

“Another Kind of Valor” Training Available

Luis recently came home from a 9-month tour of Iraq. As he is sitting on his front porch, a car backfires and he takes cover, as if he were under attack. At the same time, he is sweating profusely; his heart races and many memories of war are running through his mind.

Luis was recently seen by a psychiatrist at the VA hospital and was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). People with this disorder have thoughts, nightmares, flashbacks, emotional reactions, and physiological reactions. They also experience amnesia, detachment, numbing, sleep disturbance, concentration problems, anger, hyper-vigilance, and hyper-startle responses.

Unfortunately, Luis' story is not uncommon. Thousands of American soldiers, both men and women, are coming home from war suffering from numerous issues including Major Depression, PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury, Military Sexual Trauma, Substance Abuse, Suicide, Job Loss, Family Dissolution, Homelessness, Incarceration and Violence towards self and others.

There are a number of agencies in Kings County serving Veterans, but there are other organizations that do not know exactly how they can help the returning Veterans or are confused about what services the VA offers. In order to address this issue, Kings County Behavioral Health Administration is presenting a day of learning of how to better serve Veterans and their families. Agencies and organizations will learn the effects of war on returning Veterans and their families, how to engage and work with Veterans and their families, and resources available for Veterans and their families.

The training is entitled, “Another Kind of Valor” and will take place on August 4th from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., at 530 Kings County Drive, Suite B Conference Room, in Hanford. The fee is \$25.00 per person and includes lunch and Valor training materials. Seating is limited to 25 people. Call today to make your reservation at 582-3211, ext. 2333. Future dates and private group trainings are available. The Kings County Veterans Services Office will be available to answer questions about available benefits.

There are many state and federal benefits and programs available to veterans and their dependents. To find out if you are eligible for any of these benefits, visit or call our office. We can and will assist you in completing all required application forms. You can also get information on the web from the Kings County Veterans Service Office website at www.countyofkings.com.

Joe Wright, retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, is the Veterans Service Officer for Kings County. Send your questions to the Veterans Service Office, 1400 West Lacey Blvd, Hanford, CA 93230, the phone number is 582-3211 ex. 2662 or email joe.wright@co.kings.ca.us.