



# A Beacon of Support

April - May 2026 | Issue #59

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Client Care Coordinator

**NICK ELLIOTT**  
Financial Coach

**VETERANS CLIMB:**

**CHRISTIAN KEYS**  
**PAUL COOKE 3RD**

*By Bob McLaughlin, Executive Director*

**A**t Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center, everything we do is grounded in one core belief: no service member, veteran, or family member should stand alone. That belief is not just a statement; it is a commitment we live out every day through the power of partnership.

Since opening our doors ten years ago, collaboration has been at the heart of our work. When military service ends, the mission does not — it evolves. We also know that while one individual may wear the uniform, it takes an entire community to carry the mission forward after service. Veterans and their families face complex challenges, including employment, housing, behavioral health, benefits navigation, family reintegration, and rediscovering purpose. These are challenges that no single organization, no matter the size, can solve alone.

That is why partnership is not just important — it is essential.

Across the Pikes Peak region, public institutions provide a critical foundation of support. Federal, state, county, and city agencies, along with elected officials, continue to prioritize those who have served. But government alone cannot meet every need. It is the strength of public-private collaboration that allows us to truly meet veterans where they are.

We see that strength come to life day in and day out. It takes many forms — employers opening doors and creating meaningful career pathways for veterans; behavioral health providers working together to reduce wait times and expand access to care; housing partners stepping in to prevent eviction and homelessness; businesses and foundations investing in innovative solutions; and volunteers giving their time not for recognition, but out of a genuine desire to serve.

This is what true partnership looks like — organizations and individuals locking arms around a shared mission.

I have had the privilege of meeting thousands of veterans who walk through our doors. Some



Bob McLaughlin

arrive with clarity and confidence, simply needing direction. Others come in carrying invisible burdens. Some are unsure of what they need at all. What changes outcomes for each of them is not just the availability of programs — it is the coordination of care and the passion behind it.

That level of connection only happens because of our partners, stakeholders, and community members, who choose collaboration over competition and impact over recognition.

There is an African proverb that reminds us, “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” The work of serving veterans is not a sprint; it is a long-term commitment, and going far requires all of us.

Thank you for your partnership and your commitment to serving our veteran community.

Thank you for being part of our team.

Bob McLaughlin ■



# Partner Spotlight

## CASE MANAGERS:

SHANTEL WARE  
MEGAN HARRISON  
INEZ JACKSON  
DARIA KLAUSNER

## HEALTH & WELLNESS:

KIRSTEN BELAIRE  
Dir, Health & Wellness

VIVIENNE BELAIRE  
BH Ops & Gateway Manager

AARON VITONE  
Behavioral Health Counselor

NIKKI HAMILTON  
Behavioral Health Auditing & Info Specialist

RODGER JOHNSON  
Next Chapter Program Manager

DR. ELINAH RUSSELL  
STEVE FUGIEL  
ANDREW HARTMAN  
SSG FOX SPGP

## DEV & FUNDRAISING:

JAMES HERRINGTON  
Director, Fundraising & Development

ALEX MCCABE  
Donor and Partner Specialist

NICOLA BROOKE  
Development Associate

DENISE PATRICK  
Grant Writer

## GREET AND CONNECT:

REBECCA WEREMBLEWSKI  
CHRISTIE ROBINSON  
Client Services

RUSSELL POUSSON  
IT/Facilities Coordinator

## VBOC:

JOE REAGAN  
Director

AARON GROZIAK  
NATHANIEL HAMILTON-THOMPSON  
COREY MCFADDEN

## PUEBLO:

SAL KATZ JR  
Director, Rural Colorado Services

DAIJAH ANDREWS  
Client Services

MIA ALI  
Peer Navigator

LAURIE COLLINS  
Case Manager

Veteran Resources & Community  
Development Coordinators

## TRINIDAD:

DAVID SAMPSON

## ALAMOSA:

ALEX KAMRUD



Pikes Peak International Raceway is a great partner to Mt. Carmel. They are opening their first location in Colorado Springs in June. They not only support the veteran population but, they have also donated their entire racetrack to us for an event in August. Their support and

generosity has been instrumental in creating the event. PPIR's love for veterans is evident in everything they do. We are proud to be partners with PPIR. Please check out some upcoming events they are having. [ppir.com](http://ppir.com) ■

# Department Updates



## Transition and Employment

Mt. Carmel Transition and Employment had our 5,199th placement at the end of April 2026. We are pleased to note hiring has recovered post Government shutdown and the annual end of year/holiday slowdown.

Our hiring event on April 29 saw 105 job seekers through the door, with the typical drop off seen in spring hiring events. Nine employers were presented with Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Statements of Support. That was followed up by the Veterans Beer Club networking event held at Voodoo Brewing.

Mt. Carmel supported members of the 302nd Airlift Wing Security Forces Squadron as they returned from a deployment.

Jenni attended the annual Coffee with the Mayor event on May 8th. Ana will be at Peterson SFB on the 8th to support their military spouse appreciation event. ■



## Military, Veteran, and Family Services

MVFS is saying our 'See Ya Later's' to Kileen as she steps out of her Mission Outreach Specialist position and embarks on her new journey in GA. Kileen held her position for the last two years and will be sorely missed. While she stepped out, Daria stepped in. Daria comes to us with a lot of social services/case management background and as MilSpouse herself, is committed to the mission. Welcome to the team!

We officially welcomed Dillon to the team as our SSG Fox case manager. He started as an intern with us in January and we decided we liked him enough to pay him! Welcome to the team! As Dillon came on, we said goodbye to JT. JT will be impossible to replace and we wish him nothing but the best as he moves forward.

MVFS attended a lunch for our Senior Veterans at the senior living facility that we sponsored for Senior Angel Tree in December. They had a great time reconnecting and visiting our friends there.

MVFS has completed grant reporting for several of our cyclic grants with the support of Denise. Our connection to these grant programs remains strong and we have received nothing but positive feedback from them. Way to go, team. ■



## Greet & Connect

April-May were busy times for the Mt. Carmel Greet & Connect team. Over 300 community members had their taxes completed through the annual AARP and Mt. Carmel partnership. We also hosted various regional forums from the Marine Corps Delayed Enlisted Program send-off to several political figures conducting veteran roundtables. We also took the next step in our Client Feedback program as we implemented a standardized automated survey device in each of the core mission areas. This enhancement project was completed in partnership with UCCS as part of a cornerstone class. Results have been impressive with client inputs more than doubling in the first two months.

Efforts are now underway to conduct another Social Return on Investment (SROI) assessment on the impact Mt. Carmel has had in the past two years. Data gathering is being compiled and the external assessor will start the drill later this summer.

Finally, as a reminder, event space is available for rent at Mt. Carmel for all occasions, including birthday parties, holiday parties, baby showers, office gatherings and graduation celebrations. For availability, bookings, or a facility tour, please contact our front desk at 719-772-7000. ■



## Health and Wellness

We completed our two annual couple's retreats with 15 couples attending the Silver Cliff Ranch retreat, and seven couples attending the Bar Ni retreat. 87% of couples experienced an increase in connection by the end of the retreats.

Kirsten provided community presentations and topics included: supervisory practices, trauma and the brain, fight and flight trauma

responses, reintegration for returning combat deployment units, and Complex PTSD.

Vivienne and Nikki have engaged in SSG Fox training. Our Director and three of our licensure candidates are continuing to engage in Brief Cognitive Behavior Therapy-Suicide Prevention (BCBT-SP) consultation meetings. This specific modality is evidence based and has been proven highly effective in reducing suicide ideation and attempts. ■

# Department Updates



## Next Chapter

On **April 8, 2026**, Next Chapter conducted a meet-and-greet with **Victory Clinic** to explore opportunities for future collaboration.

Next Chapter also met with **Rocky Mountain Health Plans (BHASO)** to discuss potential partnership and service alignment.

**Rodger Johnson** and **Damian McCabe** completed a two-day Brief Cognitive Behavioral Therapy training on **April 20–21, 2026**, strengthening clinical skills and service delivery.

Next Chapter will participate in the **NAMI Walk** at **Panorama Park** on **May 9, 2026**, in support of mental health awareness.

The team will also attend the **Special Forces Foundation Ruck March** on May 16, 2026, held at America the Beautiful Park.

Next Chapter continues to grow its client base, with **weekly intakes and ongoing behavioral health appointments** supporting individuals in the community. ■



## VBOC

During April and May, the Colorado VBOC welcomed 45 new client sign-ups, conducted 125 counseling sessions, and increased its LinkedIn following to more than 1,209 followers. Throughout this period, we remained actively engaged in the veteran and business communities by attending numerous networking and professional development events, including the Veterans Beer Club, the Honoring Our Veterans event hosted by the Pikes Peak Veterans Council, the PPSBA monthly meeting, the AI Skills Lab – BoodleBox AI Demo at Exponential Impact, the Vet Biz Dream Team, Business Law Group's Tax Networking Social, the Southwest Colorado Small Business Conference, the Techstars Boulder + Southern Colorado Founder & Investor Discussion, and several Small Business Week events, including the Kickoff Celebration & Awards Presentation, Small Business Listening Tour, AI Pitch Competition, and Closing Celebration.

We also met with representatives from Northwestern Mutual, eXp Realty, ION Philanthropy, Franchise.org, the Big Sky VBOC, and FarmAble to strengthen partnerships and explore collaborative opportunities supporting veteran entrepreneurs.

In addition, we co-hosted an Ethics of Real Estate class, a B.A.I.L. Team workshop, a training session with Vectra Bank, and a professional development session with Enhanced Team Performance, Inc.

We continued delivering Boots to Business training at Schriever Space Force Base, Fort Carson, Peterson Space Force Base, and the United States Air Force Academy.

By the end of May, the Colorado VBOC is projected to surpass 1,500 clients served, a significant milestone that reflects the growing demand for veteran-focused business assistance throughout the state. Outreach efforts and program engagement remain strong.

Looking ahead to June, we will host the Mt. Carmel Veteran Business Conference, a one-day small business resource fair focused on education, networking, and business support services for veterans and military spouses. The team also plans to attend the El Paso County Veterans Expo, the Leadership Veteran Quarterly Insight Series, Conversation With Commandos Colorado + Special Forces Trust, and the Pueblo Chamber Multi-Chamber Regional Mixer, while continuing Boots to Business training at Fort Carson. ■



## SSG FOX GRANT

Since its launch, the **Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program (SSG Fox SPGP)** has made significant strides in strengthening suicide prevention efforts for military members, veterans, and their families. The team has completed comprehensive staff trainings focused on suicide prevention, including the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale, Motivational Interviewing, and the Data Collection Tool (DCT) to provide high-quality, trauma-informed care and accurate tracking of services. On April 30, the program hosted a highly successful Launch & Learn event, bringing together community partners and stakeholders to build awareness and collaboration. Building

on this momentum, SSG Fox is initiating case conferencing meetings to support coordinated problem-solving and service delivery for military members and their families. Continued outreach includes a scheduled suicide prevention training at Fort Carson on May 7, 2026, further expanding education and engagement efforts across the military community. We would also like to welcome Andrew Hartman to the team. He will serve as the Outreach and Engagement Coordinator for Teller County. ■



## Southern Colorado

Southern Colorado continues to rise together in support of veterans, military families, and underserved community members through growing partnerships, expanded outreach, and a shared commitment to ensuring no one faces life's challenges alone. Across Pueblo, Trinidad, Alamosa, and Westcliffe, organizations, volunteers, and local leaders are building stronger networks of care that are creating real and lasting impact throughout the region. Over the past two months, these collective efforts have strengthened access to services, increased collaboration, and provided critical support to hundreds of individuals and families in need.

In the San Luis Valley, momentum continues to build as outreach and resource development efforts expand for veterans and their families. A major milestone was reached with the relocation of the Alamosa office into the county building alongside the Veteran Service Officer, creating a more accessible and collaborative environment for veterans seeking assistance. This move has already strengthened coordination between agencies and improved the overall experience for veterans navigating benefits and support systems. Partnerships with organizations such as the Foxhole Project continue to deepen community engagement and strengthen connections with veterans, active-duty members, and military families across the Valley.

At the same time, regional leaders are working together through the SLV Advisory Committee to develop a large-scale resource fair designed to connect veterans and their families with vital programs, services, and opportunities available throughout the area. The goal is simple but powerful: bring organizations together under one roof to ensure veterans know they are seen, valued, and supported. The continued growth of collaboration and outreach efforts throughout the San Luis Valley reflects a region fully committed to serving those who served.

In Trinidad (Las Animas County), the impact of veteran-centered support continues to grow in remarkable ways. At a time when many organizations across the country are facing reductions in services, the Las Animas County Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center remains steadfast in its mission—providing hope, stability, and connection for veterans and families throughout the community. Through its food pantry, trusted partnerships, and expanding programs, the center continues to meet people where they are and provide meaningful support during difficult times.

Awareness of the Trinidad office continues to increase rapidly through active participation in city council meetings, network council gatherings, monthly Care and Share food distributions, and American Legion events. Strong partnerships with the County Veteran Service Officer and American Legion Post 11 have helped connect more veterans to critical care, resources, and support systems they may not have otherwise known existed.

The veterans arts and cooking classes, developed in partnership with the Mt. Carmel Wellness & Community Center, have become a tremendous success story—offering veterans opportunities for healing, creativity, connection, and wellness. Due to overwhelming positive feedback, the partnership will continue expanding into next year with even larger goals focused on building community, reducing isolation, and strengthening overall well-being.

The Helping Hands Mobile Food Pantry continues to make a powerful difference throughout Las Animas County. During the first distribution of the new year alone, 44 families representing 101 individuals received food assistance and support. Behind every number is a family facing hardship, a senior trying to make ends meet, or a veteran searching for stability. The response from volunteers and community partners has been overwhelming, reflecting the compassion and generosity that define Southern Colorado communities. Together, these partnerships are not simply maintaining services—they are building stronger futures for veterans and families across the region.

In Pueblo County, the Veterans Connections Program continues to make a significant impact through direct outreach, wellness initiatives, and community collaboration. Over the past two months, more than 600 individuals have been served through the Helping Hands initiative and

related support efforts. In addition, over 40 veterans received free chair massages focused on wellness, stress relief, and restoration — small but meaningful reminders that caring for the whole person matters.

Community engagement efforts throughout Pueblo have remained strong and visible through participation in events such as the United Way Governance Board class, Pueblo Senior Resource Fair, Business After Hours with Farmers Insurance, Wings on Wheels, the Center for American Values speaker series, the Boat House Grand Opening, and the Veterans Resource Fair hosted at the VFW. These events continue strengthening relationships between organizations while ensuring veterans and families remain connected to trusted resources and support networks.

The commitment to veteran wellness and long-term support is also expanding through new partnerships. Beginning this month, services are growing through collaboration with the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic, bringing virtual mental health services directly into the office to improve access to timely and confidential care. Additional partnership efforts with the Veterans Business Outreach Center are helping veterans and military spouses pursue entrepreneurship, business growth, and economic stability. Together, these collaborations are creating a stronger and more responsive network of care focused on dignity, empowerment, and hope.

One recent story captures the heart of this mission. In March, an elderly Navy veteran came to Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center overwhelmed after a rent increase left him struggling to survive on a fixed income. He needed only one month of assistance to regain stability and avoid falling further behind. Mt. Carmel immediately stepped in to cover his rent, providing relief during an incredibly stressful season of life. More importantly, he left knowing he was not alone. Staff continue staying connected with him while linking him to additional resources, including food support and ongoing assistance. This is the impact of community—meeting people in moments of crisis with compassion, action, and hope.

In Westcliffe (Custer County), renewed energy is building around restoring and strengthening veteran services throughout the region. Leaders and organizations are reengaging in important conversations focused on rebuilding coordinated support systems for local veterans and families. Recent outreach efforts have included a published op-ed article, participation in a local radio podcast, and renewed collaboration with community stakeholders committed to long-term impact.

In June, Westcliffe will host a Veterans Community Roundtable focused on wraparound services and strengthening local partnerships. The event will bring organizations, leaders, and service providers together to identify gaps, improve communication, and build sustainable support systems specifically tailored to the needs of rural veterans. These efforts mark an important step forward in ensuring veterans in Custer County remain connected, supported, and empowered.

As Southern Colorado looks ahead, the need continues to grow. Rising housing costs, utility challenges, food insecurity, and emergency assistance requests are placing increased pressure on veterans and families across the region. Yet even amid these challenges, communities continue responding with resilience, compassion, and determination. Upcoming initiatives such as Pars for Patriots and additional outreach events will continue engaging community partners and expanding opportunities to directly support veteran services.

The work happening across Southern Colorado is more than programs or events — it is people coming together to care for one another. It is veterans finding hope after hardship. It is families receiving support when they need it most. It is organizations choosing collaboration over competition and service over recognition. Together, Pueblo, Trinidad, Alamosa, and Westcliffe are building a stronger future for veterans and military families across the region—one relationship, one resource, and one life at a time. ■



## Alamosa – San Luis Valley



Over the past two months, we have continued to strengthen outreach and resource development efforts for veterans and their families throughout the San Luis Valley. One of the largest changes has been our office relocation. We have officially moved into the county building alongside the VSO office, which has already improved collaboration and accessibility for veterans seeking assistance and resources.

We have also continued building community relationships through outreach efforts with the Foxhole Project. These partnerships have helped increase engagement with local veterans, active-duty members, and their families while creating stronger connections between organizations serving the community.

In addition, I have been working closely with the SLV Advisory Committee to develop a regional resource fair focused on connecting veterans and family members with benefits, programs, and services available throughout our area. The goal of this event is to improve awareness of local resources while bringing organizations together in one accessible location for the veteran community.

Overall, we continue to see positive growth in collaboration, outreach, and resource development across the valley. ■



## Trinidad - Las Animas County



Over the past few months, incredible progress has been made in strengthening the foundation of support for veterans and their families in Las Animas County, progress that will continue to grow for years to come. At a time when many organizations are facing cuts, the Las Animas County Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center remains steadfast in serving our community through our food pantry, trusted partnerships, and a growing network of resources.

Each month, we see a steady flow of families relying on our services, while also welcoming new faces through intakes. Awareness of Trinidad's Mt. Carmel office is expanding rapidly thanks to our regular presence at city council meetings, network council meetings, monthly Care and Share food distributions, and American Legion gatherings. Our strong partnerships with the County Veteran Service Officer and American Legion Post 11 have been instrumental in connecting more veterans to the care they deserve.

Our veterans arts and cooking classes, in collaboration with Mt. Carmel Wellness & Community Center, has been a resounding success. We're thrilled that this partnership will continue into the next year, with even bigger plans to expand programming that builds skills, wellness and community.

Helping Hands mobile food pantry continues to have a tremendous response to our first distribution of the new year in February by assisting 44 families that included 101 individuals. The positive feedback and great support from wonderful volunteers. We are expecting similar numbers in March and it is a privilege to be able to offer this wonderful resource to the residents of Las Animas County.

Trinidad's Monthly Helping Hands - Together, with our partners, supporters and community, we are not only sustaining services, but expanding opportunities for veterans and families in Las Animas County to thrive. ■



**NEWS UPDATE** - Over the past two months, the Veterans Connections Program has continued to strengthen its commitment to serving both veterans and the broader community through our Helping Hands initiative. During this time, we have served over 600 individuals, reflecting the growing need for accessible support and trusted community-based services. In addition, we provided over 40 veterans with free chair massages, offering meaningful moments of relief, wellness, and restoration. Our outreach efforts also included active participation in key community events such as the United Way Governance Board class in partnership with United Way, the Pueblo Senior Resource Fair, Business After Hours supporting Farmers Insurance, Wings on Wheels, the Center for American Values speaker series, and the Boat House Grand Opening.



We also supported the Veterans Resource Fair hosted at the VFW, helping ensure veterans had direct access to essential services and resources. Our engagement extended beyond the region through attendance at the “Brothers After War” film event in Colorado Springs, reinforcing our commitment to veteran connection, healing, and awareness. Through all these efforts, we continue to strengthen partnerships with agencies and organizations that support our veteran community, ensuring that no veteran navigates life alone.



## UP AHEAD

### May

- 1st ..... VFW Veterans Resource Fair
- 1st ..... Trinidad Helping Hands Community Coalition
- 2nd..... Brothers after War Movie
- 6th ..... Pueblo Helping Hands Community Coalition
- 7th ..... Quilts of Valor Ceremony (Sangre De Cristo Community Center)
- 8th ..... Military Affairs Committee Meeting
- 8th ..... Las Animas County Veterans Council
- 16th..... Trinidad Armed Forces Day Parade
- 19th..... Trinidad Veterans Round Table
- 23rd .... Custer County Veterans Day Parade
- 25th..... Pueblo Veterans Day Memorial Day Ceremony
- 30th .... Pueblo Punishers Football game

### June

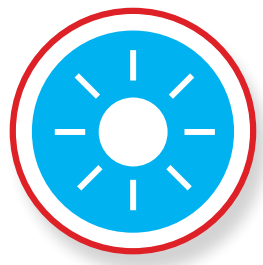
- 3rd ..... Pueblo Helping Hands Community Coalition
- 3rd ..... Trinidad Veterans Coffee Bunker
- 5th ..... Trinidad Helping Hands Community Coalition
- 11th..... MCVSC 10th Anniversary Concert (Cowboys)
- 12th..... Pars for Patriots Golf Charity
- 12th..... Women’s Veteran Recognition Day
- 17th .... Custer County Veterans Round Table
- 18th .... Trinidad Veterans Cooking and Social
- 27th .... Arkansas River Festival

### June

- 1st ..... Pueblo Helping Hands Community Coalition
- 1st ..... Trinidad Veterans Coffee Bunker
- 3rd ..... Trinidad Helping Hands Community Coalition
- 4th ..... Independence Day - 250 years
- 10th..... Military Affairs Committee Meeting
- 28th..... Pueblo’s future is better together meeting

**Note:** The Pueblo Helping Hands Community Coalition with Care and Share takes place the first Wednesday of each month from 10–11 AM in the St. Mary Corwin Hospital’s back parking lot.

**MAKING AN IMPACT** - We are making a meaningful impact by consistently showing up for veterans, spouses, and their families — listening closely, ensuring they feel seen, supported, and connected to real help when they need it most. Starting this month, we are expanding our services through a new partnership with The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic, providing **virtual mental health services directly within our office** to increase access to timely and confidential care. In addition, we continue to strengthen economic opportunities for those we serve through our partnership with the Veterans Business Outreach Center, offering guidance and resources for veterans and spouses pursuing entrepreneurship and business growth. Our mission is to serve veterans with dignity and dedication. No matter the



## Pueblo – Pueblo County (Continued)

circumstances, we are committed to keeping Pueblo County veterans connected, supported, and empowered. This work is strengthened through strong partnerships with local organizations and community leaders who share our commitment to immediate impact—allowing us to connect individuals to resources quickly and effectively. Together, we are building a responsive network of care that meets veterans, spouses, and families where they are, ensuring support is accessible, compassionate, and timely. “We stand by a shared promise: no one has to navigate life’s challenges alone.”

**GOOD NEWS STORIES** - In March, an elderly Navy veteran came to Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center seeking help after a recent rent increase left him struggling on a very limited fixed income. He needed assistance for just one month to catch up and regain stability, and Mt. Carmel was able to step in and cover his rent, providing immediate relief and peace of mind. This support gave him the breathing room to focus on budgeting and planning for the months ahead, while also restoring a

sense of stability during a stressful time. Our team will continue to stay connected with him and ensure he is supported moving forward, including linking him to additional resources such as our on-site pantry so he is not navigating these challenges alone.

**MONTHLY CHALLENGE** - In the coming month, we expect continued emergency assistance, particularly in housing, utilities, & basic needs, as rising costs continue to impact veterans & families across our community. At the same time, outreach & partnership opportunities continue to grow, requiring strong coordination & staff capacity to ensure consistent follow-through and meaningful impact. We are also seeking sponsorships for our upcoming **Pars for Patriots** initiative to engage community partners in directly supporting veteran services & strengthening local impact. As these needs grow, maintaining a balance between service demand, quality care, and timely response remains our priority, ensuring every veteran receives the support and connection they need. ■

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## Partner Relations

We have been selected by six of our partners to be the beneficiaries of their fund raising events. Three golf tournaments, two concerts, and a company conference. It is an honor to be supported by our great partners. These fundraisers not only generate revenue, it introduces our mission to different people who may not be aware of everything that we do.

In April and May, 7 new partners joined the mission to support local heroes and their families in critical services

If you are interested in partnering with Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center to support military members, veterans and their families, reach out to James Herrington at [Jherrington@mtcarmelcenter.org](mailto:Jherrington@mtcarmelcenter.org). ■

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## Community Outreach

- Walker Wilson Benefit Concert- June 11, 2026
- 4th of July Parade (Monument)- July 4, 2026
- Pars for Patriots- June 12, 2026
- Rita Run- July 11, 2026

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## Volunteer Spotlight: Brooks Joseph



CW3 Brooks Joseph has been a long time volunteer for Mt. Carmel. Brooks has helped in every fundraising event for the last two years. Not only does he dedicate his time and energy to the organization he recruits and helps manage other volunteers. As an active-duty soldier, Brooks is the conduit between Fort Carson, and Mt. Carmel, where his actions are invaluable. Brooks is currently serving at 1st Space Brigade on Fort Carson. He plans to retire from the Army in three years and continue to serve his community anyway he can. ■



## The Vantage Point

# THE VANTAGE POINT

The Vantage Point Podcast continued its mission of bridging lived experience with academic insight through conversations that challenged listeners to think more deeply about the human mind, resilience, and personal growth. In one of our most intellectually engaging episodes to date, cognitive psychologist Dr. Lori James joined the show to explore the science behind memory, language, and perception. Drawing from decades of research, Dr. James explained how memories are formed, why some experiences remain vivid while others fade, and how reframing stress can transform it from an obstacle into a powerful tool for growth and learning.

We also hosted several deeply personal and meaningful conversations centered around military service, transition, and lifelong connection. Sean Sindler and Mark Shuster courageously shared their military

journeys, the struggles that followed retirement, and the critical role Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center played in helping them rediscover purpose and stability after service. In another powerful episode, host Taylor Chapman reunited with his childhood best friend Dylan Averack — 16-year military veteran — for a reflective conversation spanning more than 25 years of friendship. Together, they explored how military service reshaped their identities, perspectives, and understanding of life itself. These episodes continue to strengthen The Vantage Point as more than a podcast; it is becoming a growing archive of lived wisdom, honest conversation, and shared human experience. Scan the QR code to watch on YouTube! ■



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