

The background of the slide is a stylized American flag. The top half is a solid blue field with white stars, and the bottom half is a white field with red stripes. The stars and stripes are slightly blurred and have a soft glow.

# **Connecticut Veterans, SMI and Unemployment**

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**“A Man who is good enough to shed his blood for his country is good enough to be given a square deal afterwards”-**

Theodore Roosevelt

# Connecticut Veterans and Employability

- Improve communication between Employers and Veterans
- Connect with the extensive resources available to help employers hire, retain, and accommodate Veterans
- Educate ourselves about Mental illness
- Working with the ECCC employment specialists who will serve both employers and Veteran job seekers.

# Veteran Unemployment

7% of Veterans are unemployed - under the national average

Population	Unemployment among post-9/11 Veterans	Unemployment among civilians
Men 18-24	20.0%	16.4%
Men 25-34	9.6%	8.1%
Women 18-24	18%	13.6%
Women 25-34	11.6%	8.3%



## HELPING VETERANS FIND JOBS

# Serious Mental Illness

- Serious Mental Illness: medical conditions that disrupt a person's thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others and daily functioning.
- One in 17—about 13.6 million— people live with a serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, major depression or bipolar disorder. (NAMI)
- Recovery is Possible! - through treatment and medication, people experiencing mental illness are able to lead productive, fulfilling lives

# Veterans and SMI

**1.2 million male Veterans were identified as living with serious mental illness in 2003. (NAMI)**

**Approximately 209,000 female veterans reported serious mental illness (NAMI)**

**Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans experience PTSD at an estimated rate of 20%. It's even higher for Vietnam Era Veterans at 31% (U.S.**

**Dept. of Veteran's Affairs)**



# Popular Workplace Misconceptions

- **Mental Illness is the result of a personal weakness**
- **Mental Illness makes people violent**
- **Mental Illness makes it impossible for people to work**

# Notable Individuals with an SMI

- **Abraham Lincoln**

The revered sixteenth President of the United States suffered from severe and incapacitating depressions.

- **Charles Dickens**

One of the greatest authors in the English language suffered from clinical depression.

- **Tom Harrell**

Against considerable odds, Harrell has successfully struggled with schizophrenia and has become one of the most respected trumpeters and composers of the past 30 years.



# Serious Mental Illness and Employability

- There are three million working-age adults with severe mental illness (in the US) of whom 70%-90% are unemployed
- A diagnosis of severe mental illness is not a reliable indicator that someone cannot work
- People with serious mental illness work at all kinds of Jobs in the labor market (including) technical and professional roles

# Employment and Quality of Life

Employment improves a Veteran's quality of life

- Self-worth
- Financial benefit

Employment helps people experiencing SMI in the same way work improves the lives of people without SMI.

Statistics have shown greater recovery outcomes for Veterans when employment is secured

Veterans with SMI face much more stigma, so the benefits of employment can in many ways help the Job seeking Veteran more than his or her civilian counterpart with an SMI.

# Why Hire Wounded Warriors?

- **Have overcome adversity – can handle a challenge**
- **Loyal to organizations which support them and provide them an opportunity**
- **Creative problem solvers – in both personal and professional settings**
- **Experienced in working in teams for a common mission**



# Barriers to Employment? Communication

- Employer misinformation in regard to Serious Mental Illness  
SMI
  - Stigma of mental illness
  - Unfamiliarity with working with Employment specialists
- Interviewing
  - People with SMI may have stronger work skills than interview skills

# Financial Incentives and Support!

- Work Opportunity Tax Credit
- Disability Tax Credit
- Tax Deduction to Remove Architectural and Transportation Barriers to People with Disabilities

# **Working With ECCC Employment Specialists**



- **Help with finding the right Veteran for the right Job**
- **Assistance in tax credit administration**
- **Ongoing job support for employer and Veteran employee**
- **Occupational case support for Veterans with disabilities**

# Connecticut Veterans Recovery Project Contact Information

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