



*"Saving Lives in Tennessee"*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **TSPN Announces the Tennessee Veteran Suicide Prevention Task Force**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services wishes to announce the formation of the Veteran Suicide Prevention Task Force (VSPTF). This joint effort of TSPN and the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services, which was created and approved by the TSPN Advisory Council, will serve to focus veteran serving organizations throughout Tennessee towards the goal of suicide prevention. The VSPTF will meet to create and carry out action items to support the veteran population at-risk of suicide. We are excited about Tennessee being one of the first states in the nation to establish a statewide Veterans Suicide Prevention Task Force.

#### **The fifteen-member Task Force is comprised of the following members:**

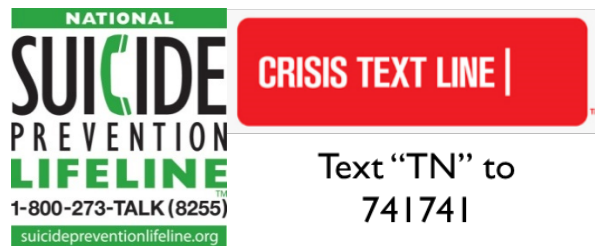
- Co-Chair: Travis Murphy, Tennessee Department of Veterans Services, Nashville
- Co-Chair: Scott Ridgway, Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network, Nashville
- Honorable Judge Bill Anderson, Shelby County Veterans Treatment Court, Memphis
- Sam Bernard, Ph.D, Bernard & Associates, P.C., Chattanooga
- Robert J. Campbell, United States Department of Veterans Affairs, Johnson City
- Timothy Coop, Wounded Warrior Project, Nashville
- Emily Hager, Vet to Vet Tennessee and Veteran, Knoxville
- Bill Harpel, Clarksville Mayor's Office, Clarksville
- John Krenson, Operation Stand Down, Nashville
- Evan Owens, Reboot Combat Recovery, Nashville
- Jodie Robison, Ph.D., Centerstone's Military Services, Nashville.
- Ernie Rumsby, Tri-Cities Military Affairs Council, Bristol
- Jack Stewart, NAMI TN and Veteran, Greeneville

- Corey Watkins, The Jason Foundation, Hendersonville
- Matthew Younger, Fort Campbell, Clarksville

**Ex-Officio members include:**

- Gray Bishop, Tennessee Department of Health
- Matt Yancey, Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services

TSPN’s Executive Director, Scott Ridgway, MS, expresses his enthusiasm towards the efforts of this Task Force, stating “with the support of the Task Force member, TSPN will be better prepared to assist Tennessee Veterans in getting the help they need to continue to prevent suicide in our state.” Between 2010 and 2015, there were 942 confirmed suicides among this population. The leading stress triggers for military personnel are failing relationships, financial troubles, and legal issues. To find out more on this at-risk group, including specific resources and specific risk factors, visit the TSPN webpage <http://tspn.org/veteran-resources>.



TTY line: 1-800-799-4TTY (4889)

For non-emergency information on suicide prevention, contact the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network at (615) 297-1077 or [tspn@tspn.org](mailto:tspn@tspn.org). More information about TSPN is available at the agency website ([www.tspn.org](http://www.tspn.org)).

TSPN is the statewide public-private organization responsible for implementing the Tennessee Strategy for Suicide Prevention. TSPN and its volunteers work across the state to organize activities & projects promoting suicide prevention awareness, providing suicide prevention & crisis intervention training to community organizations, and conducting postvention sessions for schools & organizations after suicides occur.