

## CAUCUS CO-CHAIRS

STATE SENATOR  
**PAT BROWNE**

STATE SENATOR  
**JAY COSTA**

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**R. LEE JAMES**

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**TIM BRIGGS**

REPLY TO  
SENATE BOX 203043  
THE STATE CAPITOL  
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-3043  
TELEPHONE: (717) 787-7683  
FAX: (717) 783-5979

# Creating Communities of Care for Pennsylvania Veterans

*By Staff of the PA Department of Military & Veterans Affairs and the PA Council on the Arts*

In 2017-18 the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA) and the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) joined together to bring collaborative, creative programming to veterans with dementia at all six Veterans Homes in Pennsylvania. This was accomplished through staff and artist participation in an evidence-based, award-winning training program called TimeSlips.

TimeSlips is a creative storytelling method that opens storytelling to everyone by replacing the pressure to remember with encouragement to imagine. It was originally designed as a way for people with dementia and their care partners to share in creative expression together.

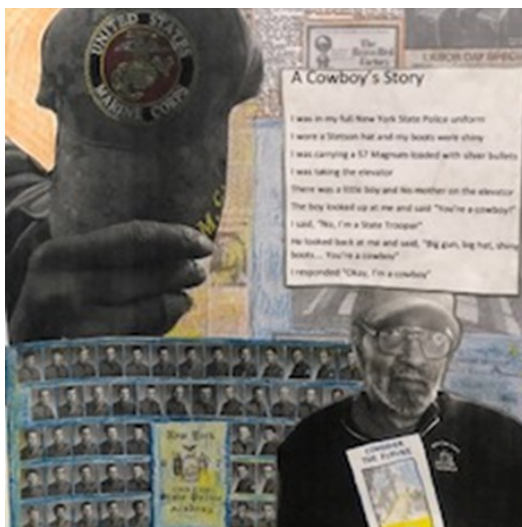
creative engagement techniques in their work with the veterans.

The teaching artist at each home led a 20-day Arts in Education residency where they used TimeSlips techniques to guide the veterans through creative art-making experiences. Each 20-day residency ended with a celebration event that highlighted the work created through the program.

The outcomes from this pilot partnership were truly inspiring. The experience for the veterans, staff, care givers and artists went beyond the creative process. A sense of comfort and community developed through the sessions. The veterans took great pride in their art work and stories. The staff learned new ways to connect and engage with the residents and with each other. Being creative in a safe space provided an opportunity to bond and to share.

***"Being able to encourage the residents to be creative, imaginative and sometimes humorous has empowered me to do more to enable their success."***

***– Sherry Morningstar, Military Affairs Activity Aide***



*Shown above is an image of a piece of art created by a veteran at the Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center in Scranton, PA.*

All six homes will continue this work in 2018-19 with support from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. Each home will have the opportunity to develop artist residencies that build off of their first year experience. Staff at each home will continue to use the TimeSlips techniques to build relationships with the veterans and with each other.

Both agencies are incredibly proud of this first collaborative venture and plan to grow the partnership for our Pennsylvania Veterans and their care givers.

The PCA Arts in Education Partners connected each veterans' home with a teaching artist from that community. The teaching artist along with activities staff at the home, received certification training in TimeSlips which enables them to use person-centered,

## Blue Star Museums

*By Rusty Baker, PA Museums*

This past summer, 93 of Pennsylvania's museums, including all of the museums operated by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC), participated as Blue Star Museums. Blue Star Museums is a collaboration among the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, the Department of Defense, and museums across



The Pennsylvania Military Museum in Boalsburg

the United States. Each summer since 2010, Blue Star Museums have offered free admission to the nation's active-duty military personnel and their families, including National Guard and Reserve, from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. About 2,000 museums in the United States took part in the initiative in 2018.

History museums, art museums, science and nature centers, zoos, and children's museums are all part of the program, and their being

designated Blue Star Museums is an opportunity to better serve their communities and work together with other museums to attract audiences. Many of Pennsylvania's museums provide veteran's programs as part of their regular schedules, and quite a few of Pennsylvania's museums, such as the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, the Pennsylvania Military Museum in Boalsburg, and Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall and Museum in Pittsburgh, have a long history of serving veterans and active-duty military personnel.

"As many military families spend the summer months moving from one duty station to another, or reconnecting with a parent who has returned from deployment, Blue Star Museums helps service members and their families create memories," said Blue Star Families Chief Executive Officer Kathy Roth-Douquet. "Blue Star Families has great appreciation for the generosity of the museums across the country who roll out the red carpet for the families who serve alongside their service members. We are thrilled with the continued growth of the program and the unparalleled opportunities it offers."

Tyler Gum, Site Administrator at the Pennsylvania Military Museum said, "The Pennsylvania Military Museum is a proud participant in the Blue Star Museums program. Through this program we have proudly welcomed military families to our museum and programs – there is no greater honor than serving those that have served us. As a museum charged with preserving and protecting the Commonwealth's military history, we also ensure that the legacy of the brave men and women who have served our State and nation is never forgotten."

For a complete list of museums that participated last year, please visit <https://www.arts.gov/national-initiatives/blue-star-museums#!PA>. Blue Star Families' impact from their national programs is available at <https://bluestarfam.org/impact/>. The program is expected to continue in 2019

## Recommended Resources Arts & Military Initiatives

**Strategy Sampler**, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, [https://nasaa-arts.org/meeting\\_docs/state-arts-military-initiatives-strategy-sampler/](https://nasaa-arts.org/meeting_docs/state-arts-military-initiatives-strategy-sampler/)

**National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military Fact Sheet**, Americans for the Arts, <https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/legislation-policy/the-national-initiative-for-arts-health-in-the-military>

**Creative Forces**, National Endowment for the Arts, <https://www.arts.gov/national-initiatives/creative-forces>

United States Veterans Arts Alliance, <http://usvaa.org/>



## Pennsylvania's Veterans Upward Bound Graduation 2018

*By Jared Valdez, PA Humanities Council*

In late August, the University of Pennsylvania's Veterans Upward Bound (Penn VUB) program held its graduation ceremony honoring the accomplishments of the Class of 2018. Twenty-four veterans completed the rigorous academic program which provides preparation for the challenges of postsecondary education. Program Director Diane Sandefur read personal profiles of each graduate as they received the certificates, including details about their military service. U.S. Congressman Dwight Evans also addressed the group.

Humanities experiences that reinforce classroom studies play a large role in Penn VUB's curriculum, and during the ceremony many students described those experiences as highlights of the program. With the

support of the Pennsylvania Humanities Council, the veterans have been able to take trips to theaters, museums, and historical sites that relate thematically to their coursework.

This fall the graduates head off to regional colleges including Chestnut Hill College, Stockton College, LaSalle University, and the Community College of Philadelphia. Penn VUB reports that the success rate for its graduates is high—most go on to enroll in postsecondary courses. The program teaches important academic skills that help make this possible but, perhaps more importantly, it builds confidence in the veterans' own abilities.



Recent graduates of Penn VUB's college readiness program will receive a certificate of completion honoring their hard work.



Veteran Michael Doe speaks at Penn VUB's 2018 graduation ceremony.



Penn VUB graduates gather for a group photo at the 2018 graduation ceremony.



Pennsylvania Congressman Dwight Evans (PA-03) speaks at Penn VUB's 2018

## Pennsylvania Arts Organizations & Artists Provide Programming for Veterans and Members of the Military

By Jenny Hershour, *Citizens for the Arts in PA*

Below is a summary of some of the programs that are available to both Active Duty Military, Veterans, and their families.



**The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra's (PSO)\* Music & Wellness Program** works with music therapists and other healthcare professionals to bring therapeutic, live music to individuals at multiple Pittsburgh area facilities, including the H.J. Heinz Campus of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System.

PSO musicians lead music and wellness sessions for small groups and help participants meet their physical, emotional, and social needs. At the VA, musicians have provided music that sparks memories and conversations during cognitive therapy group session. They have also energized participants and encouraged social interaction through large group programs.

To learn more about the program in general or watch videos demonstrating the impact, visit the Music and Wellness Program website at [www.wellness.pittsburghsymphony.org](http://www.wellness.pittsburghsymphony.org)



Operation Valor Arts (OVArts)\* is a Pittsburgh organization that helps

Veterans secure the necessary resources to design and construct public art as a means to:

1. Process and interpret their experience of war
2. Engage collaboratively with fellow service members to accomplish a new mission
3. Connect with opportunities in art, design, and technology fields
4. Create a lasting tribute to the service members and their families

The focus is on service men and women returning from Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)

More information may be found at [www.ovarts.org](http://www.ovarts.org).

### WARRIOR Writers

**Warrior Writers of Culture Trust** is a veteran-focused arts organization that fosters artistic exploration and expression through casual, welcoming workshops and retreats that are located in Philadelphia. It is a community of military veterans, service members, artists, allies, and healers dedicated to creativity and wellness. They use writing, painting, photography, and a host of other mediums to reflect on their experiences and express them creatively.

Visit their website at [www.warriorwriters.org](http://www.warriorwriters.org) for more information.

**Witness to War** Examining combat-themed art of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, *Witness to War* provides a poignant introspective of the lived experience of war and its aftermath. Through photographs, sculptures, and paintings, including works of retired Marine and former combat artist Michael D. Fay and other notable historical and working war artists, the exhibition looks at war through a scattering of moments, altogether raw and starkly intimate. This exhibit runs through Dec. 16, 2018 at the Suzanne H. Arnold Art Gallery of Lebanon Valley College in Annville.



CWO2 Michael D. Fay, USMCR (American, b. 1953), *Memorial Service for Corporal Kirven, Afghanistan*, n.d., watercolor on paper, 25 1/4 x 23 1/4 inches, Art Collection, National Museum of the Marine Corps, Triangle, VA

Fay, a Lebanon Valley College adjunct professor of art & visual culture, co-curated *Witness to War* with Dr. Barbara McNulty, director of the Gallery, in developing the exhibit. They received additional assistance from Dr. Tara Leigh Tappert, an independent scholar and activist focusing on arts and the military.

Tours of the exhibit can be arranged through Dr. McNulty at [mcnulty@lvc.edu](mailto:mcnulty@lvc.edu). For more information about the exhibit, visit <https://www.lvc.edu/offices-directories/the-suzanne-h-arnold-art-gallery/>.

**\*National Initiative For Arts & Health in the Military, Pennsylvania Network Directory, Americans for the Arts**