

KARL WELLER

Goes to work every day with one mission: **Assist Veterans in need.**

Karl Weller goes to work every day with one mission: assist Veterans in need. As an Army Veteran who served in Afghanistan, Weller not only has a service mentality, but his military experiences help him bond with at-risk Veterans and gain their trust more easily.



“These are people who were willing to make huge sacrifices for our country, and I’m glad we are given an opportunity to find and help them.”

Karl Weller

Weller works as the Region 2 coordinator for the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs’ Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program. Coordinators like Weller work to connect Veterans to community services and provide case management and support with an emphasis on treatment and recovery. He has an office in La Crosse, but he rarely spends time in it, as he spends most of his day working directly with Veterans throughout his region, which includes La Crosse, Monroe, Juneau, Adams, Wood, Jackson, Trempealeau, and Buffalo counties.

Through the VORP, Veterans can receive crisis services in addition to on-the-street case management so they can receive treatment for mental health and/or substance usage, including paying for private treatment.

Collaboration with those in the community is a key for Weller and the VORP’s success. He works closely with County Veterans Service Officers, Veteran service organizations, local government agencies, nonprofit organizations and many others. By establishing relationships with those in the community, Veterans are also able to receive individualized wrap-around services such as housing, food, clothing, furniture, education and employment.

“Karl is a wonderful resource and advocate for the Veterans with whom he works,” Couleecap, Inc. Case Manager Becky Koske said. “On so many occasions, Karl has been willing to assist in whatever way he can to help the Veterans he serves to find housing, to maintain housing, and to really focus on getting things back on track when they have derailed.”

Weller recently met with an in-need Veteran in the La Crosse County Jail. The Veteran had battled opioid addiction for many years, and Weller worked with his probation officer to have him released for an assessment and treatment. Following treatment, the Veteran applied for a sober living house in La Crosse in addition to applying to be a part of the WDVA's Veterans Housing and Recovery Program in Chippewa Falls.

"I am so happy and I feel great for the first time in a long time," the Veteran said. "I am very excited to start putting my life back together and feel like a part of society again."

The WDVA's VORP started as a pilot program in 49 counties in 2014, and it recently expanded to all 72 counties in Wisconsin. Since the program's inception, coordinators have helped nearly 500 Veterans obtain mental health services, substance and alcohol treatment and other supportive services.

If you know of a Veteran in need within Weller's region, contact him at 608-881-9116.

Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program

The Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program (VORP) connects Veterans to community services, provides case management and support, with a special focus on treatment and recovery.

VORP staff work with community partners and professionals to provide assistance and connection to:

- Mental Health Services
- Substance Abuse Treatment
- Financial Assistance
- Housing and Utilities
- Claims and Benefits Assistance
- Employment and Education
- Transportation
- And many other services

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Becky Koske
Coulecap, Inc. Case Manager