

VALOR

VETERAN ★ ALLIANCE



April 2021

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Colleagues and friends,

When we talk about giving to others, we rarely focus on what such giving does for us. It feels unseemly to view giving as anything but the purest of endeavors. But those who give know that giving produces a certain happiness and a sense of connection with our humanity. Eleanor Roosevelt said, "Since you get more joy out of giving joy to others, you should put a good deal of thought into the happiness that you are able to give."

Since April is National Volunteer Month, it seems like this is a perfect time to reflect upon what we have to give to others through our volunteer efforts. After what has been a long, exhausting, and often heartbreaking year, the opportunity to serve others and enhance our joy and sense of connection at the same time seems to be just what the doctor ordered. I hope that you will take some time this month to contemplate what you can do to help others with your volunteer efforts. The short article on page 7 of this month's newsletter provides ideas on where to start (or extend) your giving journey.

On a similar note, I urge all area veterans to check out this month's *Call To Action* (page 4) and share their story through Warriors of the North events. This is a special kind of giving that allows others to learn about military culture and experiences from veterans' first-person accounts. Military service is a commitment that only a small percentage of the population makes, the extent and implications of that commitment need to be shared more broadly with civilians. Please engage with this important effort.

In closing, I hope you find a way to create joy for yourself and others this month by giving of yourself. We are always stronger together. If you have student veteran questions, please reach out to me or Jim Stoddard. As always, thank you all for your commitment to VALOR and our student veterans at NDSU.

Carol Cwiak, J.D., Ph.D.
VALOR Faculty Liaison





VCO Update
Jim Stoddard

You can visit Jim on campus at the Veterans Educational Training Office in Ceres 329; or by phone at 701-231-9706; or by email at james.stoddard@ndsu.edu.

NDSU Resources

- Education Benefits
ndsu.edu/veterans/
211 Ceres Hall
701-231-7985
- Tutoring
ndsu.edu/ace/tutoring/
Lower Level of the West Dining Center
701-231-5554
- Student Health
ndsu.edu/studenthealthservice/
1707 Centennial Blvd.
701-231-7331
- Counseling
ndsu.edu/counseling/
212 Ceres Hall
701-231-7671
- Registration
ndsu.edu/registrar/
110 Ceres Hall
701-231-7981

Be on the lookout for a series of stories highlighting several NDSU students currently serving in the National Guard! These little articles will appear on Thursdays throughout April on NDSU's Facebook page as well as their website home page. Through this series, we hope to show how these students are already serving as leaders and problem-solvers in our communities, and are applying what they're learning at NDSU to address some very significant real-world challenges. We also hope to increase understanding of how participating in these important military and civil-support operations can synergize with academics, while also creating some stress and difficulty in pursuing one's education. Thank you to NDSU University Relations, and the students who have volunteered to share their stories!

Thanks to all faculty who have been taking the time to provide progress report feedback on your military students as requested by the Career and Advising Center this semester! At both the 4-week point, and again at the midterm point, my office received about 140 progress reports from instructors that a military-connected student in their class may be at risk of failing. I assure you that I review each one of them and assess the need for intervention, providing students appropriate resources and suggestions. It's hard to measure if this fairly new process is having a positive effect, but anecdotally, it does seem to be making a difference for some!

Veteran space enhancement update: the improved air conditioner has been installed, and the ergonomic study pods are on order, hopefully arriving within a few more weeks. This equipment is being purchased with a grant from NDSU Student Government, and we appreciate their support of our student veteran community!

Also, we're purchasing a couple Common Access Card (CAC) readers so that military students can log in to their government e-mail and other administrative systems from our campus computer lab. This was a low-cost "best practice" suggestion we got from the NASPA Symposium on Military-Connected Students, and will hopefully be a nice convenience that we can provide!

We're still doing our semi-monthly informal lunchtime Zoom meetings for the NDSU military community. Thanks to those who've participated! We'll continue to do these on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month this semester (11:30 – 12:30, drop in/out as needed) until we can safely meet in person for a similar event. No agenda; just a chance for our military student community to meet with each other and to chat informally with faculty and staff allies. April's meetings are on the 14th and 28th if you're able to drop in for a few minutes — you can connect here: <https://ndsu.zoom.us/j/96244525563?pwd=SnlVeTJZWxJsQlJnaUhwQ0FRaHVEdz09>.



“In war, there are no unwounded soldiers.” ~José Narosky

“Understanding PTSD and PTSD Treatment” - see [this booklet](#) from the VA.



Veteran's Voice

Craig Schwinden

VALOR Student Veteran Representative

Greetings Student Vets,

We are nearing another semester and I hope everything is well with you. As with any end to the spring semester, the weather is warming and the anticipation for summer is increasing by the day. Before we head out to our homes, internships or other summer jobs, I would encourage you to check out the Bison Student Veterans. The April meeting will be on April 9th at 3 PM. At this meeting, there will be

elections for officers for the 21-22 academic year. This organization has really made some strides in the three years I have been on campus and they are always looking for new students (or current ones) to continue to improve the organization. You can do that by becoming an officer or, even more importantly, just participating in the meetings and sharing ideas. There is also a social hour on April 20th at 7:30 PM. Check out this link for more information on both of these meetings: <https://myndsu.ndsu.edu/organization/bisonstudentveterans>.

Speaking of the semester ending, for you upper-class persons, it is time to start thinking about employment, if you haven't already started. Here is a link from a website called GI Jobs: [Top 25 Hot Jobs for Veterans 2021 | Jobs for Veterans | G.I. Jobs](#). This link directs you to an article about the hottest 25 jobs for veterans. I would encourage you to

check this link out, not to mention the website. This is a great website for veterans and veteran's employment issues. In addition, as we've mentioned many times before in this newsletter, don't forget our Career Center on campus for help with cover letters, resumes, interview skills, and other valuable tips regarding preparation for job searches and interviews. Here is the link: <https://career-advising.ndsu.edu/>.

Lastly, make sure you are asking for and getting help with ANY issue you are/may be having. It might be easy to slack off a little and relax as the weather warms up and the pandemic appears to be on its way out of our lives, but the pandemic is *still* around, and the end of the semester and finals are near. If you are struggling academically, emotionally, physically or otherwise, there are literally dozens of agencies on and off campus that are there to assist you. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

New items on PsychArmor—check it out!

If you haven't visited PsychArmor recently, you have missed the significant revamp of their site and the new resources they have added. Two great new additions to the site are the [Behind the Mission podcast](#) and the [Mantram Repetition webinar](#). The podcasts, all roughly 30 minutes long, cover a wide variety of topics relevant to veterans. In fact, episode 2 features Dr. Jill Bormann speaking about the Mantram Repetition Training webinar she partnered with Dr. Carie Rodgers to develop. Mantram Repetition is an evidence-based stress management tool used to calm and focus the mind, be present, and live with intention.

PsychArmor® is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that offers (free) critical resources to Americans so they can effectively engage with and support military service members, veterans, and their families. They offer over 170 online training courses with the intent of educating the nation. If you would like to help support PsychArmor's efforts you can [donate here](#).



Name: McKinnon Carlson

Major/Minor: Business Administration

Originally from: Moorhead

Current city: Moorhead

Career plans after college: Pursue a career in the financial sector.

Military Service/Awards (Branch – other relevant items): North Dakota Air National Guard, assisted with the 59th presidential inauguration.

NDSU activities/engagement: Bison Student Veterans

Community activities/engagement: Work at Bell Bank as a part time teller.

An interesting tidbit about the veteran: Love to hunt and be outdoors.

Favorite experience/memories/etc. at NDSU: Meeting a lot of new friends and making good memories with them.

CALL TO ACTION: **SHARE YOUR STORY**

According to PsychArmor, fewer than 7% of Americans serve, or have served, in uniform. As such, most civilians are unfamiliar with military culture and the impacts of service. That is why therapeutic art efforts with veterans are so very important. In these efforts, veterans create artifacts that represent or narrate their feelings and experiences. Increasingly, the artifacts created have been shared with the public. With this sharing comes a glimpse into veterans' experiences and struggles—a glimpse that helps civilians understand the honor, duty, commitment, and burden that comes with service.

A local therapeutic art effort is underway in the Fargo-Moorhead area called **Warriors of the North** (see page 8 of this newsletter). There is currently an open call for area veterans to engage in a collection of opportunities, such as mask making, songwriting, written pieces, and a photographic exhibit. VALOR Advisory Board member Amy Tichy is heavily involved in organizing this effort and has been wonderful about sharing information with us (thank you Amy).

The call to action this month is to veterans in our community to share your story. Share your story for you, for the benefit of other veterans and currently serving military members, and to help civilians see inside your experiences. You have an opportunity to enlighten and educate others, to help them understand what it means to serve your country and the ways that it has changed or shaped your life. These events are so important to the narrative surrounding service and they are much more powerful than aggregated data because they are first-person narratives of people we know and care about in our community. Check out the options for you to engage and find one or more ways in which you can participate—your story deserves to be shared. Thank you. ❤️

Do you need to talk? Please reach out.



valor.veteran.alliance.organization/

The Drop Zone: Delivering BSV news “on-time, on-target”

Chase Tozer, BSV Vice President

Spring has arrived! With this news, most students are either looking towards graduation or summer break. I encourage all of you to stay focused and tackle the rest of the semester with vigor and intensity by putting in the best work you can. The group had another great meeting at the beginning of the month. The business part focused on the upcoming elections and what is expected if an individual has a desire to run for candidacy. We are starting to coordinate and establish a method of voting. Please see the BSV Constitution if there are questions on candidate or voter eligibility. Since this year was relatively chaotic, we are relaxing the restrictions on eligibility to get the most accurate inclination of the group.



Chase Tozer

The Student Voice Project is still in full swing. We are getting ever more comfortable with the group and our responses. We have an excellent group of individuals working to produce an accurate record of the issues and wishes of the student-veteran population. If you would like to be a part of this discussion, please reach out. Unfortunately, the fundraiser scheduled for March fell through as there were miscommunications with the sign-up process. These uncertainties have been clarified and we hope to do another fundraiser with Blaze Pizza in the near future.

We are continuously looking for stories to highlight our fellow classmates and the incredible work they put into the community. There have been many big events around the country requesting the aid of the National Guard. Students in the National Guard have completed these missions with absolute pride and impact. NDSU has partnered with the 119th Wing in Fargo to provide stories to both communities. If you know of an NDSU student that has participated in one of the multiple taskings around the U.S., please encourage them to reach out to us or Jim Stoddard to share their story. NDSU has done a great job so far; let's keep them busy! Lastly, we still have coins for sale! Please consider buying a coin (or more) to support this great group! Prices are \$5 (BSV member) and \$10 (non-members) - email us at bisonveterans.ndsu@outlook.com for details. Stay safe, stay focused, and stay motivated .



COMING UP

April

Month of the Military Child	Month of April
Military Saves Month	Month of April
Gold Star Spouses Day	April 5
National Former POW Recognition Day	April 9
Air Force Reserve Birthday	April 14
Purple Up! Day	April 15
Army Reserve Birthday	April 23
National Military Brats Day	April 30

June

PTSD Awareness Month	Month of June
D-Day	June 6
Women Veterans Day	June 12
Army Birthday	June 14
U.S. Flag Day	June 14
Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday	June 23
PTSD Awareness Day	June 27

May

Month of the Military Caretaker	Month of May
National Military Appreciation Month	Month of May
Silver Star Service Banner Day	May 1
VE Day	May 8
Children of Fallen Patriots Day	May 13
Armed Forces Day	May 15
Memorial Day	May 31

July

Independence Day	July 4
National Hire A Veteran Day	July 25
National Korean War Veterans	
Armistice Day	July 27
National Buffalo Soldiers Day	July 28
Army Chaplain Corps Anniversary	July 29

“There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, learning from failure.” ~ Colin Powell

Career Corner

Jerry South, Assistant Director, Career Coaching, NDSU Career and Advising Center



The sun is shining, birds are singing and temps are rising! All signs of Spring which leads to the end of another semester or a college career. For most students the stress of finals week is short lived, but for others that is followed by additional stress of having to start the next season of their life. They start asking questions such as, "Have I done enough outside the classroom to get a full-time job?", "What if I don't have the skills and experience an employer is looking for?", or "is my resume developed enough?". These questions should be asked early and be used to guide your decision making.

Employer's primary way of determining if someone is qualified for a position is by reviewing an applicant's experience on their resume. So, what is the best way to gain the skills and experience employers are looking for? The obvious answer, get a job...part-time, co-op or internship. The closer a job is related to the industry for your major or career choice, the easier it is to articulate your skills and experience in the bullet statements on your resume. It stands to reason, the more experience you have on your resume, the better it looks to employers. This is true and it is one of the key reasons the NDSU Career and Advising Center hosts multiple career fairs each year, thereby providing the opportunity to gain these types of experiences. But if these have not been part of your college activities for one reason or another, there are other ways to gain and express your skills without the typical work experience.

One other key way to acquire skills and experience for your resume is by volunteering in your community. My suggestion is to be very intentional about where you volunteer though. Research the types of companies you want to work for in the future and find out what types of causes they support like social initiatives, green energy, or cleaning up the environment. Also, research job descriptions related to the type of work you would like to be doing and find out what kinds of skills are needed to be a successful candidate for those jobs. Hopefully, you will find something that aligns with your own values and skills. Wherever the two align, that is where you want to put your energy.

While you are volunteering, ask questions about the bigger picture of what you are doing and the importance of it. Find out details about the total effort of the organization and the impact they are having, then use these facts in your bullet statements. Don't just type out a one-liner like, "Volunteered for XYZ during the summer", but break down what you accomplished during that time. The Career and Advising Center is here to help develop your resume, either in person on the third floor of Ceres Hall, or in our Zoom studio (the link is on our home page at: <https://career-advising.ndsu.edu/>). You can also register to attend one of our employer events in CAREERLINK such as the Enterprise Holdings Resume Review workshop being held on April 13th at 11 AM. So take charge of your future, it is never too late to improve yourself and increase your potential.

NDSU Policy 333: Class Attendance Policy

[NDSU Policy 333](#) covers student attendance in classes. Policy 333(7b) specifically addresses when student veteran absences must be excused: "Absences due to military duty or veteran status, including service related medical appointments, where failure to appear might result in a loss of benefits." There has been some confusion about what type of student veteran absence qualifies under this policy and often neither the student veteran nor the faculty member are fully aware of what is covered by the policy.

The Dean of Students' office has information about these absences and will validate your paperwork and facilitate notice to your instructors and advisor. See ndsu.edu/enrollmentmanagement/absence/ on the Dean of Students' page for more details. Instructors should be notified in advance of these absences.



"The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave." ~ Patrick Henry

Volunteering: Make Your World Better**Craig Schwinden**

According to author Joanne Fritz, some 77.3 million people volunteered in the United States in 2018. This effort created 6.9 billion hours of work valued at \$167 billion. Volunteerism is "...one of the more cherished activities of American values" (Fritz, 2019). April is National Volunteer Month in the United States and there are many ways you can help others by volunteering, even during a pandemic.

Here in the Fargo-Moorhead-West Fargo area, there are many worthwhile organizations looking for volunteers, such as:

- [Valley Senior Services](#)
- [Churches United](#)
- [Great Plains Food Bank](#)
- [March of Dimes](#)
- [American Red Cross](#)
- [Salvation Army](#)
- [United Way](#)
- [Lake Agassiz Habitat for Humanity](#)
- [Red River Zoo](#)
- [Hospice of the Red River Valley](#)
- [Rape and Abuse Crisis Center](#)
- [American Cancer Society](#)
- [Fargo VA Health Care System](#)
- [Ronald McDonald House Charities](#)



These are just some of the organizations doing great work in our area and around the country. If there isn't an organization above that looks like a good fit for you, go to [VolunteerMatch](#) where you can find dozens of other organizations looking for someone like you to volunteer. For tips on how to get the most out of your volunteer experiences, see [this article](#).

"Although volunteers make all of our lives better, you, the volunteer, can expect to be happier, healthier, and more likely to be employed than people who never volunteer. Studies have shown that unemployed folks who volunteer enjoy 27% better odds of finding a job" (Fritz, 2019). Volunteering is a great experience no matter where you are in life. Consider volunteering some of your time, energy, and skills today.

Donate to the Fargo VA**Books**

- The 5 Love Languages: Military Edition (Gary Chapman)
- Why is Mom so Mad? (Seth & Julia Kastle)
- Why is Dad so Mad? (Seth Kastle)

Gift Cards

- \$20-\$50 Walmart Gift Cards
- \$20 Gas Station Gift Cards
- \$20 Grocery Store Gift Cards

Clothing: (new with tags only - L, XL, or 2XL)
Seasonally appropriate clothing - coats, cold weather hats (no handmade items), gloves or mittens, coveralls/bibs, sweatpants without drawstrings, and tee-shirts (call Voluntary Service for seasonal clothing need updates).

Toiletries: full size deodorant, Chapstick, disposable razors, shaving cream, hair brushes, shampoo, conditioner, and lens cleaner for eyeglasses.

Sewn items: cloth face masks, 60x80 blankets or comforters (masculine print), walker bags, wheelchair bags, and wound vac bags.

Children activity bags (no food): coloring/activity/word search/reading books, crayons, stuffed animals, lacing cards, etc. put in individual drawstring bags for each child.

Due to COVID-19, all donations must be mailed or dropped off outside the front doors of the Fargo VA. Please call Voluntary Service (701-239-3700, ext. 3395) to make an appointment for contactless drop-off.



Marine Cpl. Chris McNair in 2017
Photo by Lynn Johnson / National Geographic

ENGAGE TO HEAL AND EDUCATE

In 2017, *National Geographic* published a powerful story entitled: [Behind the Mask: Revealing the Trauma of War](#). The story featured a series of veterans who created masks through art therapy to address the trauma they had experienced. The article features the masks as well as the veterans own words on audio. In 2018, MPR featured a [powerful mask gallery with area veterans](#) and their extended thoughts on audio.

Art therapy has been increasingly used in the veteran community to help address the trauma veterans have experienced. Often the items created within these therapeutic opportunities are shared in public events to help others understand the challenges and burdens that linger with veterans from their military service.

We are fortunate to have these opportunities available in our local area through *Warriors of the North*. All veterans are encouraged to participate in one or more of the free events detailed below.

Warriors of the North

Fargo Veterans Affairs (VA) Health Care System and the Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County in Moorhead, MN, are partnering on a creative art exhibit with a series of public events featuring local veterans' journey in trauma recovery. These events will be held in the fall and winter of 2021 and 2022. **Veterans interested in becoming involved in this effort are currently being sought.** See below for the variety of opportunities to engage with this project.

- **A mask making event will be held on May 26, 1-4 PM at the Fargo VA Medical Center.** Veterans interested in participating in this opportunity should call Dr. Margo Norton of the Fargo VA HCS, at (701) 239-3700 extension 3150.
- **A veterans writing workshop series, led by veteran facilitator Wendell Affield will be held this summer.** A virtual series will be offered Saturday, July 24th and Saturday, July 31st over zoom from 2-4 PM. The in person series will be offered Saturday, August 7th and Saturday, August 14th from 1-4 PM. Veterans interested in participating in either of the two workshop series should contact Amy Tichy at (218) 766-8795 or via email at amy.tichy@gmail.com.
- **A local veteran artist is recruiting for veterans from all wars who have experienced military trauma and would be willing to sit for a photo shoot, while sharing their military experiences.** Veterans interested in participating in this opportunity should call Dr. Ken Andersen at (701) 371-4735 or via email at k.andersen.studio@gmail.com.
- **A local veteran musician is looking for veterans interested in being paired with local songwriters, and local musicians who would like to be paired with a veteran to assist in putting a difficult military experience or trauma to words and music.** Veterans interested in participating in this opportunity should call Dan Hudson at (701) 306- 6870 or via email at dthuddy73@gmail.com.

**Facilities are wheel-chair accessible and ASL interpreters and audio-describers can be arranged for participants with two weeks' notice. If you would like to request services, please email Maureen.jonason@HCSmuseum.org.*



See more: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/healing-soldiers/>