

Education and Career Transition Guide for Servicemembers and Veterans

Military Advanced Education & Transition

SPECIAL SECTION:
**ONLINE SCHOOL
ROUNDTABLE**

Connecting
at a Distance

Leah K.
Matthews

Executive Director
Distance Education
Accrediting
Commission

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MAE&T

July/August 2016
Volume 11, Issue 6

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LEAH K. MATTHEWS

Executive Director
Distance Education Accrediting
Commission

"It is clear that **distance education** and online learning is a major focus of nearly every college and university in the United States. Modern learners are **continually connected to new and evolving content...** in ways unimagined just as recently as a year ago."

— Leah Matthews

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CYNDI PORTER

Vice President for Extended
Academic Programs
University of the Incarnate Word

Military Advanced Education & Transition

The leading higher education resource for our nation's servicemembers

Targeted circulation reaches education services officers and content focuses on current trends in higher education and highlights pressing issues for military students.

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Education and Career Transition Guide for Servicemembers and Veterans

Editorial

Editor-in-Chief

Kelly G. Fodel kellyf@kmimediagroup.com

Correspondents

J.B. Bissell • Kasey Chisholm • Catherine Day
Jaime Fettrow-Alderfer • Nora McGann
Holly Christy

Art & Design

Graphic Designer

Scott Cassidy

Advertising

kmi@kmimediagroup.com

KMI Media Group

Chief Executive Officer

Jack Kerrigan jack@kmimediagroup.com

Publisher and Chief Financial Officer

Constance Kerrigan connik@kmimediagroup.com

Operations, Circulation & Production

Circulation & Marketing Administrator

Duane Ebanks duanee@kmimediagroup.com

Subscription Information

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Corporate Offices

KMI Media Group
10209 Bentcross Drive
Potomac, MD 20854
kmi@kmimediagroup.com
Web: www.MAE-kmi.com

EDITOR'S PERSPECTIVE

We're pleased to announce that submissions are currently being accepted for Military Advanced Education and Transition's 2017 Guide to Colleges and Universities. Now in its tenth year, the Guide provides potential students with information about institutions that go out of their way to give back to our men and women in uniform.

The questionnaire evaluates schools in military culture, financial aid, flexibility, on-campus support and online support services. If you have not already done so, please go online to take the survey before time runs out! The deadline is September 15, 2016.

To log in, please use the unique log-in link that MAE&T emailed to you when the survey initially went live. This link is your only way to log in to the survey to edit and save the survey. There are no user names or passwords required.

MAE&T has made some changes to our extensive survey and improved our submission process this year. We encourage schools with multiple campuses to submit a questionnaire for each location, as they may offer different services. However, each school/campus will log in via a unique weblink, so let us know if you need us to generate another link for an additional campus.

SAVE your survey email. That email contains the URL link that will allow you to fill out the survey at your own pace. Every time you log in to the survey, you will need to use the unique link provided to you. If you need to share the survey with colleagues to review—no problem! Just forward them your link and they'll be able to log in and review.

If your school is designated as a "Top College or University" we will notify you in October and send you our exclusive logo and press release template to use in your marketing materials.

Again, the deadline for submissions will be September 15, and early submissions are encouraged.

We will again score the questionnaire responses to standardize the results, which will be displayed in the December issue of MAE&T in easy-to-read bar charts. This will enable prospective students to quickly target schools that are strongest in the military-friendly policies that are most important to them, and then put these policies in context with other academic or career considerations. Additionally, all questions and answers will appear on MAE&T's searchable online database, including the essay section, in which institutions have the opportunity to describe in their own words what makes them military-supportive.

If you aren't in our database and would like to participate, please reach out and we can send you a unique log-in URL. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions at kellyf@kmimediagroup.com.



Kelly G. Fodel
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Kelly G. Fodel

2016-17 Editorial Calendar now available.



Contact kmi@kmimediagroup.com to receive your copy.

Ed Department Proposes Rule on State Authorization of Postsecondary Distance Education

The U.S. Department of Education has proposed regulations that seek to improve oversight and protect more than 5.5 million distance education students at degree-granting institutions, including nearly 3 million exclusively online students by clarifying the state authorization requirements for postsecondary distance education.

To ensure that institutions offering distance education are legally authorized and monitored by states, as required by the Higher Education Act, the proposed regulations clarify state authorization requirements for institutions to participate in the Department's federal student aid programs. The proposed regulations also address state and federal oversight of American colleges operating in foreign locations worldwide.

"These proposed regulations achieve an important balance between accountability and flexibility, and in so doing create better protections for students and taxpayers," said U.S. Under Secretary of Education Ted Mitchell. "Additionally, these regulations promote and clarify state authorization procedures, further strengthening the integrity of federal financial aid programs."

In 2006, Congress abolished a rule restricting access to federal student aid for distance education programs. Since then, the number of students enrolled in online degree programs has significantly increased. By 2014, more than half of students at for-profit institutions were enrolled in exclusively distance education courses, compared with an estimated 9 percent of students in public institutions and 15 percent of students in private nonprofit institutions.

State authorization is a longstanding requirement in the Higher Education Act that requires institutions to be authorized in the state in which they are located as a condition for eligibility to receive Title IV Federal student aid. While all higher education institutions must have state authorization in the states in which they are physically located, there are no federal requirements for distance education providers in states where the institutions are not located.

The proposed regulations close this loophole by:

- Requiring institutions offering distance education or correspondence courses to be authorized by each state in which

the institution enrolls students, if such authorization is required by the state. The proposed regulation recognizes authorization through participation in a state authorization reciprocity agreement, as long as the agreement does not prevent a state from enforcing its own consumer laws.

- Requiring institutions to document the state process for resolving student complaints regarding distance education programs.
- Requiring public and individualized disclosures to enrolled and prospective students in distance education programs, including adverse actions taken against the school, the school's refund policies, and whether each program meets applicable state licensure or certification requirements.
- Requiring that foreign branch campuses or locations be authorized by the appropriate foreign government agency and, if at least half of a program can be completed at the foreign location or branch campus, be approved by the accrediting agency and reported to the state where the main campus is located.

The Department previously regulated on state authorization of both physical locations and distance education in 2010, but a federal court vacated the distance education portion of the rule on procedural grounds in 2011. The other portions of the 2010 state authorization rule relating to physical locations were implemented last year. Similar to the proposed rule, the 2010 physical locations rule also required institutions to be authorized by states having a state-based consumer complaint system.

The Department held three sessions of negotiated rulemaking on this issue in 2014, but the negotiating committee did not reach consensus. These proposed regulations are a result of that process and further a longstanding regulatory effort by the Department to support state oversight of schools that offer distance or correspondence education and protect students in those programs.

The proposed regulations were published in the Federal Register on July 25, and the public comment period will end August 24. The Department expects to publish a final regulation before the end of the year.

Dr. Karan Powell Appointed APUS President



American Public University System (APUS) announced that after an extensive search process, Executive Vice President and Provost Karan Powell will succeed long-time President Wallace E. Boston. Boston will remain CEO of APUS parent company American Public Education, Inc. (APEI) as part of an anticipated organizational realignment, providing strategic and leadership support to APUS, Hondros

College of Nursing, and other APEI ventures.

"Dr. Powell's contributions have been instrumental in helping achieve APUS's leadership position in online higher education," said APUS Board of Trustees Chair Dr. Kate Zatz. "We are very pleased to be able to maintain the momentum Dr. Boston has established in support of our academic reputation and providing superior learning outcomes for our students."

Powell holds a doctor of philosophy in education from George Mason University, with a specialization in organization development and learning. She also holds a bachelor of science in business education from Western Illinois University, a master of divinity from Loyola University and a certificate in advanced organization design from the University of Southern California.

Accelerated Degrees: Less Time, More Intensity

GET ON THE FAST TRACK TO A COLLEGE DEGREE.

By HOLLY CHRISTY, MAE&T CORRESPONDENT



Many universities now have the option for their students to earn degrees in an accelerated format. This can mean that the courses are shorter (six or eight weeks instead of sixteen), so students can take more courses during a year, or it might mean that the courses are weightier and earn more credit hours than traditional courses, or it can simply refer to a school's ability to award course credit for a student's work history thus "fast tracking" them toward graduation. Adult learners are often attracted to accelerated online degree programs because of the significant and immediate benefits that this format includes: quicker path to degree completion, credit for prior learning or service, and cost savings as compared to a longer program. To many students, the ability to accomplish their educational goals in a way that's quick and cost-effective overrides any other factors.

Still, there are other factors to consider—such as your preference for face-to-face interaction, whether or not your field of study can be learned well in an accelerated format, and if your personal and professional lives are such that you are able to devote much of your focus to study during the intense few weeks of your courses. Oftentimes, the amount of required weekly studying for an accelerated course is significantly more than that of a traditional class format.

Once you've decided that an accelerated degree program is the way you want to go, evaluate the schools and get a sense for how their programs are structured. There are a couple of ways that a university can speed students through a program. The schools featured here each have unique things to offer their students.



Derrick Pope

Colorado State University – Global Campus

Colorado State University – Global Campus focuses on the adult learner, and has developed its enrollment and credit awarding policies to recognize the value of other avenues of learning—on the job and in service. Derrick Pope, director of enrollment, said, "This has the distinct advantage of moving students farther along the graduation track, effectively shortening their time to degree completion, as well as the financial costs."

But don't assume that taking less time to graduate means being less prepared for the workforce. CSU-Global's philosophy is deeply committed to career-ready graduates. Pope explained, "The advantage of a highly accredited university such as Colorado State University – Global Campus is the reputation and rigor of the education. Because we focus on the non-traditional adult learner and degree completion for those who didn't finish; our students have been in the world, they know they need the degree and the career-relevant skills to move ahead. They are here to learn and gather real-world applicable knowledge. We are here to help them achieve their goals."

One way that CSU - Global equips its students is by incorporating their current real-life work challenges into their education. According to Pope, "We are a project-based education where teachers ask students to identify challenges and opportunities from their current work or life situation to use as classroom projects rather than test-based assessments. Most students turn around and use those skills and ideas the very next day." He elaborated: "A CSU – Global Campus graduate is not only recognized in their industry as more than capable to earn the job, they are known to be prepared and successful with career-relevant skills on day one."

Earning a degree at CSU - Global is an attractive option for servicemembers, according to Pope. "Our degrees combine the exemplary reputation of the State of Colorado System to put on a resume with confidence blended with the most progressive delivery and access of the online approach," he said. "Servicemembers are busy people with responsibilities and changing schedules. Our motto is 'You Are Already On Campus,' because you can connect and take your class when and where it works for you. We have a designated military enrollment specialist because CSU - Global recognizes

our active military, family and veterans have made a commitment to our country and we are making a commitment right back—to help you achieve your degree goals; quickly, efficiently and most cost-effectively." Military students at CSU - Global can plan their class schedules as well as their class work around their commitments, knowing that classes start every month. There's no need to wait until the next semester to enroll in the next class. Furthermore, "We understand the pressures that come with [being in the military] so we invest heavily in advising and support for our veterans to help them cope with their unique challenges," Pope said.

CSU - Global is unique in that it is a non-profit, state institution subject to oversight and accountable to the state just like its sister-schools in the state system; not shareholders who own stock in companies that run for-profit schools. Pope explained that CSU - Global "operates a lean business model in the black without state-funding, donors or soliciting alumni. It is 100 percent online and 100 percent independent from the other universities in the system. It is not an online arm of a brick and mortar school, so tuition dollars go directly into instruction and support."



Gary Soldato

Southern New Hampshire University

Southern New Hampshire University has the unique distinction of being the worldwide education partner of the USO, providing educational and financial literacy opportunities onsite at USO locations throughout the country. This partnership is part of the USO's Transition 360 Alliance, which aims to help U.S. military personnel and their families to make successful transitions back to civilian life after their service ends. This is just one example of what has made SNHU a military-supportive school for the past 80 years.

Gary Soldato is an Army Lt. Colonel (Ret.), and AVP of Military Initiatives at SNHU. He told MAE&T, "At Southern New Hampshire University, we understand and respect the enormous sacrifice that our veterans, military servicemembers and their

families have made and continue to make on behalf of our country. Every military student and spouse working toward an online degree from SNHU works with a dedicated military advisor who has military experience. Our military advisors understand what it's like to balance a military career, family and education. They know the ins and outs of everything from getting students into the right classes to speaking to the right people for military benefits." Additionally, SNHU offers discounts of up to 30 percent for active-duty servicemembers and their spouses working toward an online degree, as well as accepting Tuition Assistance (TA), Post-9/11 G.I. Bill and Montgomery G.I. Bill benefits.

Soldato acknowledged that, "in general online degree programs tend to appeal to military students and their spouses given the amount of transition in their lives—from moves to deployments. Working through a degree program at your own pace and own schedule is perfectly suited to the realities of

military life." And adding the convenience of an accelerated pace is also appealing to students in certain circumstances. "An accelerated online degree may be a very attractive option for servicemembers, especially for those who have either already taken courses in a particular field (such as accounting) or who are already working in the industry but don't have the academic qualifications," he added. SNHU offers two accelerated online degree programs: a BS in Nursing with an accelerated RN to MSN option, and an Accounting Accelerated Track that takes students from a BS to an MS.

SNHU's Accelerated RN to MSN online degree pathway allows registered nurses to move through a BSN to an MSN without a break in continuity. This is perfect for professional nurses with clearly defined educational goals. The accelerated nursing pathway lets BSN students progress into the MSN program through the successful completion of two advanced-level BSN courses



"Excelsior was the best choice for me because it was the most flexible. They gave me credit for my military experience and CLEP exams, and let me transfer credits from other schools. They really supported and encouraged me, which helped me finish. Now that I have my degree, I anticipate a promotion."

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in which students perform graduate-level work, which results in two graduate courses being waived—saving time and tuition.

The accelerated BS to MS in Accounting degree allows undergraduate students who've shown success in their undergradu-

ate program the opportunity to take two graduate level courses (6 credits) while completing their bachelor's degree. This specially designed accelerated accounting program was created for focused students who want to earn both their BS

and MS and need a master's to sit for their state's CPA exam. "Most states require an additional 150 hours of graduate level coursework before you can sit for the CPA exam," Soldato said. "Rules for licensure vary by state."



Cheryl Hayek

Grantham University

Grantham University was founded in 1951 by WWII Veteran Donald Grantham to provide other veterans a way to better their

lives through distance learning. Since then, it has accumulated a long and impressive list of accolades for being a military-supportive school, and more than fifty-percent of Grantham's student body is made up of servicemembers. Grantham offers an abundance of support for military students, which includes tuition and financial aid services, scholarship opportunities, textbook and software grants, and online college guides. Additionally, Grantham carefully reviews students' military and professional training and

previous college-level courses to see what they can transfer for credit, minimizing their length of study.

Grantham University offers more than 45 online undergraduate and graduate degree programs and certificates. The university's 100 percent online format, frequent course starts, and eight week classes empower students to choose the pace of their degree program. Students are able to follow a traditional program timeline or, qualified students can decide to increase their course loads thereby "accelerating their time to graduation."

Specifically, the Mark Skousen School of Business at Grantham University offers an Accelerated Master of Business Administration option that enables qualified students to complete the program in as little as one year. Most traditional MBA programs require two

years to complete. The MBA program outcomes include: analyzing business practices, applying knowledge of all foundational business areas, integrating theory and practice, utilizing communication skills, evaluations techniques and employing quantitative analysis.

Cheryl Hayek is Grantham University's interim university president, Chief Academic Officer and Provost. "Because students are essentially doubling their course work, programs like the Accelerated MBA are ideal for individuals who are able to devote additional time and commitment toward the goal of completing their MBA at an advanced pace," she said. "The Accelerated MBA is a rigorous path that satisfies the need for advanced education in a shortened time frame—perfect for those on the fast track to career success."



Chuck Gurden

Baker College

Baker Online was recently recognized as having an Exemplary Status by the Online Learning Consortium (formerly

known as Sloan-C) for all of its online programs. According to Chuck Gurden, vice president of Graduate, Online, and Military Admissions at Baker College, "It is one thing to say you focus on quality in online education but it is another thing to be recognized by a leader in that industry for actually doing it. This is something Baker College is very proud, of as it ensures we are offering our servicemembers the best education possible. We like to say the College's Online Learning Model ensures that faculty, students and the institution have rigorous expectations, a high level of engagement, and a strong commitment to success."

All of Baker's online classes are just six weeks long, which makes it easier for students to progress toward graduation. In addition, Gurden said, "Baker also has accelerated programs—in the fields of business

administration and health care administration—where the time to complete the degree is shortened due to unique courses built on taking weekly course discussion and participation and combining it with a research component. The courses carry more credit to compensate for the research component, thus allowing a student to complete a degree in a shorter period of time. These degrees also allow for the maximization of college transfer credit, credit awarded for military training, as well as DANTES and other forms of non-traditional credit."

As with any online or accelerated program, the main challenge faced by servicemembers and all working adults is time. Gurden explained the unique benefit and challenge of an online, accelerated program. "When am I going to be able to fit taking college courses into my busy schedule of life? That challenge is also the opportunity of online education. Are our programs easy? Absolutely not, they are rigorous, quality courses, and require one's time and commitment to be successful. However, with online education this is where you can plan around your schedule. Perhaps it's evening,

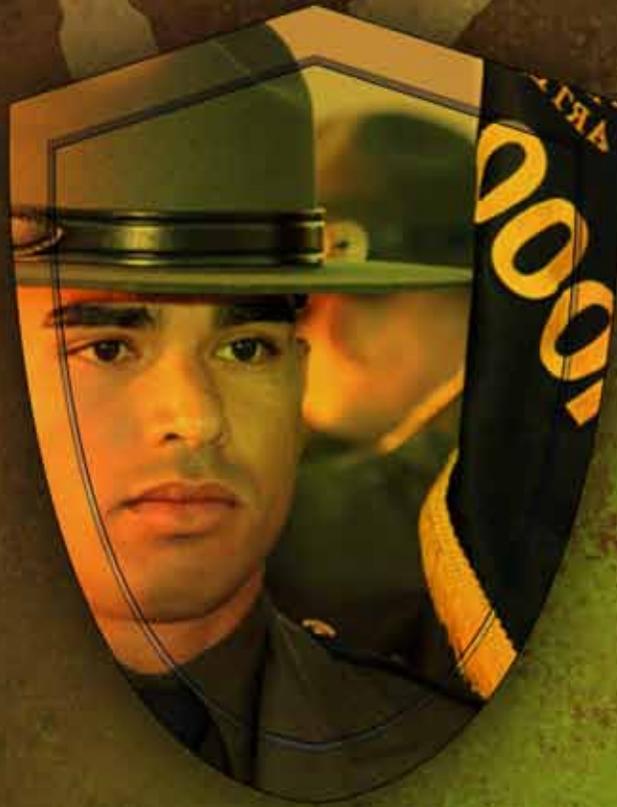
weekends, early mornings, or lunch breaks. Baker prides itself in maintaining the same quality and education available in the brick and mortar classroom, but allows the student the flexibility of a 24/7 classroom. Courses still have start and end dates, your weeks still require participation, homework, etc., but the students plan those times accordingly."

Besides transferring as much credit as possible from military service, Baker seeks to support its military students at every stage of their educational process. "Each department within the college from admissions, to academic, financial services, tutoring, etc., are available in a virtual format for military students," Gurden said. "They have a military dedicated person, familiar with some of the unique needs of the military population, ready to assist at a moment's notice. These services are also available to our veterans, military dependents, basically the entire military connected family." ★

For more information, contact MAE&T Editor Kelly Fodel at kellyf@kmimediagroup.com or search our online archives for related stories at www.mae-kmi.com.

Military Advanced Education & Transition's

TRANSITION TRENDS:



Careers in **Homeland Security**

**Corporate Connection:
Rockwell Collins**

CORPORATE CONNECTION Military Advanced Education & Transition



Rockwell Collins

Michael Brown

Director of Commercial Systems Engineering, Service Solutions
Executive Chair of Rockwell Collins Military & Veteran Employee Resource Group

Q: What advice would you offer servicemembers and veterans looking to make the transition to a civilian career?

A: Make sure you do your homework and make the most of your experience and credentials. Write your resume for the job you are applying for and most importantly, make sure you have written it for a civilian audience. So many times, veterans write their resumes full of military lingo and acronyms that do not bring out their true skills and experience. The more you can translate it to a civilian experience, the better.

Just as important, you need to prepare yourself mentally for the change you will experience. The transition to the civilian workforce not only brings a big change in culture, but also brings so many other differences such as having to set-up a 401K, choosing a medical plan, and choosing your doctor. Everything seems different and that can make one feel a bit lonely. So make sure you reach out to your friends who have already transitioned for insight and support.

Q: What do you think is the biggest challenge veterans face in making their transition to civilian employment?

A: I think one of the biggest challenges veterans face is matching their military skills to the requirements of a civilian position. When I started my transition from the Air Force, I spent a lot of time writing and rewriting my resume to get it to the point that it would resonate with a civilian hiring manager. So remember who your audience is and translate or spell out all military acronyms and phrases that a civilian hiring manager may not understand. Now that I'm on the other side of the table as a

hiring manager, when I read resumes from former military, I can understand the military jargon, but I know my civilian colleagues may not be able to.

Q: How can companies better assist veterans in their transition?

A: I believe companies should offer an environment that supports special employee groups to assist veterans in settling into the corporate world. At Rockwell Collins we have our Military and Veteran Employee Resource Group which I lead as the Executive Chairman. In addition to supporting local military and veteran non-profit organizations, this group's main charter is to help veterans transition more easily to the civilian workforce and to help Rockwell Collins find and hire veterans. Our group does this by helping new veteran hires with finding mentors, building internal networks, and navigating the company, including tackling some administrative functions.

Q: Why does your company believe veterans are a valuable investment?

A: Veterans are extremely valuable to our company because we manufacture high-tech avionics, communications, information management and products. Many of these solutions are used in the military environment. The veteran hire provides us with a unique customer-operator perspective that helps us bring smarter solutions to the market. In addition, the veteran hire brings with them a tremendous amount of leadership and operational execution experience that would be valued by any company.

Q:

Many companies recognize the value of veterans entering the corporate workforce. What makes your company distinct in the support it offers to veteran employees?

A:

We have a robust Military and Veteran Employee Resource Group with more than 500 members, whose main purpose it is to assist veteran employees with their workforce transition and any other challenges. This is in addition to the support the committee members provide to their local military and veteran non-profit organizations.

Q:

From an educational perspective, what advice would you offer to transitioning servicemembers trying to determine a degree path/career field for their civilian careers?

A:

My advice is to have a plan and work it! Early on, you should try to understand how you want to leverage your skill set beyond your military career and start planning for your civilian dream job.

Q:

What do you believe makes your company particularly veteran-inclusive and supportive?

A:

The Rockwell Collins Military & Veteran Employee Resource Group makes a major effort to work with hiring managers to help them understand how military skills, such as leading large groups and working in highly stressful environments, can benefit the company by translating to strong leadership skills and the ability to make good, fast decisions under pressure. ★

For more information, contact MAE&T Editor Kelly Fodel at kellyf@kmimediagroup.com or search our online archives for related stories at www.mae-kmi.com.

▲▲▲

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“My today started when I realized my leadership skills were building blocks. After serving my country with tours in Afghanistan and Iraq, I was equipped with the fundamentals. But I knew there was room to grow and more to learn. At the University of Nebraska at Omaha, I found a highly ranked program available online that worked with me while overseas and helped develop the skills I apply in my role each day. Thanks to my advanced degree, I’m able to use my leadership and managerial expertise to tackle administrative challenges. And I’m excited to see my opportunities continue to grow today and tomorrow.”

JEFF LEHMKUHL
Master of Public Administration
University of Nebraska at Omaha



Defending the Homefront

Careers in homeland security offer a natural extension of military training.

By Kasey Chisholm
MAE&T Correspondent

Current and former members of our military take their oath to protect and serve our nation very seriously. Many of these dedicated men and women choose to pursue other ways of serving and protecting beyond their time in uniform, namely through the field of homeland security. Irmak Renda-Tanali, professor and program chair of the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Graduate Degree Specialization at University of Maryland University College, notes that military tactics do not always apply to civilian world but the discipline, patriotism and service-mindedness do. “Former members of the military are thus well suited to take an important part in securing our homeland in the civilian side,” said Renda-Tanali. The ideals gained during one’s military career establish a strong base for varied careers in homeland security.

Not only is a military veteran a prime candidate for careers in homeland security, but the demand for homeland security professionals is higher than ever. “With continual threats around the world and specifically in the U.S., there is growing concern to protect the homeland,” shared Kelli Frakes, program director of Homeland Security at American Military University. She continued, “For this reason, careers in homeland security are only growing. Members of the homeland security enterprise—such as the Department of Homeland Security, state and local public safety entities, and large corporations—are aggressively searching for people who have the comprehensive educational training to be intellectual and strategic leaders in this field,” making job prospects for trained, experienced workers strong. Students of homeland security can continue serving their country by helping eliminate such threats in a variety of ways.

AMERICAN MILITARY UNIVERSITY

American Military University offers students a bachelor's or master's degree in Homeland Security. In the bachelor program, students will study the basics of terrorism, counterterrorism, hazard management, intelligence, and other components of national security. In the Master's degree curriculum, students will focus on concentrations in Business, Counterterrorism Studies, Criminal Justice, Cyber, Emergency Management and Public Health, Intelligence Studies and Transportation Security or a general concentration. "AMU's Homeland Security courses are taught by highly credentialed faculty that not only possess the education, but are experts in their field," said Frakes. "In addition, the curriculum is regularly reviewed by an advisory council of industry experts for relevancy to today's marketplace."



Kelli Frakes

American Military University

A degree from AMU in Homeland Security prepares students for a variety of career paths, including employment with federal, state, and local entities, as well as employment in the private sector. "Knowledgeable employees who can contribute new ideas, identify and critique unexamined assumptions of policy and strategy, and who have the ability to translate good intentions into effective action are in demand," shared Frakes, and are areas of focus in AMU's course work.

"Homeland Security is often touted as having a multidisciplinary approach and includes many stakeholders and responsibilities," explained Frakes, which she believes makes a military background beneficial for prospective students. Approximately two-thirds of currently enrolled students in the Homeland Security programs at AMU are active or former military, and AMU takes great pride in ensuring support for this population. Academic advising, mentoring, the APUS online library, and Tutor.com are just a few of the supports in place.

AMU also is home to the Homeland Security Network and the largest chapter of the Student Veterans of America organizations. Financially, AMU offers "a grant which caps our undergraduate tuition at \$250/credit hour and graduate

"AMU HELPED ME REACH HIGHER"

AMU ALUM AND VETERAN WES O'DONNELL (MBA 2011)



Veteran, author, and entrepreneur Wes O'Donnell gained the right tools and confidence from AMU to publish a book, start a healthcare solutions company, and launch a successful digital media group. Join the #1 provider of education to the Armed Forces* and gain knowledge that's relevant to what you do today and what you want to do tomorrow. Reach higher at www.AMUonline.com/MAE

*As reported by Military Times, July/August 2015

tuition at \$325/credit hour for U.S. active-duty servicemembers, Guard, Reserve, military spouses and dependents, and veterans,” explained Frakes, and textbooks or e-books are provided at no charge. At times, military education and training may earn students credit as well.

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

Arizona State University offers a fully online Master of Arts in Emergency Management and Homeland Security, offering top-notch education with the convenience and flexibility of distance learning. The degree specifically offers concentrations in homeland security and in biosecurity and threat management, emphasizing “public management and leadership skills in the areas of emergencies,



Brian J. Gerber

Arizona State University

disasters and homeland security issues,” outlined Brian J. Gerber, associate professor and director of the Emergency Management and Homeland Security program at ASU. Gerber realizes that “given the increasingly complex set of challenges facing our country and the rest of the world, it is more important than ever that programs like ours attract talented and committed individuals so that we can assist their long-term career efforts aimed at making those important contributions.”

That makes now a critical time to consider this career path. An MA from ASU prepares graduates for a variety of career paths dealing with public safety, emergency management and other areas of hazards management in both the private and public sectors. Another degree, a Master of Public Safety Leadership and Administration, is also offered at ASU with three concentrations in Executive Police Administration, Executive Fire Administration and Emergency Medical Services—Mobile Integrated Healthcare; while not specifically a degree in Homeland Security, it is closely related and a possible path for interested servicemembers.

“Students with military service experience bring an important set of skills and perspectives that translate perfectly into emergency and security management practices,” explained Gerber. “Our program helps relate those knowledge skills and abilities developed in their military service into a career development path pertaining to security, threat, or hazards management.”

Approximately one quarter of currently enrolled students in the program are former or active military. The Pat Tillman Veterans Center, an resource specifically intentioned to help with the academic and career development for ASU’s military students, has helped make ASU a national leader in higher education for those with military experience. At ASU,

there is a dedication to these students that includes transition assistance, mentorship, and guidance for benefits.

EXCELSIOR COLLEGE

In Excelsior College’s School of Public Service, there are two bachelor’s degrees that students can pursue in their efforts to follow the homeland security career path. The first is a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice with a concentration in Homeland Security, while the second is the new Bachelor of Science in Homeland Security and Emergency Management.



Michael A. Verro

Excelsior College

Few pre-requisites as well as generous transfer credit and training/experience credit allowances enable students in these degrees to complete them with relative speed and economy. “With the ever-increasing threat of terrorist attacks, cybersecurity breaches, and wanton violence against various cultural and religious groups, this is an important time for students to consider these types of degrees and employment,” said Michael A. Verro, the senior program director of the School of Public Service at Excelsior. Graduates of the programs “may choose to go into the Department of Homeland Security itself, or the Coast Guard, FEMA, NSA, or any other homeland defense or intelligence gathering entity. Also, there is a significant need for emergency managers at the local and state level.”

Excelsior allows students the opportunity to complete “stackable credentialing,” meaning that Students may start with their associate degree in criminal justice, “and work all the way up to their master’s degree in homeland security through our college,” shared Verro.

Currently, 70 to 80 percent of currently enrolled students in the homeland security concentrations are active or former military. Verro noted that a large portion of servicemembers’ military training could be converted in to college credit “because of the nature of military organizations—structure, chain of command, knowledge of weapons, tactics, international policies, and politics—students who come from the military are especially suited for this type of education and work.”

Each student’s experience is reviewed by the Center for Military Education at Excelsior to see exactly what can be credited as college-level experience by the American Council on Education (ACE). The Lt Col Bryant A. Murray Veterans Center is also an excellent resource, providing assistance regarding financing, educational benefits, college basics, time management, career, and even health and wellness to military members and their families. Verro noted that the Veterans Center has “a section on business ownership, faculty

and staff information on military and veterans, transition assistance, and on-demand webinars on college and career topics” and that the college offers special pricing opportunities for military members and their spouses.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

For servicemembers interested in a career in homeland security, University of Maryland University College has a variety of programs for prospective students to consider. The first program is a Bachelor in Public Safety Administration (PSA), which “is meant for those people wanting to work throughout public safety, but mainly for those wanting to bridge the gaps between the public safety silos,” detailed Susan Blankenship, the program chair of the Public Safety and Investigative Forensics programs at UMUC. A student enrolled in the PSA degree can minor in Homeland Security. The program emphasizes cross-agency issues and corporation and collaboration. It also works through the public safety cycle of planning, implementation, risk management, analysis and re-planning, ultimately preparing students for whatever career specialization of their choosing. Blankenship noted that “a degree in Public Safety Administration can allow a student to become employed in homeland security, advance in their homeland security career or go on to graduate school to receive an advanced degree in homeland security management.” Approximately half of the students currently enrolled in the PSA degree at UMUC are connected to the military, including current and former servicemembers as well as military spouses and dependents.

Graduate level students also have homeland security degree options at UMUC in the Master of Science in Homeland Security program. Renda-Tanali shared that the focus of this MS is to “provide an essential understanding of the need to protect the people, communities, critical infrastructures, and key assets of the nation from terrorist attacks as well as natural calamities.” Students engage in learning that closely mimics real life scenarios to prepare them for the skills needed at the local, state, and federal levels.



Susan Blankenship

University of Maryland
University College



Irmak Renda-Tanali

University of Maryland
University College

“Our curriculum teaches the students the principles of working in collaboration with others in federal and local governments, private sector and not-for-profit sectors, by effective communication in order to break down barriers between agencies, how to build public and private partnerships, how to navigate the political environment, and how to manage crises by the use of knowledge, technology, and science-based approach based on education, training, experience, ethical practice, public stewardship and continuous improvement,” explained Renda-Tanali.

Graduates of the MS in Homeland Security degree program find work in both the public and private sectors. Possible careers graduates might pursue include: Business Continuity Specialists, Chief Operations Officers, Contingency Planners, Corporate Physical Security Officers, Critical Infrastructure Security Specialists, Emergency Management Specialists, Environmental Health, Safety, and Security Analysts, Facility Security Managers/Officers, Hazard/Threat/Risk Management Specialists, Homeland Security Analysts/Consultants/Specialists and more. Currently more than 60 percent of the enrolled students in the MS in Homeland Security are military members or their families.

Whether prospective students are considering the PSA degree or the MS in Homeland Security, UMUC offers a great support system for military veterans and their families. “We offer military advising teams, hybrid classes on many military bases throughout the world, in-state Maryland tuition rates for military members and their dependents no matter where in the world they are living, and a support group for veterans,” Blankenship said. In addition, UMUC holds open houses on military bases to encourage military students to continue their education.

UMUC recognizes that military service prepares students to enter these career paths. “Because military students usually have experience with the factors and aspects of those threats to homeland security, they bring that understanding to the classroom,” continued Blankenship, “And, since the entire U.S. military was built using public safety as the main reason of existence, a public safety career is a natural fit for a member of the military looking to transition to civilian life.” Renda-Tanali agreed, noting that “With the current turmoil in the Middle East and the ISIS-linked terror attacks purported by jihadi fighters across the world, we need to arm individuals with knowledge and tools to combat terrorism, along with a knowledge to protect our people and assets from such attacks.” That makes now the perfect time for servicemembers to make the transition to the civilian security workforce. ★

For more information, contact MAE&T Editor Kelly Fodel at kellyf@kmimediagroup.com or search our online archives for related stories at www.mae-kmi.com.

Coding Scholarships for Veterans

The demand for professional computer coders continues to grow and the U.S. Department of Labor predicts that by 2020 there will be 1.4 million coding jobs available in the American workforce. To enable U.S. veterans to tap into this pipeline of opportunity, LaSalle Computer Learning Center in Tampa is offering full scholarships to its Web Application Development Diploma Program, which teaches how to code.

With a focus on Microsoft C#.net, the program offers a diverse and comprehensive coursework that includes learning introduction to programming concepts, HTML5, CSS, JavaScript, Visual Studio .NET, SQL Server, among other topics. It is five months in duration starting in September 2016. The deadline to apply for the scholarships is August 31.

This comprehensive program will cover what local area employers are looking for Junior .NET Web Application Developers.

“Military families and veterans have been an important part of the Tampa Bay community’s fabric for many decades contributing to its strength, diversity and vibrancy,” said LaSalle’s Associate Director and Military Liaison, Kasandra Perez. “We want to give back to the many men and women who have served and continue to serve our community and our nation by helping them develop a highly coveted, in demand skill for the current job market.”

“Coding” is the new buzz word used in industry to describe what was called computer programming. Individuals can work on web applications, websites or software applications that power up everyday life. Without it, there wouldn’t be social media, smartphones, web browsers or blogs. Learning how to code has become imperative for technology professionals in the digital age.

To qualify for LaSalle’s scholarship, you must be active duty, a veteran, military spouse or military dependent. No experience is necessary, however, candidates should have a comprehensive understanding of the way the internet works and an eagerness to learn, the commitment to comply with program requirements and a high school diploma. Those applying must be 18 or older. To receive an application or for additional information, email kperez@LaSalleComputer.edu.

UT Dallas: New Public Policy Degree

Starting this fall, the School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences (EPPS) at UT Dallas will offer a bachelor’s degree in public policy that will include new courses focusing on legal and legislative issues related to science, big data and the internet.

With the program, UT Dallas will be the only public university in Texas to offer a public policy degree at the undergraduate level. The University already offers a master’s degree in public policy and a PhD in public policy and political economy.

The bachelor’s degree, approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in January, will prepare students to analyze potential solutions to problems facing government, nonprofits and businesses, said Dr. Jennifer Holmes, professor and head of the political science, public policy and political economy programs.

“We’re proud to offer the new bachelor’s degree in public policy at UT Dallas,” she said. “The new degree will give students the opportunity to gain expertise in a field that continues to grow as institutions of all kinds increasingly seek people with the skills needed to solve complex problems in diverse policy areas such as environment, education or health care.”

Students will take classes from economics, political science, public policy, international political economy and other related disciplines.

Also this fall, EPPS will offer two new minors: a 21-hour public policy minor and an 18-hour science, technology and policy minor. The science, technology and policy minor will include new courses focusing on legal and legislative issues related to science, big data and the internet, in addition to a selection of policy-related courses.

Codeup Accepts G.I. Bill Benefits; First Coding Career Program in Southern US

As of mid-July, Codeup welcomes all U.S. military veterans to accelerate their careers in software development by utilizing their education benefits from the G.I. Bill. As San Antonio’s first ever web and software development career accelerator program, Codeup will now also be recognized as one of the first four career accelerators in the nation to accept G.I. Bills as a form of payment.

“We are proud to support our active duty and veteran populations by providing them with another avenue to deepen their skills and enhance their career opportunities. From our start, Codeup has partnered with organizations and community efforts that support the betterment of the valiant lives of our armed forces, and this is one more way that Codeup wanted to show full support for our military population.” says CEO of Codeup, Kay Jones.

“As employers continue to seek more diverse knowledge and skills in their candidates, Codeup continues to deliver a superior educational program, providing exposure to mentorships, apprenticeships and development of softer skills like resume writing and interview skills,” Kay continued. “We commit deeply to helping our students accelerate their careers by building a well rounded and relevant curriculum that supports our graduates as they fill the growing demand for Software Developers.”

There remains to be more than 200,000 unfilled software development-related job openings. As an underrepresented demographic in the software engineering industry at about 2.2-percent, U.S. veterans will now be able to accelerate their career and take advantage of this industry trend with minimal financial burden due to the benefits that come with using their G.I. bill.

With the G.I. Bill’s ability to cover up to 100-percent of the tuition cost, Codeup aims to lessen the financial burden for veterans who are interested in becoming web developers and software engineers. Aside from the G.I. Bill financing, Codeup also offers a wide variety of financial aid options to help students in jumpstarting their careers and achieving their goals.

For more information, visit www.codeup.com.

West Chester U: New Degree Programs

The Board of Governors of Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education approved a new Bachelor of Science degree in urban and environmental planning and a Master of Science in human resource management, both to be offered by West Chester University of Pennsylvania.

The Bachelor of Science in urban and environmental planning was designed to prepare graduates to work as professional planners, geographic information systems (GIS) analysts, and environmental specialists and in related fields. The program will ensure students are trained with cutting-edge geospatial technologies and with a deep knowledge of local and regional sustainability concerns.

The Master of Science in human resource management will be offered online and will be targeted toward working HR professionals looking to advance their careers. It will focus on the development of core competencies in the areas of compensation and benefits, employee and labor relations, ethics, global human resources, human resource metrics, leadership and change management and workforce planning.

Both of the new degree programs will be offered beginning this fall.

Since June 2010, the State System universities have added 86 new academic programs; placed 141 programs into moratorium, during which no new students are accepted into the program is reviewed to determine whether it should be reinstated, reorganized or eliminated; and discontinued 189 programs.

Master of Global Affairs at Notre Dame

The University of Notre Dame's new Donald R. Keough School of Global Affairs announced the opening of applications for its inaugural academic program, the two-year professional Master of Global Affairs. The program is designed to prepare new generations of leaders and agents of change in governments, nongovernmental and civil society organizations, and the private sector.

"The world clearly needs more highly skilled, effective and ethical leaders, and Notre Dame—with its global reach, powerful mission and accomplished teaching and research community—is prepared in a distinctive way to contribute to the education and training of global professionals," said Scott Appleby, Marilyn Keough Dean of the Keough School.

Appleby said students in the master's program, while focusing their studies in one or two areas of specialization, "will be challenged to think broadly and imaginatively about the 21st-century world. They will spend extensive time in global settings—forging real-world partnerships and effective and inclusive global solutions."

All students in the interdisciplinary Master of Global Affairs will receive rigorous training in the broad field of global affairs and skills training to match their career aspirations. They will choose a concentration in Sustainable Development or International Peace Studies (which builds on the 30-year-old program of the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies) or Global Affairs with options to specialize in areas such as economic development, global religion, human rights, international law, environmental sustainability, international politics, governance, conflict analysis and mediation, or regional or national cultures and history, among other areas.

Distinctive features of the master's curriculum include integration labs organized around real-world problems and extensive field work with Notre Dame partner organizations in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America. Students will graduate with two full years of practical experience, positioning them for high-impact careers in a wide range of global fields.

All qualified students will be eligible for a tuition scholarship and stipend. The deadline for applications is Dec. 15. Classes begin in August 2017.

EBV Program Provides Entrepreneurship 'Bootcamp' Training to Post 9/11 Veterans

More than 80 veterans with disabilities converged on the UCLA, Texas A&M, and Syracuse University campuses in July to leverage the valued skills gained from military service and learn the basics of business ownership during the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV).

The Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University (IVMF) and nine other EBV consortium schools across the country deliver the EBV Program to post-9/11 veterans with service-connected disabilities, who desire to develop the skills and tools needed to launch and maintain successful businesses. Assistance from the U.S. Small Business Administration, corporate partners and donors allows participants to attend the EBV program cost-free.

UCLA's Anderson School of Management held its EBV program from July 9 – 17, 2016. The Mays Business School at Texas A&M University, and Syracuse University's Whitman School of Management both ran their respective EBV programs July 16 through July 23.

EBV is a three-phase program, beginning with a three-week online instructor-led course where participants shape business plans and learn business language. During the second phase, participants complete an intensive eight-day residency at each university, learning the 'nuts and bolts' of business ownership from established entrepreneurs and educators. Following the residency, EBV graduates receive access to a year-long support and mentorship program through EBV Technical Assistance, managed by the IVME.

"EBV has produced more than 1,300 graduates since 2007, of which 68 percent have launched new ventures," said Tina Kapral, Senior Director of Education and Training at IVME. "The IVMF at Syracuse University is excited to work again with UCLA and Texas A&M to support our nation's veterans in creating and growing their own small businesses."

Celebrating its 10-year anniversary this July, the EBV program was launched at Syracuse's Whitman School of Management in 2007. Since the original class, the IVMF has expanded the EBV Program to ten world-class universities throughout the U.S. In addition to Syracuse University, UCLA, and Texas A&M University, the EBV Program is also offered at the following universities:

- College of Business at Florida State University
- Krannert School of Management at Purdue University
- School of Business at the University of Connecticut (UCONN)
- E.J. Ourso College of Business at Louisiana State University (LSU)
- School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University
- Haub School of Business at Saint Joseph's University
- Trulaske College of Business at the University of Missouri

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Connecting at a Distance

Q&A

Insights into the world of distance education with an education and training leader.

Leah K. Matthews Executive Director Distance Education Accrediting Commission

Leah Matthews began serving as the DEAC Executive Director on April 1, 2013. Matthews came to DEAC from her previous position as Vice President for Recognition Services at the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), the national coordinating organization for higher education accrediting organizations. Matthews is currently serving an At-Large Member of the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET) and as a board member of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA).

Prior to working with CHEA, Dr. Matthews served nearly 12 years on the staff of the Accrediting Commission for Career Schools and Colleges, of which for seven years she held a senior leadership position. Prior to joining ACCSC, Matthews worked for five years as a civilian based at the U.S. Army Japan Headquarters in Zama, Japan where she directed family support services and education programs for children and youth and where she directed the Army Family Action Plan advocating for post-secondary education opportunities for soldiers and families assigned to the U.S. Army Japan, Headquarters. Matthews earned a Bachelor of Arts in Music from Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA; a Master of Public Administration from the University of Oklahoma and a PhD in Education from George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia.



Q: Thank you for joining MAE&T for another interview. We noticed that the organization you represent changed its name last year. Tell us about the rationale for the change of name.

A: Thank you so much for inviting me to participate in another interview with MAE&T. Since we last talked, the organization changed its name on January 5, 2015 from the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC) to the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC) to reflect our broader strategic initiatives for quality assurance in the field of distance education and our expertise in driving the innovations needed to shape the future of education. The change of name to DEAC communicates a clear and consistent message about DEAC's primary function in accreditation and its value to a stakeholder base that includes institutions, students, employers, non-traditional education providers, regulators, and trendsetters in distance education.

Q: How do you think distance education is changing and what do you think are some of the most pressing challenges?

A: All forms of education, to include distance education, have become incredibly dependent on the integration of technology into teaching and learning. This is not going away. It is clear that distance education and online learning is a major focus of nearly every college and university in the United States. Modern learners are continually connected to new and evolving content that addresses their personal learning needs in ways unimagined just as recently as a year ago. Distance education is making more use of open educational resources (OER) that offer free educational material. There are dozens of repositories available to the public for re-use and re-formatting at no charge through resources such as Merlot and OpenStax. More than ever before, distance education is firmly established within the mainstream of higher education. The challenge is to try to imagine what is next for distance education and how to assure the quality of the teaching and learning. Although new technologies that integrate facets such as gamification and adaptive learning into the education experience are innovative and exciting, we must stay focused on what students are learning and on evidence that students are achieving learning outcomes.

Q: You stated above that distance education is “firmly established within the mainstream of higher education.” Upon what do you base this statement?

A: Data reported by institutions to the US Department of education proves this trend. Annually, the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET) provides detailed summaries and analysis of the distance education data reported to the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Fall Enrollment 2014 survey. IPEDS is a national survey of postsecondary institutions in the United States, which is conducted by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics. Based upon its analysis of the most recently available data, WCET reported that in fall 2014:

- One-in-seven (14 percent) of all higher education students took all of their courses exclusively at a distance.
- One-in-seven (14 percent) of all higher education students took some but not all of their courses at a distance.
- More than one in four students (28 percent) enrolled in at least one of their courses at a distance in the fall of 2014.

WCET's careful scrutiny of the data also reveals that distance education enrollments grew each year, even as overall higher education enrollments have declined. Clearly, distance education is imbedded within the U.S. system of higher education. If MAE&T readers are interested in learning more about distance education enrollment trends at U.S. institutions, I highly recommend they review the report at the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies website: <http://wcet.wiche.edu/initiatives/research/WCET-Distance-Education-Enrollment-Report-2016>

Q: There is a lot of hype in both the media and in policy forums about competency based education. What do you think is driving the discussion?

A: Competency-based education has been around for a long time and while it once stood as a central feature of vocational education programs, it is now conflated with programs offered by distance education institutions. In an online learning environment, it certainly has the potential to reform higher education, it can increase the effectiveness of the education experience and reduce the amount of time needed to earn a degree. Competency based learning delivered via distance education centers around an academic model where the time it takes to demonstrate competencies varies but the expectations for learning outcomes are constant. Students acquire and demonstrate their knowledge through engaging in learning activities and experiences that align with programmatic outcomes. Learners earn credentials by demonstrating mastery through multiple forms of assessment, often at a pace determined by the learner. However, federal financial aid regulations present significant challenges to fully realizing the potential of competency based learning. The foundation of financial aid regulations holds time as constant (through credit hour allocation) whereas competency based education treats learning as constant and time as variable. Although institutions may offer competency-based education programs that are eligible for federal financial aid, they must map competencies back to time units (credit hours) if students are to receive financial aid.

Q: Are competency-based education opportunities a viable option for service members or veterans?

A: Certainly a competency-based education program can play to the strengths of an individual who has already refined critical skills, knowledge, theories, and abilities through learning and practical experiences gained through military service. Assessments measure an individual's skills and abilities as well as their understanding of academic theory with an emphasis on practical knowledge. For example, a student studying web design may undergo an assessment that involves a redesign of a website to demonstrate knowledge of interactive best practices, rather than answer multiple-choice questions about effective web design strategies. Students in competency-based education programs are able to move more quickly through material where they have deep experience and slow down to focus on areas that are unfamiliar. Servicemembers and veterans who are interested in learning more about competency-based education programs should consider the Competency Based Education Network (C-BEN) at www.cbenet-work.org for a list of institutions that offer competency-based programs.

Q: So when you think about all of the different technologies that support student learning and achievement of competencies, what is your advice for how students can showcase the knowledge they gained in a digital world? This is particularly important for servicemembers and veterans who are anticipating a transition to a new career after completing their education goals.

A: I highly recommend the use of an electronic portfolio or "ePortfolio" in addition to the traditional resumé. ePortfolios are becoming an increasingly popular alternative to traditional paper-based portfolios because they can provide a means for assessment based on evidence of an individual's growth over time and effort as compared to a list of test scores or an academic transcript. Evaluating the learner's work using a variety of media such as projects, infographics, written work (a blog, for example), video interviews and other communications provide a view into the individual's perspectives and capabilities in addition to their academic strengths. A longitudinal view of a learner's experiences through the use of an ePortfolio presents a profile of accomplishment based on evidence and makes the learning more visible. Students can use free websites such as portfolium.com to organize their materials and then circulate their ePortfolio to a wide audience of potential employers.

Q: What are important factors servicemembers and veterans should consider when determining whether a distance education program is the right fit for achieving their education goals?

A: Choosing the right distance education institution is an extremely important decision. First and foremost, it is essential to confirm that the institution is accredited. There are many different accrediting organizations that are recognized for establishing and assuring quality standards for distance education. These accrediting agencies are listed by The US Department of Higher Education and The Council for Higher Education Accreditation. However, institutional accreditation for distance education is just one important aspect to consider. When potential students are seeking to obtain a credential that will lead to licensure or certification in a specific profession (such as nursing, veterinary technician, teaching, or information technology) it is vitally important to also

confirm that the institution holds the appropriate programmatic accreditation status and that upon successful completion of the program the graduate may take the requisite licensure examination needed to enter the profession.

Q: What qualities make someone a good candidate for distance education?

A: It is important to understand that in the distance education environment, students have significant amounts of autonomy and responsibility for the learning experience. Students engage in learning in a digital networked culture that demands participatory learning and authentic engagement. Helping student servicemembers and veterans succeed means assuring that such students have the attitude and aptitude for distance education. Motivation is a key factor of success in distance education. This is an attribute that many servicemembers and veterans already possess; the challenge is to help them adapt the skills and attitude they have developed through their military service for use within a learning environment. To start, potential students should honestly assess their motivation by asking themselves “Do I have the self-discipline needed to avoid distractions, stay organized, and complete my assignments when the going gets tough?” Potential students should also honestly assess their technology preparedness and confidence. A growing number of people consume digital information as part of their daily lives, but engaging as a learner in a networked, digital culture requires a high level of technical aptitude. Being ready technologically requires more than just maintaining an up to date and functioning computer environment, a well-connected and reliable internet service provider, and posting pictures using social media. Potential students should honestly assess whether they possess the technical aptitude necessary to be successful in online learning. They should ask themselves “Do I use a computer, tablet, or smart phone as a normal part of everyday activities (i.e. communicating, networking, banking, information gathering, scheduling)?” and “Do I have at least a working knowledge of open, public, free-of-charge digital

platforms frequently used as part of a digital learning environment (i.e. WordPress, TABS Explorer, Diigo, Twitter, or Google Hangouts)?” Many of today’s digital environments incorporate powerful connected learning spaces that require students to access resources and authentic audiences, express themselves through near-professional grade media, and make more immediate connections via hyperlinks and personal learning networks. If engaging in this kind of learning environment raises concern about the technical support needed to take full advantage of this kind of learning environment, and then carefully reconsider online learning.

Q: What are the benefits to distance education as compared to an on-campus education model?

A: Many of the benefits of distance education are already well-established; the convenience and flexibility are immensely appealing to individuals who are seeking a part-time option that is well suited to a busy life of full-time work, family obligations and other pressures. It is also important to consider that for post-traditional students, such as current servicemembers and veterans, a return to a college environment can be overwhelming. Distance education offers the same variety of options as does the on-ground campus setting. Programs of study available online cover the entire spectrum of disciplines, ranging from certification in an information technology field, to health sciences, to Juris doctorate degrees. Enrolling in a distance education program can also help to alleviate the challenges active duty servicemembers face related to geographic mobility, deployments, and other disruptions that interfere with their academic pursuits. A key word here is flexibility. Another key word is connections. More than ever, distance education is building communities of learners who are making connections between their work, research, and personal experiences in ways that are not often discussed in traditional classrooms but are attuned to the nuances of digital workflows. Experiencing diversified and powerful connections through distance education can prepare servicemembers and veterans to engage in a digital world with success and confidence. ★

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Service to School

PERFECTING THE MILITARY-TO-ACADEMIA TRANSITION.
By BETH MORGAN

For many who selflessly sacrificed for our country, going to college or earning an advanced degree seems out of reach. They might worry their grades aren't good enough or they didn't prepare earlier in life for getting an education. As the costs of higher education skyrocket, many fear the education they need to start their dream career just might be too expensive.

Without question, however, our active duty servicemembers and veterans have unique gifts, which make them stand out from other applicants, from leadership skills to strong work ethics. Service to School (S2S), a non-profit organization, is proud to help make those gifts known to prospective colleges and universities across America. It all starts with the applicant understanding and appreciating all they have to offer an academic community.

Service to School provides free application counseling to military veterans. Our goal is to help veterans win admission to the best institutions possible and to help them maximize their education benefits. This is achieved by employing the "T.R.A.I.N." method: providing quality test preparation, offering résumé and transcript review, assisting in the application and essay process, preparing individuals for interviews and fostering networking relationships. Along the way, applicants receive guidance from experts and other veterans to navigate the process. We understand the transition from warrior to student can often pose its own challenges, and we stand ready to provide support for our heroes now in the classroom. We provide all of this at no cost to the applicant.

We are inspired by the results we have already achieved. Prior to the Fall 2016 admission cycle, Service to School assisted 20 undergraduate applicants gain admission to college since its founding in 2010. Because we saw a great need to assist enlisted men and women obtain their undergraduate degree, we've dedicated much of our resources with them in mind. As a

result, for the Fall 2016 admission cycle, we assisted 85 undergraduate applicants gain admission to a four-year university. This includes admission to many highly selective universities and colleges including Yale, Harvard, Princeton, Columbia, Cornell, Stanford, Brown, Williams, Smith, Notre Dame, Berkeley, and Amherst. In total, Service to School has served more than 300 active duty servicemembers and veterans who sought higher education, including law and MBA students.

Most importantly, Service to School is transforming the lives of those to whom we dedicate our service. One such student is Tony Grant, a Mississippian who was tired of working dead-end jobs and wanted better for his life. In the U.S. Air Force, he learned three languages working as an analyst in the intelligence community.

Grant wanted to translate his language aptitude into a diplomatic job with the State Department. He knew he needed an education to accomplish that goal. With the help of S2S ambassador Sean O'Grady, Grant, who once had been discouraged by a lower than average ACT score, earned a spot at Yale University.

"S2S provided the confidence I lacked to seek schools outside of my comfort zone and realize what I have to offer," Grant said.



Tony Grant



Eric O'Connor

“My ambassador coached me in the art of military-to-civilian writing to the point where I am comfortable doing the same for others.”

Eric O'Connor has also benefitted from the guidance of ambassador O'Grady. The Army communications specialist wanted to finish his undergraduate degree and earn a Master's in Business Administration. His heart was set on Columbia University, but it had been quite some time since O'Connor wrote academically.

That's where Service to School stepped in. S2S helped O'Connor with personal essay and interview preparation, as well as remaining diligent with the admissions office at Columbia. Today, O'Connor is living his dream at Columbia University's School of General Studies, and he credits S2S for helping him make it happen.



Piragash Swargaloganthan

“Without all the help and support, I don't know if this would have been a first time go,” O'Connor explained. “S2S is truly a unique program offering servicemembers unparalleled help and opportunities to help brighten our future.”

Navy Hospital Corpsman Piragash Swargaloganthan also desired a brighter future. He was attending community college but wanted to pursue a fuller education to prepare him for medi-

cal school. Unfortunately, Swargaloganthan had no formal guidance or knowledge of the higher educational process.

Service to School Ambassador Saamon Legoski changed that. He helped Swargaloganthan find the right school that fit his needs. S2S also reviewed his application essays and provided suggestions for improvement, and helped him complete his entire application package. Throughout the process, S2S offered him support as he wrapped up his community college experience.

S2S connected him via VetLink, a program bridging the gap between veterans and interested schools, to institutions that saw value in his specialized skills. As a result of his hard work and the efforts of his S2S support team, Swargaloganthan was awarded admission to Cornell's College of Human Ecology. He also received a 100 percent need-based financial aid package.



Stephen Fraser



Benton Leary

Harrison B., Student
Two tours of duty. Dad. C.J.



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“Service to School gave me the guidance and knowledge to be a successful applicant to a highly selective institution,” he said. “Without the help of this organization, I cannot imagine this would have happened.”

Stephen Fraser, a Marine data technician, is the first person in his family to go to college. In fact, he never thought he’d go to college at all. Now he’s at Dartmouth College, due in part to the support he received from S2S.

Thanks to a Service to School testing preparation scholarship, Fraser raised his SAT score from 1570 to 1790. S2S provided guidance on how to improve his admissions essays and helped him build an academic network. The organization even provided guidance in determining which school was right for him.

“Service to School enabled me to realize my potential, earn admission to my dream school and chase my aspirations,” Fraser explained. “I would not be where I am without S2S and through their investment in me, my life has been changed forever.”

Benton Leary served in the Navy as a Submarine Reactor Operator and made the decision to apply to go back to college



while on active duty during a strenuous reactor refuel and engine-room overhaul. He needed assistance since he had to position his newfound experiences against a relatively poor high school performance, and time was at a premium just to get his application completed.

Service to School stepped up with the support Leary needed, not only providing constructive feedback on the direction his applications should take, but also introducing him to interested schools he had not actively been pursuing previously, resulting in numerous college opportunities. Leary ended up gaining acceptance and selecting to attend Williams College. He was even awarded a grant to cover any costs in attending Williams not covered by the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill.

Leary tells it this way, “Service to School’s mentorship allowed me to perfect my applications and maximize my admission possibilities; without their help I would not have been able to start my education at a top-tier school.”

There are countless stories like this from the beneficiaries of Service to School. With the help of committed donors and community partners, S2S hopes to assist even more brave men and women as they pursue their academic passions. We are confident our tailored approach meets the needs of those returning to academia best and our constant mentorship provides the support these warriors need.

With so many of the world’s top companies actively recruiting those with military service, we are delighted to help them achieve the academic success to enrich their lives and advance their careers. They have served us. Now, it is our turn to serve them.

Beth Morgan is the executive director of Service to School. For more information, visit www.Service2School.org. ★

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Support from Afar



EVEN IF YOU'RE TAKING A CLASS FROM A DISTANCE, RESOURCES EXIST TO ENSURE SUCCESS.

Online education is only as good as the support services backing up the course content. How do schools go above and beyond in providing ancillary services to military students learning online? *MAE&T* asked a group of institutions to describe their methods of supporting the online student and why it is so important to have these support structures in place.



DARRELL EVERHART

**DIRECTOR OF MILITARY & VETERAN SUCCESS CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN**

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) has a long history of honoring and serving student veterans, active-duty, reservists, National Guard and military dependents and spouses. UNL's Military & Veteran Success Center (MVSC) supports military and veteran students in their transition to an academic environment while providing services and resources that support their success. The Center provides academic and transition coaching connecting students with resources, informing them about various scholarship and tutoring programs, empowering them to make decisions through their academic advisors and providing guidance on different majors and courses of study that will prepare them for yet another transition, to the career force. As a one-stop location, MVSC has established

a network with such services as Career Services, First Year Experience and Transition Programs, Counseling and Psychological Services, Services for Students with Disabilities, the Women's Center, the University Registrar, Scholarships and Financial Aid, and many others. It is a one-stop location for certifying educational benefits and for providing advice on military credit, tuition assistance, and Veterans Affairs educational programs. A successful network of peer-mentor leaders and an orientation program initiates early outreach and provides a reliable and sustainable support program.

Student support staff and technology helpdesk resources are available online, via phone, text, or chat. The writing center provides in-person, phone, and desktop conferencing coaching appointments. Through University Libraries, distance students have remote access to electronic and print resources, liai-

son librarian instruction, reference assistance and delivery of materials. Distance students have access to all career services through phone or Skype consultations.

Online resources are extensive for all master and doctoral students. A dedicated distance education program specialist is assisted by doctoral and master program specialists. Each student is linked with a faculty advisor who assists them throughout their program of study and remains with them to graduation.

Faculty teaching online are the same as those who teach on-campus courses. Online instructors are supported by instructional designers who assist them in developing and teaching their courses. University-wide as well as college and department specific events, online resources, and training institutes are all offered to faculty teaching at a distance.



MARGARET OAKAR

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, ADMISSION SERVICES FOR OUTREACH AND ONLINE EDUCATION
PENN STATE UNIVERSITY**

Penn State World Campus is proud to support the military community as they advance their education in one of our 125 online programs, and we have several student support services in place to assist our prospective and current students.

We have an established, dedicated team of staff members from across the university to support our military students at every step of the way—from when they inquire to the time they are a student and even after they graduate. This team consists of admissions

counselors, undergraduate academic advisers, VA certifying officials, disability services counselors, and bursar and registrar office staff that work specifically with military students. We believe it is crucial that military students get connected to the right support person or office for the proper service to make their transition and experience as smooth and successful as possible.

The first point of contact is our military admissions team, whose counselors provide support to prospective students as they choose their program of study and initiate the use of the military educational benefits. Our military admissions counselors are

well-versed in these benefits and will direct prospective students to find the specific military support services offered throughout the University once they enroll. In addition, many of our military counselors on our admissions team have transitioned to college after serving in the military themselves and can relate to what our prospective students are going through.

Once students are admitted to Penn State, our military admissions counselors will transition them to work with a staff member from our military undergraduate academic advising team who will serve as their primary point of contact throughout their time

at Penn State World Campus. Our military academic advisors, many of whom are also veterans, not only help students choose their courses each semester but also serve as a liaison and advocate for the military student within Penn State.



DEANN STERNER

DIRECTOR OF THE MILITARY VETERAN SERVICES CENTER
BELLEVUE UNIVERSITY

As an early adopter of online learning, Bellevue University has had 20 years to refine its award-winning online platform and support services. We learned a long time ago that offering quality online programs is more than simply posting a traditional in-class program on the internet.

Our students experience a higher level of engagement through our innovative online learning model. Our online instructors complete a rigorous training program for online course delivery techniques. They experience online learning themselves in order to understand the learners' point of view. They design courses to incorporate a variety of ways for students to interact with peers and instructors.

Our student support system includes

Additionally, academic affairs staff work hard to serve our military students when they may need additional resources. These include career counseling, disability services, research assistance from our online librarian, or a

24/7 technical support via email, phone and an online ticket response system. Students can check their grades, review class schedules, make payments and perform other tasks through our real-time user information network. Students also enjoy 24/7 online access to our award-winning library services. Other resources include a variety of tutorials and tools to help students get started and maintain a successful education pathway.

Our dedication to online student engagement has been recognized nationally as we are routinely ranked among the nation's top online colleges. Our online students work closely with their peers. They post assignments, share thoughts and enjoy a truly enriching experience.

Effective online learning models must offer the flexibility necessary to meet the needs of servicepersons and their family

connection to mental health professional. The World Campus also developed an online professional development course to help instructors understand military culture and the challenges that military students may face.

members. This flexibility must go beyond the programs themselves. We recognize all previous college credits and relevant experience so our students can hit the ground running. We accept all associate's degree credits, all ACE recommended credit listed on a student's Joint Service Transcript and CCAF transcript, CLEP/DSST exams and courses completed at other accredited schools. We offer military students a free evaluation of their prior credits and ultimately a personalized degree plan. Such support has ranked us among the nation's most military-supportive universities, especially for online learning.

Our Military Veterans Services Center is an outstanding resource for our online students. The center features veterans serving veterans (and all student servicepersons) over the phone, through email and via social media channels.



KAREN BOLLINGER

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA CHAMPAIGN

The ability to learn and communicate online is a 21st century skill and with so many choices, it's important that prospective online learners choose a college with online experience, an outstanding academic reputation, relevant academic subjects and strong support services.

The University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign (Illinois Online) offers 75 online degrees and certificates in a wide-range of subjects like engineering, business, computer science, education, health communication, human resource management, information accessibility, and urban agriculture to name just a few. In addition to offering hundreds of online courses, Illinois offers 50 MOOCs (massive open online courses). All Illinois

online courses are high-quality, high-touch programs taught by the same faculty who teach on campus.

The prospect of starting or restarting university course work can be overwhelming and online learning may seem even more daunting. The Illinois Online student services team, part of the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL), are dedicated to helping students understand the nuances of learning online and also help students feel confident that they have the contacts and resources to be successful. In addition to helping students obtain NetIDs and passwords, CITL helps students connect with services like textbooks, distance library services, accessibility, writing assistances, technology, exams and proctors.

The University of Illinois has a long history of providing services to military populations. Veterans Student Support Services and the new

Center for Wounded Veterans provide comprehensive resources and transition services to successfully guide students to fulfilling academic and career goals. In Spring 2017, Illinois will offer a new 2-credit, fully online transition and leadership course designed specifically to help veterans "get back in the groove" of enrolling in college coursework. Students will learn about assistive resources, gain practical skills that will support their transition and academic readiness, reflect on their service history and new mission as students and develop a sense of authentic community with the university, either online or on-campus. The course is available to active military, veterans, reservists and family members.

For more information about online learning opportunities at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, email online-info@illinois.edu or visit online.illinois.edu ★

Corporate Initiatives to Aid Transitioning Servicemembers and Veterans

By MARGARET REED

With the passage of the VOW to Hire Heroes Act, many government programs have been created to assist the service member and families with career transitioning such as the VRAP (Veteran Retraining Assistance Program), TAP (Transition Assistance Program) and the Job Training, Employment Skills Training, Apprenticeships, and Internships (JTEST-AI) for eligible servicemembers. In addition, college, industry, and entrepreneurial skill building initiatives have been developed to enhance job skills of transitioning servicemembers.

There are several initiatives that allow business and corporate entities to partner with the higher education and military education communities to ease the transition from military service to employment in the civilian sector. There are best practices from those who have successfully completed corporate/military/school partnerships to replicate these programs involving military installations, schools that serve the military, and corporate players interested in hiring veterans.

SkillBridge is a wonderful example of a successful program for our transitioning servicemembers. Our transitioning Servicemembers need bridges to the civilian work world. The New DoD SkillBridge authority allows servicemember participation in civilian training, apprenticeship, and internship programs—starting up to six months before separation. Using this authority, there are already a number of SkillBridge employer training programs in various industries. Almost all participating servicemembers received jobs. SkillBridge allows participating businesses to gain early access to highly

skilled servicemembers as prospective employees before those servicemembers become veterans. Since servicemembers continue to receive their military pay and benefits while participating, the training provider does not pay the servicemember to participate. There is now a great opportunity for employers to leverage SkillBridge to recruit talented servicemembers. Community colleges and universities now have greater opportunities to partner with employers to deliver skill-gap training and education.

Another program to consider when looking to benchmark successful programs for transitioning servicemembers is the Army Career Skills Program (CSP). The Army CSP is a component of the Soldier Life Cycle that encourages soldiers to capitalize on training and development opportunities throughout their military careers—both in uniform and as civilians beyond their military service. CSPs provide soldiers with the opportunity to participate in career and employment skill training opportunities during transition, to improve employment options upon separation from military service. CSP opportunities include: credentialing, apprenticeship, internship, on-the-job training (OJT), and job shadowing.

Both these exemplary programs focus on the soldiers who may fall into one or more of the following conditions: between 18-24 years old, first time enlistment, involuntarily separating due to force shaping, undergoing rapid separation from active duty, or may have disabilities that result in medical separations. In order for the servicemember to be eligible he or she must be separating within 180 days and have the support of

the Battalion Commander. The soldier's supervisor must give authority for participation and release from daily unit duties, while maintaining accountability for the soldier participating in the CSP program. The military also maintains the right to release the soldier from the program for any military purpose. Funding must be provided at no charge and without any monetary responsibility to the servicemember or their families.



Francisco Lopez

Note from Franc Lopez, CCME President: CCME thanks Margaret Reed, senior director, Webster University, for her overview of the CCME 2016 Roundtable on Transition Initiatives. For more information about our organization, please visit CCMEonline.org. Note: Call for Proposals and Awards for next year's Symposium are now open. ★

For more information, contact MAE&T Editor Kelly Fodel at kellyf@kmimediagroup.com or search our online archives for related stories at www.mae-kmi.com.

UWF Military and Veterans Resource Center: New Scholarships

The University of West Florida Military and Veterans Resource Center awarded scholarships to ten students at its fifth annual scholarship luncheon, held Thursday, July 21, 2016.

The luncheon recognizes military veterans and dependents or family members of an active or retired military service member who are awarded the Brig. Gen. and Mrs. Michael Ferguson Scholarship, Navy Federal Credit Union Scholarship, Buzz and Larue Ambersley Scholarship or the newly established Gulf Power Company Scholarship. For the first time, the MVRC also sponsored its own scholarship this year.

“Going to school is a big deal,” said MVRC director Marc Churchwell. “Any sort of springboard or help we can provide, we certainly want to do that. It’s not just our veterans, but their dependents that get to go. This is part of their career path and it’s helping them move forward.”

Gulf Power provided more than \$30,000 to the MVRC in December 2015 to recognize the Center for its support of wounded military members and their families. Part of this gift was used to establish the Gulf Power Company Scholarship, presented to Bria Banner, a junior communication arts major, as a tribute to her brother, Pfc. Brandon Banner, who was among the nine soldiers killed in the Texas floodwaters in June. Their mother, Sarah Banner, has been a UWF employee with Continuing Education for more than 25 years.

Brig. Gen. and Mrs. Michael Ferguson were also present to award scholarships to five students in the College of Business. In 2001, the couple created an endowment to provide support for military veterans and their dependents who demonstrate leadership capability and commitment to service. This year’s recipients include:

- Gunnar Bowling, senior, business administration – finance major, Army veteran dependent
- Alesha Davis, senior, psychology major, Navy veteran dependent
- Ricardo Hidalgo, sophomore, international business major, Air Force veteran dependent
- Marcus Young, senior, supply chain logistics management major, Army veteran dependent
- Thomas Owens, sophomore, business administration major, Marine Corps veteran dependent

Haoting Tiedemann – senior, biochemistry major and Navy veteran spouse – and Rebecca Juntunen – senior, English major and Air Force veteran dependent – were awarded the Navy Federal Credit Union Scholarship, established in 2013 to provide assistance to military veterans and their dependents.

The Buzz and Larue Ambersley Scholarship was established in 2012 with the UWF Foundation Inc. to provide assistance to a dependent child or spouse of a veteran, deceased or active duty, non-commissioned officer who is a resident of Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa or Walton counties. The scholarship is renewable and applied until the recipient graduates. Tyler Milkeris-Zellar, a sophomore physics major and Air Force veteran dependent, was presented the award at the 2015 luncheon and returned this year to share how it has impacted her experience at UWF.

After receiving more than 130 applications, the Center created the Military and Veterans Resource Center Scholarship. Marissa Finnerty, a senior studying criminal justice and legal studies and dependent of a Navy veteran, was selected as the first recipient. With only three classes left until graduation, Finnerty was one course shy of full-time status and received a prorated Pell grant amount for the fall term. The MVRC scholarship will help offset the aid she did not receive.



\$2 Million Milestone for Military Children Scholarships

The Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association (SMSA) has achieved a record-breaking milestone in contributions and pledges towards its Seabee Can Do Legacy Campaign. With a \$100,000 donation from AECOM, SMSA’s campaign has reached \$2 million, which will permit SMSA to expand the number and amount of scholarships awarded annually. The Legacy Campaign seeks to raise \$7 million by 2019.

SMSA is the nation’s only provider of scholarships to the children and grandchildren of America’s Navy Seabees and Civil Engineer Corps servicemembers, and has provided over 2,800 scholarship awards totaling \$4.6 million since 1972.

“Our Legacy Campaign, supported with gifts from corporate partners like AECOM, ensures that SMSA will be able to support more scholars with larger financial awards for generations to come. The Association’s scholarships develop the nation’s future workforce and reward those young scholars who embody the character and academic values needed to lead in the globally competitive economy,” said CAPT Kurt Sisson, SMSA president.

On September 20, 2016, SMSA will hold its inaugural Building America’s Future Gala in Washington, D.C. to recognize scholarship recipients, industry leaders and General John Allen, USMC (Ret.)

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Military Advanced Education & Transition

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AMY MOORASH
 Deputy Director and Chief
 Advising/Apprenticeship Programs
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Cyndi Porter
Vice President for Extended Academic Programs
University of the Incarnate Word

Q: Please provide a brief overview of your school's history, mission and curriculum.

A: University of the Incarnate Word (UIW) provides a high-quality education to students pursuing academic degrees in more than 80 of today's high-in-demand undergraduate and graduate programs. Founded in 1881 as a faith-based institution, UIW welcomes to its community persons of diverse backgrounds, in the belief that their respectful interaction advances the discovery of truth, mutual understanding, self-realization and the common good. UIW is the largest Catholic university in Texas and the fourth-largest private university in the state.

UIW Online, part of the School of Online Learning, is a natural extension of the mission and the entrepreneurial direction of the University of the Incarnate Word. By utilizing computer-mediated learning techniques, the university addresses the lifestyle demands of military and traditional adult learners. By maintaining high educational standards, UIW Online offers regionally, nationally and professionally accredited distance-learning programs in a convenient online format.

Q: What is your school's background in military education?

A: The University of the Incarnate Word welcomes all active duty servicemembers and their families, and appreciates those serving to protect the rights and freedoms of our country. We are active members of GoArmyEd, Navy College Program Distance Learning Partnership (NCPDLP) and Air University Associate to Baccalaureate Cooperative (AU-ABC) programs, and are proud to participate in several collaborative programs with the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC). We understand the unique needs of an active duty military student and we are committed to being military-supportive.

Q: What makes your school unique in the benefits and programs you offer to military servicemembers?



A: UIW has long been cognizant of the unique challenges of military members where mission comes first. UIW respects that difference and has tailored our program to meet the needs of our military members. UIW Online has no fees or expenses. That means that TA benefits cover all costs. Textbooks are a major expense for all students. For our military members in both graduate and undergraduate programs, textbooks are free. There are no hidden charges. Coursework is done completely online, and there are no proctored exams. We also schedule our courses specifically for you so you can keep moving forward and graduate on time. Our job is to make sure that you reach your goal of graduation!

Q: What are some of your school's main goals in meeting the future challenges of online education for the military?

A: The main challenge is in understanding that our military students have a day job, and that is their primary mission. While education is important to their future in the military and when they leave, the mission comes first! A second challenge is our understanding that today's military member is on the go. We need to constantly be aware of this and look for new ways to deliver education to our fast-paced students. UIW Online leadership continually reviews, updates and seeks out new, innovative technology that helps us deliver a quality product to our students.

Q: Looking ahead, how will your school realize its core objectives and aspirations?

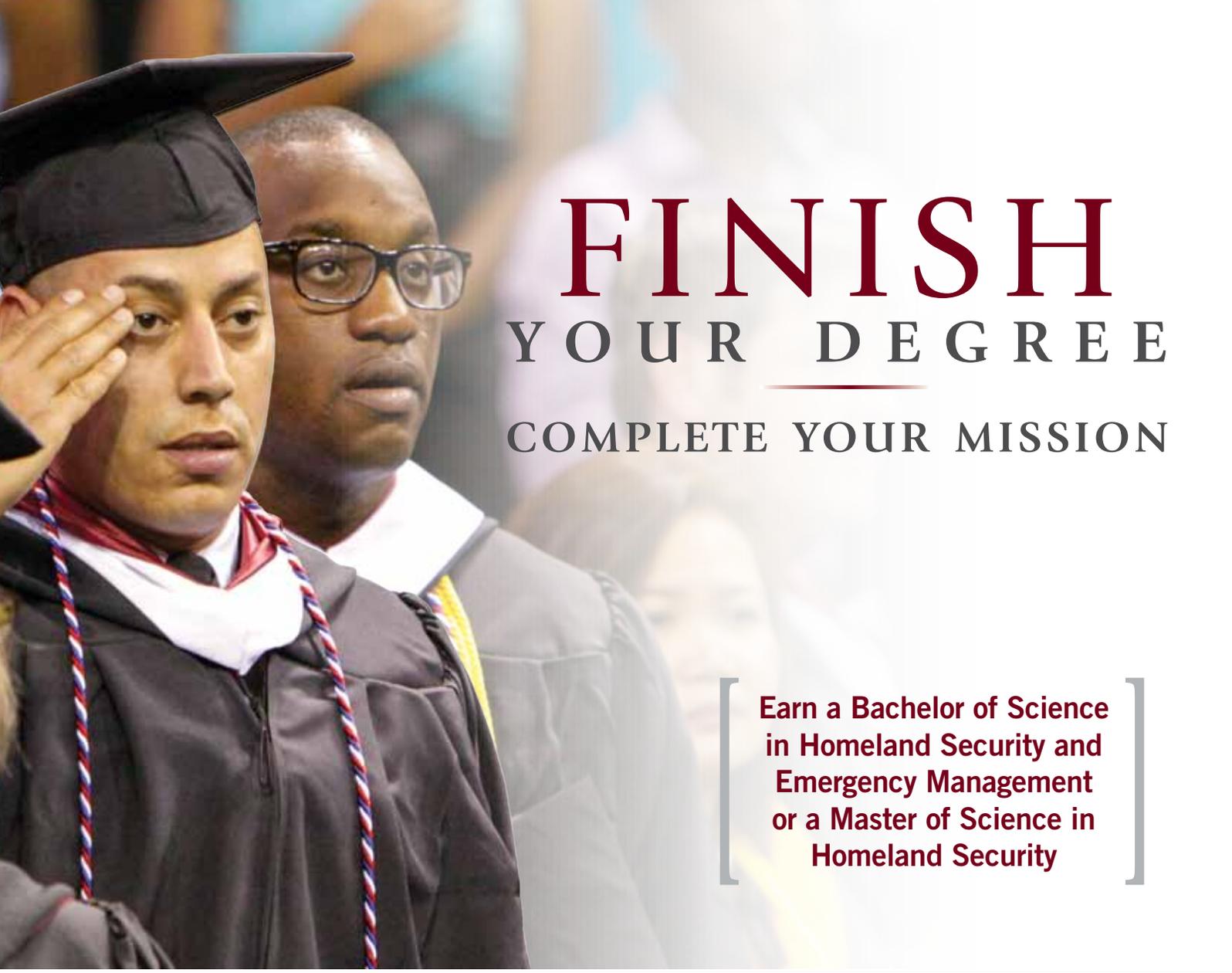
A: Our core objectives at UIW are fulfilled when we expand opportunities for students through new degrees in formats that meet their needs. For example, we will be offering our Doctorate of Business Administration in a completely online format. This degree allows our MBA students to specialize at the highest level and build the foundation for executive positions.

Q: What do you think are the key issues facing higher education today?

A: One of the key issues in higher education is evaluating the training and education our military members receive into their curriculum. UIW is dedicated to providing options for Competency Based Education (CBE) and evaluation of college-level learning from training that can be a basis for credit towards a certification or degree.

Q: What are some of your most popular programs, and which ones are the most appealing to military students?

A: UIW offers more than 25 different programs and concentrations online. Some of the more popular ones at the undergraduate level are the business programs in our Bachelor of Science (BS) in Business Administration. Concentrations such as General Business, Accounting, Information Systems, Marketing, Management, and Project Management are highly sought after. Another popular degree is our BS in Health Science with concentrations in administration, nutrition and general health science with the option to bring in military healthcare training credits. At the graduate level, we have an MBA that can be finished in 10 months. Our Master of Science in Organizational Development and Leadership is a draw for those students wanting to build on their military leadership skills and continue in the business environment. ★



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