

SUPPORTING EMPLOYMENT AND RESOURCES FOR VETERANS' ECONOMIC SECURITY

ABOUT THE NETWORK

SERVES is focused on developing data infrastructure and a learning health system community of researchers dedicated to studying employment and economic security for Veterans, with the aim of preventing negative outcomes such as homelessness, suicide, criminal justice involvement, and poor health. Our goals include building a network of researchers, establishing a multi-year pilot grant funding program, and creating a body of operations-partnered research that enhances the understanding and development of programs dedicated to the economic security of Veterans, thereby improving their housing, health, and well-being. As a network member of the SERVES CORE, **you are part of a growing national collaborative** of VA professionals committed to enhancing employment and economic security outcomes for Veterans. We thank you for your engagement!

IN THIS ISSUE

- ★ **About the SERVES CORE Network**
- ★ **Meet the CORE Team**
 - ★ Principal Investigators
 - ★ Co-Investigators & Consultants
 - ★ Administrative Team
- ★ **Recent Updates**
- ★ **Recent Research from the SERVES Team**
- ★ **Announcements**
- ★ **Contact Information**

MEET THE CORE TEAM

Principal Investigators

James LePage, PhD

Associate Chief of Staff for Research and Development
VA North Texas Health Care System



Brian Stevenson, PhD

Research Psychologist & Director of EmpowerWork Program
VA Bedford Health Care System, VISN 1 MIRECC



Jack Tsai, PhD, MCSP

Director of Research for the National Center on
Homelessness Among Veterans
VA Central Office



Continued on page 2

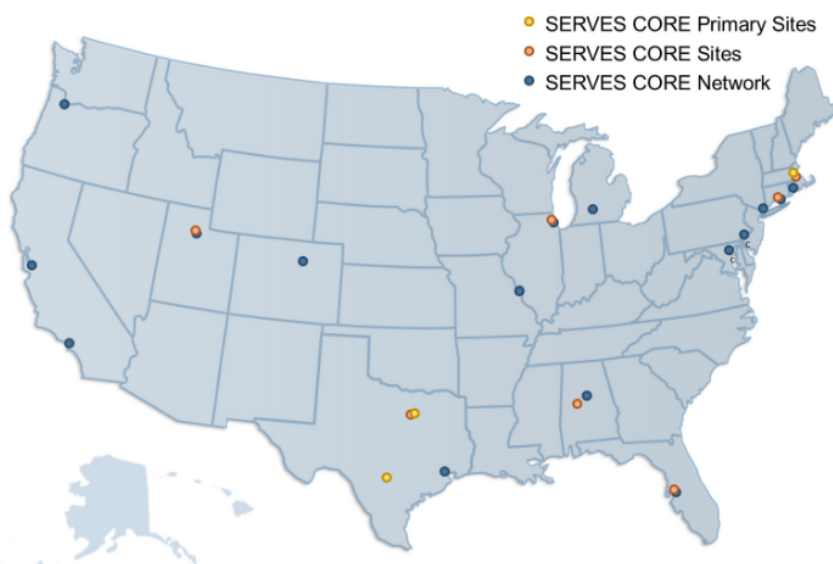
MEET THE CORE TEAM

Co-Investigators & Consultants

Morris Bell, PhD	VA Connecticut Health Care System
Lori Davis, MD	VA Birmingham Health Care System
Richard Nelson, PhD	VA Salt Lake City Health Care System
Lisa Ottomanelli, PhD	VA Tampa Health Care System
Gary Bond, PhD	Independent Researcher
Jean Yoon, PhD	VA Health Economics Research Center
Lisa Mueller, PhD	VA Bedford Health Care System
Steven Arxer, PhD	University of Texas at Arlington
Marc Rosen, MD	VA Connecticut Health Care System
Emre Umucu, PhD	VA South Texas Health Care System
Bo Kim, PhD	VA Boston Health Care System
Hong Yu, PhD	VA Bedford Health Care System
Mayumi Gianoli, PhD	VA Connecticut Health Care System
Dina Hooshyar, MD	VA National Center on Homelessness Among Veterans
Robert Rosenheck, MD	Yale University
Matthew Sprong, PhD	VA Hines Health Care System

Administrative Team

April Crawford Project Coordinator VA North Texas Health Care System
Jason Flake Post-Doctoral Fellow VA North Texas Health Care System
Taylor Hunt Project Coordinator VA Bedford Health Care System



RECENT UPDATES

We have been working hard on CORE start-up, including establishing an advisory committee and our network of partners. We are also developing a Veteran Economic Security Panel (see Announcements Section) to review future projects. A team focused on outcomes has established sub-committees to identify research gaps, and to develop measurement and data repositories. We have also started an evidence-based practice review of the current employment literature and have begun steps for securing pilot funding for employment/economic security related projects.

RECENT 2025 RESEARCH FROM THE SERVES TEAM

Montgomery, A. E., DeRussy, A., Byrne, T., Richman, J., Tsai, J., & Nelson, R. (2025). Residential migration among veterans with experience of housing instability. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 114, 103552. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2024.103552>

Ottomanelli, L., Venkatachalam, H., McDonald, S., Smith, T., Dillahun-Aspillaga, C., Toyinbo, P., Cotner, B., Cruz, A., Cessna-Palas, J., and Goetz, L. (2025) Hopefulness and perception of barriers among job seeking veterans with SCI prior to initiation of vocational rehabilitation interventions. *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation*, 106(4). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apmr.2025.01.133>

Richardson, E., Flike, K., Hyde, J., Petrakis, B. A., McInnes, D. K., & Kim, B. (2025). "It's more than a ride" veteran perceptions of peer specialist qualities and activities that were most valuable for post-incarceration reentry: A qualitative analysis. *Health & Justice*, 13(1), 2. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40352-024-00303-7>

Sprong, M. E., Hollender, H., Lee, Y.-S., Forziat-Pytel, K., Dooley, T., & Buono, F. D. (2025). Effects of COVID-19 on enrollment and discharge for veterans (With substance and alcohol use disorders) referred for vocational rehabilitation within the VA Health Care System. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/00343552251320950>

Stevenson, B. J., Reed, C., Falcón, A., Hunt, T., Kathawalla, U.-K., Mueller, L., McNary, K., Wilkins, S., & Blustein, D. (2025). Purposeful pathways: An integrative career development intervention for vocational, mental health, and substance use recovery. *Journal of Career Development*, 52(2), 214-235. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08948453241313192>

Tsai, J., Witte, L., & Fate, T. (2025). Mixed-methods study of use and attitudes about psychedelics for therapeutic purposes among low-income U.S. veterans nationally. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02791072.2025.2483705>

Umucu, E., Granger, T. A., Weichelt, B., McGee, T., Lee, G., Celik Zencir, A., Yates, J., Barnas, J., Barter, C., & Lee, B. (2025). Access to care and services among U.S. rural veterans with and without disabilities: A national study. *Healthcare*, 13(3), 275. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare13030275>

Umucu, E., Granger, T., Degeneffe, C. E., & Lee, B. (2025). Reasons to worry about employment during COVID-19 among veterans with disabilities. *Stress and Health*, 41(1). <https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.70004>

Cotner, B., Ottomanelli, L., Cruz, A., & Smith, T. (2025). Engaging veterans with spinal cord injury in vocational rehabilitation: What works, what doesn't in the early phase of job seeking. *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation*, 106(4), e70. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apmr.2025.01.181>

Degeneffe, C. E., Granger, T. A., Umucu, E., & Kriofske Mainella, A. (2025). Preparing rehabilitation counselors to serve veterans: Perspectives of post-9/11 student veterans in rehabilitation counselor education programs. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/00343552251320945>

Hooshyar, D., D'Olympia, J., Kearns, J. C., Seed, R., Park, W., & Siddiq, J. D. (2025). Homeless outreach: Framework, influencers, and best practices. *Illness, Crisis & Loss*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/10541373251316261>

Kinney, R.L., Hooshyar, D., and Tsai, J. (2025) Use, benefits, and barriers to financial and credit counseling among veterans according to financial counselors and other subject matter experts. *Military Medicine*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/milmed/usaf040>

Meisler, A. W., Gianoli, M. O., & Pietrzak, R. H. (2025). Criminal justice system involvement among U.S. military veterans: Prevalence, correlates, and mental health burden. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 52(4), 555-570. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00938548241313383>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are actively recruiting Veterans to serve on our Veterans Economic Security Panel!

Please help us identify Veterans interested in serving on a newly developed Veterans Economic Security Panel. Please share this information with staff and Veterans!

Who: We are looking for 8 to 10 Veterans with current or past employment, and/or economic-security hardships to serve on this panel.

Why: The goal of this panel is to support high-quality research and evaluation projects that are well-aligned with Veterans' perspectives for improving VHA health care practice and policy. Members will be paid \$50 per meeting, as well as \$50 for time spent reviewing material for scheduled meetings. This is a great opportunity for Veterans to use their voice to contribute VHA activities that support Veterans' employment and economic security!

What: Members will provide their feedback and critique of VHA research and evaluation projects and should be willing to:

- Attend a 2-hour virtual Panel meeting every two months
- Attend an annual virtual SOTA conference meeting
- Review research/evaluation materials in advance of Panel meetings
- Provide input to researchers and operations partners on ongoing or future directions of research/evaluation projects

How to Apply: Please have veterans complete an application using this link, or by scanning the QR code on the flyer below. <https://varedcap.rcp.vaec.va.gov/redcap/surveys/?s=PRRTPWR94HXFRLX9>

This panel is one component on a newly developed research consortium (CORE) focused on Veterans' employment and economic security (Supporting Employment and Resources for Veterans' Economic Security "SERVES"). For more details, please visit our website: <https://www.hsrd.research.va.gov/centers/core/serves.cfm>

Please direct any further questions to Dr. Brian Stevenson
(brian.stevenson4@va.gov; 781-854-1436).



**New research published or
presented at a conference?
Please let us know so we can share
it with the community in our next
newsletter.
Email taylor.hunt@va.gov**

Check back for next month's newsletter!