

The NH “Ask the Question” Campaign

*Presented to:
Northern New England Community Action Conference*



A silhouette of a soldier in profile, facing right, holding an M16-style rifle. The soldier is wearing a helmet with a night vision device mounted on top. The background is a warm, orange and yellow sunset or sunrise sky with some clouds at the bottom. The sun is visible through the rifle's sights, creating a bright, circular lens flare effect.

Agenda

- Military Profile
- Veteran Survey:
What Veterans Are Telling Us!
- “Ask the Question” Campaign
- Military Culture
- State & VA Model of Care
- Improving Access & Services
- Next Steps...

A Quick New Hampshire Snapshot

- Approximately 105,000 NH Veterans (In 2008, NH had 130,000)
- 8th highest Veteran Population (per capita) in U.S.
- 45% of NH veterans are over 65 years of age
- Strong National Guard Presence and Support in New Hampshire
- Primarily 2 VA Medical Centers Serve NH Veterans:
 - *Manchester VA Medical Center*
 - *White River Junction VA Medical Center*
- Primarily 3 Vet Centers Serve NH Veterans:
 - *Berlin Vet Center*
 - *Keene Vet Center*
 - *Manchester Vet Center*

Of the 105,000 NH veterans, just over 32,000 receive care at the VA
Over 300,000 NH Veterans, Service Members & Military Family Members



Community Based Military Programs

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services

To collaborate, coordinate and communicate with military and civilian provider groups in the delivery of healthcare services to New Hampshire veterans, service members and their families.



A Support Structure to Reduce Gaps & Strengthen Services

New Hampshire Military–Civilian Committees & Coalitions

- NH Legislative Commission on PTSD and TBI
- Governor's Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Prevention, Treatment & Recovery - Joint Military Task Force
- NH Justice Involved Veterans Task Force
- Military & Civilian Homeless Provider Coalition
- NH State Military Leadership Team
- MyVA Veterans Engagement Board
- North Country Justice Involved Veterans Team
- North Country Veterans Inc.
- NH Legislative State Suicide Prevention Council - Military Task Force
- Seacoast Veterans Conference Planning Committee
- State Veterans Advisory Committee (including 19 Veteran Service Organizations)



NH 2012 – 2013 Veteran Survey: 1,200 Veterans Responded

38% From Vietnam Era; 35% from Post 9/11; and 18% from Persian Gulf

What are your barriers in accessing care?

#1 – Top Barrier in Accessing Care: Stigma, Embarrassment & Shame

#2 – Second Highest Barrier in Accessing Care:

“ I do not feel understood by the providers who serve me”

#3 – Don’t know where to go; nothing available to help; I will only speak to another veteran; no one wants to help

NH 2017 – 2108 Veteran Survey – 950 Veterans Responded

What are your barriers in accessing care?

- Top Barrier in Accessing Care: Stigma, Embarrassment & Shame
- Top Barrier in Accessing Care:
“ I do not feel understood by the providers who serve me”
- 75% of Veterans Surveyed said, YES – they have been asked “the question” in the last two years.
- 70% of Veterans Surveyed said, YES – coordination and communication between military, VA and/or civilian healthcare providers has improved.

Ask the Question....

”Have you or a family member ever served in the military?”



*The “Ask the Question” Campaign is dedicated to
Lt. Col. Stephanie Riley, a former nurse with the NH National Guard.
Lt. Col. Riley died of lung cancer in December of 2014.*

“Ask the Question” Campaign

“Have you or a family member ever served in the military?”

When Service Providers Ask, They Can:

- ✓ *Understand the relationship between military experiences and today's medical symptoms!*
- ✓ *Help connect veterans to the VA!*
- ✓ *Identify a warrior's transferable job skills!*
- ✓ *Address service-related barriers to stable housing!*
- ✓ *Assist military widows access survivor benefits!*
- ✓ *Help a student thrive when a parent is deployed!*
- ✓ *Overall, create a well-informed and collaborative system of care and services for service members, veterans, and military families!*

1st in the Nation

- Engaged 2,000 Civilian Providers During Contract Year
- Shared Resources
- 62 Military Culture Trainings
- Assessed 940 Civilian Providers
- 7% (Contract Start) were “asking the question”
- 72% (Contract End) are “asking” or have intent to “ask”
- UNH Grad Student: Capstone Project →



www.AskTheQuestionNH.com

It's OK to "ask the question"!

The image is a screenshot of the website www.AskTheQuestionNH.com. The header features a navigation bar with links: Home, About, Providers, Get Involved, and Connect. To the right of these links are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube. On the far right, there are vertical buttons for 'Call Us' and 'Email Us'. The main banner shows a family of four (a woman, an older man, a young girl, and a man carrying a child on his shoulders) in a wooded area. Overlaid on the left is a logo that says 'ASK THE QUESTION' in a stylized font. In the center, the text 'ONE QUESTION' is written in large, bold, white letters, with the tagline 'can make a big difference.' in a smaller, italicized font below it. At the bottom, a dark bar contains the text 'Select your profession to see how:' followed by five circular icons representing different professions: a caduceus for 'Health Care & Medical Services', a brain for 'Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services', a police badge for 'Law Enforcement & First Responders', a scale of justice for 'Legal & Advocacy Services', and a house for 'Housing & Homelessness Services'. Navigation arrows are located on the far left and right of this bottom bar.

ASK THE QUESTION

Home About Providers Get Involved Connect

f t i l y

Call Us Email Us

ONE QUESTION
can make a big difference.

Select your profession to see how:

Health Care & Medical Services

Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services

Law Enforcement & First Responders

Legal & Advocacy Services

Housing & Homelessness Services

“Ask the Question”

National Attention!

- Sept 22, 2015 - SAMHSA National Webinar - 700 Participants
- Nov 6, 2015 - VA Presents “Ask the Question” at International Trauma Conference
- Jan 15, 2016 - White House Joining Forces Conference Call
- May 03, 2016 - National Military Mental Health Summit - San Diego
- June 13, 2016 - Association of American Medical Colleges
- July 20, 2017 - DoD, VA & US DHHS - DC Mental Health Summit
- Aug 6, 2017 - National Legislative Summit, Boston, MA
- Aug 28, 2017 - George W. Bush Institute Conference Call

State Attention!

- All DHHS Sponsored Military Culture Trainings include “Ask the Question”
- DHHS Program Areas Across the Department are Starting to “Ask the Question”
- Priority for Governor’s Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Prevention, Treatment & Recovery – Military Task Force
- 1st in the Nation Community Mental Health Center Military Liaison Initiative – over 17% of clients are military-connected (of the over 21,000 clients served monthly)
- ServiceLink – 16% of clients served are military-connected (of the 30,000 clients served annually)
- Strong Support from NH Hospital Association - Just starting to engage NH Hospitals!

Military Culture Trainings

It's not “one and done”!

Military culture education can transform access to services for those who have served in the military. In a statewide survey, NH veterans let us know that one of the top barriers in receiving care was that they “do not feel understood by the providers who serve them.”

Military culture education bridges that gap, and transforms care by equipping providers with the tools they need to improve rapport, communication, and referral pathways.

Sectors Trained

- Social Services
- Children's Services & School Systems
- Aging & Senior Services
- Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services
- Housing & Homelessness Services
- Healthcare & Medical Services
- Law Enforcement & First Responders

Outreach Statewide

- 62 Trainings Conducted , June 2015 – September 2017
- Total Participants Trained Statewide: Over 2,500

1st in the Nation

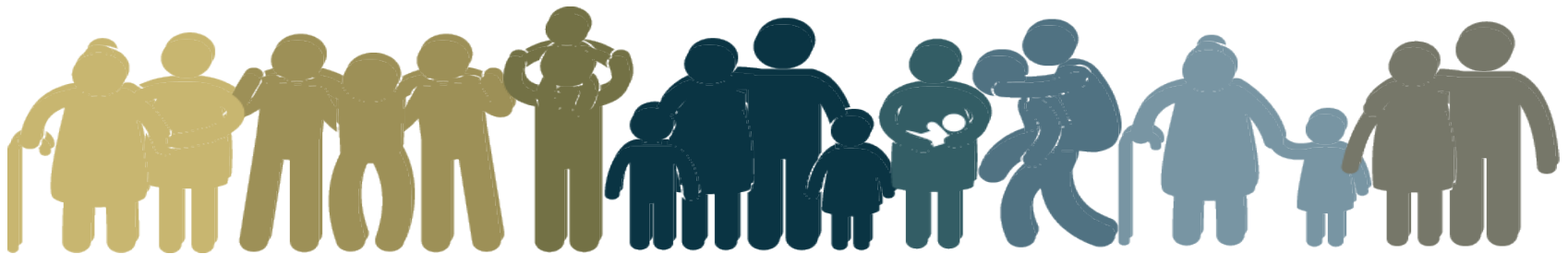
Community Mental Health Center Military Liaison Initiative

Serving Military Families!

Mission

To improve access to and quality of care for veterans, service members and military families by:

- 1) Strengthening systems for identifying military members being served;**
 - * At least 17% are military-connected;**
 - * Increased TRICARE Enrollment to NINE Centers → over 250 credentialed clinicians!**
- 2) Enhancing military cultural competence;**
 - * Trained 1300 staff with over 2600 hours**
- 3) Partnering with civilian-military partners and the community.**
 - * Client referral coordination/support with VA Medical Centers & Vet Centers**



The ServiceLink Network

- **Serving Over 5,000 Veterans, Service Members and their Families**
 - *Serving 30,000 individuals a year*
 - *Of those individuals served, at least 5,000 (17%) are veterans, service members or military families members*
- **Veteran Service Officers Provide Over 500 Office Visits**
 - *During 5/1/2017 through 4/30/2018, Rockingham ServiceLink provided 408 referrals to OVS. Total scheduled appointments from these 408 referrals, were 275 scheduled appointments.*
- **Keeping 150 Veterans in their Home and Community**
 - *Partners with the Veterans Administration on the Veteran Directed Home and Community Based Service Program*
- **100% of ServiceLink Staff Trained in Military Culture**
 - *Trained in Conducting a Culturally Sensitive Interview, Accessing Military Resources and Understanding unique issues regarding deployment and military family issues*

A Community, State & VA Model of Care

Frisbie Memorial Hospital

- Top Leadership Support
- Strong Leadership Support Throughout Hospital Network
- Identify military members at in-take by “asking the question”
- Veteran Advocate - Tracie Tankevich
(Financial Counselor; Civilian; Strong Advocate; Passion to Serve Military; Community Partner; Can Connect to Resources)
- Participate in Military Culture Trainings & Have Familiarity with Resources
- Refer veterans to VA as they are identified; Connect veterans and military members to the Hospital Veteran Advocate
- Serve veterans eligible for VA Services through Veterans Choice
- Partner with VA and Military-Civilian Community Partners

You are not alone in this journey – We are here to help!



Serving Justice Involved Veterans

What is a Veterans Track?

A Veterans Track is a “special docket” charged with hearing cases that involve veterans or service members, particularly those diagnosed with service-related illnesses. There are close to 400 veterans’ courts, tracks or dockets across the Country. In NH, we have six:

- ❖ *9th Circuit Court, Nashua District Division*
- ❖ *9th Circuit Court, Manchester District Division*
- ❖ *Rockingham County Superior Court*
- ❖ *Three Veterans Tracks in Grafton County: Lebanon, Littleton and Plymouth Mental Health Courts*

Statewide Conference – SOLD OUT

300 person Conference on June 12, 2015 at Grappone Conference Center, Concord, NH

Success Across the State

In the last three years, over 60 veterans have participated and/or are currently participating in the six Veterans Tracks across the State. As of December of 2017, thirty (30) NH veterans have graduated.

Legislation & Moving Forward

The Governor and Legislature passed HB 652 in 2017, establishing a Veterans Track within the court system. This act went into effect on January 1, 2018 and includes the essential 10 components of a Veterans Track. These 10 components provide the foundation for the successful operation of a NH Veterans Track.

The Soldier's Creed

- I am an American Soldier.
- I am a warrior and a member of the team. I serve the people of the United States of America and live the Army Values.
- I will always place the mission first.
- I will never accept defeat.
- I will never quit.
- I will never leave a fallen comrade.
- I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my Warrior tasks and drills. I always maintain my arms, my equipment and my self.
- I am an expert and I am a professional.
- I stand ready to deploy, engage and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.
- I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.
- I am an American Soldier.

Proud Men & Women

Difficult to Accept Help

“These are generally very good people, eager to help, feel awkward and embarrassed asking for help. It took enormous courage for them to walk into your office. Forgive them if they cancel an appointment. Give them time to find the words for their entire story. They probably feel that you can never understand. Do not mention political beliefs. They did what their country asked of them. That’s more than 99% of Americans are willing to do. They can be guarded, not trusting. That trait has kept them safe.”

NH Deployment Cycle Support Program – Care Coordinator

Iraq Veteran

“Three weeks ago I was driving Humvees and kicking down doors, and now after three weeks of demobilization, signing papers and getting medical checkups, I am suddenly back on the streets at home, but I can’t yet make myself understand it or believe it.”

Welcome Them Home, Help Them Heal

Afghanistan Veteran

“After returning home, I find that I get frustrated easily with others. People here at home get upset so quickly over the little things – long lines at the grocery store, busy traffic. Don’t they know that these are small things and we all need to be simply grateful that we live in a free country.”

NH Army National Guard

Vietnam Veteran

“ When in uniform, you follow orders, no matter how you feel. When given a command, you use whatever force is necessary. Then you come back to civilian life and those things land you in jail.”

Welcome Them Home, Help Them Heal

Iraq Veteran

“ When I was overseas, life was simple. I protected my buddy and kept my weapon ready. The rules were easy to understand. Now that I have returned, there are too many rules and so much that I don’t understand.”

Massachusetts Army Active Duty

Spouse of Veteran with TBI

“When we are standing in line at a fast food restaurant, my husband takes a long time to order his food. People have no patience. I wish my husband would always wear his TBI Shirt that says, ‘I have a Traumatic Brain Injury because I served YOUR country.’ ”

Brain Injury Center of NY

Persian Gulf War Veteran

“I will only speak to another combat Marine about my experiences in the Desert. No one else can understand what it means to be a Marine or what it means to be a combat Marine.”

Marine Veteran, Wisconsin

Iraq Veteran

“I was just happy to see my girlfriend. I thought we would pick up where we left off, get engaged, and marry. Little did I know we would be separated in less than two months.”

Welcome Them Home, Help Them Heal

NH Former Prisoners of War (mostly World War II)

Meeting Regularly at the Manchester VA

NH Former Prisoners of War - Survey

Young NH Veterans are returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with mental health issues, post traumatic stress disorder, combat stress, marital issues, family concerns and financial responsibilities.

1. What suggestions do you have for these veterans?

#1 Answer: Confide with your spouse and children what you went through.

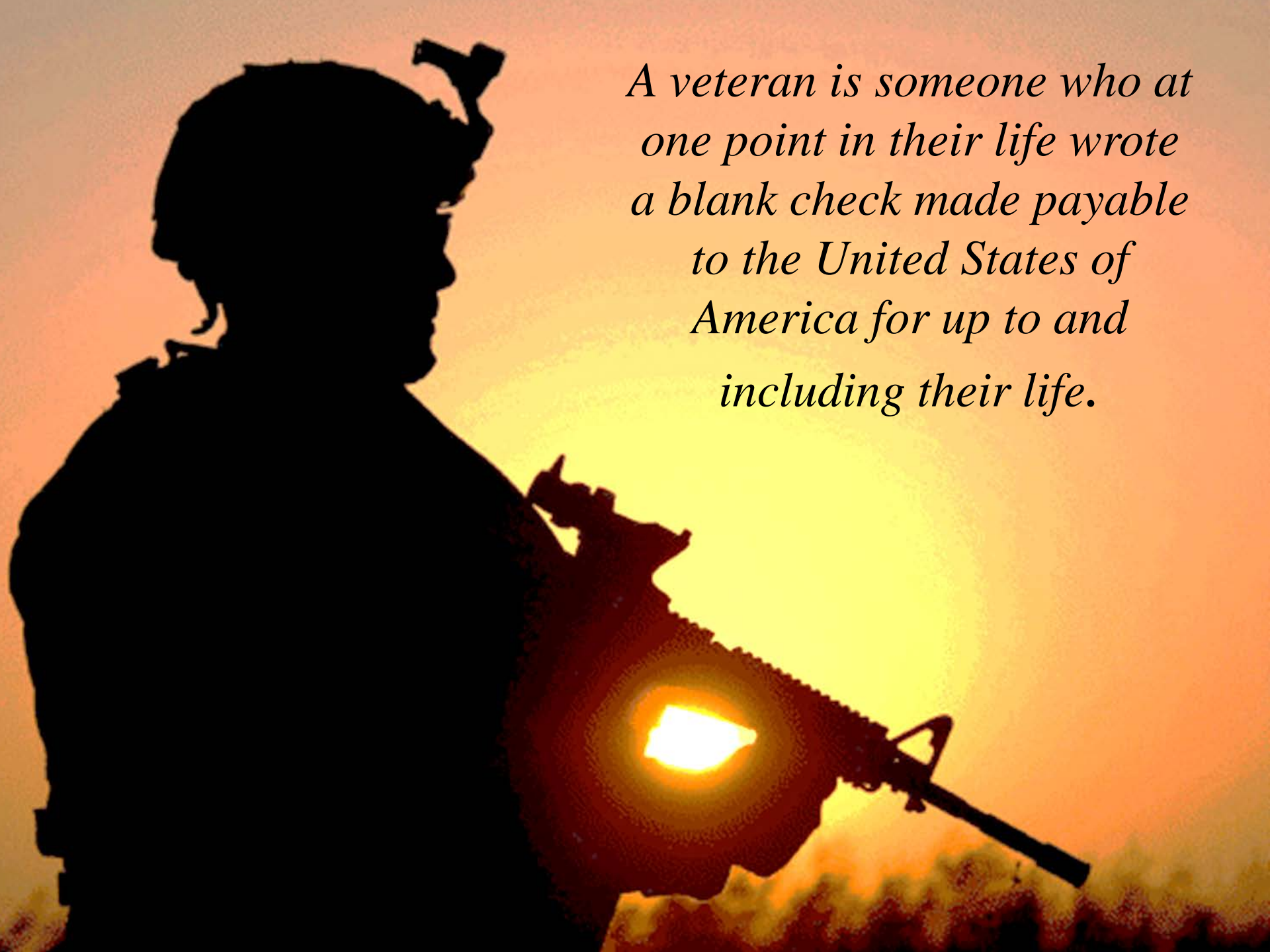
2. What suggestions do you have for their families?

#1 Answer: Listen. Be patient. Encourage them to seek help.

What American Veterans Want You to Know

Psych Armor Institute, Military Culture Training Institute, San Diego

- We are not all soldiers
- Not everyone in the military is infantry
- We did not kill someone and those that have DO NOT like talking about it. DON'T ASK!
- We all DO NOT have PTSD.
- Those of us who do have invisible wounds are not dangerous and are not violent.
- It is really hard for us to ask for help.
- Our military service changed us.
- We differ in how much we identify with the military after we leave active duty.
- Our families serve with us.
- We would die for each other and for our country.
- We all made this one sacrifice for one reason, to serve something more important than ourselves.

A silhouette of a soldier in profile, facing right, holding an assault rifle. The soldier is wearing a helmet with a night vision device mounted on top. The background is a bright, hazy sunset or sunrise with a large, glowing sun partially obscured by the rifle's magazine. The overall color palette is warm, with oranges, yellows, and reds.

*A veteran is someone who at
one point in their life wrote
a blank check made payable
to the United States of
America for up to and
including their life.*

Questions & Answers



For more information

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