



The Association of VA Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals (AVAVRP) Report

May 2017, Vol. 2, No. 1

Welcome!

For those who do not know me, and for potential members, please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Rob Dennis, and I am the President of the [AVAVRP](#), the association that allows VR professionals to connect and collaborate cross specialties all in an effort to better serve Veterans, Servicemembers, and ourselves!

It gives me great pleasure to be able to welcome you to your Association and to another edition of the AVAVRP's newsletter, the *AVAVRP*

Report. Although it has been quite some time since we last "talked," behind the scenes, AVAVRP has remained busy and productive over the last few years, advocating for those we serve and for our profession.

In fact, in this edition, we are sharing some of those activities of your Executive Team and general members. Moreover, we are sharing some of our future initiatives. Plus, we will share ways you can get involved.

So, please enjoy the *AVAVRP Report*, connect with us, and become active in the VA's professional organization that represents you.

Please feel free to contact me to share your feedback!



Image of Rob Dennis, President

Very Respectfully,
Rob Dennis, PhD, CRC, President

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Special points of interest:

- The Voc Rehab Position in the VA and the CACREP/CORE Merge
- Action Items
- Resources for Vets & VRCs
- Upcoming Events

Your AVAVRP Executive Team

The AVAVRP has a great, committed Executive Team from different departments within the VA and from across the nation. See if you recognize them. Along with myself, they include **Allan D. Fine**, President

Elect/Vice President; **Marchea Sovde**, Treasurer; **Sharon Barton**, Secretary; **Danielle Hale**, Congressional Liaison; **Kathryn Kraut-Petruccione**, Special Projects-Conference

Chairperson; and Members at Large, **David Tesheira**, **Rae Chapman**, and **Triva Watts**. For more information about our mission and the team, visit our [website, here](#).

Join Us!

The Voc Rehab Position in the VA and the CORE/CACREP Merger

For the AVAVRP, one of the goals is to ensure that we continue to bring awareness to others regarding the vocational rehabilitation counseling profession. Another is to be an active participant, if possible, in any decision-making process that can impact the profession.

As such, two areas of discussion for the AVAVRP have been the merger of CACREP/CORE, a national initiative, and the conversion of vocational rehabilitation positions to the Hybrid 0101 VR Counselor positions, AVAVRP's initiative.

Both are important to us as they may

bring more opportunities to us as rehabilitation professionals within the VA and the merger might give us more leverage in terms of identity on a national platform.

We have had guest speakers at our meetings who have discussed the merger, and plan to have further discussion. Moreover, we are also actively developing memos for discussion regarding the VRC/VRS roles.

What are your thoughts on the CORE/CACREP? And, what do you think are the unique differences of

the VRS and VRC roles?

Please share feedback to Rob.Dennis@Va.gov.



Student Member and VA Intern, Donnette Deigh, Presents at NCRE Spring Conference

We would like to congratulate **Ms. Donnette Deigh** for being selected as a presenter at the National Council on Rehabilitation Educations' (NCRE) Spring Conference held in Anaheim, CA! Donnette is a member of AVAVRP, who was an intern in the National Capital Region Benefits Office's VRE Division, led by VRE Officer Chantile Stovall.

Donnette, who will graduate with her Master's degree from George Washington University, hopes to earn her doctoral degree, and is interested in therapeutic, clinical services to Veterans with disabilities, as well as transition among youth. Donnette co-conducted a discussion presentation, "Vocational Rehabilitation Considerations of Veterans" with **Dr. Shonda McLaughlin, AVAVRP Member**, and **Mr. Adam Popp**, a USAF Veteran and Graduate student of George Washington University. Additionally, Ms. Deigh was accepted to present a poster presentation, "Unique Issues of Career Development with Ethnic Minority Adolescents with Disabilities." Donnette actively seeks research partners. So, keep her in mind!

AVAVRP is proud of the young and future leaders, Donnette and Adam, of the Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling field!



Image of Adam (L) & Donnette (DeighR)

Next Steps: Action Items from Current and Potential Members

Certainly, we strive to be and hope to reflect action, not just words. As such, we encourage current and potential members to engage, too, national, locally, and departmentally. Although there are many others, below are some Next Steps:

- (1) [Join Us](#), as there are “strengths in numbers.” And, be active by serving in different roles.
- (2) [Support](#) your peers by recognizing their good work, as we do it daily. Nominate someone who reflects the [VA Core Values](#) of Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence. Send it to us so that we can highlight that person.
- (3) As a team, or individually, [volunteer](#) beyond your division, to interact, share, and learn more about the needs and “best practices” to serve Veterans and Servicemembers, via [VA Voluntary Service](#).
- (4) [Join VAPulse](#) to connect and collaborate with professionals cross disciplines.
- (5) [Submit](#) write-ups/stories to us regarding your best practices.



Image of “Next Steps” Sign

The **Core Values** of the VA are **I**ntegrity, **C**ommitment, **A**dvocacy, **R**espect, and **E**xcellence or, to put it simply, “**I CARE**.”

Resources for Veterans and VRCs

[Work Recruitment Program](#)

[Todoist.com](#)

[Sample Second Interview Thank You Email](#)

[The Test Every Great Leader Must Pass](#) by Lolly Daskal

[O*Net Online](#)

[USAJOBS](#)

[How to Overcome Burnout and Stay Motivated](#) by Rebecca Knight

[After Bitter Decades, a Wounded Vietnam Veteran Handcycles Back to Hope](#)

by Noah Remnick

[Services for Family Caregivers of Post 9-11 Veterans](#)

[Make the Connection](#)

[Suiting Warriors](#)



Image of Veterans Crisis Line:

1-800-273-8255 Press 1



Join Us!

Phone: Rob Dennis, President, 937-268-6511 X1311

Connect with Us:

VAPULSE

Website: <http://www.avavrp.org/>

AVAVRP Executive Team

Rob Dennis, President
Allan D. Fine, President Elect/VP
Marchea Sovde, Treasurer
Sharon Barton, Secretary
Vacant Nominations Chair
Danielle Hale, Congressional Liaison
Kathryn Kraut—Petruccione, Special
Projects-Conference Chair
Shonda McLaughlin, Webmaster

Members at Large

David Tesheira, Rae Chapman, and Tri-
va Watts

Active Members: William Woods, Cyn-
thia Young, Kevin Fields, Karen West,
Laverne Harmon, Joy Inniss-Johnson.
Thanks, Gang!



Mark Your Calendar/Upcoming Events

[AVAVRP Meeting](#): May 23, 2017: 1:00 PM EST

[May is Mental Health Awareness Month!](#)

Memorial Day: May 29, 2017

Mother's Day: May 14, 2107

[The DC Metro Veteran and Military Spouse Re-
source Event](#), 5/24, 4-7PM EST

[Fall NCRE/RSA/CSAVR](#) Conference: Oct 26-28.
2017, Arlington, VA

[Women Veterans
Leadership & Di-
versity Conference](#)
Nov 10-12, 2017



We know you know someone who is doing a "great job" serving Veterans and Servicemembers. In fact, YOU might that be that person. If so, share your story with AVAVRP! We would love to publish it in our newsletter!

Submit your stories/articles to Dr. Rob Dennis,
Rob.Dennis@Va.Gov.

**Newsletter Editor Needed! Interested? Join us
and email**

Rob.Dennis@Va.gov.



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