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SALUS UNIVERSITY COLLABORATES ON SECOND ANNUAL HEALTH SCREENING PROGRAM FOR VETERANS

Elkins Park, Pa. - Salus University, Montgomery County Community College (MCCC) Community College of Philadelphia (CCP), and Corporal Michael J. Crescenz (Philadelphia) VA Medical Center, have collaborated on a health screening program for student veterans. The Salus Veterans Readiness Initiative (VRI) Multisensory Screening and Care program offers veterans free multisensory (vision, hearing, balance) screenings and access to follow-up treatment and rehabilitation. Salus optometry and audiology faculty and students recently conducted customized multisensory screenings at CCP and MCCC for the second consecutive year.

Exposure to blast and other trauma associated with military service can lead to sensory dysfunction and symptoms including blurry vision, headaches, aversion to light and sounds, dizziness and trouble hearing. It can also result in mild traumatic brain injury and/or post-concussion syndrome. These problems can substantially hinder the community reintegration process for veterans, including educational performance and employability.

Veterans with sensory dysfunction typically pass standard vision and hearing tests. A more in-depth, specialized visual, auditory and vestibular assessment can uncover these conditions and dictate the appropriate treatment.

The VRI screening program offers a convenient way for student veterans, who often have a full course-load in addition to jobs and families, to obtain vision, hearing and balance screenings. Community College representatives assisted in the registration of student veterans who were seen on-campus by teams of Salus optometry and audiology students under the supervision of faculty preceptors. If needed, appointments for follow-up care were made with the Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VA Medical Center representatives in attendance.

Participating student veterans have a positive view of the program. Wendell B., a student veteran at CCP, said, “This is the second year ... I’ve had my vision and hearing screened by Salus University students and faculty. The balance component of the hearing screening added another dynamic, and the vision screening was very extensive. The best part is the screenings come to you.” Another student veteran from CCP, Jared J., who recently completed an assignment in the Navy, shared, “The screenings were so convenient and helpful, and the students and doctors were really attentive.”

According to Salus University president and former deputy surgeon general of the U.S. Navy, Michael H. Mittelman, OD, MPH, “We are proud to partner with these institutions to offer student veterans the health care they need and deserve. As the VRI continues to expand, our hope is that it can serve as a nationwide model for other schools, helping to positively impact the lives of the young men and women who have served our country.”

About Salus University

Salus University, founded as the Pennsylvania College of Optometry in 1919, today is a diversified, globally recognized professional academic center of learning that offers a wide range of degree programs in the professions of Optometry, Audiology, Physician Assistant, Public Health, Education and Rehabilitation for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Biomedicine, Occupational Therapy and Speech-Language Pathology. Salus operates four clinical facilities in the Philadelphia area that provide highly specialized vision, hearing and balance, and speech-language pathology services. The University has more than 1,100 students, including PhD candidates, and more than 12,500 alumni worldwide. For more information, please visit www.salus.edu.