

Fulfilling the Promise

Resources and Programs to Support our Transitioning Service Members and Families

Here is a brief listing of GI Bills, webpages, and a variety of services and organizations that may be helpful to servicemembers, veterans, families, and college administration and faculty.

- Department of Defense Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of Understanding

The Department of Defense in conjunction with the Department of Education wrote a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for all schools that wish to be designated as “Military Friendly.”

[https://www.dodmou.com/TADECIDE/Documents/DOD-TA-DECIDE-Tool_Source Doc.pdf](https://www.dodmou.com/TADECIDE/Documents/DOD-TA-DECIDE-Tool_Source_Doc.pdf)

GI Bills

- Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB-AD)

Available to all active duty members and veterans who have served at least two years, for up to 36 months dependent on specific protocols.

https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/montgomery_bill.asp

- Montgomery GI Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR)

Available to all Reserve and National Guard service members, as determined by the Selected Reserves. Payments are made by the VA directly to the institution.

https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/mgib_sr.asp

- Forever GI Bill – Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act

Made significant changes to many educational and training programs effective immediately and in the short-term future.

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/FGIBSummaries.asp>

From *Dog Tags to Diploma* by Col Nicholas D Young, Christine Nevada Michael, and Elizabeth Jean.

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- Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP)

This program offered assistance to reserves who were placed on active duty due to war or emergency, however, the program was replaced with the Post 9/11 GI Bill.

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/reap.asp>

- Post 9/11 GI Bill

For those servicemembers who have at least 90 days of active duty service or those who were honorably discharged after 30 days.

https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/post911_gibill.asp

- Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP)

For those in the military who elected to set money aside for educational purposes, the government matched the contributions 2:1.

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/veap.asp>

- GI Bill Kicker (Army, Navy, & Marines)

Offered as part of an enlistment or reenlistment contract, these additional monies that must be combined with the GI Bill in order to cover the majority of college costs.

<https://www.military.com/education/gi-bill/the-gi-bill-kicker.html>

- GI Bill Buy-up Program (Air Force)

Similar to the program above, Air Force members can use this program in conjunction with the Montgomery Bill.

<https://www.military.com/education/gi-bill/gi-bill-buy-up-program.html>

- Student Loan Repayment (all branches)

Branch and job specific, student loan repayment is available when you agree not to pursue the Montgomery GI Bill in addition to signing on for 3 years, or six for National Guard.

<https://www.military.com/education/money-for-school/student-loan-repayment.html>

Dependents and Spouses

- Dependents Educational Assistance Program (DEAP)

This program offers educational monies to dependents and spouses of those permanently disabled or killed while on active duty.

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/DEA.asp>

- Fry Scholarship

Offering educational monies to children and spouses of active duty armed forces servicemembers who lost their lives on or after September 11, 2001, it cannot be used in combination with the DEAP.

https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/Fry_scholarship.asp

Military Friendly Schools

● Traditional Schools

Schools designated as Military Friendly these schools go through rigorous examination as determined by many criteria. The University of Florida, for example, exceeds the standards in six categories.

<http://militaryfriendly.com/military-friendly-schools-methodology/>

● Online Schools

Offering a plethora of online possibilities, Best Colleges (2017) and SR Education Group (2017) sets the stage with the top schools for servicemembers and their families when online learning is the option of choice. Based on four overarching categories, schools that made the 2017 list offer at least 10 programs of study at the bachelor, masters or doctoral levels, and, in addition, must rank high in four overarching categories: military culture, flexibility, online support, and financial aid (SR Education Group, 2017).

<http://www.bestcolleges.com/features/top-military-friendly-colleges/>

Programs to Help Veterans Find Success on Campus

● Eight Keys to Veterans' Success

Helping postsecondary schools to ensure veteran success on the campus, the Department of Education has compiled a list of eight key factors. Schools are encouraged to follow them, however, there is no oversight.

<https://www.ed.gov/veterans-and-military-families/8-keys-success-sites>

● VA Principles of Excellence Program

Postsecondary institutions who participate in this program agree to follow seven criteria to ensure veteran-student success.

https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/principles_of_excellence.asp

● VetSuccess on Campus

This program helps Veteran-students and their qualified dependents find success on the college campus through coordinated assistance from beginning to end of their postsecondary career.

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/vsocfactsheet.asp>

Combined Branches of Service

- National Defense University

Located in Washington, DC, the National Defense University is a group of five smaller colleges all dedicated to senior level courses in national security strategy that span across the five branches of the armed forces.

<http://nwc.ndu.edu/>

- Joint Services Transcript (JTS)

Transcript services that help both the career counselors and employers understand the veterans' skills and education.

<https://www.military.com/education/timesaving-programs/the-joint-services-transcript.html>

Individual Branches of Service

Army

- Army Education Centers

At almost every army base, servicemembers can find an Education Center to help them understand the GI Bill, access programs and classes and more. For an example see Ft. Drum Army Education Center.

<http://www.drum.army.mil/hr/Pages/education.aspx>

- Army War College

Meant to teach the senior leaders to have a clear and deep understanding of strategic national security, the war college boasts a long history that has changed over time to meet the needs of the country and its officers.

<http://www.armywarcollege.edu/history.htm>

- Military Academy (West Point)

The oldest of the Academies, West Point is the hub of Officer training for the Army. Cadets receive a bachelors degree in exchange for years of service.

<https://www.usma.edu/SitePages/Home.aspx>

- Concurrent Admissions Program (ConAP)

Available to new enlistees of the Army and Army Reserve, ConAP, is a partnership between 1,900 colleges and universities and the Army Recruiting Command. As such it offers a viable pipeline for "college-capable" (MyArmyBenefits, 2017, n.p.) enlisted members to access higher education at a faster rate.

[http://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Home/Benefit_Library/Federal_Benefits_Page/Concurrent_Admissions_Program_\(ConAP\).html](http://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Home/Benefit_Library/Federal_Benefits_Page/Concurrent_Admissions_Program_(ConAP).html)

● eArmyU

Offers solely postsecondary degrees and technical certificate online programs with a technology bundle.

https://www.goarmyed.com/public/public_earn_degree-earmyu.aspx

Navy

● Naval War College

Similar to other War Colleges., the Naval version is dedicated to the advancement of future leaders through an education that stimulates the mind and informs decisions based on past history and future thinking.

<https://usnwc.edu/>

● Naval Academy

The Navy and Marines share this academy dedicated to the high seas and those who wish to pursue a bachelors' degree and earn a commission as an Ensign.

<https://www.usna.edu/homepage.php>

● Navy College Program for Afloat College Education

For members at sea, college tuition is paid for, however, they must pay for books and materials.

<http://www.navycollege.navy.mil/information-for-sailors/paying-for-school/ncpace.htm>

Air Force

● Air War College

Similar to the Army War College, the intent of the AWC is to meet the needs of national security leaders in the Air Force and provide exceptional skills and knowledge applications in real world settings.

http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/aa_leadership.aspx

● Air Force Academy

A four-year degree is given to enlisted who complete the college program in exchange for active duty service.

<http://www.usafa.af.mil/>

● Scholarships for Outstanding Airman to ROTC (SOAR)

Active duty enlisted become full-time college students while being attached to an Air Force ROTC program. Stipend and tuition, as well as other benefits are available.

<http://www.au.af.mil/au/holmcenter/afrotc/enlistedcomm/SOAR.asp>

- Airman Education and Commissioning Program (AECP) and the Airman Scholarship and Commissioning Program (ASCP)

Enlisted members may go to school full-time and earn a bachelors' and an officer designation by joining an Air Force ROTC program.

<http://www.au.af.mil/au/holmcenter/afrotc/enlistedcomm/ASCP.asp>

- USAF Professional Officer Course – Early Release Program

Same as above, however, participants must be able to complete all requirements within two years and in exchange for degree, become a Second Lieutenant upon graduation and return to service for a period of at least four years.

http://www.au.af.mil/au/holmcenter/afrotc/enlistedcomm/POC_ERP.asp

- Community College of the Air Force

The largest community college system for enlisted Air Force personnel, offering two-year associates degrees in applied science from over 65 different degree completion programs.

<http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Barnes/CCAF/>

Marines

- Naval Academy

The Marines share this academy with the Navy and its participants pursue a bachelors' degree and earn a commission as an Ensign.

<https://www.usna.edu/homepage.php>

- Military Academic Skills Program

For members and dependents who need more math and reading skill building prior to attending college programs.

<http://www.marforres.marines.mil/General-Special-Staff/Marine-Corps-Community-Services/Marine-Family-Services/Voluntary-Education-Program/MASP/>

- United Services Military Apprenticeship Program

Using time served as a springboard to journeyman status within a variety of trades, this active duty joint service program (Marines, Navy and Coast Guard) helps servicemembers get a head start once discharged.

<https://www.thebalance.com/united-services-military-apprenticeship-program-usmap-2356514>

Coast Guard

- Enlisted training

After basic training has been completed, enlisted members go on to specialized training within their "rating." If interested in moving up the ladder, service members must either complete a "striker program" or "A school." This guide can explain the necessary steps.

<https://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/enlisted-opportunities/advance-through-training>

Officer Training

Both active duty and reserve Coast Guard members are entitled to apply for these programs.

- **College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative (Scholarship Program)**

<https://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/officer-opportunities/programs/college-student-pre-commissioning-initiative>

- **Wilks Flight Initiative**

<https://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/officer-opportunities/programs/wilks-flight-initiative-wifi>

- **CSPI-Student Loan Repayment Program**

<https://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/officer-opportunities/programs/cspi-student-loan-repayment-program-cspi-slrp>

- **Officer Candidate School**

<https://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/officer-opportunities/programs/officer-candidate-school-ocs>

- **Coast Guard Academy**

<http://www.cga.edu/>

Direct Commission Programs

One way that the Coast Guard ensures its critical needs are met is with direct commissions that occur in conjunction with, or directly after, college completion.

- **Direct Commission Aviator**

<https://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/officer-opportunities/programs/direct-commission-aviator-dca>

- **Direct Commission Physician Assistant Program**

<https://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/officer-opportunities/programs/direct-commission-physician-assistant-dcpa>

- **Direct Commission Engineer**

<https://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/officer-opportunities/programs/direct-commission-engineer-dce>

- **Direct Commission Intelligence Officer**

<https://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/officer-opportunities/programs/direct-commission-intelligence-officer-dcio>

- **Direct Commission Lawyer**

<https://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/officer-opportunities/programs/direct-commission-lawyer-dcl>

● **Direct Commission Selected School Program**

<https://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/officer-opportunities/programs/direct-commission-programs>

● **Maritime Academy Graduate**

<https://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/officer-opportunities/programs/maritime-academy-graduate-margrad>

● **Prior Trained Military Officer**

<https://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/officer-opportunities/programs/prior-trained-military-officer-ptmo-0>

National Guard

The National Guard programs differ by state, benefits and terms of service. Check with local National Guard units for specific information or check this website:

<http://www.nationalguard.mil/>

● **National Guard Engineering Education**

This program trains servicemembers to become masons, engineers, electricians, underwater welders, firefighters, or surveyors.

<https://www.nationalguard.com/tools/vocational-opportunities/vocational-technical-engineering>

● **Troops to Teachers**

Offering active duty and reservists an education that prepares them to be teachers, school adjustment counselors, and many other school based positions using financial aid to the GI Bill to help pay the costs.

<https://www.nationalguard.com/education-programs/troops-to-teachers>

● **Registered Apprenticeship and On-the-Job Training Programs**

Providing a way for tradesmen to flourish in the military, these trained servicemembers go on to be well qualified to work in a variety of fields that require a journeyman to observe and sign off on a particular number of hours depending on the specialization.

<https://www.nationalguard.com/education-programs/apprenticeship>

● **Defense Activity for NonTraditional Education Support (DANTES)**

The National Guard offers free entrance exams and high school equivalency exams as well as college credit equivalency exams to active duty members.

<https://www.nationalguard.com/education-programs/college-information>

Service Organizations

This is a very short list of some of the many organizations that exist to support our servicemembers, veterans, and families.

● Military Veteran Project

A relatively new, charity-based organization, MVP funds research on PTSD and TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury), and raises awareness of veteran suicides, estimated by the VA to be approximately 22 a day, or one every 65 minutes (VA Issues New Report on Suicide Data, 2013, <https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/Pressrelease.cfm?id=427>). The site offers a comprehensive list of military charities, organizations, and government contacts.

<https://www.militaryveteranproject.org/military-resources.html>

● Veterans Affairs Administration (VA)

The VA has three branches including health care, benefits, and burials and memorials. The health care unit is the “nation’s largest health care system, with more than 1,700 hospitals, clinics, community living centers, domiciliaries, readjustment counseling centers and other facilities” (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2017). The benefits department provides services and benefits to servicemembers, veterans, dependents, and survivors. Finally, the burials and memorials unit operates 135 national cemeteries and offers benefits to servicemembers, veterans, and family members as well.

<https://www.va.gov/>

● Non-Commissioned Officers Associations (NCOA)

Founded in 1960, this organization caters to the enlisted of each branch, National Guard and Reserves, active duty and veterans, including their families. Premium members have access to discounted rental cars, hotels and entertainment, insurance, and colleges.

<http://ncoausa.org/>

● Military Officers Association of America

The most influential and largest military organization dedicated to officers only, it supports legislation, and offers benefits such as those above to its members.

http://www.moaa.org/join/?utm_source=hp&utm_medium=benefitsheader&utm_campaign=join

● National Guard Association of the United States

Formed by militia in 1878 as a means to obtain equipment, this is the oldest military organization that purposefully lobbies “solely for the benefit of the National Guard...and [educates] the public about the Guard’s role and history in the Armed Forces...” More information can be found here:

<https://www.ngaus.org/united-voice-national-guard>

● Military Order of the Purple Heart

This particular group began in 1958, with a charter from Congress. It is for the select few who were wounded in combat, although they claim to serve all veterans/families.

<http://www.purpleheart.org/>

● Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)

The VFW began in 1899 when members of the armed forces came home from the Spanish-American War and the Philippine Insurrection wounded and in need of care. Veterans in that era banded together to form local chapters and quickly spread across the United States. In recent times, the VFW has been instrumental in showing support to build several war memorials, as well as for the health rights of veterans who came home from Vietnam and other battles in need of care and reparation.

<https://www.vfw.org/>

● American Legion

Chartered by Congress in 1919, the American Legion is a patriotic veterans' association, fighting for change in America. Their long history is impressive, as is their commitment to all members of the armed forces.

<https://www.legion.org/history>

● Wounded Warriors Project

This organization mission is three-fold: to connect veterans to “peers, programs, and communities,” to serve by way of free programs, and to empower the veterans to “live life to the fullest.”

<https://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/mission>

● Red Shirt Fridays

This organization simply wants to let servicemembers, veterans, and families know that they “support their sacrifice and that we will not forget them; we will do this by wearing RED every Friday.” Red stands for “Remember Everyone Deployed.” They are a movement rather than a non-profit, and seek only to get the word out.

<http://redshirtfridays.org/>

● American Gold Star Mothers, Inc

This group was begun in 1917 when one mother, whose son was deployed in WWI to fly planes with the British Royal Flying Corps, began to visit injured servicemen who had returned home and were in the hospital. Over time, more woman joined with a mission to use their time, talents, and gifts to lessen the grief of other families.

<https://www.goldstarmoms.com/our-history.html>

● Home Base

A collaboration between the Red Sox Baseball Foundation and the Massachusetts General Hospital, the Home Base program offers support to returning veterans and their families. Their biggest charity event is the annual Run to Home Base at Fenway Park. The program offers “world-class clinical care and fitness and mind-body wellness programs for servicemembers, veterans, and families who struggle with the Invisible Wounds” of war.

<http://homebase.org/>

● The Gary Sinise Foundation

The foundation creates and supports key programming to show gratitude to servicemembers, first responders, veterans and their families. All of the programs “entertain, educate, inspire, strengthen, and build communities” (Gary Sinise Foundation 2016). For example, RISE (Restoring Independence, Supporting Empowerment) builds smart homes for wounded vets, while the Gary Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band, travels the globe singing and raising money to support internal causes. Perhaps the most interesting facet of this foundation is the WWII museum, Soaring Valor, where vets visit and can make a video that documents their time in the service (Gary Sinise Foundation 2016).

<https://www.garysinisefoundation.org/gary-sinise-foundation>

● Student Veterans of America

Their mission is to “provide military veterans with the resources, support, and advocacy needed to succeed in higher education and following graduation.” Among other things, this group offers support to students enrolled at postsecondary institutions, funds scholarships for servicemembers, offers leadership conference to train tomorrow’s leaders, and builds vet centers to support servicemembers on campuses. In addition, the organization works to protect the Post 9/11 GI Bill as well as others, conducts research, holds an annual national conference, builds an alumni network once SVSM complete college, and finds corporate sponsors to fund future student veteran success stories.

<http://studentveterans.org>