Recognizing PTSD Awareness Month

Summer 2017

PTSD JOURNAL
Not All Wounds Are Visible™

25 PEOPLE TO KNOW

PRUDENTIAL HELPS VETERANS

FROM BEYONCÉ TO A WOUNDED SOUL

Vietnamese Soldiers: How They Survived The War

Fallujah: The Opera

10 QUESTIONS WITH... A HARVARD PH.D.

How Army Captain Deshauna Barber Spent Her Time As Miss USA

PTSDJournal.com
Best Company
If you are a soldier looking for a job, look no further than Prudential where hiring veterans is a time-honored tradition. By Wayne Rose

Beautiful Soldier
Captain Deshauna Barber used her time in the spotlight to speak out about PTSD. By Connie Aitcheson

Individuals of Influence
These 25 symbolize the work and innovation in the study of PTSD. Compiled by Craig Winston

Listening Medicine
Affraz Mohammed didn't get PTSD from battle, but from a court martial. By Christine Graf
With about eight million adults suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder during a given year, it shouldn’t be a surprise that perhaps thousands of researchers, doctors, clinicians and social service workers are trying to further the understanding and treatment of the trauma-induced affliction. To acknowledge their efforts, PTSD Journal decided to recognize 25 people for their contributions to the field. Our selections are eclectic and well considered, but the staff did not analyze hundreds of study abstracts for candidates. We were attracted to those toiling across the spectrum—doctors, researchers in laboratories, celebrities on stage and in film, or activists helping to ease the transition for returning soldiers. Many of the names are familiar to the medical community, some work in private practice and others address PTSD from foundations or nonprofits. The selections, however, are distinct in their clear contributions to the growing conversation in the country surrounding PTSD.
PAULA SCHNURR, PH.D.
Executive Director, National Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder; Research Professor of Psychiatry, Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth

Schnurr is responsible for the multidivisional center in White River Junction, Vermont, guiding research and also offering insight into the care of veterans with PTSD or similar disorders related to traumatic stress. She is lead principal investigator in a $10 million study, involving 900 veterans at 17 sites that compares leading psychotherapies for PTSD.

“She has dedicated her career to advancing the clinical care of and finding the most effective treatments for America’s Veterans who are living with PTSD. I know that in the years to come she will lead the Center in making even greater strides in promoting understanding and advancing scientific knowledge of PTSD,” said Dr. Rajiv Jain, the, VA’s Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Patient Care Services.

RON ARMSTEAD
Executive Director, Congressional Black Caucus Veterans Braintrust

He has served in this capacity since the organization’s inception in 1988, and it has become a platform from which African-American veterans could voice their concerns. Armstead has been at the forefront of pointing out the need for black veterans to seek help with so little support for them outside the veterans’ system. Hispanic and black veterans are the most susceptible groups to PTSD and represent about 40 percent of homeless veterans.

CARL BELL, M.D.
Professor, Department of Psychiatry, School of Medicine at the University of Illinois at Chicago

Dr. Bell is a recognized authority on trauma and resiliency. He says the common belief about Post Traumatic Stress Disorders is that if you experience trauma your life is ruined but that this isn’t true, he contends. “It’s not the trauma that causes post traumatic stress disorders, it’s the helplessness from the trauma.”

MARC BURGESS
CEO, Disabled American Veterans

The DAV has been a leading organization in helping military sexual assault survivors and bringing to light the issues they face. “We’re in a unique position today where recognition for PTSD is high and the stigma associated with it is down considerably. Veterans are getting in for care sooner than they would have in previous wars. Our understanding and focus on treatment is better than in the past,” said Burgess.

JOHN CARLSON, PH.D.
Certified, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)

A leading proponent and practitioner of EMDR, he works with adults, military and civilian, who are consumed by stress. He manages their trauma by teaching patients new coping strategies and with therapy that includes relaxation and behavioral desensitization techniques.

PETER CHIARELLI
CEO of One Mind; U.S. Army General (retired), former Vice Chief of Staff of the Army

One Mind strives to find answers to brain illness. With his nearly 40 years of military service, Chiarelli leads the organization in its efforts to eliminate the stigma of post traumatic stress and to foster fundamental changes in research that will radically accelerate the development and implementation of improved diagnostics, treatments and cures. He is also leading a movement to remove the word Disorder from PTSD.
**JON TESTER**

U.S. Senator (D-Montana); ranking minority member, U.S. Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee; recipient, Dept. of Defense Medal for Distinguished Public Service

Tester has long been a vocal advocate for better health care for former military, especially in the treatment of PTSD. He has argued, for example, that the VA’s interpretation of misconduct is too expansive, and veterans living with PTSD who received other-than-honorable discharges should receive treatment.

“The folks who served this nation deserve respect and they must be able to access the health care they earned,” Tester said. “There are countless veterans in Montana and across the country who are being denied basic health care at the VA because they were never properly diagnosed with PTSD. It is time to take action and ensure that every veteran is receiving the health care treatment they need.” Most recently, he asked the VA to cover the costs of emergency care for hundreds of thousands of veterans—many elderly on fixed incomes—as required by the Emergency Care Fairness Act.
BESSEL A. VAN DER KOLK, M.D.

Leading researcher in the causes and treatment of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder; Founder and medical director, Trauma Center at the Justice Resource Institute, Brookline, Mass.; co-director of the Complex Trauma Treatment Network; professor of psychiatry at Boston University Medical School

Van der Kolk, whose work integrates mind, brain, body, and social connections to understand and treat trauma, is also the author of more than 150 peer-reviewed scientific articles and several books including the best-selling “The Body Keeps the Score,” which posits that the effects of trauma do not reside solely in the mind but are held throughout the body. He speaks globally on the topic, in professional symposia and at venues like Kripalu, the yoga institute. His research also includes neurofeedback, EMDR and theater for the treatment of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. He was one of the principal investigators of DSM IV field trials for PTSD and is currently working on field trials for a new diagnosis: Developmental Trauma Disorder. Van der Kolk participated in the first neuroimaging study of PTSD and a current project, funded by the NIH, uses yoga for treating the syndrome.

TANJA JOVANOVIC, PH.D.

Assistant Professor, Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences; Director, Grady Trauma Project in Atlanta

Her research program focuses on the interaction of traumatic experiences, neurobiology, hormones, and genetics in mental disorders in adults and children. A recent focus has been on developmental studies in school-age children that suggest impaired fear inhibition is an early risk factor for anxiety disorders.

DAVID LYNCH

Founder David Lynch Foundation for Consciousness-Based Education and World Peace; film and TV director (“Blue Velvet,” “Twin Peaks,” “The Elephant Man”) Employs transcendental meditation to ease suffering of at-risk populations, particularly veterans and the military, women’s groups and underserved youth, among others. An estimated half-million worldwide have used the technique to reduce stress. The foundation funds organization to implement its TM programs. Photo: Dean Hurley

CHARLES MARMAR, M.D.

Professor, Chair, Dept. of Psychiatry, NYU Langone Medical Center; Director, Steven and Alexandra Cohen Veterans Center and Military Family Clinic.

Marmar’s focus ranges from combat-related conditions in veterans to PTSD in refugees and earthquake victims, serving on multiple committees and advisory groups for the VA and the National Institute of Mental Health and as counsel to the VA Medical Centers, fire and police departments, and disaster response teams.

MOHAMMED MILAD, PH.D.

Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School; Director, Behavioral Neuroscience Lab

His research is focused on a fundamental question: How do we learn not to fear? He studies how the human brain acquires fear and is trying to develop new approaches to treat patients with PTSD. He also examines how men and women may differ in their ability to regulate fear.

BRUCE PERRY, M.D., PH.D.

Founder, senior fellow, The ChildTrauma Academy; co-author of “The Boy Who Was Raised As A Dog”; former chief of psychiatry for Texas Children’s Hospital.

He is frequently consulted on high-profile cases involving traumatized children such as the Branch Davidian siege, the Columbine and Sandy Hook shootings, Hurricane Katrina and the Haiti earthquake. His clinical practices have been adopted by many organizations serving at-risk children.
KERRY J. RESSLER, M.D.
Chief Scientific Officer at McLean Hospital, chief of the Division of Depression and Anxiety Disorders, director of the Neurobiology of Fear Laboratory; professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School
The lab staff seeks to learn more about how fear works in the brain so new treatments can be developed for psychiatric illnesses such as PTSD, phobic disorders and panic disorder.

PAUL RIECKHOFF
Founder, CEO of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA). Served as an Army 1st Lt. and infantry rifle platoon leader in Iraq and authored Chasing Ghosts, an account of his experiences in Iraq
IAV A is America’s first and largest organization for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans. The nonprofit was founded in 2004 and has more than 150,000 members. Among its many other functions, IAVA offers one-on-one support to connect members with mental health resources.

SKIP RIZZO, PH.D.
Associate Director for Medical Virtual Reality, USC Institute for Creative Technologies
He is an expert in trauma psychology and on using virtual reality technology for training emotional coping skills with the aim of preparing service members for the stresses of combat. He is the creator of the Virtual Iraq/ Afghanistan PTSD Exposure Therapy System. Treatment typically involves repeated reliving of the traumatic event with triggers in a software application.

GARY SINISE
Started Gary Sinise Foundation in 2011; film actor (“Forrest Gump,” “Apollo 13,” “CSI: NY”)
Through programs as diverse as the Lt. Dan Band to Relief & Resiliency Outreach, his foundation has addressed many areas of need for thousands of military members and veterans. Of PTSD, trauma and suicide stats relating to the military, he says, “I’ve always looked at my role . . .was to help boost their mental health and raise their spirits.”

ARIEH SHALEV, M.D.
Professor of Psychiatry, NYU Langone Medical Center; co-director of the Steven and Alexandra Cohen Veterans Center and Military Family Clinic
His work ranges from acute responses to combat stress, coping with combat stress, frontline interventions, acute and chronic PTSD in civilians, individual and communities’ responses to terror, and other areas. He is the principal investigator of numerous PTSD-related grants funded by the National Institute of Mental Health.

MONNICA WILLIAMS, PH.D.
Associate Professor, Director of the Laboratory for Culture & Mental Health Disparities, University of Connecticut; clinical director for the Behavioral Wellness Clinics (Kentucky)
She argues persuasively that racism is a cause of PTSD and should be included as such in the American Psychiatric Association’s manual of mental disorders. She has written on PTSD and racial trauma and on issues of mental health for African-Americans in national publications and is frequently a subject matter source for the media.

RACHEL YEHUDA, PH.D.
Professor of Psychiatry and Neuroscience; Director of the Traumatic Stress Studies Division at Mount Sinai School of Medicine
She oversees PTSD clinical research program at the James J. Peters Veterans Affairs Medical Center (Bronx, N.Y.), is a leader in the field of traumatic stress studies, a prolific author on the subject and is well known for her work on the generational transmission of trauma and PTSD.

As a leader in disseminating information about research into and treatment for PTSD, the editors at PTSD Journal urge our readers and the medical community to share information on new approaches by emailing us at info@ptsdjournal.com. Your contribution may help heal invisible wounds.

SOURCE: University, medical school press releases; news reports