

14TH ANNUAL

**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM  
MILITARY-AFFILIATED STUDENT  
SYMPOSIUM**



Military-Affiliated Student Success:

**Fostering Strategic  
Initiatives**



# WELCOME

October 24, 2022

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**Texas A&M University  
System**

Office of Veteran and  
Military Services

**Director**

Col. Gerald "Jerry" L.  
Smith '82, USMC (Ret).

**Associate Director**

Monteigne Long '02

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Dear Symposium Attendees,

On behalf of the Office of Veteran and Military Services staff, we would like to welcome you to the 14th Annual Symposium. The theme of the symposium is "Military-Affiliated Student Success: Fostering Strategic Initiatives."

We are honored by your commitment to military-affiliated students across the state and nation, and thank you for your attendance. We look forward to learning together, and hope to increase communication and collaboration among all those involved in serving the military-affiliated student population.

Best Regards,

**Jerry, Monteigne, & Staff**

# Program Schedule

## MONDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2022

8:00 – 8:30	<b>Registration, Check – In, and Breakfast</b>	ROOM 2300 A&B
8:30 – 9:15	<b>Welcome and Opening Remarks</b> Chancellor John Sharp, The Texas A&M University System	
9:15 – 10:00	<b>Keynote Address</b> Jared Lyon, National President & CEO, Student Veterans of America	
10:00 – 10:15	<b>Break</b>	
10:15 – 11:15	<b>An Update From the Texas Veterans Commission and the Presentation of the Veterans Education Excellence Recognition Awards</b> Thomas Palladino, Executive Director   Kevin Barber, Commissioner	
11:20 – 11:50	<b>Meals for Vets Spotlight</b>	
12:00 – 1:15	<b>Lunch</b>	
1:30 – 2:30	<b>Concurrent Sessions</b>	
	"You Paid for WHAT?" Leveraging Your (Already Existing) LMS and Forms System to Manage Veterans Benefits   Colby Dillard	ROOM 2500
	The George W. Bush Institute Higher Education Task Force: Combining Forces to Optimize Student Veteran Success   Wendy Lang	ROOM 2401
2:45 – 3:45	<b>Concurrent Sessions</b>	
	Corporate Partnerships with the Campus Veteran Office   Dr. Lisa Adams	ROOM 2500
	Turning Requirements into Opportunities: A Short Course in Assessment for Military Connected Offices   Dr. Glenn Philips	ROOM 2401
	First-Gen Confidence – Why it Matters and How to Build It   Ryan Pavel   Dr. Linda Euto   Robert Liu	ROOM 2300 A&B
4:00–5:30	<b>Enhancing Military Cultural Competency in Community Based Educators</b> Rachel Brauner   Andy Crocker	ROOM 2300 A&B
4:00 – 6:00	<b>UT System Breakout Session</b>	
6:00 – 8:00	<b>Reception at the University Club</b>	

## TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2022

8:00 – 8:30	<b>Registration, Check – In, and Breakfast</b>	ROOM 2300 A&B
8:45 – 9:30	<b>Day 2 Keynote</b> BG Ramirez '97, USA (Ret.)	
9:45 – 10:45	<b>Never Letting a Veteran Fall through the Cracks: Collaboration with Combined Arms</b> Jason Wise   John Smith	
10:45 – 11:00	<b>Break</b>	
11:15 – 12:15	<b>Concurrent Sessions</b>	
	Building Military Cultural Competency on Campus with Technology   R.J. Jenkins	ROOM 2401
	TexVEST – Texas' Efforts to Support Student Veteran Success Moderator: Dr. Katherine Selber Panelists: Dr. Chris Cate   Bob Gear   Jeremiah Gunderson   Phil Hoy	ROOM 2300 A&B
12:15 – 1:30	<b>Lunch</b>	
1:30 – 2:30	<b>Concurrent Sessions</b>	
	Vet-SIM Simulations: A Potential Game Changing Opportunity for Student Veterans Facing Unique Challenges in Higher Education   Dr. Linda Euto   Dr. Benjamin Dotger	ROOM 2401
	College Credit for Heroes Program Capacity Building   Blair Mosley   Phil Hoy	ROOM 2500
2:45 – 3:45	<b>Concurrent Sessions</b>	
	Veteran Readiness and Employment – CH31   Jimmie Rogers	ROOM 2500
	Building a Case for Philanthropy: Student Veterans   Dave Fujimoto	ROOM 2401
4:00 – 4:30	<b>Closing Remarks</b>	ROOM 2300 A&B



# Biographies

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## **Chancellor John Sharp**

*Chancellor, The Texas A&M University System*

John Sharp was appointed Chancellor of The Texas A&M University System by the Board of Regents on Sept. 6, 2011. Chancellor Sharp leads one of the largest systems in the country with an annual budget of \$9.6 billion and an enrollment of more than 153,000 at the A&M System's 11 universities. Additionally, under the System umbrella, there are eight state agencies.

Chancellor Sharp brings with him more than three decades of public service. He earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Texas A&M University in 1972, where he was a member of the Corps staff of the Corps of Cadets, a member of the 1972 rugby team and was elected student body president. Upon graduation, Sharp was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the United States Army Reserve.

In 1976, Sharp received a master's degree in public administration from Southwest Texas State University while working full-time with the Legislative Budget Board in Austin. In 1978, he opened a one-man real estate firm in Victoria and became a successful small business owner. That same year he was elected to the Texas House of Representatives.

In 1982, he won a seat in the Texas Senate, and four years later, he was elected to the Texas Railroad Commission. He also was elected state comptroller in 1990 and re-elected in 1994.



## **Jared Lyon**

*National President & CEO, Student Veterans of America*

Jared Lyon was appointed National President & CEO of Student Veterans of America (SVA) in 2016. He leads the organization's efforts to empower student veterans using the transformative power of higher education. Since he took office, Lyon has overseen SVA's growth to a network of more than 1,500 chapters on campuses in all 50 states and three countries representing over 750,000 student veterans.

During his tenure, he co-authored the National Veteran Education Success Tracker (NVEST), a comprehensive study of the first 854,000 student veterans to use the Post-9/11 GI Bill. In 2017 Lyon led SVA's commitment to pass the "Forever GI Bill," the largest expansion of college aid for military veterans in a decade with an economic impact of \$3.4 Billion. A veteran of the U.S. Navy, he served as a submariner and diver, taking part in multiple deployments in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

Prior to joining the headquarters team at SVA, Lyon previously served as the National Program Manager for the Institute for Veterans and Military Families Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans and as Manager of Florida Operations for the Washington Nationals Major League Baseball team. Lyon is a member of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Veteran's Advisory Committee on Education, and a commissioner for the American Council on Education's Commission for Education Attainment. He also serves on the advisory boards for the Global War on Terrorism Memorial Foundation and the Florida State University Veteran Advisory Board and is a 2018 Presidential Leadership Scholar.

He holds an Associate of Arts from Eastern Florida State College, a Bachelor of Science from Florida State University, and a Master of Public Administration from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University, where he is an adjunct professor at the Whitman School of Management. In 2011, SVA named Lyon the National Student Veteran of the Year. Jared and his wife Chayla reside in Alexandria, Virginia with their son, Campbell.





## **BG Joe Ramirez, JR**

*Vice President for Student Affairs, Texas A&M University*

Brigadier General Joe Ramirez, Jr. is a native of Houston and a graduate of Texas A&M University, where he was a member of the Texas Aggie Band in the Corps of Cadets. He received his commission in the United States Army Field Artillery from Texas A&M in 1979 as a Distinguished Military Graduate.

During his 31 years of military service, General Ramirez commanded soldiers around the world and served in leadership positions in various joint and operational commands. He was the Deputy Chief of Staff for United States Central Command during Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom and was the Deputy Division Commander for the 2nd Infantry Division in the Republic of Korea. His most recent assignment was Deputy Director for Strategy, Plans, and Policy for US European Command in Stuttgart, Germany.

Prior to being named Vice President for Student Affairs, General Ramirez served as the 45th Commandant of Cadets at Texas A&M from 2010–2021. As the Commandant, General Ramirez oversaw the largest collegiate Corps of Cadets outside of the three military academies. Under his leadership, the Corps of Cadets experienced the largest growth it has seen since the early 1970s, increasing in size from 1800 cadets to over 2550 cadets in just 7 years. In addition, the overall cumulative Corps GPA increased during his tenure as Commandant from an overall 2.6 his first semester to a 3.2 in 2021. Under his leadership, the Corps also increased in diversity. During his tenure, the Corps of Cadets had its first African American Corps Commander, first female Corps Commander, first female Mascot Handler, and the first Hispanic Yell Leader. In addition, he helped oversee the largest number of officers commissioned into the Armed Forces from Texas A&M since the Vietnam War in the early 1970s.

General Ramirez holds a Bachelor's Degree in Physical Education from Texas A&M (1979); a Master's Degree in Management from Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri (1993); and a Master's Degree in Strategic Studies from the United States Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania (2000). His military awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terror Expeditionary Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, and the Parachutists Badge.



## **Thomas Palladino**

*Executive Director, Texas Veterans Commission*

Thomas Palladino has served as the Executive Director of the Texas Veterans Commission since 2010. In this position he is responsible for directing the overall administration of the agency and provides leadership for all stakeholders within the State of Texas to accomplish its mission which is to advocate for and provide superior service that will significantly improve the quality of life for all Texas Veterans, their Families, and their survivors. Additionally, Tom Palladino is a Past President of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs.

He retired as a Colonel from the U.S. Army in September 2009 after 27 years of service (1982- 2009). During this time Tom Palladino served in both the active U.S. Army and the Texas Army National Guard as an Active Guard Reserve officer. As an Armored Cavalry Officer during the Cold War, he served in the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment (Blackhorse) and patrolled the East-West Germany border in the Fulda Gap. He also served as an Armored Cavalry Troop Commander in the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment (Brave Rifles) at Ft. Bliss, Texas. In the Texas Army National Guard, Tom Palladino served under the Adjutant General where he provided needed support and assistance to Texas National Guard Soldiers, Airmen, and military family members. He coordinated a state-wide collaborative partnership among all federal, state, and local organizations to enhance benefits and services for all military veterans and their families in the State of Texas. He also served as an Associate Professor of Military Science (Army ROTC) at the University of Texas at Austin and an Associate Professor in Government at Austin Community College. As a Texas Public School Social Studies teacher, he taught High School and Middle School students in the Austin and Pflugerville Independent School Districts.

Tom Palladino's education includes a BA in Political Science from Providence College and a MA in Political Science from Texas State University, Texas. Additionally, he possesses a Texas Secondary Education Teaching Certificate and Texas Public School Principal's Certification.



## **Kevin Barber**

*Founder at Veteran Energy LLC, Vice Chairmen at The Texas Veterans Commission*

Kevin Barber of Houston is the founder of Veteran Energy, LLC, 95 Bravo Resources and the Power to Give Back Program, an initiative created to provide resources to military veterans and their families. Leveraging his background in energy trading and risk management, Mr. Barber has spent over 25 years in energy commodity trading and banking while holding positions with increasing responsibility at Duke Energy, Integrys Energy (Wisconsin Public Service), Southwest Energy, Silvergate Bank, Panhandle Eastern Trading Company, Associated Natural Gas, and currently serves as Desk Head for Business Development and Retail Trading at Bridgeline Commodities, LLC.

He has served on multiple philanthropic boards of directors for veteran services organizations in Texas. He is a recipient of The Chapel of Four Chaplains Legion of Honor Humanitarian Award. Barber served in the US Army's 1st Military Police Company of the 1st Infantry Division as a Military Police K-9 patrol dog handler. Barber received a Bachelor of Arts in political science from State University of New York (SUNY) at Albany and an Associate degree in Criminal Justice from SUNY-Adirondack. He resides in Houston with his wife and two daughters.

He is the recipient of The American Legion National 2014 Winner of the Year for Small Employer of Veterans. The American Legion Texas 2014 Winner of the Year for Small Employer of Veterans. Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Small Business National Employer of the Year recipient. Texas Veterans Commission Small Business Employer of the Year recipient. Rice University's Veterans in Business Association and Entrepreneurs Organization Veteran 2015 Entrepreneur of the Year Finalist. Recipient of Leadership Houston's Leadership in Action Award. Mr. Barber has been recognized by the Houston Business Journals 2014/2015 Who's Who in Energy for Houston, Dallas, Pittsburgh, San Antonio, Columbus, and St. Louis. Winner of the Better Business Bureau's (BBB) Distinction Award for Excellence. Commemorative Partner with the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration's 50th Anniversary Initiative. Mental Health of America for Excellence in Veterans Assistance Award.



## **Coby Dillard**

*Director of Military and Veteran Affairs, UT Tyler*

Coby W. Dillard, MA-HSC, CMCC is the Director of Military and Veterans Affairs at the University of Texas at Tyler. A Navy veteran, his work and research focus is military-related students and their transition in and through the academic community. He has written and presented on ways that educational institutions can improve their support services for this unique student population.

Coby's higher education career began at Tidewater Community College (TCC) in 2010, where he worked as a VA work-study, financial aid assistant, VA Certifying Official and finally as an academic advisor at the college's Center for Military and Veterans Education. He continued his work with military-related students at Regent University from 2016-2017 and returned to TCC as its first Veterans Resource Liaison in January 2017. Before coming to UT Tyler, Coby was the Coordinator for Veterans and Military Services at University of California, Santa Barbara. He is a graduate of TCC, Norfolk State University, Regent University, and also holds a certification as a Clinical Military Counselor.



## **Wendy Lang**

*Founder and President, Operation College Promise/Task Force Lead, George W. Bush Institute, Higher Education Task Force*

Wendy worked in state government for ten years, including serving as Senator John H. Ewing's Chief of Staff, staffing the Senate Education and Women's Issues Committee, and later, filling an appointment as Governor Christie Todd Whitman's Education Policy Advisor. Since founding Operation College Promise (OCP) in 2008, she has managed all programming, research, outreach, public relations, and partnership development. In this role, she developed one of the first websites for veterans and those who serve them, authored the nation's first comprehensive resource guide for veterans' service providers (The OCP Field Guide), and designed the Certificate for Veterans' Service Providers (CVSP) professional development program. Over 800 professionals from 40 states have received certification through the CVSP program reaching over 250,000 military-affiliated students.



*Wendy Lang  
Continued*

In 2011 and 2013, Wendy published landmark research on student veterans' progress toward degree attainment in the Post-9/11 era. She released a third "Completing the Mission" report on the COVID pandemic's effects on student veterans in the Spring of 2021

Wendy regularly presents at military-related conferences as a subject matter expert in best practices in supporting veterans in "To, Through, and Beyond"™ their postsecondary lifecycle. She currently serves on the Stockton University Veterans' Advisory Board and was awarded their "Advocate of the Year" award in 2017. She was a contributing author to What's Next for Student Veterans, published by the National Resource Center in 2019. Her work with OCP has been highlighted in The New York Times, USA Today, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Chronicle on Higher Education, Inside Higher Ed, Military Advanced Education, NBC, Fox News, NPR, and CNN, among others. Wendy's current portfolio includes identifying and implementing efforts to reduce barriers to employment through legislation and streamlined degree programs.

Wendy leads the George W. Bush Presidential Center Higher Education Task Force and is an Honorary Commander Emeriti at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. She received her BA in Political Science and MA in International Relations from Drew University, where she co-founded the John H. Ewing Center for Public Policy. She is a lifelong competitive equestrian with a perennial state national ranking. Wendy resides in a pre-revolutionary home in Burlington City, New Jersey, with her Jack Russell Terrier, Austin.



## **Lisa Adams**

*Director of Military and Veteran Affairs, UT Dallas*

Lisa Adams is the Director for UT Dallas Military and Veteran Center, a department within the Division of Student Affairs. Before transitioning to a career in higher education, she served in the U.S. Air Force. She earned her commission through the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and spent over nine years on Active Duty as a C-21 and B-52 pilot. She was in the first generation of women to fly combat aircraft. She then served 11 years in the U.S. Air Force Reserve as an Admissions Liaison Officer before retiring at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.





*Lisa Adams  
Continued*

Lisa has Bachelor and Master of Science degrees in Industrial and Operations Engineering from the University of Michigan, a Master of Education in Higher Education from Dallas Baptist University, and a Ph.D. in Higher Education from the University of North Texas. Her research interests include veterans in higher education and women in STEM. Lisa serves as the Region III representative on the NASPA Veterans Knowledge Community Advisory Board. She is a member of the UT Dallas Blackstone LaunchPad Stewardship Council and the Veteran Higher Education Task Force for the George W. Bush Institute Military Service Initiative



## **Glenn Philips**

*Account Executive, Watermark Insights*

Glenn Allen Phillips, Ph.D. is an Account Executive with Watermark Insights, an educational technology company focusing on software that supports institutional effectiveness. Prior to joining Watermark, Glenn was the Director of Assessment and Interim Coordinator of Veteran Services (SCO) for Howard University in Washington, DC. Glenn's research interests include good practice for assessment of veteran-facing administrative units in higher education and Veteran Critical Theory, a reflective tool used to identify ways in which student veterans and military-connected students may be experiencing marginalization in higher education.



## **Ryan Pavel**

*CEO of Warrior – Scholar Project*

Ryan serves as the CEO of Warrior-Scholar Project, channeling a deeply held conviction that enlisted veterans have unlimited potential to leverage military service into enormous impact in higher education and beyond.

At the age of 17, Ryan enlisted in the Marine Corps, culminating in two non-combat deployments to Iraq. Ryan then earned his BA from University of Michigan and JD from University of Virginia School of Law, leading Student Veterans of America chapters at both institutions.



*Ryan Pavel*  
*Continued*

His teaching experience includes working as a Teach For America corps member at an inner-city Detroit high school and as an adjunct instructor at Virginia Military Institute. Ryan has also worked for a variety of legal institutions, including legal aid organizations and a large national law firm, and has provided pro bono legal services to veterans.

In addition to his ongoing work at WSP, Ryan serves as the Vice President of Partnerships of the Veterans Leadership Council, a Working Group Lead of the Bush Institute's Veteran Higher Education Task Force, and Council Member of the Teach for America Military Veteran Council.



## **RJ Jenkins**

*Curriculum Design Specialist, Columbia University Center for Veteran Transition and Integration*

R.J. Jenkins joined the Columbia University Center for Veteran Transition and Integration as the Curriculum Design Specialist where his primary responsibility is the development of "University Studies for Student Veterans," an online curriculum that helps prepare veterans to succeed academically as they transition from military service into higher education settings.

R.J. has held a number of roles in academic administration, including advising and counseling, and student support services at both Columbia and Harvard University. Most recently, R.J. served as an Associate Dean of Students at the Columbia University School of General Studies where he directed the Academic Resource Center and served as the lead instructor for University Studies, a first-year transition course. R.J. holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and anthropology from Columbia University (2003), a Master of Letters in English literature from the University of Cambridge (2005), and is completing his Doctor of Philosophy in English literature at Harvard University.



## **Linda Euto**

*Associate Director of Research and Evaluation, Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University*

Linda Euto, Ph.D., is the Associate Director for research and evaluation at the D'Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) at Syracuse University. As a member of the research team, Linda focuses on student veterans and higher education and has concentrated her research efforts on looking at student veterans and their transition into collegiate study.

Linda has an extensive skill set in both the media/communications and research/evaluation areas, in both the private and public sectors. Throughout her wide-ranging career, she worked as a writer/producer/executive producer, as an instructional designer, grant writer, communications specialist, and has extensive experience working with charitable and non-profit organizations, focusing on children's education, community, and educational programs for at-risk populations.

Linda is also a proud military-connected family member and SU alumna with deep ties across the University community. Linda is an avid runner and lives with her husband Jeremy and dog Buddy, in Skaneateles, NY.



## **Rachel Brauner**

*Extension Program Specialist, Military Programs, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service*

Rachel Brauner is an Extension Program Specialist for Military Programs at Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Her focus is to enhance educational programming for providers, service members, military families, and Department of Defense civilians in the areas of caregiving, mental health, and alcohol and substance use.





*Rachel Brauner  
Continued*

Ms. Brauner works closely with military professionals across the nation in assessing caregiver needs and providing the necessary education and resources to alleviate the stress that comes with caring for wounded service members and those caring for individuals with special needs. Her programs entail OneOp, formerly the Military Families Learning Network, Powerful Tools for Caregivers, and Mental Health First Aid.

Ms. Brauner recently worked with prevention education programs within the Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) at Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA), Texas. Her Extension team was responsible for providing non-clinical alcohol and drug prevention and education training and suicide prevention programs to service members, commanders, civilian employees, and military families. Ms. Brauner received both a Master of Agriculture in International Development and a Bachelor of Science in Communication and Journalism from Texas A&M University.



## **Andy Crocker**

*Senior Extension Program Specialist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service*

Andy Crocker is a Senior Extension Program Specialist in Gerontology and Health with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. His role is to support County Extension Agents for Family and Community Health in their efforts to educate older adults, caregivers, and the professionals who serve them.

He earned a B.A. in Biology (2001) and an M.S. in Gerontology (2002) from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in One Health Sciences at the Texas Tech University School of Veterinary Medicine in Amarillo, TX.



## **Jason Wise**

*Collaboration Manager, Combined Arms*

Jason is a proud U.S. Army veteran who served as a Cavalry Scout with the 1st Cav Division out of Fort Hood, TX. After serving in the Army, Jason began working with two U.S. House of Representatives in Ohio as their constituent services representative and helping with local veteran service organizations. During this time, he used his VA education benefits to complete a degree in business communications with Excelsior College. With the time left in his education benefits, he learned to fly helicopters through Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, AZ while working towards a digital marketing and aviation business degree. Jason joined Combined Arms because of his passion for assisting fellow veterans and their families to find the proper resources they need as they settle into their post-military lives. Jason currently lives in Canton, OH, with his two German Shepherd dogs, Reagan and Teddy.



## **John Smith**

*Southeast Texas Regional Manager, Texas Veterans Network*

John Smith is a 9-year Marine Corps Combat Veteran who served from 1999–2008. Once exiting the Marine Corps, like many others, he struggled with the transition from active duty to civilian life. He knows firsthand the obstacles that transitioning service members and families face during the transitioning process. John joined the Combined Arms team in 2019 as an Intake Coordinator. In 2020, he became the Southeast Texas Regional Manager for the Texas Veterans Network. In John's current role, he facilitates and builds relationships with Veteran Serving Organizations as well as with local Veteran Resource Groups to ensure they are aware of and have access to the innovative Combined Arms technology. Through John's work and determination, he can help connect veterans access the resources they need to thrive while holding his organizational partners accountable for getting back to the Veteran within a timely manner.



## **Dr. Katherine Selber**

*Professor, Texas State University*

Dr. Katherine Selber is a Professor in the School of Social Work at Texas State University joining the faculty in 1997. She was appointed the Texas State University System Research Fellow from 2017–2018. She holds a Bachelors in Psychology from The University of Texas – Austin, a Masters in Social Work from the University of Houston and a Ph.D. in Social Work from the University of Texas–Austin.

Dr. Selber is a founding member of the Texas State University–Veteran Advisory Council (VAC) and was the faculty sponsor for the student veteran organization, the Veteran Alliance of Texas State (VATS) from 2008–2013. Since 2008 she has provided leadership in developing Texas State’s program for serving the campus’ veterans and dependents. As part of this nationally recognized program, Dr. Selber has supervised over 50 Masters of Social Work and Bachelor of Social Work students in a special program, the Veterans Initiative, that serves the student veterans on campus and in the community providing over 20,000 hours of service delivery since 2010. These interns have performed outreach, case management, program development, and research functions that benefit veterans while training to be the next generation of veteran service providers. She also teaches a course for Masters students both on campus and online on Helping Veterans Transition and has trained over 600 students interested in working with veterans in the community. Graduates of this unique internship and classroom training model are now employed in veteran serving organizations such as: Wounded Warrior Project; Operation Homefront; Samaritan Counseling Center’s Hope for Heroes; and various Veterans Administration clinics and hospital sites across the country.

She has been the recipient of grants from state and federal entities and foundations including over \$1.7 million from the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Health Resources Services Administration grants and Chase Foundation for providing training stipends to MSW students, many of them veterans and military family members, to work with veterans upon graduation. She has published many articles and chapters and presented at over 100 conferences and workshops on issues related to veterans.



*Dr. Katherine Selber*  
*Continued*

Dr. Selber has received recognitions for her support of many deployed units engaged in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and New Dawn. In addition, the U.S. President's Council on Service & Civic Participation awarded her the President's Volunteer Service Award for 2006–2008 in recognition of her military support activities. For her work with student veterans she was named the Texas State Faculty Advisor of the Year in 2010, recognized with the campus Diversity Award in 2010, and in 2012 given the Friends of Veterans award. In 2015 she was awarded the statewide Texas Veterans Commission Patriot Award. In 2016 she was recognized again with the Friends of Veterans Award. She is also a military family member and has a son on active duty since 2004 that has deployed six times to Iraq and Afghanistan across 56 months and understands personally military family issues.



### **Dr. Chris Cate**

*Vice President of Research, Student Veterans of America*

As Vice President of Research for Student Veterans of America (SVA), Dr. Chris Andrew Cate coordinates all internal and external data collection, analysis, reporting, and security along with overseeing the research strategy for the organization. He began volunteering SVA in 2010 helping in the designing and implementing the organization's Learning and Measurement objectives, then in September of 2012, he joined SVA's professional staff as Vice President of Research.

Dr. Cate's focus is on providing actionable research to policy makers, stakeholders, SVA chapters, partners, and the public to help them make data-driven decisions about topics and issues affecting student veterans and the larger veteran community. As primary researcher for the Million Records Project (MRP), National Veteran Education Success Tracker (NVEST) Project, and the Life Cycle Atlas, Dr. Cate focuses on research surrounding student veterans' post-secondary academic outcomes, exploring the impact of student veteran decisions on their education and employment outcomes, and the groundwork on the return on investment (ROI) of the GI Bill.



*Dr. Chris Cate*  
*Continued*

He graduated from the University of California at Santa Barbara with a Doctorate in Special Education, Disability, and Risk Studies (2011) where his dissertation explored student veterans' college experiences, academic performance, and their transition to and through higher education, and a Masters of Arts in Research Methodology (2009). A proud Gonzaga University alumnus, he graduated from Gonzaga University with a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in Theatre Arts and English (1998) and also earned a Masters in Arts in Teaching degree with an emphasis in At-Risk Students (2000).



### **Bob Gear**

*Texas Veterans Leadership Program Director, Texas Workforce Commission*

Bob Gear is the Director of the Texas Workforce Commission's Texas Veterans Leadership Program. The Texas Veterans Leadership Program is resource and referral network that serves to connect returning veterans of the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and the Horn of Africa with the resources and tools they require to achieve a successful transition into civilian life. Bob also oversees Texas Operation Welcome Home which is a program designed to better meet the needs of Transitioning Service Members, recently separated Veterans and Military Spouses in the Great State of Texas.

He brings years of experience working with programs designed for military service members, veterans, and their families. Bob is a co-founder and served two years as the Commander of the first Veterans of Foreign Wars Virtual Post in the nation. Under his leadership, the Post won VFW All-State and All-American Honors two years in a row. During 2016-2017, Bob served as the District Commander for Texas VFW District 28, the District won All-State and All-American Honors.





*Bob Gear  
Continued*

Bob was appointed to the National OIF/OEF Committee and as National Aidede-Camp in 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and again in 2019-2020. He was the recipient of the Texas VFW J.T. Rutherford Award and Texas American Legion Legionnaire of the Year Award.

Bob serves as the Veterans Preference & Employment Committee Chairman for the American Legion, Department of Texas as well as the Texas VFW Employment Committee Chairman.

Before joining the Texas Veterans Leadership Program in July 2008, Bob served our nation in the United States Army for over 20 years as a Tanker; including a tour of duty in Desert Shield/Desert Storm and two tours of duty in Operation Iraqi Freedom.



## **Phil Hoy**

*Director, Military and Veterans Engagement at Dallas College*

A retired US Coast Guard veteran, Phil performed a variety of missions including law enforcement, drug/migrant interdiction, search and rescue and homeland security. He obtained a BS on active duty using military tuition assistance, Chapter 30 benefits, and college level testing. After separation he used the Post 9-11 GI Bill to complete a Master of Science in Administration and Management in 2011 and an MBA in 2012.

In 2013 he was provided with the opportunity to join Dallas College and continue service to the community; he has been here ever since. Phil believes strongly in the value of education and its ability to strengthen the community by supporting individual growth and success. Currently, he serves as a Director in the Dallas College, Military and Veteran Compliance office

He is a huge proponent of education and believes that through education, veterans, service members and their families will be able to fulfill their potential.



## **Benjamin Dotger**

*Professor, Chair of Teaching & Leadership, Syracuse University*

Benjamin Dotger, PhD, is a professor in the Teaching and Leadership Department at Syracuse University. He teaches education foundations courses to secondary and K-12 students, coordinates the Teaching & Curriculum master's program, and directs clinical simulation design and implementation efforts between the School of Education and SUNY Upstate Medical University's Clinical Skills Center. His scholarship centers on the design and study of clinical simulations in educator, student veteran, and data science contexts, with emphasis on identity formation, discipline-specific practices, and physiological responses. This work has been supported by numerous federal and private foundations, including the Spencer Foundation, the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, the National Science Foundation, and the Institute for Educational Sciences.



## **Blair Mosley**

*College Credit for Heroes Program Manager, Texas Workforce Commission*

Blair Mosley is a proud United States Army combat veteran who has served in various leadership capacities as a Logistics Officer. After serving in the United States Army from 2006 to 2015, Blair decided to transition from the military force to the private sector. He worked as a process improvement specialist for a major big box retail chain for over two years and then moved on to become a logistics supervisor at a global pharmaceutical company for another two years. After, years of going back and forth Blair decided that he still wanted to serve the men and woman in uniform and decided to take a position working with veterans, active and transition service members with the Texas Workforce Commission.

Blair is currently the program manager for the College Credit for Heroes program, which seeks to maximize college credits awarded for military courses and experience. Blair graduated from Indiana University from the "Kelly School of Business" with a Bachelor of Science in Management and Marketing. In his free time, Blair enjoys spending time with his friends and family. He also enjoys creating different Italian Ice Flavors for his business and putting smiles on faces.



## **Jimmie D. Rogers**

*Vet Success on Campus Coordinator*

Jimmie D. Rogers works for the Department of Veteran Affairs full-time at Texas A&M University as the VetSuccess on Campus coordinator. Jimmie served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam as an Airborne/Ranger/Infantry Platoon Leader and Company Commander 67-69. He graduated from the University of California-Santa Cruz with a BA Politics and the University of North Texas with a MS Rehabilitation Counseling.



## **David Fujimoto**

*Director of Development for Veteran Affairs, Texas A&M University*

"Fuji" is currently the Director of Development for Veteran Affairs at the Texas A&M Foundation. Dave assists donors by identifying the areas and programs where their support will enhance Texas A&M's capability to be among the best universities and #1 choice for student veterans. Dave previously served as the Director of Strategic Engagement at The Association of Former Students where he ran Texas A&M's Legislative Advocacy program. Fuji is also active in community serving as the President of the Brazos County A&M Club, on the Board of The Bush School Former Student Constituent Network, volunteering with the City of College Station Historical Preservation Committee, mentoring candidates to the U.S. Air Force Academy (as an Admissions Liaison Officer), and is a leadership instructor at The Hollingsworth Center for Ethical Leadership.

Lt Col Fujimoto retired in 2015 from the USAF as a Senior Pilot after 22.5 years of active-duty service and 12 overseas deployments. 10 of these deployments were post-9/11 where he served in a variety of combat roles flying the AC-130H Spectre Gunship and other special operations aircraft, eventually serving on the four-star's Commanders Advisory Group (CAG).

He is also a 1993 graduate of the US Air Force Academy, and holds graduate degrees from both American Military University and The Bush School of Government & Public Service. Lt Col Fujimoto is also a graduate of Squadron Officer School, Air Command and Staff College, and Air War College (with Excellence).





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