



NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR ARTS & HEALTH IN THE MILITARY

Mission

Founded in 2012, the [National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military](#) advances the arts in health, healing, and healthcare for military servicemembers, veterans, their families, and caregivers. Working across military, veterans, government, private and nonprofit sectors, the goals of the National Initiative are to:

- Advance the policy, practice, and quality use of arts and creativity as tools for health in the military;
- Raise visibility, understanding, and support of arts and health in the military; and
- Make the arts as tools for health available to all active duty military, staff, family members, and veterans.

The National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military's founding organizations include: [Americans for the Arts](#), [Association of Performing Arts Presenters](#), [Creative Healing Connections](#), [Foundation for Art & Healing](#), Society for the Arts in Healthcare (Global Alliance for Arts & Health), [National Center for Creative Aging](#), [National Endowment for the Arts](#), [Oasis by Design, LLC](#), [Rollins & Associates](#), [Smith Center for Healing and the Arts](#), [The Epidaurus Project](#), [Vet Art Project](#), [VSA, an affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts](#), and [Walter Reed National Military Medical Center](#).

Leadership

The National Initiative is led by Americans for the Arts, with the advice of a [National Steering Committee](#), and charged with building a grassroots network of organizations, practitioners, and providers of arts services for servicemembers, veterans and their families, and a National Leadership Advisory Council to guide the Initiative's national action strategy. The National Leadership Advisory Council, chaired by Brigadier General Nolen V. Bivens, USA, (RET), is currently under development and will be composed of high level national leaders from the military, veterans, government, corporate, foundation, philanthropic, and nonprofit sectors.

Along with a growing National Network of individuals and organizations engaged in programs and services across the country, we work together to: (1) Encourage cooperation among arts, military, veterans, and health fields; (2) Enhance communication between beneficiaries and providers; (3) Promote visibility for the arts in military servicemembers and veterans' health and wellness, and; (4) Engage with leaders across agencies and sectors to develop and advocate for supportive policies.

Key Activities

Convenings

- **October 14–15, 2011.** Inaugural *National Summit: Arts in Healing for Warriors*, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda, MD
- **November 15, 2012.** *Arts & Health in the Military National Roundtable*, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, DC
- **April 10, 2013.** *National Summit: Arts, Health, and Well-Being Across the Military Continuum*, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda, MD
- **February 27, 2015.** *National Summit—Advancing Research in the Arts for Health and Well-being across the Military Continuum*, National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health at the National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD



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Publications

- [*The Arts: A Promising Solution to Meeting the Challenges of Today's Military—A Summary Report and Blueprint for Action*](#) (Report from the 2012 Arts & Health in the Military National Roundtable, April 10, 2013) proposes a framework to integrate the arts into the “Standard of Care” in military clinical (VA and military hospitals) as well as in community settings across the country.
- Published in October, 2013 the report, [*Arts, Health, and Well-Being Across the Military Continuum - White Paper and Framing a National Plan for Action*](#) makes recommendations in research, practice, and policy, and summarizes discussions with more than 500 participants in national convenings.

Key Collaborators and Partners

- **American Legion Auxiliary (ALA)**—Americans for the Arts is an AmeriCorps VISTA site of the American Legion Auxiliary Call to Service Corps.
- **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**—The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed on June 10, 2014 to **recognize and enhance the partnership** between the VA and Americans for the Arts in support of the National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military and National Veterans Creative Arts Festival .
- **Veterans Health Administration (VHA)**—The MOU was signed on February 13, 2015 to maximize the opportunities and resources of, and for, Americans for the Arts and the VAVHA specifically to address their mutual goal to increase the use of arts in VA medical settings.
- **PBS “Stories of Service”/WGVU Public Media We Are Veterans**—AFTA and the NIAHM are members of the advisory committee for this public education campaign to support servicemembers, veterans, and their families
- National convenings past host and/or sponsor institutions include **Walter Reed National Military Medical Center** and the **National Intrepid Center of Excellence** (2011 and 2013); **John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts** (2012) and the **National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health/National Institutes of Health** (2015)

Information and Resources

- **National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military WEBPAGE:** www.ArtsAcrossTheMilitary.org A central online collective resource for events, news, multimedia presentations, reports and data, publications, and the National Network Directory
- **NATIONAL NETWORK DIRECTORY** – featuring individuals, artists, non-profit arts, health and VSO's, as well as VA and military treatment facilities that are actively working to advance the arts in health and well-being for military servicemembers, veterans, their families, and caregivers. The Directory is updated weekly and is located at www.ArtsAcrossTheMilitary.org.
- **March–May 2015 –Arts Deployed: A Practical Guide to Support Arts, Health, and Well-Being across the Military Continuum WEBINAR SERIES** – Americans for the Arts and the American Legion Auxiliary are working together to produce a series of three free webinars, available to view and/or download at www.ArtsAcrossTheMilitary.org, designed to explain, train, and support community initiatives in creating local arts programming for military servicemembers, veterans, their families and caregivers. *Part One: Introduction to the Guide (March 11); Part Two: Current Programs, New Possibilities, and Ways to Help (April 8); and Part Three: Arts Deployed in Building a Grassroots Community Mil/Vet Creative Arts Initiative.*
- **Coming June 2015 –Arts Deployed: A Practical Guide to Support Arts, Health, and Well-Being across the Military Continuum E-BOOK** – Americans for the Arts and the American Legion Auxiliary have joined forces to create a complete online guide for starting a community dialogue in to bridge the military/civilian divide and engage military servicemembers, veterans, their families, and caregivers through the arts to facilitate healing and well-being from pre-deployment, deployment, re-entry, and reintegration. The e-book will be available to view and/or download at www.ArtsAcrossTheMilitary.org.

*The National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military is supported in part by the
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation.*

www.ArtsAcrossTheMilitary.org