

## **Thomas J. Berger, Ph.D.**

Dr. Tom Berger is a Life Member of Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) and founding member of VVA Chapter 317 in Kansas City, Missouri. Dr. Berger served as a Navy Corpsman with the 3rd Marine Corps Division in Vietnam during 1966-68. Following his military service and upon the subsequent completion of his postdoctoral studies, he's held faculty, research and administrative appointments at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, the State University System of Florida in Tallahassee, and the University of Missouri-Columbia, as well as program administrator positions with the Illinois Easter Seal Society and United Cerebral Palsy.

After serving as chair of VVA's national PTSD and Substance Abuse Committee for almost a decade, he joined the staff of the VVA national office as "Senior Policy Analyst for Veterans' Benefits & Mental Health Issues" in 2008. Then in June 2009, he was appointed as "Executive Director of the VVA Veterans Health Council", whose primary mission is to improve the healthcare of America's veterans through education and information.

Dr. Berger has been involved in veterans' advocacy for over thirty years, and he is a member of VVA's national Health Care, Government Affairs, Agent Orange and Toxic Substances, and Women Veterans committees. In addition, he is a member (and the former Chair) of the Veterans Administration's (VA) Consumer Liaison Council for the Committee on Care of Veterans with Serious Mental Illness (SMI Committee) in Washington, D.C.; he is also a member of the VA's Mental Health Quality Enhancement Research Initiative Executive Committee (MHQUERI) based in Little Rock, Arkansas and the South Central Mental Illness Research and Education Clinical Center (SC MIRECC) based in Houston, Texas. Dr. Berger holds the distinction of being the first representative of a national veterans' service organization to hold membership on the VA's Executive Committee of the Substance Use Disorder Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (SUD QUERI) in Palo Alto, CA and serves as a committee member on the National Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors (NAADAC) veterans' working group and member of the National Leadership Forum on Behavioral Health-Criminal Justice Services with the CMHS-funded national GAINS Center. He has also served as a reviewer of proposals for the Department of Defense (DoD) "Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs". He is a current member of the Education Advisory Committee for the National Center for PTSD in White River Junction, Vermont, as well as a member of the Executive Committee of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention.

Dr. Berger's varied academic interests have included published research, books and articles in the biological sciences, wildlife regulatory law, adolescent risk behaviors, domestic violence, substance abuse, suicide, and post-traumatic stress disorder. He currently resides in Silver Spring, Maryland.