

# Center gives helping hand to Vietnam War veterans

By Jim Anderson

The Veterans Outreach Center, 1240 N. 10th St., has provided services aimed at readjustment and resocialization to honorably discharged Vietnam era (1964-1975) veterans since its establishment nearly a year ago.

The center opened its doors in December 1981, although centers like it have existed since September 1979. Funded by the Veterans Administration, services are offered free or charge to the 16,000 honorably discharged Vietnam veterans in a 15-county Nebraska and two-county Kansas area.

Norman McCormack, team leader and one of the three counselors at the center, said services offered fall into two main categories.

First, he said, readjustment counseling on personal and social problems and on problems springing from military and combat service is offered. McCormack said the problems encountered at the center are much like those handled by any other counseling center.

Secondly, an information and referral service is provided to the vets to acquaint them with the benefits, programs and entitlements available to them from various governmental agencies.

A large number of Vietnam-era veter-

ans, McCormack said, felt cheated and used by their government when they returned home from service. Many were reluctant to get involved with the government again for fear of being further taken advantage of.

McCormack said a lot of veterans do not take advantage of the services available to them. One of the things the center does is try to break down this barrier.

Vet centers deal with the problems of daily life encountered by veterans and helps them back into normal roles in society.

Success is measured in the number of people served by the center, McCormack said. The three counselors at the center and the two mental health centers - Blue Valley and Pioneer, which counsel vets farther away from the Lincoln area - have served more than 400 persons during the last 11 months.

Originally scheduled to last only until 1981, vet centers were granted an extension in October 1981 and will continue in operation until 1984.

McCormack said the future success of the centers depends on their efforts to ensure that veterans of the Vietnam era can relate to people and the government and that they can get what they are entitled to. He said the centers are making significant progress in getting that message out.

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