

# SDI

SUSAN DAVIS  
INTERNATIONAL



DEFENSE CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE  
For Psychological Health & Traumatic Brain Injury

## Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury

### Challenge

Susan Davis International (SDI) helped the Department of Defense (DoD) stand up the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE). The DCoE was established to promote resilience, recovery, and reintegration of service members and their families facing psychological health (PH) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) issues. As a newly created entity within the DOD, DCoE faced significant internal organizational and communication challenges, as well as the monumental task of effectively communicating with those affected by PH and TBI issues.

### Solution

SDI navigated DCoE through its first year of existence and into its eventual thought leadership position in addressing PH and TBI. The successful guidance was informed by the strategic communications plan that SDI created and implemented. We utilized SDI's trademarked COMSEM™ (Communications Sensitivity Matrix) process, which analyzes the issues and audiences that are central to DCoE's communication needs, as a basis for developing a comprehensive strategic communications plan.

At a tactical level, SDI provided written and editorial assistance to create blogs and other web site content, news releases, newsletter articles, brochures, and talking points for speeches and media appearances by DCoE's senior leadership. Additionally, SDI provided public affairs assistance in support of DCoE's outreach and interaction with other government agencies. To further propagate the DCoE message, we coordinated radio satellite tours, as well as prepared the DCoE Director and senior leadership for speaking engagements and media events. SDI also offered logistical and media relations support for a suicide prevention conference DCoE co-hosted with the Department of Veterans Affairs. To generate internal support, SDI held communications planning workshops for each of DCoE's eight directorates, as well as provided communications assistance to DCoE's six component centers.

### Results

SDI's efforts were recognized by the agency director with a Certificate of Appreciation and a military coin for contributions to overall communications efforts.

SDI's media relations support generated articles in multiple leading publications including the New York Times. Furthermore, the two radio satellite tours we coordinated enabled the DCoE Director to reach more than two million people with a message of hope and support for service members and their families who may be dealing with PH and TBI issues.



Mental Health AWARENESS MONTH  
Got a Question? #AskDCoE

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Women Owned Small Business | GSA Schedule #GS23F0055M | CAGE code 3HGK2  
NAICS: 541430, 541611, 541612, 541613, 541618, 541690, 541720, 541810, 541820, 541830, 541850, 541890, 541910, 541990, 561920