

VETERANS CHRONICLE

FEBRUARY 2020

**How the GI Bill
opens educational doors**

**Learn about support
programs in WA, ID**

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Veterans Chronicle Presents The GI Bill Education Issue

Since 1944 the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, also known as the GI Bill, has impacted the lives of millions of veterans and their families. The law provided a wide range of benefits to veterans returning from World War II, including low-cost home loans, education and vocational training, unemployment payments, and an expansion of veteran health care.

As we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the GI Bill, we reflect on how this legislation has impacted veterans and their families for generations. From the Montgomery GI Bill to the Post-9/11 GI Bill, the VA offers a robust variety of benefits to meet a wide range of education goals, including certificate programs, vocational and technical programs, on-the-job training, apprenticeship, correspondence, post-secondary degrees and work-study programs.

Since 1944, VA has paid about \$400 billion in education benefits to 25 million beneficiaries. VA education and training benefits are a key resource for veterans transitioning from military service to the civilian workforce.

In this edition, you will find information about the GI Bill Education Benefit and about various education and training opportunities available locally. You will also find numerous resources and stories that might help you decide what school or program will best suit you and your situation.

When in doubt, consult "How Can I Get Help?" on page 5 or contact an institution's Veteran Resource Center. We hope you will save this edition and pass it on to a veteran or family member to help them find a path to use this amazing benefit.

COMING NEXT MONTH

March's issue will focus on the services available for veterans through Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center (VAMC) in Spokane. This will be a "must save" edition, as it will highlight the many locations and services that are part of one of the finest VA medical centers in the nation.



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VETERANS CHRONICLE

FRIDAY, February 21, 2020



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Veterans Help Net partners with *The Spokesman-Review* to publish Veterans Chronicle on the third Friday of every month to increase awareness about veteran issues and to help veterans find hope and help.

To share a veteran story or information about resources for veterans, please contact info@veteranshelpnet.com or visit www.VeteransHelpNet.com.

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Grand Canyon University creates path for veterans to earn online degree

Grand Canyon University proudly serves the military community. Recognized as one of the nation's top military-friendly colleges by GI Jobs Magazine, the Christian university is committed to help veterans achieve their education and career with affordable and convenient private education.

By building a truly effective and achievable pathway, veterans can choose to earn a college degree on GCU's ground campus in Phoenix or from the university's comprehensive selection of more than 150 online bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs.

Military service instills many valuable qualities in those who serve. However, not many people consider how those traits can benefit veterans going to college. Veterans are more likely to exhibit some key traits that are linked to performing well in higher education, including:

- A strong work ethic and self-discipline
- Critical thinking and decision-making abilities
- Motivation to learn and put education into practice
- Maturity and sense of purpose
- Self-reliance and resourcefulness

GCU's goal is to help veterans discover their purpose and best fit for a degree program and how to utilize their VA education benefits.

Is online learning for me?

Each veteran brings a skill set from their military service that – when combined with their civilian job history and life experience – influences their education goals.

GCU's team of veteran and retired-military development counselors work one-on-one with veterans to review online program options in high-demand employment areas, including business, education, humanities and social sciences, health care and technology.

Online learning is a popular and convenient way to earn a degree because of the flexibility to study on your own schedule, at times most convenient to you, while balancing work and other responsibilities. Students achieve success with a user-friendly online platform, academic support resources and free tutoring.

What education benefits are available to veterans?

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers several VA education benefits to help eligible veterans pay the cost of outstanding tuition and fees.

Grand Canyon University is one of nearly 600 private colleges that enables the GI Bill benefit to be used for private school tuition. GCU also provides free pre-evaluations of the service member's Joint Service Transcript and Air University credits for Air Force service members. In

addition, GCU proudly participates in the Yellow Ribbon Program-funding expenses that exceed the annual maximum cap for private institutions. A military university counselor can help you determine how to transfer military training to college credits so that you can maximize your education experience.

Does Grand Canyon University offer military scholarship?

Veterans and their spouses can receive a special tuition rate through a GCU Military Veteran Tuition Scholarship. If you are currently serving in the military and can utilize military educational benefits, Grand Canyon University offers a special military rate per credit hour to you and your spouse for online and evening programs. GCU follows military policies and processes for the Military Tuition Assistance (TA) program for eligible members of the Army, Army Reserves, Army National Guard, Navy Marines, Air Force Air Force Reserves and Coast Guard.

A GCU military university development counselor is a great resource to help provide you with information about degree programs, the admissions process and applying to Grand Canyon University.

For more information, contact GCU Military University Development Counselor gina.grabicki@gcu.edu or (509) 572-8205.

Post-9/11 GI Bill: Yellow Ribbon Program

Assistance with private school and out-of-state tuition and fees.



What is the Yellow Ribbon Program?

The Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program, or the Yellow Ribbon Program, is a part of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008. This program allows U.S. institutions of higher learning to voluntarily enter into an agreement with the Department of Veteran Affairs. These degree-granting institutions partner with VA to cover tuition and fee expenses that exceed VA's maximum payable amount. Schools can contribute a specified dollar amount. VA will match the amount, not to exceed 50 percent of the difference.

How does the Yellow Ribbon Program benefit participants?

The Post-9/11 GI Bill pays up to all public in-state tuition and fees. If a recipient attends a private or out-of-state school, tuition rates may be more than the covered amount. However, if the school participates in The Yellow Ribbon Program, additional funds may be available to the student. Institutions that voluntarily enter into a Yellow Ribbon Program Agreement with VA choose the amount of tuition and fees to contribute. VA will match that amount and directly pay the institution.

Who is eligible?

Individuals entitled to the maximum benefit level, based on service requirements, may receive this funding. Others who may be eligible include:

- Those who served at least 36 months of active duty after Sept 10, 2001
- Purple Heart recipients with an honorable discharge and any amount of service
- Service members who were honorably discharged from active duty for a service-connected disability and served 30 days in a row after Sept 10, 2001
- A dependent eligible for Transfer of Entitlement under the Post-9/11 GI Bill

This program can allow a GI Bill user to reduce the extra cost of a private or out state higher tuition and costs. Visit your school's veteran resource center or visit va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/post-9-11/yellow-ribbon-program/ to find out more.

HOW CAN I GET HELP?

Every county and state has a Veteran Affairs office to answer questions about benefits and provide assistance. There are also other useful resources for veterans in the Inland Northwest.



GO ONLINE

VA.gov

The Department of Veterans Affairs website has resources on every topic relevant to veterans.

VA.gov/welcome-kit

The VA Welcome Guide covers all types of benefits and services available for veterans, new recruits, active service members and their families.

DAV9.com

Based in Post Falls, Disabled American Veterans Chapter 9 Fort Sherman shares links and information to both local and national help organizations for veterans.

Explore.VA.gov/benefits-navigator

Explore VA benefits and discover which ones you and your family may be eligible to receive.



IN PERSON

Spokane County Regional Veteran Service

1117 N. Evergreen Rd.,
Spokane Valley, WA
(509) 477-3690

Apply for emergency services, or have any benefits or service questions answered by 5 Veteran Service Officers (VSO) and staff.

North Idaho Veteran Services and Benefits Office

120 E. Railroad Ave., Post Falls, ID (208) 446-1092

Meet with a VSO or staff for help with VA benefits enrollment, claims or other veteran needs.

Goodwill Support Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)

130 E. Third Ave., Spokane, WA (509) 828-2449

SSVF helps homeless veterans and their families find housing and connects veterans with other support organizations.



BY PHONE

Spokane County Regional Veteran Service

(509) 477-3690

North Idaho Veteran Services and Benefits Office

(208) 446-1092

Veteran Crisis Line

1 (800) 273-8255, press 1

North Idaho Crisis Center

(208) 625-4884

Washington or Idaho 2-1-1

Dial "2-1-1" for health and human resources referrals.

Healthcare for Homeless Veterans HCHV

In Person or Phone
504 E. Second Ave.,
Spokane, WA

Phone: (509) 435-2019
Provides healthcare and outreach for housing, job opportunities and counseling.

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The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers home loans to active military members, reservists, and retirees, as a benefit of service in our nations' Armed Forces.

Many service members are not aware this earned benefit is available to them; many sellers are not aware of the advantages to VA loans in the transaction process.

We encourage all Spokane realtors - to become familiar with this loan type so that we can all join in saying "We believe in VA financing!"



Visit www.spokaneopen.com

to view VA qualified homes in your preferred area

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Brighton Court Assisted Living Community

1308 North Verder Road
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Assisted Living Community

Hey Veterans DID YOU KNOW?

Which four questions to ask before using your GI Bill benefits?

Before you decide where to go to school or what program is right for you, ask these four questions:

1. Does this school or program have dedicated staff for veteran affairs?
2. How much of my tuition and fees will my Post-9/11 GI Bill cover?
3. Does the school or program have a Yellow Ribbon Program?
4. Will I have to pay out-of-state tuition?

For help in finding answers to these questions, contact a Veteran Service Officer ("How Can I Get Help?" on above) or contact your potential school or program to see if they have an office dedicated to serving veteran students.

Hey Veterans DID YOU KNOW?

Some education and training programs are paid for by the Post-9/11 GI Bill?

Some of the approved training and assistance approved include:

- Correspondence training
- Entrepreneurship training
- Flight training
- Independent and distance learning
- Institutions of higher learning undergraduate and graduate degrees
- Licensing and certification reimbursement
- On-the-job training
- Tuition Assistance top-up
- Vocational/technical training

All training must be approved for GI Bill benefits. To find out more, contact the Veteran Services at your school or meet with one of the Veteran Service Officer located in our "How Can I Get Help?" directory on page 5.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) can help veterans with service-connected disabilities?

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program is authorized by Congress under Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 31. Its mission is to help veterans with service-connected disabilities prepare for, find, and keep suitable jobs.

VR&E also provides vocational-educational counseling to veterans and certain dependents. A range of vocational and educational counseling services are also available to service members still on active duty, as well as veterans and dependents who are eligible for one of VA's educational benefit programs.

Visit www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/ to learn more, or contact a Veteran Service Officer ("How Can I Get Help?" on page 5) to start accessing your benefits.

A monthly housing allowance is available for veterans in apprenticeship and on-the-job training programs?

Qualified veterans can use their GI Bill entitlement in approved apprenticeship and on-the-job training programs and receive a monthly housing allowance while in their program. Monthly housing allowance rates correspond to time in training period. You may also be eligible to receive a books and supplies stipend.

To get more information about this program, visit WorkSource Spokane (130 S. Arthur St.), or call (509) 532-3120 with questions. In Idaho, visit Idaho Department of Labor (600 N. Thornton St., Post Falls) or call (208) 457-8789. You can also contact a Veteran Service Officer ("How Can I Get Help?" on page 5) for help.



Post-9/11 GI Bill Frequently Asked Questions

Question: Who is eligible?

Answer: You're eligible if you served a minimum of 90 days on active duty after Sept. 10, 2001. This covers active duty served as a member of the Armed Forces or as a result of a call or order to active duty from a reserve component (National Guard and Reserve) under certain sections of Title 10. There are many inclusions and exclusions for National Guard/Reserve. If you are a veteran, you must have an honorable discharge. If you served at least 30 days active duty and have a disability discharge, you are also eligible.

Question: Does the length of time served after Sept. 11, 2001, affect my level of benefits?

Answer: Yes, the amount of tuition and stipends paid under the Post-9/11 GI Bill will vary depending on your school, number of classes taken, and amount of post-Sept. 11, 2001, active-duty service. Here is a quick

reference showing the percentage of total combined benefit eligibility based on the following periods of service:

100% = 36 or more total months, or 30 or more consecutive days with a disability-related discharge.
90% = 30 total months
80% = 24 total months
70% = 18 total months
60% = 12 total months
50% = 6 total months
40% = 90 or more days

Question: What are the benefits of the new educational assistance program?

Answer: The Post-9/11 GI Bill offers several education assistance benefits. The three major benefits include: up to 100% paid tuition, a monthly housing stipend, and a stipend of up to \$1,000 a year for books and supplies.

If you attend less than full-time you will receive a portion of the payment based on the number of units of study. These

payment rates are paid according to the length of your period of service.

Tuition and fee payments will be made to the school (of your choice) for all authorized charges. The Post-9/11 GI Bill can pay your full resident tuition at a public school. If you are attending a private or foreign school, it will pay up to \$24,476.79. The amount of authorized charges payable for the entire quarter, semester, or term will be sent directly to the school as a lump sum payment.

The monthly housing stipend will be paid based on the monthly basic allowance for housing (BAH) payable for a military member with dependents in pay grade E-5 residing in the same ZIP code for the school or campus where you take a majority of your classes. The housing allowance is paid at a percentage based on your active duty service.

Question: Are there additional benefits?

Answer: Yes, the additional benefits include the following, which are not charged against your 36-month entitlement:

- Tutorial assistance may be paid up to \$100 per month, not to exceed a total of \$1,200.
- Authorized work study for individuals training at 3/4 time or higher.
- A one-time payment of \$500 for veterans using the Post-9/11 GI Bill to pursue a program of education if they live in a county with 6 persons or less per square mile (as determined by most recent decennial Census); and either physically relocate at least 500 miles to attend school; or travel by air to physically attend school if no other land-based transportation exists.

Visit va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/post-9-11/ for more information.



A Driving Force for Veterans

He's on the road more than 200 days a year, traveling to 33 counties throughout Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana.

Robert "Stu" Sturtevant (BA '10, MBA '18) is a U.S. Air Force retiree who served for 23 years, including in the Gulf War and Global War on Terror. After earning his bachelor's in organizational management at Whitworth University, Sturtevant was hired as the office manager for the Spokane Vet Center.

In 2016, he began a different role as operator/outreach program specialist for the Spokane Mobile Vet Center. He drives a self-contained RV loaded with all the necessities – a satellite dish for conferencing, a fax machine, a copy machine and everything he needs to make sure military veterans in rural areas get the critical benefits and services they need.

During all that driving, Sturtevant discovered something unexpected, and the wheels started to turn.

"In 2015, I found out I still had my G.I. Bill," Sturtevant said. "I thought, 'wow, that's a no-brainer.' I knew I wanted to come back to Whitworth because I loved it when I did my undergrad here. This school is really remarkable. There was no question where I wanted to go; I just needed to get back into it."

Sturtevant was accepted into the Whitworth Master of

Business Administration Program. Night classes allowed him to keep his job at the Vet Center. He says it's a job that truly puts to use the mind-and-heart education he received at Whitworth.

"You run across a lot of people with cancer, mostly terminal from Agent Orange," he said. "Sometimes you're helping them get their affairs in order, trying to get a place at the cemetery. But it's very gratifying to get compensation for them, to make sure their spouses are taken care of, you know, at the end there," he said, his voice trailing off. "That part is hard ... but it's really rewarding."

Sturtevant read a passage from the Bible, Matthew 25:14-27, at Whitworth's 2018 graduate commencement ceremony. He said it was an honor to have been asked, and with his contagious smile and North Carolina accent added, "I asked them, please, please tell me what I'll be reading early on so I can practice and not sound so Southern."

As for his plans down the road? He'd like to put his training to good use and one day help open a veteran resource center at Whitworth.



Veteran Resources

Whitworth University deeply values the service and sacrifice of veterans and their families. Recognized as a Military Friendly School® for 2019-20 by Victory Media and ranked No. 1 in the West for Veterans by the 2020 U.S. News & World Report, Whitworth University continues to be a strong support for veterans and their dependents. Whitworth is proud to accept and honor all veteran educational benefit programs.

As a recipient of the Partners for Veteran Supportive Campuses Certificate through the Washington State Department Veterans Affairs, Whitworth is dedicated to supporting veteran success with:

- Admissions and financial aid counseling
- One-on-one academic advising
- A dedicated veterans' lounge
- A military-friendly community
- Peer veteran support

If you are a military-connected student, visit whitworth.edu/veterans and check out Veteran Resources.

If you have questions about VA benefits, admissions and programs at Whitworth, please contact one of the following individuals:

Whitworth VA Certifying Official
Jaime Ochoa, Assistant Registrar
Registrar's Office
509.777.3508
jochoa@whitworth.edu

Veterans Outreach
Phil Labrie, Assistant Director
Continuing Studies
509.777.3302
veterans@whitworth.edu

Financial Aid—Veterans Benefit Coordination
Jenny Keen
Financial Aid Office
509.777.4545
jkeen@whitworth.edu



"The veteran specific support staff has gone out of their way to make me feel invited and welcome here at Whitworth University and have, and are, making sure that I have every resource that I might need in my tenure here."

– Garrett

Mission first, soldiers always



by Trent Reedy
The Washington Examiner

Although I thank God to live in a country with free elections, I absolutely dread the bitter arguments that flare up during presidential campaign season. I'm reminded of summers growing up in Iowa, when there was a rumble of thunder from dark, distant clouds echoing over the cornfields. My uncle on the old family farm might shake his head. "Gonna be a bad one."

One issue candidates have tried to address is the challenge students face paying for college. My solution, years ago, was to enlist in the National Guard.

I recently had coffee with Dave Millet, director of the Veterans Resource Center at Eastern Washington University, a man who works with many students who took similar steps to pay for college. The VRC's mission statement includes the sort of language one might expect: "support the unique recruitment, retention, and educational needs of students whose lives are connected to the military," and so on. But Mr. Millet's dedication goes far beyond slogans. The retired Army infantry lieutenant colonel keeps a regulation haircut and stays fit with many bike rides, and he makes it clear that he cares about making all soldiers and veterans feel welcome on campus.

He doesn't allow any plaques or other signs of his rank in his office.

"I don't want a young student veteran to salute or call me 'sir,'" he said. "You're Trent, and I'm Dave."

Though duty would have required me to salute him were we in uniform, he was quick to point out, "Our experiences are more important than what rank we held."

"A big part of an infantry officer's job is to help young soldiers," Dave said. He didn't stop helping when he retired. He works with a lot of young veterans in their early 20s, who remain "a little anxious in their first quarter."

He remembered a young Air Force veteran

who went by her call sign, "Blackbird." She really struggled when she first began school. But with help from the VRC, she "settled down academically and figured out what she was good at." She eventually earned a biology degree and full-ride scholarship to Notre Dame, where she earned a master's degree working on insect-spread diseases.

A former Marine Corps sniper had never been a good student, but the VRC helped him put his GI Bill benefits to work and provided community and support as he went on to earn straight A's before applying to law school. Eastern Washington University is 12 miles from Fairchild Air Force Base, and with several nearby reserve units and Joint Base Lewis-McChord on the other side of the state, the university welcomes plenty of veterans. Yet it was clear to me that Dave looked well beyond the numbers; here was a man who truly believed in the old mantra: "Mission first. Soldiers always."

He pointed out how even though he doesn't pin on military medals anymore, he loves helping people navigate the transition from military to academic life. One of his favorite duties is working at commencement, watching the veterans walk across the stage with red, white, and blue honor cords complementing their gowns. During the ceremony, when the time comes for all veterans to stand and be recognized, there is always the loudest applause.

Amid the presidential campaign season's constant reminder of the bitter divide among Americans, shows of unity, such as the celebration of graduates, especially of those who are also veterans, as well as the service and dedication of men such as Dave Millet, offer much-needed encouragement.

Trent Reedy served as a combat engineer in the Iowa National Guard from 1999 to 2005, including a tour of duty in Afghanistan.



Eastern Washington University Veteran Resource Center

Since Eastern Washington University opened the Veterans Resource Center (VRC) in July 2012, it has helped thousands of veterans, service members and their families navigate the transition from the military to higher education. With close to 600 students on campus each year using some type of VA Educational Benefit it is imperative that the campus community provide support for this student population to ensure both academically and financially they are able to accomplish their academic goals.

Last year alone, the EWU VRC processed VA Educational Benefits for 680 students, which brought in close in \$2.5 million in tuition to EWU. Beyond just processing VA Benefits, EWU and the VRC awarded over \$25,000 in scholarship support to veterans and through continued fundraising efforts and a strong and generous alumni veteran group, EWU now has six endowments awarded specifically to student veterans, National Guard or Reserve service members, along with several "pass-thru" scholarships each year.

The VRC has also accomplished many other great things, including receiving a grant to help with childcare for student veterans, and providing continuing training to faculty, staff, and students about military culture and best practices to help veteran's transition to campus.

Eastern Washington University and the Veterans Resource Center is known around the region, and some would say nationally, as the flagship of Centers, the model to

emulate and the standard to follow. Student veterans accomplish great things at EWU, and upon graduation continue to be valuable members to the community.

The Veterans Resource Center provides the following:

- GI Bill benefit information
- Admissions and financial aid counseling
- Targeted recruitment
- Academic and personal advising
- Liaison with disability support services
- Specialized tutoring
- Support for veterans' student club
- Activities for veteran and military students and their families
- Public presentations and speakers
- Workshops for veteran and military student
- Faculty and staff training

EWU VRC Staff

Dave Millet, Director and US Army veteran

Lena Tanguay, Benefits Supervisor and US Navy veteran

Steve Lewis, Vet Corps Navigator and US Army veteran

VA Work Study Students

Morgan Overall, US Air Force veteran

Robin Robles, US Air Force veteran

Ian Burnham, US Marine Corps veteran

Community Colleges of Spokane Veteran Services

One story tells it all ...

“What do I do now?”

By Jonathan Glover

At 31 years old, retired Marine Austin Mendez has found a camaraderie at Spokane Community College he didn't think was possible since leaving the military in 2017.

No longer is he traveling the world. No longer is he following orders from higher-ups. No longer is he seeing the same faces when he turns in for the night or wakes up in the morning.

Routine, interrupted.
“It's kind of funny, because you get out and then there's kind of this scary void,” said Mendez, who this quarter began working toward a two-year degree in the machining program. “What do I do now?”

Like thousands of other veterans who've attended the Community Colleges of Spokane, Mendez isn't alone. And that's why the colleges offer a bevy of veteran-friendly programs and contacts intended to make the transition from military life to school life as smooth as possible.

Take SCC, for example. The college is one of just 17 in the state to be designated a military-friendly school by the Military Friendly Company – a company that surveys hundreds of schools nationwide. What's more, it received a silver designation – the only community college in the state to do so. It's a badge of honor the school wears as proudly as a stripe on a uniform. Deana Sleep, the college's Veteran Services Program Coordinator, helped build the school's military-friendly reputation when she started her “dream job” in 2012. That's after she attended in 2006, earning two degrees and a certificate.

“I love this job,” she said. “I absolutely love this job. It's what I want to do. I have a network that's unbelievable.”

One of Sleep's first indicatives was to create what's called the Veterans One-Stop – an initiative that brought work study positions to campus, in addition to designated areas for veteran-specific computers.

What's more, the school also offers scholarships, either for the student or their spouse, veteran-friendly contacts at buildings throughout campus, and even their own table in the cafeteria.



Spokane Community College student and retired Marine Austin Mendez, 31, works in his machining class Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2020. (James Feeney)

And of course, resources on how to use the GI Bill to pay for classes.

The biggest benefit, however? Sleep herself. At least, that's how Mendez sees it.

“I'd say Deana is the resource I use most,” Mendez said. “She's just about daily sending me stuff on how to cope with school, get different resources. Things like that.”

Since beginning the machining program this quarter, Mendez said he's “loving it so far.” He decided to pursue the Associate in Applied Science degree after a recommendation from a friend. Plus, he was raised in a metal shop by his dad, himself a veteran who served in the U.S. Navy, where he worked as a machinist shaping metal on giant war ships.

Throughout the two-year program, Mendez will learn how to build and fabricate high-tech equipment and run machining software in an industry put on the back burner by many higher-education institutions. He hopes to find a career in the Spokane area.

While the classes have kept him plenty busy, Mendez has also enjoyed the many events happening throughout campus.

“It's a great community, not just a college,” he said. “Just look at the calendar – there's always something going on to relieve the stress of school.”

Mendez is also grateful his time spent in the U.S. Marines. Not only did it shape much of his life trajectory, it also provided a secret benefit.

“I would say the military actually made me a better student,” he said. “Before I was kind of a flake and wasn't really interested in school. The previous classes I've taken at SCC, I've always ended up on the presidential and vice-presidential honor roll.”

Sleep, who herself comes from a family of veterans, said that an important role of a community college is to ensure veteran students feel at home on campus.

It's a service she's happy to provide. After all, it's one of the best ways she can “give back,” she said.

“They sacrifice so much,” she said. “It's the whole patriotic side of it.”

A photograph of Lee Greenwood performing on stage. He is wearing a dark jacket and a black shirt, and is holding a microphone. The background is a large screen displaying the text "LEE GREENWOOD THE HITS TOUR 2020".

LEE GREENWOOD
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A photograph of two hands holding each other, one in a blue and white striped shirt and the other in a white shirt. The background is a solid blue color.

HOSPICE OF SPOKANE

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step of the way.**

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Gonzaga University student veterans at the 2020 National Student Veteran Conference in Los Angeles. From left to right, Richard Nyambura (Army Veteran), Venette Melo (Ret. Marines), Jason Trosine (Ret. Air Force), John Lipkea (Ret. Air Force), Michael Segaline (Marines), Dr. Colleen Quinn Vandenboom (Coast Guard dependent), Brenda Vogel (Ret. Navy).

Gonzaga University: A place for military veterans

By Colleen Quinn Vandenboom, Ph.D.
Assistant Dean, Gonzaga University

For many service members and veterans, Gonzaga University's mission of educating individuals for lives of leadership and service for the common good draws them to this University. Gonzaga has a rich military history dating back to pre-WWII, when GU received Naval cadets from the V-5 program.

Today Gonzaga is proud to have veterans represented in all areas of the university, from undergraduates to doctoral and law students. The University's president Dr. Thayne McCulloh is also an Army veteran. Veterans make Gonzaga's campus richer and more diverse. GU is committed to hiring and enrolling military veterans.

Over 200 Zags tap the GI Bill to help pay for college at Gonzaga. But even with the GI Bill benefit, some veterans have questioned if they could make it work financially. Gonzaga's participation in the Yellow Ribbon Program (for undergraduate and law students) makes attending Gonzaga a reality for many student veterans.

"One reason I knew I could come to GU was that they participate in the Yellow Ribbon," said Cody Porter, a biochemistry student and Navy veteran. "The

combination of my GI Bill and the Yellow Ribbon, made GU a reality for me."

Gonzaga encourages all interested veterans to reach out to the Admission Office to find out the benefits available to them.

With an increase in the number of student veterans, Gonzaga works to make sure the campus continues to be military-supportive. The student veteran support team focuses on five areas: academic success, career and professional development, financial support, mental and physical health, and community-building. This support is bolstered by the work of the WDVA VetCorp Navigator, three VA work-study employees, and designated staff liaisons in many of the student service offices on campus.

Over the last few years Gonzaga has seen a major growth in the social and community aspect of veteran life on campus. The success is largely due to the new transfer and veteran office in the Hemmingson Center. The office hosts regular socials and events for veterans on campus. At the heart of the activity is the student veteran's organization with members from all academic departments

and branches.

The first week in January, six members of Gonzaga's student veteran organization travelled to Los Angeles for the National Student Veteran Conference (NatCon), the largest gathering of student veterans in the world. GU was selected to present at the conference. During the conference, students attended educational sessions, and networked with other student veterans and employers.

Marine Corps Veteran and graduate student Venette Melo reflected: "Attending NATCON allowed me to reconnect with my Focus Forward Fellows and SVA Leadership Institute cohort. That camaraderie is priceless and probably the greatest thing I miss about serving in the military."

It was Air Force veteran and business major John Lipkea's second year attending NatCon.

"I enjoyed seeing friends from other campuses around the nation and making new connections with partner companies," Lipkea said. "I feel like my family just got bigger and I am confident that I will have the support, connections, and tools to 'Learn Today. Lead Tomorrow.'"

Gonzaga has a wide variety of staff, faculty and administrators working hard to support veterans and the military community. Faculty like Dr. Lisa Silvestri are bringing awareness to the stories of military veterans, while our human resources, admissions and student support areas are developing programs and services to support veterans when they choose Gonzaga University. The military veterans and their families have done so much for our country and GU's work to support veterans is one small way to say "Thank you for your service."



Gonzaga University Veteran Services

The Veteran Services staff is appreciative of your service and committed to providing the best possible services to veterans and their dependents who attend Gonzaga University. Gonzaga's academic programs of study are approved by the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board's State Approving Agency (HECB/SAA) for enrollment of persons eligible to receive educational benefits under Title 38 and Title 10 USC.

CAMPUS LOCATION

College Hall 229 (Office of the Registrar)

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Veterans Services
502 E Boone Ave AD 83
Spokane, WA 99258-0083

OFFICE HOURS:

Mon-Tues, Thurs-Fri 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Wednesday 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

STAFF:

Mike Grabowski, Primary Veteran Advisor
(509) 313-6596, grabowski@gonzaga.edu

Ryan Forim, Alternate Veteran Coordinator
(509) 313-6509, forim@gonzaga.edu

Although appointments are not necessary, calling or e-mailing ahead of time can avoid a wait as the above two persons are also regular Registrar staff personnel.



NIC student veteran earns full-ride to UVA through Posse Foundation

Jacob Beckham, a North Idaho College student and U.S. Marine Corps veteran, said it was pure faith that brought him and his family to Idaho after five years in the Marines and 10 years as a banker.

"I'd never been to Idaho. I didn't know anyone," Beckham said. "But, long story short, here we are."

It was exactly that kind of faith that led to him being only the second NIC student ever selected to the national Posse Foundation Veterans Scholarship Program.

Beckham had never heard of the program before NIC veteran counselor Kecia Siegel and work study student Connor Haas briefed him on the opportunity.

The Posse Foundation is a nonprofit that, in addition to its traditional scholarships, offers a special program to veterans to promote college access and leadership development. The foundation covers the cost of tuition at partner colleges and universities across the nation. Each college supports a cohort of about 10 Posse scholars who attend the respective college together.

"The idea is to send a group together so that they can support each other," Beckham said. "After the initial nomination, it's up to the applicant to do all the work."

Beckham would interview twice in Tacoma, Washington, then fly

to New York City for the third round of intense interviews. There were more than 17,000 applicants nationwide with only about 700 being selected. Of those recipients, only 40 were veterans; the rest were high school graduates.

"This is a huge honor and fantastic opportunity," said Greg Eaton, NIC Veterans and Military Family services advisor. "Jacob worked extremely hard and took a big chance, traveling to New York on his own dime, but it has paid off in a big way. He's earned this."

Beckham plans to attend the University of Virginia next fall, where he will study secondary education. With out-of-state tuition at UVA upwards of \$45,000 per year, the Posse scholarship will cover whatever his GI Bill does not.

Former NIC student and US Army veteran Timea Taylor is currently attending Wesleyan University on a Posse scholarship.

"The program also includes individual mentoring, career development and access to a broad network of professionals who can help them transition from college to the workforce that includes companies such as Google, Goldman Sachs, Disney, Reebok, and others," Eaton said. "It's a tremendous opportunity and we're very proud of Jacob."

North Idaho College Veteran & Military Family Services



Our Mission

North Idaho College Veteran & Military Family Services Office is committed to supporting the unique needs of those who have served, are currently serving, and their dependents in defining and achieving their educational, personal and career goals.

What We Do

Provide comprehensive advising and referral services to active and former military members, their dependents, prospective students, and National Guard and Reserve members. Services range from navigating higher education processes and requirements, to enrolling in and understanding VA educational benefits, to providing knowledgeable campus and community services referrals across all of NIC's campuses. The Veteran & Military Family Services staff is here to serve those who have served our nation and their families and assist in a successful transition into college and a productive experience through college.

Veteran Resource Center

The Veterans Resource Center provides a valuable one-stop environment for student veterans and military family members, VRC services range from admissions, registration and academic advising assistance, to accessing educational and VA information, computer lab access, career exploration tools and many other resource, as well as a place to relax, study or socialize. The VRC has:

- GI Bill, admissions, academic and career info
- Campus and local area reference material
- Information about local area veterans' events
- Referrals to off-campus resources
- Liaison with Disability Support Services
- Regular visits by Spokane Vet Center Counselor
- Lounge area, computer lab and study areas

Learn more about North Idaho College professional and technical programs. Veterans can use GI Bill benefits to earn certification in many different trades and programs that could lead directly to highly skilled well-paying employment.

CONTACT

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Phone: (208) 929-0428 Email: vetercenter@nic.edu Website: nic.edu/veterans

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Monday-Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

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