

VSPE Veteran Serving Organization Impact Highlight America's Warrior Partnership



AMERICA'S WARRIOR PARTNERSHIP

VSPE funded America's Warrior Partnership (AWP) for three cycles of VSPE between 2018 and 2022. AWP is a national organization headquartered in Augusta, Georgia. They use their Community Integration Model (the Model) partnering with nine affiliate communities across the nation, including the Navajo Nation and the state of Alaska, to prevent Veteran suicide. Together they serve over 60,000 Veterans and their communities. The AWP Model proactively connects Veterans, their families, and caregivers with available services and resources by collaborating with existing community partners. This upstream prevention program—addressing root causes rather than symptoms—aims to bridge gaps and ensure Veteran access to resources, including linking Veterans to housing, healthcare, employment, earned-benefits, recreation, and education.



In 2022, the CDC presented Jim Lorraine, President and CEO of AWP, with a partnership award to recognize collaborative evaluation efforts toward preventing veteran suicide.

To examine and strengthen their objectives or goals, AWP gathered stakeholder feedback to improve collaboration with the affiliate communities in their first year. This process is called formative evaluation. This resulted in the development of a detailed program logic model, which illustrates the resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes of the program and evaluation plan. They continued with their evaluation in the second year to identify key components for successful use of their Model within and across communities.

They used these evaluation findings to:

- **Develop and implement a systematic process to assess key components for successful use of their Model.**
- **Increase data driven decision making to improve the program.**
- **Determine when and how a prospective community is best ready to start their own Model. This ensures prospective communities are equipped to connect with and successfully serve Veterans.**



Kaitlin Cashwell, Director of Community Integration, shares findings from Year 3 of their VSPE project on a panel with fellow CDC and VSO colleagues at the 9th Annual Warrior Symposium

AWP improved equity through their Model in their third year by focusing on Navajo Nation veterans, who have a high burden of suicide. AWP collaborated with the [Dine' Naazbaa Partnership \(DNP\)](#) on the Navajo Nation to culturally tailor their Model for its Veterans. AWP used [outcome evaluation](#) to assess the effect of the revised Model on its intended outcomes among this specific community.

They used the evaluation findings to:

- **Improve how they implement the program and inform future model changes in other underserved areas, such as rural communities, and among Alaskan Natives.**
- **Determine baseline objectives, which serve as a starting point for comparing data, for their Model to improve outcomes, such as Veteran quality of life.**
- **Share promising practices with others. AWP shared findings at their [9th Warrior Community Integration Symposium](#) and plan to develop a white paper with additional analysis.**

AWP's participation in VSPE provided them with tools to internally repeat evaluation processes to assess and show the impact of their program. They continue to use evaluation to strengthen partnerships, improve their collaborative approach, and increase their reach and effectiveness within communities. They anticipate being able to scale up and sustain the Model in other communities. Using evaluation allows them to continue improving this approach. AWP also initiated and hosts an evaluation community of practice with former VSPE grant recipients. This helps to sustain partnerships and share evaluation knowledge across the communities.



In 2021, DNP collaborated with Mission Roll Call to tell the stories of the challenges female Navajo Nation veterans face.

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