



NATIONAL
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HUMANITIES

The Warrior Chorus: Florida

OVERVIEW: *The Warrior Chorus*, supported by a National Endowment for the Humanities grant, seeks veterans and members of the US military to participate in a reading/discussion group and public programs.

WHO SHOULD APPLY? Any US veteran or serving US military personnel interested in the arts and humanities in general, and/or in participating in a reading group.

HOW TO APPLY: Write/call Bobby White, Program Site Director: bobbyvet@aol.com, 954-987-6089, or Jessica Adler, Program Scholar: jadler@fiu.edu, 305-348-7968.

DATES: Weekly discussion group meetings take place Jan. 13 – Feb. 23 2020 (Time and day TBD); Public programs take place in spring and summer 2020. An information session will be held on Nov. 6, 2019 at 7pm at VFW Post 8195.

LOCATION: VFW Post 8195, 4432 Pembroke Rd., Hollywood, FL 33021

WHAT WILL YOU DO? There are three main elements to the program. First, you will meet with 7-12 fellow Veterans, as well as the site director and scholar, for six weekly discussion/training sessions focused on how themes in *The Odyssey* relate to real life experiences. You do not need to have read this work before, or be familiar with it; just come prepared to listen and share your experiences with the group. You will also help plan a public event involving members of the group, such as readings of key scenes from *The Odyssey*, which will take place at a Miami area institution. Finally, you will develop, and have the option to participate in, public discussions about your group's perspectives, which will take place at performances of Aquila Theatre's touring production of *The Odyssey*.

REQUIRED MATERIALS: Homer's *Odyssey*, translated by Emily Wilson (Norton: 2017). You will be given a copy of this book to use and keep.

HONORARIA: You will be paid \$600 for completing all six discussions/trainings, \$150 for participating in the Miami area public program, and \$250, plus hotel and transport, for participating in outside-of-area events. Payment is made by check from the New York office at the culmination of the discussion program following submission of attendance by Site Director. Event payments are made one week after attended events.

PROGRAM SITE DIRECTOR: Bobby White is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and Post Commander and Executive Director of VFW Post 8195, Stone of Hope Military Outreach and Wellness Center in West Park, Florida. A Veteran of the United States Army, who completed a combat tour in Vietnam, White edited and is a contributing author of *Black Soldiers Tell Their Vietnam Stories; A book written and published by Vietnam Veterans* (VFW Post 8195: 2013). He is also co-author and producer of *Black Vietnam Into the Light*, a documentary film about Black Veterans and their service during the Vietnam War. From 1981 to 2010, he served as Director of the Fort Lauderdale Vet Center, a Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient mental health counseling center. In the 1970s and 1980s, he counseled Veterans at Florida International University, and Miami-Dade College. A retired Veteran and Minority Business Owner, he received a Commendation and





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Special Contribution Award from the Department of Veterans Affairs. He is a member of the Broward County Workforce Development Board and serves as Vice Commander of American Legion Post 29 in Miami, Florida. White earned his B.A. from Florida International University and his Master of Science in Psychology from St. Thomas University, both in Miami, Florida.

PROGRAM SCHOLAR: Dr. Jessica L. Adler, Assistant Professor of History and Health Policy & Management at Florida International University, researches and teaches about U.S. health and social policy, war and society, and American political development. Her first book, *Burdens of War: Creating the United States Veterans Health System* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), is about the World War I-era origins of the nation's largest integrated health care system. Her current projects examine late twentieth century transformations in the veterans' medical system, and health/health care in U.S. prisons. Adler's work has appeared in various publications, including the *American Journal of Public Health*, *the Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, *The Washington Post*, *The Hill*, *The Miami Herald*, and *USA Today*, as well as in edited books on military and medical history. She has also led public history projects, including reading groups geared at military veterans. Adler received a FIU Top Scholar Award in 2019 and a Columbia University Bancroft Dissertation Award in 2013.

BACKGROUND: The Warrior Chorus: American Odyssey – is a national humanities program that will present a public engagement series led by veterans and scholars based around one of the most important works of world literature, Homer's *Odyssey*. The Warrior Chorus: American Odyssey will train veterans and scholars in three regional centers to lead audience forums, participatory workshops, public talks and reading groups in 24 locations throughout America, connected with a staging of Emily Wilson's new translation of *The Odyssey*. This will be coupled with a dynamic use of social media and a specially developed app. American Odyssey uses Homer's classical text to inspire people from all backgrounds to reflect on the connections between the works of the ancient Greeks and the issues they reflect in their own lives. The diverse group of American veterans that make up the Warrior Chorus is an excellent resource for fostering conversations, building bridges and bringing people together to experience live events, workshops, lectures, and discussions. American Odyssey also provides a rich contextual frame for ancient literature to inspire in-depth public discussions about conflict, service, country, home, family, identity, leadership – themes every American should have the opportunity to reflect upon as informed citizens in a vibrant democracy.

This extensive new program unites the assets of the Aquila Theatre Company, the Classics Department and Center for Ancient Studies at New York University (NYU), The Classics Departments of the University of Texas at Austin (UT), the History Department at Florida International University, the Society for Classical Studies (SCS), The Society of Artistic Veterans (SocArtVets) and NeoPangea Inc. (an app developer). American Odyssey will take place from May 2019 to Feb 2021 and will be presented in 24 geographically diverse locations at performing arts centers, museums, public libraries, and at veteran and community center. The program is guided by Prof. Peter Meineck PhD, Professor of Classics in the Modern World at New York University, Desiree Sanchez, Artistic Director of Aquila Theatre. The program is organized around four thematic units each anchored by the *Odyssey*: 1) The Idea of the Hero; 2) The Return of the Warrior; 3) The Meanings of Democracy; 4) The Question of Identity. These units will explore significant humanities themes that investigate the connections between classical literature and contemporary America as they relate to the issues affecting both the veteran community and the broader American public today. MORE INFO: pm57@nyu.edu and www.aquilatheatre.com.

