VETERAN’S VOICE
A NEWSLETTER FOR STUDENT VETERANS
FROM THE OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
DECEMBER 2017

The Colonel’s Corner

Team,

We are approaching the end of the term, and my congratulations to all who have persevered this far...you don’t have much longer to go and another semester will be under your belt!

Please make sure you have come to see us in order to certify for the Winter 17/Spring 18 semester. If you have NOT seen an auto-generated e-mail notifying you that we have sent your certification up to the VA, then you have not completed the necessary step(s) for certification. Remember:

1) You are responsible for providing us a Concise Student Schedule, a Signed Advisor Worksheet (undergraduates NOT in a Nursing program only - Graduate students do not require this), and a completed Tuition & Fee deferment form.
2) If you have not done the above, then you may be purged on day 1 of classes.

Please see us ASAP to prevent a hiccup in your education and your benefits payments.

The Colonel
Holiday stress getting under your skin?

Holiday blues getting a toe hold?

Come join us for some peace, solidarity, and a break in the action:

“Sane for the Holidays” coffee hour

Where: Johnson City Vet Center

When: Every Friday at 9 a.m. from November 24 through December 29, 2017

Who: You and your family/friends

Why: Because life is too short to be unduly stressed by the holidays—come “push back” with a friendly crowd.

Questions? Call the Johnson City Vet Center at 423-928-8387
ANNOUCEMENTS

ETSU Checkpoint Is Here!

You should have received an invitation to join us on ETSU Checkpoint, a new platform whereby you can get information, see the long-term calendars, special events, etc. Let us know if you haven’t received one so we can get you on Checkpoint!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UPCOMING EVENTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>ONGOING – Wreaths Across America campaign...please consider purchasing a wreath to go on the grave of a veteran. This year’s campaign is ending soon!</td>
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<td>Dec 6 – Turkey and all the trimmings lunch at the Military-Affiliated Student lounge beginning at noon. Come join us as we celebrate the end of the year/term!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 8 &amp; 9 – Weather permitting, we need as many volunteers as possible to help finish painting the sign at the VFW Post in Elizabethton (2001 West Elk Avenue). We will paint from 1100-1600 each day. Please come help!</td>
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<td>Dec 23 – Holiday Open House at the Colonel’s Residence beginning at 2 pm – ALL are invited!</td>
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Get Involved

Join the campus chapter of the Student Veterans of America, SVA@ETSU!

What are we? A peer networking group providing our student veterans the resources, support, and advocacy needed to succeed in higher education AND following graduation.

Contact student president Chris Guffey at guffeyc@etsu.edu or stop by the Veterans Affairs office.

A note on Joint Service Transcripts: Once your JST is received at ETSU’s Admissions Office, they will evaluate it and provide the Office of Veteran Affairs a copy and a “buckslip” with your credits broken out. We will call you in to have a conversation with your advisor and financial aid in order to decide how many (if any) of your general elective credits you would like to have applied to your degree plan. Please don’t just drop the buckslip off at your advisor’s...schedule an appointment and discuss your options. Then come back to see us to complete an election form so we can have whichever number of elective credits you desire. Don’t forget to do that, as that finishes the process!
What is Tennessee Volunteer ChalleNGe Academy (TNVCA)?

TNVCA is a program for youth of the state of Tennessee administered by the National Guard Youth Challenge Program and the state of Tennessee. The program is for 16-18-year-olds who have dropped out of school or are at risk of becoming a dropout. These participants are given an opportunity to succeed outside of a traditional school setting by learning self-discipline, leadership, and responsibility. Qualified cadets will be given the opportunity to participate in Credit Recovery for subjects they may have failed and the chance to possibly earn high school credits. TNVCA will also offer qualified cadets the opportunity to obtain a HiSet (high school equivalency diploma).

Focuses on Eight Core Components

- **Academic Excellence** - Daily classes increase math and reading comprehension, preparing qualified Cadets for Credit Recovery for those subjects they may have failed or a HiSet (high school equivalency diploma).
- **Life Coping Skills** - Cadets learn how to identify and self-regulate emotions, such as anger, grief, frustration, and stress, and how to identify conflict resolution strategies.
- **Job Skills** - Career exploration is accomplished through career assessment and interest inventories, job-specific skills orientation, and training in area vocational centers.
- **Health and Hygiene** - Cadets learn the value of a healthy, well-balanced lifestyle, physical and mental well-being, and the effects of substance abuse and sexually transmitted diseases.
- **Responsible Citizenship** - Cadets discover their role in the democratic process and learn their rights, privileges, and obligations as United States citizens.
- **Service to the Community** - Cadets realize the value and importance of giving back to the community while performing a minimum of 40 hours of community service.
- **Leadership/Followership** - Cadets learn to comply with established rules, regulations willingly, and procedures; perform basic military customs and courtesies; and define and recognize leadership skills, traits, dimensions, and components.
- **Physical Fitness** - Cadets perform physical training based on the President’s ChalleNGe.

**Eligibility**

- A high school dropout or at risk of dropping out due to credit deficiency or other risk factors
- Voluntary enrollment
- Unemployed or underemployed
- Drug free
- Not currently on parole or probation for more than juvenile status offenses. Not awaiting sentencing, and not under indictment, charged or convicted of a crime that is considered a felony when charged as an adult.
- Physically and mentally capable of participating in the program
What the Tennessee Volunteer ChalleNGe Academy Is Not:

- Boot Camp
- Residential Treatment Facility
- Juvenile Detention
- Jail/Prison

Snapshot

- 17 ½ month program broken down into the following components:
  - 2 - Week Acclimation Period
  - 20 - Week Residential Phase
  - 12 - month Post Residential “Mentoring” Phase

Tennessee Volunteer ChalleNGe Academy Specifics

Funding

- Shared cost with Federal Government, 75% Federal 25% State
- Executed via a Cooperative Agreement between Military Department of Tennessee and the National Guard Bureau
- Funding is based on target graduation rate – minimum 100 Cadets Per Cycle (2 Cycles per year)
- Program will be executed via an initial partnership between TN Military Department and TN Department of Children’s Services

Eligible Operating Cost via Master Youth Cooperative Agreement (MYCP)

- Salaries/Benefits, Facilities Lease
- Maintenance and Utilities
- Indoor/Outdoor Furnishings
- Transportation of Cadets and Staff
- Dining Operations
- Educational and Administrative Supplies
- Uniforms
- Medical Services
- Telecommunications and Computing Hardware
- Outreach and Security Services
- Marketing and Recruiting
Highlights

- Graduation target - 100 per class (2 classes per year)
- Classes begin each January and July
- Location - 3965 Stewarts Lane, Nashville, TN
- Funding - 25% State / 75% Federal
- Approximate cost to TN per HS Dropout 2013/2014 School Year Statistics (TN – DOE)
  - 6,523 Dropouts - Approx. $260K each = $1.7B in lost wages, taxes, & productivity only (2009 data - TDOE)
  - Return on Investment (ROI) - $2.66 per $1 invested (RAND Corp 2012)

The National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program (NGYCP)

National Website: www.ngycp.com

The National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program (NGYCP) was established by the National Guard in 1993 to turn around the lives of young men and women between the ages of 16 and 18 who are experiencing difficulty in completing traditional high school. NGYCP are a cost-free program that is open to permanent legal residents in each of the participating states/territories.

NGYCP is a voluntary 17½-month program that is very disciplined and structured and uses a quasi-military model to increase the chance of success for these youth. Participants have the opportunity to enhance life skills, improve self-esteem, learn job skills, and if they qualify, cadets will have the opportunity to take the high school equivalency test (HiSet). ChalleNGe works with program participants after graduation to help enroll in college, trade school, start a career or join the military. More than 145,000 students have graduated to date, changing the path for their lives. By intervening in the lives of troubled adolescents, ChalleNGe is making a difference. It is the only program of its kind providing graduates with a personal mentor for one year to help the transition into adulthood.


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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicants</td>
<td>338,554</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enrollees</td>
<td>187,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>145,075</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Credentials</td>
<td>89,842</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service to Community Hours</td>
<td>9,604,360</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service to Community Value</td>
<td>$188,997,796</td>
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Various Credentials Offered: HS Diploma, GED/HiSet, & Credit Recovery
Not certain what career field or degree plan you want to pursue? Consider using ONET online as a career exploration tool!

Go to [https://www.onetonline.org](https://www.onetonline.org) and begin searching today!
October 2017

Veterans Identification Card
Fact Sheet

This fact sheet is designed to explain the rollout and implementation of the Veteran Identification Card (VIC) that will be available in November 2017.

On July 20, 2015, the President signed into law the Veterans Identification Card (VIC) Act of 2015, Public Law (PL) 114-31, which requires that the Department of Veterans Affairs issue an identification card to Veterans that request a card and meet other eligibility requirements.

The VIC is a portable and secure alternative to a DD-214 that can be used to obtain discounts on promotional goods and services offered to Veterans.

Veterans who served a minimum obligated time in service but, did not meet the retirement or medical discharge threshold may be eligible to receive a VIC. Starting in November 2017, individual’s that do not have a Veterans Health Identification Card (VHIC) or retirement card issued by the Department of Defense will be able to apply for a VIC online using vets.gov.

Key Facts:
- Starting in November 2017, Veterans can submit an electronic application for the VIC using vets.gov. To sign in, they can use their ID.me account or the same log-in that they use for their eBenefits account (DS Logon).
- Individuals that have a character of discharge type of Honorable or General (Under Honorable Conditions) are eligible for a VIC.
- Individuals with a Dishonorable, Other than Honorable conditions or Bad Conduct discharge are not eligible for a VIC.
- The VIC is not meant to duplicate Veteran identification cards currently issued by the VA or the Department of Defense (DoD).
- The VIC can be used as proof of service for Veterans who do not have a form of identification that designates them as a Veteran.
- The VIC can be used to obtain discounts on promotional goods and services offered to Veterans and does not reflect entitlement to any benefits administered by the VA.
- The VIC can be presented to Vendors for discounted services without compromising Personal Identifiable Information (PII) that is visible on the DD-214.

How to Apply for a VIC
- Veterans can apply for a VIC using vets.gov.

Explanation of Initiative
- The VIC can be used in lieu a DD-214 and will provide Veterans who served a minimum obligated time in service, but did not meet the retirement or medical discharge threshold with a more portable and secure alternative for proof of service.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. When can I apply for a VIC?
A. VA will begin accepting applications for the VIC in November 2017.

Q. Is there eligibility criteria in order to qualify for the VIC?
A. Yes, any Veteran who served in the Armed Forces (includes: active Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines as well as Reserve Component and National Guard) and have a character of discharge type of Honorable, General (Under Honorable Conditions) may request the VIC. Veterans Affairs will review eligibility to ensure a Department of Defense form DD–214 or other official document of discharge is present and a character of discharge type of is annotated describing the service of the Veteran.

Q. Are individuals that served in the Reserves or National Guard eligible for a VIC?
A. Individuals that served in the Army Reserve, the Navy Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve, the Air Force Reserve, the Coast Guard Reserve, the Army National Guard of the United States, or the Air National Guard of the United States qualify for a VIC if they received a DD-214 or other approved document of discharge. Request from individuals that served in the Reserves or National Guard will be processed at a later date.

Q. Will the VIC give a Veteran access to any other benefits, goods, or services that they don’t already get with their Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC), DoD retired identification card or state-issued identification with a Veteran designation?
A. No, if a Veteran already has a VHIC, retirement card issued by DoD, or a driver’s license with a Veteran designation they do not need to apply for a VIC. The VIC does not qualify individuals for additional benefits administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs and does not serve as proof for any benefits to which they may be entitled.

Q. How can Veterans submit a request for a VIC?
A. Starting in November 2017, Veterans can submit requests for a VIC on vets.gov.

Q. What if the Veteran does not have an ID.me account, can they still apply for the VIC?
A. Yes, the same log-in used for eBenefits or DS Logon, can be used to log into their vets.gov account.

Q. Can Veterans go to a VA Medical Center or Regional Office to apply for the VIC?
A. No, the only way to apply for the VIC will be by using vets.gov.

Q. Will the VA charge a fee to issue the VIC?
A. Veterans will not be charged a fee for the VIC. The printing and shipping of the card will be covered by a public-private partnership agreement.

Q. Is the list of vendors that offer discounts to Veterans available online?
A. Promotional discounts and services offered to Veterans may vary by location. Check with your local retailer to verify if they offer discounted goods or services to Veterans.
Veteran Tickets Foundation - Tickets For Troops - Vet Tix

www.vettix.org

Vet Tix * provides tickets to events which reduce stress, strengthen family bonds, build life-long memories and encourage service members and veterans to stay engaged with local communities and American life. We support our troops by honoring their service and providing positive family and life experiences, during and after their years of service to our country.

Vet Tix provides tickets to all branches of currently-serving Military and Veterans, including immediate family of troops KIA.

Vet Tix secures tickets to sporting events, concerts, performing arts, educational and family activities across the nation. VetTixers sign up online. We verify their service. VetTixers request tickets to events that interest them, then pay a small delivery fee to receive their free tickets.

* Vet Tix is a 95% Charity

Veteran Tickets Foundation’s Tickets for Troops Program is dedicated to giving back to those who gave us so much. We team up with major sports teams, leagues, promoters, organizations, venues and every day event ticket holders to provide free and discounted tickets to currently serving and veterans of all branches of the US military.

Tutoring

If you are eligible and using a GI Bill benefit, then you be reimbursed for up to $100/month in tutoring costs from the Veterans Administration. Typical tutoring rates are $10-11/hr. You can either:

a) Find a tutor on our information board in the lounge (We have the names of tutors for several courses)
b) Speak to your professor about an upperclassman who received an A in the course and would be a good tutor; or
c) Retain a peer in the class who is doing extremely well; or
d) Talk to the Graduate Assistant (if you have one for your class).

AFTER you complete your tutoring (and most likely, the term) submit a completed VA Form 22-1990t for one of our signatures and you mail it in for reimbursement processing.
Landon Blinn, Erica Colen, Robert Jones – 1 Dec
Joshua Hazlett – 2 Dec
Jeremiah Cribbs – 3 Dec
Jill Molt – 4 Dec
Casey Hess, Hannah King, Carleigh Widner – 5 Dec
Samuel Summers – 6 Dec
William Beswetherick, Mary Foran – 7 Dec
Jessica Jacobsen – 8 Dec
Matthew Johannessen, Nicholas McIntire – 9 Dec
Melissa Stephenson, Amanda Lockhart, Kaleb Nichols – 10 Dec
Rylee Oakes, Tjara Reed, James Walton – 11 Dec
Joseph Reppond – 12 Dec
Kenneth Hanson, Jason Wilkins, Emily Dingler – 13 Dec
Cipriana Simerly, Joseph Davis, Thomas Moore – 14 Dec
Steven T. Jones – 15 Dec
Jacob Saylor – 16 Dec
Courtney Randal, Robert Boatman – 17 Dec
Brandon Smith – 18 Dec
Michael McElhaney, James Richardson – 19 Dec
Arshene Yavari Baigvand – 20 Dec
Keith Norris – 21 Dec
Andrew Doran, Eric Colen – 22 Dec
Wayne Radden, Chance Culver, Alicia Rodriguez – 23 Dec
Jonathan Byrd, Zoe Swavely, Andrew Wellington, Bailie Light – 24 Dec
Thomas Cash, Olivia Kallstrom – 25 Dec
Daniel Boster – 28 Dec
Zachary Phillips – 29 Dec
Lance Bryden, Jesse Richardson, David Stone – 30 Dec
Logan Overbay, Alexandra Rodriguez, Cameron Tate – 31 Dec
What does a ChalleNGe graduate look like?

Every year, more than one million young Americans drop out of school. The National Guard Youth Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that supports the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program - an evidence-based initiative that has given over 130,000 adolescents a second chance at life's opportunities for 20 years. ChalleNGe produces nearly 9,000 graduates a year, equipping these young men and women with the self-confidence, determination, and credentials necessary to carve out a successful path for their future.

- 47% continue their education
- 39% join the workforce
- 5% join the military
- 79% male
- 43% white
- 28% black
- 29% hispanic
- 46% of grads are 17 years old
- 86% more likely to attend college
- Have earned a GED, high school diploma, or are going back to high school to graduate with their peers
- Drug-free
- Have positive attitudes toward themselves and their prospects for the future
- 47% of grads are 17 years old
- More likely to earn higher wages than those who dropped out of school and did not attend ChalleNGe
- 29% more likely to attain a high school diploma or GED
- Unlikely to be involved with or return to a life of crime

"I got to walk across the stage at graduation in a cap and gown with a gold cord around my neck and receive a high school diploma. The pride I felt was more than I could have ever imagined, and I owe it all to what I learned at ChalleNGe."

-Tracey Barber
Graduate, Lincoln's ChalleNGe Academy