CSUSB Student Nurses Conduct Research on Veterans’ Health

By Marilyn Stoner, RN-BC, PhD
Professor of Nursing

In 2012 First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden asked nursing schools to include more content on the issues related to veterans’ health. The initiative was part of many other initiatives called the “Future of Nursing Education.” Nurses have always played an important role during war. The two-year nursing degree offered at community colleges arose out of a need to train nurses more quickly after WWII.

This project was not a compilation of research studies, but done as part of a research class to collect evidence on a specific topic related to veterans’ health, then synthesize the information gathered in a poster. Students did this in preparation for presenting nursing content at professional meetings.

The topics selected focused on the three most recent wars, starting with Vietnam, then OEF and the current wars.

I am an Air Force dependent, born at the now closed Georgia Air Force base, and growing up I traveled around the United States. As a teenager I cut my teeth watching reports on the Vietnam war. My dad was a crew chief in the defunct SAC.

The students addressed 12 topics. To view PDFs of the posters, log onto the Veterans Success Center’s Facebook page.
On April 12, 2014, seven student veterans, service members, a dependent, an alumni and the director of the Veterans Success Center participated in the university’s Coyote Cares Day. The event began at 8 a.m. with a free breakfast in the Obershaw Dining Room. Students were then transported by vans to a variety of organizations throughout San Bernardino, where they provided community service activities such as clean-up, painting, beautification and restoration. Student veterans chose to volunteer at the Veterans Exploration Garden in Speicher Park. Last year, more than 250 students, faculty, staff and alumni volunteers came together to complete projects that benefit San Bernardino and other nearby areas as a way of thanking the community for their support of the university.

“Coyote Cares Day gave us students a chance to make a difference in our community”

Jordan Gallinger, USMC Veteran
Dating back to 1775, American women have always served on the battlefield. In 1948, the Women’s Armed Services Integration Act granted women permanent status in the regular and reserve forces of the U.S. military. Women veterans have been an integral part of the fabric of California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) since it was established in 1965. In honor of women veterans who are a large and growing part of our veteran campus community, a pair of combat boots were painted to represent all those women who, despite the difficulties of returning to civilian life, attended CSUSB. The right boot is adorned with an American flag along with the Coast Guard, U.S. Army and Air Force emblems. The colorful beads intertwined on each side of the boot represent two of the conflicts our women student veterans have served in. In support of these campaigns, a symbol of each conflict is painted alongside the beads. On the right side of the boot, the beads symbolize the Persian Gulf War, and for this an emblem of UCENTAF was painted. On the left side of the boot, the twin towers are painted inside a pentagon with an American flag as the background memorializing the tragedy that occurred on Sept. 11, 2001. On the same boot, a stack of books was painted to represent the hours of studying and learning that our women student veterans engage in on a daily basis. The coyote painted in CSUSB school colors—black, blue and gray—symbolizes school spirit. Because these boots were donated by a soldier in the Army National Guard, the California state flag along with the Minute Man were painted on the left boot. On this same boot, emblems of both the Marine Corps and Navy were painted as well as the two ROTC programs (Army and Air Force) that are offered at CSUSB. Symbolizing the Iraq War, beads were placed on the laces to resemble the campaign ribbon, and the campaign medal was painted on. Luckily, our female veterans safely returned to the United States before beginning school, thus a large yellow ribbon was painted on, which symbolizes “welcome back.” Finally an American bald eagle was painted on the boot to embody our great country’s national symbol.

These customized boots will be on permanent display as a part of A Mile in Her Boots exhibit at the VA Loma Linda Health Care System.

From left to right top: Air Force Cadet Janelle Hrycyk, 2d Lt Nethania Penrod (U.S. Air Force), Jenifer Iacolino (U.S. Army Veteran), 1 Lt Angela Park (U.S. Army), Judith Castillo (CA National Guard Veteran), Jennifer Smolenski (U.S. Air Force Veteran), Bottom: PFC Yajaira Trejo (CA National Guard), Air Force Cadet Jessica Zetina.
Although the school year is coming to an end, you might have lingering questions that you have been wanting to ask. Luckily, our annual Spring Fling Resource Fair is just around corner! With numerous department representatives that work specifically for our student veterans here at Cal State San Bernardino. This resource fair is your chance to have them all gathered under one roof. Lunch will be provided, so be prepared with questions galore. This year, we will have representatives from WorkAbility IV, GI Bill and the benefit fee waiver, careers in teaching and many more! Make sure to mark your calendars because it is coming on April 29, 2014, starting at 8 a.m.

Alfonso Flores (left) has been accepted to the UCSF School of Pharmacy and Antonio Silva (right) has been accepted to the Claremont Colleges, Keck Graduate Institute School of Pharmacy.

Translating Your Military Skills Into Civilian Ones

When creating a resume, translating your military skills, experience and training into terms that civilian employers can understand can be a very challenging task. For example, the military job description for an M1 Armor Crewman includes responsibilities such as: Assists in target detection and identification; places turret in operation; determines range to target; prepares range and sketch cards; operates main gun controls and firing controls; adjusts fires; bore sights, screen and zero’s main gun. A civilian employer would most likely be unable to understand what these job responsibilities entail or how this skillset applies to the job posting. The Military.com website (http://www.military.com/veteran-jobs/search) can assist you. To get started, click on the “Skills Translator” tab at the top. Once on the page, select your branch of service, last or current pay grade, and enter your military job title or MOS/AFSC. The website will provide you with a civilian-friendly description. Add your subspecialties and training and the website will provide a listing of current jobs available to you that best align with your capabilities. The website is a great resource, and best of all, it’s free!
Student Veterans of America and Home Depot Grant Awarded to CSUSB Student Veterans Organization

The CSUSB Student Veterans Organization (SVO) proudly announces that we were awarded $9,500 to purchase furniture, a storage solution, student lockers, and a bookcase for the Fletcher Memorial Library. In February, the SVO applied for a grant through the Student Veterans of America funded by Home Depot for furniture, plants and other items for the Veterans Success Center (VSC). The overall purpose of the grant was to establish or refurbish an existing Veterans Center on campus. The grant required collaboration between members of the SVO and VSC on what was needed to improve services offered to student veterans. The SVO was able to come up with goals and objectives that would make the VSC even more welcoming to veterans.

The SVO will also donate flowers and new umbrellas to the living memorial garden in front of the VSC. Once the purchases arrive, the SVO will need volunteers to help with transporting furniture and arranging furniture. The SVO is glad to be able to give back to the VSC, which has done so much for veterans on campus.

Q & A with Andreas Kossak

What will I learn in this course?
You will learn how to develop your original idea into an outline, a treatment, and finally into a feature length screenplay. We will examine how various characters "drive" a story. We'll explore modern screenplay structure, dialog, suspense, non-linear storytelling, and many other elements of writing a story for the screen. You will also learn about tapping into your creativity and sustaining your creative flow. Further, you will be introduced to basic legal and business aspects of screenwriting. I will also show you how to convert a manuscript and publish it on Amazon as a Kindle eBook.

What is the “initial Idea” I need to have at the beginning of the course?
The "initial idea" answers four basic questions. 1) Who is the main character you want to write about? 2) What goal does your main character want to achieve? 3) What is your main character up against that makes achieving that goal so hard? 4) What is at risk, if the main character fails to achieve this goal? Work on these four questions and try to answer them in less than a total of 150 words--that's your initial idea. This will get you started. Over the entire course, you will expand and modify this idea, until it's a screenplay.

How much of a time commitment is this course?
We will have nine class sessions over nine weeks, scheduled for four hours each. For each week you will have an assignment to work on your story incorporating concepts you've learned in class. I will give you target word counts to keep you on track. The most productive way of writing is to follow a daily, undisturbed "writing routine" of around 30 minutes. Ideas cannot be forced into existence. Instead, they will "come to you." The daily writing routine is about giving your ideas that opportunity by trusting and relaxing into your creative mode.
Controversy Surrounds New Army Hair Regulations

Reprinted from Associated Press 4/5/2014

WASHINGTON -- New Army regulations meant to help standardize and professionalize soldiers' appearance are now coming under criticism by some black military women, who say changes in the requirement for their hair are racially biased.

The Army earlier this week issued new appearance standards, which included bans on most twists, dreadlocks and large cornrows, all styles used predominantly by African-American women with natural hairstyles. More than 11,000 people have signed a White House petition asking President Barack Obama, the commander in chief, to have the military review the regulations to allow for "neat and maintained natural hairstyles."

Some black military women, who make up about a third of the women in the armed forces, feel they have been singled out with these new regulations.

"I think that it primarily targets black women, and I'm not in agreement with it," said Patricia Jackson-Kelley of the National Association of Black Military Women. "I don't see how a woman wearing three braids in her hair, how that affects her ability to perform her duty in the military."

The changes also banned several male hairstyles, including Mohawks and long sideburns. Body piercings were also specifically banned, with an exception made for earrings. Also banned was the use of wireless earpieces outside a vehicle and tattoos visible below the elbow or knee or above the neckline. Current soldiers would be permitted to keep any tattoos not deemed racist, sexist or extremist.

Graduating Student Veterans, Order Your Graduation Stole Today

Call the Veterans Success Center at (909) 537-7196 or e-mail Jaime Espinosa at jespinosa@csusb.edu to receive your free graduation stole. Make sure to include your full name, email address, phone number, and branch of service.

The Veterans Graduation Celebration will be held on June 5, 2014, at 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. in the Obershaw Dining Room. Dinner will be provided.

If you have a GPA of 3.0 or higher you qualify for the S.A.L.T.E Honor Society. Applications are available at the VSC or contact Jaime Espinosa at (909) 537-7196 or e-mail at jespinosa@csusb.edu.