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**Center for the Study
of Traumatic Stress**

2019

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The Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress (CSTS) is part of the Department of Psychiatry in the F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine (America's Medical School) of the Uniformed Services University (USU). The Center supports USU, the Military Health System (MHS), and the Department of Defense (DoD).

Since it was established in 1987, the Center has been working to mitigate the impact of trauma from exposure to war, disasters, terrorism, community violence, public health threats, and humanitarian operations throughout the nation and across the globe.

The Center's work encompasses both military and civilian populations, but it focuses on health issues of special interest to the military, including combat, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), suicide and suicide-related behavior, and the impact of death and loss on the families of Service members.

CSTS is comprised of a multi-disciplinary and collaborative team of scientists, educators, clinicians, and leaders who help inform our nation's policies and responses to the impacts of exposure to trauma from disasters, both human-made and natural. The Center is well-positioned to rapidly respond to DoD mission-relevant activities. CSTS sustains national readiness, enhances national security, and serves an essential role for the DoD and the nation.



The Center consists of more than 100 people. In 2019, CSTS directed more than \$64 million in funding through a core grant and 13 external grants.

For more information, visit the CSTS website at: www.CSTSONline.org

CSTS Mission

The Center provides leadership, education, training, research, scholarship, service, outreach, consultation, and global health engagement. CSTS informs and educates community, regional, state, national, and global stakeholders in government, industry, healthcare, public health, and academia. The Center's work includes innovative and ground-breaking research that ranges from the micro level in laboratories to the macro level in communities, the nation, and all across the world. CSTS helps to foster community and national resilience, and improve trauma-related care by preparing treatment providers to address the impact of trauma.

The work of the Center also:

- Uniquely combines and integrates military and disaster psychiatry
- Moves science from the gene, to the cell, to the organism, to the person, to the community
- Applies state-of-the-art approaches to neuroscience and precision medicine
- Moves from knowledge to action
- Helps ensure that behavioral health is addressed in the face of public health threats, disaster planning, and disaster recovery.



Research

CSTS research encompasses a broad spectrum both in the laboratory and in the field. All the Center research is designed to support the Military Health System (MHS) in its efforts to provide a medically-ready force to Combatant Commands in both peacetime and wartime, and to deliver integrated, affordable, and high quality health services.

The four core areas of CSTS research are:

- Research on Service members
- Research on the children and family members of Service members
- Research in neuroscience and neurobiology
- Research on disasters and terrorism

Examples of specific research topics include the causes of suicide in Service members, psychological responses to trauma and disasters, and clinical investigations of the symptomatology and treatment of PTSD.



Research Highlights in 2019

- The Army STARRS and STARRS-LS research is designed to elucidate potential targets for interventions in Soldiers at risk for suicide, and is the largest research project of suicide and mental health ever conducted in the military.
- The Center completed data collection at the Washington, D.C. Navy Yard (WNY) as part of a multi-site study to better understand the risk and protective factors associated with response efforts following community mass violence. CSTS examined the impact of the 2013 WNY workplace mass shooting to better understand the social and occupational difficulties still impacting personnel following the event.
- Clinical trials in medication and psychotherapy for PTSD offer the potential for improved treatments to contribute to a more ready force and better quality care.
- The Center's Child and Family Program (CFP) advances scientific and clinical knowledge, and provides educational resources addressing the needs of children and families affected by trauma, with particular focus on our nation's military families that are affected by combat-related illness and injury, bereavement, child maltreatment, and family violence.

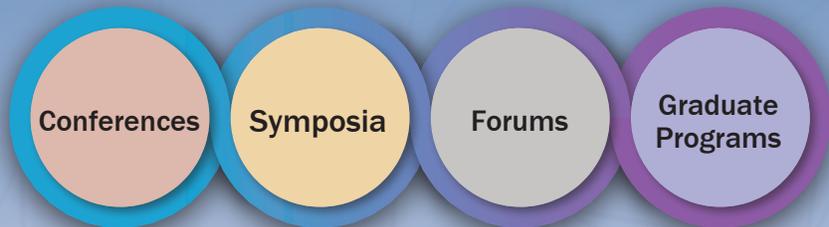
Education and Training

The Center provides educational resources to interagency partners (including DoD and other federal partners) as well as state and local agencies, professional associations, and others.

Center Scientists educate and train USU medical students committed to service in our nation's Army, Air Force, Navy, and Public Health Service. The Center provides education to interagency and private sectors leaders and other personnel.

The Center advances the field of military and disaster psychiatry through publications, presentations, outreach, and training. CSTS sponsors and participates in conferences, seminars, symposia, workshops, and collaborations with educational and training objectives across the U.S. and internationally. The Center also educates and expands knowledge through public health efforts and interventions during and after disasters.

CSTS disseminates educational materials to stakeholders including healthcare providers, community leaders, families, first responders, teaching professionals, and policy makers. The Center creates and disseminates customized, easy-to-read, just-in-time educational fact sheets to assist stakeholders in effectively managing the adverse effects of traumatic stress through enhanced preparation and response to disaster events.



Education and Training Highlights in 2019

- Conducted the “14th Annual Amygdala, Stress, and PTSD Conference: Risk, Resilience, and Recovery” on the biological basis of stress, fear, and PTSD.
- Developed a free continuing medical education (CME) course entitled “Resilience: The Science of Mastering Life’s Greatest Challenges” for the American Psychiatric Association (APA). This course is a recorded session from the 2019 Amygdala Conference.
- Co-sponsored the “Reimagining Reintegration: The Challenge for Deployed Doctors” symposium, which discussed the unique problems of healthcare workers returning from combat deployment.
- Sponsored two NATO panel meetings: “Leveraging Technology in Military Mental Health: Virtual Reality, Neuromodulation, and Telehealth” and “Personalized Medicine in Mental Health and Performance.” These two meetings included experts from Canada, the Netherlands, Australia, the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, and the United States.
- Directed a 5-day course on disaster mental health in Nigeria for the Defense Institute for Medical Operations.
- Funded two CSTS Graduate Student Fellowship recipients, one in USU’s Clinical Psychology program and one in USU’s Neuroscience program. This fellowship provides two years of salary and travel support.

Consultation

The Center develops partnerships with, and provides consultation to, many agencies and organizations throughout the DoD and other Federal agencies, as well as with state, local, and national agencies, professional associations, and international organizations.

Since its inception, establishing and maintaining consultative relationships have been a cornerstone of CSTS's work, including a wide variety of partner organizations both inside and outside government, and internationally. These collaborations build bridges that provide opportunities to contribute Center resources and expertise in the service of others and to monitor real-time needs of partners and stakeholders.



Consultation Highlights in 2019

- Contributed behavioral health subject matter expertise and technical input for the “Tick-Borne Disease Working Group 2018 Report to Congress.”
- Consulted with the FBI’s Victims Services Division around the impact of death notification on victims’ families following criminal events and mass casualties.
- Participated in the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) Committee on Military Family Well-Being. Committee participation resulted in the NASEM publication entitled “Strengthening the Military Family Readiness System for a Changing American Society” which was commissioned by the DoD.
- Participated in the International Ministerial (5-Eyes) Mental Health Research Innovation Collaborative on “Military and Veteran Mental Health.” This collaboration also resulted in the following publication “Treatment of Military-related Post-traumatic Stress Disorder: Challenges, Innovations, and the Way Forward.”
- Consulted with the New Zealand Surgeon General’s office to support their response, recovery, and outreach efforts following mass shootings in Christchurch, NZ.

Knowledge Dissemination

CSTS disseminates knowledge through a variety of means, including:

- Publishing research findings in peer-reviewed scientific journals
- Publishing books, volumes, and newsletters
- Making presentations at scientific meetings and conferences, and other events
- Giving briefings and interviews
- Developing and disseminating fact sheets
- Conducting educational campaigns
- Posting information and other resources on the CSTS website

Health Education Campaigns

Publications

Online Presence

Newsletters

Disaster Education Fact Sheets



Knowledge Dissemination Highlights in 2019

- 47 publications.
- 54 presentations at scientific or professional meetings, conferences, and symposia.
- Disseminated fact sheets in real time following major disasters and traumatic events.

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