

RHIP and COVID-19 MINI-GRANT PROJECT SUMMARIES

COVID-19 Final Report for Central Oregon Veterans Ranch (RHIP) “Veteran Outreach and Community Engagement Project”

Reviewed by the Substance Misuse and Upstream Prevention Workgroups

Summary of Results:

- With support from COHC, we engaged consultants to conduct an organizational assessment, build infrastructure, increase staff capacity, strengthen partnerships, increase veteran engagement, and prepare for hiring of a veteran peer coordinator.
- From April-July 2021, COVR worked with consultants to conduct an organizational assessment and develop a capacity building plan.
- The plan calls for an increase from 5 staff (3.12 FTE) in March of 2021, to 7 staff (6.7 FTE) by the end of 2022.
- New positions hired, thanks in part to this grant, include an Operations & Program Manager and Outreach & Education Coordinator; both are making a huge impact on our services.
- An adjustment was made to our original hiring plan due to our relationship with OHA and the opportunity to secure a contract to hire a Peer Support Specialist in early 2022 (which will be matched by COHC).
- The Outreach & Education Coordinator position (now on staff) meets the original objectives of the Veteran Peer Coordinator.



Story:

A Marine Iraq combat veteran came to COVR for the first time in the Fall of 2020. He had dropped out of college and VA care and was "drifting." He was in a tenuous relationship and his future was uncertain. His first experience was volunteering to help with a seasonal clear out of our Victory Gardens: "I had no idea you guys existed. Now that I do, I'm going to be here every week." He began coming out weekly to volunteer and get training in the COVR hydroponics greenhouse, on the farm property, and soon after joined the Iraq and Afghanistan Veteran Peer Support Group. During the past year, this veteran has gotten certified and hired by Deschutes. Co. as a veteran peer support specialist, got engaged, and is expecting a child.