

## PTSD, Depression: MyndVR Tech Puts Aging Veterans In a Peaceful Place

The relationship with Long Island State Veterans Home is the first partnership with a veterans home for MyndVR, which already was serving senior communities.

BY LANCE MURRAY ([HTTPS://DALLASINNOVATES.COM/AUTHOR/LANCE-MURRAY/](https://dallasinnovates.com/author/lance-murray/)) • JUL 31, 2018



A singer entertains in one of MyndVR's virtual reality experiences. [Courtesy MyndVR]

**Addison-based tech, health, and wellness company MyndVR has partnered with a veterans home in New York, helping the seniors there who are living with depression, PTSD, dementia, and other age-related illnesses by using virtual reality technology.**

Immersive and meaningful experiences — such as entering a virtual world where they can swim with dolphins, watching a professional artist create a masterpiece, or sitting in the front row for the musical “The Lion King”—are part of MyndVR’s turn-key virtual reality solution, which includes a content library geared toward adults 55 and older with original content and content from the nation’s top VR producers.

The partnership with Long Island State Veterans Home at Stony Brook University was finalized in June and is MyndVR’s first partnership with a veterans home, the company said.

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**Chris Brickler**

The partnership happened quickly, MyndVR CEO and co-Founder Chris Brickler said.

The veterans home learned about the company and reached out to get more information. “Within one week of getting connected, LISVH and MyndVR established a two-year customer partnership that is thriving today,” Brickler said.

“The Long Island State Veterans Home is very progressive in its use of technology for its over 350 residents,” Brickler told *Dallas Innovates* via email. “The executive director reached out to one of our distribution partners to learn more about MyndVR’s product leadership in serving senior communities across the U.S.”

The MyndVR team said it already has seen significant results on the overall health of veterans at Long Island State Veterans Home.

Brickler said that MyndVR is “very much a health-care company focused on clinical research and positive outcomes across a variety of cognitive and physical conditions.”

He said that MyndVR recently added Dr. Skip Rizzo, a noted VR researcher at the University of Southern California to its science advisory board to help guide the company’s ongoing research with PTSD.

“From our early installation of MyndVR in Long Island, we’re observing a reduction in anxiety, depression, and feelings of isolation which are common, yet unfortunate, side effects of PTSD,” Brickler said. “From a clinical perspective, MyndVR is developing and testing immersive technology with several major universities to deliver peaceful and mindful experiences. The promise of this technology is truly amazing, but we’re far from making any medical claims.”



Veteran Al Anderson has benefitted from the VR technology, which has helped improve his sleep and counteract depression. {Photo Courtesy MyndVR}

MyndVR said an inspiring example of the program’s success is Al Anderson, a Vietnam veteran who suffers from PTSD.

The company said that virtual reality took him out of the PTSD mindset and helped him sleep better and not feel depressed.

## Seniors and VR

While virtual reality is more commonly associated with young gamers, MyndVR said it is proving that VR has a significant impact on seniors.

According to MyndVR, therapists and other team members at the veterans home see that the residents experience improvements in mood, show fewer signs of agitation, and their spirits are lifted while they use the VR technology and afterward.

For example, one resident with dementia who usually doesn't speak went on a tour through Paris and communicated with the tour guide by talking out loud.



[Courtesy MyndVR]

MyndVR said that for another resident who doesn't like to engage in activities, the VR experience caused an outpouring of happiness — bringing his family to tears.

Another veteran visited a place he hadn't been in 60 years and that VR allowed him to go back to the place he thought he would never see again.

The veterans home with residents ages 55 to 105 uses 10 sets of VR goggles multiple times a week and offers one-on-one sessions with veterans as needed, MyndVR said.

Team members follow along on a tablet as the residents use the VR and can communicate with them during the experience.





[Courtesy MyndVR]

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“I don’t think we had any idea of how much joy and happiness the MyndVR solution would bring to these retired veterans,” Brickler told *Dallas Innovates*. “And, just taking a step back from a busy life of being an entrepreneur and getting to know the brave men and women, this project has really deepened my gratitude for the freedoms that these veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, etc. have ensured for our younger generation.”



A painter creates a masterpiece in this VR experience. [Courtesy MyndVR]

Brickler said we owe a lot to veterans such as the residents in Long Island State Veterans Home.

“Without these freedoms, all of this technology, opportunity and our general spirit of American innovation might not be flourishing like it is today,” Brickler said.

## What's next for MyndVR?

Brickler has been invited to give a technology keynote address at the National Association of State Veterans Home Summer Conference running through Aug. 3 in San Antonio.

He said he and his team will demonstrate the MyndVR solution to hundreds of veteran communities across the U.S.

“Our goal is simple: to provide an affordable, and fantastic content solution for as many retired veterans as possible,” Brickler said.

Here's MyndVR's video about the work at Long Island State Veterans Home at Stony Brook University.

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