

TO MAKE A REFERRAL

If you are a Post-9/11 service member or veteran in Michigan, or know someone who might benefit from being matched with a volunteer for support, call us:

**BUDDY-TO-BUDDY
VOLUNTEER VETERAN PROGRAM
1-888-82-BUDDY
(1-888-822-8339)**

Only Michigan Post-9/11 service members or veterans are eligible for the program, but anyone can make a referral.

Remember to explain the program first and ask permission before referring someone else.

Anyone who is actively suicidal or a danger to him/herself or others is outside the scope of this program.

IF YOU ARE HAVING SUICIDAL THOUGHTS OR ENCOUNTER A FELLOW SERVICE MEMBER IN THIS SITUATION, CALL 9-1-1 OR THE NATIONAL SUICIDE LIFELINE 1-800-273-8255 AND PRESS 1 FOR VETERANS.

The Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran Program is part of M-SPAN (Military Support Programs and Networks), a family of programs at the University of Michigan developed to address the needs and challenges faced by service members, veterans, and military families.

Program Collaborators

The Michigan Army National Guard Yellow Ribbon Program

The University of Michigan Depression Center and Department of Psychiatry

Michigan State University Department of Human Development and Family Studies

Program Sponsors

The Robert R. McCormick Foundation

Major League Baseball Charities

Welcome Back Veterans

Department of Veterans Affairs

Veteran Integrated Services Network 11

Department of Veterans Affairs

Office of Mental Health Services

For additional information about the Buddy-to-Buddy Program, visit www.buddytobuddy.org email us at buddytobuddyVVP@umich.edu or call 1-888-82-BUDDY (1-888-822-8339).



GET HELP WITH:

- FINANCES
- BENEFITS
- LEGAL ISSUES
- EDUCATION
- HEALTH, FAMILY, AND EMOTIONAL CONCERNS



**BUDDY
★ TO ★
BUDDY**
Volunteer Veteran Program

*OUTREACH AND SUPPORT
FOR MICHIGAN VETERANS OF
POST-9/11 CONFLICTS*

*TOTALLY VOLUNTARY.
COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL.
ABSOLUTELY FREE.*

WHAT IS BUDDY-TO-BUDDY?

The Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran Program is a peer-to-peer program designed to help Michigan Post-9/11 service members and veterans deal with the challenges they may face when readjusting to civilian life.



Behind the program is a simple concept: military service is unlike any other life experience. No one knows more about the issues facing a veteran – in combat or on the home front – than another veteran.

Buddy-to-Buddy was developed by the Michigan Army National Guard, veterans, veteran advocates, and healthcare professionals from the University of Michigan and Michigan State University.

Our objective: to train Michigan vets to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with other veterans, serving as their first line of defense with support and help connecting to resources.

GET HELP FROM A VOLUNTEER VETERAN

Everyone needs a little help now and then. Adjusting back to civilian life can be tough. It can be difficult to ask for help, to know who to talk to or where to go for assistance. The Buddy-to-Buddy Program can help.

*Talk confidentially with a
veteran who's been there.*

**1-888-82-BUDDY
(1-888-822-8339)**

Volunteer Veterans are trained to help you find resources for a variety of readjustment issues such as: financial problems; benefits; educational goals; emotional challenges; substance abuse; legal, medical, or employment issues.



**MICHIGAN VETERANS.
STANDING SHOULDER TO SHOULDER
TO GET SERVICE MEMBERS
THE HELP THEY NEED.**

GET INVOLVED WITH BUDDY-TO-BUDDY

*Volunteer today to
help your fellow veterans*

If you are passionate about helping veterans, think about joining our team. As a Volunteer Veteran, you will help Post-9/11 military service members and veterans link to the financial, health care, educational, and counseling resources they might need throughout the deployment cycle.



If you are a veteran willing to donate your time to an amazing cause, the Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran Program is looking for you.

Reach us at 1-888-822-8339 or buddytobuddyVVP@umich.edu. To learn more, visit www.buddytobuddy.org.

Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran Program Overview

The Buddy-to-Buddy Program was initially launched in January, 2009 as part of an initiative that was funded by the McCormick Foundation and Major League Baseball Charities. This peer support program was developed at the University of Michigan in partnership with the Michigan Army National Guard and Michigan State University to address the unique challenges facing citizen soldiers who often deploy multiple times and are isolated from those with whom they served once they return to their home communities. This peer-to-peer intervention uses military culture to overcome the stigma around asking for help that is so prevalent in the military.

Buddy-to-Buddy is a two-tier program, with the first tier (Buddy 1s) being in-unit Guard soldiers who are trained to identify concerns and refer as appropriate for additional help. This tier is now supported and overseen by the Michigan National Guard. The second tier (Buddy 2s) or Volunteer Veterans are community veterans outside the Guard who are trained in communication skills and local resources. These Volunteer Veterans get referrals from Buddy 1s, chaplains, or most often, are approached by soldiers themselves regarding reintegration or mental health challenges. Buddy 2s link soldiers to military and/or community resources to address concerns ranging from financial or legal assistance to help with benefits or education, to identifying a mental health provider for emotional or relationship concerns. The primary goal of the program is to intervene early so that identified concerns and stressors will not escalate into full blown crises such as at-risk behavior or suicidality.

The program has gone through multiple iterations to arrive at the current, widely accepted model for Guard soldiers. For example, initially Buddy-to-Buddy was set up to be a phone program with a secure phone platform. It quickly became apparent that without the ability to have face-to-face interactions where trust could be established, there were few referrals. However, once Volunteer Veterans were assigned to units and joined that unit in armories on drill weekends, they were approached with a wide range of questions and concerns. Although, our volunteer documentation is incomplete, in calendar 2010 (due primarily to volunteers doing the work, but not recording it), Buddy Two Volunteer Veterans (B2VV) documented over 300 unique referrals. In the first quarter of 2011, B2VV recorded 73 unique referrals. We now have a group of 44 trained and active volunteers in 26 armories throughout Michigan, and expect to expand to 90 volunteers by the end of 2012. The collaboration with the Michigan Army National Guard has been particularly rewarding, with the Assistant Adjutant General (ATAG) of the Guard calling the universities his “force multiplier”.

The McCormick Foundation and Major League Baseball have continued to fund the program. In FY 2011 and 2012, we received additional funding from the Department of Veterans

Affairs Integrated Services Network 11 and the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Mental Health Services. A research member on our team, Dr. Valenstein, has received a VA HSR&D grant to conduct a formative evaluation and a preliminary quasi-experimental exploration of the effectiveness of this program.

Our project team has been pleased that the Buddy 1 portion of the program has been designated by the National Guard Bureau as a best practice program, and we have received requests from numerous states for additional information. The two-tier program has also been identified by the Defense Centers of Excellence (DCoE) as a best practice program that is described in its White Paper on Peer Support Programs. The Illinois Guard has received funding to implement both tiers of the program and the South Carolina Guard has implemented Tier 1 and is in the process of implementing Tier 2. We are convinced that this model can be leveraged in many important ways, and can be implemented as a stand-alone program or incorporated into existing military readiness, resilience and suicide prevention programs.

The VA has played a large role in the success of this program. Most of the clinical referrals from the Buddy-to-Buddy Program are to the VAs, Vet Centers and CBOCs, and we have built relationships with the OEF/OIF teams at VA medical centers throughout the state. The Program Psychologist is the Local Resource Coordinator and Staff Psychologist at the Ann Arbor VA. The VA has also been a sponsor, and their supplementary funding has allowed continued growth of the program. Finally, the VA has funded the program evaluation study. Very few of the existing Peer Support Programs have been evaluated with any rigor so the opportunity to conduct a formative evaluation and conduct a quasi-experimental assessment of its effectiveness is extremely important.

Our two organizations' mutual program goals of outreach, early intervention, suicide prevention, and community collaboration provide impetus for additional discussion on how a continued interface could leverage program sustainability and dissemination. We look forward to these discussions.



Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran Program

Mission, Vision, and Goals Statement

Mission

The Mission of the Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran Program is to use trained veteran volunteers to help OIF/OEF military service members overcome the stigma around asking for help and link those who are facing challenges in readjusting to civilian life with appropriate resources that will optimize their quality of life.

Vision

Veterans will take advantage of existing resources available to them, seek help earlier if needed, and stay in treatment longer as necessary resulting in better outcomes and higher quality of life. Stigma around seeking help for psychological injuries will be a vestige of the past. The value of peer support will be demonstrated and will result in higher utilization of these effective and cost-effective approaches.

Goals

- Provide support and linkage to resources so that veterans will:
 - feel connected and supported
 - become aware of the best local resources and their options
 - get help navigating complex health care systems and other organizations
 - access care sooner
 - get support to stay in treatment
 - optimize their quality of life
- Evaluate program effectiveness.
- Solicit ongoing feedback from consumers and providers of services to continue to improve program.
- Create a program model that is replicable and sustainable.

Strategies

- Recruit sufficient number of volunteer veterans to staff Michigan Army National Guard Armories throughout Michigan.
- Establish relationships with Unit Command at Armories.
- Establish linkages and ongoing communication with MI ARNG Buddy 1 Program.
- Recruit and train a core of volunteer veterans to handle referrals from other branches of the military.
- Identify referral resources throughout Michigan, both military and local community-based; keep updated information on effectiveness of resources.
- Provide outreach to other VSOs to inform them about program.
- Develop web-based and other strategies to increase awareness of program.
- Provide ongoing training, supervision and support to volunteer veterans.

Feeling overwhelmed?
Stressed out?
Need to talk?

Talk confidentially
with a veteran
who's been there.

1-888-82-BUDDY
(1-888-822-8339)

Everyone needs a little help now and then. For soldiers returning from deployment, adjusting to life at home can be tough. It can be difficult to ask for help, or to know where to go or who to talk to.

Fortunately, help is just a phone call away.

No one knows more about the issues facing a soldier — in combat or on the home front — than a fellow soldier. That's why the Buddy-to-Buddy program was developed—to train Michigan vets to help newly-returning soldiers adjust to life after active duty. From family concerns to financial struggles to emotional challenges, trained Buddy-to-Buddy volunteer vets are there to listen and to help returning soldiers access the community resources and care they need to ease the transition home.

Michigan Vets. Standing shoulder to shoulder.

If you or a soldier you know needs help, call the Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran Program at 1-888-82-BUDDY (822-8339). You'll be matched with a vet trained to help you find resources for mental health, substance abuse, financial benefits, educational, legal or job issues.



The **Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran** program was developed by a team from the Michigan Army National Guard, healthcare professionals from the University of Michigan and Michigan State University, and veteran advocates. **Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran** program is part of the Michigan Army National Guard's Road to Reintegration Program which was developed to provide support to OIF/OEF Soldiers as they return to civilian life. **Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran** program is sponsored in part by Welcome Back Veterans, an organization which raises awareness about the issues facing returning veterans, and supports programs and services for military service members and their families. Welcome Back Veterans is sponsored by Major League Baseball Charities and the McCormick Foundation. To learn more about the program, contact Brandon Brogan, Program Manager, at bcbrogan@umich.edu.



Seeking Veterans for Unique Volunteer Opportunity

The Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran Program

**No one knows more about the issues facing a veteran—
while deployed or on the home front—
than another veteran.**

The Michigan Army National Guard and the University of Michigan
have partnered to create the Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran Program
to provide peer support and links to needed resources
for OEF/OIF service members.

Think about joining our team if you have:

- A strong desire to help other veterans
- Good communication and listening skills
- A good understanding of the issues facing returning service members
- Basic internet and email skills
- 1-2 hours per week
- 1 Saturday per month

Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran Program

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

**Call 1-888-822-8339 or email
buddytobuddyVVP@umich.edu**

**Visit www.buddytobuddy.org
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