



# VISN 6 Mid-Atlantic MIRECC Post Deployment Mental Health

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## Clinical Component Update

### PAINTING A MOVING TRAIN:

### Working with Veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan and Their Families

Harold Kudler, MD and Kristy Straits-Troster, PhD

Many service members and veterans presently prefer to seek care for post deployment mental health problems from community providers. For example, only about one third of OEF/OIF veterans eligible for VA care have applied for that care. In addition, family members are also subject to significant deployment-related stress. They too will be seeking help in the greater community.

Community health care providers are not always well prepared to identify or treat such problems. Thus there is a need for more training. The MIRECC's Clinical component has collaborated with the North Carolina Area Health Education



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## Recently Approved Grants

**Grant GA, Marx C** Posttraumatic Stress Disorder/Traumatic Brain Injury Clinical Consortium Study Site Award. Department of Defense

## New MIRECC Researchers

### Richmond VAMC

Robin Lumpkin grew up in Dallas, Texas and attended Trinity University in San Antonio



### Salisbury VAMC

My name is Cortney McCormick and I am the new MIRECC Research Assistant



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## Clinical Component Update

### PAINTING A MOVING TRAIN:

#### Working with Veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan and Their Families

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Program and the North Carolina Citizen Soldier Support Program to create a workshop that provides essential information on screening for, assessing, treating, and, when necessary, triaging disorders associated with military deployment.

This training is designed for mental health professionals who want to learn how to apply their existing clinical skills to their work with veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq and their families.

#### Learning Objectives:

- ★ Describe the process of **Battlemind**
- ★ Translate the current knowledge of trauma and PTSD into a combat/military context.
- ★ Create and maintain a therapeutic alliance with combat veterans and their families from assessment through treatment
- ★ Identify how family relationships are impacted by mobilization, deployment and redeployment

The workshop will be offered at eight locations across North Carolina in between March and June:

Asheville - March 13  
 Fayetteville - March 27  
 Winston-Salem - April 10  
 Charlotte - April 17  
 Greensboro - May 1  
 Raleigh - May 22  
 Greenville - May 20  
 Rocky Mount - June 5

6 Contact Hours - 6 hours NC Psychology Credit  
 Category A - 6 hours NBCC Credit

A brochure describing the workshop series is available at:

[www.coastalahec.org/edservices/pdf/movingtrain.pdf](http://www.coastalahec.org/edservices/pdf/movingtrain.pdf)



## Research

### Research Profile

By Kelly Malcom Inside Duke Medicine

Volume 17, Number 3

#### War Trauma and the Brain

The MIRECC's innovative functional neuroimaging research in veterans with PTSD lead by **Dr. Raj Morey** was recently featured by "Inside Duke Medicine".



#### Publications

Calhoun PS, Wiley M, Dennis MF, Means MK, Edinger JD, Beckham JC. Sleep disturbance in women with posttraumatic stress disorder. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*. 2007;15:256-263.

Dennis MF, Clancy CP, Beckham JC. Gender differences in immediate antecedents of cigarette smoking in smokers with posttraumatic stress disorder. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*. 2007;39:479-486.

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#### Fayetteville VAMC April 19



#### Outreach to Veterans and Families Welcome Home Events

The original **Welcome Home Celebration** was held at the Washington DC VAMC. It was developed, in part, during the **VISN 6 MIRECC-sponsored Family Assistance Program** in August, 2006. The goal of this Program is to develop new 'best practices' that facilitate veterans' readjustment. Including families in treatment and support efforts is emphasized. The success of the Washington DC VAMC's welcome home event lead to its adoption as a national mandate for all VAMCs!



Carolinan HealthCare System

## Outreach to Community Providers

### Managing Behaviors Following Brain Injury March 28, Charlotte NC

Cortney McCormick, MA (MIRECC - Research) presented ***"TBI: Understanding Comorbidities with Substance Abuse and Mental Health Diagnoses"***. More than 40 health care providers attended the symposium.

## Publications

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Elbogen EB, Butterfield MI, Beckham JC, Swartz M, Swanson J. Assessment of violent behavior among veterans with severe mental illness. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*. 2008; 21:113-117.

Makulaski D, Chiou-Tan FY, Taber KH. Neuroimaging in Post-Traumatic Hypopituitarism. *Journal of Computer Assisted Tomography*. 2008; 32(2): 324-328.

Polusny MA, Ries BJ, Schultz JR, Calhoun P, Clemensen L, Johnsen IR. PTSD symptom clusters associated with physical health and health care utilization in rural primary care patients exposed to natural disaster. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*. 2008;21(1):75-82.

## Invited Lectures

**Dr. Robin Hurley** (Associate Director, Education) and **Dr. Katherine Taber** (Assistant Director, Education) presented ***"Introduction to Neuroimaging in Neuropsychiatry"*** at the Neuropsychiatry 101 Workshop and ***"Functional Neuroanatomy of Pain"*** at the Society for Behavioral and Cognitive Neurology Workshop, American Neuropsychiatric Association Pre Meeting Workshops, March 1 2008, Savannah, GA. **Dr. Hurley** presented 2 sessions on ***"PTSD and TBI"*** at the VA PTSD Mentoring conference, April 2-4 2008, San Antonio TX.

## Community Outreach

# Battered Brains

Emerging Treatments for Acute Brain Injury

A Regional Symposium Hosted by the Western NC Chapter of SFN

April 18, Winston-Salem NC

**Dr. Katherine Taber** (Assistant Director, Education) presented ***"Windows to the Brain: Traumatic Brain Injury in Time of War"***.



## Outreach to Community Providers

January/February 2008 issue



### Commentaries from our MIRECC:

**Harold Kudler MD, Kristy Straits-Tröster PhD**  
 “Identifying and Treating Post Deployment Mental Health Problems Among New Combat Veterans”

**George L. Jackson PhD MHA, Natia S. Hamilton,  
 Larry A. Tupler PhD**  
 “Detecting Traumatic Brain Injury Among Veterans of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom”

### New MIRECC Researchers

#### Richmond VAMC

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Texas. Following graduation, he stayed in San Antonio to work as a research assistant in both epidemiology for the University of Texas and neuropsychology for Lackland Air Force Base. In 2001, he moved to Richmond, Virginia to attend Virginia Commonwealth University's clinical psychology program. In addition to taking classes there, he has managed a home for adolescents in foster care and taught high school special education. Currently, he is excited about the opportunity to work with veterans. In his personal life, he has just purchased a house with his fiancée Jennifer and dog Emmett, and is preparing to get married in October of this year. In his free time, Robin follows Dallas sports teams, plays softball, and practices country, rock, and blues guitar.

#### Salisbury VAMC

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in Salisbury. I come to Salisbury from Carolinas Rehabilitation, where I worked for 2 ½ years in acute TBI rehabilitation. While pursuing my Master's degree in Clinical and Community Psychology from UNC Charlotte, I was a student at the Salisbury VA for a practicum placement, so it is wonderful to be back in a supportive and enriching environment. I am a Licensed Psychological Associate in N.C., as well as a Certified Brain Injury Specialist. I will be working on research protocols administering a neurocognitive battery of tests to veterans returning from OIF/OEF. I am recently married and live in Charlotte with my husband, 2 dogs, 4 cats, and 4 fish. In my free time, I enjoy gardening, cooking, and spending time on the lake with my dogs.

### Noon V-tel Lecture Schedule:

#### May 9

Eric Kuhn, PhD (Palo Alto VAMC)  
 “PTSD and Substance Abuse in OEF/OIF Veterans”

#### June 13

Debra Volkmer, LCSW (Salisbury VAMC)  
 “Outreach to OEF/OIF Veterans: Best Practices”

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.