



Veterans Coalition of North Central Texas

Joint County Meeting

Veteran Service Organization County Forum

After Action Report

Thursday, July 25, 2013

11:00-2:00pm

The Veterans Coalition of North Central Texas (VCNCT) hosted a “Joint County Meeting: Veteran Service Organization County Forum.” The Coalition called leaders and Veteran Service Organizations from Tarrant, Denton, Collin, and Dallas County. There are approximately 330,000 Military men and women in the DFW area. Given this, it is critical that all VSO’s are informed, organized, and working together to better serve our Military families. We believe working together will benefit each organization, County, and Military family. Our objectives are to make this an annual event, eventually growing into a regional meeting inviting attendees to have exhibitor’s booths and inviting Military Families to learn of all the resources available to them, to have a regional and state model of how to effectively network and serve Military families, engage and educate the civilian community, and finally to support and participate in eachothers individual events throughout the Counties.

The meeting took place at High Point Church in Arlington with 78 attendees. Registered Coalition Members and County partners set up exhibitor’s booths to share information regarding county resources. The following organizations set up exhibitors booths:

1. Operation Healthy Reunions
2. Timberlawn
3. Parker College
4. Department of Veterans Affairs
5. Allies in Service
6. Casa Palmera
7. Department of Veterans Affairs, Tarrant County
8. Innovative Engineering Association
9. Catholic Charities
10. Denton County Veterans Coalition
11. Survivor Outreach Services

The host, Pastor Gary Simons opened the meeting with greeting attendees to High Point Church, followed by a prayer and blessing the lunch. He also recognized each County present by doing a roll call, and recognized Military dignitaries in attendance. Tracy Little, Director of Dallas County Veterans Service Office welcomed attendees on behalf of the VCNCT. She thanked Pastor Simons and his staff for hosting the meeting and also recognized dignitaries in attendance.

The first County representative was Cliff Sosaman of Collin County. Cliff is the President of the North Texas Military Association.

Mission Statement: An association of military veterans dedicated to building an environment of leadership, support and community integration. Our purpose is to appreciate service members and their dedication to our country.

Their area of Operation is Forney to Weatherford & Sherman to Waco. Focusing on Collin County & it’s 53,000+ veterans. Their current initiatives are as follows: Warrior Mentors Program, Focusing on student veterans and partnering with AUSA , and Vision. The NTXMA focuses on working with other VSO’s, recommending services, and promoting Military initiatives in the community.

Jinger Simonson was the next speaker representing Denton County. Jinger was representing the Denton County Veterans Coalition. Their goal is to be a functional strong coalition focusing on the following:

1. Make “the system” easier to navigate for veterans
2. Leverage individual agency resources and talents for the benefit of all veterans
3. Avoid duplication of effort
4. Augment federal, state and county programs
5. Interact with other veteran coalitions in the DFW area to share lessons learned and resources
6. Help other county municipalities and/or agencies that don’t have the manpower to justify big veteran events, but still wish to honor/assist their vet population

Lunch was provided by High Point Church and catered by Olive Garden. VCNCT conducts working lunches.

Tarrant County was represented by Judge Brent Carr. Judge Carr is the former Chair of the Veterans Coalition of Tarrant County(VETCO) and Judge of Veterans Court of Tarrant County. Judge Carr is also a Marine and West Point Graduate. He spoke on the importance of working together and understanding the value of networking amongst counties and organizations.

Nekima Booker was the last speaker representing Dallas County on behalf of the Veterans Coalition of North Central Texas. The VCNCT is the “Gap filler” in services to Veterans, their families, and Veterans Service Organizations.

The VCNCT Mission is: To build bridges between both public, private, and not for profit organizations at the local, county, state, and federal levels; For all our veterans, and their families by rebuilding, educating, and equipping all veterans to reintegrate back into society and to bring awareness and a call to action to all communities of the challenges of our veterans and their families.

The VCNCT Vision is to: Mobilize all sectors of society to give our service members and their families the opportunities and support they have earned.

The VCNCT has four major Initiatives: Housing, Education, Employment, and Mental Health. They have two major programs; the Career Development & Financial Education Program and Thanksgiving for Veterans. The Coalition has partnered with the Rotary District 5810 to launch the Veterans Career Development Program, a mentoring program to provide Military Veterans with services and resources through participating Rotary and Coalition members so our heroes can make a transition towards success.

The VCNCT guest speaker, LTC Yesenia Rosa (US Army), of the Joint Chiefs & Warrior Care and Family Support concluded the presentations by giving riveting words of encouragement and stressed the importance of networking and collaborations. LTC Rosa gave the challenge of building working partnerships between Counties and complemented each attendee for coming together to start the conversation, network, and make future plans of collaborations.

Following LTC Rosa, the floor was open for program announcements, upcoming events, and additional comments. Members and guest introduced themselves and shared announcements with attendees. The meeting was adjourned at 2:00pm.