

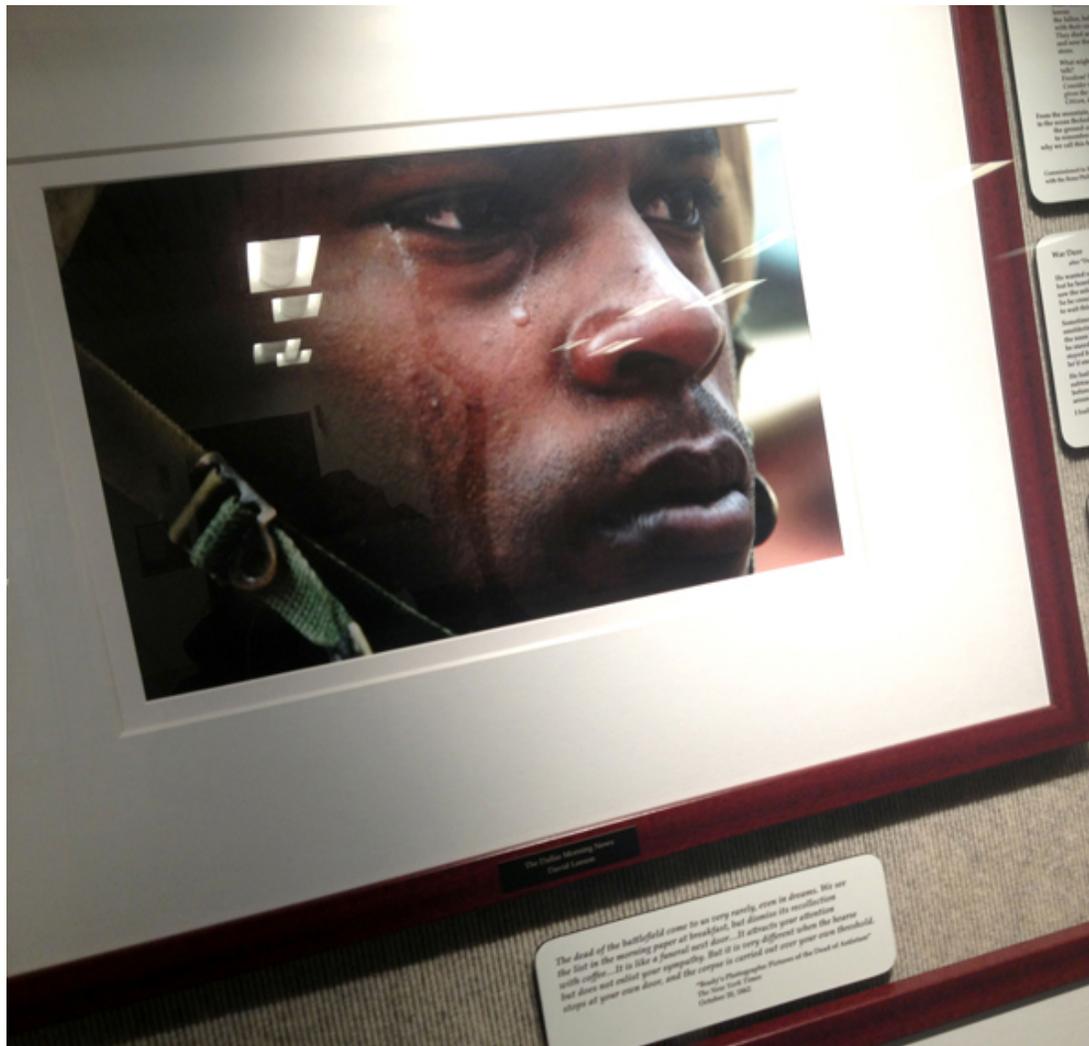
Taking a Look at the Visions of War

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Visions of War is a series of

The photographs in 'Always Lost: A Meditation on War' is a reminder that the effects of war are personal and ongoing. Photo by Samantha Feld.

veteran-focused exhibits and workshops that honor the men and women who have served in the military. It is a collaboration between the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point and Mid-State Technical College that has been going on for the past two years.

The program aims to give student-veterans and other members of the university and the central Wisconsin community a chance to think about their war experiences and to use art to express themselves.

Leslie DeBauche, one of the coordinators on the committee for Visions of War, said a whole range of departments and colleges help to fund the activities for this year.

"This year the program includes an exhibition called 'Always Lost' that includes photographs of all the service women and men who have died in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan," DeBauche said.

Ann Whipp, another member on the committee and the Veterans Coordinator on campus, says that the "Always Lost: A Meditation on War" exhibit was initially created by students at Western Nevada College.

"It consists of over 30 panels of the names and photos of all the military members killed in Iraq and Afghanistan since 9/11," Whipp said.

Additionally, there will be photographs from David Lesson, a 2004 Pulitzer Prize-winner, and Cheryl Diaz Meyer. There will also be literary work from Professor Swirczek's creative writing classes, veterans and their families, the Lone Mountain Writers group and other Northern Nevada writers.

"This exhibit reminds us that war is very personal and affects us all," Whipp said.

The display is located in the Dreyfus University Center next to the Laird room until the closing ceremony on Thursday, April 25 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

During Visions of War, there will also be a visit from Nate Lewis of Combat Paper. Lewis helps veterans use their uniforms to make paper and then make art with the paper.

"We will be making journals out of the pulped uniform paper, and also veterans and other participants will have the opportunity to make art or anything out of the paper that is made the week that Combat Paper is on campus," DeBauche said.

Also on campus will be Lovalla Calico from Warrior Writers. Calico and two other members of her organization will work with student and community veterans to write about their experience of war.

Nancy Schaperkotter, the director of Student Support at Mid-State Technical College, said the writing and art workshops support artistic exploration and expression and are open to all veterans, service members, military families and members of the community.

"Warrior Writers support and empower veterans through creativity, wellness and open dialogue between veterans and the civilian community in order to promote connection, understanding and healing," Schaperkotter said.

Warrior Writers also offers prompts to encourage the sharing of stories, opinions and ideas about various military issues and experiences. The workshops empower veterans and military families to release bottled-up thoughts and emotions through writing and art.

"We have also invited award-winning film-maker and vet Kyle Hausmann-Stokes to campus," DeBauche said.

Hausmann-Stokes will show his film and speak on "Paradigm Shift: Iraq, College, PTSD, and How I Found Therapy through Filmmaking." Hausmann-Stokes always wanted to pursue a career in film but joined the army out of high school and was disturbed by the lack of support from civilians back home. He now has his own professional film company, Blue Three Productions, where he creates content that addresses veteran affairs.

"For me, the purpose of these events is to offer our veterans different ways to process their experiences and promote healing. The 'Always Lost: A Meditation on War' exhibit is a reminder that the effects of war are personal and ongoing with the loss of our children, parents, neighbors and friends," Whipp said.

Whipp believes that Visions of War is important because it informs people about the human costs of war through the exhibit and offers different ways for people to process war's effects.

"We have included several receptions for people to gather and communicate about what they have seen and heard through Visions of War and about their personal experiences and thoughts about war," Whipp said.

Events are free and open to the public and will be held throughout the month of April. Two of the writers' workshops are reserved for student and community veterans. The third workshop is open to all.