

# Veteran Survey 2014

By: Elizabeth Donald

Billings Metro VISTA Project



### **Special Acknowledgments**

The Billings Metro VISTA Project (BMVP) Veterans Project would like to thank the volunteers that helped administer this survey throughout Billings. The project would not have been possible without them. BMVP Veterans project would also like to thank those who donated items for veterans care packages. We would also like to thank the service providers and the Billings Public Library for allowing surveys to be administered at their locations.

This Report was prepared by:

**Elizabeth Donald**  
AmeriCorps Volunteer in Service to America  
Billings Metro VISTA Project (MVP)  
City of Billings, Community Development Division

## Contents

Methods:.....	4
SERVICE PROVIDER: Survey Construction .....	4
VETERANS SURVEY: Survey Construction .....	4
Publicity.....	5
Donations.....	5
Volunteers.....	5
Survey Administration .....	6
Definitions.....	7
Results.....	8
Demographics: .....	8
Needs: .....	11
What went well?.....	14
Future Recommendations .....	14
What's next? .....	14
Transportation .....	14
Housing .....	15
Employment.....	15

## **Introduction:**

There was a 46% increase in homeless veterans in Billings from 2012 to 2013 ([Housing Status Survey](#).) The Billings Metro VISTA Project (B-MVP) was created in 2009 by ***The City of Billings - Mayor's Committee on Homelessness*** to combat poverty and homelessness in Billings. In July 2013, the Veteran Services Project was created to address the issue of veterans experiencing poverty and homelessness in Billings. A survey was created through this project to address veteran issues and determine what could be done to decrease the number of veterans experiencing poverty and homelessness.

## **Methods:**

### **SERVICE PROVIDER: Survey Construction**

A survey was designed, created, and administered to local veteran service providers. The goal was to determine what types of questions and issues needed to be addressed by the upcoming veteran survey.<sup>1</sup> The following questions were asked:

- What services do you provide?
- Do you provide any services specific to veterans?
- What are your client demographics?
- What barriers do veterans face in accessing services?
- Do you have suggestions about what information would be helpful?

The paper survey was distributed at the quarterly veteran service providers meeting in October 2013. Unfortunately, the paper survey itself did not provide the needed results. Therefore, in person interviews were set up and conducted with local veteran service providers. It was discovered that when questions were asked verbally, the response was much better. This process illuminated the following:

- A comprehensive list of resources available to veterans would be helpful, (Veterans Resource List can be found at <http://mt-billings2.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/24981>)
- Veteran housing assistance and housing options are needed, and
- Transportation to appointments was an issue for some veterans.

### **VETERANS SURVEY: Survey Construction**

Service provider's feedback influenced the questions asked on the veteran's survey. The ***Housing Status Survey*** and the ***Youth Count!*** survey were both reviewed to determine what questions might be included on the Veterans Survey. We also consulted the VISTA members involved in conducting each of those surveys for tips regarding the creation of the veterans' survey.

---

<sup>1</sup> Service provider survey is Attachment 1

The survey questions were designed to ask questions that would allow the results to be most useful. The goal was to determine what homeless veterans' most urgent needs were and how we might serve them better. The main areas covered by the survey included:

- Demographics
- Services currently being accessed,
- Information regarding denied services and why
- Employment status,
- Housing, health care, and other basic needs

The draft survey document and planned delivery methods were reviewed by some service providers and veterans. Their feedback was consulted to construct the final survey document.<sup>2</sup>

### **Publicity**

Posters<sup>3</sup> were created and distributed to service providers and the public library. The posters identified dates, times, and locations for completing the survey. It also provided a link to the online survey.

A media release was created with information regarding the survey and how to volunteer for the event. The information appeared in the ***Billings Gazette*** on January 16, 2014.<sup>4</sup>

### **Donations**

It was determined that care packages would be distributed to veterans completing the survey. Donations were therefore requested from area businesses and groups. The following items were donated and put into 75 care packages for homeless veterans:

- 72 toothbrushes from Brewer Dental,
- 72 small toothpastes and 72 floss packages from Turley Dental Care,
- Toiletries and snacks from the Billings Pay It Forward Group,
- 110 Wendys sandwich coupons from Wendy's of Montana, and
- Snacks donated by individuals.

The items were placed in the bags and volunteers distributed care packages to veterans who completed the survey during street outreach on January 31 and February 2, 2014.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers were recruited through:

- Area churches,
- VISTA members,
- Facebook groups,

---

<sup>2</sup> The Veterans Survey is Attachment 2

<sup>3</sup> The poster is Attachment 3

<sup>4</sup> The ***Billings Gazette*** article is Attachments 4

- Meetup.com groups,
- Craigslist, and
- E-mails sent to current service providers.

We were successful in recruiting volunteers through Facebook, Meetup.com, and VISTA members. Almost all volunteers were VISTA members. A training session for volunteers was held at the Billings Public Library on January 30, 2014, the night before survey outreach. The training went over information regarding the survey, safety tips, and how to approach someone about the survey. A total of fourteen volunteers helped with survey outreach January 31 and February 1, 2014.

## **Survey Administration**

The survey was administered at the following locations:

- Billings Community Connect
- Billings Public Library
- The Hub
- Montana Rescue Mission
- Street outreach throughout Billings
- Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
- Military and Family Life Counseling (MFLC)
- Human Resources Development Counsel (HRDC) Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) “Tax Preparation for Veterans” event

The first administration of the survey was at **Billings Community Connect** on January 24, 2014, at the Shrine Auditorium. A booth was strategically reserved near the entrance of the event. People who entered walked past the booth and many people stopped to learn about the survey. 41 surveys were collected. The Billings Community Connect committee reported 38 veterans attended the event, as identified through their entrance ticket information. We were able to get a few more filled out by event volunteers.

The survey was next administered at the following locations and times:

- **Billings Public Library** on January 28, 2014 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Unfortunately, very few surveys were collected. It is suspected the time of day was not ideal for reaching impoverished or homeless veterans.
- At **The Hub** on Wednesday, January 29, 2014, from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. where we got a few responses.
- At the **Montana Rescue Mission** during lunch on January 30, 2014, where a few responses were received.
- Volunteers walked through assigned areas in Billings on Friday afternoon, January 31, and Saturday, February 1, 2014. The most responses were received in the downtown area and on the south side.

- Paper survey forms were also left at the **VFW** and **MFLC** offices so their clients could fill them out there. This delivery method did not result in any responses.
- Only one survey response was received from the **HRDC VITA “Tax Preparation for Veterans”** event held on March 1, 2014.

The survey was also available online through **SurveyMonkey** January 24 to March 1, 2014. Anyone with a computer and internet access could fill out the survey. We did not receive very many responses this way. However, we entered paper survey responses into Survey Monkey to allow us to compile the responses. **SurveyMonkey** statistical data, charts, graphs, and other analytical tools proved useful in compiling this report.

## Definitions

The **US Department of Housing and Urban Development** defines **homelessness** as sheltered and unsheltered individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate night time residence.

The **City of Billings Mayor’s Committee on Homelessness** began meeting in June 2006 following Mayor Tussing’s charge to develop a 10-Year Plan to address the needs of the chronically homeless in Billings. The 10 year plan was named “**Welcome Home Billings**.” The Mayor’s Committee includes representation from a broad stakeholder group including housing, service providers, civic and business leaders, economic and work force agencies, faith based and philanthropy groups, and other interested parties.<sup>5</sup>

**Welcome Home Billings** recognizes there are individuals who do not fit into that definition of homelessness, but still should be considered homeless. These are referred to as “precariously housed individuals.” “**Precariously housed individuals**” includes those who are staying with friends or family (short or long term), in a hotel or motel, in a hospital, in jail or prison, in a psychiatric facility, in a substance abuse treatment facility, and in foster care. For this report, the HUD-defined definition and the expanded **Welcome Home Billings** definition were combined to determine who is homeless.<sup>6</sup> Copy

---

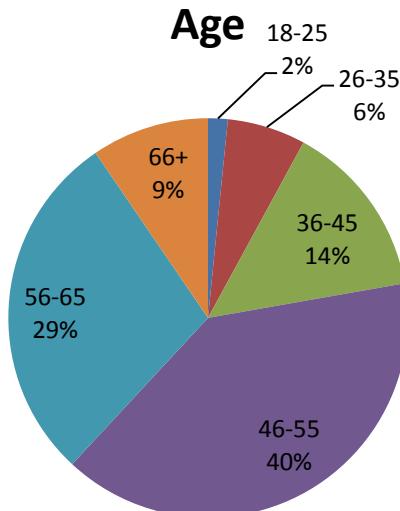
<sup>5</sup> Definition taken from the City of Billings website at <https://mt-billings2.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=1514>

<sup>6</sup> Definition taken from the Housing Status Survey 2013 at <http://mt-billings2.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/23477>

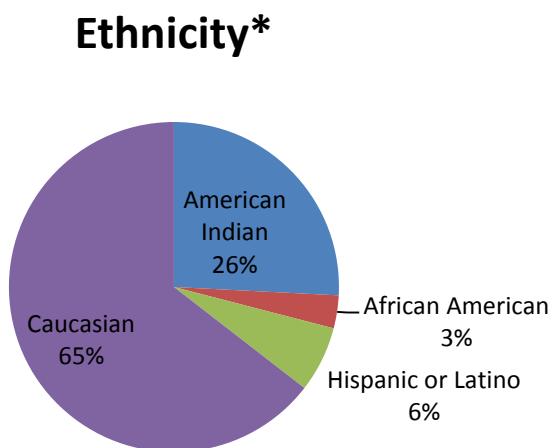
## Results

### Demographics:

A total of 66 completed surveys were received. 95% of the respondents were male; 5% were female. The following graph shows the age ranges of survey respondents.

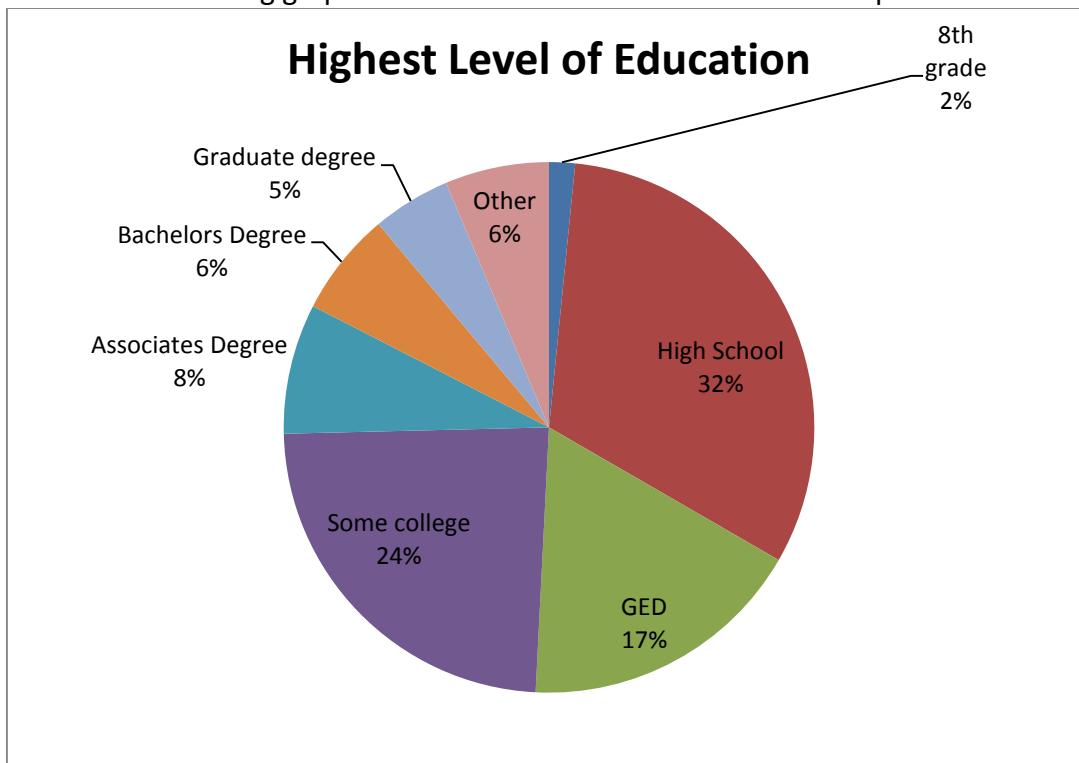


The following chart displays the ethnicity of the survey respondents.

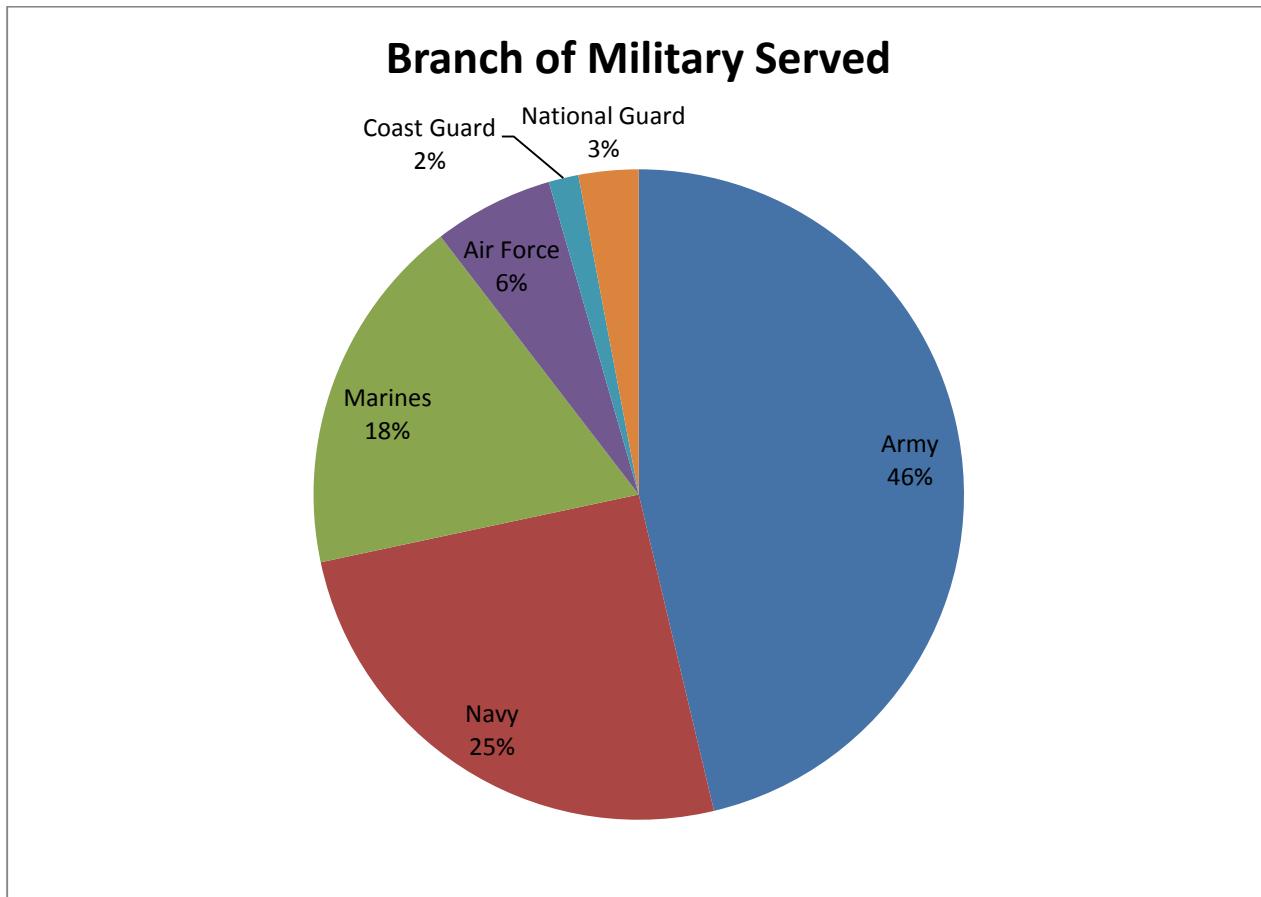


\*zero respondents reported being Asian or Pacific Islander

The following graph illustrates the levels of education of respondents

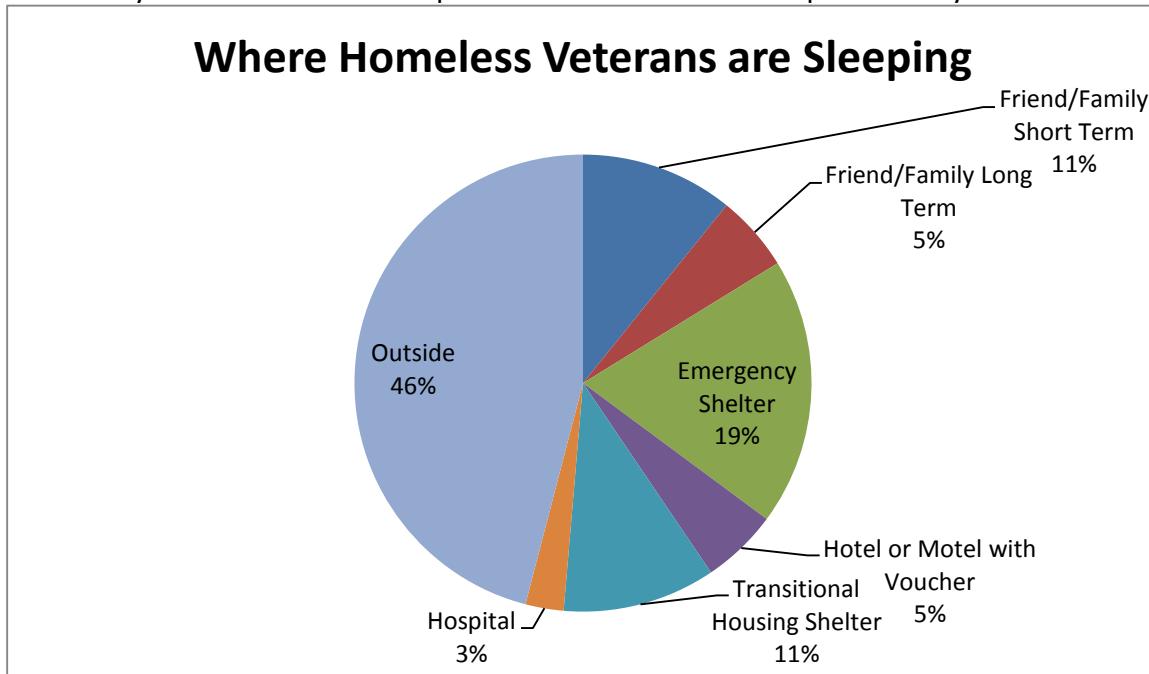


Survey results showed the following military service affiliations;

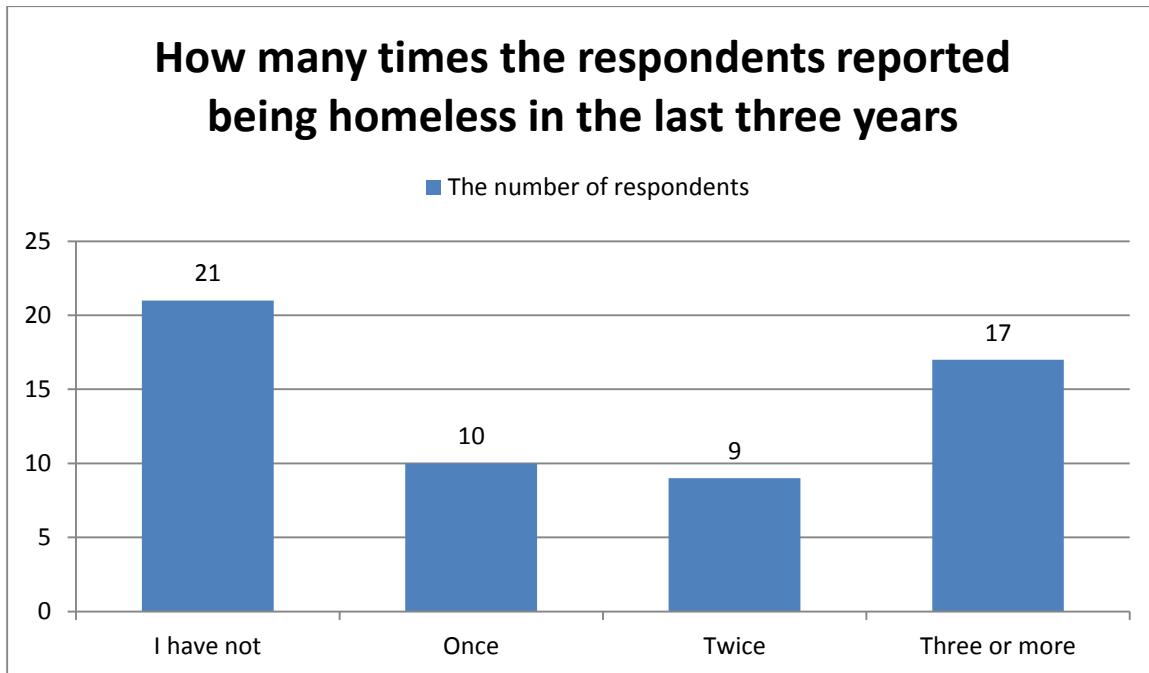


**Needs:**

This survey found that 49% of respondents were homeless or precariously housed.



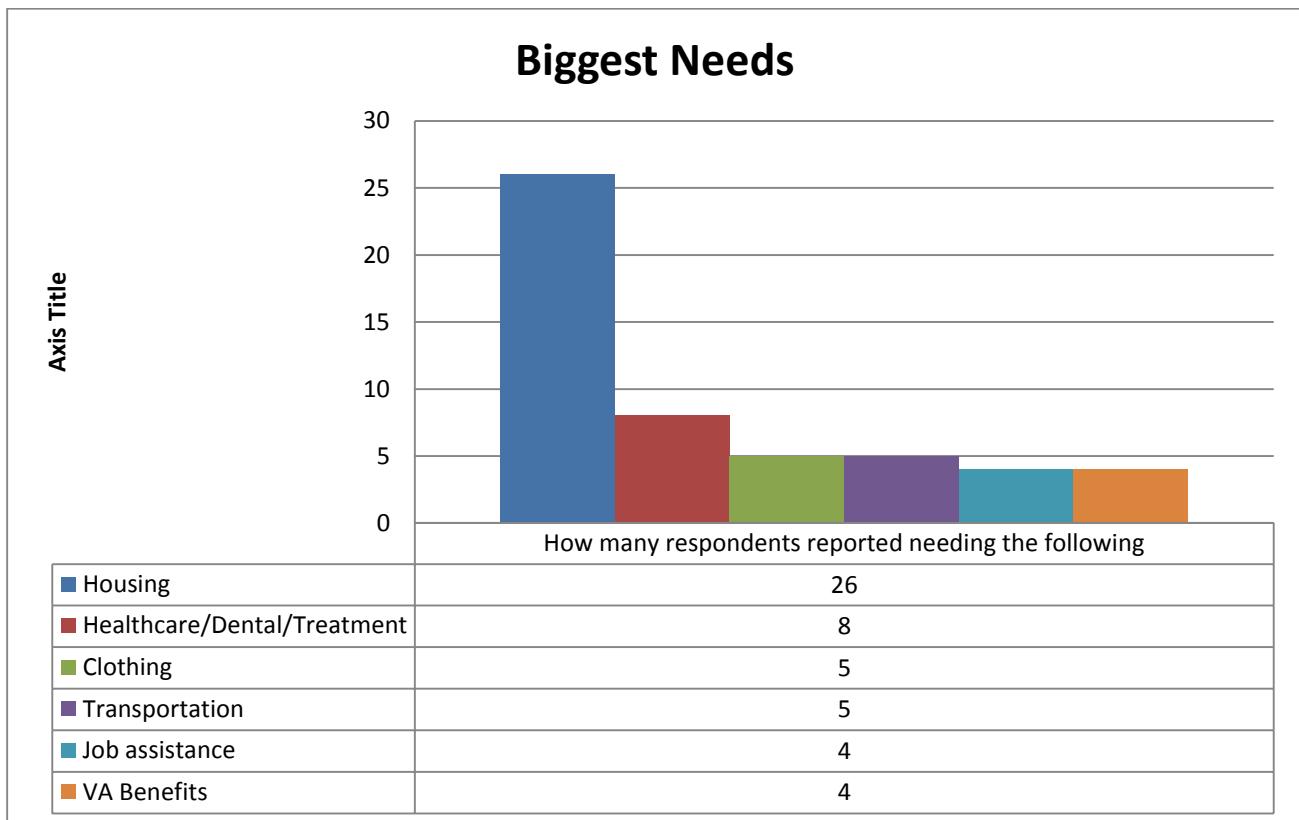
When asked how many times in the last three years had they been homeless, 30% responded they had been three or more times, 16% reported two times, and 16% reported one time.



Survey respondents reported the following current needs:

- Housing

- Healthcare/dental dare/treatment services
- Transportation assistance
- Clothing
- Job assistance
- VA benefits

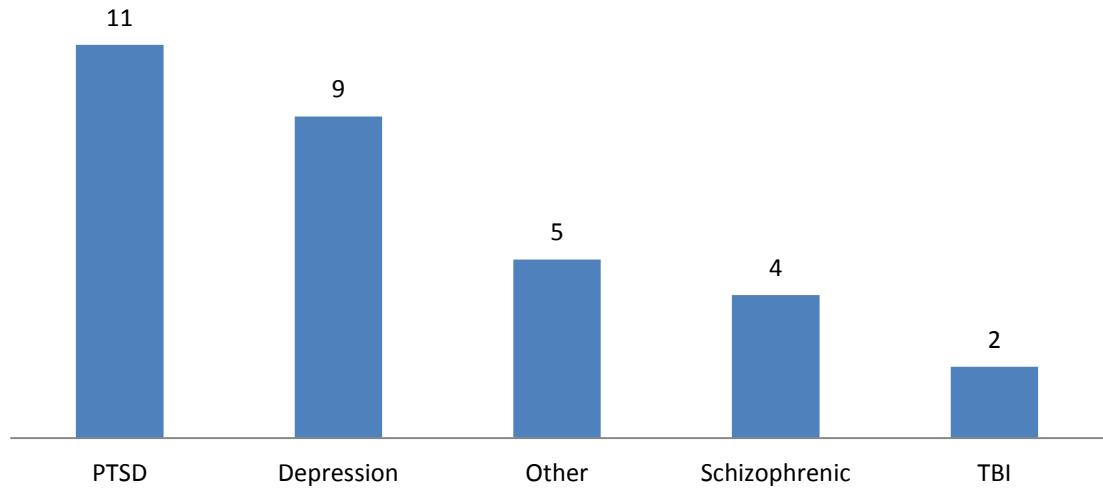


This project assessed veterans' needs and currently available services. Housing was the greatest identified need. The survey asked individuals if they had transportation to appointments when needed, 40% responded they were only "sometimes" or "rarely/never" had transportation. When asked whether they were currently employed, 80% responded they were not employed. In addition, 42% reported they faced obstacles in finding employment.

When asked if they were able to see a doctor when they needed to, 88% said yes. When asked if they were able to see a dentist when they needed to, only 55% reported yes. 45% reported having a mental health condition and 23% suffered from substance abuse.

## Reported Mental Health Conditions

■ Number of responses



When asked if they had gone hungry any days in the past month, 34% responded they have gone hungry at least one day in the past month. Of those who said they had gone hungry, 35% reported they had gone hungry for 8 or more days.

## **What went well?**

Billings Community Connect (BCC) was an effective vehicle for collecting surveys. The survey booth was the first table people encountered when entering the BCC event. This location, combined with wonderful volunteers, snacks, and a large sign indicating the survey was for veterans, proved to be an effective method for collecting surveys.

## **Future Recommendations**

In order to make the survey more successful for future administration, it is recommended that more volunteers be recruited. Presentations about the survey and BMVP Veterans project to various churches and service groups could be helpful in recruiting volunteers in the future.

The weather hampered survey outreach efforts. During survey administration, it was extremely cold, with several inches of new snow on the ground and few individuals were outside. It was difficult to get people to commit to volunteering because it was so cold outside. Thus, summer or fall would probably be a better time to administer the survey. In the future, if the survey is conducted at the Billings Public Library, it is suspected it would be more effective during the evening hours.

Future recommendations are as follows: service providers must be recruited ahead of time to efficiently administer surveys to their clients at their locations. For example, a few service providers stated they would administer surveys, but very few responses were collected. In the future, it would be beneficial to stress the importance of the survey results and how their organizations might benefit from the survey results.

The survey revealed that homeless and impoverished veterans in Billings currently face significant obstacles. The most urgent needs that must be addressed are a lack of affordable/available housing, transportation, and jobs. While there are currently programs and projects in Billings that are addressing these problems, service improvements for veterans' needs is essential. The Billings Metro VISTA Veterans Project's goal is to assist service providers already providing these services to create or enhance projects and programs to meet veterans' needs, and to ensure an increase in the capacity for veterans currently accessing needs.

## **What's next?**

Housing, transportation, and employment were highlighted as a result of survey analysis. The VISTA member plans to partner with current service providers in order to address veterans' needs for housing, employment, and transportation.

## **Transportation**

Currently free bus passes are only available to veterans who have a service-connected disability. The VISTA member plans to create a program that will expand transportation options for veterans. The development of this program and its subsequent implementation will provide bus passes for any veteran, regardless of disability.

## **Housing**

A veteran's housing project will be supported by the VISTA project with the goal of increasing the capacity of housing services, ultimately decreasing the number of homeless veterans in Billings. The specific service provider that will be assisted by the VISTA project will be identified based on future meetings.

## **Employment**

A project will be developed to help veterans find employment. In the future, a VISTA project will partner with a current service provider in order to increase the number of veterans served. A similar project will be created to help veterans find employment.

## **Attachment 1: Service Provider Survey**

Agency Name:	Contact Person:
Address:	Website:
Phone Number:	E-mail:
<b>Services Provided</b>	

***Please indicate which services are offered using the key below.***

**R = Referrals** for this service

**S = Services provided on-site** regardless of enrollment

**P = Service provided for enrolled participants only**

***Please check all of the services you currently provide to the homeless in the Billings area:***

<b>Prevention</b>		<b>Outreach</b>	<b>Supportive Services</b>
Public Assistance		Street Outreach	Case Management
Community Services Referral		Mobile Clinic	Personal Money Management
Housing Counseling		Showers	Life Skills / Decision Making
Mortgage Assistance		Laundry	Conflict Resolution / Mediation
Rental Assistance		Clothing	Alcohol & Drug Treatment
Utilities Assistance		Food Assistance	Mental Health Counseling
Housing		Food Boxes / Meals	Health Care Services
Counseling / Advocacy		Sack Lunches	Health Care Referrals
Support Groups		Telephone Use	Medication Assistance
Tenant Rights Education		Computer Access	Dental Care
Legal Assistance		Toiletry Supplies	Vision Care
Family Planning		Family Planning Education	HIV / AIDS
<b>Other prevention services:</b>		Temporary Shelter	Education
		Day Center	Employment Assistance
		Law Enforcement	Child Care
		<b>Other outreach services:</b>	
		Parenting Classes	
		Transportation & Assistance	
		Pre-release & Re-entry	
		Domestic Violence Assistance	
		<b>Other supportive services:</b>	

What service gaps for veteran services in Billings do you see?

**Clients**

Approximately how many clients do you serve per year:

**Please indicate an approximate percentage of clients that are apart of each listed group:**

Male:	Female:	Homeless:
-------	---------	-----------

Age 18-30:	Age 31-50:	Age 50+:
------------	------------	----------

Veterans:	Physically disabled:	Mentally Ill:
-----------	----------------------	---------------

**Challenges**

***Please Indicate the level of each challenge 1 through 5***

“1” very little challenge  “5” very big challenge

**Lack of volunteers:**

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**Lack of funding:**

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**Unsure where to refer clients to:**

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**Long wait list for services:**

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**Community Awareness of your services:**

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**Other (please describe):** \_\_\_\_\_

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**Other (please describe):** \_\_\_\_\_

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

What is the best way to reach out to veterans to provide information?

What barriers do veterans face when accessing services?

Do you have any future veterans' projects or plans your organization would like to implement?

How might the VISTA member assist your organization in implementing these plans or in addressing other challenges?

Are there any other organizations or people the VISTA member should contact regarding veteran services in Billings?

We would like to meet with each service provider in the area to discuss veteran services. If interested, when would you be available?

Is it ok to put your organizations information on a resource list and website listing all veteran service providers in the area? If yes, please supply a short blurb about your organization to have with your information. (Examples would be; what programs you offer, who your clients are, hours, events etc.)

Any Additional Information

## Attachment 2: Veterans Survey

The goal of this survey is to identify needed services for veterans in Billings. The survey will only be used to enhance and/or increase services and we will not use your responses in any way that could negatively affect you. All of your answers are anonymous. Your name or any identifying information will not be linked with any of your responses. You may skip answering any question; however, the more information you give us the more effective we can be in meeting veterans' needs. Thank you for taking the time to take our survey and help us improve veteran services.

By providing the following information you are giving us your permission to use your information to help serve veterans better in Billings.

This unique code will be used to make sure that each participant takes the survey only once but will not be able to identify who you are.

Initial of First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Initial of Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The day you were born (Example February 12 please put 12 in the box): \_\_\_\_\_

Male or Female: \_\_\_\_\_



Please circle the answer that fits your response the best. Some questions require a written response. If you would like to provide any additional information to a question, or in general, feel free to write in the boxes or on the back of the survey.

<b>1) Do you feel connected to other veterans in the area?</b>	Yes	No	
<b>Would you like to be more connected to other veterans in Billings?</b>			
Yes	No		
<b>2) Do you have one or more friends you can confide in regularly?</b>	Yes	No	
<b>3) Where do you normally sleep at night? (please circle all that apply)</b>			
Your own home or apartment	Domestic violence shelter		
At a friend or family member's house long term	Emergency shelter		
At a friend or family member's house short term	Prison, jail, or a detention facility		
Transitional housing program for homeless	Substance abuse treatment facility		
Apartment or house paid by a subsidy	Hotel or motel paid by self		
Hotel or motel with a voucher	Hospital		
Outside or other place not meant for sleeping (car, van, etc)			
Other: _____			
<b>4) How long have you been sleeping there?</b>			
Less than one month	2-3 months	4-6 months	7 months to a year
1-2 years	more than 2 years; please indicate how long _____		
<b>5) How many times in the last three years have you been without a home or permanent place to live?</b>			
I have not been without a home	One time		
Two times	Three or more times		
<b>6) Why did you leave the last place you considered home? (circle all that apply)</b>			
Evicted for reasons other than rent	Unable to pay rent		
Conflict with family or friends	Overcrowding		
Domestic violence	Lost job or no job		
Unexpected change in income	Went to prison or jail		
Went into the hospital	Housing condemned		
I have not changed residence recently	Fire		
Other, please specify _____			
<b>7) Have you received any of these benefits or services? (circle all that apply)</b>			
Disability compensation through VA	Home loans from VA	GI Bill	
HUD-VA Supportive Housing Program	Other benefits from VA	Section 8	
TANF cash assistance	Unemployment	Social Security	
Medicare/Medicaid	Health insurance	SNAP/Food Stamps	
Other: _____	None		



<b>11) Do you have any mental health conditions?</b>					
Yes, diagnosed	Yes, undiagnosed	No			
Please list: _____					
Is this condition a result from your service?		Yes	No		
<b>12) Do you suffer from any substance abuse? (alcohol, drugs, etc. please list)</b>					
Yes _____		No			
<b>13) Do you have any long term physical injuries resulting from your service?</b>					
Yes, please list: _____			No		
<b>14) Have you ever been hospitalized while homeless?</b>					
Yes, how many times? _____		No	I've never been homeless		
<b>15) Are you able to see a doctor when you need to?</b>					
Yes		No			
<b>16) When is the last time you saw a doctor?</b>					
Less than a year	1-2 years	3-5 years	5+ years		
<b>17) Are you able to see a dentist when you need to?</b>					
Yes		No			
<b>18) When is the last time you saw a dentist?</b>					
Less than a year	1-2 years	3-5 years	5+ years		
<b>19) How many days in the last month did you go hungry?</b>					
0	1-3	4-7	8+		
<b>20) How many meals do you normally have each day?</b>					
0	1	2	3 or more		
<b>21) Are you able to find transportation to appointments when you need it?</b>					
Yes		Sometimes	Rarely/Never		
<b>22) What is your age:</b>					
18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66+
<b>23) What is your marital Status:</b>					
Single	Married	Divorced			
Widow/Widower	Long term relationship				
<b>24) What race do you identify with most?</b>					
White	Native American or American Indian				
Hispanic or Latino	Black or African American				
Asian / Pacific Islander	Prefer not to disclose				
Other _____					
<b>25) Highest level of education completed:</b>					
8 <sup>th</sup> grade	High School Diploma	GED	Some College		
Associates degree	Bachelors degree	Graduate/Professional degree			

<p><b>26) What branch of military did you serve?</b></p> <p>Army      Navy      Marines      Air Force      Coast Guard      National Guard</p> <p>Please check if reserves      <input type="checkbox"/></p>						
<p><b>27) How many years did you serve in the military?</b></p> <p>0-2      3-4      5-6      7-10      11-15      16-20      20+</p>						
<p><b>28) Discharge from service:</b></p> <p>Honorable discharge      General discharge      Other discharge</p>						
<p><b>29) How many years have you lived in Billings?</b></p> <p>0-1      2-5      6-10      11-15      16-20      21+</p>						
<p><b>30) How many hours of sleep do you normally get at night?</b></p> <p>0-3      4-5      6-7      8+</p>						
<p><b>31) Do you have regular access to a shower?</b></p> <p>Always      Sometimes      Rarely      Never</p>						
<p><b>32) Do you have access to personal hygiene products and services? (toothbrush, toothpaste, haircuts, soap etc.)</b></p> <p>Yes      No, please list what you need: _____</p>						
<p><b>33) Are you currently employed?</b></p> <p>Yes, full time      Yes, part time      No</p>						
<p><b>34) If you are looking for employment, are you facing any obstacles looking for employment?</b></p> <p>Yes      No</p> <p>If yes, please describe: _____</p>						
<p><b>35) Do you have any children under the age of 18?</b></p> <p>Yes, how many? _____      No</p> <p>If yes, are you a primary caregiver? (<i>there can be more than one primary caregiver</i>)</p> <p>Yes      No</p>						
<p><b>36) Do you have trouble finding adequate childcare for your children?</b></p> <p>Yes      No</p>						
<p><b>37) Thank you so much for your participation in this survey. Do you have any additional information that you would like to share?</b></p> <p>_____</p>						

# VETERAN SURVEY!



The Billings Metro VISTA Project is conducting a veterans' survey, which asks veterans about their needs and the services they have accessed. Survey results will be used to determine how to better serve veterans experiencing poverty and/or homelessness in Billings.

**Surveys may be taken online at:**

**<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/vetsurveybillings>**

Contact Elizabeth Donald at 406-657-8289 or [vista2@ci.billings.mt.us](mailto:vista2@ci.billings.mt.us) for more information or to request a paper copy of the survey



Attachment 4:  
Gazette Article



Billings





**BILLINGS GAZETTE**

## **Gazette opinion: Observe MLK holiday with community service**

January 16, 2014 12:00 am

The Martin Luther King Jr. holiday on Monday will be a regular work day for most Montanans. Banks and government offices will close, and Billings Public School students will have a day off. For the rest of us, the holiday will be a regular Monday, like Presidents Day will be next month.

However, the federal holiday honoring the slain civil rights leader has become more than a day off. For many Americans, it is a “day on” for volunteers, a national day of service.

Recognizing that many potential volunteers will be working Monday, Billings organizations have arranged National Day of Service activities on Saturday. From, 8 a.m. till noon Saturday, community volunteers are invited to help spruce up Friendship House of Christian Service, 3123 Eighth Ave. S. There will be jobs that adults and children can do at this after-school child care and community center, said Matt Lundgren, executive director. Volunteers are needed to dust, wash chairs, paint and varnish, build shelves and do some outdoor work, weather permitting.

Next week brings some once-a-year opportunities for Billings volunteers to assist homeless persons.

On Jan. 23 and 24, volunteers are needed to help with Billings Community Connect, an annual outreach to people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. Dozens of local agencies will be on hand at the Shrine Auditorium, 1124 Broadwater Ave., all day on Jan. 24 to help individuals and families connect with services that they can use to lift themselves out of homelessness. Billings Community Connect also offers hot meals, clothing and other necessities.

The annual survey of homelessness is scheduled for Jan. 22 and 23. As of Wednesday, 26 more volunteers were needed to conduct the survey at various agencies and on the streets of Billings. Volunteers choose the shifts they want to work and are required to have training, which is scheduled for today at noon and 7 p.m.

Even those of us who have only 10 minutes to spare can help. The Billings Metro VISTA Project, working with local helping agencies and the Billings Community Development office, is

conducting a survey of homelessness in Billings. It takes less than 10 minutes to complete the online survey, and results will help inform local decisions for addressing homelessness in our city.

The Metro VISTA Project also is conducting a survey designed to identify gaps in services to U.S. veterans. Volunteers are needed to survey veterans starting next week and at various times through Feb. 1.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day has become a national day of service. It is a time to recognize and honor the volunteers in our communities. Be part of this uplifting movement. Volunteer this week. If you are in Billings, check the box below for volunteer opportunity details.

## **How to help**

- For more information on the Day of Service Saturday at Friendship House, call Mike Yakawich at 254-2445.
- For more information on other volunteer opportunities, go to the United Way of Yellowstone County's volunteer website: [youcanvolunteer.com](http://youcanvolunteer.com). This week, the site listed 118 opportunities offered by 76 agencies.
- To volunteer by phone for Billings Community Connect, call 245-6177. Volunteers are needed to help set up from 1 to 4 p.m. on Jan. 23 and must be 18 years old.
- Volunteers for the 2014 Housing Status Survey of homeless folks are required to attend two-hour training sessions starting either at noon today or at 7 p.m. tonight at United Way, 2173 Overland Ave.
- To volunteer for the Billings Metro VISTA survey of veterans, call Elizabeth Donald at 657-8289 or email [vista2@ci.billings.mt.us](mailto:vista2@ci.billings.mt.us).
- To complete the Billings Metro VISTA survey on homelessness in our community, go to the link with this Gazette opinion at [billingsgazette.com](http://billingsgazette.com).