

## MARK PROVENCHER JR.

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

As a Marine Corps Veteran, Provencher not only has a service mentality, but the experiences he gained during his military service help him bond with and gain the trust of Veterans who need mental health or substance use services. He works as the Region 8 coordinator of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs' Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program.



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Coordinators like Provencher work throughout the state to connect Veterans to community services and provide case management and support with a special focus on treatment and recovery. He has an office, but rarely sees it as he spends his day working directly with Veterans throughout his region, which includes Columbia, Dodge, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Ozaukee, Sheboygan,

and Washington counties.

“I couldn’t see myself doing anything else for a ‘retirement’ job, it’s such a rewarding blessing,” he said. “I thank God every day for opening the window to this pathway and showing me exactly what I should be doing and where I should be after my 22 years of military service.”

A big part of Provencher’s job as a VORP coordinator is building relationships with those in the

community and working with them to better serve Veterans. He often collaborates with County Veterans Service Officers, Veteran service organizations, local government agencies, community nonprofits and others. Building those relationships opens the door for Veterans to also receive individualized wrap-around services such as housing, food, clothing, furniture, education, and employment.

“Region 8 is fortunate to have Mark as our coordinator,” Sheboygan CVSO

Charlene Cobb said. “He is experienced in doing case management and advocacy for Veterans, so he’s transitioned into his job seamlessly.”

Recently, a Veteran approached Provencher who had lost his job and was being evicted from his apartment. The Veteran had been struggling with alcohol abuse and depression, and his vehicle was not functioning. Provencher recommended traveling to the Milwaukee VA Medical Center for a 45-day recovery/rehabilitation program. With the help of Cobb, the Veteran was accepted into the Milwaukee VA’s domiciliary and started intensive treatment due to the severity of his condition.

In the meantime, Provencher had the Veteran’s car towed and had the transmission replaced; all bills related to the vehicle were paid in full. His belongings in his apartment were packed up and moved to a storage facility with the help of Two Men and a Truck, who donated their time to do so.

The Veteran is currently enrolled in the program and credited Provencher for “saving his life,” he said.

The WDVA’s Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program started out as a pilot program in 49 counties in 2014 and recently expanded to all 72 counties in Wisconsin. Since the program’s inception, coordinators have helped about 500 Veterans obtain mental health services, substance and alcohol treatment, and other supportive services.

If you know of a Veteran in need, contact Mark Provencher at 920-226-9898.

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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**Charlene Cobb**  
*Sheboygan CVSO*