

VHWC DISPATCH

March 2026

FOUNDATION

The VHWC brings together parties to build or expand pathways through which Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and their care partners optimize health and wellness outcomes.

CONTACT Us

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CORE TEAM UPDATE

In recent weeks, we have been reminded of the profound sacrifices made by those in our nation's Armed Forces. Service requires extraordinary commitment, resilience, and sacrifice, and we remain grateful for the individuals and their families who dedicate themselves to protecting and supporting our communities.

As we move forward, the VHWC remains committed to elevating existing resources, strengthening cross-sector partnerships, and advancing initiatives aligned with our 2026 priority areas: Housing Insecurity, Oral Health, Suicide Prevention, and Transition. We encourage you to share VHWC updates within your networks and connect colleagues to our resources, events, and information opportunities. To stay informed, consider joining our [listserv](#) or contacting us directly at ihp.vhwc@msu.edu.

SPOTLIGHT:

Michigan Dental Association (MDA)- Michigan Donated Dental Services (DDS)

Access to dental care remains a significant challenge for many vulnerable individuals, including older adults, people with complex medical conditions, and veterans who may not have adequate dental coverage. MDA's Donated Dental Services Program (DDS) helps address this gap by connecting eligible patients with volunteer dentists who provide comprehensive dental treatment at no cost.

Since 1995, volunteer dentists participating in the Michigan DDS program have donated their time and expertise to help more than 7,100 Michigan residents receive essential dental care. Many of the individuals served are elderly, permanently disabled, or medically fragile and have limited financial resources and few alternatives for accessing treatment. By providing critical dental services, the DDS program helps improve health outcomes and quality of life for individuals who might otherwise go without care. Dental professionals can join MDA's efforts [here](#).

Expanding awareness of programs like DDS is an important step in supporting the overall health and well-being of Michigan's veteran

MILITARY SERVICE?

There may be benefits and resources available to help you through your current situation.

Call 1-800-MICH-VET or visit Michigan.gov/MVAA



community. To learn more about the program or determine eligibility, visit their [website](#) or contact Sophie Andarovna at sandarovna@michigandental.org.

Military Mindset Training Series CEU Opportunity (See attached flyer)

Developed and co-presented by partners from the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA) and Macomb Community College, the Military Mindset training series offers a unique approach to understanding military culture by integrating both civilian and military perspectives.

This series is open to those who currently serve, have served, and those who stand beside them. It is designed to help participants become individuals veterans trust, not avoid, and aims to transform the way you communicate, build relationships, and support meaningful connection. All sessions are held at Macomb Community College.

In this session, you'll learn:

- What military culture really is — *not Hollywood myths or stereotypes*.
- How rank, structure, language, and emotional norms shape behavior and expectations.
- Why vets may appear direct, reserved, hypervigilant, or uncomfortable in unstructured spaces.
- How to avoid unintentionally shutting down conversation or trust.
- How to talk to veterans in ways that feel respectful, culturally aligned, and productive.

You'll walk away with:

- *Actionable strategies* for building rapport and communicating clearly.
- *Tools* for designing classrooms, offices, or services that feel safe, predictable, and respectful.
- *Practical adjustments* to reduce frustration, confusion, or misinterpretation on both sides.

Directions are attached for WCE [registration](#) to save your spot.

Upcoming Winter/Spring 2026 Sessions:

Military Mindset: Foundations of Military Culture & Core Principles (Part I)

Wednesday, April 8, 2026, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm, South E-306

Military Mindset: Applying Military Principles for Civilian Success (Part II)

Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm, Center B-107

Wednesday, April 15, 2026, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm, South E-306

Military Mindset: Full Series (Includes lunch!)

Thursday, April 16, 2026, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm, South E-213

(Preregistration preferred.)

VA Whole Health: Nutrition for Body, Mind, and Spirit

This month, the VA's Whole Health initiative highlights the important role nutrition plays in supporting overall well-being. The food and drinks we choose affect not only physical health but

also emotional and mental wellness. Nutritious eating patterns can help manage weight, improve gut health, and support positive mood and energy levels.

Across Michigan, VA medical centers and clinics including facilities in Ann Arbor, Detroit, Battle Creek and Saginaw, offer Whole health services and nutrition related supports as part of a comprehensive approach to veteran care. These services may include nutrition counseling, education on healthy eating habits, and opportunities to build skills that support long-term wellness.

Veterans receiving care through the VA also have access to programs such as [Nutrition and Food Services](#), the [Healthy Teaching Kitchen Program](#), and the [Veterans Canteen Service](#), which provides nutritious food options at VA medical facilities. These programs help veterans build practical skills and knowledge to support healthier lifestyles.

Veterans interested in learning more about Whole Health and nutrition resources are encouraged to connect with their local VA care team or explore available resources [here](#).

UPDATES: 2025 PRIORITY AREAS

Let our team know about upcoming events and we will disseminate that information through our network. Organizations needing help for their event should also reach out so we can put those requests in front of others who may be in a position to help.

Housing Insecurity: We are working on a webinar encouraging landlords to rent to veterans. If you have content or speaker recommendations, please forward names and email addresses to ihp.vhwc@msu.edu.

Oral Health: We welcome ideas for partnering with current dental and hygiene training programs to help expand access to oral health services for veterans. If you have any contacts or suggestions, please send them our way.

Suicide Prevention: We are looking for opportunities to support suicide prevention trainings and educational offerings across Michigan. Let us know of programs, trainings, or webinars you come across.

Transition: We are seeking input on financial literacy offerings that strengthen housing stability, as well as screeners or tools that can better connect transitioning service members and veterans to resources. Please share programs, contacts, or tools that we should explore.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

Webinars:

Webinars can be hosted by VHWC for statewide viewing. Email ihp.vhwc@msu.edu to introduce yourself, your idea(s), or make referrals to subject matter experts. Our staff is available to arrange for technical support(s).

Events/Programs:

We are interested in hosting podcasts for more informal and targeted discussions. We would record these for later listening. If you have an interest in hosting or participating with this, reach out to us. Also let us know about your upcoming events for veterans! These are also listed on the [Resources and Events](#) tab of our website to help boost engagement.

- Vietnam Veterans Day Welcome Home Luncheon- 3/27/26 from 11:30pm-1:00pm @ The War Memorial, 32 Lake Shore Road, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI, 48236. In commemoration of National Vietnam War Veterans Day, veterans and their families are invited to join the War Memorial for afternoon lunch to commemorate their bravery and sacrifice during the Vietnam war. Seats are limited. [Register here!](#)

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Subscribe at our website and share with your networks.
- Participate with Advisory Council or subcommittee activities.
- Volunteer your expertise: Whether you have ever served in the military, are a health care professional, community leader, or advocate, your input can make a difference.

“The willingness of America’s veterans to sacrifice for our country has earned them our lasting gratitude.”

Jeff Miller
