Military leaders say we need every weapon in our arsenal to meet the many challenges we face today. However, one of the most powerful tools we have...the arts – is often under-utilized and not well understood within the military and the healthcare system.

Arts, Health and Well-Being across the Military Continuum, 2013
The Challenge

- More than 2.5 million U.S. troops deployed since 2001
- Historically unprecedented—extended and multiple deployments, exposure to nontraditional combat and shortened time at home between deployments.
- More than 48,000 US wounded
- More returning home with physical and psychological traumas
- Significant impacts on families and healthcare providers

- 22 million veterans in the US today (1% of US population)
- Veterans report difficulty returning to civilian life—in 2012, 10% of homeless citizens were veterans (HUD)
- Civilians not connected with the military want to help but don’t know how

Collectively, these challenges require more than medical treatment to resolve
Process for Change: Dialogue Across Sectors

2011: National Summit—Arts in Healing for Wounded Warriors

2012: Arts and Health in the Military National Roundtable

2013: National Summit—Arts, Health & Well-being Across the Military Continuum

2015: National Summit—Advancing Research in the Arts for Health & Well-being Across the Military Continuum
Why the Arts and the Military?

National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military

*Arts, Health and Well-Being across the Military Continuum—White Paper and Framing a National Plan for Action* (October, 2013)
The Arts Offer Solutions

Arts + Creative Arts Therapies = **Force Multipliers**

- Individuals
- Families
- Communities – Military, Veteran and Civilian
New Program
Partners and Collaborators
Arts in Defense Health

THE NATIONAL INTREPID CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
an instrument of hope, healing, discovery and learning
National Intrepid Center of Excellence: Collaborative, Patient-Centered Evaluation and Assessment

4 weeks of intensive diagnostics and treatment planning

Comprehensive Dx and Proposed Treatment
NICOE
Healing Arts Program

- Group Art Therapy Sessions
- Individual Art Therapy Sessions
- Family Art Therapy Sessions
- Spouse Expressive Art Groups
- Expressive Writing Groups
- Creative Writing Workshops
- Music/Music Therapy Sessions
NICoE Healing Arts Program
Melissa S. Walker, MA, ATR

The Injury

Split Self
Arts in Veterans Health
Changing the Conversation for Veterans Health and Well-being

VA-OPCC Office of Patient Centered Care

THE SAN FRANCISCO VA PSYCHOSOCIAL REHABILITATION AND RECOVERY CENTER

COMMUNITY INTEGRATION THROUGH CREATIVITY
Projects have advanced Veterans’ skills in theater, digital media, music, visual arts and dance with the help of established professional artist/contractors in the community.


Director Max Reynoard and Jonathan Wei, founder of the “The Telling Project” help veterans bring their stories to life for their performance at the Mission Cultural Center Theater.
Music helping all veterans heal...

By offering employment opportunities

...expression and enjoyment.

Wisconsin
Hawaii
Idaho
Texas
Alabama
Arkansas
VA Palo Alto
Georgia
New Jersey
North Carolina
Oregon

Open Mic Night for Veterans – Sacred Grounds Coffee House
Tampa, FL
That’s nice... 
Prove it!
The Arts & Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) research: evidence based/peer reviewed


- A structured writing program was associated with improved diagnostic status and lower levels of intrusive symptoms, depression and state anxiety, while a trend was noted for the reduction of avoidance symptoms, for patients with PTSD. (Van Emmerik, A. A. P., Kamphuis, J. H., & Emmelkamp, P. M. G. (2008). Treating Acute Stress Disorder and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy or Structured Writing Therapy: A Randomized Controlled Trial. Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics, 77(2), 93–100. http://doi.org/10.1159/000112886)
PTSD study

“Guitars for Vets: Evaluating psychological outcome of a novel music therapy.”

2011 Study at the Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center, Milwaukee, WI
Timothy R. Dillingham MD MS
http://www.hsrds.research.va.gov/research/abstracts.cfm?Project_ID=2141700403


The Arts & Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) research: evidence based/peer reviewed


References – Arts & TBI Research


- “Evaluation of a specific balance and coordination program for individuals with a traumatic brain injury.” *2002 Brain Injury* – Dault and Dugas


Beyond healing...
Arts and Veterans
Workforce Transition & Reintegration
Shakespeare Center – Los Angeles

Veterans in Art Employment Initiative
Arts and Veterans
Workforce Transition & Reintegration

Vets Restore – Seattle

King County Veterans Programs and Arts4Culture
Arts and Veteran-run organizations

Veteran Artist Program

The Telling Project
It’s time to speak. It’s time to listen.
Veteran arts...creating an artistic legacy for generations to come

“What astonishes me most when I’m teaching a workshop among Veterans is how good the writing is, period. In fact, there’s reason to believe that an entire wave of a wholly new genre of literature, borne of our 21st-century wars, is being minted by this hybrid generation of combat Veterans...Harnessing memory, creating cosmos — true art — out of its characteristic chaos, has always been the anxious aim of the autobiographical writer, regardless of pedigree and past — though the experience of combat stands alone, I’d wager, as the single most traumatic and disorienting ritual experience since the beginning of time.”

~ “They Are Everywhere”, Joseph Bathanti, One State, November 13, 2013