



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
BOROUGH OF THE BRONX  
COMMUNITY BOARD 7**



HON. VANESSA L. GIBSON, BOROUGH PRESIDENT    YAJAIRA ARIAS, CHAIRPERSON    VACANT, DISTRICT MANAGER

**VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

<b>Chair:</b>	<b>Chad Y. Royer</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>April 19, 2023</b>
<b>Meeting Time:</b>	<b>6:30PM</b>
<b>Meeting Recording:</b>	<a href="https://youtu.be/jbgU_TuZsZg">https://youtu.be/jbgU_TuZsZg</a>
<b>Members In Attendance:</b>	<u>✓</u> Chad Royer <u>✓</u> Emmanuel Asamoah <u>✓</u> Hugo Gonzalez <u>✓</u> Jean Hill <u>✓</u> Tobie Buford
<b>Minutes done by:</b>	<b>Chad Y. Royer</b>

**Minutes:**

- I. Meeting Guidelines**
- II. Introductions**
- III. Review of previous minutes**
- IV. Follow-up from previous month (If applicable)**

**1. VA Medical Center Update**

- a.** Terra Osterberg, Clinical Research Coordinator, spoke about a research initiative where they look to help Veterans to better understand the relationship between brain function and mental health, while examining the effects of a mild head injury and mood disorders like depression and PTSD, which may have an impact of suicidal ideation and behavior. The goal is to reach out to communities and improve clinical care.
- b.** The VA offers transportation to and from the Bronx VA and the studies are with compensation to the Veterans who participate. For more information, contact Terra Osterberg at 718-584-9000 x3635, or at [Terra.osterberg@va.gov](mailto:Terra.osterberg@va.gov)

**V. New Business**

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E-MAIL: [KCABRERACARRERA@CB.NYC.GOV](mailto:KCABRERACARRERA@CB.NYC.GOV) ◊ WEBSITE: [NYC.GOV/BRONXCB7](http://NYC.GOV/BRONXCB7)



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#### **1. Presentation on Orisha Wholeness: Ms. Pascale Pierre, President**

- a. Orisha Wholeness is a health and wellness organization founded by residents of the Bronx and they provide health and wellness activities for free and/or low cost. They offer fitness classes like salsa, yoga, body conditioning, Zumba, nutritional training and financial literacy.
- b. The Resilience Program deals with Veterans' mental health needs and they encourage exercising, breathing fresh air, and socializing. They provide weekly classes for Veterans to participate. Veterans Appreciation Day is Saturday June 17, 2023 and their event will be at Poe Park from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. (Rain date is June 24, 2023)
- c. For more information, go to website <https://www.orishawholeness.org> or email [orishawholeness@gmail.com](mailto:orishawholeness@gmail.com)

#### **2. Presentation on Traumatic Stress and Resilience In Veterans: Dr. Michael Turman, PhD, Postdoctoral Fellow Of Psychology In Psychiatry At Weill-Cornell**

- a. Many Veterans experience challenging events or periods of time throughout their service that can lead to anxiety, depression and stress. While many may feel that these challenges are exclusive to some traumatic events, other causes can include transition from military to civilian life and vice versa.
- b. According to a study in 2016 regarding Veterans three years to post separation, there was a significant decline in health outcomes and self-reported well-being. The difficulty in accessing health care can further stem from stigma around mental health. Between

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21% and 29% of Veterans at some point in life will experience PTSD, and some of those reactions could include not being fully present, loss of interest in things, feeling disconnected from others, avoiding things that remind them of events, feelings of isolation and guilt, trouble concentrating, and inability to sleep.

- c. Common feedback from Veterans include wanting to avoid crowds, preferring to shop and run errands during off-peak times, avoiding traffic, and avoiding places that are not safe. Other traumatic events could include warzone/sensitive area deployments and sexual trauma.
- d. Resilience is a process that can be used to help with facing these challenges. First step is assessing what happened and the impact it left. Second step is identifying what needs to be healed. The third step is to reevaluate how one feels about the healing and strengthening process. The follow up is to go through the previous steps and see what worked and what did not (rinse and repeat).
- e. Community engagement in the Veterans community is crucial and social support is important to improve resilience. The New York Presbyterian Military Family Wellness Center at Weill-Cornell offers short term evidence based treatments for Veterans regardless of discharge status and their families.
- f. Additional information will be sent to the office, or requested by email at [mit9053@med.cornell.edu](mailto:mit9053@med.cornell.edu)

### 3. Events In May and June 2023

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- a. Bronx Victory Memorial Annual Flagging Event will take place at Mosholu Parkway on Saturday, May 13, 2023 at 11:00 AM. All are invited and welcome to attend.
- b. Woodlawn Cemetery Flagging Event will take place at Woodlawn Cemetery on Wednesday, May 24, 2023 at 10:00 AM. The event will be about one to two hours long. All are invited and welcome to attend.
- c. Bronx Community Board 7's Veterans Committee will host a Veterans Resource Fair On June 3, 2023. The location is at Fordham Library at 310 East Kingsbridge Road. The time is tentative for 10:00 and is subject to change. All are welcome.

**VI. Next meeting date: May 17, 2023 at 6:30PM**

**VII. Discussion on next agenda**

**VIII. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn meeting by Jean Hill, seconded by Hugo Gonzalez.**

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