

Macomb Veterans Action Collaborative Minutes  
Virtual Meeting and In-person meeting  
Monday, August 07, 2023

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Laura Rios at 9:07 A.M.

**II. ATTENDEES:**

Jen Swift	Laura Rios	Sharon Urban
April Winkelman	Mark Kilgore	Katie Page
Madeline Habib	Carolyn Doak	Russell Lacelle
Olivia Rayne-Leonard	Stephen Boegehold	Liz Sergent
Bertran Emekaekwye	Katie Carroll	Teena Sawicki
Bill Browning	English Reed-Jones	Kim Bonham
Nikki Hachberg	Paz Colston	Tiffany Carr
Carly Walter		

**III. INTRODUCTIONS/APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The February 6, 2022 meeting minutes were approved and recorded as written.

**IV. SPECIAL SPEAKER:**

English Reed Jones – Unite Us

“Unite Michigan is a coordinated care network of health and social service organizations. Partners in the network are connected through Unite Us’ shared technology platform, which enables them to send and receive electronic referrals, address people’s social needs and improve health across communities.” Excerpt from

[https://cdn.bfldr.com/C0F7NWER/as/qzcg64prg6c72mcz3wpvk8c/Michigan\\_Network\\_Flyer](https://cdn.bfldr.com/C0F7NWER/as/qzcg64prg6c72mcz3wpvk8c/Michigan_Network_Flyer) website. It was founded in 2013 by two Veterans that came back from active duty only to realize it was very difficult to get connected to social care within the community. Since 2013 Unite Us have active networks in 46 states. They have been able to impact over 18 million people and got them connected to care in two days or less. In Michigan right now they have 81 organizations and 174 programs. Ms. Jones showed the Collaborative how this system works and how it could benefit service organizations and Veterans in our community. The Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency and The Macomb County Veterans Services department are two of the service partners on this platform.

Madeline Habib - Using Existing Service Networks in Macomb County

Madeline went through the seven different service network systems that are available in Macomb County. These include: Online User-Friendly Resource Directory – The Right Connection; Resource Referrals and Access to services – The Matrix; Online Community Well-Being Bulletin Board – Commonweath; Online Communities for Service Providers

– Google email group; Inter-agency trainings – Traveling Tours and Information Exchange; Macomb County Committees and the Regional and National Resources.

**V. AGENCY UPDATES/ROUND ROBIN:**

Bill Browning stated there was a free concert on August 17, 2023, in Warren at the Summer VetFest and Benefits Fair. There will be VSOS on site to help Veterans apply for Pact Act benefits.

Carly Walter from Volunteers of American introduced herself and stated she was the Program Manager of the Veterans Suicide Prevention Program. Their program is based on the SSVF grant from the VA and they do supportive case management. Please send any Veterans or active-duty members who are at risk of suicide to her.

Tiffany Carr from the Chesterfield Veterans Home stated they are currently serving 108 residents right now with their maximum being 128. They are looking to recruit nurses and other health care professionals. The home in Chesterfield is a skilled nursing care facility that takes care of Veterans who need 24-hour nursing care through the end of life and into hospice care.

Carolyn Doak from MSU Extension introduced herself and stated they have programs to help with property tax foreclosures.

Madeline Habib stated there is a Macomb County Health and Wellness Fair on September 23 at the MISD Administration building on Garfield. This event is intended to bring various community agencies together to share resources. She stated she is still working on the Service Animal project.

Mark Kilgore from Care of Southeast Michigan stated they just completed their Camp Care event last week. Camp Care is a two-week camp for children whose lives have been touched by someone with addiction. August 24<sup>th</sup> there is a Family Fun Day at their United Community Center in Fraser. Everyone is invited to come.

Chris Reilly from Macomb St Clair Michigan Works! stated the Veterans Employability Boot Camp is still on hiatus.

Kara Fields from Macomb Community College stated on August 21 and August 22 they were holding a pop-up service for their students. This will help students get connected to resources. This will be held at the Garfield location from 8:00 – 5:30. There are programs to help students pay their tuition.

Katie Page from the VA Vet Center stated the eligibility for their services just expanded. Please go to [www.vetcenter.va.gov](http://www.vetcenter.va.gov) for more information. She also stated they are hoping to hire a new counselor soon. Right now the center has 3 full time counselors.

Olivia Leonard from Lakeshore Legal Aid stated they have an expungement clinic on September 8. This clinic is for everyone. It will be hosted at the Farmington library, but it is available for anyone living in Macomb, Oakland, St. Clair or Wayne Counties.

Jen Swift from Senator Gary Peters office introduced herself. She is the new Regional Director for Macomb County. She stated the Senator put in a Term Limiting Discharge Review Board Accountability Act. This could expand the 2016 law that said if a Veteran had a less than Honorable Discharge due to PTSD, it would go to a review board for a possible upgrade. This bill has passed the House and the Senate.

**VI. VCAT UPDATE/MVAA UPDATES:**

Kara stated on September 15 at 10:00 the VCAT is hosting their 2<sup>nd</sup> installation meeting. This is a resource meeting similar to the MVAC. She will pass on the meeting link when it becomes available.

**VII. NEXT MEETING: October 02, 2023**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 AM