

# The Invictus Games Foundation CONVERSATION



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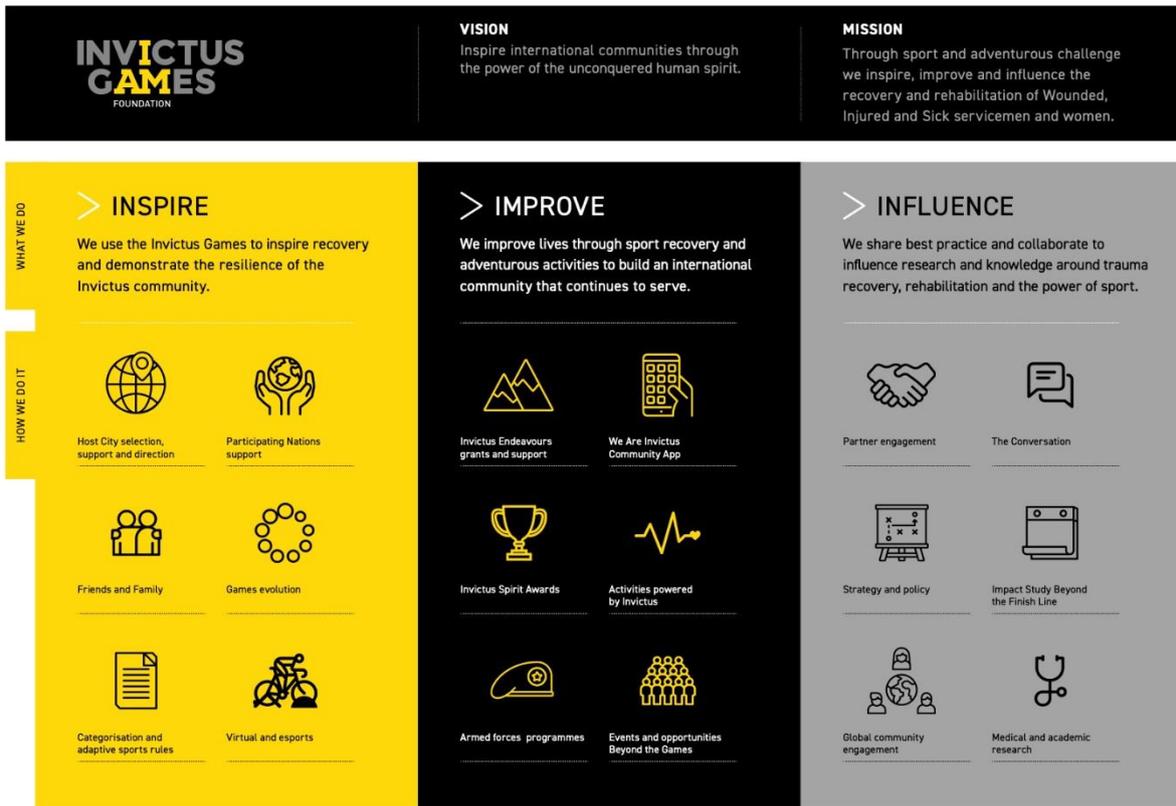
## **Invictus Games Foundation 'Conversation' Webinar: 'Beyond the Games: 'The Unconquered Community – Thriving in a Complex and Uncertain World' Tuesday, 13 October 2020**

On Tuesday, 13 October 2020 the Invictus Games Foundation (IGF) conducted the fourth iteration of its 'Conversation' entitled 'Beyond the Games: 'The Unconquered Community – Thriving in a Complex and Uncertain World'. It followed on from the first iteration on 13<sup>th</sup> May entitled 'Realising and Sharing the Invictus Spirit', the second one on 8<sup>th</sup> July with the National Health Service (NHS) entitled 'Preparing for Recovery: Learning from the Invictus Games Foundation'; and the third on 30<sup>th</sup> July entitled 'the Sustainability of Projects post COVID-19'.

The IGF is again indebted to the invaluable support provided by Ascot Rehab, the Fisher House Foundation and ISPS Handa in enabling the Conversation. It is also delighted that the webinar was attended by circa 100 people drawn from across the international community including the twenty Participating Nations of the Invictus Games.

### **Intent**

The intent of this webinar was to portray that the key outputs of the IGF amount to more than the Invictus Games themselves. While the Games will be a central component of the Foundation, it is able to support and enable the individual journeys of recovery and rehabilitation of the international Wounded, Injured and Sick community more widely and in a number of ways. This is reflected in the schematic below.



## Themes

The webinar focused on the following themes:

1. Explaining the various schemes and initiatives which have been developed by the Invictus Games Foundation as part of its 'Beyond the Games' package in the Improve Pillar.
2. Sharing research on key studies into the welfare, support and development of the WIS in the Influence Pillar.
3. Curating the experiences and best practice of how the WIS, the Participating Nations and the IGF as part of the Unconquered Community have addressed and overcome the challenges of an uncertain world, especially during the Covid 19 pandemic

## Summary of Presentations

### Session One: 'Improving Lives – Beyond the Games'

This session was hosted by David Wiseman (Director of Grants & Programmes, IGF) who firstly outlined the reasoning behind extending operations outside of the Games, before highlighting current activity taking place within the We Are Invictus app and active esports and then finally providing a preview of the Invictus: Endeavours Grants programme.

He interviewed Mickaela Richards (WIS Liaison Manager) who provided detail about the current and future work of We Are Invictus and the impact of the app. She spoke about the future developments of the app (specifically translation tools) that will make it more widely available and accessible across the nations - this was welcomed by the attendees. Feedback provided privately after the webinar (from a CEO within the Military Charity sector) noted how valuable the We Are Invictus app is in terms of creating social networks and informal support systems that

will have been key during the pandemic and will provide foundations for continued success into the future. A question from the attendees regarding access to We Are Invictus might indicate that there is still some work to be done in communicating its purpose and reasons behind the strict eligibility.

He then interviewed Zed Pitts and Andy Perrin (former Invictus Games competitors) who spoke about their leadership in the coordination and running of weekly - active esports - cycling events on the Zwift platform. They spoke about how the community had built up over the past few months and how they believed it was the social aspect of the ride that meant people kept coming back (not purely the physical training aspect). The deduction is that the active esports packages are proving successful in helping participants to build and maintain both physical and mental fitness through exercise and social interaction. A comment from an Australian attendee regarding time zones might indicate that there is an opportunity to develop a second ride that benefits those in the Eastern Hemisphere.

More detail was promised regarding application to Invictus Endeavours after the IGF had conversed with the Team Managers in order to gather ideas from them regarding best pathways into each nation in order to develop the most simple process that fits best for all.

## **Session Two: 'Sharing Best Practice through Influencing Research'**

### **Sharing Research on [Veteran Wellness Alliance](#)**

[Kacie Kelly](#), Deputy Director of the Military Service Initiative at the [George W. Bush Institute](#), shared some of the highlights from her work where she leads the health & well-being portfolio. The Bush Institute's Military Service Initiative helps post-9/11 veterans and their families make successful transitions to civilian life with a focus on optimizing health and well-being and leveraging meaningful economic opportunities. Compared to historical rates, the number of post-9/11 veterans experiencing the invisible wounds (e.g. PTSD, traumatic brain injury, depression, etc.) is high. In order to address this challenge and through the strategic framework of Recognize-Connect-Deliver, the [Veteran Wellness Alliance](#) aims to increase the number of veterans who are receiving high-quality care for the invisible wounds by linking veteran peer networks and effective clinical care programs. The Alliance is specifically advancing 3 priorities in order to fulfill its mission: 1) increasing the understanding of the invisible wounds and encouraging veterans to ask for help, 2) improving the delivery of the care system, and 3) advocating for more effective treatment. During her presentation, Ms. Kelly shared innovative research that produced a set of [common questions](#) for all veteran serving organizations as well as innovative research that is informing more precise and segmented outreach tactics across the Alliance. In addition, she shared research that led to the first ever definition for [high quality care for PTSD and TBI](#) completed in partnership with RAND, and discussed a pilot project called [Check In](#) that is testing a referral model that gives veteran peers an "easy button" to connect a friend in need to effective clinical care. In closing, Ms. Kelly acknowledged the "circle of trust" resulting from shared experiences between veteran peers and encouraged veteran leaders to take a role in the solution – to consider those in their network who may benefit from learning more about effective programs for the invisible wounds.

### **Invictus Games Longitudinal Study – Beyond the Finish Line**

One of the key outcomes of the Invictus Games Beyond the Finish Line research, funded by the Forces in Mind Trust, will be the identification of best practices for sport recovery programming. Dr Celina Shirazipour, Assistant Professor at Cedars -Sinai Medical Center, provided an overview of the interim findings from interviews conducted with nation staff, as well as visits by the research team to training camps. In the presentation, she outlined how nations are situating the Invictus Games within sport recovery trajectories, in particular the implications of two emerging models: the Invictus Games as a final stage of recovery; and the Invictus Games as

an option for all stages of recovery. Other key findings presented included how nations are seeking to maintain involvement and support for former competitors and individuals not selected for the Invictus Games teams, with key strategies including a focus on mentorship, advocacy, and programming. Finally, some initial findings were presented from the research surveys regarding the COVID experiences of service members and veterans with illnesses and injuries. Initial findings suggest that COVID restrictions may be particularly difficult for those in early stages of recovery and, for some, is having an impact on their health behaviours. These findings help indicate what types of support could be valuable for military personnel with illnesses and injuries as the pandemic continues.

### **Closing Panel Discussion**

The following key comments and observations were raised during the closing panel session with all the speakers and CEO, IGF taking part:

- Psychological Conditions and Treatment. It was noted that there is growing recognition that psychological health is as important as physical health on which traditionally there has been much more focus. But together physical and psychological wellbeing combine to produce overall health. In addressing psychological wellbeing, it was explained that the first key step was to acknowledge the need for help and to ask for support. This was best achieved in an environment of trust and could be facilitated through a range of channels including peers or friends and family.

This led onto the interesting observation that in a number of ways veterans are leading the way in facilitating the provision of high quality and enduring care programmes for Post Traumatic Stress and Traumatic Brain Injuries for the benefit of the overall civilian and military communities.

- Best Practice. In looking supporting those people who are not selected for the Invictus Games, it was noted that the We Are Invictus app offers an important means of offering opportunities to the whole Invictus community including between and beyond the Games. This would be further enhanced through the ongoing programme to have the app translated into all the respective languages of the Participating Nations. Further examples of best practice included:
  - Including all potential and interested competitors in training camps.
  - Holding trials and including friends and families.
  - Including individuals not selected to compete at the Games as part of a nation's allocation for its overall team and family and friends to travel to the Games.
  - Including friends and families as far as possible in all opportunities so they gained a deeper understanding of the role of sport in recovery and rehabilitation and how they can help further.
- Invictus Community as a Beacon. It was noted that a key aspiration of the Invictus concept was to create space for people to inter-act including competitors, friends and family and members of the respective teams. As part of this, the idea of helping each other and developing the spirit of mentorship would be important. Members of the Invictus community do and make remarkable achievements. An enduring theme of the IGF is that this Invictus Spirit should not solely be confined to its own community but shared more widely, acting as a beacon for those in wider society to follow and be inspired.

## Way Ahead

In closing, it was that webinar as part of the IGF Conversation series would be followed by the next iteration early in 2021 for which suggestions of themes would be warmly welcomed. Initial thoughts are focusing on the topics of Resilience and Employment.

### Recording, Presentation and Programme

A copy of the recording and the accompanying slides to the presentations are attached at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/uylf1js0vwp89qz/IGF%20Conversation%203%20V2.mp4?dl=1> and  
[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/zqe20ch05ucjq43/AACqdNMnkOQHfc5\\_hD2WzqiVa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/zqe20ch05ucjq43/AACqdNMnkOQHfc5_hD2WzqiVa?dl=0)

**Beyond the Games: The Unconquered Community – Thriving in a Complex and Uncertain World**

14.00  
Welcome and opening comments  
**Dominic Reid OBE, CEO Invictus Games Foundation & David Richmond CBE.**

14.10  
How we have operated and thrived during the Coronavirus pandemic including examples of challenges being faced.  
**Participating Nations, Teams, Competitors, Family & Friends.**

1425-1505  
Session One 'Improving Lives – Beyond the Games' Building and Delivering the Improve Pillar of IGF including measures and initiatives implemented during the COVID 19 pandemic.  
**David Wiseman – IGF Director of Grants and Programmes** in discussion with key personnel and members of the WIS Community.

1505-1525  
Session Two  
Sharing Research on Veteran Wellness Alliance  
**Kacie Kelly – Deputy Director, Military Service Initiative George W. Bush Presidential Center**

1525-1540  
Drawing on Invictus Games Longitudinal Study – Beyond the Finish Line  
**Dr Celina Shirazipour – Assistant Professor at Cedars – Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles.**

1540-1600  
Panel discussion  
**All**



| Invictus Games Foundation 'Conversation' – Webinar: Tuesday 13 October 2020<br>'Beyond the Games'<br>'The Unconquered Community – thriving in a complex and uncertain world' |              |   |   |
|--|--------------|---|---|
| Serial   | Timing (BST) | Activity  | Remarks   |
| 1.   | 1350-1400    | <b>Sign-in and Preparation</b>  |   |
| 2.   | 1400-1410    | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Welcome and Opening Remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David Richmond CBE and Dominic Reid OBE<br/>Invictus Games Foundation</li> <li>• Dignitaries and Sponsors<br/>- Brendan Lawlor</li> </ul>  | <p>Facilitator and<br/>CEO IGF</p> <p>Ambassador- ISPS<br/>Handa</p>  |
| 3.   | 1410-1425    | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>'Participating Nations, Teams, Competitors –<br/>Family &amp; Friends – How we have operated and<br/>thrived during the Coronavirus pandemic</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Including:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Examples of challenges being faced by<br/>Participating Nations and where assistance is<br/>requested</b></p> | <p>Collation of pre-<br/>recorded<br/>messages from<br/>Participating<br/>Nations including<br/>2-3 vignettes from<br/>selected<br/>Participating<br/>Nations</p> |

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|-----|------------|--|--|
| 4.  | 1425-1505  | <b>Session One<br/>'Improving Lives – Beyond the Games'</b>  |  |
| 5.  |            | Introduction by Facilitator  | David Richmond<br>CBE  |
| 6.  | 1425-1505  | <p>Building and Delivering the Improve and 'Beyond the Games' Pillar including measures and initiatives implemented during the COVID 19 pandemic.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Based around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 'We Are Invictus' App and Moderator Programme.</li> <li>• The introduction and impact of active esports</li> <li>• The future opportunities through Invictus Endeavours</li> </ul>   | Facilitated by David Wiseman – IGF Director of Grants and Programmes in discussion with key personnel and members of the WIS Community |
| 7.  | 1505-1540  | <b>Session Two<br/>'Sharing Best Practice through Influencing Research'</b>  |  |
| 8.  | 1505-1510  | Introduction by Facilitator  | David Richmond<br>CBE  |
| 9.  | 1510-1525  | <p>Sharing Research on <a href="#">Veteran Wellness Alliance</a> including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing a definition for high quality care for the invisible wounds (i.e. traumatic brain injury/concussion, posttraumatic stress) in partnership with RAND Corp.</li> <li>• Testing a referral process for non-clinical, veteran peer networks to help their peers connect to high quality care for the invisible wounds.</li> <li>• What can social media tell us about veterans wellbeing and how to be smarter about outreach to veterans in need of mental wellbeing resources – a market segmentation approach.</li> </ul> | Kacie Kelly – Deputy Director, Military Service Initiative George W. Bush Presidential Center  |
| 10. | 1525-1540  | <p>Drawing on Invictus Games Longitudinal Study – Beyond the Finish Line</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing and identifying best practice amongst Participating Nations in supporting sport recovery including programmes.</li> <li>• The role of advocacy and mentorship among the WIS to give back to the Invictus Community.</li> <li>• The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic amongst the Invictus Community.</li> </ul>  | Dr Celina Shirazipour – Assistant Professor at Cedars – Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles  |
| 11. | 1540 -1600 | <b>Closing Panel, Discussion and Concluding Comments</b>   | Facilitated by David Richmond<br>CBE   |

## Biographies



### **David Richmond, CBE MA Hon DUniv (Bucks)**

David Richmond served in the Army for 26 years deploying on operations to NI, Iraq in 1991 (Op GRANBY), Bosnia, Iraq (Op TELIC) and Afghanistan. He commanded The Argylls, 5 SCOTS during Op HERRICK 8 in Afghanistan and was seriously wounded during a Battle Group operation near Musa Qaleh in June 2008.

David underwent four years of reconstruction surgery and rehabilitation during which he advised Help for Heroes and the UK MOD on the creation and development of their recovery services. He was medically discharged in April 2012 and joined Help for Heroes as their first Director of Recovery.

In this role David was responsible for all the charity's work with beneficiaries and specifically for developing the vision for their service delivery arm and turning it into an operational reality. The service has now supported over 20,000 wounded, injured and sick servicemen, veterans and families. He was a Partnership Board Member of the UK Invictus Games team for the first three games, UK Team Director and Chairman of Selectors. He was also a member of the Defence Recovery Board, responsible for providing strategic direction to the UK Defence Recovery Capability.

Separately, David sat on Lord Boyce's Review of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS), was a member of the Independent Medical Advisory Group of the AFCS and a member of the Kings College for Military Health Research Advisory Board. He also founded and, until September 2018, chaired the Contact Group, which brings together the military charities engaged in delivering mental health support to veterans and their families with the MOD, various parts of the NHS and others with the purpose of working collaboratively to improve the quality of support available to those suffering from mental health and/or wellbeing challenges.

David left Help for Heroes in December 2017 and developed a portfolio of work that includes: advising other nations on creating or developing their own recovery services for wounded, injured and sick servicemen, veterans and families; advising on leadership and team development; leadership and executive coaching and mentoring; motivational speaking; and interim executive roles. He is COO of Worldmaker International which works with businesses, communities, first responders, veterans and the education establishment to help them develop resilient leadership and their collective and individual human resilience; and he is Chairman of Boccia UK, which is the National Governing Body for the Paralympic sport of Boccia. In October 2019 David was appointed as the first Director of the Office of Veterans' Affairs in the Cabinet Office, responsible for delivering the UK government's vision of making the UK the best country in the world to be a veteran.



### **Dominic Reid OBE**

Chief Executive, Invictus Games Foundation

Dominic was responsible for the operational delivery of the inaugural Invictus Games in London 2014. A former army officer and architect he has worked on major events since being appointed Pageantmaster of the Lord Mayor's Show in 1992. He was Executive Director of the Oxford & Cambridge Boat Race, Director of the Royal Society's 350th Anniversary Programme and worked on The Queen's Golden Jubilee.



**David Wiseman**

Grants and Programmes Director, Invictus Games Foundation

David Wiseman commissioned as an Infantry Officer into the Yorkshire Regiment in 2006 and served in both Iraq and Afghanistan. David received a gunshot wound to the chest that ended his career whilst commanding troops in combat in Afghanistan.

As part of his recovery, David engaged with the charity Walking With the Wounded and participated in mountaineering endeavours across the Alps and Himalayas that involved in him reaching the summit of Mt Manaslu, (8163m) and culminated in an attempt to climb Mt Everest (8148m) in 2012.

Since leaving the army, David has dedicated his professional life to supporting the Armed Forces Community through his previous role at The Royal Foundation and his current role at The Invictus Games Foundation. David has had critical involvement with several programmes directed at supporting the welfare of the Armed Forces Community including the Endeavour Fund, Step Into Health and as an executive member of the organising committee for the inaugural Invictus Games, 2014.

As a competitor, David won 14 Medals across 3 Invictus Games and was selected as the UK Team Captain in 2016. David has used the skills learnt during his Invictus experience to support a York based swimming club for children with physical and/or learning disabilities.

David was drawn to help the people of Nepal after the devastating earthquake in 2015, deploying with Team Rubicon within 48hrs of the disaster and has supported on the board of trustees for this incredible charity for four years. Closer to home, David led the Team Rubicon response for the 2015 Boxing Day Floods in Tadcaster; for these efforts, David received the Points of Light award from Prime Minister David Cameron.

David is the co-founder of the recently formed CASEVAC Club that seeks to bring life time cohesion to the community, wounded in AFG and IRQ as well as enabling this cohort to assist the advancement of medical science, guide future policy across the sector and consolidate the potential for extensive philanthropic output of the many club members that collectively do so much good for society.

David is a keen swimmer, a poor mountaineer, a published author (Helmand to the Himalayas) and was selected as a Winfield Scholar by the US State Department for their 2016 International Visitor Leadership Programme.



**Mickaela Richards**

WIS Liaison Manager, Invictus Games Foundation

Mickaela joined the Royal Navy in 2006 as an Engineering Technician (Weapons Engineer). She saw service on HMS Portland and HMS Bulwark conducting anti-narcotics and anti-piracy operations. In 2011 Mickaela was involved in a car accident and was rehabilitated at Headley Court and Hasler Company. She competed in the London 2014 Invictus Games, winning two gold and one silver medal.



### **Zed Pitts**

Zed Pitts is a 13-year veteran of the United States Army Reserve. He is currently a Staff Sergeant in the Inactive Ready Reserve and plans to continue his military career as a commissioned officer within the next two years. After being diagnosed with Graves' Disease in 2013, he experienced a severe thyroid storm as he was preparing for deployment to Afghanistan. This storm resulted in permanent damage to the muscular structure of his left forearm.

With the encouragement from his fellow wounded veterans in the US Army Warrior Transition Battalion at Fort Bliss, Texas, he began the adaptive cycling program to regain his health and strength. It was through this program that he was introduced to the world of competitive sports and went on to earn medals at the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) Warrior Games and the Invictus Games Orlando 2016 in both cycling and athletics track.

Zed first met Andrew Perrin in the 2015 DoD Warrior Games. Their bond was forged by their respective invisible wounds, a category of injuries that does not result in visible physical alterations. Given that they resided on different continents, they used Facebook to periodically keep in touch and Strava to track each other's athletic progress. Eventually, they started cycling virtually "together" weekly using Zwift. The Zwift platform allowed them to continuously support each other in a way that only wounded, injured, and sick veterans can. The type of connection and support that Zed and Andrew have is vital in the recovery process through adaptive sports. Seeking more of this type of connection and support, Zed founded the VeloFlöprojekt to help build an international community for wounded, injured, and sick athletes who are no longer able to utilize adaptive sports programs once they leave their respective military rehabilitation programs. Zed utilizes the VeloFlöprojekt to foster a safe social environment for veterans engaged in adaptive sports through platforms like Zwift.



### **Andrew Perrin**

Andy's British Army career saw him serving in the Royal Signals where he became a specialist in telecommunications and counter-IED (improvised explosive device), a skill that he utilised extensively in Northern Ireland, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Andy's twelve year career ended when he received a double blow of a long-term knee injury and the diagnosis of Crohn's disease; these diagnoses, coupled with a sudden and dramatic change in career and lifestyle significantly affected Andy's mental health. Cycling became a key factor in his recovery and rehabilitation and over time Andy started competing locally in various track, road and cyclocross events.

In 2014 Andy competed in the inaugural Invictus Games in London and won gold medals in both his cycling events. The 2014 Invictus Games gave Andy the confidence to take on other cycling challenges; including Race Across America and the 2019 Ride London event where he represented IGF. These experiences were the foundation for a new opportunity to be developed through volunteering to maintain his recovery and support others to get into cycling.



**Kacie Kelly**

Director of Health and Wellbeing and Deputy Director of the Military Service Initiative, President George W. Bush Institute

Kacie Kelly directs policy and operational programs on veteran health and well-being at the George. W. Bush Presidential Center. She oversees Bush Institute efforts to promote partnerships, collaboration, and alignment among key national and international stakeholders addressing the invisible wounds of war (PTSD, mTBI, etc.) among post-9/11 military families, including the Bush Institute's Veteran Wellness Alliance. The Alliance unites clinical and peer-based organizations around a single mission to connect more veterans to the right high-quality resources for the invisible wounds of war when they need it. In this role, she has led a range of ground-breaking work including establishing common data elements for veteran peer programs and creating the first definition for quality care for the invisible wounds of war.

Prior to this role, Kacie served as the National Director for Public-Private Partnerships in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office for Suicide Prevention & Mental Health where she was responsible for developing a comprehensive and integrated public health approach to prevent suicide among veterans. Throughout her 15-year career with VA, she led innovative programs to serve more veterans and their families through strategic partnerships within government agencies and across public and private sectors. In addition, she had leading roles to promote military culture competence in the community, outreach efforts to reduce stigma associated with seeking mental healthcare, and to enhance provider proficiency in evidence-based mental health care for veterans. She earned her Master of Health Sciences (MHS) at Louisiana State University and has a Graduate Certificate in Women in Public Policy and Politics from the University of Massachusetts - Boston.



**Dr Celina Shirazipour**

Assistant Professor, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center (Los Angeles, USA)

Dr. Celina Shirazipour is an Assistant Professor at the Research Center for Health Equity at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center (Los Angeles, USA), and an Assistant Professor-in-Residence at the University of California Los Angeles School of Medicine. She is also a research consultant for the Invictus Games Foundation and a board member for the City Parks Alliance. Her overall research program is focused on promoting physical activity for individuals with illnesses and injuries resulting in impairment. Her current research, in partnership with the Invictus Games Foundation, focuses on examining the long-term impact of sport as recovery for ill and injured military personnel, as well as determining best practices for military sport recovery programming. This research is funded by Forces in Mind Trust, a £35 million funding scheme run by the Trust using an endowment awarded by the Big Lottery Fund.