



Tuesday, March 4, PM Workshop 2

VA Panel: Understanding Benefits and Services for Veterans

Speakers: Matt Barnes, Attorney, ProSeniors, Mike Farmer, Executive Director, Butler County Veterans Service Commission and Kristen Lawwill, Assistant Chief of Social Work Service, Cincinnati VAMC

Speakers Bio:

Kristen Lawwill has been at the Cincinnati VAMC since 2015 following graduating with her MSW from the University of Cincinnati. She's held several positions in both direct Veteran care and supervisory roles. She previously held the role of Inpatient/Outpatient Social Work Supervisor before becoming the Assistant Chief of Social Work Service in 2021. She started her VA Social Work career at the Community Living Center and then transitioned to inpatient medical units, where she filled the roles in surgery, critical care, PACT, and emergency care, and held several Social Work positions at The Christ Hospital. Kristen serves as an adjunct instructor for the College of Allied Health & Sciences at the University of Cincinnati's MSW program.

Matthew Barnes graduated from the University of Cincinnati, College of Law in 2013. Following graduation, Matthew worked with ProSeniors as an Equal Justice Fellow for two years with a focus on public benefits. Now Matthew works with Veteran clients as a staff attorney for ProSeniors.

Mike Farmer is the Executive Director of the Butler County Veterans Service Commission and an accredited Service Officer. He graduated from Miami University with a Bachelor of Science degree in information technology and an Associate of Arts degree with concentration in business.

Before using his VA Education Benefits at Miami University, Mike served in the United States Marine Corps. After graduating from Parris Island he was assigned to serve at Camp Lejeune North Carolina. He continually volunteers his time to assist veterans in their transitions. Beginning as a Co-Adviser to the Student Veterans Association on the Hamilton Campus, Mike has become a leader within Butler County and is a strong advocate for veterans' affairs. Continuing on the path of serving those who served, Mike left Miami University in August 2016 to become a County Veterans Service Officer. His leadership, vision and desire to serve quickly became evident and in July 2020 when he was promoted to the position of Executive Director.