

2023-24 Veterans Enrollment Report

November 2024



The Nevada System of Higher Education

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Background and Purpose

The Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) is dedicated to supporting student veterans and their families in pursuing their educational goals. This particular student population often faces unique challenges in assimilating back into civilian life. It is the goal of NSHE and its institutions to provide the necessary services to support student veterans in the success of achieving their educational goals.

The purpose of this report is to meet the requirements of *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) 396.5453. This provision requires the Board of Regents to submit an annual report to the Legislature, or to the Legislative Committee on Education when the Legislature is not in regular session, which includes: (1) the number of students who identify themselves as veterans and who are receiving payments or benefits from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; (2) The gender, retention rate, average age, and most common areas of study of students who are veterans; (3) information about how policy changes may have affected the number of students who are veterans enrolled in the Nevada System of Higher Education; (4) the number of students who are veterans who graduated during the immediately preceding academic year; and (5) the efforts undertaken by each institution within the System to retain and graduate students who are veterans.

Student Veterans Data

Number of Identified Student Veterans: 7,404

For Academic Year 2023-24, 7,404 student veterans were identified across the seven NSHE teaching institutions. This figure is unduplicated and only captures students whose veterans' benefits were certified by an NSHE institution or who self-identified on an admission application.

Number of Student Veterans Receiving Payments from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs: 4,152

For Academic Year 2023-24, 4,152 student veterans were certified by an NSHE institution for the purpose of receiving federal veteran education benefits. This figure is unduplicated and only includes students who have been certified by an NSHE institution to receive benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Percent of Student Veterans by Gender: 56.1 % Male, 43.9% Female

Of the student veterans identified as enrolled at an NSHE institution in Academic Year 2023-24 that provided gender data, 56.1 percent were identified as male and 43.9 percent as female.

Average Age of Enrolled Student Veterans: 29.6 years old

For the identified student veterans enrolled in the 2023-24 academic year, the average age of this student population was 29.6 years old as of September 2023.

Fall to Spring Retention: 74.8%

Of the identified student veterans that were enrolled in Fall 2023, 74.8 percent persisted and enrolled in the Spring 2024 term.

Number of Student Veterans Who Graduated: 1,526

During Academic Year 2023-24, 1,526 student veterans received a degree or certificate. The actual number may be higher as this excludes any veteran who did not receive benefits and/or self-identify as a veteran to the institution.

Areas of Study

State law requires that NSHE report “the most common areas of study among the students who are veterans.” This data is reported by the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) category for student veterans enrolled during the 2023-24 academic year. The CIP codes used in this report are based on a taxonomic scheme that supports the accurate tracking and reporting of fields of study and program completions activity. The CIP scheme was developed and is maintained by the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The CIP code is the accepted standard for the federal government on instructional program classifications in higher education and is used in a variety of education related surveys and databases within NSHE and across the country.

The top 15 CIP categories with the highest number of student veterans enrolled are noted in the following table.

Classification of Instructional Program Category	Number of Students
52-Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services	1,226
51-Health Professions and Related Programs	1,074
11-Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services	518
24-Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities	466
42-Psychology	450
43-Homeland Security, Law Enforcement, Firefighting and Related Protective Services	435
50-Visual and Performing Arts	434
13-Education	397
14-Engineering	337
26-Biological and Biomedical Sciences	275
45-Social Sciences	261
41-Science Technologies/Technicians	211
44-Public Administration and Social Service Professions	198
40-Physical Sciences	178
31-Parks, Recreation, Leisure, Fitness, and Kinesiology	146

Policy Impact

State law (NRS 396.5453) requires reporting of any information necessary to determine the impact of policy changes on the number of student veterans who are enrolled in an NSHE institution. Generally, public policies that impact veterans' enrollment nationally provide certain veterans and their families with residency for purposes of in-state tuition. In-state tuition allows for the movement of veterans and their families between states as they separate from the military and determine where to transition into civilian life and start or continue their higher education pursuits. One of the most significant public laws that has increased veteran enrollment through provisions for in-state tuition is the federal Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014. Since the original Choice Act, further residency and in-state provisions have been made at the federal and state level. Summarized below are provisions relating to residency and in-state tuition. Additionally, provisions under federal legislation to expand certain benefits relating to apprenticeships, distance education, and the pandemic are also mentioned.

Nevada Legislation

Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 396.540 provides that the Board of Regents may fix the tuition charges for students at NSHE campuses, but must not charge tuition to certain students, including for example, students who are residents of Nevada. Existing Board policy under *Title 4, Chapter 15* (sections for Tuition and Resident Students) of the Handbook recognizes the provisions contained in NRS 396.540.

The 2013 Legislature passed Assembly Bill 260 (Chapter 505, *Statutes of Nevada 2013*), which added "veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States who were honorably discharged within the 2 years immediately preceding the date of matriculation of the veteran at a university, state college or community college within the System" to the list of students for whom the Board must not charge tuition under NRS 396.540. Subsequently, the 2015 Legislature passed Assembly Bill 76 (Chapter 13, *Statutes of Nevada 2015*) and amended this section of State law to increase the timeframe from two years to five years. Board policy also includes this exemption as set forth by the Nevada Legislature (*Title 4, Chapter 15*).

The 2019 Legislature passed Assembly Bill 427 (Chapter 320, *Statutes of Nevada 2019*) requiring the Nevada System of Higher Education effective July 1, 2019, to waive the payment of registration fees and certain other fees assessed against students within the System who are veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States who have been awarded the Purple Heart. This bill also provides that Purple Heart recipients receiving the waiver be deemed bona fide Nevada residents under NRS 396.540. The Board of Regents adopted the provision as set forth by the Nevada Legislature (*Title 4, Chapter 17*).

During the 2021 Session of the Nevada State Legislature, Assembly Bill 165 (Chapter 397, *Statutes of Nevada 2021*) was approved, further amending NRS 396.540. Assembly Bill 165 removed the required five-year limitation for honorably discharged veterans to be considered residents for tuition purposes. With the passage of A.B. 165, the Board of Regents must not charge tuition to an honorably discharged veteran, irrespective of where the veteran has established residency or date of discharge. At its June 2021 meeting, the Board of Regents revised the provisions governing tuition for honorably discharged veterans to comply with the revised provisions of state law enacted under A.B. 165.

Additionally, during the 2021 Session of the Nevada State Legislature, Senate Bill 193 (Chapter 211, *Statutes of Nevada 2021*) was approved, permitting the Board of Regents to require each nursing program and teacher education program within the Nevada System of Higher Education to give preference in admission to veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States who were honorably discharged.

During the 2023 Session of the Nevada State Legislature, Assembly Bill 279 (Chapter 471, *Statutes of Nevada 2023*) was approved amending NRS 396.5443 extending the provisions of waiver of payment of registration fees and certain other fees assessed against students who have been awarded the Purple Heart to include, under certain criteria, the child of such veteran. The waiver may be used for ten years after the eligible student turns 18 or, if the student enrolls prior to turning 18, ten years from that enrollment date. This bill also provides that recipients receiving the waiver be deemed bona fide Nevada residents under NRS 396.540. The Board of Regents (*Title 4, Chapter 17*) adopted the provision as set forth by the Nevada Legislature.

Federal Legislation

The Choice Act

Under Section 702 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (H.R. 3230, “Choice Act”), public institutions of higher education that do not offer in-state tuition rates to certain veterans will lose federal veteran educational assistance dollars under the Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33 of Title 38 of the *United States Code*, which includes the Fry Scholarship) and Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty (Chapter 30 of Title 38 of the *United States Code*). Specifically, institutions must offer in-state tuition rates to veterans who are living in the state in which the institution is located; served in the active military, naval or air service; are pursuing a course of education with federal education benefits; and enroll in the institution within three years after their discharge from service. In-state tuition must also be offered to certain family members of the veteran or a member of the armed forces who died in the line of duty while on active duty if that family member enrolls within three years after the veteran’s discharge or the service member’s death and is using veteran education benefits.

To ensure NSHE institutions comply with this new federal law and do not risk the loss of federal veteran educational assistance by its students, the Board of Regents adopted provisions necessary to comply with the original 2014 Act, as well as subsequent revisions at the federal level under *Board of Regents’ Handbook*, Title 4, Chapter 15, Section 3.12. The adopted policy complies with Section 702 of the “Choice Act” by providing an exemption from tuition charges for a covered individual who enrolls within the specified three-year timeframe. Covered individuals must start their program within three years and then they will be covered for terms after the 3-year mark. In addition, Board policy also extends the requirements of the Choice Act in Nevada to include within the non-resident tuition exemption veterans and dependent beneficiaries who qualify under the Survivors’ and Dependents’ Educational Assistance (DEA) Program (See Chapter 35 of Title 38 of the *United States Code*). The DEA Program provides education and training opportunities to eligible dependents of veterans who are permanently and totally disabled due to a service-related condition or of veterans who died while on active duty or as a result of a service-related condition.

Late in 2018, Congress passed Public Law 115-251, and Section 301 of that legislation further amends 39 U.S.C. 3679(c) “Choice Act” to require that individuals using education assistance under Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Chapter 31 of Title 38 of the *United States Code*) also be charged the in-state tuition rate. Under this federal amendment, effective for courses, semesters, or terms beginning after March 1, 2019, a public institution of higher learning must charge the in-state rate to Chapter 31 participants, as well as the other categories of individuals already included. When an institution charges these individuals more than the rate for resident students, the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) is required to disapprove programs of education sponsored by the VA. To ensure compliance with the amended federal law, the Board of Regents adopted provisions to cover the Chapter 31 students under the *Board of Regents’ Handbook*, Title 4, Chapter 15, Section 3.12.

In January 2021, Congress passed Public Law 116-315, further amending the Choice Act under 38 U.S.C. 3679(c). Section 1005 of the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-315) removes the three-year time period from date of discharge during which a covered individual must enroll in an institution to receive in-state tuition. Consequently, there is no longer a required time period during which a covered individual must enroll to receive in-state tuition. To ensure NSHE institutions complied with this new amendment to the Choice Act and to not risk the loss of federal veteran education assistance funds, Board of Regents’ policy was amended in June 2021 to comply with 38 U.S.C. 3679(c), as amended

by Public Law 116-315. In addition, the Board updated policy to include the provision of Public Law 116-315 for individuals who are covered under the Survivors' and Dependents Educational Assistance Program (Chapter 35 of Title 38 U.S.C.).

Support for Veterans in Effective Apprenticeships Act 2019

The Support for Veterans in Effective Apprenticeship Act 2019 (S. 760) enables registered apprenticeship programs to better serve veterans. Enacted March 2020, this bill requires that the Department of Labor revise its registered apprenticeship programs to include additional program requirements for increasing the access of veterans and their survivors or dependents to such programs. The Department of Labor must acquire written assurance that sponsors of apprenticeship programs: 1.) are aware of the availability of educational assistance for veterans and eligible individuals for use in such programs, 2.) will make a good faith effort to obtain approval for such educational assistance for at least each program location that employs or recruits such recipients, and 3.) will not deny a qualified applicant to avoid making a good faith effort to obtain approval for educational assistance. In addition, the U.S. Department of Labor must require program sponsors to provide standards that contain provisions to grant advanced standing or credit and to provide increased wages commensurate to such standing or credit to individuals eligible for educational assistance.

Department of Veteran Affairs Educational Assistance Benefits for Certain Programs of Education Converted to Distance Education

In March 2020, Public Law 16-128 (S. 3503) was enacted to authorize the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to treat certain programs of education converted to distance learning by reasons of emergency and health-related situations in the same manner as programs of education pursued in-person at educational institutions. This includes payment of monthly housing stipends under Chapter 33 as well as subsistence allowances under Chapters 30, 31, 32, and 35 of Title 38 U.S.C. The same provision covers Chapters 1606 and 1607 of Title 10 U.S.C.

Student Veteran Coronavirus Response Act 2020

The Student Veteran Coronavirus Response Act of 2020 (H.R. 6322) provides several improvements in the educational assistance benefits under Veteran Administration laws in the case of changes to courses of education by reason of emergency situation. This bill addresses education programs and assistance for veterans during the covered period of March 1 through December 21, 2020. The Act authorizes Veterans Affairs to: 1.) continue paying work study allowances during the emergency periods under certain circumstances in which a student is unable to access work for up to four weeks, 2.) prohibit the charge of entitlement of students unable to pursue a program of education due to an emergency situation including temporary school closure or a termination of a course or program of study, and 3.) provide an extension of time limitation for use of entitlement to Chapter 30, Chapter 33 and transferees, and Chapter 31 who are prevented from pursuing a chosen program of education before the designated expiration period due to the closure of the institution under Executive Order of the President. The Act also amends Title 38 Section 3699 by including Chapter 31 students as covered individuals such that entitlement shall not be charged due to the closure of an institution during the covered period. Lastly, the Act provides for an extension of payment of vocational rehabilitation subsistence allowances for certain individuals during the covered period.

Continuing Appropriations Act 2021 and Other Extensions Act

Enacted October of 2020, the Continuing Appropriations Act of 2021, Section 5202 provides for the extension to the end date of the Student Veteran Coronavirus Response Act of 2020 from December 21, 2020, to December 21, 2021.

Responsible Education Mitigating Options and Technical Extensions Act (REMOTE Act)

In December of 2021 the Responsible Education Mitigating Options and Technical Extensions Act (REMOTE Act)(H.R. 5545) was signed into law (Public Law 117-76, 117th Congress). The REMOTE Act extended various COVID-19 protections for GI Bill students from December 21, 2021 to June 1, 2022. Specifically, the REMOTE Act extended the Student Veteran Coronavirus Response Act of 2020 as previously amended by the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2020.

Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020

In January 2021, Congress enacted Public Law 116-315, the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020, which included provisions relating to veteran education benefits and institutions of higher learning. The law provides for access to, and timely accurate delivery of education benefits to veterans, service members and their dependents. Within Public Law 116-315 there are a total of 32 provisions that impact the administration and oversight of VA education benefits. Most notable, the law expands several benefits including: provisions for in-state tuition benefits; Yellow Ribbon benefits to students studying at overseas schools; the period for election to receive benefits under the Montgomery GI Bill®; transfer of entitlement under the Post 9/11 Bill®; and certain qualifying work-study activities. For a comprehensive view of all 32 provisions impacting veterans' education, the VA has available an [Isakson and Roe Fact Sheet](#).

Veterans Auto and Education Improvement Act of 2022

The Veterans Auto and Education Improvement Act of 2022 ([H.B. 7939](#)), enacted in January 2023, provides permanent authority for the application of certain flexibilities to assist veterans with their educational assistance benefits during emergency situations (as declared by the President). Specifically, the bill extends certain program adjustments that were implemented during the COVID-19 emergency to other emergency situations that may arise and have an effect on veterans and their educational assistance benefits. The bill authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs to continue to provide educational assistance, including monthly housing stipends or subsistence allowances, for programs of education that have been converted to distance learning due to an emergency or health-related situation; ensures that an educational assistance payment will not be charged against any entitlement to educational assistance or counted against the aggregate period in situations where an individual was unable to complete a course or program due to an emergency situation; extends the time limitation for using educational assistance under the Montgomery GI Bill, Post-9/11 GI Bill, or vocational rehabilitation program when institutions are closed due to an emergency situation or executive order; authorizes the payment of work-study allowances during emergency periods; ensures an educational assistance payment shall not be charged against an individual's entitlement if the individual was unable to complete a course or program due to the temporary closure of an educational institution or the temporary termination of a program by reason of an emergency situation; and adjusts the administration of certain benefits for veterans participating in an apprenticeship or other on-job training.

Nevada System of Higher Education

In June of 2023, the Board of Regents approved a fee waiver for recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor to recognize and honor recipients that have been awarded the United States' highest award for military valor in action (*Title 4, Chapter 17*). The provisions waive the payment of registration fees and certain other fees assessed against students within the System who have been awarded the medal. In September of 2023, the Board of Regents approved an expansion of the fee waiver to include, under certain circumstances, the child of a recipient of such medal. Recipients receiving the waiver are deemed bona fide Nevada residents under NRS 396.540.

Impact

In Academic Year 2023-24, 899 new and continuing veterans were deemed residents for tuition purposes. It is expected that with the expansion of the NRS 396.5443 through the enactment of Assembly Bill 279 (Chapter 471, *Statutes of Nevada 2023*) to include certain children of a Purple Heart Recipients as fee waiver recipients and the provisions of the federal Veterans Auto and Education Improvement Act of 2022, the number of veterans and their dependents seeking residency may continue to grow.

Institutional Efforts

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Introduction

The MVSC supports the vision and academic mission of the university while serving our growing student veteran and military family community by developing a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success. Population: The Military & Veteran Services Center (MVSC) supports the 1,854 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, reservists, Army/Air Force Cadets, military family members and survivors attending UNLV.

Brief of the 2023-2024 Academic Year

- Certifications: During 2023-2024, the MVSC certification team led by the Associate Director of Certifying Operations processed 7,212 certifications and all payments.
- Department of Defense MOU: We have completed our 5-year renewal of the MOU requirements.
- Debt Payments: Working with financial aid, cashiering, and the comptroller's office, the MVSC certification team processed 77 debts, totaling \$72,546.74.
- WAVES Conference awarded UNLV's Associate Director of Certifying Operations and School Certifying Official Melissa Barber the prestigious Bill Pearson Outstanding Lifetime Achievement Award for 2024.
- UNLV was again ranked as a TOP TEN "Veteran Friendly" university. Source: GIJOBS.COM.

New Initiatives

In Collaboration with EASY Day Foundation, who provided a GRANT to fund our Vets Career Readiness Program - Veteran students today must prepare beyond their academic curriculum to realize positive career outcomes and future career transition and mobility. Veteran students find themselves at a disadvantage without clear paths in their post-military chosen professions and may lack awareness of the activities, levels of engagement and milestones that open doors for future career success. This program proposes to provide career interventions along with exposure to employers, professional role models and workplace environments to enhance and accelerate the retention and career development process for 10 veterans at our top 10 Military Friendly serving institution, which serves over 1,800 veterans per semester. Funded our Veteran Hiring Fair open to all veterans in Nevada.

Overarching Outcomes

All participants are employed full-time in a field related to their course of study or career interests upon graduation from UNLV. All participants will prototype career options by participation in high impact and experiential learning activities during their first or second year of enrollment at UNLV.

These include career informational interviewing, service learning, leadership development, workplace environment exposure, employer networking and internship readiness among others.

All participants will interact with employers and work environments that expose them to viable career options in their first years of enrollment at UNLV. All participants will network at the UNLV Veteran Career Mixer and UNLV Career & Internship Fair twice a year. Combined, these events are the largest in Nevada and showcases more than 100 employers with jobs available for the entire Las Vegas military community.

Continuing Initiatives

- MVSC - Certifying Operations and Payment Processing: The MVSC has the continual task of processing the required documents of more than 1,854 GI Bill® recipients in order to access their VA Education Benefits and process their payments.

- Peer Advisors for Veteran Education (PAVE): UNLV has experienced 9 veteran or military family member suicides since 2013. First and foremost, the PAVE program provides outreach services to address isolation, loneliness, and desperation. The PAVE team provides face-to-face interactions or remote connections at various times. The PAVE team completed the following: (a) outreaches = 2,919, (b) interactions = 354, (c) student veterans assisted = 410, (d) referrals to resources = 154 (tutoring, Veterans office, Academic Advising, etc.), (e) top topics discussed = GI Bill benefits, balancing coursework, registering/changing course, and (f) students of concern = 11.
- Student Veterans of America (SVA Chapter – Rebel Vets): The Rebel Vets’ stated mission: “One way to promote your success in college and in your future career is to get involved in your community or join like-minded student organizations. The UNLV Rebel Vets is a nationally recognized organization dedicated to the principle of veterans helping fellow veterans be successful.”
- VA VITAL: Since 2019, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has included UNLV as part of the VA VITAL program on campus. The Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL) program is a partnership between Southern Nevada VA Healthcare system and UNLV.
- VA VetSuccess Partnership: Since 2013, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has included UNLV as part of the VetSuccess on Campus program. The program was created to provide an experienced VA benefits counselor on campus to work in collaboration with the UNLV Military & Veteran Services Center to assist our growing population of veterans with resources to make sure their health, educational, and benefit needs are met, and to help them reach their education and career goals.
- Suicide Prevention Efforts: Because 9 UNLV student veterans and military family members have committed suicide since 2013, the MVSC continues to host “Safe Talk” suicide prevention training. Each training is open to our MVSC staff, PAVE team, student veterans, faculty and staff.
- COE 303 Veteran Transition Seminar: UNLV is also addressing suicide prevention with a course created just for student veterans. This new class within the College of Education—a special section of COE 303—is designed to help service members in academia find a sense of comfort, confidence, and belonging.
- Rebel Vet Transition Orientation: The MVSC hosted two Rebel Vet Transition Orientations this year, which provided our new veterans with a GI Bill® responsibilities class, information about veteran resources and VA benefits, connection to our peer-to-peer network, and some helpful classes in their journey for academic success.
- Rebel Vet Graduation Reception: Since 2012, the Eleanor Kagi Foundation has funded 22 Rebel Vet graduation receptions to honor our 4,567 student veteran graduates. Each Rebel Vet graduate received a Rebel Vet graduation coin; a red, white, and blue cord; and certificates of recognition from the governor and the Nevada delegation. We also conducted a drawing of prizes from the local community.

University of Nevada, Reno

Introduction

Veteran Services at the University of Nevada, Reno provides a wide range of support and referral services for all undergraduate and graduate students who are veterans, currently serving either on active duty or in the Reserve or National Guard. The department also provides services for veterans and family members for college readiness and employment opportunities. Our vision is to graduate the best prepared student veterans and family members by incorporating students' prior military and life experiences with university academic achievements to have a purposeful impact on their personal, career, and civic endeavors while recognizing and celebrating the vast diversity of the population.

Brief of the 2023-2024 Academic Year

The number of students using GI BILL® increased to 760 students, expanded our Veteran Support Team to 26 faculty and facilitated four VetSmart trainings for the campus. Additionally, we installed two Purple Heart and disabled veteran parking spots and our Veterans Alumni Chapter was awarded Chapter of the Year.

New Initiatives

- Designed and facilitated four VetFit sessions during Nevada Fit week. Entitled *Wolf Pack Battle Buddies, Your New Barracks on Campus*, we talked about imposter syndrome, when and how to share a military status with faculty, strategies for interacting with younger classmates and resources to utilize to be successful on campus.
- Completed fundraising efforts to fund a student veteran emergency fund to support students with unexpected life expenses.
- Offered an ENG102 section specifically for veterans, guard, reservists, ROTC and military connected students with themes of transition and military experiences.
- Presentations
 - NAVPA VA conference on best practices Cultivating a Military Engaged Community
 - Student Veterans of American National Conference on Developing a Robust Alumni Chapter Veterans Alumni Association, Services Beyond Graduation
 - School Certify Official Training panelist on sharing best practices of navigating student support and VA administration duties
 - Veteran Services facilitated four VetSmart trainings to the campus
- In collaboration and guidance from the School of Social Work, A Veteran Impact Study was implemented Spring 2024. Sixty-five student Veterans, Guard/Reservists, family members, and alumni participated in individual peer-to-peer interviews regarding their experiences and the transitional impact which may occur in the Veterans and Military Center. Funding for the study was provided with a grant from the Nevada Department of Veterans Services.
 - Summary: The VMC demonstrates a culture of authenticity. Students can report experiencing acceptance, courage, empathy, trust, respect, receptiveness, and appreciation interwoven throughout the many services provided by the center. Key findings include:
 - Academic and Career Support: The VMC's comprehensive support was crucial in their academic and career achievements. The VMC's proactive and deeply involved advising approach stood out, as staff were not just passive advisors but active participants in guiding students through their educational paths.
 - Sense of Community and Belonging: The VMC was crucial in fostering a strong sense of community and belonging. This environment was vital for veterans as they navigated their university experiences.

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: The center was pivotal in supporting student veterans' mental health and overall well-being. Transitioning from military service to academic life posed significant emotional and psychological challenges for many veterans.
 - Community and peer support fostered by the VMC: The camaraderie among veterans within the center created a unique source of encouragement and solidarity, allowing them to share experiences and build emotional resilience together.
- Hosted two student veteran round-tables with Senator Jacky Rosen on PACT Act and VA benefits (medical, education, disability).
- Hosted a Vocational Readiness and Employment informational session with VA VR&E counselors and Director of the VA Regional Office for VA benefits. The afternoon brought students to bring awareness of additional VA programs for student veterans. The workshop included students from Truckee Meadows.
- Hosted a workshop with Steve Minsk, Executive Director of the PACT ACT, to provide information and support to student veterans seeking a PACT ACT claim with the VA.
- Co-Chair the Education and Workforce Development committee for the Veteran Guest House Community Monthly Roundtable.
- ENGAGE, Veteran Services partnered with Nevada Veterans Alumni chapter to host Brigadier General (retired) Michael Peyerl to speak about his experience transitioning from a career in the service to a civilian position at Truckee Meadows Community College. Additionally, two recent Nevada Veteran Alumni spoke on their experiences and support in transitioning to higher education at Nevada.

Continuing Initiatives

- Operation Battle Born. In partnerships with Truckee Meadows Community College Veteran Services and the Reno Vet Center, UNR participated in the planning, logistics, support and implementation of Operation Battle Born on Memorial Day weekend. Participants hiked from the state capital in Carson City to the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Fernley, NV carrying over 7,000 dog tags to represent the military members lost since 9/11.
- A Ruck to Remember. In partnership with Truckee Meadows Community College Veteran Services and the Mayor's Challenge, UNR supported and participated in a Ruck to Remember on World Suicide Awareness Day. Participants watched the movie Merging Players and Vets and followed with a discussion about suicide and transitioning issues. The event had a candlelight ruck around the TMCC campus to remember those lost to suicide.
- Veterans Week appreciation events
 - 2500 flag planting
 - Flag retirement ceremony
 - ASUN hosted lunch
 - Dedication of Purple Heart and Disabled Veteran parking spots
- Wolf Pack Veterans
 - Summer Bash
 - Football Tailgate
 - Hike to replace local flags which are unfit in the local area
 - Seven socials to community connections
 - Three park clean-ups at Crystal Peak Park in Verdi, NV
 - Volunteer to staff hospitality table at Veteran Guest House volunteer recognition event

- Zoom Informational Sessions on GI BILL® for incoming students. Staff scheduled online information sessions and in-person appointments to assist incoming students how to navigate both UNR enrollment and GI Bill® usage.
- At-Risk Student Personalized outreach. Veteran Services office outreached to students with low GPA for intervention, support and information on resources. Veteran Services removed the warning term policy for using GI BILL® benefits to align with university SAP policy.
- Social Wellness and Educational Programs:
 - Applying and Funding Graduate School Seminar
 - Financial planning
 - March Madness Tournament
 - Nevada baseball game social
 - VA and American Iron Gym power weightlifting program for personal development and growth specifically for Veterans
- V.I.T.A.L. Grant. UNR maintains a partnership with the VA Sierra Nevada Hospital to host a VA LCSW on campus. The VA LCSW provides mental health/ well-being care to students.
- Community Partnerships. Veteran Services continues to provide a private office space for external organizations to bring veteran-related services to campus. Organizations Veteran Services partnered with in 2022-2023 include NV DETR/ Job Connect for resume writing, Vietnam Veterans of America 989, Nevada Department of Veteran Services, Veterans Guest House, PTSD Now, Work for Warriors, Reserve Assistance Advisor Federal Contractor (RCTAA), David J. Drakulich Foundation, Amazon Inc, Adopt-a-Dental, and Katie Grace Foundation.
- Collaborated with Athletics for Salute to Service games for basketball, baseball, and football.

Nevada State University

Introduction

Nevada State University is committed to providing our student veterans with an exceptional and supportive educational experience to best prepare them for the next chapter in their lives. Nevada State's overarching goal is to promote better outcomes for student veterans, including improved retention and graduation rates.

To this end, the university continues to develop and refine the robust initiatives that address the needs and aspirations of this population. These initiatives address several different facets of the student experience, including the allocation of physical space (a Veterans' Lounge), the provision of financial support (including emergency funding support), and community-building opportunities (the "ScorpionVets" club). The university strives to ensure a support system that is holistic but adaptable to individual needs.

Nevada State continues to explore and develop new initiatives that will benefit this student population, while remaining dedicated to refining and improving the supports already in place.

New Initiatives

- Nevada State is committed to student success and lessening the burdens and barriers to successfully accessing higher education. With that in mind, the university continues to explore new and innovative opportunities to assist our student veterans and help them achieve their goal of obtaining a college degree. Since the last reporting, the university has made progress in a variety of new initiatives, which are outlined in this section.
- **Military Credit for Prior Learning (M-CPL) Taskforce**
Nevada State acknowledges that veterans end their military careers with skills, training, and education that should be recognized at the university level. Nevada State is developing policy that would allow for veterans to be awarded credit for prior learning and experiences such as work, military service, self-directed study or other non-college sources. It would also seek to award credits to students based on the ACE guidelines and recommendations, as well as the JST (Joint Student Transcript) from military school and training.
- **Certified Nevada Department of Veterans Service Advocate**
Nevada State's Coordinator of Veteran Services earned certification as a Nevada Department of Veterans Service Advocate through the Nevada Department of Veterans Affairs.
This certification attests that the Veterans Affairs Coordinator has the knowledge of VA benefits beyond education, supports available for the veterans and their family, and an understanding of the vast opportunities and benefits available to them.
- **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs VA Scholarship Program**
The university works to help student veterans successfully apply for this scholarship program through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. This scholarship provides a full tuition for veterans pursuing a BSN or MSN in the School of Nursing.
- **Increased Coordination with Office of Student Life**
The Coordinator of Veteran Services is engaged in ongoing discussions with the Office of Student Life to increase the number of clubs and organizations as well as social and academic support for student veterans.

Continuing Initiatives

- Nevada State continues to invest in the many established programs and supports developed to help veterans succeed in higher education. These efforts include creating spaces, both physical and social, designed for these students, seeking opportunities for financial assistance through work study programs

and grants, and ensuring these students are aware of the resources available to them and their families. The following section outlines many of the robust programs and resources veterans can access at Nevada State.

- **Nevada State ScorpionVets**
The Nevada State University ScorpionVets Club focuses on promoting awareness of veteran issues, supporting an institutional culture of inclusion, facilitating the integration of veterans into the Nevada State community, and providing camaraderie for veterans. Nevada State viewed the development of the student organization as the most important step in facilitating more robust services, providing an opportunity for student veterans to increase their activity level on campus. This group is actively fundraising to develop a foundation to support programming. In addition, their organization has been officially recognized by the Student Veterans of America. ScorpionVets also takes the lead on various initiatives throughout the year including:
- **NSC Ruck March**
ScorpionVets holds an annual Ruck March each spring semester. Nevada State faculty and staff, UNLV student veterans, and other veteran organizations in the community participate.
- **Volunteer Efforts with US Vets***
Nevada State University ScorpionVets continue to be active within the veterans' community in the valley. In past years ScorpionVets have volunteered at the Boulder City Veterans' Home Olympics, providing support and camaraderie for the veterans living in the home. They have also hosted formal flag ceremonies that involve Nevada State administrators, students, faculty and staff, as well as community organizations and dignitaries from the City of Henderson.
- **Monthly Zoom Meetings**
Born of the need to adapt during the COVID-19 pandemic, the monthly Zoom meetings allow our student veterans to connect with the Coordinator of Veteran Services as well as other veterans. The primary purpose of these meetings is to discuss the needs, interests, and challenges of our veterans, and to do so in a way that improves access to students who may not be able to establish an in-person appointment. Participants discuss current issues and challenges, the VA Weekly Newsletter, how they can access VA support services, and also provides another forum to develop relationships with their fellow veterans.
- **Peer Mentorship**
This program started in 2023 and pairs new student veterans or dependent students with a current veteran or dependent student to provide mentorship from the first semester of college through graduation and beyond. The mentorship helps students successfully navigate the college experience at Nevada State. This includes providing guidance with registration, advising, support services, student life, NSSA, and software applications. This program is designed to reach beyond academics, as mentors are also tasked with planning at least one monthly activity for the mentee.
- **Professional Development and Networking**
Nevada State University has sent student veterans to the Student Veterans of America National Conference in Orlando, FL. By participating in the conference, students have an opportunity to network with other student veterans as well as learn more about available resources. Students have also attended the NASPA Symposium on Military-Connected Students which focuses on effective strategies to serve and support the success of veterans and other military-connected students.
- **Nevada State Veterans Webpage**
Nevada State maintains a dedicated page on its website for student veterans regarding their VA benefits. Students can also find other important information and contact information for external supports.

College of Southern Nevada

Introduction

The Veterans Education and Transition Services (VETS) Center supports the College of Southern Nevada's mission to empower our students and communities to achieve, succeed, and prosper by providing exceptional services, programs, and learning experiences for current and former service members and their dependents. Our efforts shape and support a seamless transition to civilian life.

Our vision is to be the preeminent military and veteran service provider among institutions of higher learning in Nevada.

The center's primary goals include efficiently and effectively administering U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs education programs; improving and better tracking of persistence, retention, and graduation rates for VA beneficiaries; and creating and implementing transformational programming that increases opportunities for student veteran success.

Brief of the 2023-2024 Academic Year

CSN obtained the VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC). This program assists disabled veterans using Veteran Readiness and Employment (Chapter 31) on our campus with a VA funded representative.

New Initiatives

- Community Partnerships – Our VETS team and Marketing Department have connected with organizations to provide comprehensive support and resources for current students while actively recruiting new veterans to CSN. We are also actively seeking collaborations with larger national organizations serving veterans and their families to expand our reach and better serve our students. The VETS team participated in the Veterans Stand Down by U.S. VETS. The events objective is to provide crucial support and resources to veterans who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The event brings together various organizations, volunteers, and service providers who offer life-changing services, such as education assistance, healthcare, job assistance, housing support, legal aid, and essential resources like food and clothing. Their goal is to provide veterans with the support needed to help them improve their lives in a single day and under one roof.
- VA Town Hall – UNLV hosted the US Department of Veterans Affairs GI Bill Town Hall and Veteran Benefits Fair on October 24, 2023. The CSN VETS Center encouraged all students utilizing VA benefits to attend this important event, where the VA directly addressed student questions and provided valuable in-person resources and information.
- VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) – this program is a VA initiative designed to support Veterans, Servicemembers, and their dependents in their transition to college life. The program provides on-campus benefits assistance, counseling, and resources to help them succeed academically and professionally. Each VSOC school has a dedicated VA Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) and a Vet Center Outreach Coordinator to provide personalized support to Veterans. VSOC Counselors offer assistance with benefits, disability accommodations, and referrals for health services, ensuring Veterans have access to the resources they need to succeed. The VSOC program fosters stronger collaboration between the VA and institutions of higher learning to create a more supportive environment for Veterans. VSOC provides outreach and transition services to help Veterans achieve their educational and career goals, ensuring a smooth transition from military to civilian life.

- Access through Electronic Forms – To streamline the process and accommodate deployed students, the VETS Center replaced paper forms with electronic submissions. This allowed students to request benefits from anywhere, ensuring timely processing. A convenient dashboard was implemented, enabling students to track the status of their requests and maintain a comprehensive record. This efficient and effective system provides a seamless experience for student veterans.
- Mental Health First Aid Training – In March, the VETS Center staff, VITAL Program Coordinator, and Sarah Duckworth from the Nellis Extension successfully completed Mental Health First Aid training. This nationally recognized program equips individuals with the skills to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illness and substance abuse disorders. Through the ALGEE action plan, participants learn to assess for risk, listen empathetically, provide reassurance and information, encourage professional help, and offer self-help strategies. This training empowers our team to provide initial support to students who may be struggling with mental health or substance use challenges and connect them to appropriate care.

Continuing Initiatives

- FYE Events Collaboration – The CSN VETS Center has successfully partnered with the First Year Experience (FYE) program to integrate veteran-specific resources into campus-wide events. By providing on-site academic advising and information about VA benefits during FYE events, we aim to ensure that veteran students have a seamless transition to college life. This collaborative approach allows VA beneficiaries to connect with their peers, build relationships with campus partners, explore campus resources, and establish their benefits while participating fully in the college experience. For the academic year 2023-2024, VETS attended 18 FYE events and assisted 113 students.
- Veteran Academic Advising – CSN's VETS Center provides personalized academic advising exclusively for student veterans and their dependents. We offer both in-person and virtual advising options, ensuring students have the flexibility to choose the method that best suits their needs. Whether you prefer face-to-face meetings or the convenience of remote support, our dedicated advisors are here to assist you.
- Retention Degree Assistance – With limited advising appointments, to enhance student retention, the VETS Center offered convenient walk-in support for returning students who were not changing their majors. By providing access to recent degree audits and consultations with School Certifying Officials, we helped students make informed decisions about course selection, ensuring their academic progress aligns with degree requirements and enrollment rate goals. This personalized support empowers students to stay on track, maximize their benefits, and successfully complete their degree programs.
- Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL) – This program serves as a collaborative effort between the VA Medical Center and CSN to support student Veterans. VITAL aims to help Veterans overcome challenges, adjust to the academic environment, and successfully complete their educational goals. The program offers personalized assistance, resources, and support to Veterans enrolled in local colleges and universities.

Great Basin College

Introduction

The Veterans Resource Center at Great Basin College strives to provide our military affiliated students with the best resources and opportunities to succeed in higher education.

- Wide Range of Degree Objectives to foster success in the civilian world
- Veterans Education Program Assistance/Guidance for all Chapters
- New Student Orientation Briefings
- Course Certification for Monthly Benefits
- Department of Defense Tuition Assistance Guidance
- Private Study Area for Students
- One Stop Shop for all Student Veterans and Military Affiliated Students

Brief of the 2023-2024 Academic Year

The VRC started hosting our annual Veterans Day Luncheon event on the Friday before Veterans Day providing free lunches to Veterans and their family members. This is in collaboration with our café on campus, The Lunchbox. We are soon approaching our third annual event and have been seeing an average of 50 attendees for this event.

We have also started hosting events on Memorial Day. This is known as our Memorial Day BBQ, I chose to do a BBQ because while I was in the Marine Corps my platoon would always host a BBQ on Memorial Day and I felt it was important to carry on with that tradition while at GBC. This event has been held typically on Saturdays and has had an average of 50 attendees as well. All events are open to Veterans, Family Members, and any GBC staff and faculty that would like to attend. We have been very fortunate to receive donations from a local ranch, the Brough Ranch for hamburgers, hot dogs, and other cuts of meat for this event. As well as donations from attendees.

New Initiatives

- The VRC is currently in the process of becoming more actively involved in the Veterans Readiness & Employment (VR&E) program (Chapter 31) to ensure students are able to maintain consistent communication with VA assigned Counselors, as well as school officials being able to contact VA Counselors to ensure students are receiving monthly stipends in a timely manner plus ensuring that institutions are receiving tuition payments to help alleviate stress that is placed on the VR&E students.

Continuing Initiatives

- Collaboration with Admissions and Records to analyze Joint Service Transcripts to ensure completion of articulation in a timely manner and to try to better serve students by bringing in applicable courses.
- Continued collaboration with the advising department and advisors to ensure students are taking applicable courses and working with advisors who are experts in the fields that they advise.
- Continue to utilize tracking system via Google Sheets to keep track of Military Affiliated Students and note geographical and educational data.
- Early Enrollment Notifications are continued to be sent out to notify our students when enrollment for the fall and spring semester opens. We encourage them to enroll early to beat the rush and guarantee a seat in the course. This helps with retaining students who would otherwise procrastinate and not be able to enroll in needed courses.
- Continue to share office spaces with the Nevada Department of Veteran Services to provide veterans with optimal resources for education and health care benefits.

Truckee Meadows Community College

Introduction

The mission of Truckee Meadows Community College's (TMCC) Veteran Services is to assist our student veteran population and military connected students in their transition from the military into the academic environment. We are focused and determined on retaining our veteran students and guiding them towards their graduation and professional goals. Our staff works diligently to identify areas of need for our student veteran population as well as areas in which we need to expand and improve.

New Initiatives

- TMCC Veteran Services is now the single point of contact for all military-connected students, regardless of the benefits they are utilizing. Whether students are accessing active duty tuition assistance, the Nevada National Guard waiver, or other veteran education benefits, our team is here to provide comprehensive guidance and support. By centralizing these services, TMCC Veteran Services ensures that all military-connected students receive personalized assistance with navigating their educational benefits and resources, creating a streamlined experience to help them succeed academically.

Continuing Initiatives

- Professional Development Initiative – Each semester, TMCC Veteran Services collaborates with the TMCC Career Hub to offer a series of veteran-specific professional development workshops and job preparation classes, open to all student veterans and their dependents. These workshops cover essential skills such as résumé writing, LinkedIn profile creation, effective networking, and mock interviews, all designed to equip veterans for a successful transition into the professional world after graduation.
- Veteran Job and Resource Fair – Another collaboration between TMCC Veteran Services and the TMCC Career Center is the Veteran Resource and Job Fair. Created specifically for veterans and their families, the fairs are held every fall and spring semester. They typically have 50-60 employers and community resources on hand to fulfill the needs of our veterans. These fairs play a very important role for both the students and the veteran community as a whole and help highlight TMCC's never-ending dedication to our nation's veterans.
- Veteran Academic Advisor – TMCC employs three veteran-specific academic advisors who provide personalized support to veterans in navigating degree and course selection, transfer workshops, financial aid applications, and scholarship opportunities. With dedicated advisors, our veteran students receive the guidance they need to develop a clear educational plan, helping them stay on track and graduate on time.'
- Veterans Pre-Admission Associate – Our Veterans Pre-Admission Associate serves as an intake coordinator as well as updates military transcripts, in accordance with SB 457. This position was funded by the TAACCCT 4 grant but was made permanent in March 2018. This position is vital to the overall mission of TMCC Veteran Services and helps ensure that the department maintains the high quality of service that is currently provided to our student veteran population.
- Early Enrollment – TMCC began offering priority registration to student veterans and eligible dependents back in the spring of 2013. Priority registration is essential to ensure that our students are able to enroll in the necessary classes in order to avoid delays in their GI Bill payments.
- Veterans Upward Bound – TMCC houses the only Veterans Upward Bound program in the state of Nevada. Located at the TMCC Meadowood Campus, Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) is a pre-college preparation

program that offers academic skills development, testing, financial literacy, advisement, career planning, and transitional assistance to eligible student veterans.

- Truckee Meadows Veterans Club (TMVC) – TMCC has a nationally recognized Student Veterans of America chapter (SVA) on campus, Truckee Meadows Veterans Club (TMVC). TMVC's presence in the VRC helps build comradery and gives the student veterans a unified voice on campus. The club is very active in the community and holds many student veteran-centered events both on and off campus.
- Application Fee Waiver – TMCC values the extraordinary talents, experiences, and diversity that the United States Military Veterans bring to our campus. In recognition of their service, TMCC has committed to waiving the admissions application fee for all honorably discharged U.S. Military Veterans beginning the Fall 2017 semester.
- SB 457 Compliance – As of August 1, 2017, TMCC is in full compliance with SB 457. We have updated our webpage to reflect the bill as well as added a detailed list of all accepted military credits along with their corresponding ACE exhibit number for reference.
- V.I.T.A.L. Initiative – Through the V.I.T.A.L. Initiative, TMCC partners with the VA Sierra Nevada Healthcare System to provide on-campus support. A dedicated VA social worker is available at least two days a week, offering vital mental health services to student veterans at the VRC.
- Veteran Outreach Events – Veteran Services hosts various outreach events each semester, including large veteran BBQs that foster camaraderie on and off campus. We also partner with community resources to offer workshops for faculty and staff to better understand military and veteran culture.
- Purple Heart School – On May 2, 2018, Truckee Meadows Community College officially became the first Purple Heart College in the State of Nevada. With this designation, TMCC issued a proclamation highlighting the college's commitment to our combat-wounded students and dedicated a parking spot specifically for Purple Heart recipients.
- Operation Battle Born - Operation Battle Born is a collaboration between TMCC's Veteran Leadership Academy, TMVC, and veterans from UNR and UNLV. They organize a statewide ruck march to honor fallen heroes of the Global War on Terrorism, uniting the student veteran community and fostering camaraderie while remembering those who sacrificed for the nation.
- VetSmart –Military and Veteran Culture Training, covering key topics like differences between service branches, training impacts, and deployments. It also provides information on local, state, and federal resources. Goal is to help attendees better understand student veterans.

Western Nevada College

Introduction

Western Nevada College is committed to serving the veterans of our community. This commitment is personified by our Veteran Services department. The Veteran Services department is a collaborative effort of the Veterans Resource Coordinator, Financial Assistance, Counseling Services, Admissions and Records and a volunteer Academic Faculty member. At Western Nevada College, our mission is to aid the student veteran in the transition from military service to higher education by providing support and guidance during the application, admissions, and academic processes. Each member of the Western Nevada College team has a role to play in the success of our student veterans and the family members of veterans. Western Nevada College's Veterans Services Department provides wrap around services from initial intake to graduation. Each veteran student or their dependent receives services and assistance, including:

- WNC new student orientation
- WNC Disability Support Services
- WNC food pantry
- WNC Wildcat Wellness
- Access to tutoring and academic coaches
- Assistance in the admission application and registration
- Financial aid assistance
- VA Work Study Program
- Private study area and room for veterans to study, gather, and collaborate
- Computers for student veterans/ dependents to use
- Advisement including selections of classes to ensure classes are eligible for veteran educational benefits
- Support from the Veteran Academic Counselor for any veteran student falling below the Satisfactory Academic Progress standard
- Student veteran campus events
- Veterans Club re-established - WNC Wildcat Vets
- Connection to external veteran resources: Disabled American Veterans, Nevada Job Connect, Vietnam Veterans of America, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Wounded Warrior Project, Etc.
- Access to Veteran Advocate and Veteran Service Officer
- Intervention for students who receive veteran educational benefits to ensure any withdrawal from courses receive counseling on how the withdrawal may affect their benefits and academic plan

Brief of the 2023-2024 Academic Year

- Events Hosted:
 - Annual American Legion Oratorical contest
 - Annual Wildcat Vets Club Suicide Awareness Walk
 - Veterans Day BBQ
 - 9/11 Stair Climb Rememberance
- Increased VA Work Study staffing to 6 students per semester

New Initiatives

- Created a satellite Veteran Resource Center on WNC's Fallon Campus - Space has been designated on the Fallon campus. This initiative has been delayed by personnel limitations and is slated for completion in FY25

Continuing Initiatives

- The Veterans Resource Center provides:
 - A central location for student veterans to connect with academic, social and outreach resources geared towards veterans.
 - Guidance for student veterans and family members through the adjustment of military life and higher education.
 - Dedicated quiet study area computers and equipment to assist those pursuing their degree or certification.
 - A home for the Wildcat Veterans Club.
 - Academic Counseling Intervention Meetings with at risk students.
 - VA Work Study opportunities.
- Academic Advising & Access has a primary counselor dedicated to supporting student veterans for academic and/or personal difficulty
- WNC is a Purple Heart College in recognition of service men and women who have received the Purple Heart decoration and as such has designated "Purple Heart" parking for combat-wounded service members at Carson, Douglas, and Fallon campus locations.