Family Services/ Prevention Healthcare Provider / Community Health Mental Health / Substance Abuse Community-Based Partner / Civic Group
<b>Organization Mission and/or Charter:</b>	Purple Mountain Institute develops and/or delivers experiential learning programs to special needs populations.
<b>Brief background of organization (year established, etc.):</b>	Purple Mountain Institute started working in the community in 1999 and was granted non-profit status by the IRS in 2001. There is one full time employee and several people who provide contract services for administrative assistance, teaching, and wilderness guide/outfitter.
<b>What area of the state do you serve?</b>	Regional within Arizona
<b>Region:</b>	Southern Arizona
<b>County/Counties:</b>	Maricopa Pima Santa Cruz
<b>City/Local Area:</b>	Tucson
<b>Programs, resources, services, etc.:</b>	Mindful Veterans Project - We offer classes and activities to military, veterans and their families at no cost. Programs include Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), Mindfulness Meditation, Tai Chi, Hiking With Goats. In addition to offering these classes and activities to our own participants, we also develop and deliver programs to staff of other organizations, bringing mindfulness into the workplace. (We could all use a bit more peace.)
<b>Eligibility guidelines for programs, resources and/or</b>	All of our programs are open to anybody who tells us they are military or veteran (having served in uniform) or

**services:**

military/veteran family members. We don't ask for proof and welcome all, no matter where they served or how they were discharged.

**Description of target audience:**

Anybody interested in reducing stress and increasing happiness. We offer one-hour classes in mindfulness meditation and tai chi, half-day hikes in the wilderness with a herd of goats, and 8-week evidence-based programs in stress reduction. We offer opportunities to experience and cultivate peace of mind. Our target audience member is anybody with a mind who is seeking peace (or at least a little less chaos.)

**Cost for programs or services to service members, veterans and/or family members (or funding sources if no cost to individuals and families):**

Purple Mountain Institute (PMI) and the Mindful Veterans Project (MVP) are funded by donations. There is no cost to service members, veterans and/or family members. PMI received a donation from AZ Dept. of Veterans Services to support MVP offering 4 sessions of MBSR to women veterans. Fundraising ongoing to support all other programs.

**Regulatory body that has oversight over organization and/or industry (if applicable):**

NA

**Our organization understands and agrees to the following Guiding Principles:**

1. Military service often fosters resilience and strength in service members, veterans and family members.
2. Military service impacts the individual and the family. A "military family" can include a service member or veteran, their spouse/significant other and children, as well as parents, siblings, extended family and friends.
3. The military is a distinct culture. While service members, veterans and their families experience the same life circumstances and events as civilians, both positive and negative, they also have a unique set of life experiences relating to service, deployment and reintegration that are distinct from civilian life.
4. As a community, we are committed to providing the best care and support to all those who serve. Since changes in military status affect eligibility for programs, resources and benefits, we seek to build a continuum of care that addresses the needs of the entire military, veteran and family population.
5. No one organization can meet all needs for the entire military and veteran population. Stronger collaboration between military, government and community partners supports service members, veterans and their families in connecting to the right program, resource and/or benefit at the right time. Organizations should also focus on collaboration to maximize available resources and minimize duplication of effort.
6. There should be no wrong door to which a service member, veteran or family member goes to for help. Each individual and organization should have at least the basic knowledge on the military/veteran systems of care to assist in connecting that individual or family to a more appropriate resource so that no one is turned away.
7. As a network of individuals and organizations who provide care and support to the military and veteran population, our goal is to assist service members, veterans and family members in being informed consumers who are empowered to make decisions to access those programs,

resources & benefits that will meet their needs.

8. Every service member, veteran and family member has an individual experience and perspective which should be acknowledged and incorporated into the provision of care and support.

**Our organization understands and agrees to the following Ethical Considerations:**

1. The interest of the service member, veteran and family member should come first, above the interest of the provider or organization, financial or otherwise.

2. Any potential conflicts of interest should be disclosed up front.

3. Respect the service member, veteran and/or family member by providing accurate information that will assist them in making informed decisions about the care and support they access.

4. Organizations should only offer programs, services and resources that they are equipped or trained to deliver. Outreach and engagement of the military and veteran population should be within the scope of the role and function of the individual (training & experience) and the organization (policies, practices, procedures).

5. Organizations that outreach to the military/veteran population have an obligation to equip their personnel and organizations with the training necessary to understand: a) the unique aspects of the military experience b) the issues affecting these individuals and their families and c) the specific military/government programs and benefits available to this population. Organizations should consult with subject matter experts when necessary.

6. Outreach and messaging to the military and veteran population should be truthful, not misleading nor designed to incite fear, should always accurately and appropriately cite sources and present information in context.

7. Organizations should be cautious about promising outcomes. Information should clearly state if a program or service is evidence-based or independently documented to be effective. Statements about the effectiveness of programs or services should include information on success rates and the documented source of this information.

8. Coordination of care and follow up is essential when service members, veterans and family members are accessing multiple systems of care. Partners need to be actively engaging with other providers and systems as appropriate, while still respecting the confidentiality of the individual or family.

**How our organization CONNECTS to the culture:**

In 2008 I was talking with a donor who was also a former Marine, a Viet Nam veteran with PTSD. I told him I wanted to start a program for veterans. He told me to teach Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) because it was the only thing that had ever worked for him.

We began offering MBSR classes in 2009 and have done frequent lectures and educational programs in outreach, community education, and provider education. Most of our participants are referred by providers with the VA, the class for women veterans is offered at the Tucson Vet Center. The Outreach Coordinator is another former Marine, another Viet Nam veteran with PTSD.

Many participants join our classes because they know somebody else who has taken an MBSR class, somebody who has good things to say:

"I'm not experiencing anger longer than a few moments because of this."

"I can stay in the moment and not bounce around in my head so much!"

"I now have sharper tools for understanding and dealing with emotions and reactions."

". . . complete change in my understanding of how I can participate in my own wellness. I have specific, tangible methods for coping with stress and challenges now, which I've never had before."

"I learned how to be more compassionate with myself. To note a thought as just a thought, an emotion just an emotion - I do not need to act or react to them."

"This program has helped me handle my stresses in a new way that the other stress relievers could not."

"I could get peace while I meditated and my overall level of stress is lower when I'm not meditating. Get yer ass in there and give it a try. Everyone will benefit."

**How our organization ASKS the right questions at the right time:**

Our programs are offered at no cost to anybody who tells us they are service members (active duty, Guard & reserve), veterans and families.

We have been offering 2 or 3 classes, 4 times a year, since 2009. We send flyers to VA providers, Tucson Vet Center, most local Veterans Service Organizations, private providers, and others in our outreach network.

Most participants are referred by health care providers, specifically to take one of our classes - most participants are already getting services.

To better serve the members of our community and those who find their way to us on their own, the Outreach Coordinator for the Mindful Veterans Project (Bob Phillips) has been trained as a navigator with the Military/Veteran Resource Network.

**How our organization RESPONDS effectively:**

Purple Mountain Institute (PMI) and the Mindful Veterans Project (MVP) participate as partners, vendors, volunteers, staff, and/or providers at many military and veteran events in our area. These include the Military/Veteran Resource Network (MVRN), Stand Downs, events at the VA, community events and professional conferences.

The Outreach Coordinator is a navigator with MVRN.

The instructors of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) have trained with Jon Kabat-Zinn as well as others at the Center for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, where MBSR was developed and MBSR instructors are trained. MBSR is a manualized, evidence-based program that has been proven to be effective in alleviating many symptoms of PTSD, including but not limited to anxiety, depression, insomnia, hypertension, insomnia, and perseveration.

Staff and volunteers use best practices as outlined by the industry and culturally relevant approaches. Those working with military or veterans attend frequent trainings with the Arizona Coalition for Military Families, The Center for Deployment Psychology, the American Red Cross, the VA, and various continuing education providers.

MVP has delegates to all local programs, boards and committees serving the military and veteran communities. We provide a small slice of services, very deep but not wide. We are active in the community in order to facilitate better communication and collaboration among providers.

**How our organization ENGAGES :**

Staff and volunteers participate in training and continuing education opportunities for the industry and in military/veteran issues.

We will have more than one Point-of-Contact on the Military/Veteran Resource Network site and the organization information will be updated quarterly (or as needed.)

We participate in military/veteran activities as vendors, volunteers, or providers. We also participate in similar community events, promoting our classes for military members, veterans, and/or their families.

We are involved in capacity building by offering classes at other organizations - classes to their participants or classes to their staff and volunteers.