**Suncoast Mental Health Counselors Association (SMHCA) Procedure for Addressing Requests for Professional Partnership**

Professional partnerships are formal, reciprocal, collaborative, and complementary relationships formed between SMHCA and external groups or organizations. Partnership implies an ongoing relationship between two organizations, although either organization may terminate a partnership at any time. SMHCA adopts a conservative approach to forming professional partnerships, restricting partnerships to reputable and well-established not-for-

profit organizations that have been thoroughly vetted. A group, organization, or external entity need not seek formal partnerships from SMHCA in order to co-sponsor events, present at SMHCA training events, or offer information to SMHCA members.

In order to be considered for partnership with SMHCA, an organization must meet the following requirements:

(1) The organization maintains not-for-profit IRS tax code designation; (https://[www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Types-of-Tax-Exempt-Organizations-);](http://www.irs.gov/Charities-%26-Non-Profits/Types-of-Tax-Exempt-Organizations-)%3B)

*Verified, see attachment*

(2) The mission, purpose, and values of the organization are compatible with and complimentary to SMHCA’s purpose statement ( <http://suncoastmhca.org/Purpose)>and the American Mental Health Counselors Association *Code of Ethics* ([http://www.amhca.org/?page=codeofethics);](http://www.amhca.org/?page=codeofethics)%3B)

*“Veterans Counseling Veterans Incorporated” is a 501 C (3) tax exempted CharitableOrganization lead primarily by military veterans and spouses of Veterans that provides direct and referred counseling services; veteran’s professional association of military veterans and spouses of military veterans in the behavioral health profession.*

(3) The organization is a:

a. Well-established, recognized in the field of mental health counseling, and of good repute

*(1) VCV is a member of South Tampa Chamber of Commerce, Hillsborough’s Veterans Council, American Legion District 15/Post 5,*

*(2) VCV was approved by Troy University and Argosy as an Internship site for Graduate Students in Graduate Mental Health Programs*

*(3) VCV Board membership includes LMHCs, Qualified supervisor and PhDs*

*(4) Recently VCV supported Florida Mental Health Counselor Association by providing 75 % of the military related panelists for FMHCA’s Military Panel at their Conference*

*(5) VCV has partnered with American Legion Post 5 and North Tampa Behavioral Health*

*(6) VCV currently provides mental health counseling support to the 13th Circuit Court’s Veterans Treatment Court*

b. VCV in will support SMHCAs by:

(1) Assisting SMHCA’s membership goal by publicizing and encouraging its members to join SMHCA

(2) Provide SMHCA with Subject Matter Experts (SME) in Military Culture

(3) Display SMHCA brochures at VCV events and socials

(4) The relationship benefits SMHCA’s membership.

In speaking with CEO and Registered Intern Tony Williams, he assured me that everywhere and everyone he coordinates with will know about SMHCA. He will take our brochures to all his meetings and distribute as deemed necessary.

The following procedure is applied when organizations wish to pursue partnership with SMHCA: (1) The organization is referred to SMHCA’s Public Relations Committee (PRC). The PRC

acts as a liaison to the interested organization and provides the organization with information on SMHCA.

(2) The organization provides the PRC with the following items:

a. Verification of IRS not-for-profit tax designation;

b. A summary or outline of the organization’s history;

c. A summary or outline entailing what the organization would like from SMHCA

and what the organization is prepared to provide SMHCA;

d. A copy or summary of the organization's mission/purpose statements and values.

(3) The PRC conducts research into the background and history of the organization.

CEO, Tony Williams received the AMHCA Volunteer Award in 2014 for all his hard work with Veterans.

(4) The PRC creates a report outlining the above information, identifying possible benefits

and drawbacks to the proposed partnership, and offering a recommendation to the

Board of whether or not to partner with the organization.

No drawbacks could be identified in partnering with Veterans Counseling Veterans.

The main benefit for SMHCA is the tireless “outreach” Tony does within the community; for example, Crisis Hotline, Suicide Prevention, Veterans Court, Veterans Administration, American Legion…..if it’s a military related event, Tony is there!

(5) The PRC sends the report to SMHCA’s Board of Directors.

(6) The Board reviews the information, requests meetings with the organization if

warranted, and votes on the partnership agreement. Please note that it may take the

Board 30 to 90 days to reach a decision.

(7) The agreement is typed and signed by representatives of both organizations.

Adopted by SMHCA Board 1/15/16 Revised 1/26/16