

Combat to College:

A Guide for the Transitioning Student Veteran



Student Veterans of America

P.O. Box 77673

Washington D.C. 20013

www.studentveterans.org

(866) 320-3826



Table of Contents

FOREWORD	3
FROM COMBAT TO COLLEGE	4
EDUCATION RESOURCES	9
VETERANS EDUCATION CHECKLIST	13
MISC EDUCATION RESOURCES	17
EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES	20
VA FORMS	24
QUICK LINKS	25



FOREWORD

This guide is designed for those who have not already accessed their benefits and those who are seeking information on the military to college transition process. This document is adapted from an original publication created by John Powers. It is not intended to replace any government resources or a school's established policies and procedures, rather to be a supplement to them.

In addition to using this guide, we suggest that you contact the VA Education Office in your area to determine the educational benefits available and which one best suits your educational needs. If you are still serving on active duty or in the reserve, consider *all* of your educational benefits and the resources you have, before separating to ensure you have a smooth transition. Also note that some states offer educational benefits for veterans that are in addition to or supplement your federal benefits; so make sure you inquire about the existence of these benefits within your state as well.

Lastly, be encouraged and assured by the fact that this transition has been made by many of your comrades who are now leaders in the civilian world and are rooting for you to make it as well. Your experience in the military will greatly benefit you during your transition into college and allow you to be successful. Knowing that higher education institutions are set up similar to other government agencies (such as the Armed Forces), will give you a frame of reference in navigating these institutions. Still, the challenges of transition are vast and the needs of student veterans vary depending on their eligibility, interests, and educational goals. This uniqueness is the impetus of this publication. Good luck, and know that you are not alone.



FROM COMBAT TO COLLEGE...

Choosing an Institution of Higher Education

Choosing a school depends on your own unique goals and how you want to apply your education in the future. Therefore, it is difficult to provide specific assistance via a general guide such as this, so we encourage you to seek additional guidance from your State's Department of Employment (aka the unemployment office) or your local VA advisor for more specifically tailored information. You can also consult the specific schools you might be interested in, or your friends, family, or coworkers. You could also contact an education advisor at a community college or university in your current local area.

Generally, we have listed below some considerations you should make in choosing an institution.

If you are a first-time student:

- ❖ Consider your family needs (e.g. finances, child care, spousal needs, etc.)
- ❖ Consider how much time you will have per day for school (both attendance and studying) A rule of thumb is to expect 2 hours of studying for every hour of class time.
- ❖ Does your career goal(s) require a specific or general degree, and does the prospective institution offer that degree?
- ❖ Does your career goal require certification instead of a degree?
- ❖ Does your military education transfer into the institution?

If you are a transferring student, in addition to the items above:

- ❖ Consider whether the school you will be transferring to will accept your credits.
- ❖ What the institution costs: include books, fees, travel, and expenses.
- ❖ Does your military education transcript transfer into the institution?

Military Transcripts & Online Education

You should understand that individual schools are semi or completely autonomous and typically have complete discretion in determining admissions and applying transfer credit into their institutions. Many schools have published specific policies regarding their acceptance or denial of transfer credits which you can typically find on their websites. So, whether or not your previous training and course work is accepted as transfer credit; is on a case-by-case basis. As an example, you may have completed 90 credits at one school, and transfer in with only 15 credits at your new school. However, if you feel that you are being discriminated against for reasons outside of their policies in applying, or getting credits accepted, you should contact an SVA or VA representative to help you rectify your situation. Beware, if Harvard University



does not accept your “Basic Marksmanship Class” from the Community College of the Air Force, that does not mean they are discriminating against you.

Online Programs and Military Transcripts

Choosing a school is very important and must be done by researching the various schools in which you plan to attend. In the 21st century, the educational landscape has changed from the traditional brick-and-mortar institutions to the emergence of online schools found in the virtual world of the internet. Increasingly, military members are attending online schools to get a jump on their education prior to exiting the military, and even more continue or start online courses to accommodate their busy and demanding lifestyles. As a result, online education and military credit acceptance has become complicated. This section is meant to inform you of the issues to help you make educated decisions in choosing the higher education institutions that will best suit your ultimate goals and current lifestyle both before and after you separate from the military.

While online schools and courses widely accept military credits and give academic credit for military service, many traditional schools do not. In this same vein, many traditional schools may choose not to accept certain online courses or may choose not to accept any of your online coursework. This dynamic has made continuing education a frustrating process for some veterans. Therefore, it is our hope that you will be better prepared in handling these complicated issues. The major key to eliminating this problem is to have clear goals when starting your education and knowing how you will apply your education upon graduation.

Transferring Credits

Even after making a well-informed decision regarding your educational goals, many students find that their needs or desires change. Sometimes, students find they no longer want or need to attend an online school and seek to transfer to a more traditional school. Before making this decision, you should check the gaining school’s criteria for accepting online and military coursework. Also note that you should not rely on the losing school’s accreditation as an “automatic” transference of credits at the gaining institution. You should have a degree plan in place and compare it with the advisor at the gaining school every semester, to ensure that you are not wasting valuable time or benefit eligibility in courses that you cannot transfer.

Navigating the Transition into College

Many similarities exist between those weeks spent in boot camp and the transition into a higher educational system. However, in college, the transition is less structured; more individualized, may take a little longer and can be frustrating. But we assure you—you will get accustomed to the jargon and processes just like you did in boot camp and eventually you will be helping your fellow student veteran through their process.



Sometimes you will be treated like a number, as in the military and pushed along from office to office. Sometimes this process runs smoothly and sometimes it does not, but the key thing to remember is that this process is just a part of the higher educational system. It will prepare you to eventually be a leader in the civilian world after you graduate, just like the military. Still, college has its own uniqueness in that you choose what you want to learn, when you want to learn it and how fast or how slow you want to go. This section is written to help you maximize your learning and minimize your out of pocket expenses. Some helpful tips are:

- ❖ **Start with a few courses to ease into the transition.** If possible, choose a mixture of courses that tap different skills and have varying amounts of reading or problem-solving assignments (e.g., combine math, English; science, music, or social science)
- ❖ **Take notes during class and consider recording your lectures.** This helps to ensure that you stay on top of the material, especially if you have trouble focusing. In some cases, you may need to contact your school's disability office to obtain written permission for recording lectures.
- ❖ **Get to know your professors and ask for their help.** They are there to help you learn and can often recommend strategies to master their specific course materials.
- ❖ **Studying: take notes, lots of breaks, and find a study partner.** Find a quiet and comfortable location and take notes while reading. This will help you to retain the information. Be sure to build in several short breaks, more if you find yourself easily distracted. Some people find it easier to study with another student. You can visit your college's academic services office for more helpful tips on studying.
- ❖ **Take advantage of your school's resources such as academic services, tutoring, and counseling.** If it's been awhile since you were in school or you had difficulty learning while in high school, seek out the many academic and counseling resources available at your college. These resources are designed to help you identify your learning needs and to help you succeed in college.
- ❖ **Participate in student activities as a way to break down barriers to you and other students.** In addition to joining your local SVA chapter, you might consider getting involved in other on-campus activities. Such involvement may help you feel more connected to other students and the larger campus community.
- ❖ **Recognize that others may not agree with you or understand your service in the military.** Agree to disagree - nearly everyone has an opinion about the military and U.S. foreign policy. If you feel uncomfortable talking about certain issues, respectfully decline to answer any questions you do not feel comfortable talking about.



- ❖ **Regular exercise and relaxation techniques will help reduce overall anxiety, hyper arousal, and improve concentration.** Get into a regular exercise routine to relieve your transition anxiety. Many schools have an exercise facility which are part of your tuition and fees. Also, you can enroll in a gym class, or get involved with an intramural sports team.
- ❖ **Learn to recognize your own signs of physical and mental stress and seek help before you are overwhelmed.** Be aware of yourself and your surroundings. If you recognize your signs or triggers, take a break, talk to a friend, or get help.
- ❖ **Get plenty of rest, exercise, and eat right** – these habits will help keep you strong physically and mentally.

Combat Stress

Transitioning from any area of life can be stressful but transitioning from the military environment onto a college campus can present some unique challenges. As such, you should be aware of the symptoms associated with combat stress and how to get help in managing it to ensure you have a successful college experience.

Combat Stress Reference Guide

“The first signs of stress for many combat veterans appear approximately three to four months after returning home”

--Army Times; January 7th, 2005

Symptoms of Combat Stress Can Include:

- ❖ Sleep disturbances
- ❖ Flashbacks
- ❖ Poor or lack of concentration
- ❖ Negative self image
- ❖ Depression
- ❖ Anger issues
- ❖ Alienation and isolation
- ❖ Memory impairment
- ❖ Loss of interest in things you once loved
- ❖ Problems with intimate relationships
- ❖ Alcohol and drug use
- ❖ Survivor guilt
- ❖ Trust issues
- ❖ Suicidal thoughts



Contributors of more severe Combat Stress symptoms:

- ❖ Longer periods of time in combat
- ❖ Negative situations upon returning home
- ❖ No support system
- ❖ Duty as a medic or frontline combat postings

Ways to Manage Stress Injuries:

- ❖ Talk things out with someone you trust; memories of the magnitude associated with combat stress will only stay suppressed for a minimal amount of time until they become unbearable. Medical and non-medical professionals are available to talk to if you are isolated from friends or family. Reintegration Centers (i.e. VA Vet Centers) are an excellent, no/low cost, confidential resource for veterans and their families for transition stress management.
- ❖ As a student veteran, taking a music appreciation class or writing class may help you relieve stress by listening to music and learning a process of dealing with your stress through the arts. Another method is to keep a log of how you are feeling and noting your triggers of negative emotions, e.g. guilt, unprovoked anger, etc.
- ❖ Engage in physical activity, work out, play sports, keep active and don't sleep all day or isolate yourself. Again, as a student, you may be eligible to try out for collegiate athletics or intramural sports offered at your school.
- ❖ Avoid quick fixes that dull your symptoms such as alcohol and non-prescription drugs; talk to a professional when needed.
- ❖ Large, busy places like malls or shopping centers may trigger some sort of anxiety. *Planning and preparation* can be the key to your success. If you go to the mall, don't stay long if you feel uncomfortable, or go to the restroom, take a break so you can clear your head and relax.

Changes in Family Relationships

It is important to understand that problems may present themselves in your relationships as well. Upon returning home, significant others may experience resentment with each other. Healing and getting back on track will take time, so don't rush it. Don't lose focus, talk about your expectations with your partner and if needed seek reintegration assistance available for couples & families through the VA, a Vet Center, or other Veteran Service Organization that offers this type of service. Also, stay connected with your SVA Chapter to talk with others who may be having similar issues; building a strong personal network is the key in managing your homecoming stress. Remember, homecoming is a process, not an event. It is normal to have these issues and there are a variety of ways you can seek support.

Important Self Help Tips when Returning Home:

- ❖ Limit alcohol, caffeine, nicotine, and illegal substances
- ❖ Limit news watching or regular exposure to traumatic information
- ❖ Talk to your peers and professionals



- ❖ Get plenty of sleep and rest
- ❖ Maintain a healthy diet
- ❖ Read, write
- ❖ Keep on a schedule
- ❖ Listen to relaxing music
- ❖ Plan family activities
- ❖ Engage in Volunteer work
- ❖ Learn to recognize signs of stress and emotional triggers



EDUCATION RESOURCES

VA Education

There are a variety of different veteran education benefits offered from the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs as well as some benefits that might be available from individual states. To the newly separating veteran, this may appear confusing, because there are at least six different federal programs called the “GI Bill”. So, to approach someone and request information about your GI Bill, you would first need to narrow it down. This next section is designed to give you a basic familiarity with the variety of different GI Bills there are, and which one or ones you potentially qualify for. Each different program has some strengths and weaknesses, so your choice depends on what you qualify for, and what your academic aspirations are. Lastly, you should note there are two identifiers associated with each federal program. First there is the program’s name, for example “Post 9/11 GI Bill” and secondly there is its chapter number, for instance “Chapter 33”. Each mean the same thing, and are often used interchangeably, so don’t get caught up in this, just understand that the dynamic exists.

Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty (Chapter 30):

The MGIB program provides up to 36 months of educational benefits to qualifying veterans. This benefit may be used for degree or certificate programs, flight training, apprenticeship/on-the-job training and correspondence courses. Remedial, deficiency, and refresher courses may be approved under certain circumstances. Generally, benefits are payable for 10 years following your release from active duty.

Link: <http://gibill.va.gov/post-911/montgomery-gi-bill/active-duty.html>

\$600 Buy Up Program

Some service members may have contributed up to an additional \$600 to their GI Bill benefit, to receive an increased monthly stipend. For your additional \$600 contribution, you may receive up to \$5400 total, in additional GI Bill benefits disbursed monthly. The increased benefit is only payable after leaving active duty, and the additional contribution must be made while you were still on active duty. For more information contact your personnel or payroll office prior to separating.

Post 9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33):

The Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Act of 2008, otherwise known as Chapter 33, provides up to 36 months of educational benefits for qualifying veterans. This benefit may be used for degree and certificate programs, flight training, apprenticeship/on-the-job training and correspondence courses. Remedial, deficiency and refresher courses may be approved under certain



circumstances. Generally, benefits are payable for up to 15 years following your release from active duty.

Based on your length of active duty service, you are entitled to a percentage of the following:

- ❖ Cost of tuition and fees, not to exceed the most expensive, in-state undergraduate program or the national cap (paid by the VA directly to your school);
- ❖ Monthly housing allowance* equal to the basic allowance for housing at the E-5 with dependents rate, for the zip code of your school (paid to you);
- ❖ Annual books/supplies stipend of up to \$1000 per year (paid to you); and
- ❖ A one-time payment of \$500 can be paid to individuals relocating from rural areas

**Note: Active duty personnel do not qualify to receive the housing allowance, books and supplies stipend. The housing allowance is not payable to those pursuing training at half time or less or to individuals enrolled in distance learning. Individuals are limited to a maximum of 48 months of entitlement when using benefits under two or more programs (i.e. 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 1606, and 1607). Individuals eligible under chapter 30 who elect to receive benefits under chapter 33 are only entitled to the number of months they had remaining under chapter 30 (including any revoked months of transferred entitlement) up to a maximum of 36 months).*

Link: <http://gibill.va.gov/post-911/post-911-gi-bill-summary/>

Yellow Ribbon Program

Currently, the Post 9/11 GI Bill tuition is capped at either the highest resident, undergraduate tuition rate in your state, or the national cap per credit. Your tuition and fees may exceed these amounts if you are attending a private school or are attending a public school as a nonresident student. Institutions of Higher Learning may elect to participate in the Yellow Ribbon Program to make additional funds available for your education program without an additional charge to your GI Bill entitlement.

Schools that voluntarily enter into a Yellow Ribbon Agreement with the VA, choose the amount of tuition and fees that will be contributed. The VA will match that amount and issue payment directly to your school, dollar for dollar. To find out if your school is participating in the Yellow Ribbon Program, or more information regarding this program, please click one of the links below.

Link: <http://gibill.va.gov/post-911/post-911-gi-bill-summary/yellow-ribbon-program.html>

School Search: http://www.gibill.va.gov/GI_Bill_Info/CH33/YRP/YRP_List_2010.htm



Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve (Chapter 1606):

The MGIB-SR program may be available to you, if you are a member of the Selected Reserve. The Selected Reserve includes the Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve and Coast Guard Reserve, the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard. This benefit may be used for degree and certificate programs, flight training, apprenticeship/on-the-job training and correspondence courses. Remedial, deficiency, and refresher courses may be approved under certain circumstances.

Link: <http://gibill.va.gov/post-911/montgomery-gi-bill/selected-reserve.html>

Reserve Educational Assistance Program [REAP] (Chapter 1607):

REAP (Chapter 1607 of title 10, U.S. Code) is an education program that provides up to 36 months of education benefits to members of the Selected Reserves, Individual Ready Reserve (IRR), and National Guard, who were called or ordered to active service in response to a war or national emergency as declared by the President or Congress.

Buy Up Program

Some reservists may contribute up to an additional \$600 to their GI Bill to receive increased monthly benefits. For an additional \$600 contribution, you may receive up to \$5400 in additional GI Bill benefits. You must have been a member of a Ready Reserve component (Selected Reserve, Individual Ready Reserve, or Inactive National Guard) to pay into the “buy-up” program. For more information contact your personnel or payroll office.

Link: <http://gibill.va.gov/post-911/other-programs/reap.html>

Veterans Educational Assistance Program [VEAP] (Chapter 32):

Chapter 32, VEAP is available if you first entered active duty between January 1, 1977 and June 30, 1985 and you elected to make contributions from your military pay to participate in this education benefit program. Your contributions were matched on a \$2 for \$1 basis by the Government. This benefit may be used for degree and certificate programs, flight training, apprenticeship/on-the-job training and correspondence courses. Remedial, deficiency, and refresher courses may be approved under certain circumstances.

Link: <http://gibill.va.gov/post-911/other-programs/veap.html>

Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (Chapter 35):

Dependents' Educational Assistance provides education and training opportunities to eligible dependents of certain veterans. The program offers up to 45 months of education benefits. These



benefits may be used for degree and certificate programs, apprenticeship, and on-the-job training.

Link: <http://gibill.va.gov/post-911/other-programs/dea.html>

Vocational Rehabilitation (Chapter 31):

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) mission is to help veterans with *service-connected disabilities with a rating 20% or more* to prepare for, find, and keep suitable jobs. Also, VR&E Service provides vocational-educational counseling to veterans and certain dependents. VR&E can provide a wide range of vocational and educational counseling services to service members still on active duty, as well as veterans and dependents who are eligible for one of VA's educational benefit programs.

Link: <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/>



VETERANS EDUCATION BENEFITS CHECKLIST

Mission: This generalized checklist was designed to help veterans making their transition into college a success.

Before enrolling in school:

- Decide which school you would like to attend. What do you want to study?
 - Contact the VA Certifying Official at each school you are interested in to find out if they are approved by the US Dept of Veterans Affairs.
Find an *approved* VA Education Programs you qualify for:
Link: <http://www.gibill.va.gov/benefits/index.html>
Phone: 1-888-442-4551
- Apply for admission
 - Check with each school you are interested in for their specific requirements
- Complete the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA)
 - FAFSA determines your eligibility for low or no interest student loans as well as state and other federal grants from your school.
 - Apply at www.fafsa.ed.gov, when filling out your application:
 - Watch for deadlines.
 - Report any veterans' benefits you will be receiving.
 - If you have not paid taxes, report the income you received for the calendar year specified in the FAFSA application.
 - Financial aid is calculated based on your previous year's earnings. If this doesn't accurately reflect your income at the time you will be taking classes, file a financial aid appeal at the college you will be attending to have your application reassessed.
- Compile all your transcripts from previous colleges you attended and/or any military training you want evaluated for transfer credit. To find your military transcripts:
 - **Army/American Council on Education Registry Transcript System (AARTS):**
Link: <http://aarts.army.mil/>
 - **Community College of the Air Force Transcript Request Forms (CCAF):**
Link: <http://www.au.af.mil/au/ccaf/transcripts.asp>
 - **Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES)**
Link: http://www.dantes.doded.mil/Dantes_web/DANTESHOME.asp
 - **Sailor/Marine American Council on Education Reg Transcript (SMART):**
Link: <https://smart.navy.mil/smart/welcome.do>



- Find out from your school about any required testing for placement they may have. For example, math or foreign language programs may require placement testing prior to registration.
- Attend your school's orientation process and note the following:
 - Rules, Regulations, & Policies
 - Tutoring Sessions, Team Athletics, & Extracurricular Activities
 - Financial Aid
 - Housing Availability
- Consult with an academic advisor.
 - Register for classes
- Apply for VA benefits
 - Contact the VA Certifying Official on your campus to apply for your benefits. This needs to be completed as soon as possible because it could take 8-12 weeks for the VA to process your application.
Complete a VA Form 22-1990 (first time applicants):
Link: <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/22-1990.pdf>
Complete VA Form 22-1995 (if you change your program or school):
Link: <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-22-1995-ARE.pdf>
If you were discharged from active duty you will need to provide your VA Certifying Official with a copy of your DD Form 214:
Link: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>
 - Your G.I. Bill checks will be paid monthly, after the month you attend class. So, if you attend class in September, you will receive that check in October. Also, if you start on any day other than the 1st of the month, then that month's check will be prorated for the number of days you were actually in class. For example, if you started the Fall semester on September 15, your October check will be approximately 1/2 the normal amount.
 - Your VA program may require you to verify your attendance every month in order to receive your check (not Post 9/11 or Voc Rehab). To verify your enrollment:
 - By phone, call: (877) 823-2378 or
 - Or online, visit: <https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/index.do>
 - Contact your VA Certifying Official if you have any change in your enrollment status including, but not limited to: adding courses, dropping courses, withdrawing, or receiving incomplete grades.
- Contact the nearest VA Hospital for access to VA health care services and information on service-connected disabilities.



- Veterans of OEF/OIF may contact their program managers at the VA Hospital for more information on specific OEF/OIF health care services and service-connected disabilities.
- **OEF/OIF Program Managers**
Link: <http://www.oefoif.va.gov/>
- If you have a service-connected disability or had tailored curriculum/procedures during high school, contact the institution's disability services for assistance.
 - Disability services are available for both visible and invisible disabilities so don't be afraid or ashamed to ask for help.

IMPORTANT: Your medical history and records, both mental and physical, are private. They should only be disclosed to the University or institution's disability office when seeking services on a need-to-know basis. Professors, administrators (outside of the disability office), or VA certifying officials have no need to know the specifics of your disability so do not disclose to them any private information. If you have questions or feel that your HIPAA rights are being violated, contact the ADA administrator at your school, your school's disability office, or the VA before disclosing any private information.

- Contact the local SVA Chapter on your campus.
 - They can assist you on the peer-to-peer level in this process.
 - To find the SVA Chapter nearest you, please visit:
<http://www.studentveterans.org/chapters/search.php>
- Apply for additional scholarships and grants at:
 - **Fast Web Scholarship Search Engine**
Link: <http://www.fastweb.com>
 - **Fin Aid Scholarship Search Engine**
Link: <http://www.finaid.org/scholarships>



MISC EDUCATION RESOURCES

State Resources

State Resources

Check with your state for additional benefits and financial assistance that may be available. A list to your state's responsible agency and links to their resources may be found through the following link.

Link: http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_ID=SHE

University Resources

University Resources

Check with your university's financial aid advisor and/or your veteran's representative/liaison for additional benefits and financial assistance that may be available.

Scholarships

Student Veterans of America Scholarship Program

SVA has established a Scholarship program for our members. It is available to any individual member of an official SVA chapter that will be enrolled in a term following the application period. SVA considers applicants based on their service contribution to SVA on a local, regional or national levels, volunteer service, academics and financial need. Scholarship applications and additional information is available through the link below.

Link: <http://www.studentveterans.org/programs/>

AFCEA Educational Fund

The AFCEA War Veterans Scholarships are offered to active-duty and honorably discharged U.S. military veterans (to include Reservists and National Guard personnel) of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom.

Candidates must be currently enrolled and attending either a two or four-year accredited college or university in the United States and must be majoring in the following or related fields:



electrical, aerospace, systems or computer engineering; computer engineering technology; computer information systems; information systems management; computer science; physics; mathematics; or science or mathematics education. Each scholarship award is \$2,500.

Link: <http://www.afcea.org/education/scholarships/undergraduate/ChapterScholarships.asp>

AMVETS Scholarships

AMVETS annually awards scholarships to veterans and active duty military, their children or grandchildren. A child or grandchild of a deceased veteran is also eligible. This scholarship is awarded on the basis of academic excellence and financial need. AMVETS scholarships go to deserving high school seniors, high school JROTC students and veterans pursuing a higher education degree.

Link: <http://www.amvetsnsf.org/scholarships.html>

Troops to Teachers

The Troops to Teachers (TTT) is a Dept of Defense, *Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support* (DANTES) program that enriches the quality of American education by helping to place mature, motivated, experienced, and dedicated personnel in our nation's classrooms. TTT provides financial assistance, counseling, and employment referral through a network of state TTT Placement Assistance Offices.

Link: <http://www.ProudToServeAgain.com>

VA MortgageCenter.com Scholarship

The VA Mortgage Center is proud to now offer five, bi-annual \$1,500 scholarships in conjunction with their Military Education Scholarship Program. The process and purpose is simple: many college students currently struggle to meet the financial requirements of pursuing their education, even with the help of financial aid and other scholarship programs. These scholarships are awarded each year in May and November and are awarded as part of an essay competition.

Link: <http://www.vamortgagecenter.com/scholarships.html>



VFW Military Scholarships

The VFW's Military Scholarship program provides twenty-five, \$3,000 scholarships annually to VFW members who are currently serving in uniform or have been discharged within the 36 months before the December 31 deadline.

Link: <http://www.vfw.org/index.cfm?fa=cmtty.levelc&cid=1836&tok=1>



EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES

VA Work Study Program

VA Work Study Program

If you are at least a 3/4-time student, in a college degree program, and using a federal GI Bill program, you can "earn while you learn" with a VA work-study allowance. The VA work-study allowance is available to persons training under the following programs: Chapters 30, 32, 33, 35, 1606, and 1607. You'll earn an hourly wage equal to the Federal minimum wage or your state's minimum wage, whichever is greater. If you're in a work-study job at a college or university, your school may pay you the difference between the amount VA pays and the amount the school normally pays other work-study students doing the same job as you.

Services you perform under a VA work-study program must be related to VA work. Examples of acceptable work are: processing VA paperwork at schools or VA offices, performing outreach services under the supervision of a VA employee, and/or performing services at VA medical facilities or the offices of the National Cemetery Administration. The work you actually do will depend on your interests and the type of work available in your area.

For additional information, one or more of the following offices/representatives can assist you: any VA regional office, any VA Vet Center, local representatives of veteran's organizations, or Reserve Education and Incentives Officers.

Link: <http://www.gibill.va.gov/pamphlets/wkstud.htm>

Employment Help

Employer Support of Guard and Reserve:

Guardsmen and Reservists have the right, under federal law, to return to their civilian jobs following their deployment or military activation. Those who think they have been treated unfairly by their employers should contact:

Link: <http://www.esgr.org>

Phone: 1-800-336-4590

REALifelines:

REALifelines is a joint project of the U.S. Department of Labor, the Bethesda Naval Medical Hospital and the Walter Reed Army Medical Center. For more information, visit:



Link: www.dol.gov/vets/programs/real-life/main.htm

Career Command Post (CCP):

CCP specializes in bringing transitioning active duty military personnel and armed forces veterans together with civilian employers hiring for executive, managerial, professional, technical, skilled and semi-skilled positions, from the Military Transition Group, Inc.

Link: http://www.quintcareers.com/former_military.html

Vet Biz:

Vet Biz is set up for veterans to start their own business. More information is at the link below.

Link: <http://www.vetbiz.gov/>

Patriot Express:

The Small Business Association (SBA) has launched loan programs to help veterans start their own businesses.

Link: www.sba.gov/patriotexpress

Vet Jobs:

This is a great resource for veterans and employers looking to connect for specific and general careers. Jobs listed here are both government and private.

Link: www.vetjobs.com

Recruit Military:

This is an excellent source to connect student veterans with jobs in corporate America.

Link: <http://www.recruitmilitary.com/>

HireVetsFirst:

HireVetsFirst is a government-backed, free job search engine that includes help with resume building/writing for veterans.

Link: <http://www.hirevetsfirst.gov/>



Veteran Employment:

This Veteran Employment website is partnered with Monster.com and allows veterans to search for jobs including jobs that require a security clearance.

Link: www.veteranemployment.com

Military OneSource:

Link: www.militaryonesource.com

Hire Veterans:

The Hire Veterans website provides resume posting, archiving, and several employment opportunities for veterans.

Link: <http://www.hireveterans.com/>

Helmets to Hardhats:

Helmets to Hardhats was started in 2003 to help veterans with a construction background, or those seeking to enter the field and streamline information about construction-related careers.

Link: www.helmetstohardhats.org/

Hire a Hero:

Link: www.hireahero.com

Federal jobs search engine:

USAjobs.gov is the government-employment database for all federal jobs.

Link: www.usajobs.gov

Veteran Employment Information:

Link: www.opm.gov/veterans



Vet Friends:

This job database includes employers from all 50 states that are geared toward veterans seeking employment opportunities.

Link: <http://vetfriends.destinygrp.com/destiny/index.jsp>

Employment Workshops

Resume Help:

Link: <http://www.eresumes.com/>

Link: <http://www.opm.gov/veterans>

Link: <http://www.resume-resource.com/>

Link: <http://www.hirevetsfirst.gov/resume.asp>

Link: <http://www.resume-help.org/>

Interview Help:

Link: <http://www.job-interview.net/>

Link: <http://www.collegegrad.com/intv/>

Link: <http://www.seekingsuccess.com/articles/art51.php3>

Link: http://www.resume-help.org/interview_tips.htm

Veterans Employment Information:

Link: <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/>

Link: <http://www.military.com/Careers/Home/0,13373,,00.html>

Federal Jobs:

Link: <http://www.usajobs.com/>

Civilian Resources:

Link: <https://www.donhr.navy.mil/>

Link: <http://cpol.army.mil/>

Problems with your employer information:

Link: <http://www.esgr.org/userra.asp?p=summary>

Job Search Tips:

Link: http://www.job-hunt.org/article_veterans_jobsearch.shtml

Local Area Help:

Newspapers

State agencies

Network with VFW Posts, Legion, AmVets



VA FORMS

General

VA Forms

Link: <http://www.va.gov/vaforms/>

Request VA Forms:

Link: <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-20-8800-ARE.pdf>

Education

Application for VA Education Benefits (VA 22-1990)

Link: <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/22-1990.pdf>

Application for Change of Program/University (VA 22-1995)

Link: <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-22-1995-ARE.pdf>

Application for VA Work Study Program (VA Form 22-8691)

Link: <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-22-8691-ARE.pdf>

All Education Forms:

Link: http://gibill.va.gov/resources/student_handouts/

VA Regional Education Offices:

These locations are where you mail your VA 22-1990 form to

Link: http://www.gibill.va.gov/contact/regional_offices/

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment

Steps to Apply for Vocational Rehabilitation (VA Form 28-0588)

Link: <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-28-0588-ARE.pdf>

Application for Vocational Rehabilitation (VA Form 28-1900)

Link: <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-28-1900-ARE.pdf>



QUICK LINKS

VA Links

Contact Numbers to VA Services:

VA Regional Office	1-800-827-1000
Veteran Affairs Medical Center	1-401-273-7100
Vets Center	1-401-739-0167
Suicide Hotline	1-800-273-8255
Wave Automated Verify Enrollment (WAVE)	1-877-823-2378

Toll-Free Telephone Contact Numbers:

Health Benefits Provided by VA	1-800-222-8387
VA Benefits	1-800-827-1000

Other Useful Links

Student Veterans of America

Phone: (202) 470-6100

Link: www.studentveterans.org

SVA Chapter Locator: www.studentveterans.org/chapters/

Operation Vets

Link: www.operationvets.com

Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center

Toll Free 1- 800 - 870 – 9244

Link: www.dvbic.org

National Center for PTSD

Link: <http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/index.jsp>

Veterans Benefit Booklet

Link: http://www1.va.gov/OPA/vadocs/current_benefits.asp

National Archives (Obtain a copy of your DD Form 214)

Link: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>