



WESTERN PA VETERANS ACADEMIC ALLIANCE

September 16th 2019
CAAC West Hills



Meeting Moderators



David Roudabush

Outreach Coordinator

Office of Veterans Services

University of Pittsburgh



Dan Duffy

Executive Director

Military & Veterans Services

Community College of Allegheny County

Meeting Agenda

- **Host Institution Welcome Remarks**
- **Topics of Discussion**
- **Guest Speakers**
- **Group Updates**
- **Closing Remarks**
- **Closing Activity**



Western PA VAA – Who we are and What We Do



- What does the Alliance do?

- **Champion our strengths**

We create an impactful message that reflects our strengths. This is reinforced by developing strategic alliances with appropriate military-based organizations, and other university groups throughout the region

- **Shape student success**

We maintain connections with all University representatives. We work together to establish a robust engagement strategy, and use this to strengthen the Western Pennsylvania veteran and military dependent student population

- **Collaborate**

We facilitate collective activities focusing on areas that showcase our strengths, and support our individual and collective efforts

Academic Institutions Currently Participating in the Alliance

- Butler County Community College
- California University of Pennsylvania
- Carlow University
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Chatham University
- Clarion University
- Community College of Allegheny County
- Community College of Beaver County
- Duquesne University
- Edinboro University
- Indiana University of Pittsburgh
- La Roche College
- Penn State University
- Point Park University
- Robert Morris University
- Saint Francis University
- Saint Vincent College
- Seton Hill University
- Slippery Rock University
- University of Pittsburgh
- University of Pittsburgh - Bradford Campus
- University of Pittsburgh - Greensburg Campus
- University of Pittsburgh - Titusville Campus
- University of Pittsburgh - Johnstown Campus
- Waynesburg University
- West Virginia University
- West Virginia University – Parkersburg Campus

KIND Bars for Student Veterans

- Liz Rocci
- Sr. Collegiate Marketing Manager NE & Great Lakes
- erocci@kindsnacks.com
- C 757.373.4543





Lauren DelRicci
Associate Director





CIVILIAN - MILITARY DIVIDE

1.4 **MILLION VETERANS “FEEL
DISCONNECTED FROM CIVILIANS”¹**

80% **OF VETERANS SAY “AVERAGE
AMERICANS DON’T
UNDERSTAND MY EXPERIENCE”¹**

96% **OF COMBAT VETERANS WANT
HELP REINTEGRATING²**

¹ After the Wars: Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation Survey of Afghanistan and Iraq war Veterans (October 2015)

² Reintegration Problems and Treatment Interests Among Iraq and Afghanistan Combat Veterans Receiving VA Medical Care. Psychiatric Services, 2010, 61, 589–597. doi: 10.1176/appi.ps.61.6.589

VETERANS BREAKFAST CLUB

95% OF VETERANS SAY VBC
EVENTS PROMOTE HEALING

89% OF NON-VETERANS SAY THE VBC
GAVE THEM A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING
OF THE BURDENS CARRIED BY
OUR VETERANS







MEMORANDUM

To: Lauren DelRicci, Associate Director, Veterans Breakfast Club

From: Wendy A. Lang, Director of Operation College Promise (OCP)

Re: Certificate for Veterans' Service Providers (CVSP)

Date: 3 September 2019

Per our conversation, please find the below anticipated needs to host a CVSP training in Pittsburgh. I have excluded certain giveaways as we will be able to provide most of these through our current inventory.

The remaining needs are as follows:

- ☐ 5 meals including 1 light lunch, 2 breakfasts and 2 additional lunches (1 hot) – water, iced tea and coffee throughout
- ☐ 1 reception with heavy hors d'oeuvres
- ☐ 1 55-seat charter bus for approximately 5 hours
- ☐ 100 printed programs
- ☐ 50 speaker gifts
- ☐ 10 boxes of supplies shipped
- ☐ Audio Visual for 2 ½ days inclusive of 1 podium, 1 projector and screen, 1 podium mic, 2 table mics and 2 hand-held mics (AV support on site preferred), 1 stage
- ☐ 10 round tables of 8 (or comparable) set crescent shape with linens
- ☐ 4 6-foot rectangular tables (2 for panels/2 for registration). Caterer will determine their needs... usually another 4 6-foot tables
- ☐ 100 name badges with inserts and lanyards

We will also need Tech support to set up the registration link and site. The site itself is relatively simple and we can provide the design used in the past.

This does not include consulting support for staff (2) and volunteers (2).

Note: if the host hotel nightly room rate includes a breakfast, we often reduce or eliminate those meals.

OPERATION COLLEGE PROMISE

Certificate for Veterans Service
Providers (CVSP) Program

November 30 – December 2, 2016

College Park Marriott & Conference Center
3501 University Blvd., East Hyattsville, MD 20783
Cost: \$550

Program Content:

Module 1 – Military 101: A Primer on Military Culture

Module 2 – What's New, What to Expect – An Update on the
Status of the Post-9/11 GI Bill

Module 3 – Serving My Country – A Student Veteran Panel

Module 4 – Cracking the Code of Military Credit and Experience
Transfer

Module 5 – Invisible Injuries of Contemporary Warfare

Module 6 – Resources for Veterans in Transition

Module 7 – Promising Practices in Veteran Support Services: A
National Perspective

**For more information, contact Wendy Lang at
wlang@tesu.edu or 609.777.5696, ext. 2227.**



www.OperationCollegePromise.org

Certificate for Veteran Service Providers (CVSP) Testimonials

- The perfect training to allow higher education professionals an understanding of how to create a comprehensive and integrative campus veterans services program regardless of your campus position.-- *Dr. Esmilda Abreu, Montclair State University*
- All the sessions were outstanding. The information was relevant, well documented, useful and presented in an excellent manner. It will assist us immeasurably as we all work to meet the needs of our student veterans. --*Bob Philpott, Captain USCG (Ret) Veterans Affairs Coordinator Cape Fear Community College, Wilmington NC*

Update on Professional Development Opportunities

- **Group Members:**

- Catrina Abbott - ServiceLink
- David Ausman – Robert Morris University
- Heather Jericho – Point Park University
- Crystal McFadden – Corporate America Supports You
- Aaron Melius – PA Serves, Pittsburgh Mercy
- Erica Restch - ServiceLink

Update on Professional Development Opportunities

- **Zero Draft Brainstorming from a Student Veteran Perspective within WPVAA:**
 - What they likely know
 - What they need to know
 - What is of key importance

Update on Professional Development Opportunities

- **What they likely know:**

- Importance of internships
- Career Center location & resources
- Academic programs & academic advisers
- Student Veteran club/groups & student activities calendar
- Importance of looking for employers with good relationships and services for veterans

Update on Professional Development Opportunities

- **What they need to know:**

- How to network
- Where to get academic, counseling, or financial support
- Importance of micro-certifications
- Job market outlook overall and of specific major
- How to find veteran friendly employers/partnerships and how to engage them
- Accountability / owning their success

Update on Professional Development Opportunities

- **What is of key importance:**

- Align passion with career choice
- Understanding job market / corporate need
- Enhancing communication
- Addressing/avoiding under-employment
- Skill sets, strengths, personality assessments
- Impact of quality veteran employment on family and community
- Employers learning how to retain veterans
- Mentoring programs

Update on Professional Development Opportunities

- **What organizations with a local presence have dedicated veteran hiring programs and/or development programs once hired**
- **Leadership and developmental programs for veterans in the local region**

Professional Development Opportunities: Programs

- **LEADERSHIP PITTSBURGH INC.**

- CLCV-Community Leadership Course for Veterans
- <http://www.lpinc.org/programs/community-leadership-course-for-veterans/>
- Application process- Due in February
- Usually runs April to September

- **Institute For Veterans and Military families**

- Onward to Opportunity
- <https://ivmf.syracuse.edu/onward-to-opportunity/all-locations/pittsburgh/>
- Free certification program
- 4 Cohort's a year
- Open to veterans and spouses
- Certifications in Information Technology/Human resources/Business management

- **Team RWB**

- Eagle Leadership Development Program
 - <https://www.teamrwb.org/programs/eagle-leadership-development-program/>
 - 36 Month Curriculum
- Eagle leadership Fellows
 - <https://www.teamrwb.org/programs/eagle-leadership-development-program/eagle-leaders-fellows>
 - 12 months Leadership development

Professional Development Opportunities: Programs

- **The Mission Continues**

- Service Leadership Corps

- <https://missioncontinues.org/service-leadership-corps/>
 - Application process
 - 6 month program

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- Her Mission

- <https://missioncontinues.org/get-involved/hermission/>
 - Women Veterans Leadership Summit is part of an ongoing national conversation for women veterans, empowering and equipping these women to lead a movement that inspires community change efforts and advancement towards equality.

- **BME**

- BME Vanguard Fellowship-Pittsburgh Black Veterans

- <https://bmecommunity.org/vanguard-fellowship/>

- **New politics Leadership Academy**

- Answering the Call (ATC)

- <https://www.newpoliticsacademy.org/>

Professional Development Opportunities: Programs

- **Riverside Center for Innovation Soldiers to Entrepreneurs Boot Camp**
 - Offers free training classes for veterans and their spouses in Southwestern PA that are interested in starting their own business; 13-15 week training session designed to teach basic, intermediate, and advances skills needed to create a successful new business
 - Instruction is led by skilled professionals (including Riverside Center for Innovation Staff), Business Consultants, and Guest Speakers
 - Also offers mentoring by some of the fifty small businesses who are clients and tenants at Riverside Center
 - Contact Info: Donn Nemchick; dn@riversidecenterforinnovation.com; 412-322-3523
 - Website: <https://www.spvcc.org/bootcamp/>
- **National Organization on Disability, Wounded Warriors Career Program- Pittsburgh Office**
 - Helps veterans with serious disabilities to achieve meaningful, rewarding, and sustainable careers in civilian center
 - Based upon six core principles, model allows veterans and families to develop Career Action Plans and achieve goals in 4 step process, with support from Career Specialists
 - Website: <https://www.nod.org/innovation/wounded-warrior-careers/>

Professional Development Opportunities: Programs

- **Goodwill of Southwestern PA- Veteran Services**

- Provides career transition support designed to provide wrap around services to veterans, current and former military, and their families
- Services include: creation of individualized employment plan, vocational assessment, military to career skill translation (transferrable skills), resume creation/completion assistance, mock interviewing assistance, job search skills/career planning, job matching/employer referrals, post-employment follow up, referral source to various veteran support services, digital skills training
- Contact Info: Drew Williams; andrew.williams@goodwillswpa.org ; 412-632-1443
- Website: <https://pa211sw.communityos.org/zf/profile/service/id/1889985>

- **BNY Mellon VetNet**

- BNY Mellon's Employee Resource Group that is dedicated to helping military veterans by developing professionals skills and preparing them for rewarding career
- Partners with Veteran's Leadership Program of Western PA (VLPWPA) and Wounded Warrior Foundation
- Websites: <https://www.bnymellon.com/us/en/careers/veterans.jsp>
- <https://www.bnymellon.com/us/en/who-we-are/diversity-inclusion/vetnet.jsp>

Professional Development Opportunities: Programs

- **EATON**

- Dedicated military recruitment program for military, veterans, and military spouses
 - Website has a tool that will search for jobs based on MOS
 - <https://www.eaton.com/us/en-us/company/careers/military-veterans.html>
- Learning and Development programs for Employees including Veterans
 - Eaton University, Leadership Program, Stretch Assignment Marketplace SAM, Inclusion & Diversity Groups (including Veterans Focus Group)
 - <https://www.eaton.com/us/en-us/company/careers/life-at-eaton/learning-development.html>

- **UPS**

- Veteran Career Gateway
- Site offers a job search tool through UPS. A resume building guide and what they look for. A list of other resources to help find jobs and build a career
- <https://military.jobs-ups.com/>

- **Amazon**

- Amazon Warrior program
- Offers Job listing throughout the US and other countries. Also works with Military Spouses and Dependents
- <https://www.amazon.jobs/en/military/>

Professional Development Opportunities: Programs

- **Shell**
 - Helping Vets get matched to a Career Path
 - Degree Matcher, Internships, Scholarships
 - <https://www.shell.us/careers/military-veterans.html>
- **Bank of America**
 - Efforts to hire and develop military service members and veterans
 - Military Transition, Career Development and learning
 - <https://careers.bankofamerica.com/us/working-here/military-veterans.aspx>
- **Aetna**
 - Hiring Vet
 - Offers transition coaching and job search
 - <https://www.aetnacareers.com/veteran-careers/>
- **Covestro**
 - Program called CHAMP - Covestro Helping Armed Forces & Military Personnel
 - Provides resources to veterans and helps raise awareness and understanding of those who have served.
 - <https://www.covestro.us/en/company/diversity-and-inclusion/overview/ergs>

Update on Professional Development Opportunities

- Thank you!
- Questions?

Joint Service Transcript

Team Members: Don Accamando(Duquesne), Connie Beckel(Seaton Hill), Caitlyn Bengele(Carlow), Mary Cummings(Waynesburg)

- The Joint Services Transcript is a document that presents data for all military branches and includes “personal service member data, military course completions, military occupations, college level test scores, and more” (American Council on Education, 2019).
 - The way that coursework translates to a 4-year program often falls under the purview of the credit-granting institution. It is also heavily dependent on the student’s program of interest.
- Military Guide by ACE - <https://www.acenet.edu/Programs-Services/Pages/Credit-Transcripts/military-guide-online.aspx>
 - This resource calls out all military courses and occupations that have been evaluated by ACE. It also showcases credit recommendations and summaries that can be used by university stakeholders to transfer in military experience and coursework. This military guide is updated on a daily basis.
- ACE Events Page - <https://www.acenet.edu/Events/Pages/default.aspx>
 - This webpage provides information about all of the upcoming events (online and in-person) for ACE. From time to time, this will include JST webinars. It does not look like any are slated on the calendar at this point in time.

WPVAA Strategic Planning Session Results

Team Members – Brett Foley (Pitt), Cheri Kramer (St. Vincent), Laura Papcunik (St. Francis) & Lisa Reffner (Pitt-Greensburg)

Barriers

- **How to effectively identify**
 - Military & Veteran students using educational benefits to include dependents & spouses
 - Non-Educational benefit military & veteran students
 - EAP/TA/MY CAA
- **Is the appropriate data being collected?**
 - What questions are being asked on what forms?
 - If so, where? (Application for Admissions, Surveys, Orientation Registration)
- **Data storage | location | Access | Reporting**
 - Where is that data stored?
 - What data is pulled into the student record and when?
 - Do we have access? What reporting options/capabilities are available?

Strategies to Address Barriers

- Coding (on multiple platforms)
- Verify the “Veteran Status” question on Admissions Application
- Work with Institutional Research to identify additional data sources
 - Graduation Surveys, Ruffalo Noel Levitz
- Career Services
- Multiple office collaboration
 - Admissions, Financial Aid, Student Accounts, Registrar, Institutional Research, and ROTC

Student Coding

Pitt-Greensburg - SCO

C30 – Chapter 30 – Active Duty

1606 – Chap 1606 – Reservist Natl Grd

C31 – Chapter 31 – Disabled Veteran

C33 – Chapter 33 – 9/11 GI Bill®

C33D – Chapter 33 – 9/11 GI Bill® Dependent

C33Y – Ch 33 – Yellow Ribbon

C35 – Chapter 35 – Veteran Dependent

C3YD – Ch 33 – Yellow Ribbon *Dependent*

MLAD – Military – Active Duty

ROTC – Reserve Officer Training Crse

VANB – Veteran – No Benefits

VATA – Veteran – Tuition Assistance

VEPE – Veterans Priority Enrollment

VRAP – Veterans Retraining Assistance

Pitt OVS Identifying Students for coding

- Student sends a survey submission upon matriculation and Pitt account creation.
 - Students are verified and coded in ‘Student Groups’ prior to VA education benefits certification submissions.
- Student touches base with our office: phone and email.
- Activity Duty students are identified based on military billing statuses.
- Self identification by veterans and active military not receiving funding (may be seeking priority enrollment).

St. Vincent University Financial Aid

VABN	Veteran Benefits
VABN1	Veterans Benefits
VABN2	Veteran Benefits
VABN7	Veterans Benefits
VABN8	Veterans Benefits
VAYR	Veteran Benefit Yellow Ribbon
VAYR1	Veteran Benefit Yellow Ribbon
VAYR2	Veteran Benefit Yellow Ribbon
VEGP	Veteran Educational Gratuity
Pgm	
VROTC	Veteran ROTC Benefit

Students, through the admissions office, will be directed to the financial aid office if they plan on using their VA Ed benefits. They (starting Fall 2019) fill out an electronic form to initially start their enrollment certification, along with their COE.

Example - UPG Online Application for Admission

PAST PRACTICE

As promised, here is the verbiage for the existing questions we currently ask this required question:

Do you plan to use your own, parent's, or spouse's military or veteran educational benefits to pay for your education at the University?*

And these optional questions:

Do you currently serve, or are you a veteran, of any branch of the United States armed forces? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you interested in or planning to participate in Army ROTC? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you been awarded an Army ROTC Scholarship? ☐ Yes ☐ No

CURRENT PRACTICE

Beginning in the upcoming fall, we will be asking online (required questions on the Scarlet application):

Are you a veteran of the U.S. armed services? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you plan to use your own, parents, or spouse's military or veteran education benefits to pay for your education at the University? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

And the ROTC questions will move to our Inquiry Form instead of the online application.

CHALLENGES:

- Question verbiage, "Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?"
- Confusion regarding the parent education benefits

FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid

[◀ Return To FAFSA Guide](#)

49. Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training? **See Notes page 9.**

- Yes
- No

50. Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces? **See Notes page 9.**

- Yes
- No

Why are they asking this information?

These questions will help either the Department of Education or your intended school determine if you (or through your parents) qualify for certain types of military aid. Some of these include:

- Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine ROTC (Reserve Officer's Training Corps)
- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Education Benefits
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant
- Additional Pell Grant funding
- Student loan repayment benefits such as deferment and limited interest rates

How to answer this question / fill out this section

Answer Yes to this question if you are currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserves on active duty for other than training purposes.

Answer No if you are currently not on active duty in the U.S. Armed forces or if you are a National Guard or Reserves enlistee in active duty for training purposes only.

Additional considerations

These types of benefits are separate from the GI Bill and the Post 9/11 GI Bill, which are education-funding benefits that do not require a FAFSA to be filed in order to receive. If you or your parent is a veteran and you are interested in using the GI Bill to help fund your education costs, please contact your Veterans Affairs Office for further information.

CHALLENGES:

- Access to and exportability of the data (Reporting Platforms)
- Question verbiage, “Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?”
- Current format does not truly represent dependent data as there are no questions on the parent portion of the FAFSA that refer directly to active or veteran status

WPVAA Strategic Planning Session Results Cont'd

What is Working Currently

- SCO or Veteran Services Rep. at Admissions Event
- Allies to help identify (Faculty, Military “Action Connection” Committees, Student Accounting and Billing Offices)
- Report from Admissions | Financial Aid
- Working with Institutional Research

Incentives to Self-Identify

- Priority Registration
- Veterans Orientation
- Free Parking
- Discounts | Free Coffee
- Professional Development Opportunities
- Campus Activities
- Student Veteran Organizations
- Networking and Social Events

A Few Best Practice Resources

- Million Records Project (SVA) – A Review of Veteran Achievement in Higher Education
- National Veteran Education Success Tracker (SVA) – A Report on the Academic Success of Student Veterans Using the Post-9/11 GI Bill
- Measuring the Success of Student Veterans and Active Duty Military Students (NASPA)
- Toolkit for Veteran Friendly Institutions (ACENET)
- Promising Practices in Veterans Education: Outcomes and Recommendations from the Success for Veterans Award Grants (ACE)

"GI Bill®" is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government website at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>

Open Floor Discussion

- Institutional News, Updates, Additional Thoughts
- PAServes Update
- CASY Update
- O2O Update
- Additional Updates
- 2019/2020 Meetings: Would anyone like to host? December 2019, March 2020, June 2020





CLOSING REMARKS

REMEMBER:
NEXT MEETING WILL BE IN DECEMBER 2019
(DOODLE SCHEDULING POLL WILL BE SENT OUT)

