



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

DIVISION OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative and selected portions of a previously-funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the current guidelines, which reflect the most recent information and instructions, at <https://www.neh.gov/grants/education/dialogues-the-experience-war>

Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Education Programs staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative and selected portions, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title: Meaning and Dimensions of Service: Duty, Loyalty, and Culture in War

Institution: St. John Fisher College

Project Director: Dr. Carolyn Vacca

Grant Program: Dialogues on the Experience of War

Narrative

Summary of the project. St. John Fisher College (SJFC) will partner with the Veterans Services Agency (VSA), Heel to Heal/Sole to Soul (H2/S2), and Keeping Our Promise (KOP) to offer a series of discussions on the *Meaning and Dimensions of Service: Duty, Loyalty, and Culture in War* as an NEH Dialogues on the Experience of War project. This program will build on our two previous Dialogues grants from 2017 and 2020, which have engaged students, student veterans, and veterans, and extend their reach to include Afghan interpreters/Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders in order to delve into discussions about the definition of service, the lines of duty, the claims of loyalty, and their relationship to culture. Using humanities resources on World War I (WWI) and the ‘small wars’ in Iraq and Afghanistan, discussion leaders trained in a semester-long preparatory course will bring diverse participants together to share differing perspectives on the understanding of service. The context will be provided by history faculty members, Drs. Carolyn S. Vacca (Project Director) and Frederick Dotolo (Co-Project Director), using literary, historical, television/film, and archival sources along with community partners and content experts who will provide a unique cultural awareness. The project aims to build an inclusive veteran community, one that recognizes interpreters, and provide historical context on these compelling issues for the future.

Project development, intellectual rationale, and program overview. Even before the official withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan and the simultaneous spotlight on Afghan interpreters and their tragic plight, the trailer for the CBS sitcom, *The United States of Al*, generated controversy (April 1, 2021). The show weaves the lives of a Marine combat veteran trying to reintegrate in American society and the newly resettled Afghan interpreter who served with his unit in Afghanistan. While some of the criticism focused on the casting of a non-Afghan as the interpreter, others challenged the presentation of the “terp” as non-dimensional, even hyper-respectful. However, as the series evolved, some of the nuances in the relationship between Marine Riley and Alwamir (Al) Karimi, as well as Riley’s family, create moments of

cultural understanding. Consider Episode 5, which opens with Al attempting to pray amidst interruptions by Riley until Al explains that this is an effort to assuage his homesickness. Riley, trying to soften Al's sense of loss, takes him to a bar frequented by veterans, many of them who served in WWII, the Korean War, and the Viet Nam War. Al soon realizes that despite having experienced war, these veterans have no shared vocabulary of war with him, and resorts to play a game of darts. He returns to the house to find that Riley's family has re-created an Afghan dinner, an event that spurs a deeper conversation between Al and Riley's sister, Lizzie. Al reflects on how beautiful his country is, and how he will never see it again while Lizzie, mourning the death of her helicopter pilot fiancé, reveals her opinion that there is nothing beautiful about Afghanistan. As she considers Al's loss and her own, Lizzie suggests that "homesick" is not the right word for what Al is experiencing because that implies he will go home one day, which can never happen. Neither one of them will ever be able to fully resolve the loss they experienced, but in dialogue they found common ground. Whatever the issues that some critics may have had, the television series highlights the differing experiences of war, the pain of resettlement (even when it is an individual choice), and the strong bonds between the military and its support personnel. And the early backlash that the series inspired makes abundantly clear how this service experience needs to be explored and preserved for the future.

This exploration and preservation will be two of the goals of our new Dialogues project, in which we will continue to expand the diversity that framed our previous two NEH Dialogues programs (2017-2019, 2020-2022) by reaching new partners and audiences, fostering a wider concept of service and dialogue, and broadening our understanding of the dimensions of culture in duty, loyalty, and service. As in previous programs, we will connect all of this work to the overarching questions of the "A More Perfect Union" initiative. Our 2017 grant, *Dialogues on War: The Ethics of War*, involved a discussion-leader preparatory course and dialogues to engage participants in exploring issues of duty, loyalty, and patriotism. Our 2020 grant, *Dialogues on Civics, Ethics, and Military Service*, which is still in process, has enhanced our

understanding of the historical resonance of war experiences and its applicability to our understanding of pressing moral and ethical issues through an enlarged civic engagement component, an even more diverse range of participants, and a new course structure. The NEH 2017 grant program achieved our established goals, even when unpredictable challenges arose with some of the community partners; the NEH 2020 program has achieved many goals, despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and is working towards achieving others. Both of our NEH grants used humanities-based sources to inform course content and subsequent discussions; the new grant will build on this successful approach. By involving student veterans and other SJFC students and veterans in senior living facilities, the 2017 program reached a diverse consortium of individuals to share multiple perceptions of the Common Good. There were three offerings of the discussion-leader preparation course, incorporating student feedback each time to ensure continuous improvement. We conducted 36 separate dialogue sessions with veteran groups, with some veterans choosing to attend more than one dialogue. The veterans and students were from varied backgrounds and military service, allowing for rich and interactive discussions involving multiple perspectives. The students represented a variety of majors and possessed a range of life experiences and long-term goals. This inclusive structure provided participants with the opportunity to reach across observed differences to develop a deeper understanding of “standing together.” The 2020 grant project has been greatly impacted by COVID social-distancing restrictions, requiring us to pivot our method for connecting with the community. Fortunately, we have been able to use the Zoom platform to reach veterans beyond our campus. We continued to ensure diversity among participants, despite having to consolidate sessions. Eight different sessions were also recorded, creating a useful bank of experiences and information for future preparatory courses and dialogues. While we missed the connections that face-to-face dialogues inspire, we were able to involve veterans from across the country and even across the globe. In another pivot, we also created and received NEH approval to develop and offer a capstone follow-up experience for

students, veterans, and our new community partner, Heel to Heal/Sole to Soul (H2/S2). This prep course and experience will take place in Spring 2022.

All of the evaluations for our past dialogue offerings have been positive (see other supporting materials). It is important to note that we modified our evaluation practices based on the limits of COVID and the availability of collecting analytic data. The evaluation of the 2017 Dialogues program involved the use of hardcopy pre- and post-surveys, whereas the evaluation of the 2020 grant includes a survey response tool, a reflective memo, and verbal discussions. The verbal discussion among veterans revealed that there is strong interest for individuals to participate in the program again. We hope to use some of these past participants as consultants in the new project.

We had planned significant outreach in the implementation of the 2020 grant, building upon our contacts in the 2017 Dialogues program. While that had to be severely limited because of COVID restrictions, we established a new partner, H2/S2, and began to develop a more inclusive concept of service. This new grant program will explore a different and significant variation on service, that of the support personnel, specifically Afghan interpreters. Rochester, N.Y., where SJFC is located, has successful track record of resettlement for decades. Recently, the State Department designated the city for the resettlement of 200-250 interpreters from Afghanistan. Thus along with some of our former partners, we will work with the Veterans Service Agency (VSA), which offers a wide range of assistance to veterans and has been instrumental with resettling Afghan interpreters, among others, for a number of years. The VSA director advocated for all veteran resources to be accessible to interpreters as well; thank to his efforts, the County Executive instituted this as formal policy. The director is also willing to serve as a content expert for this grant. VSA is a hub for many of the Afghan interpreters, as well as numerous other veterans, and will be an important partner, both in recruiting participants and in providing space for us to engage in dialogues. For the new grant, we are especially pleased to partner with VSA and H2/S2 as building connections with

direct veteran service agencies has been difficult, and was actually an unrealized goal in our first Dialogues grant. We are also thrilled to be working with Keeping Our Promise (KOP), “the most comprehensive resettlement program for Afghan, Iraqi and Kurdish interpreters and support personnel in the United States today” (KOP website). A nationally recognized organization, based in Rochester, their experience with Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) Afghans will be invaluable, not only in helping us to connect with participants, but also with training in the preparatory course. The participation of service experts in the discussion-leader preparatory course will expand the project through direct involvement of community participants. We will continue to actively seek other community partners as the resettlement efforts and our program unfold.

Dr. Carolyn S. Vacca, Project Director (PD), and Dr. Frederick Dotolo (Co-PD), history faculty members at SJFC, will take again the lead in developing, enhancing, and promoting a sustainable, replicable Dialogues program that will include a diverse group of community members as trainers, leaders, and participants. The historical foundation for the preparatory course (HIST 2100) will be the exploration of WWI and so-called small wars, or counterinsurgencies (COIN), specifically the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars as catalysts for discussions of duty, culture, and service. We will intertwine both leadership training and content discussions, incorporating the examination of ethics in the historical content, and actively practicing the nature of shared discussion in every class. Beginning with the exploration of Shared Authority and Sustained Dialogue techniques, students will then integrate these methods in discussions of content-based issues. This course organization marks a clear shift from the sequential approach in previous renditions to more readily incorporate our community trainers.

WWI has largely been the forgotten war in the U.S. while the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq continue to enter our public discourse on a daily basis. Discussion of each of these has tended to focus on the horrors of war rather than the ethics of war or their impact on our ideas of service, and have been characterized as wars that our nation won, only to lose the peace. They each raised questions about what

constitutes an individual's duty to the nation, or even to the global community, both of which we previously addressed. In the new Dialogues program, we will continue to address these but will now seek to close the loop by asking: What is the country's duty to those who serve, even if they are not part of the established military? The PD/Co-PD will use the similarities and striking differences of these wars to spark discussions in the divergently understood concepts of duty, loyalty, and service and their interaction with culture. The emergence of questions about the meanings of service in previous groups and the current intersections with culture prompted their inclusion. With neither the valor of the Civil War nor the hegemony of World War II, Americans perceived each of these wars at one point as a fight against dictatorial powers, one that some felt was foisted on an unwilling nation. Each involved transitions in war that challenged previously held assumptions. WWI, beyond the usual dimensions of "total war" ascribed to it, marked a major shift from agricultural to mechanized lifeways that many found discomfoting; the concomitant emphasis on technological improvement and the potential for brutality it brought with it was even more alarming. Similarly, 20th-Century small wars in general ended the ability to wage war against a clearly identified nation state and brought home questions of American prerogative and the concept of the enemy within, as well as new dimensions of warfare that were as morally unacceptable to the public as those employed in WWI. In all of this, the questions that "A More Perfect Union" raises—the role of individual conscience in a democracy, the challenges to identity in an industrial society, the moral conundrums that each war presented—underscore ethical and content discussions. With the recent withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan, potential questions about nation building and the ethics involved are particularly pertinent.

The PD/Co-PD will call upon history texts, literary texts, and film for the discussion groups. These sources provide a variety of entry points that inspire veterans to share differing viewpoints and access the power of the humanities. Americans each experienced WWI differently; for some, the war remained a European disaster to avoid, if possible. But for others, the carnage challenged any notion of complacency

and evolved into a threat to American democracy. Previously, we explored primary texts that document these shared feelings. The war also provided unique opportunities to expand the meaning of service. Dr. Vacca will explore two such groups, the Choctaw Codetalkers and the Chinese Labour Corps, aka Laborers as Soldiers. The Choctaw were recruited by troops in the Meuse Argonne Offensive on the Western Front in 1918. Germans regularly tapped their telephone lines and broke their coded messages, hampering all military efforts. An initial group of 19 formed the Choctaw Telephone Squad that both developed language for military terms and used their own language to communicate messages. Later in the war, several other tribes also contributed to codetalking. No enemy ever broke the codes, and the Choctaw returned safely home. But ironically, their children in the Indian schools were being routinely punished for trying to maintain their language and refusing to speak only in English. In addition, none of them would receive citizenship until 1924, well after the war's end. This provokes many of the same questions we ask today -- what is service? how should we acknowledge it? where do duty and loyalty lie? how do duty and culture interact? -- but does so in a much less politicized climate that encourages fruitful discussions of ethics and empathy. Consideration of the Chinese Labour Corps in WWI provides other provocative discussion opportunities. Between 1914-1918, an estimated 140,000-200,000 Chinese laborers dug trenches, removed debris, and buried the dead, among many other tasks in order that soldiers could be freed to fight (the circumstances of their recruitment, employment, and treatment are covered in the readings by Wang, Zhong, and Black). They were intentionally contracted, never given the status of "service" and their return to China was never guaranteed. They were assigned to three different forces -- French, British, and American -- and experienced diverse treatment, but it is clear that they endured both racial and religious prejudice despite their enormous contributions to the war effort. A cultural and financial imperative led them to pursue literacy skills in order that they could communicate with family members at home. Thus, many engaged in a YMCA literacy program credited with advancing Chinese linguistics and

literacy, setting the stage for the May Fourth Movement. In their cases, as with Afghan interpreters today, we can observe cultural interactions and assumptions that inform ideas about service.

The examination of small wars also engages discussion. The larger conventional military actions of the 20th Century – whether the World Wars or even the Cold War – were largely fought by conscript forces supported to varying degrees by the mass mobilization of the country. Most current military commitments involve longer struggles in what were ‘small wars’ but are now known as COIN. This warfare is increasingly isolated from the larger portion of American society. Waged by a professional, volunteer military force – sometimes even private military contractors – COIN is characterized by small-unit actions in remote, decentralized theaters of war, and places significant responsibility on junior Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs). The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan lack concurrent national mobilizations, leaving the burdens to fall on military forces and their families. IEDs, ambushes, enemies that blend into the larger civilian forces, untried or ill-prepared host nation forces, and a conflict that ebbs and flows from low to high intensity – redefine traditional concepts of loyalty, service, and duty in veterans. This connects our previous work to the current situations by posing other questions. Where did loyalty reside – to an individual’s belief structure or the needs of the nation? Is loyalty a useful framework to view individual decisions in each of the wars?

Discussion programs for military veterans and others. HIST 2100 will carry three credits and be embedded in the new SJFC core program, adding value for students. The new core emphasizes skills outcomes built on a sequence of courses throughout the student’s entire educational experience. This shift works very well for the discussion-leaders prep course, which incorporates discussion skills, civic engagement, and cultural awareness, all valued in this core. We have also incorporated the NEH’s “A More Perfect Union” initiative in course design. The discussion leaders will take the course in the spring semester, with the last four weeks set aside for the implementation of the discussion groups in the

community to engage with veterans and SIV holders in their comfort spots. This has been made possible largely by partnering with VSA and H2/S2 and will continue to be one of our greatest strengths, fostering civic engagement by having students serve in the community. Through Blackboard, an institutional learning management system, texts and movies will be accessible 24/7 for students. All students will have access to an iPad through SJFC's Apple 1:1 initiative; ten iPads purchased with the 2020 grant (a COVID pivot) will be used by participants as needed.

A continuing goal of HIST 2100 is to share and experience best practices in text-based discussion. Dr. Vacca was a discussion leader for the New York State Council on the Humanities Reading between the Lines groups, received training on text-based discussion, and has participated in two large veteran oral history projects. She has also taught oral history techniques, especially the principles of shared authority and Sustained Dialogue (a program focused on improving communication and interaction through dialogue; more information is available at www.SustainedDialogue.org) and will work with articles by Michael Frisch, Ph.D., a State University of New York at Buffalo retired faculty member and a nationally recognized expert in oral history. We will use peer modeling to improve discussion leader techniques and create a sense of community among the students. These approaches allow for the inclusion of multiple perspectives and resist the recognition of any "owner" of the discussion. A working community, fundamental to our success, will emerge as students trust in shared authority.

Building on this community, we will have consultants, content experts, engage in the course to heighten cultural awareness and its importance to shared understanding. Tova Abosch, who was formerly embedded with UK forces as a cultural support officer and has participated in our previous NEH 2020 Dialogues program, will be a consultant to inform curriculum and work with students. We will also have Ellen Smith, Executive Director of KOP serve as a guest speaker who can answer students' questions about interacting with resettled individuals. Nick Stefanovic, a combat veteran who served in Afghanistan

and Director of the VSA, will also provide his perspective. KOP, VSA, and H2/S2 will help support recruitment of participants. This will provide a natural segue into our exploration of ethics and war, helping students to frame insightful questions and grounding them in the theory of conflict.

The balance of HIST 2100 will focus on historical and literary content, weaving various types of resources together. Beginning with context informed by a general text (*World War I: A History in Documents* by Marilyn Shevin-Coetzee and Frans Coetzee) and films, we will move into the two target groups, Chinese labor and the Codetalkers, integrating historical ways of knowing with literary and artistic works. These works will include scholarly texts, remembrance texts (via primary sources diaries, letters, etc.), contemporaneous poetry, paintings, such as *Warrior* and films like *Paths of Glory*. Students and participants will begin to grapple with the tragic elements of this conflict, and to fathom the depths of the moral questions it raised. Concurrently, students will frame their own questions about duty, loyalty, culture, and service and the conduct of WWI and then question the impact of service. The goal is to create a receptive climate and secure background for the development of dialogues with our Afghan guests.

Metaphor and its usefulness as a discussion tool will be introduced with the consideration of horses in both WWI and the small wars, linking the ideas about animal use across time and space, and demonstrating some changing notions about the roles animal in service play. Pet ownership likely makes students susceptible to thinking of them in terms of agency and considering ethical questions. The issues of the use of animals, their expendability, and the human-animal bond open the door to these discussions, and the importance of horses in both WWI and some campaigns in Afghanistan provides natural connections. Furthermore, there are cultural connections in their respect and concern for these animals. The pitiful sounds of dying horses, and the questions of duty and choice that echo through those wails in the helpless soldiers' minds is one of the most poignant moments in *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Ch.4). Similarly, throughout *Horse Soldiers*, the Afghans' dismay at the loss of a horse and their willingness to go

hungry in order to feed them make their humanity even more palpable. In constructing our sense of animals in war, we can confront the same questions for society. What duty does this individual owe to his fellow soldiers (horses are often referenced as fellow soldiers) and to those who remain behind (tens of thousands of horses were abandoned in Europe at the end of the war)?

The readings also include selected excerpts on the theory and practice of small wars from Charles Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice* (1906), and the current Counterinsurgency Doctrine FM 3-24, MCWP 3-33.5 *Insurgencies and Counter Insurgencies* and war memoirs from Iraq and Afghanistan: Patrick O'Donnel *We Were One: Shoulder to Shoulder with the Marines Who Took Fallujah*, which details the intensity of combat at a platoon during an urban battle against entrenched insurgents; Sean Parnell's *Outlaw Platoon: Heroes, Renegades, Infidels and the Brotherhood of War In Afghanistan*, which recounts Parnell's experience fighting in Eastern Afghanistan, bonding with his Afghan interpreters, and encounters with the local culture. The final text is the personal account of an Iraqi interpreter from Mosul –known by the pseudonym “Johnny Walker,” –who worked with USN Seals before resettling in the US. Aside from the experience of combat, he explains the culture of Iraq and his struggle to adapt to life in America. To provide the perspective of female service members, the preparatory course includes the 2008 documentary, *Lioness* which describes the experience of female soldiers attached to frontline US Marines. These soldiers conducted the same missions as the Marines but provided key support when dealing with Iraqi women and children despite being formally banned from frontline combat.

There is also an active learning component to the course in the war game, *A Distant Plain: Insurgency in Afghanistan* (2015). Students are assigned to teams representing four factions from the war: the insurgents (warlords, Taliban) and counterinsurgents (Coalition and Afghan). Through the game, the students will learn resource management, strategic decision-making in a dynamic environment shaped by other players, and historical random events. While some veterans are familiar with COIN doctrine, this

might not be the case with the juniors enlisted in the course. Certainly, older veterans –especially those whose service took place between Vietnam and the start of the Iraq War or Afghanistan –did not have military service influenced by COIN.

The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were both fought under COIN, but they differ in important ways. COIN was developed largely with Iraq in mind – its population-centric focus depends on a level of host government participation requiring a level of state development missing from contemporary Afghanistan. In addition, Iraq is largely an urban culture – at least that is where the economic and political centers are located – and control of the cities is an effective means to control the country. Existing governmental and state structures and a military and political tradition are absent or severely underdeveloped in Afghanistan. Likewise, the Surge and the Anbar Awakening, key elements in defeating Al Qaeda in Iraq, did not succeed in Afghanistan. However, in both places Coalition forces conducted operations with small units, supported by firepower and mobility assets in partnership with host nation forces. Wartime service includes support personnel whose functions are vital to the effort, and who are also subjected to stress. What happens when a group of young Marines on their first combat deployment are faced with intense urban combat in which unit cohesion and loyalty is tested with the loss of senior leaders? What are the effects on service personnel performing kinetic missions or supporting such missions while operating amidst civilian populations? In linking WWI to small wars, we see the questions of strategic resource allocation and the ethics of decisions.

Students will participate in a graded discussion at the end of each section of HIST 2100, participate in the development of a rubric for evaluation of their mastery and presentation of their work, and submit a developed presentation for the discussion groups. These will be peer reviewed for content and engaging dialogue on the themes of duty, loyalty, service, and culture. Students will then work to provide content for oral history collections. At the close of the semester, each student will write a 5-6 page reflection on their

experience leading the discussion groups. In addition, they will participate in an open symposium with the community at which time they will present posters on their work. Two students who participated in the spring 2023 course will be selected to serve as summer research fellows under the supervision of the PD and Co-PD. During the summer, they will conduct oral histories of select dialogues participants –a new component to our Dialogues program. Initially they will work with the project directors to create an interview "map" and then review it with the community partners. They will also compose a list of those dialogue participants who would like to participate in an oral history interview. All dialogue participants need not be oral history participants; this is optional and based on the interviewees' comfort with the idea.

Discussion groups for military veterans and Afghans interpreters/SIV holders. The widest range of participants will stimulate consideration of multiple perspectives on the issues. The faculty directors will contact the community partners and facilities' directors to schedule sessions and provide program materials, including surveys, and will ascertain if they wish to add family discussion groups to their schedule (this is in response to anecdotal interest in the facilities). Faculty will attend inaugural sessions and conduct a back-brief of the session with the students, veterans, and facility liaisons.

We will meet with veterans in veteran friendly facilities, including the VSA, H2/S2, and the Charlotte-Genesee Lighthouse, and other sites that may be established during the grant period such as the Association for Town & Village Historians. We plan to schedule one session on the keeper's house of the Charlotte-Genesee Lighthouse, one of the oldest structures on Lake Ontario. We have urban and suburban settings for the discussion groups and plan for at least two meetings at each. Working with H2/S2 provides a setting in Batavia in nearby Genesee County. The VSA is centrally located in Rochester and is easily accessible by bus. Each of these locations has meeting accommodations suitable to the project and is fully supportive. Per the recommendation, the groups will be capped at 15 participants. We will offer double sessions if this presents a problem at any facility rather than turn anyone away. The discussions will be

publicized in the various locations and information will be posted in libraries and on community information boards, emphasizing that they are open sessions for all. There will be two discussion leaders per session to begin with; as the leaders gain more experience, they may move into single-leader positions. We have found that planning for an hour-long discussion is best, but the session time has ranged from 45 minutes to two hours in the past, depending on the participants' engagement. This wider range of sites and flexible scheduling will exponentially increase the number of participants, reaching underserved populations while addressing previous challenges.

Project team. Dr. Frederick H Dotolo, III, Co-Project Director, served in a Marine Reserve Rifle Company for over 22 years, rising to the rank of Company First Sergeant before medically retiring. His Ph.D. is from the State University of New York at Buffalo in European History and he currently directs the European Studies concentration in history at SJFC. His research and teaching interests includes the Italian pacification of Libya, a proposed Libyan Counterinsurgency against ISIS, Italian foreign policy in Yemen during the conflict of the 1920s, and the history of a small mixed British expeditionary unit in Mesopotamia and Persia during WWI. Currently he is working on Anglo-Italian military operations in the Horn of Africa prior to the outbreak of WWI. He taught the NEH Dialogues seminar in spring and summer 2018 and served as Co-PD. In 2021 he published an article in *The History Teacher* about his experience using humanities-based texts from the course. "Dialogues on the Experience of War: Using History and Student-Led Discussion Groups to Explore the Nature of Military Service." *The History Teacher* 54, no. 2 (February 2021): 357–374. In addition, Dr. Dotolo is the advisor for the "Group," participants in the previous NEH Dialogues grant project. They have participated in the Stockings for Troops and Toys-for-Tots annual Christmas Drives, and will conduct some dialogue sessions until the next preparatory course is offered. He is also a founding board member of H2/S2, which is serving as a partner on this grant.

Carolyn S. Vacca, PhD, Project Director, is professor and History Department Chair at SJFC, as well as Director of the Public History concentration and Director of the Museum Studies Certificate Program. Her current research and teaching interests include WWI, the history of public health, as well as several courses in local history and Women's History. As Monroe County Historian, Dr. Vacca presents numerous programs in the community, including a mini-grant program on municipal research and memorialization of local WWI participation and has participated in two oral history projects with veterans.

Erin Barry, Director of the Institute for Civic and Community Engagement who manages SJFC's relationships within the community, will support the community partners and help the project team identify new potential partners during the grant period. The project team will also include two undergraduate students who will serve as summer research fellows, documenting oral histories of select project participants. The students will be selected based on their success in completing the preparatory course.

Institutional Context. Located in Rochester, NY, SJFC is an independent, liberal arts institution that offers a range of traditional academic disciplines in the humanities, sciences, social sciences, and beyond, along with a number of career-directed professional programs, including nursing, pharmacy, and accounting. SJFC is guided by its liberal arts tradition and Catholic heritage, as expressed in the motto of its founders: "teach me goodness, discipline, and knowledge." It has a long tradition of engaging local non-profit organizations located in and around Rochester and area residents through public lectures, service projects, community-based research, and other student learning activities that put to practice knowledge gained in the classroom. The Dialogues program aligns with SJFC's mission to graduate civically engaged citizens as stated in one of the college learning outcomes (ACLOs): "Citizenship and Civic Engagement: Fisher students will be prepared to be active participants in a democracy by applying classroom knowledge to community collaborations." As a Yellow Ribbon campus, SJFC maintains a commitment to its veteran students and consistently looks to enlarging this community and making them feel fully integrated. Drs.

Vacca and Dotolo have a successful track record implementing two previous Dialogues grants, working with the School of Arts and Sciences to add the discussion leader preparatory course into the SJFC's academic offerings and partnering with the veteran community to publicize and recruit participants for the dialogues in the community. See attached institutional letter of support from the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences confirming that the proposed preparatory course will be offered in spring 2023 and 2024. The SJFC Office of Sponsored Programs and the Business Office have the full capacity and long history of working with Dr. Vacca in managing NEH grants, both from a programmatic and fiscal standpoint.

The PD/Co-PD will partner with KOP, H2/S2, and VSA to publicize and recruit dialogues participants; they all directly serve support veterans and/or interpreters. Both H2S2 and VSA, as well as Charlotte-Genesee Lighthouse, will host the dialogues (see attached letters, which provide mission statements).

Evaluation. The team will use both formative and summative evaluation to assess the achievement of the following program objectives and associated outcomes: 1) Build upon the success of two NEH grants by expanding the number and range of community partners engaged in the dialogues and deepening our understanding of the role and experiences of military interpreters; 2) Prepare SJFC students and veterans to serve as effective discussion group leaders who will explore the experiences of war with veterans from the community; and 3) Encourage veterans to reflect on the strong bonds between traditional military personnel and others who serve with them, including interpreters, through the exploration of a range of humanities sources related to duty, loyalty, and culture. Student back briefs and posters will provide the core of the student evaluation, along with SJFC's formal course evaluations. In addition, students will participate in a data analysis of the civic engagement of the course. Pre- and post-surveys with participants will evaluate the dialogues program structure, thematic content of discussions, and relevance of the humanities sources to ensure continuous program improvement during the grant period. The project team will also solicit feedback from the project partners via satisfaction surveys.

Discussion Program Schedule and Syllabus (for veteran and public participants)

The schedule below reflects the minimum number of activities and will be repeated.

May 2022	The Project Director (PD) and Co-PD will contact all partners and schedule general information sessions for liaisons/directors. The preparatory course will be fully developed and submitted for Core approval. It will then be added to the course schedule for spring semester 2023 so that we can recruit student leaders.
June 2022	Meet with partners to explore options for oral history Schedule three sessions with consultants to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work on logistics of recruitment of community veteran and interpreters• Discuss approaches to increased cultural awareness.• Reach out to other partners from previous grants to ascertain their interest in continuing with the project given its new direction.
Summer 2022	PDs attend some partner events to strengthen connections
Fall 2022	Recruit from all intended audiences. Advertise the upcoming course and program.
Jan 2023	Sites will be scheduled for multiple sessions each, no more than 15 participants in a group with two student discussion leaders, one hour each. Discussion leaders in the prep course will begin to identify humanities sources, to be included in their introductory PowerPoint slides. Sample question for future group: How do we define duty? How does the reading expand how we understand agency, service, and duty?

Preparatory Program Schedule and Syllabus

The Meaning and Dimensions of Service: Duty, Loyalty, and Culture in War course explores the historical resonance of war and service experiences and the applicability of that resonance to our understanding of pressing moral/ethical issues within military/civilian cultural contexts,. The pre-existing courses have been updated and informed by the recent military withdrawal from Afghanistan and its impact on those veterans and others who served there, Veterans and support-service personnel and SJFC students will be trained in best practices in discussion leadership, emphasizing the study of humanities sources about war and its aftermath, grounding in ethical frameworks, and discussions of cultural interactions. The course culminates with student and student veterans leading small-group public discussions with veterans and resettled interpreters in the community. This work is grounded in explorations of previous service workers' postwar experiences in WWI, Iraq, and Afghanistan. The following information explains how we will arrive at these understandings, and communicate them. **Texts:** Mark Jensen, "Epictetus vs. Aristotle: What is the Best Way to Frame Military Virtues?" *Naval War College Review*; Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*; Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Nicholas J. Mercurio, Major, USAF, "Beyond 'Thank You': Recommended Modalities for Meaningful Civilian-Military Discourse" Michael Frisch; "Shared Authority"; Coetzee Lemmon, *World War I: A History in Documents*; Peter Chen Main Wang, "Caring Beyond National Borders: The YMCA and Chinese Workers in World War I Europe"; Youru Zhong, "Sacred, the Laborers": Writing Chinese in the First World War;" Dan Black, *Harry Livingstone's Forgotten Men: Canadians and the Chinese Labour Corps in the First World War* Sarah Elisabeth Sawyer, *Anumpa Warrior: Choctaw Codetalkers of World War I*; Haji Razmi, *Fleeing Afghanistan, Stranding in America: The Life of An Interpreter's Family*; Cook, James L Cook, "We'll Always Have Kabul".¹ Doug Stanton, *Horse Soldiers* Patrick O'Donnel. *We Were One: Shoulder to Shoulder with the Marines Who Took Fallujah*. Sean Parnell, *Outlaw Platoon* Johnny Walker and Jim Deflice, *Code Name: Johnny Walker Film*: 12 Strong; TV Series: United States of AI. During the spring semester, the course will meet once a week for 3 hours. Texts are noted by author. **Week (W) 1:**

American Constitutionalism, Military Service, and Society. **Discussion (D):** How do we view service in the military vs. society? How has this changed? How do we promote open discussion? Shared Authority: Sustained Dialogue exercise. What questions would you frame? United States of AI. **W 2:** Foundations: Ethics in War, Jensen, *Naval War College Review*, Excerpts, *Nicomachean Ethics* and *On War*. **D:** How has the nature of military service remained constant despite changes in US culture, technology and society? Does it reflect new realities? **W 3:** Foundation: War and Memory Articles provided: Glassberg *Sense of History*, *Commentary: Sharing Authority: Oral History and the Collaborative Process* Michael Frisch *The Oral History Review*, Gallagher, 'The Formalism of Military History,' *Representations*. **D:** How is memory constructed? How could the unique experience of war affect this? **W 4:** Wang, **D:** How does personal narrative add to our understanding of war? What are the similarities between WWI and current narratives? Differences? How does culture inform duty and or loyalty? **W 5:** Foundations: Duty, Black and excerpts, *On War*. **D:** How do we define duty? What is the role of the individual? How does the readings expand how we understand agency, service, and duty? **W 6:** Foundations: "Small Wars & Insurgencies", Excerpts, *On War*, *Small Wars* and *FM 3-24.MCWP 3-33.5*. **D:** What are the ethical questions around WWI chemical warfare and COIN warfare? **W 7:** Foundations: Culture, *Horse Soldiers*. **D:** The significance of cultural interpretation in wartime setting. **W 8:** Foundations: The War in Afghanistan: *Outlaw Platoon*. **D:** How do we define loyalty? Are there limits? How is loyalty within a small unit sustained when the conflict involves prolonged isolation of its soldiers in a foreign culture and the larger US society? **W 9:** Foundations: The Iraq War *We Were One* and *Lioness* (2008). **Discussion:** How is unit loyalty within a small unit sustained when the conflict involves prolonged isolation of its soldiers in a foreign culture? What about that to the larger US society? **Ws 10-14:** Discussion sessions in the community & Oral History of Interpreters. *Distant Plain*, *Code Name: Johnny Walker*, & *Special Forces Interpreter*. **D:** How do we value non-military service?