

THE WORD

Spring 2024

★★★★★
MILITARY
EDITION



SERVING TOGETHER

*On a Mission to Serve
Military and Veteran Students*





THE
WORD

Spring 2024

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VETERANS DAY PARADE

On Saturday, Nov. 11, UIW participated in the official City of San Antonio Veterans Day Parade. The parade made its way through downtown San Antonio and featured various military-affiliated organizations. The UIW contingent included military veterans, UIW Cheer, the Marching Cardinals band and Red the Cardinal.

For more information on UIW's Veterans Day Celebration follow the QR Code. 





Football, volleyball, men's and women's basketball, softball and baseball teams all recognize the military during their seasons. UIW baseball held Military Appreciation weekend March 8-10 at Sullivan Field vs. Texas Southern.



Retired U.S. Navy Officer Anthony Crosby threw out the first pitch on March 8.

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Do you know someone interested in attending UIW? For more information on what UIW has to offer or to schedule a campus visit, go to uiw.edu/admissions



FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Alumni and Friends,

Welcome to the spring edition of *The Word Magazine*. In this special issue, we highlight many incredible military service members and veterans in our UIW community.

In the coming pages, you will read about an innovative program that helps prepare military chaplains for further service (p. 4) and the impact that this new residency is having on those who make up part of the next generation of the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps. You will also learn more about the long and storied history behind UIW's Brooks campus (p. 8). Now home to the UIW School of Osteopathic Medicine, it once housed other ahead-of-their-time schools in aviation medicine and aerospace medicine. It was also the site of a historic address from a U.S. president. I also invite you to learn more about our Military and Veteran Center (p. 12) that not only serves as a gathering place, but a hub for the development of ideas and programs that support our service member and veteran students and their families. You will also meet the Marmolejos (p. 16) who have made UIW and service a family tradition.

Through these stories, as varied as they are, we discover more about what called our military and veteran students, faculty and staff to serve our nation and, too, what drew them to UIW. While they may hail from different backgrounds and walk very different paths, their stories reveal that our University's approach to service, integrity and support mirror much of what they value about their military experiences. Together, they paint a brilliant picture of the many reasons why UIW continues to be a university of choice for our service members and their families and why we were honored as the No. 1 university for veterans by the *Military Times*. Simply put, it is our Mission that makes the difference.

Praised be the Incarnate Word!

Thomas M. Evans, PhD
President

Bishop Trevor Alexander and Lieutenant Colonel Chaplain Bryant Casteel sit for a conversation in Alexander's office



God's Love in Action

UIW Says “Yes” to Opening Doors to the U.S. Army

By Victoria Reyna Varville, MBA '21

On a day that seemed just like any other in the summer of 2022, Lieutenant Colonel Bryant Casteel found himself driving to the University of the Incarnate Word. A chaplain in the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps, he felt called to UIW in search of a way to give other Army chaplains educational pastoral experiences that went beyond the walls of Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC) as they worked towards their Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) certification. The CPE certification is a 52-week residency course accredited by the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command and the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), that prepares clinically trained specialists in spiritual care. These training courses are intended to prepare chaplains, the spiritual heart of the

Army, with classes and formation opportunities to best prepare them for the challenges they will face during their service.

Casteel didn't know much about the University beyond its proximity to JBSA-Fort Sam Houston. He, admittedly, had no plan for what he would do or who he would talk to once he arrived on campus.

But he knew God did.

Casteel parked, walked up the steps to the Columkille Administration Building, turned right and wandered down the hall until he saw a plate above a door that read:

“Protestant Chaplain”

“A Protestant chaplain at a Catholic University...” he thought.

His interest was piqued.



Lieutenant Colonel Chaplain Bryant Casteel and Bishop Trevor Alexander under the plate that drew Casteel into Alexander's office

"I saw Bishop (Alexander) sitting there, and I didn't even know who he was. I just went in, and we had a conversation."

His decision to turn right instead of left that day led him to the office of Bishop Trevor Alexander, UIW's beloved Protestant chaplain and adjunct faculty member. The two strangers soon felt like lifelong friends as they connected over their respective military backgrounds, their faith and more.

Though they didn't know it at the time, that conversation was the beginning of what would become a partnership between UIW and the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps at JBASA-Fort Sam Houston. Casteel left Alexander's office that day feeling positive about the possibility of working with the University to help the Army chaplains learn and grow during the year of their CPE certification residency. This residency period is a time for CPE candidates to engage in hands-on, real-world situations using what they have learned during their course. What Casteel didn't realize was that almost as soon as he left the room, so did Alexander, who went straight to the office of Sr. Walter Maher, CCVI, vice president of Mission and Ministry.

"I wasn't aware if they were going to take it on," Casteel said as he looked back on his initial pitch to work together. "But Bishop (Alexander) just took to it. He said, 'I like this idea.' And I didn't know this conversation happened, but he went to Sr. Walter, and Mission and Ministry took it on."

Sr. Walter remembers the moment well. She and Alexander got straight to work mapping out the details of what a collaboration could and should look like. To her, the choice to say "yes" to the opportunity was hardly a choice at all. It was an intrinsic step forward in UIW's path, paved by the transformative "yesses" of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word for more than a century.

"The Sisters went where they needed to go," Sr. Walter explained of the University's founding Congregation. She shared that in the late 1800s, as the railroad industry expanded, the Sisters established and staffed hospitals along the nearest railroad's route to meet the growing need for healthcare in those areas. When the road is uncertain – as it was for the founding Sisters – Sr. Walter knows to look to their example of faith.

"Maybe the best way to say it is that God is already there ahead of us," she said. "And because God is there waiting for us, then

how do we see where God is and how do we respond to that? [Chaplain Casteel] was somebody coming into this University, not having any idea about anything we do. And yet, there was an invitation from God for us to say, 'Is this possible?' And if it's possible, why not say yes?"

"From the first day we got there, it was transformative because of the acceptance," said Casteel. "It's one thing for a school to say, 'we are military friendly,' because

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My experience with UIW wasn't just them saying, 'oh, we're military friendly.' It was, 'we care for the military. We believe in what you do.'

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San Antonio is full of military bases. It's another thing for there to be a backing and action and literal support of the military. My experience with UIW wasn't just them saying, 'oh, we're military friendly.' It was, 'we care for the military. We believe in what you do. And we're willing to invest in you as chaplains in your educational journeys.'"

After more meetings and thorough planning sessions, including conversations with Chaplain (Colonel) Mark Lee, director of the CPE program at the Brooke Army Medical Center, to detail what the chaplains' training at UIW would entail, the University demonstrated support by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps at JBASA-Fort Sam Houston. The U.S. Army Chaplain Corps is the military unit that provides religious support, counseling, and guidance for U.S. Army servicemembers. Under the

agreement, Army chaplains of all religious backgrounds and denominations stationed at JBASA-Fort Sam Houston would come to the University to learn from its faculty, students and even one another to fulfill their CPE certification requirements.

"We were looking at what it means to be a chaplain in today's society," explained Alexander. "When you hear the word chaplain, what does that mean? We explored that together."

The chaplains sat for lectures across a range of topics, all centered on the role of a chaplain, both in and out of the armed forces. They were even joined at one training on campus by Chaplain (Colonel) Ibraheem Raheem, program director of the School for Spiritual Care and CPE at the U.S. Army Institute for Religious Leadership Graduate School in Fort Jackson, SC. Together with UIW faculty, they explored topics including "The Chaplain in a Multicultural Setting," "The Chaplain as a Civic Leader," and even "Chaplains at Play," which focused on how they can strike the balance between caring for others and finding moments of much-needed levity for themselves. In these lectures, they heard and learned from Sr. Walter, Dr. Arturo Chavez, associate vice president for Mission and Ministry, Dr. Javier Clavere, dean of the College of Humanities Arts and Social Sciences, Bishop Alexander and more. After each session, the chaplains would gather in a room with Casteel – whose role as discussion leader was simultaneously contributing to his own ACPE Certified Educator requirements, a certification that would qualify him to teach other chaplains – to share and explore what they had just learned, and how they could use it to better their work in their own vocations of serving others.

As the program grew, so did its offerings. The "students" became the teachers as the chaplains were eventually offered the opportunity – or challenge, some would say – to share their own presentations about topics ranging from faith to multiculturalism to social justice with UIW students, in preparation for the work they will do as CPE certified chaplains. In rooms full of their colleagues, strangers and students – all of whom represented different religions, cultures, ethnicities and walks of life – the chaplains were tasked with sharing their insights, knowledge, and ideas. These interactions were welcomed by both chaplains and



Army chaplains, Sr. Walter Maher, CCVI and Bishop Trevor Alexander visit in Sr. Walter's office

students as opportunities to experience and embrace diversity of thought, strengthening their own faith and convictions.

“One of the chaplains said, ‘When I put this presentation together, I felt good. When I started presenting it and got questions, I had to stop to think,’” recalled Alexander of a conversation he shared with a chaplain after a presentation delivered to students.

Alexander remembered what he said to the chaplain next.

“You were stunned. And you didn’t know what to do. You felt inadequate . . . That’s good. That’s how we grow in our faith. It’s okay not to have the answer, but to be able to say, ‘I don’t have the answer right now, I have to do more research on that’ . . . that’s where we grow.”

That growth happening at UIW, Casteel hopes, is what will prepare the chaplains, who have answered the call to serve members of the U.S. Army, to provide support and counseling in what may be some of their darkest days. It’s a challenge he is familiar with.

“We lost our first guys on the Fourth of July,” shared Casteel about his own deployment to Iraq as a U.S. Army chaplain. “I remember like yesterday a couple of my soldiers came up to me and said, ‘Chaplain, we have a fallen angel . . . the commander needs you.’”

“I knew we were at war,” he continued. “But there was something on that day that just hit me. It was an awakening for me about the cost of war.”

In another pivotal moment, Casteel was

delivering an Easter sunrise service while deployed, when suddenly, one word was heard by everyone in the chapel:

Incoming. Incoming. Incoming.

From within the walls of the chapel, service attendees could feel the vibrations of a rocket that struck nearby. The soldiers ran to the nearby bunker. Once they received the “all clear,” the service resumed as quickly as it had stopped. Casteel continued serving and preaching, this time with an even deeper level of gratitude for the lives of those who had gathered to praise and worship, and with a clearer understanding of the importance of his role in their lives as a spiritual leader.

Now in his time at UIW, Casteel sees the young men and women in the U.S. Army in the eyes of UIW’s students who listen to the chaplains on campus, asking questions and searching for answers of faith.

“You think about your average NCO (non-commissioned officer) or soldier, they’re coming right out of college. Your young officers, they’re coming out of this age bracket,” he explained of the value of giving chaplains the opportunity to connect with University students.

Now in the second year since signing the MOU, the mutually beneficial relationship between the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps and UIW has continued to grow. In addition to welcoming a new cohort of CPE trainees to campus for lectures and learning opportunities, the University also opened its doors for two chaplains to complete their certification residency hours by directly supporting UIW’s students. Chaplain (Captain)

Anthony Moya is completing his residency hours in UIW’s Behavioral Health Services Department, while Chaplain (Captain) Asnage Castelly is providing mentorship for UIW’s student-athletes. The two agree that though their time at UIW was unexpected, the experience has been life changing.

“I thought we were going to be at Brooke Army Medical Center,” shared Moya. “When they presented this opportunity, I felt excited because we had already had some classes and presented at UIW. It’s helped me grow – people at UIW have that desire to help you grow. I’ve grown in my ministry and in my understanding of how to help others.”

“Being at UIW, that 18-to-25 age group population is a reflection truly of what we face in the military,” added Castelly.

The young adults who Moya, Castelly and



Chaplain Captain Asnage Castelly and Sr. Walter Maher, CCVI share a hug

the other chaplains have worked with have also benefited from the program, shared Alexander. Having the chaplains on campus has helped the students expand their worldview, learn how to engage in respectful dialogue about sometimes polarizing issues, and how to see others as fellow brothers and sisters, regardless of their faith backgrounds.

“I think that’s very much part of our Catholic identity,” shared Sr. Walter when asked about the benefits of an exposure to various faith traditions. “It is really about having a strong understanding of who we are as a Catholic institution, which embraces interfaith and ecumenical dialogue. That’s very much part of our identity, very strongly attested to by Pope John Paul II and by Pope Francis. You see them all the time engaging with all the different faith traditions. So that’s just part of our identity.”

“The students summed it up best,” Alexander shared about the feedback he’s received from UIW students who have met with the chaplains since the launch of the program. “They got exposure to other voices.”

“One of the textbooks we use in class is *Fratelli tutti*, which is Pope Francis’s encyclical,” Alexander explained further. “In one of the chapters, he says, ‘in order for us to not treat people as the ‘other,’ we have to open wide our hearts’ ... these are the skills that we have to constantly work on as a society. As chaplains, you’re not just a chaplain to one denomination, you’re chaplain to everybody in your unit. I’m a chaplain for the entire University community. If we can apply that same concept to society ...”

His voice trailed off with a smile as he envisioned the world that could be if people learned to do what the chaplains and UIW community have been doing for the last two years – looking past differences and finding connection with one another. He – and all involved in the program – view the program’s creation not only as a worthwhile endeavor for good, but as a natural, almost inevitable part of UIW’s story.

“UIW is unique in terms of their innovation ... the three Sisters who came here, they always innovated,” reflected Castelly of the founding Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word. “UIW is still thinking outside the box in taking this chance to work with the military (chaplains). They come from a Catholic perspective and mission, but everyone, regardless of their faith tradition, is loved and accepted here. It all goes back to those three wonderful Sisters who answered the call to

serve.”

The call to serve is one that resonates with every member of both the UIW community and the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps. And the innovation occurring at UIW in bringing Army chaplains to an institution of higher education to teach and learn from its faculty and students, is something that has even caught the attention of Army leadership at the Pentagon.

In January of 2024, a room full of people gathered on campus to celebrate Chaplain Casteel for his completion of the ACPE Certified Educator Candidate course. Chaplain Major General William Green Jr., U.S. Army chief of chaplains, accepted an invitation to join in the celebration, held on the UIW Broadway campus.

“I wanted to do my graduation gathering here,” Casteel shared of his decision to celebrate the completion of his certification on the UIW campus. “This place has shaped me. When I walked into this building a couple of years ago, I just pulled up to the University and I didn’t know anybody. But you welcomed me in. That’s how God did this, and the University just embraced it. UIW has truly lived out its Mission.”

In addition to Casteel and Green, those in attendance included Bishop Alexander, Sr. Walter, Castelly, Moya, Dr. Javier Clavere and more members of the UIW community and U.S. Army chaplains who have all taken part in the CPE journey at UIW. All listened intently and excitedly as Green, the esteemed two-star general, addressed the crowd.

“Something has happened here,” Green said of what he learned about UIW’s work with the Army chaplains. “I want to say to this institution, thank you for having open

arms. Everything I’ve heard here is just exciting. What has happened here is an example of what we say to our soldiers and our leaders about thriving in complex situations ... and it must start somewhere.”

“As I look here, I think what you’ve been able to do is carve out a niche that’s different than any other CPE program,” he said to Casteel during his remarks. “You drove up here at UIW and you walked into something different.”

UIW’s history has been paved by people working tirelessly to make a difference. The creation of historic, innovative, and lasting programs that address current needs, with a spirit of service and open heartedness is deeply rooted in the story of the University. The CPE program is no exception, as it addresses and serves each of the University of the Incarnate Word’s core values: Education, Truth, Faith, Service and Innovation.

“This story has to be told,” Green remarked as he shared what he believes will be long-term benefits for the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps as the result of what UIW and the Army chaplains of JBSA-Fort Sam Houston began. “Army CPE will learn from what you did here. And it will change the way we look at it.”

“When you receive the call,” Green concluded, “and to me there is nothing more important than that, it is an opportunity to go out and do what God would have you do.”

From the U.S. Army chaplains to Bishop Alexander, Sr. Walter and the entire University community – guided by faith and the example of the founding Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word – the call was answered with a resounding “yes.”



Lieutenant Colonel Chaplain Bryant Casteel holds a UIW T-shirt as he poses for a photograph with Chaplain Major General William Green and Bishop Trevor Alexander at the celebration of the completion of his ACPE certification



Sarah Caron

SCHOOL OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

A MILITARY LEGACY

*Historical Facilities
and Military Matches*

By Stephanie Denning

Nestled in the heart of South San Antonio lies Brooks (formerly Brooks City Base), a unique site with a rich tapestry of over a century of fascinating history. This storied location has played a pivotal role in the realm of space exploration, boasting groundbreaking discoveries and even hosting a memorable visit from President John F. Kennedy.

The legacy of innovation runs deep within Brooks. It was home to the former Brooks School of Aviation Medicine and School of Aerospace Medicine, both destinations of groundbreaking work. It was there that early flight instruments, the revolutionary backpack parachute, and pioneering medical procedures such as MRIs and Lasik surgery were developed, shaping the course of aviation and healthcare. Today, this remarkable heritage continues to thrive at the UIW School of Osteopathic Medicine (UIWSOM), which not only shares the campus grounds of the former base, but also an enduring spirit of discovery and advancement.

The location's history dates back to 1917, when Brooks Field was established by the Army Air Corps as an installation to provide advanced flight training for young cadets. By 1947, Brooks Field became Brooks Air Force Base and flight programs were growing. According to the website, LiveBrooks.com, back in those early days, to take off, pilots would chase jackrabbits through a field of grass. When they reached the same speed as the rabbit, they knew they were going fast enough to pull the stick back to go airborne.

Ten years later, the facility added the School of Aerospace Medicine and began its impressive career of innovation and education in the medical field. The facility was at an all-time boom in the era of the "race to space." In fact, on Nov. 21, 1963, President John F. Kennedy conducted his last official act as president by dedicating the School of Aerospace Medicine the day before his assassination. Those very buildings, on the area known as the "Hill," are now home to UIWSOM.

Connie Gonzalez, chief strategy officer for Brooks, shared that "during its illustrious career as the School of Aerospace Medicine, they focused on research and technology to understand the effects of space on the human body and brain. Thus, one of the most famous animals to go to space, a rhesus monkey named SAM (short for the School of Aerospace Medicine) lived and prepared for his mission at this facility. After his journey, he returned home to the school and lived out his long, full life."

She continued, "When it was finally deemed safe for humans to venture into space, all astronauts visited the Brooks facility to be medically cleared

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We are excited to graduate compassionate and competent osteopathic physicians, taught by faculty with military experience, who will practice in all areas of military medicine and exemplify the Mission of UIW.

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before space travel, including every single astronaut for every Apollo mission.”

After 94 years of military activity, in 2011, Air Force missions from Brooks ceased and the facility's redevelopment began. In 2017, Brooks' 155,000 sq. foot



President John F. Kennedy delivers his “Cap Over the Wall” speech at Brooks Air Force Base on Nov. 21, 1963. Archival photo courtesy of Brooks.

facility became home to the UIW School of Osteopathic Medicine and its inaugural class. The facility now features large interactive learning studios, a state-of-the-art structures lab, ultrasounds for clinical and laboratory use, a simulation suite, a demonstration kitchen for medical and community education and a 12-room CIELO (Clinical Inter-professional Experiential Learning and Observation). UIWSOM's program is designed to train primary care osteopathic physicians to meet the health needs of Central and South Texas, particularly underserved and vulnerable populations. UIWSOM has also become home to many military-affiliated students, faculty and staff, enhancing the richness of the school's military relationship.

In 2021, as UIWSOM prepared to graduate its first class, a group of military-affiliated graduating doctors became the first to establish their future in medicine by being matched for residency programs with military hospitals across the nation. These students participated in either the military's Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP) or the Veteran Administration (VA) HPSP, which pays the medical school tuition for those students who make a commitment to serve in the U.S. armed forces upon completion of their degree. Since then, UIWSOM has proudly graduated 28

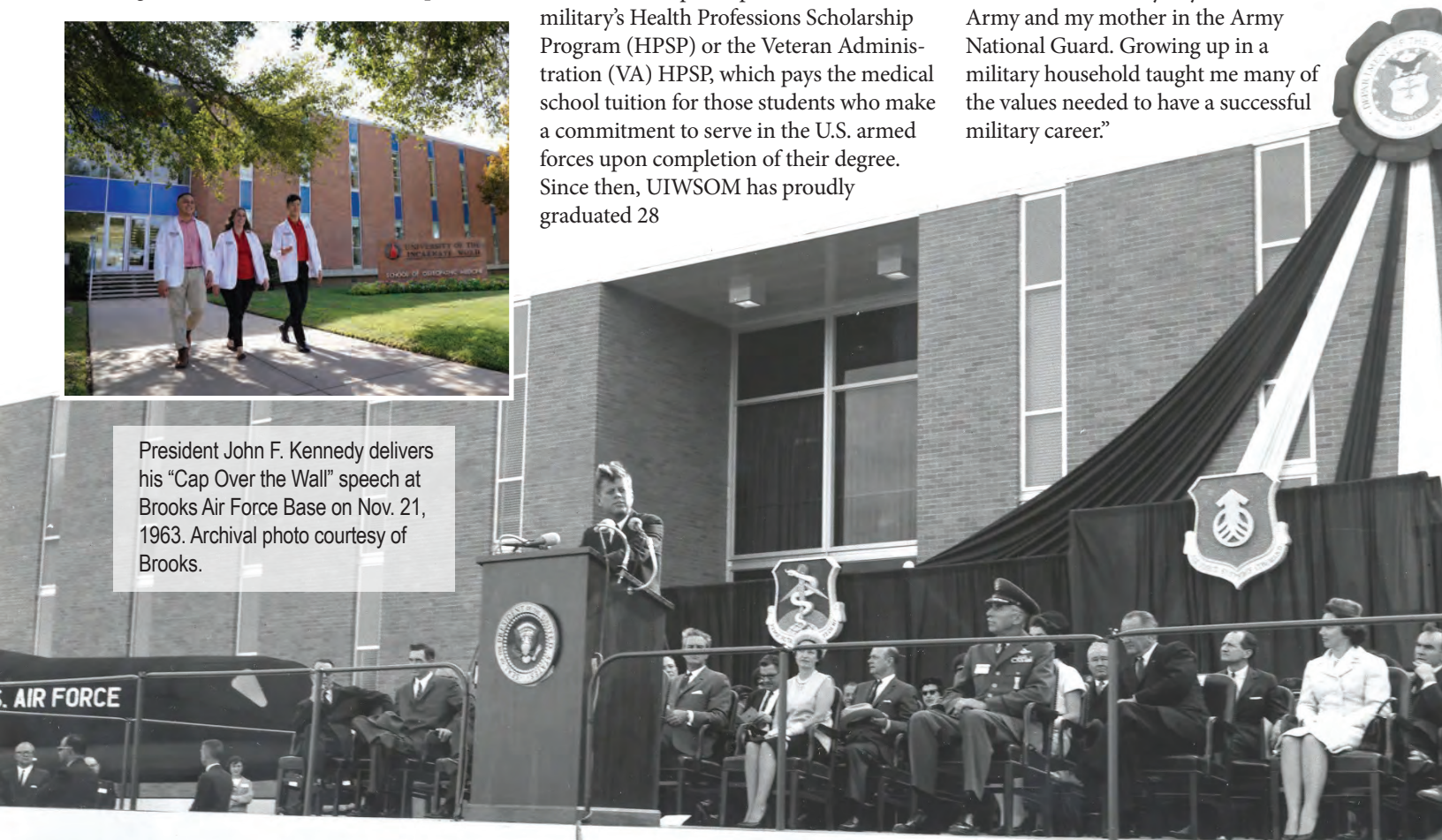
military doctors. The Class of 2024 includes an additional 38 graduates who have made commitments to pursue their medical careers in the U.S. military.



2024 UIWSOM military match Brenden McCullough said, “Early on in my process of applying to medical school, I learned of the Health Professions Scholarship Program. After doing

some research and talking to a recruiter, I decided to pursue this opportunity. Once I received acceptance into medical school, I was awarded the scholarship and commissioned as an officer in the Army.”

McCullough further reflected on what motivated him to pursue a military career. “One of my reasons for pursuing this route was my upbringing. Both of my parents served in the military, my father in the Army and my mother in the Army National Guard. Growing up in a military household taught me many of the values needed to have a successful military career.”



Sarah Caron, also a 2024 UIWSOM military match, credits the school with having a curriculum that allowed her the flexibility and freedom over her own schedule, which helped her thrive during her first two years of medical school.

“This allowed me to be independent and find out what study habits were most useful for my own learning, but it also forced me to become resourceful and do much of my own research to find answers and learn. This has prepared me for the future when I know I will not always know all the answers to everything, but I will have the tools to find the answers and continue to learn, which I believe will make me a better physician.”

About looking towards the future, Caron shared, “I am looking forward to educating patients and their parents as a future pediatrician. I love doing patient education and guiding both parents and children about what to expect during development or disease processes, and how to stay healthy. I also aspire to one day

specialize in pediatric infectious diseases (infections are my favorite)! As a future military pediatrician, I am also looking forward to possibly exploring my career overseas as well as humanitarian missions in other countries.”

The UIW School of Osteopathic Medicine provides education to future doctors who will make a difference in the communities they serve, be they military or not, all of them hoping to contribute in a profound way to their chosen field.

UIWSOM Dean Dr. John T. Pham reflected, “We are excited to graduate compassionate and competent osteopathic physicians, taught by faculty with military experience, who will practice in all areas of military medicine and exemplify the Mission of UIW. This special relationship will only continue to grow and deepen.”

Francesca Geneva, 2024 military match, sums up the sentiment best by sharing that she hopes to “be able to make a positive impact on my patients' lives and be a lifelong learner!”



The UIWSOM 2023 Military Match Alumni pictured with UIWSOM Dean Dr. John T. Pham at their ceremony.



UIW'S MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENT PROGRAMS



Peer Advisors for Veteran Education

Connecting incoming student veterans on college campuses with student veterans who are trained as peer advisors who can help students navigate college life, address challenges they may face, refer them to appropriate resources on and off campus and provide ongoing college support

One of the many PAVE events, Kevlar to Clay, took place March 8, 2024



Student Veterans of America Chapter

Expediting, facilitating and reinforcing the successful transition for U.S. military veterans and their families to university life while fostering a lasting bond of friendship with veterans of allied armed forces and mentoring the next generation of military and civilian leadership



Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership

Striving to enhance academic retention and success through:

- On-campus clinical care and coordination
- Improving understanding of veterans' unique strengths and challenges through education and training delivered to the campus community
- Collaborating with the local VA medical center, the Veterans Benefits Administration, campus faculty and staff members, and community resources
- Social Worker, Toni Bravo-Price, visits campus twice per month



The College Credit for Heroes Capacity Building Program

Developing and improving a fully integrated system to evaluate military transcripts and turn essential military training and experience into academic credit at UIW

* The College Credit for Heroes program is a \$200,000, two-year grant funded by the Texas Workforce Commission.



BEST FOR VETS:

UIW's Military and Veteran Center

by Jonathan Lovejoy, Senior Director of Military & Veteran Affairs

At UIW, supporting military-connected students is not only a goal, but a mission and priority – in fact, it is one of eight Strategic Priorities that the University has used to guide its operations.

In support of this strategic priority, the vision of UIW's Military and Veteran Center is to aspire to be the premier provider of educational opportunities to active-duty military members, veterans and their families. It was the University's dedication and commitment to this vision that recently earned the institution recognition as the #1 school in the nation in the *Military Times* "Best for Vets: Colleges" rankings. The University's Military and Veteran Center (MVC) is the school's hub for military and veteran students, and it is the Center's work over the last several years that truly put UIW on the map.

The UIW MVC can trace its roots back to UIW's School of Professional Studies (SPS). Formerly known as the Center for

Veteran Affairs, it was established in the SPS offices at St. Anthony Catholic High School in October 2009. The Center was adjacent to the office of Karen Wyatt, who was selected as its first director in February 2010. The MVC consisted of a few rooms in the University's former Adult Education and Virtual University office. This dedicated space was meticulously crafted to cater to the unique needs of military-connected students, offering personalized assistance and support. The Center later moved to the Watson building, located across the street from UIW's Broadway campus, to be more conveniently located and better assist military-connected students. Currently, over 50% of SPS students are military-connected.

In 2015, the MVC found a new home in the Columkille Administration Building on the Broadway campus. In 2019, upon the Student Engagement Center (SEC)'s completion, a significant milestone

was marked when a dedicated MVC was opened in the new building. The MVC then settled into its current offices, where it provides a space for military-connected students to study, hold group meetings and unwind with a cup of generously donated coffee. This space also serves as a hub for community-building and camaraderie among veterans, active-duty personnel and military family members. The relocation demonstrated UIW's commitment to military-connected students' success and well-being.

The MVC lounge is a place where students and groups can get together, like UIW's Student Veterans of America (SVA) chapter, an incredibly active and strong student organization, which continually advocates for student veterans on campus. The MVC allows the organization a space to bring new ideas to the surface, like the group's work to bring free parking for disabled and decorated veterans to campus.

The lounge also serves as a focal point for MVC's Peer Advisor for Veteran Education (PAVE) program, a peer support program that connects incoming student veterans with current student veterans who are trained as peer advisors and help them navigate college life, address challenges they may face and refer them to appropriate resources on and off campus. UIW expanded the PAVE program in 2023 to include military dependents so they too can benefit from the program.

While military-affiliated students connect in the MVC lounge, staff members remain hard at work to fulfill the Center's core function of processing student Veterans Administration (VA) and Tuition Assistance (TA) education benefits. Since 2011, the MVC has been processing VA Yellow Ribbon education benefits in an agreement with the VA to fund tuition and fee costs that exceed the yearly national cap on those who utilize CH 33 Post 9-11 GI Bill®. This amazing program makes it possible for those who are utilizing the CH 33 Post 9-11 GI Bill® to attend any VA-approved program at UIW without the concern of costs or hitting their annual cap. Unlike many other institutions, UIW has no limit on the number of students they allow into the Yellow Ribbon

Program. While some schools may only allow 10 students per academic year into their Yellow Ribbon Program, UIW accepts 100% of the applicants that apply and meet all qualifications.

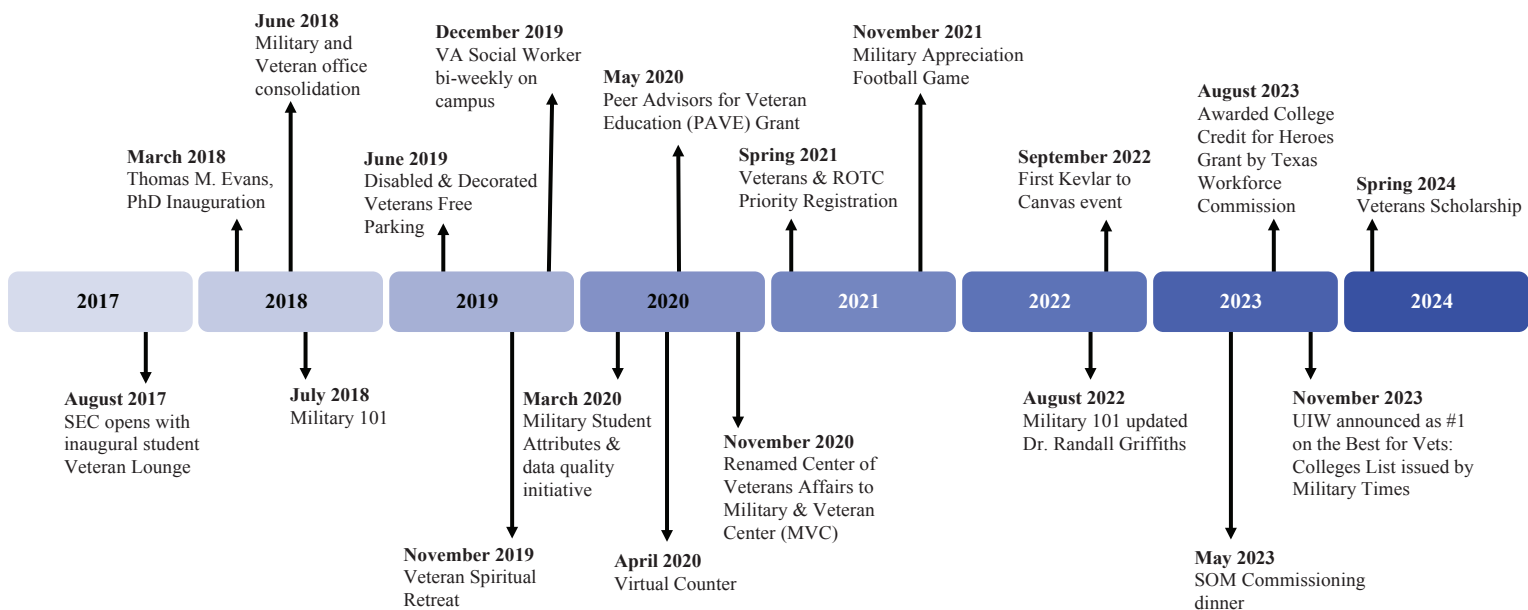
The MVC also makes a concerted effort every day to make sure veterans and their families feel welcomed and supported once they are enrolled. Approximately 22% of today's UIW students are military connected.

To better support these students, in 2018, a Military 101 training course was created by military-connected UIW faculty and staff members to educate employees on military specific issues and culture. The course material was updated in 2022 by Dr. Randall Griffiths and is provided to all faculty and staff to ensure they are equipped to support military-connected students. Employees who complete the training are given a sticker for their office door so that military students can easily find support.



Another of the MVC's main goals is to consistently stay connected to our military-affiliated community. UIW MVC does this by providing face-to-face appointments, a virtual front counter, and online appointments for the convenience of military students. MVC also provides a virtual option for military and veteran student orientation and regularly provides an online option for social events such as SVA meetings, motivational speaker series and prayer services. In 2023, the MVC

FORWARD WITH PURPOSE





took their efforts a step further when it launched a veteran peer support group to assist veterans with the transition into higher education.

Because MVC staff members understand that the transition to civilian life and the higher education experience is different for veterans and military members, the MVC also offers a new student orientation that reviews how to utilize TA and VA Educational Benefits and introduces students to campus resources. The orientation also provides an opportunity for Q&A, student mingling, free food and giveaways.

To connect students to outside resources, the MVC hosts a VA social worker on campus on a bi-weekly basis as part of the Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL) Program. The VA social worker is also available to schedule online appointments. During these appointments, students receive assistance on enrollment into Veteran Health Administration (VHA) healthcare, benefit from brief counseling services, and receive help navigating all VA, community, and on-campus resources.

UIW continues to develop a culture and environment that embraces the interests and needs of military-affiliated students. A specific 2023-2024 strategic initiative is to improve transcript articulation and applicability of military credits. As part of the Texas Workforce Commission College

Credit for Heroes (TWC CCH) Capacity Building and Sustainability Program, UIW received a \$200,000 grant that will help to develop a fully integrated system to evaluate military transcripts and turn

military transfer credits, facilitating degree completion and validating the integrity of military training.

UIW also honors and recognizes military family members and the challenges they face. In April 2023, the University community celebrated the Month of the Military Child to recognize and support military families. UIW promoted the Purple Up Month and celebrated with events throughout the month of April by printing Purple Up shirts, promoting a Purple Up social media campaign, and turning our Student Engagement Center purple. UIW held Veterans Day parades on Broadway campus in 2020 and 2021, which recognized veteran groups throughout the San Antonio community. UIW has sponsored Our Community Salutes San Antonio, which honors and recognizes high school graduates entering the military, since it was established in 2012. In addition, UIW Athletics annually honors the military with Military Appreciation athletic events and games. In 2022, UIW's military appreciation football game incorporated six high school JROTC units and had an enlistment ceremony that honored over 100 enlistees from all branches of service.

To better connect UIW's many locations in San Antonio, in 2021, the University received a veteran microgrant to support veteran library resources and services. UIW purchased a mobile display case that

“
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 affiliated students.
 ”

essential military training and experience into academic credit at UIW. The College Credit for Heroes grant manager, Alfred Van Raub, focuses on expediting the evaluation of military transfer credits, promoting consistency in the award of credits, maximizing the number of

moves between schools and has rotating military tribute displays that honor veterans. To assist service members, UIW officially joined the DoD SkillBridge program in 2022, allowing transitioning service members the opportunity to participate in higher education internship programs while transitioning out of their military careers.

In 2022, UIW hosted two military focused art events titled Kevlar to Canvas, which featured 32 military connected student artists who participated in 3-hour guided art sessions. The events were open to all military-affiliated members of the UIW community and provided a fun, relaxing and peaceful environment. In 2023 and 2024, MVC hosted a similar event called Kevlar to Clay, this time providing ceramic art guided sessions. The MVC team also actively participates in Joint Base San Antonio's (JBSA) weekly Workforce and Transition Alliance meeting to keep our student veterans connected to the community.

In gratitude, UIW rewards its military and student veterans for their hard work at graduation with a veteran graduation reception, free veteran tribute graduation stole and military challenge coin.

As part of our legacy of service to the community, the MVC staff and the entire University community will continue to honor its commitment to providing top-tier service to those who have served us.



Top: Kevlar to Canvas Event
 Middle: A Promotion Ceremony
 Bottom: Military Appreciation Football Game



Moment for Reflection

A FAMILY LEGACY:

The Marmolejos' Story

By Callum Riley, BA '13

Christopher Marmolejo, Sr. has never shied away from a mission. With over 20 years of service in the U.S. Army, Army Reserves, and the Active Guard Reserve (AGR), including three tours in Iraq, he's adept at coordinating people, operations and exercises. But as his time in active-duty military service ended, Christopher knew that success in the next chapter would require more than his military background. Education became his new mission.

In 2016, as he was serving his last terminal assignment at Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA) - Fort Sam Houston, Christopher acted on his instincts, took the leap and visited the education office on base. "In the military, you can be in charge in a sense without a degree, but I didn't have a degree, so I knew I had to do something and go back to school," he said.

As he walked into the Army education office, his eyes landed on a massive UIW

banner, sparking his interest in the local university. A San Antonio native, Christopher knew about the University but had never considered the prospect of attending classes there.

Gently laughing, Christopher says, "I was born and raised in San Antonio. I knew UIW growing up as the premier private school, the beautiful school, the expensive school ... that's what people thought in the city when they thought of UIW!"

But he quickly realized just how much UIW had to offer. In fact, as a Yellow Ribbon School, UIW has an agreement with the VA to fund the tuition and fee costs that exceed the yearly national cap for students enrolled in private institutions. The Yellow Ribbon Program is utilized in conjunction with student's Post 9-11 GI Bill®.

Starting with one class per semester in UIW's School of Professional Studies, Christopher balanced military commitments with

coursework. In 2018, a medical board led to full-time enrollment at UIW, where he embraced campus life, immersing himself in the student experience. In 2020, he was medically discharged.

"I fell in love with the school and the whole university experience," he shared. "I was part of the triathlon team for a while, and participated in everything on campus I could. I got involved with the Student Veterans of America (SVA) and wound up serving as the president of that organization for three years."

The enjoyment Christopher felt during his educational journey translated into academic success.

In August 2019, he achieved his Associate of Arts in General Studies. In May 2020, Christopher earned his bachelor's degree in Administration with a minor in Human Resources, which he celebrated with UIW's virtual ceremony that occurred during the

Covid-19 pandemic. In August 2022, he earned his Master of Business Administration in Human Resource Management. Today, he's working toward his Doctor of Business Administration degree.

This incredible path inspired Christopher to encourage others to set out on their own educational journeys. He started his lobbying campaign with those he loved the most, his family.

"As I rose through the ranks on my education journey, I thought there's no way, as the head of my household, I can make it all the way to the top while my family is still at the bottom. So, I began to strategize and find ways we could all get to the same level, to lift those people I love through education."

Patricia Marmolejo: Overcoming the Barriers

As an immigrant from El Salvador, Christopher's wife, Patricia, has her own story of overcoming barriers. When she came to the U.S. at just 16 years old, Patricia did not speak English. This language barrier challenged her as she navigated life in a new country.

"I was afraid to go out to the grocery stores or go and buy clothes because of the language barrier. It took me a long time to get comfortable over here," she explained.

This fear also extended to her education, especially growing up in a community that valued work over school.

"In El Salvador, education isn't prioritized. Work is seen as the priority. No one tells you that you could be a doctor, or you could be a teacher," said Patricia.

Although she was initially put off by the idea of completing her high school studies in the U.S., with the support of her family and state education programs, Patricia attended English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and earned her high school diploma.

After meeting in California, the couple moved to Texas where their family grew.

Patricia took joy in seeing her husband find a new passion in education after retiring from the military and often accompanied him to events on Broadway campus.

"I got to know UIW because of my husband," she recalled. "We attended a lot of events on campus, like tailgates, he was always there helping, and of course, I was going to go, too ... but at the start, I didn't feel like I was part of it."

Slowly but surely, Christopher Sr. encouraged Patricia to take a class at UIW.

"My husband kept telling me to try out a class at UIW," said Patricia. "He'd say to me, 'You can do it – it's just one class.' He wouldn't give up! In the end, I gave in and took a class and loved it," said Patricia.

After taking that first class, Patricia kept going and achieved her associate degree in December 2023. She was the first member of her family to earn a college degree and often reflects on the impact her journey will

have on her loved ones.

"Coming over here and being a role model for my children is so important to me. My babies are so excited to see their mom earn a college degree. The best way I can show my siblings, parents and grandparents that there is more to life than just work is by doing it. If I can get a degree with the language barrier, they can too. We don't need that excuse anymore."

Patricia is now working towards a Bachelor of Arts in Human Resources at UIW and credits the loving encouragement from her husband as the key to her journey so far.

"It has been everything," Patricia said with a smile. "I wouldn't be where I am now without Christopher. He pushed me, advised me and inspired me. I knew he had a plan to make me join him at UIW. And it worked."

CJ Marmolejo: A New Path

It wasn't just Patricia that Christopher nudged to take classes at the University. He also carried out a campaign to convince his son, Christopher Jr (CJ), to give higher education a chance.

"I'd been working in retail for a long time. Dad was always trying to convince me to try out classes. In the end, I gave in. I thought, 'what could it hurt?'" said CJ.

CJ soon found himself enrolled in online classes and before long, had become a full-time student at UIW. Just like his father, he became an active member of the UIW community, regularly volunteering with organizations on campus.

As a bonus, CJ got to spend quality time with his dad, something that wasn't always accessible to him growing up.

"It was cool to volunteer with the SVA. I managed to get both my community service hours and spend time with my dad all in one. Sometimes it was a little difficult growing up because I'd miss him, especially when





Christopher Marmolejo, Sr.

he was gone for long periods of time," explained CJ.

In May 2022, CJ earned his associate degree in Information Systems. He is scheduled to graduate with a Bachelor of Business Administration with a concentration in Information Systems in May 2025.

Enhancing The Heroes of Our Society

When Christopher began his journey at UIW as a full-time student, he was keen to find rewarding work on campus to supplement his studies. A student-employee role he found in the student disability office turned out to be the perfect fit.

It was in this position that Christopher was also witness to the negative stereotypes and inaccuracies surrounding the veteran community.

"I'd regularly hear some of the negative stigma associated with veterans. You know, all veterans have PTSD, all veterans are angry and frustrated, it was all that negative thinking about the veteran community."

These experiences compelled Christopher to act on behalf of the military community. To quell those stereotypes both outside and inside the veteran community, he founded a non-profit, Enhancing the Heroes in Our Society (E.T.H.O.S.).

"I thought, 'we have to think differently.'

I started a non-profit to combat this type of negative stigma surrounding veterans and mental health. We wanted to promote the idea within our community that it's ok not to be ok."

In the college setting, and through his work and experiences with E.T.H.O.S., Christopher and his family had the chance to hear what other veterans had to say about their own experiences, challenges and needs. This dialogue ultimately inspired Christopher to research scholarship programs for veterans. Through his research, Christopher learned that veterans often don't make it to the doctorate level, not because they don't have the desire to, but because they run out of education benefits.

"I spoke with Jonathan Lovejoy, senior director of Military & Veteran Affairs and said that we needed a scholarship for veterans. I'd researched other universities and couldn't find one. I think the assumption is that veterans and military-connected families' needs are fulfilled by different benefits, and they don't need additional support," explained Christopher.

Through his personal experiences and in his conversations within the veteran community, Christopher knew this wasn't the case. Some veterans don't realize their benefits expire, others don't know how to unlock them, and others transfer all their

benefits to their families.

Christopher took on the challenge and founded UIW's inaugural scholarship for veterans through E.T.H.O.S. In December 2023, UIW President Dr. Thomas Evans and his wife Lisa, both passionate supporters of the military, took the veteran scholarship to the next level and created The Evans Endowed Veterans Scholarship Fund.

"I'm proud and honored to be able to have started the first ever UIW veteran scholarship and to watch it grow," shared Christopher. "I'm also so thankful to the Evans family. They donated and established an endowed veterans scholarship."

"We'd like to thank him for establishing the strategic priority of making UIW the premier school for veterans and military-connected families," he continued. "For him to make that a top priority shows how much he truly cares about veterans. It shows that it does start at the top. And we are so thankful for that."

With final reflections on their journey, the Marmolejos expressed gratitude to UIW's supportive community and leadership. Their story underscores UIW's Mission to empower veterans and their families, leaving a legacy of service and education.





LOVE, FAITH AND SERVICE

By Devin Castillo



Karissa Ramos always felt the presence of unwavering patriotism throughout her childhood. As the daughter of a Retired Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, she looked up to her father as a role model who embodied what it meant to be passionate about one's career and honor the country he swore to protect. To her, the value he placed on the U.S. military and his role within it was undeniable.

Being a military child comes with unique challenges, though. Moving from Arizona to San Antonio during the middle of her freshman year in high school was one of them for Karissa. Though she liked her new school, St. Anthony Catholic High School (SACHS), she worried that because she transferred in the middle of the year, she would struggle to find connections, as most other students had already established friendships and community.

She was delightfully surprised – and relieved – that the first person she met would not only end up being her first friend during a new beginning, but also the person she'd ultimately choose to spend a lifetime with as her husband.

Karissa met Joshua (Josh) Ramos in her first-period class. In a room full of unknown faces, Josh spoke up and offered her a seat next to him. One kind gesture helped Karissa feel welcomed and planted the seed from which their relationship began to grow.

During the next four years, the pair remained good friends. They shared similar friend groups, a devotion to faith

and service, a military family background and a mutual admiration for one another. As graduation neared, the makings of a romantic connection laid just beneath the surface of their friendship.

In the summer of 2012, after they graduated from SACHS, Josh enlisted in the Navy. He had aspired to become a pilot since he was a child. His grandfather, a Vietnam veteran, was a constant role model who inspired Josh to pursue his dreams of achieving a successful career in the military. Enlisting was just the first step in making his dreams of flying a reality. But now his dreams also included the presence of his best friend, Karissa.

“Josh told me he was taking off in January for basic training, and he suggested that we spend time together until then to see where it goes. By that September, we were officially a couple,” recalled Karissa.

Josh completed basic training at Great Lakes Naval Station in Chicago before being stationed at Dam Neck Naval Base in Virginia Beach for intelligence specialist training where he trained to become an imagery analyst.

During this time, Karissa began her studies at the University of the Incarnate Word in pursuit of her Bachelor of Arts in Communication Arts. She was astounded by her program and fell in love with its educators and expansive opportunities. In addition to having found a community within her degree program, she also found a community within University Mission and Ministry.

During her undergraduate years, she worked as a student employee alongside the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (CCVI), whom she admired for their continued devotion to service. Under the guidance of Sr. Walter Maher, CCVI, UIW’s vice president of Mission & Ministry, this role allowed her to nurture her long-standing religious faith and helped strengthen her connection to God.

The couple was reunited at the end of 2013 when Josh was assigned to a reserve unit at the Joint Intelligence Center in San Antonio. While he fulfilled his duties, Karissa continued her studies, ultimately graduating in 2016. She decided to immediately carry on with her education and began graduate studies in pursuit of an Master of

Arts in Communication Arts, while serving as a graduate assistant for Mission and Ministry. “I got so much support through Mission and Ministry and from my program,” stated Karissa. “[It was a] wonderful six years of my life where I just felt so at home. Those in the Communication Arts program were always doing everything they could to make sure that we, as students, got to the finish line, and that we were getting the knowledge, resources and skills that we needed to succeed in the real world.”

“

Karissa and Josh are the best examples of how servant leadership, diligent work and a passion for serving others will not only lead them to success but will lead others to success.

”



In 2017, after a year at Fort Bragg in North Carolina where he worked with Joint Special Operations Command, Josh returned to San Antonio and decided he was ready

to pursue the four-year degree required to be commissioned as a Naval Officer with the ambition of being a Naval Aviator. With the University’s top-rate service to active-duty military members and veterans, and of course, the enthusiastic recommendation of Karissa, Josh could think of no better place to earn his degree than UIW.

“UIW helped a lot during my education, especially the School of Professional Studies (SPS) program,” shared Josh. “I was active in the military from Monday to Friday. It was a full-time job that spanned morning to afternoon. The SPS program helped to accommodate me and give me time to do courses in the evenings and online.”

In 2018, Karissa and Josh were – some would say, finally – married. By 2019, the pair had both earned their degrees, found an extensive community within UIW and were moving up in their professional careers. It was then that Karissa realized that her calling was to serve her country just as her father, and now husband, had. Rather than joining the armed forces herself, she chose to serve by helping the brave service members like Josh who were ready to pursue their higher education journeys at UIW. Karissa started with UIW and its Military and Veteran Center (MVC) in her official role as the veterans service specialist in 2019.

Karissa knows firsthand what a difference a supportive institution can make in the lives of military members pursuing an education and is grateful to have the opportunity to aid others in the journey her own husband took. She feels that her position – and her personal experiences as a military daughter and wife – allows her to serve both the UIW and military communities with compassion, empathy and a unique understanding.

“It really is a full circle moment for me,” she reflected. “The military has found a way to be a constant presence in my life. I get to use my past experiences to empathize with students and demonstrate that I understand what they’re going through. My job is a big blessing and honor.”

In September 2020, Josh’s longtime dream started to come to fruition when he was accepted into the Navy Pilot Aviation Program. He officially began the program in June 2021. From there, he attended Officer Candidate School (OCS), completed a six-week



air indoctrination course at Naval Aviation Schools Command, attended primary flight training and progressed towards advanced naval flight training.

Josh completed his naval aviation training to become a P-8 pilot in February 2024. At a special ceremony held in Corpus Christi, Karissa was front and center and had the honor of pinning the “wings of gold” onto her husband’s uniform. Although the honor was his, Josh’s gratitude towards Karissa, friends, family and the UIW community who supported him throughout this journey was evident. He felt especially proud to have followed in his grandfather’s footsteps, achieving what his role model had always hoped for him.

“It’s been a long time coming. I’ve been waiting for this moment for a while and it’s finally here. It’s a little bit surreal,” shared Josh, proudly and gratefully, as he looked back on the long journey to this moment.

Having been part of his journey since high school, Karissa knows that her husband’s honor reflects his unwavering dedication and commitment. She never doubted that he would one day achieve his dream of becoming a pilot. She trusted that his love for aviation, drive to serve his country and the role models, mentors and supporters that he had to look up to along the way would guide him. In the military, Josh had the privilege of working with many officers that helped him develop his skills, modeled a level of pride for service and pushed him

forward throughout his training. At UIW, community members including Jonathan Lovejoy, U.S. Navy veteran and senior director for Military and Veterans Affairs, mentored and guided him throughout his process of earning his degree and becoming a pilot. Lovejoy provided insight into his own Navy experiences and helped Josh to look forward to what his future as a pilot could hold for him.

“Karissa and Joshua are an inspiration to all,” remarked Lovejoy. “Their dedication to St. Anthony, UIW and their country is truly



impressive. Karissa inspires all with her passion and drive to support UIW’s Mission, her country and military-connected students and their families. From the day I first met Josh, I could see that he set himself up for success by accomplishing his academic goals and working tirelessly to achieve his dream of serving his country and becoming a Naval Aviator. Karissa and Josh are the best examples of how servant leadership, diligent work and a passion for serving others will not only lead them to success but will lead others to success.”

As the couple continues to reach new heights together, they remain grounded by their shared values, trust in God, and by one another, both grateful for the role that the other has played in their lives.

“I’m just so incredibly proud of the man Josh has become and the things he’s accomplished,” Karissa expressed. “I think that God has blessed him so much in this life, and he really does not waste that blessing.”

“She has been a very big support throughout my career and that hasn’t gone unnoticed,” shared Josh. “I love her for all she’s given me and us ... I hope that I can show her that same level of support and motivation for anything that she must go through in life.”

While it’s unclear what the future holds for Karissa and Josh, what is clear is that love, faith, and a passion for serving their nation and others will be ever-present in their lives.

MEMORIAL

Our community mourns the passing of three dear UIW friends.

CARLOS ALVAREZ



It is with heavy hearts that we bid farewell to UIW friend Carlos Alvarez. Alvarez and his wife Malú established the Carlos and Malú Alvarez Endowed Student Scholarship at UIW to support high-performing, under-resourced students both financially and with mentoring. They also made significant contributions to the Ila Faye Miller School of Nursing and Health Professions and the Feik School of Pharmacy. His \$1 million gift in 2018, to establish the Carlos and Malú Alvarez Endowed Student Scholarship, was the largest endowed scholarship in the history of UIW at that time. Alvarez's commitment to UIW scholars was evident when he visited campus and had the opportunity to interact with students.



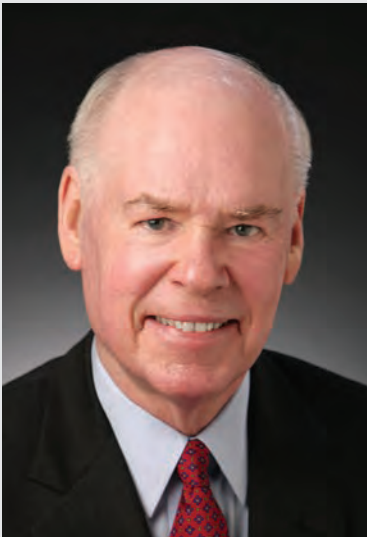
Early in Alvarez's career he worked with Grupo Modelo in Mexico as an export manager; and was instrumental in the launch of Corona Extra in the United States. Alvarez founded The Gambrinus Company and served as its Chairman and

Chief Executive Officer. By 1998, Gambrinus officially became America's top importer of beer. Today, Gambrinus is a leading craft brewer in the United States with a brewery, (Spoetzl Brewery), in Shiner, Texas; and the Trumer Brewery in Berkley, California.

During his successful career, Alvarez served his community both through extensive board involvement and philanthropic gifts. In addition to UIW, Carlos and Malú have been generous supporters of other universities, locally and across the country. His support of UIW and other higher education institutions will impact students for generations to come.

Our prayers are with his family during this time of loss.



WE WILL MISS YOU**RICHARD T. SCHLOSBERG, III**

Schlosberg and his wife, Dr. Kathy Schlosberg, are truly an “Incarnate Word family.” Schlosberg served on the Board of Trustees and Dr. Schlosberg served as an adjunct professor for the H-E-B School of Business and Administration. During his time on the UIW Board of Trustees, Schlosberg advocated for UIW, fundraised with the world beyond San Antonio, reached out to foundations and friends he had made throughout his career in publishing. The Schlosbergs recently established the Richard & Katherine Schlosberg Scholarship ensuring their support of UIW far into the future. Schlosberg’s gifts of time, talent and treasure to UIW are greatly appreciated and we pray for the Schlosberg family during this difficult time.

ROBERT SEDDON

Seddon and his wife, Ingrid, were first introduced to UIW when their grandchild, Amanda Wiatrek graduated with her Master of Arts in Administration in 2011. Seddon supported UIW and honored his wife’s memory by funding the Ingrid Seddon Endowed Voice Scholarship in Music, the UIW Fine Arts Campaign, and the Ingrid Seddon Endowed Scholarship in Osteopathic Medicine. His dedication to the students of UIW has been a blessing to multiple programs. We extend our condolences to the entire Seddon family.



Mr. Antonio Abundis, Friend
 Mr. David A. Allwein, BSN '01
 Mr. Carlos Alvarez, Donor
 Mr. Barry Andrews, Donor
 Sr. Dorothy Anhaiser, I.W.B.S.,
 BS '59
 Mrs. Betty J. R. Birdsong, BS '51
 Ms. Gloria A. Cadena, BSN '62
 Genevieve Canales, PhD, BA '75
 Daniel M. Celaya, PharmD '18
 Mrs. Ellen F. Crenan, BA '46
 Sr. Annette Emrich, A.S.C., MA '82
 Mrs. Priscilla M. Freasier, BA '14
 Mr. Arturo Garza, BBA '12
 Ms. Jeraldine Hess, Donor
 Mrs. Blanche L. Jackson, Friend
 Mr. Charles R. Jeffries, Former
 Employee
 Lt. Col. Robert E. Kelso, Ret.,
 Donor, Honorary Degree '12
 Lt. Col. Eric E. Larson, U.S.A., Ret.,
 BSN '76
 Mr. Albert J. Lymberry, Donor
 Ms. Ingrid M. Mathis, C.P.A.,
 BBA '86
 Mrs. Anna M. Morales, BSN '53
 Mrs. Elizabeth A. O'Brien
 Ms. Gloria Ortiz, BSN '51
 Mrs. Adriane N. Pierson, BA '96
 Sr. Guadalupe Rodriguez, CCVI,
 BA '00
 Sr. Elia J. Rosas, CCVI, BSN '51
 Mrs. Jacquelyn A. Rumpf, MA '80
 Mr. Richard T. Schlosberg, III,
 Former Trustee
 Mr. Robert M. Seddon, Donor
 Mr. James S. Smorto, BS '96
 Ms. Emma C. Torralva, BS '56
 Mrs. Cynthia G. Wallace, MA '97
 Farrell J. Webb, PhD, Former
 Employee
 Mrs. Gina E. Willms, BS '69

UNIVERSITY COLLECTIVE

REFLECTIONS FROM OUR ILLUSTRIOUS FACULTY AND STAFF

UIW takes pride in its military affiliations and in those members of the community who have served or supported those who have served our country. For this edition's University Collective, faculty, staff and administrators were asked to reflect on the following question and here is a sampling of their insights.

How did/does your
MILITARY EXPERIENCE
inspire your work in your professional career
at UIW?



Brandon T. Metroka, PhD

*Associate Professor of
Political Science,
Pre-Law Advisor*

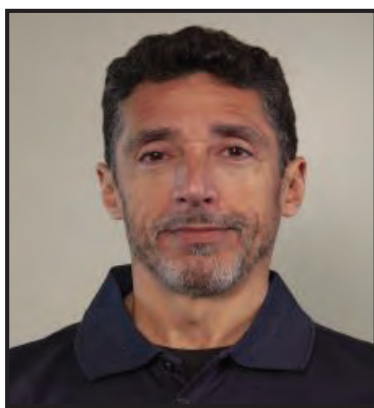
Some approaches that continue to resonate from my military experience include clearly defining goals (objectives), undertaking meaningful and appropriate collaboration to achieve them, and taking corrective actions when necessary ("After Action Reviews," or AARs). These are the basics of growth and progress for individuals and groups alike. Overall, the experience introduced me to such values as duty, selfless service, and integrity (among others). Living these and other leadership values can be challenging at times, but failure is a great teacher in worthwhile, lifelong projects.



Dr. Ashley S. Love

*Director of
Graduate Studies,
Associate Professor*

As an active-duty military spouse for over two decades and a public health professional, my journey has been deeply influenced by the values, resilience, and diverse perspectives I have encountered through my military experience and professional endeavors. This unique backdrop has shaped my personal growth and profoundly inspired my work at the University of the Incarnate Word. At UIW, these principles guide my efforts to create an educational environment that fosters academic excellence and prepares students to be compassionate, informed citizens of the world, ready to face the challenges of today and tomorrow.



Dr. Raul Marin
COL (Ret.), U.S. Army

*Associate Professor of Physical
Medicine & Rehabilitation*

During the last 15 years of my 25-year military physical medicine and rehabilitation career, I dealt with wounded warrior rehabilitation. At the onset of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, I was deployed with the invasion forces for 13 months. What I saw and experienced caused some behavioral health issues in my life. Yet, it was precisely because I deployed that I was able to be a better physician and to treat wounded warriors. I had “street” credit in the eyes of the wounded warriors. It was in the war that I learned the difference between soul and spirit (the former is horizontal – humanity; the latter is vertical – spirituality and faith). No matter the external differences (wounded enemy combatant vs. wounded U.S. soldier, Iraqi vs. American, Muslim vs. Christian, officer vs. enlisted, etc.), the bottom line is that I learned to see the humanity of my patients. Ours was a human-to-human endeavor. My experiences made me a deeply empathetic physician. My practice became a ministry. You may ask, what does this have to do with my work as a teacher at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine? The answer is that I can speak deeply about the “art” of medicine, the patient-physician therapeutic alliance, the courage of daring to feel your patient’s pain and suffering, the emotional aspects of illness, the essence of being a humanistic physician, physician personhood, and the importance of spirituality in patient care. These are pearls I teach to our medical students. Without my military experience I would not be the teacher I am today.



The Right Rev. Dr. Trevor D. Alexander

*Protestant Chaplain &
Adjunct Faculty*

My military service inspired me in many ways. First, my military service inspired me to have compassion for others. My compassion for others first began in my home. During my time in the Army, I had many opportunities to put my compassion to work. As a chaplain, my service to the UIW community is more than just having empathy, it is truly about compassion. Empathy is what we feel, compassion is what we do.



Dr. Patrick Muehlberger

*Assistant Professor of Clinical and
Applied Science Education*

The Air Force core values apply well to medicine and the SOM mission ... Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do. My Critical Care Air Transport Team deployment to Iraq was the most meaningful professional experience of my career. Years of intense learning and training enabled my ability to perform in that role. I hope to help equip our learners to have such experiences in their careers and such impacts on their patients. Additionally, with many military Health Professions Scholarship Program participants and military spouses as students, it is a pleasure to facilitate experiences in clinical training and research through my contacts at Brooke Army Medical Center to prepare them to serve with, and for the benefit of, the greatest patient population in the world.



A WINNING PROGRAM

By Kevin Malcolm



Head coach of the UIW track, field and cross-country teams, Dr. Derek Riedel, has claimed five Southland Conference Championships in the last two years. At the February 2024 Southland Indoor Track & Field Championship meet, he aimed to make it six.

This season began differently for the Cardinals who usually compete in several meets in preparation for conference championships. This year most of the team was limited to two competitions in the month and a half leading up to the big meet.

While the Cardinals were confident after winning so many championships, the lack of opportunities to sharpen their skills in real competition this season made it ever so important for Riedel to rally his team to lock in, fight complacency and give it their all during each event.

“We always talk about storming the castle,” an analogy from sports psychologist Jim Afremow, “Doesn’t matter how good you are, how many trophies you’ve had in the past, you could be the best team coming into it, but your name is not on that



trophy," shared Riedel.

The phrase would come in handy as the Cards faced more adversity through the two-day meet. Heading into the competition, school record holder, Griffin Neal was struck with the flu. During day one, the 2022 SLC Indoor MVP, Isaiah Hudgens, experienced back spasms and was unable to complete all his events. Despite the struggles UIW was in the lead with 48 points.

In the second day of competition the Cardinals performed well, but faced more misfortune when senior Candan Martin clipped his foot on the final hurdle, causing him to fall and injure himself. However, the veteran sprinter had the wherewithal to finish the race, earning key

points for UIW. While this was happening Northwestern State and McNeese were able to put together some great performances and keep the team competition close.

It was an unfamiliar feeling for the Cardinals who usually run away with the team title, in some cases knowing the hardware will be theirs after just 10 of the 17 events.

"I really enjoyed the joy they had and the support they gave each other," Riedel said, "We got to see how gritty they are."

In the end it all came down to one last race, the men's 4x400 meter relay. The team of Corin Burns, Ikenna Opara, Thomas Gignoux, and Eric Quilantan placed third, securing a third consecutive

Southland Conference Indoor Championship for UIW.

After the meet Riedel said, "These guys know how to win. They kept hitting a wall, kept hitting a wall and eventually broke through."

The excitement does not stop there as the Cards consider themselves a better outdoor team. With events like the discus, the hammer, the steeplechase, and the 4x100 relay, events UIW has dominated in the past, the Cardinals look to make even more history in the coming months.



CALENDAR

ALUMNI EVENTS

ALUMNI & FRIENDS GATHERING – HOUSTON

Thursday, May 16
Grotto Ristorante
4715 Westheimer Houston, TX 77027
6 – 8 p.m.

Calling all Houston area alumni and friends! Join us for an evening of food, friends and fun as the Office of Alumni Relations and UIW staff gather in Houston. RSVP online today!

ALUMNI & FRIENDS GATHERING – DFW

Saturday, May 18
Brasão Brazilian Steakhouse (Las Colinas)
855 W John Carpenter Fwy.
Irving, TX 75039
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Calling all Dallas/Ft. Worth area alumni and friends! Join us for an evening of food, friends and fun as the Office of Alumni Relations and UIW staff gather in Irving. RSVP online today!

MILITARY EVENTS

HIRING OUR HEROES NETWORKING MIXER AND JOB FAIR

August 7 & 8
McCombs Rosenberg Sky Room
Military/veteran alumni, as well as military spouses, are encouraged to attend!

MISSION & MINISTRY EVENTS

WELCOME MASS
Sunday, August 25
Chapel of the Incarnate Word
11 a.m.

Please check the UIW Mission & Ministry Website for updates and information on additional services, times, and locations.



Alumni Events



UIW Mission and Ministry Website



ARE YOU AN ALUMNI?

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Dr. George R. Holt

The U.S. Army Retired Colonel reflects on his military career and its impact on his tenure at UIW today.



The UIW School of Osteopathic Medicine (UIWSOM) has many dynamic and engaging faculty members who are military veterans. Their commitment to education, lifelong learning and student growth is evident in every aspect of their careers. One such professor is Dr. George R. Holt, Retired Colonel U.S. Army. Holt shares his reflection on his military experiences below and how they have inspired his professional service at UIW.

SERVICE

Professional education and practice in the health professions is indeed a “service” to society. Each of us in a teaching capacity at a university of higher learning is responsible for serving our professions and those preparing to provide healthcare services themselves. We help develop their cognitive capabilities and knowledge base, professional growth and development and inculcate the virtues, ethics and humanism required to serve persons in need of healthcare.

During my 30 years of service as a military physician, I have better understood the importance of service to others—in the clinic, operating room, intensive care unit, recovery room, on the battlefield and in the classroom. Military service-members deserve our best efforts to keep them safe, functioning and capable.

As with many other UIWSOM faculty members who are retirees or veterans, my military service has expanded my view of the term “service to others” in a different manner than in the civilian service to society.

DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT

Dedication and commitment to caring for each patient over a career in healthcare are fundamental responsibilities. They are also important in the teaching of future healthcare professionals, in the sense that we, as healthcare educators, must endeavor to ensure that learners are exposed to the most current and evidence-based information in healthcare—it is our ethical responsibility to them and their future patients, just as it is the learner’s ethical responsibility to build their knowledge foundation as strongly as possible.

Just as most healthcare professionals embrace an “oath” during their training, military physicians also take an additional oath, the “U.S. Uniformed Services Oath of Office,” affirming a commitment to supporting and defending the Constitution of the United States. I firmly believe that both the healthcare oath and the military oath embody the special dedication and commitment of healthcare providers to the myriad populations of our society.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY

It is important that healthcare professionals be engaged in the larger community that they serve. Although most healthcare professionals will strive to provide excellent services to their patient population, society also expects them to be engaged in the health and safety of the community of their practice and even the national and global population’s health needs.

Healthcare educators at UIW help learners understand their broader role and responsibility within their communities; to become leaders for change and innovations to improve access to care for all and to help drive initiatives that improve the health of all persons in the community.

As most service-members know, the U.S. military is a huge community of individuals who took the same oath and are dedicated to service to, and support of, their colleagues in uniform. I have seen countless situations where the camaraderie among team members, including medical teams, saves lives and contributes to the success of the mission. Likewise, we can teach health profession learners the importance of working together for the best benefit of the patient, and to understand that, like in the military, a community of competence and dedication can be quite rewarding.

Many student physicians in the UIWSOM are veterans, and I believe that I and my fellow military faculty members, can better relate to them and understand their path at the University, through our own military experiences. I honor military veterans who are now directing their lives to a healthcare profession.

To read the expanded version of this article follow the QR Code.





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