



VISN 6 Mid-Atlantic MIRECC Post Deployment Mental Health

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In Memoriam

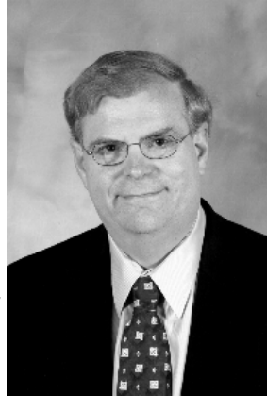
Marcy Carlson Speer 1959-2007



We are saddened to report the death of Dr. Marcy Speer from metastatic breast cancer on August 4, 2007. Marcy was a highly valued member of the VISN 6 MIRECC. Marcy served as a leader for the Genetics Core and was responsible for ensuring the success of the original award as well as scientifically guiding the project from its onset. Marcy was a genetic epidemiologist, a certified genetic counselor and a board-certified medical geneticist. She was the Director of the Duke Center for Human Genetics and a professor of Medicine and Chief of the Division of Medical Genetics in the Department of Medicine at Duke University Medical Center. She also held joint appointments as a professor in both the Department of Biostatistics and Bioinformatics and the Department of Molecular Genetics and Microbiology at Duke. Marcy worked on projects all over the world, and we appreciate that she chose as one of her projects to help veterans. Marcy is missed immensely. Our thoughts and prayers are with her husband, children and other family members as they grieve her loss.

National Service

Dr. Harold Kudler (Interim MIRECC Director) has accepted two new positions. The President of the American Psychiatric Association has invited Dr. Kudler to co-chair the APA's new committee on Mental Health Care for Veterans and Military Personnel and their Families. Dr. Kudler has also been invited to join the steering committee of the congressionally funded Citizen Soldiers Support Program (CSSP) based in Chapel Hill, NC.



Invited Lectures

Dr. Harold Kudler (Interim MIRECC Director) presented "DoD, VA, and Community Partnerships in Service to New Veterans and Their Families" at the National Association for Rural Mental Health 2007 Annual Conference and at for the VISN 2 Center for Integrated Health in August. Dr. Kudler repeated his presentation in September at the North Carolina National Guard Commanders' Conference and for the North Carolina Psychiatric Association.

In September, **Dr. Kristy Straits-Tröster** (Acting Co-Director, Clinical) presented "VA Strategies for Caring for Returning Veterans and their Families" in Bethesda, MD as part of a 2-week Psychology Training Workshop at the Center for Deployment Psychology at the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences and Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Dr. Straits-Tröster also presented "Strategies in Serving New Combat Veterans and Their Families" for the Mental Health Association in North Carolina's Annual Meeting.

Recent Presentations

Taber KH, Hurley RA. "Clinical Testing and Neuroimaging of Blast-Related Brain Injury in Veterans: Study Design and Preliminary Results", 4th Annual Research Recognition Day, Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine in Blacksburg, VA, October 17, 2007.



Robin Hurley and **Katherine Taber** (MIRECC Education component) have started a new project with **Rose Mary Pries** and **Pam Hebert** from the VA's **National Center for Health Promotion & Disease Prevention (NCP)**. The group is designing and creating new patient/family educational materials about mild traumatic brain injury.

On September 4, **Dr. Robin Hurley** (Co-Director, Education) participated in the National Center for Health Promotion & Disease Prevention's Patient Education Conference Call. Dr. Hurley's presentation on traumatic brain injury was followed by an interactive discussion of presently available educational materials and what is needed for the future. On October 19, Dr. Hurley presented "Windows to the Brain: Neuropsychiatry of TBI" for the VISN 3 Polytrauma Conference.

Outreach

"Living in the New Normal: Supporting Children Through Trauma and Loss"

On August 8th NC First Lady Mary Easley launched the nation's first statewide implementation of this new initiative in collaboration with the Joint Forces of the North Carolina National Guard. This program was created by the **Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)** to provide resources to help communities serve military families in times of transition, deployment, and loss. NC Governor Michael Easley hosted the kickoff at the Governor's Mansion to welcome experts and stakeholders attending the subsequent workshop. **MIRECC Clinical component** members were active participants in the full day public engagement effort to promote compassionate understanding of stressors related to the deployment of a parent or parents. The potential for community promotion of resilience through the establishment of a new normal was emphasized, including recognition of courage and identification of effective resources.



Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)
www.militarychild.org

Publications

Beckham JC, Dennis MF, McClernon FJ, Mozley SL, Collie CF, Vrana SR. The effects of cigarette smoking on script-driven imagery in smokers with and without posttraumatic stress disorder. *Addict Behav.* 2007 Dec;32(12):2900-15.

Hughes J, Dennis MF, Beckham JC. Attenuated baroreceptor sensitivity in women with posttraumatic stress disorder or major depressive disorder. *J Trauma Stress.* 2007 Oct 22;20(5):667-676

Kang-Park MH, Wilson WA, Kuhn CM, Moore SD, Swartzwelder HS. Differential Sensitivity of GABAA Receptor-Mediated IPSCs to Cannabinoids in Hippocampal Slices from Adolescent and Adult Rats. *J Neurophysiol.* 2007 Sep;98(3):1223-30.

Tupler LA, Krishnan KR, Greenberg DL, Marcovina SM, Payne ME, Macfall JR, Charles HC, Doraiswamy PM. Predicting memory decline in normal elderly: Genetics, MRI, and cognitive reserve. *Neurobiol Aging.* 2007 Nov;28(11):1644-56.

Noon V-tel Lecture Schedule:

November 9

Dr. W. Vaughn McCall (**Wake Forest University**)
"A Psychiatric Perspective on Sleep Disorders"

This series is presented by V-tel and audio conferences. We are having increasing participation from sites outside VISN 6. Our assigned call in numbers may change, depending upon how many sites expect to join in. For this reason, the number that each VISN 6 site will use to dial in will be included in an email notification prior to each presentation.

If you wish to attend from a site outside of VISN 6, please contact Mary Peoples (mary.peoples1@va.gov; 704-638-9000 ext 2956) so she can make the necessary arrangements.

Outreach



AMVETS 63rd NATIONAL CONVENTION

Dr. Jennifer Strauss, presenting her innovative work on the use of guided imagery in treating military sexual trauma.

