



PHILADELPHIA VA MEDICAL CENTER  
*Serving those who served.*



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
May 14, 2015

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## **SALUS UNIVERSITY AND THE PHILADELPHIA VA MEDICAL CENTER COLLABORATE ON PILOT HEALTH SCREENING PROGRAM FOR VETERANS**

**Elkins Park, PA** - Salus University, the Philadelphia VA Medical Center (PVAMC), Montgomery County Community College (MCCC), Community College of Philadelphia (CCP) and the Department of Defense Hearing Center of Excellence and Vision Center of Excellence have collaborated on a health screening program for student veterans. The Salus Veterans Readiness Initiative Multisensory Screening and Care pilot program offered free multisensory (vision, hearing, balance) screenings, follow-up treatment and rehabilitation.

Salus optometry and audiology faculty and students conducted customized multisensory screenings at CCP and MCCC. PVAMC provided on-site liaison and outreach, including assistance with VA health care enrollment and case management. This screening program will serve as a model as this initiative continues.

Exposure to blast and other trauma during the post-9/11 conflicts can cause mild traumatic brain injury and/or post-concussion syndrome. Exposure to blast and trauma is also associated with sensory dysfunction and symptoms including blurry vision, headaches, aversion to light and sounds, dizziness and trouble hearing. 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 exploration using specialized visual and auditory assessment can uncover these conditions and dictate the appropriate treatment.

According to Salus University President and former Deputy Surgeon General of the U.S. Navy Michael H. Mittelman, OD, MPH, "Leading the Navy Medical Service Corps gave me a unique understanding of the health care issues faced by returning veterans. This program will help these young men and women get back to their lives. We are proud to partner with these outstanding organizations to offer veterans the health care they need and deserve."

**About Salus University:**

*Salus University is a professional academic center of learning offering degree programs in Optometry, Audiology, Physician Assistant, Public Health, Education and Rehabilitation for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Biomedicine and Occupational Therapy.*

**About Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Medical Center:**

*PVAMC is the regional medical center for Veterans Health Administration in eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware and southern New Jersey. Its Rehabilitation Medical Services encompass comprehensive assessments and treatments for those who have traumatic brain injuries and sensory deficits. Its state-of-the-art programs have cared for several thousand post-9/11 Veterans who have traumatic brain injury and sensory deficits.*