



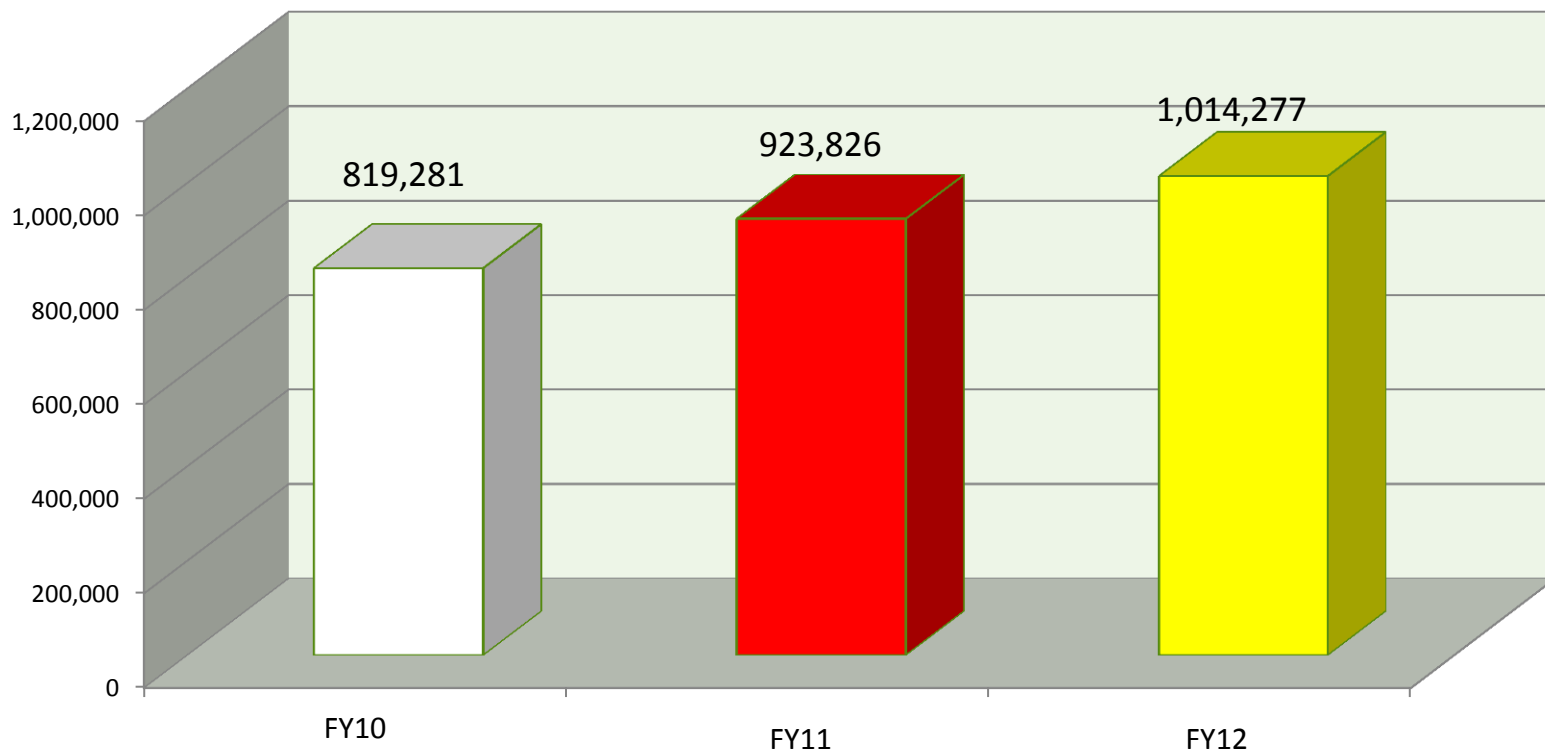
Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL)



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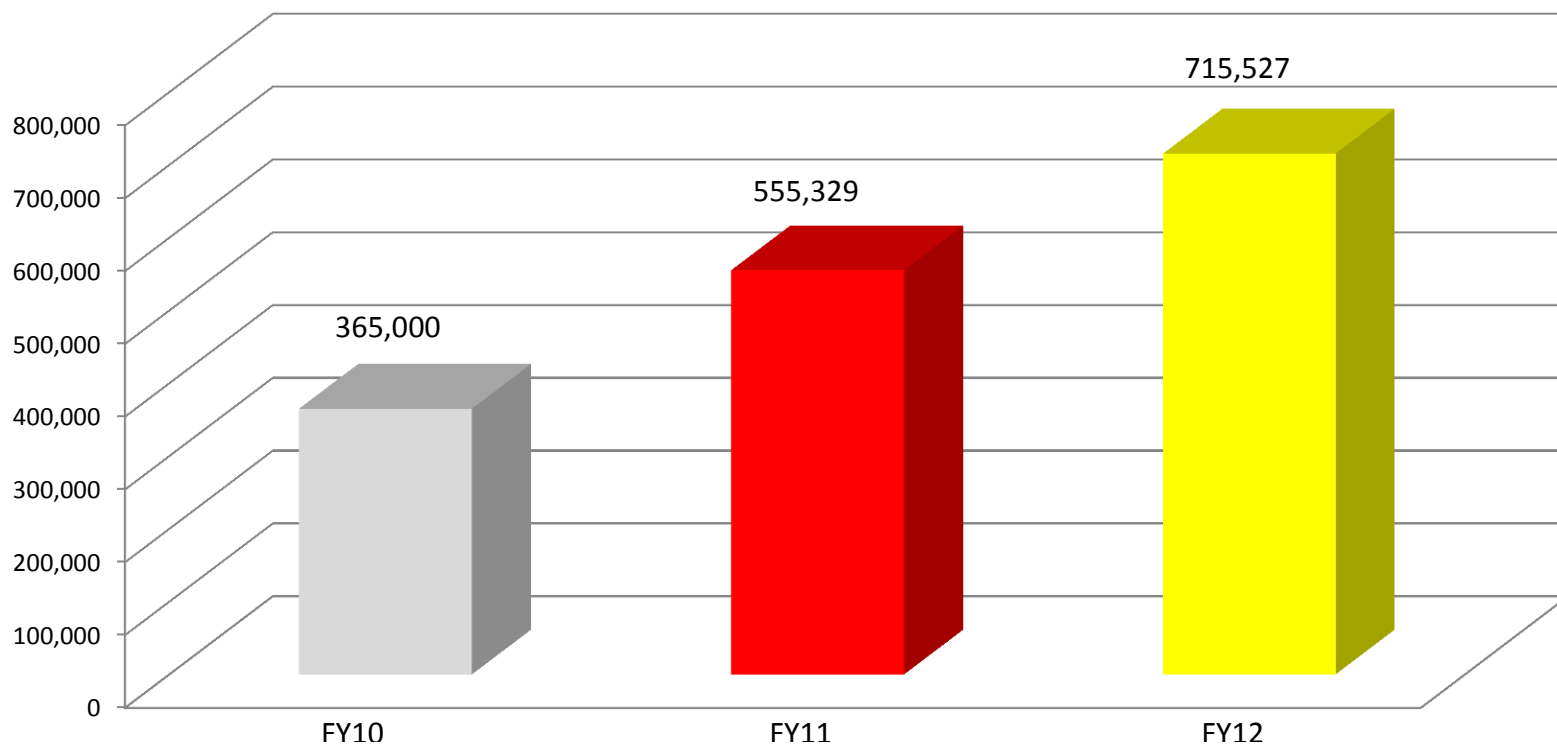
Total VA Beneficiaries FY10-12

Total VA Education Beneficiaries



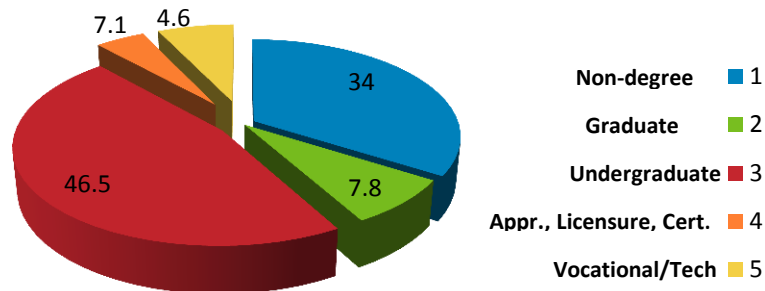
Total Veterans Using 9/11 GI Bill

Total Veterans Using 9/11 GI Bill



Student Veterans Statistics

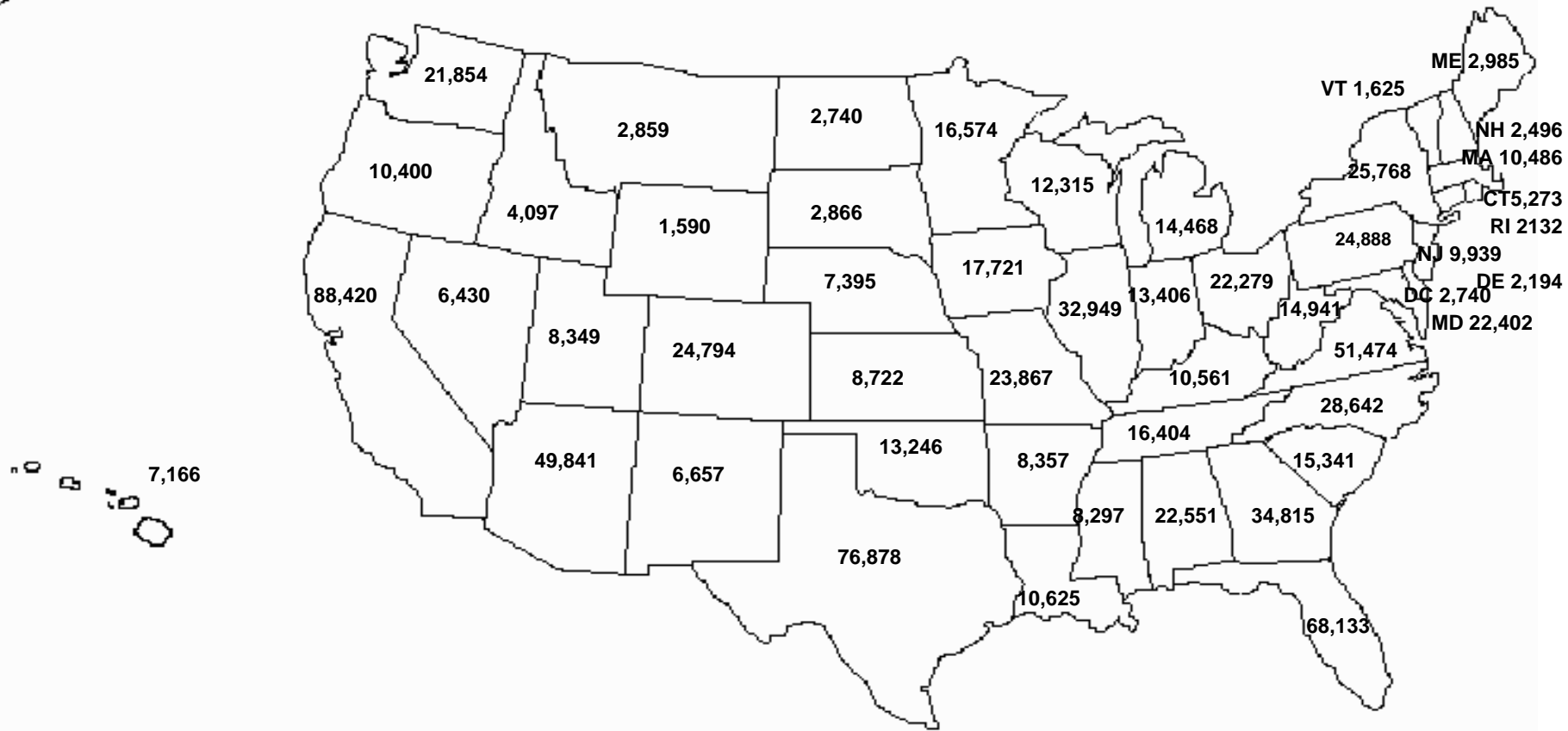
- FY10-819,281 beneficiaries -365,000 OEF/OIF/OND
- FY11-923,836 beneficiaries -555,329 OEF/OIF/OND
- FY11- % Types of Enrollment



- FY11-\$10,501,215,409 spent on education benefits with 77% or \$8,126,054,901 paid through the 9/11-GI Bill

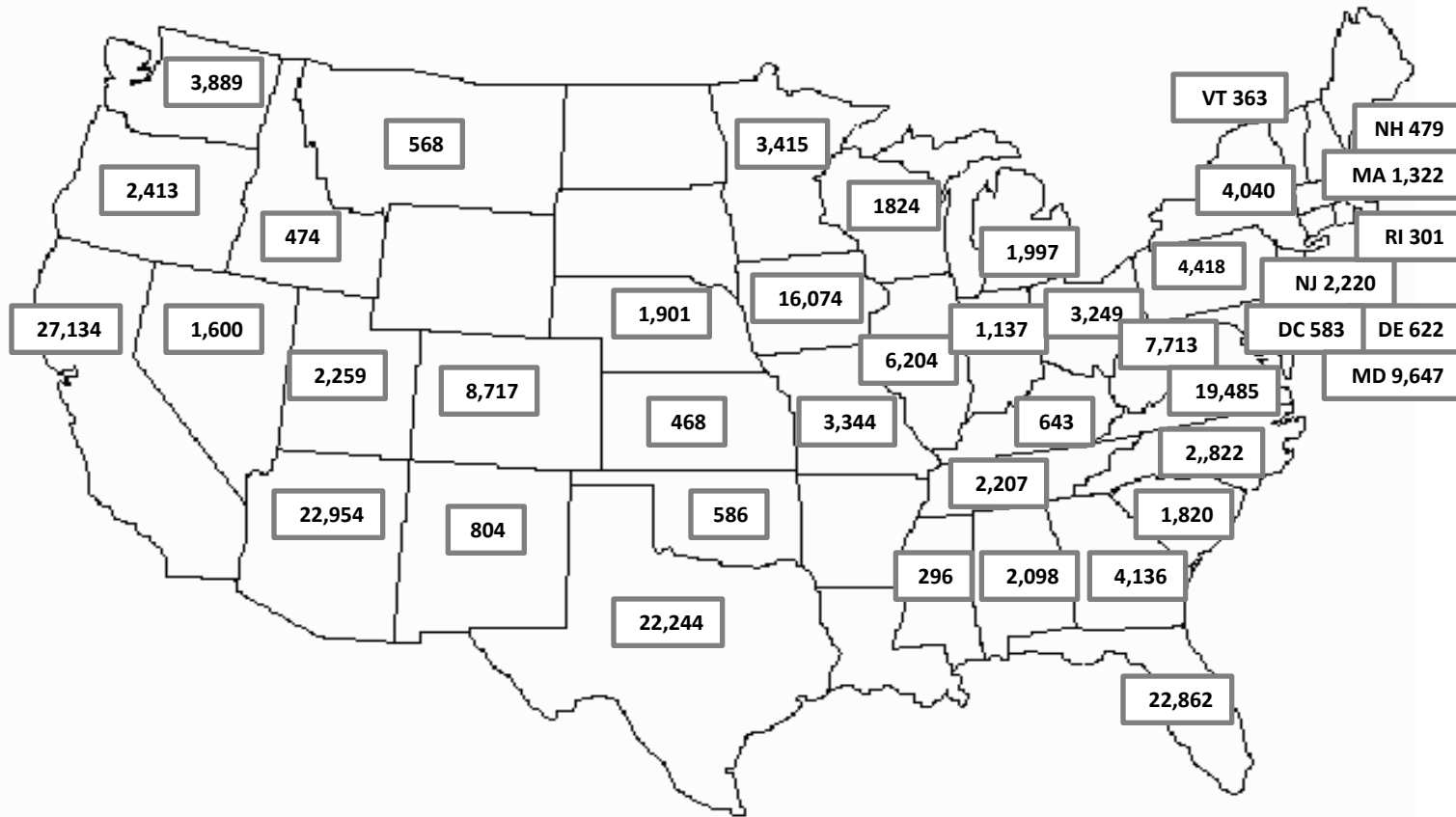
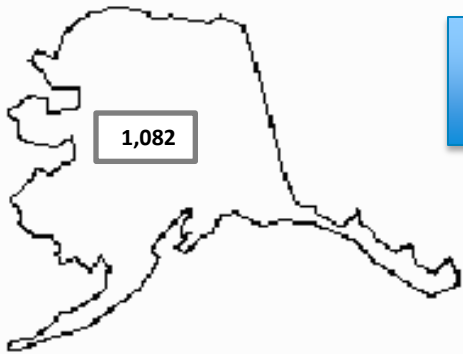
-VBA Annual Report, 2011

FY11 Education Beneficiaries by State



Post 9/11 GI Bill AUG-DEC 2012

Over 250 Veterans/Service Members



General Veteran Facts

- Veterans are highly trained, committed to excellence, highly flexible and adaptable, and have sound leadership qualities
- Many Veterans deployed to a war zone will experience adjustment issues
 - Many of these issues will go away over time (for example: sleep problems, startle response, irritability, etc.)
- A small number of Veterans will have chronic health or life long issues such as PTSD, Anxiety Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), etc.
- VITAL is committed to addressing the various needs of all Veterans

VITAL Mission

The Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL) Initiative's mission is to provide world-class healthcare and improve the overall mental health of Veterans, while supporting their successful integration into college and university campuses through seamless access to VA healthcare services and on-campus clinical counseling. Furthermore, VITAL will provide efficient care coordination of all available services, and promote positive cohesion between Veterans and the entire learning community through campus and community clinical education and training.

VITAL Philosophy

VITAL is one part of a larger system of care available to Veterans, allowing them to access and utilize services and resources to meet their mental health and educational needs. Further, VITAL is a medium in which Veterans may access to meet their educational and life goals so they can improve their life circumstances and successfully live and thrive in the career field and community of their choice.

VITAL Core Components

1. Promote positive cohesion among Veterans and the entire learning community through campus and community clinical education and training
2. Provide on campus mental health clinical counseling
3. Provide seamless access to VA healthcare and mental health counseling and other services (VBA, VET Center, campus and community, etc.)



PROMOTE A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

VITAL Strategy

- Create sound partnership with college and university leadership
- Collaborate with campus leadership, faculty, staff and community stakeholders
- Provide education about military culture, and specific mental health issues/topics, etc.
- Coordinate with Student Veterans of America (SVA) and other student Veterans organizations, to assist student Veterans



ON-CAMPUS CLINICAL COUNSELING

VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

Mental Health and Medical Issues

- 3,354,741-FY11 total # of Veterans receiving disability compensation
- 1,557,026-Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve Service Members have discharged
- 866,182-obtaining VHA health care
 - 497,996-Diseases of Musculoskeletal System
Connective Tissue (#1 issue)
 - 464,685-Mental Disorders (#2 issue)
 - PTSD 250,242

-VBA Annual Report, 2011 & VHA Office of Public Health, 2012

Main Issues Reported by VITAL Sites

1. Anxiety Disorder
2. Depression
3. PTSD
4. Irritability/Anger
5. Family Issues
6. Insomnia
7. Adjustment
8. Memory/Concentration
9. Substance Abuse
10. Grief

VITAL Strategy

- Provide evidence based onsite mental-health counseling by a clinically licensed mental health provider (Psychologist, Social Worker, etc.)
- Collaborate with existing campus mental health providers or counseling centers
 - Exchange best practices
 - Clinical case conferencing

VITAL Provides Evidence Based Practice on College and University Campuses

Evidence Base Practice and VITAL:

1. Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) for Insomnia
2. CBT for Depression
3. Brief Solution Focused Therapy
4. Motivation Interviewing (MI)
5. Relaxation Training/Techniques
6. Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)
7. Prolonged Exposure (PE)



CARE COORDINATION OF AVAILABLE SERVICES

General Issues

National survey of 362,000 first-year students and seniors attending 564 US colleges and universities by NSSE (2010) found student Veterans :

- Perceived lower levels of campus support than non-Veterans
- Interacted less with faculty members
- Spent twice as many hours per week working
- Six times as many hours on dependent care
- Often received the least amount of help and support

VITAL Strategy

- Provide coordination of services to VA (Veterans Health Administration [VHA] and Veterans Benefits Administration [VBA]), and to campus and community services/resources
- Provide care management services and enrollment into VA programs
- Partner with VBA and educate Veterans on both VHA and VBA benefits available to them

Strengths Veterans Bring to College and University Campuses

- **Leadership:** Service Members learn leadership skills from the onset, and lead by discharging responsibility for others and for their own behaviors. Leadership characteristics you will see among Service Members are: setting an example, carefully considered directions, and inspiring and influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation
- **Team Member and Team Leader:** Service Members fulfill their obligations and complete their duties by accomplishing tasks as part of a team. Furthermore, Service Members serve as team leaders where they have conducted risk assessments, analyzed situations and options, made appropriate decisions, given directions, followed through with a viable plan, and accepted responsibility for the outcome.

Strengths Veterans Bring to College and University Campuses

- **Diversity:** The military is comprised of a diverse group of people and Service Members have learned to treat others with the highest dignity and respect. Service Members have worked for and with people of all backgrounds, and their broad experience has prepared them well to interact and work with all people.
- **Punctuality:** Service Members must do their job well, and in a timely manner. They are continuously setting priorities, and meeting training, operation and mission demands. Pressure and stress are built into these activities, but they are taught how to address these factors in a positive and effective manner.

Strengths Veterans Bring to College and University Campuses

- **Flexibility and Adaptability:** All Service Members have learned to be flexible and adaptable to meet the constantly changing situation and mission. Sudden or last minute changes are common in a military and war zone environment .
- **Self-Directed:** Many Service Members train to understand and solve difficult problems and complex tasks. Their ability to function efficiently independent makes them dependable and reliable.
- **Outstanding Work Habits:** Service Members possess pride and enthusiasm for their work, and personal integrity by adhering to moral principles. Service Members complete their projects and tasks in a timely and efficient manner. These work habits are a result of social maturity, integrity, determination and perseverance.

Strengths Veterans Bring to College and University Campuses

- **Commitment to Excellence:** Service Members are continually striving to attain and surpass standards of quality for themselves, their comrades and their unit. These standards of quality are meeting their unit's mission, training standards, physical requirements and educational goals. Commitment to excellence is present when they enroll at a college/university.
- **Global Outlook:** Service Members have been stationed and served their country in various locations around the world. Some have deployed multiple times in a war zone. Their experience have broadened their perspective in regards to customs, economies, languages and cultures of other countries. Their perspective can enrich any discussion in the classroom.

-21 Strengths Arising from Military Experience; Leadership Traits and Behaviors; The Army Values

Strengths Veterans Bring to College and University Campuses

- **Invested in their Community:** Service Members have a strong desire to be productive citizens. They have an active vested interest and commitment to their community, which also includes the college/university community in which they are enrolled. Many Service Members serve their community with selfless sacrifice, without recognition or gain through volunteer activities and participating in organized events benefiting others.

“Veteran Friendly Campus”

Students who form positive and supportive relationships with faculty are more likely to persist (Tinto, 1997)

- Promote a positive learning environment
 - Interaction is part of the learning experience and student Veterans may be emotionally numb, feel distant, alone, easily agitated, easily distracted and unable to fully participate, which can be perceived by faculty and other students in the class as disconnect and lack of interest (Armstrong, Best & Dominici, 2006; Shiraldi, 2009)
- Creating a sensitive awareness and emotionally safe atmosphere that fosters healthy interactions will help faculty and student Veterans feel comfortable and overcome some of these barriers

“Veteran Friendly Campus”

Commitment is a two-way relationship. Students who are committed to the institution are more likely to persist, but they are less likely to do so if they do not perceive that the institution is committed to them (Tinto, 1997)

- The college/university campuses physical appearance is an important indicator.
 - Veterans will notice if campuses have a dedicated area for an American flag, and the size of the flag, large or small
 - Veterans will notice if the campus has a dedicated space or area for military observance. They will also determine if the dedicated military area is large or small, have updated military memorabilia or monuments, and if it’s well-kept and nicely maintained
 - Veterans are interested to know if campuses observe military events or holidays

“Veteran Friendly Campus”

Finances are a variable implicated in student attrition (Tinto, 1975 & 1993)

- Colleges and Universities should have a sound working relationship with Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)
 - Ensure that the student Veteran’s benefits are available to them and problem solve any issues
- Consider membership into the Yellow Ribbon Program
- Find ways of employing SM and Veterans on campus
- Flexible of Veterans’ employment and medical commitments
- Make available scholarships, especially those directed towards Veterans, widely accessible

“Veteran Friendly Campus”

Early Identification and Intervention

- Faculty and staff should be trained and well versed in the mechanisms to refer Veterans at any location on the campus for assistance
- A consideration for early identification and intervention is an institutional development of a peer support program
 - Matching new student Veterans to junior or senior level Veterans who can advise and assist with navigating the institution’s system, and help access support services
- Another consideration is to match graduates to current students
- Peer support programs should consider matching based on specific war zones, military branch, career goals, and degreed programs

A Few Helpful Resources

- Mental Health Services Website: <http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/>
- Veterans Crisis Line: <http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/Default.aspx>
- VITAL Campus Toolkit: <http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/studentveteran/>
- National Center for PTSD: <http://www.ptsd.va.gov/>
- Make The Connection: <http://maketheconnection.net/>
- Virtual Problem Solving Techniques <http://www.startmovingforward.org/>
- VBA Vet Success On Campus:
http://vetsuccess.gov/vetsuccess_on_campus
- Department of Veterans Affairs' GI Bill Website: <http://www.gibill.va.gov/>
- Yellow Ribbon Program:
http://www.gibill.va.gov/benefits/post_911_gibill/yellow_ribbon_program.html

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Questions?



VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION