

Economic Nuggets

April 15, 2022

The latest news, views, and announcements

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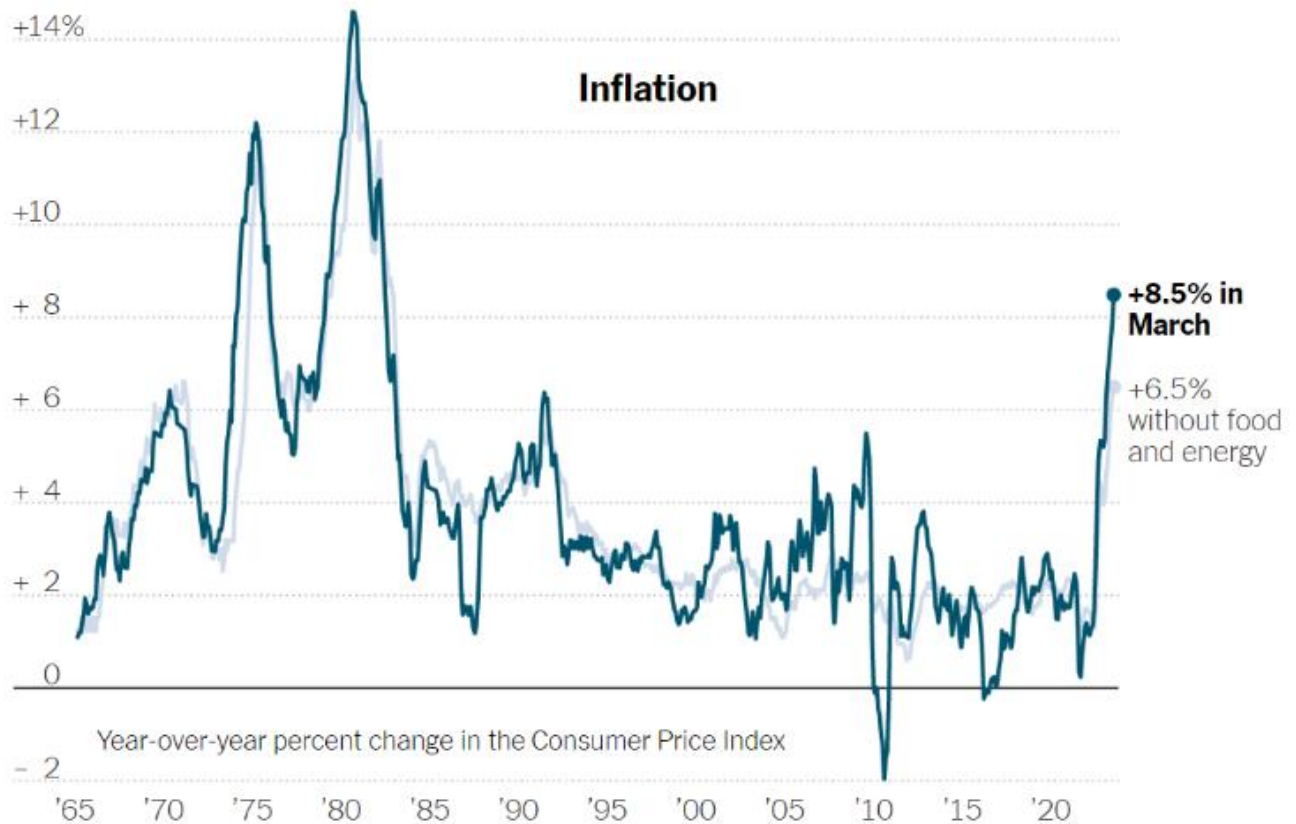
VE&E'S LATEST ANNOUNCEMENT

University of Arizona Global Campus Loses GI Bill Funding



The University of Arizona promised to fix the fraud epidemic at Ashford University. But it made one significant mistake. Whichever name you know it by, the “military-friendly” online college in metro Phoenix is taking more hits than a punching bag in a boxing gym.

This time, the university has lost all its GI Bill funding, it acknowledged. That’s the law that provides financial benefits to studious veterans and active-duty members. State offices of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs decide which colleges and universities are eligible for federal assistance for students in uniform. [Click Here to Read More](#)



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics • By Ella Koeze

ECONOMY

INFLATION HITS FASTEST PACE SINCE 1981, AT 8.5% THROUGH MARCH

Gasoline weighed heavily in the increases, while prices moderated in several categories. Some economists say the overall rate may have peaked.

Inflation hit 8.5 percent in the United States last month, the fastest 12-month pace since 1981, as a surge in gasoline prices tied to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine added to sharp increases coming from the collision of strong demand and stubborn pandemic-related supply shortages.

Fuel prices jumped to record levels across much of the nation and grocery costs soared, the Labor Department said Tuesday in its monthly report on the Consumer Price Index. The price pressures have been painful for American households, especially those that have lower incomes and devote a big share of their budgets to necessities.

But the news was not uniformly bad: A measure that strips out volatile food and fuel prices decelerated slightly from February as used car prices swooned. Economists and policymakers took that as a sign that inflation in goods might be starting to cool off after climbing at a breakneck pace for much of the past year.

In fact, several economists said March may be a high-water mark for overall inflation. Price increases could begin abating in the coming months in part because gasoline prices have declined somewhat — the national average for a gallon was \$4.10 on Tuesday, according to AAA, down from a \$4.33 peak in March. Some

researchers also expect consumers to stop buying so many goods, whether furniture or outdoor equipment, which could begin to take pressure off overtaxed supply chains.

“These numbers are likely to represent something of a peak,” said Gregory Daco, the chief economist at Ernst & Young’s strategy consultancy, EY-Parthenon. Still, he said, it will be crucial to watch whether price increases excluding food and fuel — so-called core prices — slow down in the months ahead.

A letup would be welcome news for the White House, because inflation has become a major liability for Democrats as midterm elections approach in November. Public confidence in the economy has fallen sharply, and as rapid price increases undermine support for President Biden and his party, they could imperil their control of Congress.

While inflation is up across much of the world as economies adjust to the pandemic and share supply-chain problems, core prices have risen more sharply in the United States than in places like Europe and Japan.

That has handed Republicans a talking point, especially as prices overwhelm recent wage growth. Average hourly earnings were up 5.6 percent in March, according to the Labor Department. But adjusted for inflation, average pay was down 2.7 percent.

“Americans’ paychecks are worth less and less each month,” Senator Patrick J. Toomey, Republican of Pennsylvania, wrote on Twitter after the report.

While the Federal Reserve has primary responsibility for controlling inflation, the administration has taken steps

to combat price increases. Mr. Biden announced on Tuesday that a summertime ban on sales of higher-ethanol gasoline blends would be suspended this year, a move that White House officials said was aimed at lowering gas prices.

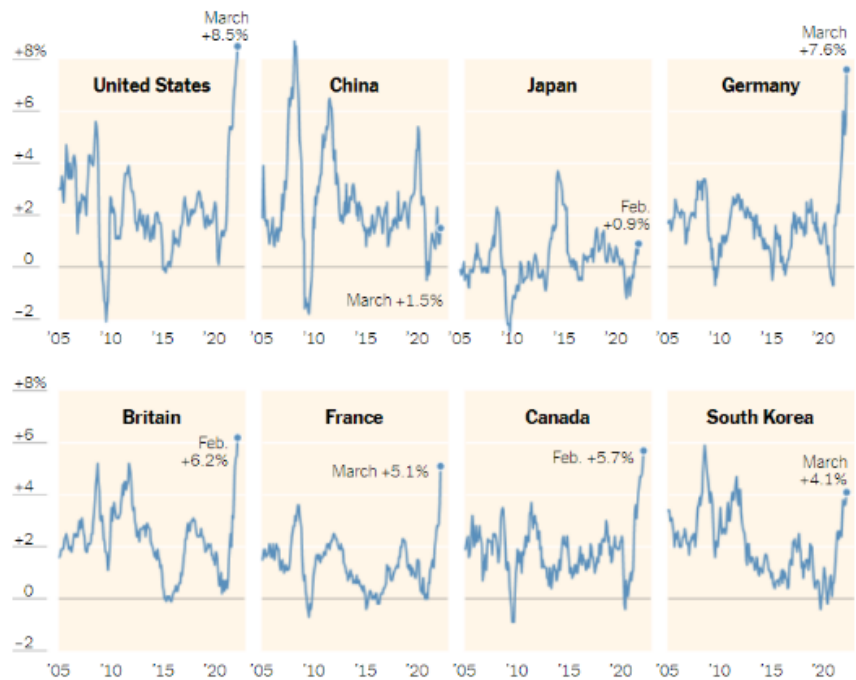
The action followed the president’s decision last month to release one million barrels of oil a day from the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve over the next six months.

“I’m doing everything within my powers, by executive order, to bring down the prices and address the Putin price hike,” Mr. Biden said in Iowa on Tuesday afternoon, referring to President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia. Inflation had risen sharply before the war in Ukraine, though the conflict has added to the pressure on energy and commodity prices.

There are a few hopeful signs that inflation could slow in the months ahead.

The first is largely mechanical. Prices began to pop last spring, which means changes will be

Inflation Rates Around the World



Year-over-year changes in consumer price indexes. - Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; Japan National Statistics Center; Eurostat; United Kingdom Office for National Statistics; Statistics Canada - By The New York Times

measured against a higher year-ago number in the months ahead.

More fundamentally, March's data showed that prices for some goods, including used cars and apparel, moderated or even fell — though the signal was somewhat inconsistent, with furniture prices rising sharply. If rapid inflation in prices for goods does wane, it could help overall inflation subside.

“It's very welcome to see the moderation in this category,” said Lael Brainard, a Fed governor and Mr. Biden's nominee to be the central bank's next vice chair, in an online appearance hosted by The Wall Street Journal. “I'll be looking to see whether we continue to see moderation in the months ahead.”

Between the slowdown in gasoline prices this month and a potential easing of goods prices, even economists who have long expressed concern about inflation said it might begin to ease.

“It's better-than-even odds that we're not going to see a number above 8.5 percent this year,” said Jason Furman, a Harvard economist who served as chair of President Barack Obama's Council of Economic Advisers.

But even if inflation slows slightly, it is likely to spend 2022 running far above the Fed's goal, which it defines as 2 percent on average using a related but more delayed price index.

The critical question is how much and how quickly prices will come down, and recent developments ramp up the risks that uncomfortably rapid inflation could linger.

Services costs, including rent and other housing expenses, are increasing more rapidly. Those measures move slowly, and are likely to be a major factor determining the course of inflation.

Wages are up sharply, pushing costs up for employers and potentially prompting them to lift prices. Businesses may feel that they have the power to pass rising costs along to customers,

and even to expand their profits, because consumers have continued to spend during a full year of rapid price increases.

And cheaper goods are not guaranteed. A coronavirus outbreak is shuttering cities and disrupting production in China, and the war in Ukraine adds a huge dose of uncertainty about commodity prices and supply chains.

“The impact from these commodity price shocks, they can take a while to make it through the economy,” said Tim Mahedy, senior economist at the tax and advisory firm KPMG U.S.

After a long stretch of rapid inflation, America's central bank is reacting, rather than waiting to see what happens next. Fed officials began raising interest rates last month and have signaled that they will continue to push them up “expeditiously” as they try to rein in lending, spending and demand, hoping to prevent steep price increases from becoming a more permanent feature of the U.S. economy.

“It's been a shock: We went for a decade in which we could not get inflation to 2 percent,” Christopher J. Waller, a Fed governor, said during an event on Monday. “We're hoping that it will go away relatively fast, that's our job, and we're going to get it done.”

Policymakers are expected to make a half-point interest rate increase at their meeting in early May, and have indicated that they will soon begin to quickly shrink their bond holdings, a change that should reinforce higher rates and soften demand. Ms. Brainard suggested on Tuesday that such a plan could be announced as soon as May, and go into effect as soon as June.

While she predicted that consumer demand would ease in the coming months as the government provided less financial help to households than in 2021 and as borrowing costs climbed, Ms. Brainard cited the war in Ukraine and Chinese lockdowns as risks that could curtail supply and keep inflation elevated.

In a recent Bloomberg survey of economists, the median inflation forecast for the final three

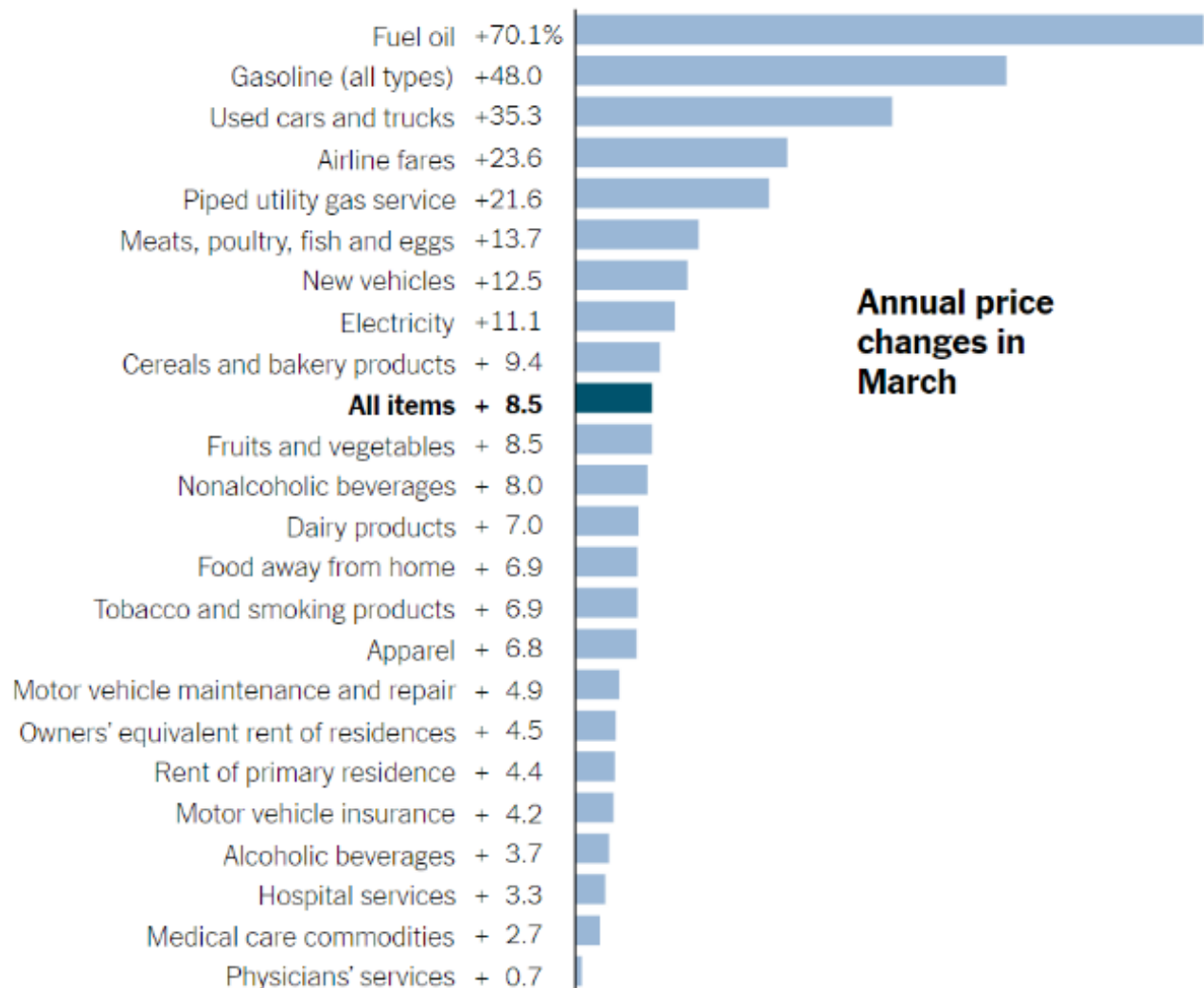
months of this year was 5.4 percent over the prior year — well above the Fed’s goal. Businesses and consumers regularly say rapid inflation is disrupting their economic lives, and many are voicing concerns that it will not quickly evaporate.

“Even if the economy slows down, it’s not going to feel like it’s slowed down to the builders, to people that have building products companies, to the trucking companies,” said Crissy Wieck, chief sales officer at the trucking company Western Express, during a Fed-hosted panel on Monday.

She noted that truckers typically buy trucks when shipping demand is as hot as it is now, lured by the promise of high pay — but because of a truck shortage, that additional capacity could be years away.

“That supply chain and supply-demand ratio isn’t going to correct,” she said.

Smialek, J., Casselman, B., & Swanson, A. (2022, April 12). Inflation hits fastest pace since 1981, at 8.5% through March. The New York Times. Retrieved April 13, 2022, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/business/economy/inflation-report-march.html?searchResultPosition=2>



Year-over-year changes in a selection of categories of the Consumer Price Index • Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics • By The New York Times

ECONOMIC NEWS RELEASE

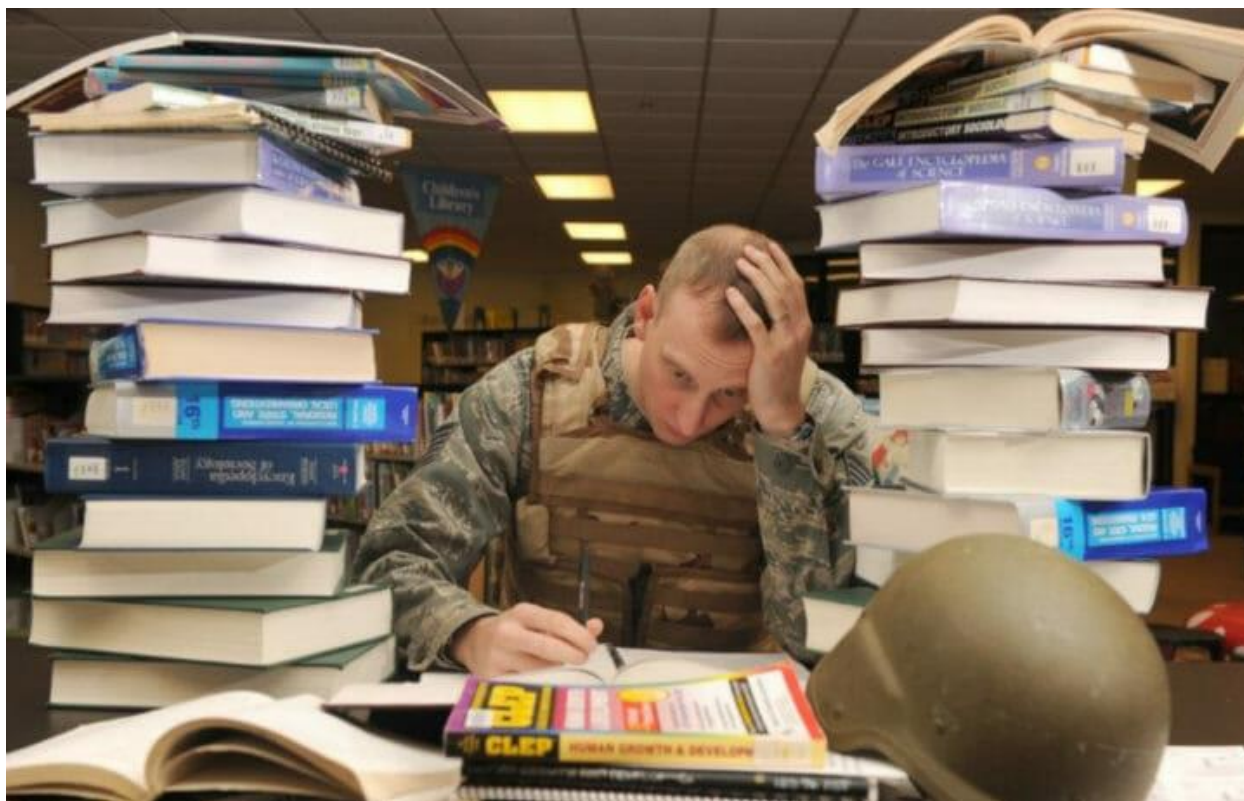
- The national unemployment rate decreased from **3.8%** in February to **3.6%** in March.
- Gulf War II veterans' unemployment rate is **3.0 percent** (March 2022)
- Gulf War II women veterans' unemployment rate is **1.8 percent** (March 2022)
- In March 2022, the veteran unemployment rate was **2.4%**, down from **3.1%** the previous month. The comparable non-veteran unemployment rate was **3.7%** in March.
- Newly discharged veterans claiming benefits totaled **4,331** a decrease of **299** from the preceding week

HOUSEHOLD DATA

Table A-5. Employment status of the civilian population 18 years and over by veteran status, period of service, and sex, not seasonally adjusted

[Numbers in thousands]

Employment status, veteran status, and period of service	Total		Men		Women	
	Mar. 2021	Mar. 2022	Mar. 2021	Mar. 2022	Mar. 2021	Mar. 2022
Unemployed	452	216	417	196	35	20
Unemployment rate	5.0	2.4	5.3	2.5	2.9	1.7



EMPLOYMENT & TRANSITION

VET TEC PROGRAM GETS A BOOST IN FUNDING

Last month the [Veteran Employment Through Technology Education Courses](#) (VET TEC) training program received an additional \$125 million as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022 – enough funding that is believed to bring the program through the end of FY22 without running out of money. The additional funding more than doubles what the program received for all of last year.

The VET TEC program is in its third year of a five-year pilot program. When originally started in 2019, funding for FY20 was limited by law to \$15 million. For FY21, that was increased to \$45 million. But due to the popularity of the program,

it ran out of money both years before the fiscal years ended.

This unique training program is designed to train veterans in high-tech skills that will qualify them for well-paid jobs in a growing high-tech industry. Training is centralized around large fields such as information science, computer programming, data processing, media applications, computer software and coding.

Not only does the VET TEC program train veterans, but they also offer employment assistance and offer help building a resume. Of the more than 2,000 graduates of this program,

1,200 have found jobs within 67 days of graduation with an average starting [salary](#) of \$57,000.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To participate in the program, veterans must meet all these requirements:

- Either already out of the military or will be within 180
- Have at least one day of GI Bill entitlement left
- Accepted by one of the [training providers](#)

TYPES OF COURSES

For those with little computer experience, one of the training programs taught by providers is Computer User Support Specialist. The 200-hour course can be taken in either in person or online. As far as numbers, the Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts the field will grow by 9% over the next 10 years. That translates to an additional estimate of 72,200 jobs per year. Median pay is posted at \$26.69 per hour or \$52,690 per year.

Other short courses [Cybersecurity](#) Specialists (120 hours), Information Security Analyst (120 hours) and Network Support Specialist (160 hours). They also have longer courses, such as the Full Stack courses in Web Development (530 hours), Software Development (530 hours), and Immersive (440 hours).



GI BILL BENEFITS

While in the program, veterans with [Post 9/11 GI Bill entitlement](#) left will receive paid tuition for the program and a Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA). If still on active duty, the training will be paid for, but you will not get the MHA. For in-person students, the MHA is calculated based on the location of the training; if attending online, then the MHA received is half of the national average or around \$800 per month. One of the unique aspects of this program is that while remaining GI Bill entitlement is required for participation in the program, participation in the program does not reduce GI Bill entitlement.

If interested in getting into the computer field, a VET TEC training course can get you ramped up quickly. If interested, fill out an [application](#).

Kness, R. (2022, April 11). Vet Tec Program gets a boost in funding. ClearanceJobs. Retrieved April 13, 2022, from <https://news.clearancejobs.com/2022/04/11/vet-tec-program-gets-a-boost-in-funding/insider/>.

VETERANS UNEMPLOYMENT DROPS TO LOWEST LEVEL IN THREE YEARS

[Veterans unemployment](#) in March fell to its lowest level in three years as the American economy continued to show signs of recovery from the [ongoing coronavirus pandemic](#).

The 2.4% unemployment rate for veterans was the lowest monthly mark since April 2019 and the first time the figure has been under 3% since the start of the pandemic in early 2020.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the rate has declined steadily in recent months, from

3.9% last October to [3.2% in February](#). It translates to about 216,000 veterans who were actively seeking work last month unable to find steady employment. That's roughly half the total jobless veterans from March 2021.

Veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan War era — who make up 43% of the veteran workforce in America today — saw their unemployment rate drop from 5.2% in January to 3% in March.

Veterans of the first Gulf War era — who make up another 28% of the veteran workforce — posted an unemployment rate of 1.4%, the third time in the last four months that group’s mark has been under 2%.

The national unemployment rate has also decreased steadily over the last year. In March 2021, the rate sat at 6%. By February of this year, it was down to 3.8%. Last month, it fell again, to 3.6%.



BLS officials said the national economy added 431,000 new jobs last month. In a statement, President Joe Biden praised the jobs news.

“This is a historic recovery — Americans are back at work,” he said.

Although veterans employment has generally outperformed the national jobless figures, lawmakers have introduced numerous jobs programs in recent years targeting former military members out of concern that their transition to civilian life could be more complicated than their non-military peers.

In the White House’s fiscal 2023 budget request unveiled this week, administration officials said they would ask for a \$31 million boost in spending for [entrepreneurial development programs](#) targeting veterans, women and minorities to ensure they have “access to counseling, training, and mentoring services.”

About half of the 18 million veterans living in America today are in the labor force. The others are either too old or injured to work, or unable to find steady employment.

Shane III, L. (2022, April 1). Veterans unemployment drops to lowest level in three years. Military Times. Retrieved April 13, 2022, from <https://www.militarytimes.com/education-transition/2022/04/01/veterans-unemployment-drops-to-lowest-level-in-three-years/>

¿DID YOU KNOW?

TRANSITIONING FROM MILITARY SERVICE? EMPLOYMENT NAVIGATORS CAN HELP

Anthony and Yasmin’s story

Anthony, a U.S. Army soldier stationed at Army Garrison Bavaria in Germany, and his wife, Yasmin, needed a plan. Their goal was to return to their home state of Florida and both find meaningful employment in in-demand information technology fields. But being thousands of miles away from home was making the prospect of job searching feel particularly daunting.

As a first step, Anthony attended the [Transition Assistance Program workshops](#) to prepare for civilian life, which are led by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (known as VETS). During the workshops, Anthony learned how the VETS [Employment Navigator and Partnership Pilot](#) could help identify good fit careers and make connections.

After meeting with Employment Navigator Natali Esteves in Bavaria, Anthony was impressed by the time she took to listen to his goals and interests. “What the Employment Navigator has built is special,” said Anthony. “You need that one-on-one time.”

He encouraged Yasmin to make an appointment with her as well.

“Within the first two minutes, I just felt completely welcomed,” Yasmin said of her first appointment with Natali. “It was nice to feel seen and heard as a military spouse.”

Natali worked with Anthony and Yasmin individually to break down the current labor market, exploring career options, assist them with tailoring their resumes, and provide referrals and connections to additional employment resources, partners and services.

She also connected them both with an Apprenticeship Placement Counselor through the VETS Apprenticeship Pilot, who then helped Anthony and Yasmin apply for a pre-apprenticeship program to begin preparing them for careers in information technology.



Anthony’s service separation in January 2022 is now a milestone they eagerly anticipate. That's because following their pre-apprenticeship program, they will be eligible to start as paid apprentices in the IBM Z® registered apprenticeship program — a major step toward their long-term employment goals.

WHAT ARE EMPLOYMENT NAVIGATORS AND HOW CAN I TALK TO ONE?

Employment Navigators are professionals who provide one-on-one, personalized services and resources to interested transitioning service members and their spouses. They are available as early as 365 days prior to separation or 2 years prior to retirement. Find out if there is an [Employment Navigator at your installation](#) and view all of our [transition curriculum and related resources here](#).

I'M INTERESTED IN AN APPRENTICESHIP. WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

Visit [apprenticeship.gov](#) to explore opportunities near you or in your field of interest. You can also explore [apprenticeship resources just for veterans and service members](#).

Winter , T. (2021, August 31). Transitioning from military service? employment navigators can help. Transitioning from Military Service? Employment Navigators Can Help. Retrieved April 13, 2022, from <https://blog.dol.gov/2021/08/31/transitioning-from-military-service-employment-navigators-can-help>

Staff Meetings on Employment Topics

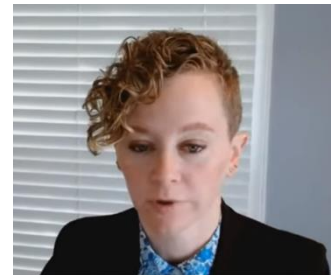
The National Veterans Employment and Education Division met with Lucas Miller and Gloria Darko, Talent Acquisition Specialists at Contact Government Solutions (CGS) Federal. The purpose of the meeting was to follow up with the company to learn about its client satisfaction rate and its candidate success rate for veteran job seekers. Discussions also revolved around military skills translation and the need for prime contracting accountability within the small business space.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division completed a Bill Review on [H.R.1453, The Military Spouses Retirement Security Act](#), This bill grants a small business employer a tax credit for each employee who is a military spouse and eligible to participate in the employer's defined contribution retirement plan.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division met with Tyra Nelson, D.C. Site director for The American Legion Auxiliary. VE&E staff communicated upcoming Hiring our Heroes Career Summits to gauge interest in events that Auxiliary would like to attend. Likewise, Auxiliary brought to VE&E's attention upcoming Yellow Ribbon Program events in both Indiana and Kansas from May 20-22.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division attended a hybrid hearing presented by the 'House Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity' titled, "Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity Legislative Hearing." The purpose of this hearing is to review twelve pieces of legislation and consider the bills and drafts that span the subcommittee's jurisdiction.

Ms. Ogilvie states that the VA supports "**H.R. 6458: Elimination of Requirement to Specify an Effective Period of a Transfer of Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to a Dependent (Rep. Murphy)**" because it would eliminate the need for a Service member to decide the timeframe for a dependent to use transferred entitlement and prevent the negative impact of certain decisions. This provides service members and their families more flexibility in utilizing their G.I. Bill benefits. The VA also supports the unnumbered bill "Discussion Draft: Permanent Authority for Educational Assistance Benefits During Emergency Situations" because it consolidates and simplifies authorities for educational assistance benefits during emergency situations.



This would allow the VA to act swiftly in times of emergency to protect veterans' education benefits. The VA also supports "**Discussion Draft: Expand Eligibility for Self-employment Assistance under Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) Program.**" This unnumbered bill would amend 38 U.S.C. § 3104(a)(12) to allow for the payment of license fees and the provision of equipment and supplies for all Veterans who qualify for benefits under 38 U.S.C. chapter 31, rather than limiting payment to Veterans with the most severe service-connected disabilities who require homebound training or self-employment, or both. The VA does not support "**Discussion Draft: Foreign School GI Bill Payment (Rep. Sherrill)**" only because it would cause disruption to the digital G.I. Bill modernization effort. Ms. Ogilvie states the VA has been working with the Department of Treasury on a solution that would enable international direct deposit payments to

foreign educational establishments and foreign-based student veterans. Lastly, Ms. Ogilvie states the VA strongly supports both **Permanent Authorization for Flexible Use of Funds for Homeless Veterans (Rep. Cherfilus-McCormick)** and **Discussion Draft: HUD-VASH Flexibilities (Rep. O'Halleran)**.



David Case is the first of five witnesses on panel 2. He is the Deputy Inspector General of the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Mr. Case started his testimony by speaking on the “**Discussion Draft: Quality Education for Veterans Act of 2022.**” He stated this bill would strengthen the OIG’s efforts to detect fraud in VA’s education and job training programs. That statement draws on OIG’s recent oversight of those programs including education fraud investigations. The investigations resulted in over 200 education institutions being accused of misconduct with a loss of over 150 million dollars to the government. Their wrongdoings include not providing educational services for which they were paid, making false statements to the government, and noncompliance with VA regulations meant to protect students and the department from fraud, waste, and poor quality of services. Fraudulent documents and actions resulted in these institutions being approved in accepting veterans’ benefits all while providing inadequate services or no services at all. The investigations have revealed systemic issues and administrative gaps that allowed bad actors to be approved and go on to commit fraud. The bill would help close these gaps by creating a uniform SAA (State Approving Agencies) application with consistent documentation requirements for all schools applying to the G.I. Bill program. This bill would enable SAA’s to perform more effective compliance checks, ensure the quality and stability of applicants, and issue risk-based surveys with a limited notice which reduces opportunities for institutions to hide fraudulent activity.

Steven R. Berg is the second of five witnesses on panel 2. He is the Vice President for Programs and Policy of the National Alliance to End Homelessness. Mr. Berg started his testimony applauding the government for its efforts in reducing veteran homelessness but then stated more work needs to be done as the issue persists. Between 2011 and 2016, the number of homeless veterans reduced by 5,000 a year. In contrast, between 2016 and 2020, the number of homeless veterans reduced by 500 a year. There are still tens of thousands of veterans who are homeless each night. Mr. Berg states the “**Discussion Draft: Permanent Authorization for Flexible Use of Funds for Homeless Veterans (Rep. Cherfilus-McCormick)**” is a very important bill and he strongly supports it. It is important because the authority that the bill grants allow veterans the flexibility to obtain products and services that would normally be hard to get with other sources of money. Mr. Berg stated his support for “**Discussion Draft: HUD-VASH Flexibilities (Rep. O'Halleran)**.” He claimed the HUD-VASH program is extremely effective in assisting homeless veterans and that the cost-effectiveness comes from targeting veterans with the most severe needs: severe disabilities, mental health concerns, and substance abuse addictions. Mr. Berg ended his testimony by stating that the HUD-VASH program has accomplished great work in combating veteran homelessness, but it needs continued support, and the other VA homelessness programs do too.





Mr. Justin Hauschild is the Policy Counsel of Student Veterans of America. He is the third of five witnesses on panel 2. Mr. Hauschild started his testimony by reciting the focus of SVA's (Student Veterans of America) mission: to empower student veterans and provide an educational experience that goes beyond the classroom. The first piece of legislation Mr. Hauschild discussed was "**Discussion Draft: Permanent Authorization for Education Assistance Benefits During Emergency Situations.**" For years, student veterans have faced challenges with education benefits during times of unexpected hardship, usually natural disasters. But the pandemic has shown us how many ways emergencies can negatively affect veterans' education benefits. Thankfully, due to Congress's swift action, student veterans now rely on a temporary safety to combat the hardships posed by the pandemic. Mr. Hauschild urged congress to make these temporary

protections a permanent authority because the United States must be proactive in preparation for any future public emergencies. However, Mr. Hauschild encouraged Congress to consider other designations to act as the basis for activating the protections. The Draft Legislation's current language would allow these benefits protections to be invoked when the president declares an emergency situation. There are multiple authorities that allow the president to declare an emergency but under the Stafford Act, an emergency declaration is just one of the declarations available to the president. For instance, a major disaster declaration can be issued for events such as a hurricane, tsunami, tornado, etc. Student veterans have been impacted by events like these in the past and, depending on the circumstances, these events can more than fairly qualify as emergency situations. Mr. Hauschild continued his testimony shifting his discussion to "**Discussion Draft: Quality Education for Veterans Act of 2022**" and "**Discussion Draft: Program Approval.**" He stated that the SVA supports the intent of both bills but there is still much work ahead to unify them into comprehensive legislation that can protect beneficiaries and taxpayer dollars without causing harmful, unintended consequences to student veterans. SVA supports the idea of strengthening program approval, but they have concerns with the proposed legislation that fall into three categories: definition, scope, and workability. Mr. Hauschild ended his testimony by expressing a desire for further collaboration between the SVA and Congress to revise some of the proposed legislation.

Mr. Shane Liermann is the Deputy National Legislative Director of Disabled American Veterans (DAV). He is the fourth of five witnesses on panel 2. Mr. Liermann started his testimony by vocalizing the DAV's support for "**Discussion Draft: Permanent Authorization for Flexible Use of Funds for Homeless Veterans (Rep. Cherfilus-McCormick)**" and "**Discussion Draft: HUD-VASH Flexibilities (Rep. O'Halleran).**" Mr. Liermann claims this legislation could play an important role in accelerating the goal of eliminating veteran homelessness. DAV also supports "**Discussion Draft: Expand Eligibility for Self-employment Assistance under Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) Program.**" As of July 2021, there were only 162 veterans in the self-employment track while there were over 76,000 veterans in the long-term services track for employment. Removing the requirement that a veteran has the most severe service-connected disabilities who require homebound training or self-employment will greatly open the eligibility and opportunities for veterans to participate in the self-employment track in VR&E. To end his testimony, Mr. Liermann articulated the DAV's support for "**Discussion Draft: Permanent Authorization for Education Assistance Benefits During Emergency Situations.**"





Mr. Dedrick Asante-Muhammad is the Chief of Membership, Policy, and Equity at the National Community Reinvestment Coalition. Mr. Dedrick is the fifth and final witness on panel 2. He stated his motive for testifying is to discuss “**Discussion Draft: VA Home Loan Transparency and Consumer Protection Act of 2022 (Rep. Porter).**” During his testimony, he revealed that only 1.8% of loans made by banks in 2018 through 2020 was a VA loan. Instead, VA lending is dominated by a relatively small group of non-bank lenders. Almost 15% of loans made by mortgage lenders are VA loans. Those lightly regulated entities are not subject to the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA). Loan churning in the VA loan program is a chronic issue among a small number of lenders. Loan churning occurs when a lender makes an initial loan at an artificially high-interest rate and then after a period of time sells the homeowner a refinance loan to bring the rate down. This generates two sets of fees for the lender, saddling the borrower with years of additional interest payments. Mr. Dedrick states that to support veterans and reduce the opportunity for predatory lenders in the VA loan program, NCRC supports the efforts of Representative Porter’s office to enact the “**Discussion Draft: VA Home Loan Transparency and Consumer Protection Act of 2022 (Rep. Porter).**” Using the non-public data reported under the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) the Consumer Finance Protection Bureau (CFPB) can assess the prevalence of predatory practices, such as loan churning, in the VA loan program.

The American Legion supports the legislation discussed during this hearing. The legislation covered a wide array of topics and issues, but they are all of high importance. The Legion supports the creation of programs or initiatives with the goal of addressing problems unique to veterans. Issues like homelessness, predatory loans, insecure educational benefits, etc., are all important to the Legion’s cause. Pertaining to Employment and Transition, The American Legion commends the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee for advancing the Veteran Health Training Act as well as the VR&E Self-Employment Assistance eligibility expansion. Through Resolution No. 79: Expanding Department of Veterans Affairs Employment Pathways, The American Legion advocates for education and training incentives within VA programs that provide avenues for servicemembers and veterans toward gainful employment.

Career Skills Program

TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

CREATE YOUR FUTURE

With The Army Career Skills Program (CSP)

Army Career Skills Program

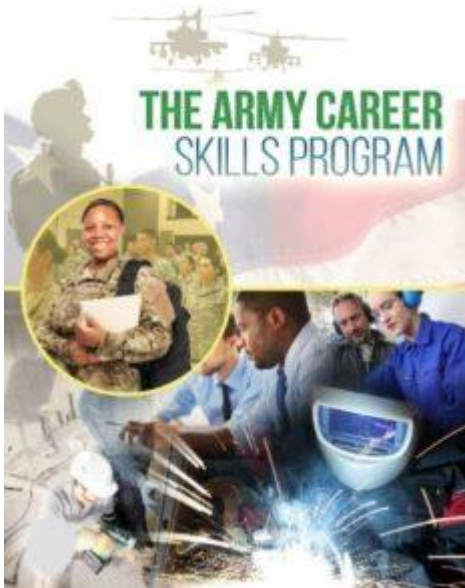
Create Your Future

**EDUCATION,
LICENSING &
CREDENTIALING**

TRANSITIONING SOLDIERS FIND SUCCESS THROUGH ARMY CAREER SKILLS PROGRAM

For many Soldiers, securing a successful career after serving in the Army starts with the opportunities they take advantage of as they begin to transition out of the military. One of the major resources that prepares Soldiers is the Army Career Skills Program.

The program provides transitioning Soldiers the opportunity to participate in employment-skills training, on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeships and internships with a high probability of employment in high-demand and highly-skilled jobs — all while the service member retains their pay and allowances, said Requisha Cannon, CSP installation administrator for Fort Leonard Wood. “Service members should definitely take this seriously,” she said. “It’s a perfect opportunity to set themselves up for success as they transition out of the military.”



The CSP provides structured opportunities, in addition to allowing some flexibility to meet the service member’s needs, Cannon said.

“There are about 200 established programs throughout the country for service members to pick from, but if a service member is not finding an opportunity that immediately matches their

need, they can actually build their own internship,” she said.

If a Soldier does not find any programs that suit their needs in the CSP — and they don’t want to set up their own internship — Cannon said the Department of Defense also offers a similar program called SkillBridge.

“To date, they have over 3,500 opportunities available,” she said. “There’s something for every skill set.”

With both CSP and SkillBridge, service members can opt for internships on or near their home installation, or anywhere else in the country, Cannon said. Either way, the program lasts 180 days, and is aligned with the service member’s expiration — term of service, or ETS, date to make employment offers and start dates easier to schedule.

“However, if a service member is being medically retired, they are in a very unique situation, where they are not limited to that 180-day mark,” she said. “They have the option to do a longer CSP with their command’s approval, or they can do more than one internship.”

Capt. Elton Wright is an Army engineer, who went through the medical review board process and is transitioning out of the Army after serving for about six years. He looked through the established internships on offer and decided instead to reach out to a colleague at the Directorate of Public Works at Fort Leonard Wood. He will complete the program in March, and he said the skills he developed during his time in the CSP are already coming in handy — Wright said he has a couple of job prospects with energy companies back in his hometown of Washington, D.C.

“The CSP was an amazing opportunity,” he said. “Being an intern, the expectation is just to learn and develop, and one of the huge assets for me was learning to use a drafting software that, for

engineering firms, engineering departments, is a desired skill.”

April Pehoski was medically retired as a sergeant first class in November, after 13 years of service. In the Army, Pehoski was a geospatial engineer, and she was able to complete her internship with the U.S. Geological Survey in Rolla, Missouri, where she has now been working since January. Pehoski said after hearing a little about the CSP, she was hooked.

“All I was seeing was money on the table,” she said. “I was like, ‘I’m getting that money.’ In my field, in geospatial engineering, a lot of us are geared toward the three-letter agencies — the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, or the National Security Agency, the CIA — because we have a clearance. That gets you in the door, but not everyone wants to do that — stay in that type of environment. When my husband and I looked at what was available for me in the CSP, and the USGS came up, I was like, ‘That is a winner.’ It’s a government job, but it lets you see if this is something you want to do in the civilian world.”

For Staff Sgt. Allen Huerta, who has been a combat medic in the Army a little more than 10 years, his internship at General Leonard Wood Army Community Hospital — with its large civilian Tricare beneficiary population — was an opportunity to learn how to translate his qualifications and experience into something a civilian would understand after he decided it was time to try something new.

“Military medicine and civilian medicine are completely different,” he said. “I’ve been interviewing for jobs lately, and that stood out. Some of my experience, I tried to make it make sense, but some of the stuff they see I did at the hospital here helped connect the dots.”

Cannon said there are no costs to the service member — only benefits.

“Employers are looking to provide training at no cost to the service member,” she said. “A lot of times, they are looking to employ afterward, so they are upskilling that service member and making sure that they are trained and prepared. There are some programs that even offer credentialing. Even if a service member is not hired by that employer, sometimes they’re connected with some of that employer’s partners, so it’s a really great opportunity.”

For more information on the CSP, or any other programs available to transitioning service members at Fort Leonard Wood, call [573-596-0719](tel:573-596-0719).

For more information visit the [Army's Career Skills Program website](#) or the Department of Defense [SkillBridge website](#).

One of the main goals of The American Legion is to provide service members with opportunities to obtain gainful employment following their departure from the service. The Army Career Skills Program does exactly that by providing transition service members with the opportunity to participate in job training programs, apprenticeships, and even the opportunity to design their own internship. [Per Resolution No. 25: Support and Expand Apprenticeship Opportunities for Servicemembers](#), The American Legion applauds the Department of Defense and the United States Army on the growth and success of their programs.

Hill, Brian. “Transitioning Service Members Find Success Through Army, DOD Programs That Offer Job Skills, Internships.” Army, 9 Feb. 2022, https://www.army.mil/article/253854/transitioning_service_members_find_success_through_army_dod_programs_th_at_offer_job_skills_internships.

VASSAR ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF VASSAR VETERANS INITIATIVE

Vassar College will launch the Vassar Veterans Initiative (VassarVets) designed to expand its overall student veterans' outreach and support by establishing an on-campus position dedicated to serving U.S. military veterans, President Elizabeth H. Bradley announced.

In 2012, Vassar became the first institution of higher education in the nation to partner with The Posse Foundation—a nonprofit foundation dedicated to recruiting outstanding young leaders from diverse backgrounds and pairing them with the country's top colleges—to recruit veterans for enrollment. Through VassarVets, the College will establish a director-level position which will coordinate the recruitment of veterans as well as serve as a resource for veterans during their time at Vassar, enhancing the college experience of Vassar's veteran student population. The new program will replace Vassar's relationship with The Posse Foundation.

"Having veterans here at Vassar has benefited all of our students because of the unique experiences and perspectives veterans bring, and their presence is part of what it means to have a truly diverse campus," Bradley said. "I am thankful to The Posse Foundation for helping us build the capacity to establish the Vassar Veterans Initiative and expand on what our work with The Posse Foundation has already accomplished."

As part of this initiative, Vassar will extend its need-blind admission policy for first-year applicants to U.S. military service members and veterans applying as transfers. This eliminates consideration of veteran applicants' ability to pay tuition from admission decisions. The College will also meet 100% of veteran students' demonstrated need for educational expenses.

With Vassar's financial aid award, scholarship funds will replace expected family contributions and loans toward undergraduate tuition and student fees. In addition, Vassar is a Yellow Ribbon school and does not cap Yellow Ribbon spaces.

U.S. service members and veterans applying to Vassar will be granted application fee waivers and will be guaranteed an admission

interview. Vassar is currently test-optional for all students, including veteran applicants, eliminating the need to submit standardized testing for admission to the College. As part of VassarVets, the new director will create a fall visitation program for prospective applicants who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces; offer dedicated college counseling to prospective veteran applicants; develop a pre-orientation program for enrolling veterans; establish partnerships with military-affiliated and veterans' organizations; facilitate group and individual advising; and develop programming with other campus offices to support student veterans.

"Vassar took the lead 10 years ago in recognizing the power and potential of those who stepped up to serve our country, and I am thrilled that the College is willing to deepen its commitment with a dedicated role not just to build out our recruitment but also to further support student veterans' success at Vassar and beyond," said Dean of Admission and Student Financial Services Sonya Smith.



Army vet Tanya Marie Painter, joined by family, about to receive her diploma from Vassar College President Elizabeth H. Bradley at Commencement in 2019.

"We are proud to have partnered with Vassar as the first Posse Veterans Program institution. Vassar led the way for selective colleges and universities to think more strategically about including U.S. veterans among the members of their student body. These service members are an important part of the equity and inclusion discussion, and we applaud Vassar for continuing the work,"

said Deborah Bial, President/Founder of The Posse Foundation.

The College is in the process of recruiting for the director of the Vassar Veterans Initiative position, who will report to the Dean of Admission and Student Financial Services, and work closely with the Dean of the College and Dean of Faculty staff, Bradley said. The position is expected to be filled by July 1. For more information, visit the Vassar Office of Admission [website](#) or call (845) 437-7300.

Vassar College is a coeducational, independent, residential liberal arts college founded in 1861.

Vassar College has announced their new program called Vassar Veterans. As part of this new

program, Vassar will make it easier for veterans to apply to their school by waving the application fee and guaranteed an admissions interview. Vassar College is a Yellow Ribbon school that does not cap Yellow Ribbon spaces at the college. [Per Resolution No. 103: Support and Expand Department of Defense Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program](#), The American Legion is a big supporter of Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program which helps veterans and their families obtain education and gainful employment.

Vassar College. "Vassar Announces Launch of Vassar Veterans Initiative." Vassar Announces Launch of Vassar Veterans Initiative, 7 Apr. 2022, <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/vassar-announces-launch-of-vassar-veterans-initiative-301520196.html>.

Staff Meetings on Education Topics

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division attended a meeting with the Veterans Benefits Administration and other veteran service organizations to discuss efforts to engage with the California State Approving Agency for Veterans Education after the withdrawal of GI Bill program approval from the University of Arizona's Global Campus.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division attended a 4 Corners Education policy meeting with minority and majority staff from both Houses of Congress to discuss, among other issues, the University of Arizona's Global Campus's loss of GI Bill eligibility.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division attended an information session held by Student Veterans of America on recent developments within the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program for military borrowers.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division attended an Education Service Stakeholder Engagement by the VAVBAWAS/CO to learn of the VA's actions regarding the California State Approving Agency for Veterans Education's (CSAAVE) withdrawal of GI Bill program approval for the University of Arizona Global Campus.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division attended a Department of Veterans Affairs meeting regarding the University of Arizona Global Campus. The purpose was for the VA to update its stakeholders on actions the VA has taken following the California State Approving Agency for Veterans Education (CSAAVE)'s withdrawal of GI Bill program approval for the University of Arizona Global Campus (UAGC). James Ruhlman, Deputy Director for Program Management's VBA, Education Service, informed attendees that the CSAAVE withdrew approval at UAGC's request.

The university sought to transition out of California accreditation and become an Arizona accredited school by applying to Arizona's State Approving Agency. Currently, the application package is being reviewed, with a final determination expected in 30 days. During that period, however, students will remain in limbo. What's more, due to the nature of UAGC's schedule of classes, which are non-standard academic terms, some students will lose their educational benefits sooner than others. VA notified all students known to be enrolled through an email notification on what they should expect at the end of the academic term, especially those utilizing Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits.



Stakeholders informed the VA that the GI Bill Comparison Tool had not yet been updated to reflect the UAGC warnings.

UAGC's lack of consideration for student veterans by not providing them adequate notice of Title IV ineligibility and subsequent loss of student education benefits concerns The American Legion. Through [Resolution No. 304: Support Accountability for Institutions of Higher Learning](#), The American Legion insists on legislative support and federal agency action to ensure that institutions are held responsible for actions that deviate from federal and state standards.



AXNE BILL TO EXPAND HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESS FOR VETERANS UNANIMOUSLY CLEARS COMMITTEE, HEADS TO HOUSE FLOOR

[Rep. Cindy Axne \(IA-03\)](#) announced that her legislation, the **Student Veteran Work Study Modernization Act**, which would expand higher education access for veterans to include those who are

enrolled part-time, passed the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs unanimously and will now move to the House floor.

While work-study programs are available through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for student veterans enrolled in secondary education programs full-time, including vocational or professional programs, many veterans have difficulty enrolling full-time while balancing their work, family, and oftentimes a VA-rated disability. Nearly half of all student veterans are married with at least one child in their care.

Rep. Axne's legislation would allow part-time student veterans to access the VA Work Study programs, ensuring they can complete their certification or degree without taking on unmanageable amounts of student debt and still care for themselves and their families.

"Student veterans have spent their lives in service to our country, and we have to do everything possible to ensure that they have the flexibility they need to succeed as they pursue higher education," said Rep. Axne. "I'd like to thank Chairman Takano and members of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs for their support as we work to expand the benefits these student veterans have earned and allow them to attend school part-time."

The **Student Veteran Work Study Modernization Act** is endorsed by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Military Veterans Advocacy, Disabled Veterans of American (DAV), Paralyzed Veterans of American (PVA), Veterans Education Success, the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), and the Council for Opportunity in Education.

Background:

Rep. Axne has championed measures to expand resources for veterans in Iowa and across the country – including the **Transition for Success Act**, bipartisan legislation she introduced to [provide skills training and employment assistance to members of the National Guard and Reserve](#), and the **Sgt. Ketchum Rural Veterans' Mental Health Act**, which was signed into law last June [to create more mental health resources for veterans living in rural areas](#).

Press Release. (2022, April 6). AXNE bill to expand higher education access for veterans unanimously clears committee, heads to House floor. Representative Cynthia Axne. Retrieved April 14, 2022, from <https://axne.house.gov/media/press-releases/axne-bill-expand-higher-education-access-veterans-unanimously-clears-committee>



HUD ANNOUNCES GRANT OPPORTUNITY TO COMBAT HOUSING DISCRIMINATION



HOMELESSNESS & HOUSING

HUD ANNOUNCES GRANT OPPORTUNITY TO COMBAT HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced on Tuesday that it is making an additional \$3,285,353 in American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding available to help HUD's Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP) agencies combat housing discrimination related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Organizations that qualify for the funding, which is being awarded through FHIP's Private Enforcement Initiative (PEI) component, will be able to use the money to conduct a range of fair housing enforcement and education and outreach activities, including addressing discriminatory practices in underserved communities.

The funds constitute the third round of ARP funding that targets COVID-19 related discrimination. To date, approximately \$16.1 million in ARP funding has been awarded to 62 FHIP agencies working to address the unequal impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on communities of color, low-income communities, and other vulnerable populations.

"The COVID-19 pandemic continues to reveal inequities in housing opportunities for many communities," said Demetria L. McCain, HUD's Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. "Our fair housing partners will utilize these additional funds to oppose discriminatory practices and safeguard housing rights for American families."

In addition to enforcement and education and outreach activities, the funding can be used to respond to housing inquiries, conduct fair housing testing, provide legal assistance, and cover costs associated with providing services related to the pandemic.

Applicants who are interested in applying for funding should go to www.Grants.gov to obtain a copy of the specific Notice of Funding Opportunity, forms, instructions, and other application materials. Additional information can be found on HUD's website, www.hud.gov.

Applications must be received by May 5, 2022. People who believe they have experienced discrimination may file a complaint by contacting HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at (800) 669-9777 (voice) or (800) 877-8339 (Relay). Housing discrimination complaints may also be filed by going to www.hud.gov/fairhousing.

The American Legion supports the additional funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. [Resolution No. 332: Support Funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\) and Veterans Affairs \(VA\) Supportive Housing \(HUD-VASH\) Homeless Program](#)

HUD announces grant opportunity to Combat Housing Discrimination • Oakland County Times. Oakland County Times. (2022, April 7). Retrieved April 7, 2022, from <https://oaklandcounty115.com/2022/04/06/hud-announces-grant-opportunity-to-combat-housing-discrimination/>

HOUSING FOR HOMELESS, VETERANS PLANNED FOR SITE OF NORTH HILLS' FORMER ANGEL APPLIANCES STORE

The half-acre development, which officials said will cost \$31.5 million to complete, was made possible by a combination of Measure HHH funds and a large donation from Hal Kassner, a retired Army veteran, and his wife, Sue. The couple donated the property with the goal that housing be made available to veterans.

Los Angeles City Council President Nury Martinez and LA Family Housing CEO Stephanie Klasky-Gamer led the way as LAFH broke ground on the construction of My Angel, a new permanent supportive housing complex in the San Fernando Valley's North Hills area.

The project will convert the former Angel Appliances store — an iconic Valley retailer and service center that opened in 1955 but recently shut down — into 54 permanent supportive homes for veterans and individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. The target completion date is October 2023.

The half-acre development, which officials said will cost \$31.5 million to complete, was made possible by a combination of Measure HHH funds and a large donation from Hal Kassner, a retired Army veteran, and his wife, Sue. The couple donated the property with the goal that housing be made available to veterans.

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LA Family Housing CEO Stephanie Klasky-Gamer, center, with Sue and Hal Kassner, a retired Army veteran, who donated the property for a permanent supportive housing project called My Angel, in North Hills on Sepulveda Blvd., for veterans and people experiencing chronic homelessness. The event was at the site of the former Angel Appliances, on Thursday, March 24, 2022. (Photo: by Dean Musgrove, Los Angeles Daily News/SCNG)

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“When the 54 veterans and individuals who will be housed at My Angel are settled into their brand new apartments, all the angels involved in making this happen will surely get their wings,” said Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, in whose 3rd District the project resides. “My Angel will provide housing for people who honorably served this country and then had a long struggle with chronic homelessness. Apartment by apartment, building by building, we are expanding bridge and permanent housing for San Fernando Valley residents so that, with time, every person in the County will have a place to call home.”

The American Legion supports the creation of new housing for homeless veterans and the mission to provide them needed services throughout the homes. [Resolution No. 331: Support Housing Preference for Low-Income Veterans in the Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) aligns with the mission to give veterans priority housing.

report, S. (2022, March 25). Housing for homeless, veterans planned for site of North Hills' former Angel Appliances Store. Daily News. Retrieved March 30, 2022, from <https://www.dailynews.com/2022/03/24/housing-for-homeless-veterans-planned-for-site-of-north-hills-former-angel-appliances-store/>

Staff Meetings on Homelessness Topics

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division attended the VA Advisory Committee on Homeless Veterans virtual meetings. The purpose of the Committee is to provide the Secretary of Veterans Affairs with an ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of the policies, organizational structure, and services of VA in assisting Veterans at risk of and experiencing homelessness. The Committee discussed information related to the needs of homeless Veterans and provided advice on the most appropriate means of assisting this Veteran population.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division joined NCRC's Director of Research, Jason Richardson, for an interactive walk through demonstrating how to use the Fair Lending Tool that produces reports on mortgages, small business lending and bank branch networks for any city, county, or metro area in the nation. Detroit was the city used to see how the data is used to strengthen work and build economy within communities.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division a Miriam Kitchen's Forum where DC Mayoral Candidates spoke about the increasing homelessness in Washington, DC. Mayoral Candidates: Robert White, Andre Davis, and James Butler discussed plans to address the homeless problem and answered questions from Miriam's Kitchen guests and advocate about expectations for the next DC Mayor.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division is assisting a service-disabled veteran with correcting records for a medical disability retirement and related military benefits. The American Legion will be clarifying the processes of filing the paperwork and facilitating the actions for this veteran.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division is assisting a veteran and their family at-risk of becoming homeless in Houston Texas with seeking temporary financial assistance support for housing. The veteran is now connected with The American Legion Homeless Task Force Representative for the state of Texas for appropriate resources.

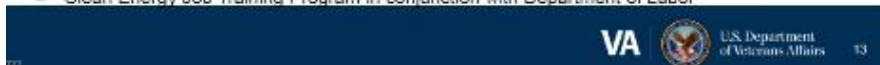
The National Veterans Employment and Education Division attended the FY 2023 President's Budget request Department of Veterans Affairs brief. Charles Tapp is the Chief Financial Officer for Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and started his segment with a "thank you" to the Veteran Service Organization for the advocacy and support that contributes to the ability to fund these services.

Charles Tapp, CFO VBA, The VBA budget is straightforward and starts with the increase funding that addresses new respiratory conditions associated with environmental exposures. On August 5, 2021, the interim rule of 3 conditions were published (asthma, rhinitis, and sinusitis). Support from congress allowed VA to start processing these claims without a budget. This is the first year that a budget is approved to support the processing of these claims, and automated support is incorporated into this process as well. In

addition to the budget to expedite claims, the Veterans Transition Assistance Grant Program is a pilot project where an office of four people will open to facilitate movement of grants to agencies and

2023 VBA General Operating Expenses budget of \$4.1 billion (+\$493 million, +13%) will provide funding for:

- 795 FTE to process claims for new respiratory conditions associated with environmental exposure
- Compensation and Pension Claims Modernization to automate process from submission to authorization
- Pension Optimization Initiative to reduce processing and wait times.
- Veteran Transitional Assistance Grant Program
- Disability Employment Pilot Project
- Clean Energy Job Training Program in conjunction with Department of Labor



organizations that are sensitive to the needs of transitioning veterans. This year the grants distributed will be \$500,000.

The Disability Employment Pilot Project is a partnership project with several partners

to include the Department of Labor (DOL). This project will focus on the job market from an angle of understanding and revisiting the challenges and hot areas in the employment sector. This allows for smarter and more productive programming when considering the veteran's journey and how better to meet their unique needs. The goal is to transform the way services are provided into a process that is better informed and more empowering for transitioning service members.

Another funding allocation is the Clean Energy Job Training Program. The administration is focused on clean energy and is working with DOL to introduce new career clean energy fields. VA is investing \$2.5 million towards those efforts to ensure that veterans are not left out of the loop as talks continue towards clean energy job opportunities.

\$ in thousands	2021 Enacted	2022 Budget	2023 Request	2024 Request
Compensation and Pensions**	124,357,227	137,575,487	152,016,542	149,738,130
Readjustment Benefits	12,964,945	14,946,618	8,006,851	8,432,500
Insurance Benefits*	131,372	138,950	109,849	123,128
Veterans Housing Program**	997,634	-	208,289	NA
Veterans Housing Liquidating Account	(5,483)	(1,767)	NA	NA
Vocational Rehabilitation Loan Program**	21	-	NA	NA
Native American Veterans Housing Loan Program**	1,282	-	NA	NA
Subtotal, Mandatory***	138,116,138	152,854,138	161,281,527	155,351,762
General Operating Expenses	3,164,000	3,473,000	3,845,000	-
Veterans Housing Program - Admin	294,400	228,500	282,381	-
Vocational Rehabilitation Loan Program - Subsidy and Admin	458	437	453	-
Native American Veterans Housing Loan Program	1,185	1,185	1,185	-
Subtotal, Discretionary	3,370,444	3,854,118	4,117,000	-
Total, Mandatory and Discretionary	141,486,582	156,708,256	165,398,527	155,351,762

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division met with the Veterans and Community Oversight and Engagement Board (VCOEB), Federal Advisory Committee to discuss the Master Plan 2022 Approval Status for the VA Healthcare Budget

Keith Harris is the Senior Executive Homeless agent for Greater L.A. and he spoke about progress in housing homeless veterans and the ongoing goal of the Secretary to house 38,000 veterans into permanent










housing by the end of this calendar year. There is excitement about service improvements and work to roll out specific information is expected in the following months.

Dr. Steve Braverman, Director VAMC Los Angeles spoke about updates and successes of the project starting with the opening of Care, Treatment & Rehabilitative Services (CTRS) initiative in April 2020. This project started with a few tents on a parking

lot and has now expanded to 120 tiny home shelters. It has been a good program as a low barrier to entry opportunity for veterans to come off the streets and start getting engaged with healthcare and housing. The A Bridge Home shelter opened late summer of 2020. Also, the buildings (205, 207 and 208) were completed by the end of 2021. This completed work will bring roughly 180 units to the LA campus by the end of this year. The secure funding for the utility infrastructure and parcel readiness needs, were unmet before and there were no plans. The current Master Plan has remedied most of those deficiencies. The Master Plan has gone through VA staffing, and it is waiting for the VA Secretary signature which is expected soon. VHA provides funding for medical transportation on campus and in partnership with veteran organizations, they provide on-site transportation as well.

Budget (cont.) - FY21 EUL Infrastructure Projects


FY21 PROJECT NAME	TYPE	AWARD AMOUNT	AWARD / COMPLETION DATE	
Install Fire Suppression Water Distribution System, North Campus	Design	\$1.98M	09/27/21 12/31/22	 <p style="text-align: center;">B205 and B208 (120 Veteran Units)</p>
Install Water Pressure Boosting Measures, North Campus	D/B	\$4.80M	09/27/21 08/24/22	
Physical Verification Site Utilities Mapping	Design	\$1.3M	09/16/21 05/13/22	 <p style="text-align: center;">Lot 48 (72 Veteran Units)</p>
Solar System Relocation and Reinstallation, Sepulveda	D/B	\$3.79M	09/24/21 06/10/22	
B402 Parking Lot 38 Utilities Infrastructure Relocation, North Campus	D/B	\$3.65M	09/29/21 09/02/22	 <p style="text-align: center;">B156 and 157 (110 Veteran Units)</p>
B404 Parking Lot 48 Utilities Infrastructure Relocation, North Campus	D/B	\$2.59M	09/29/21 08/22/22	
Replace CTRS Tents with Tiny Shelters, Power & Tiny Shelters Grading and Site Preparation	D/B	\$1M	09/29/21 03/31/22	 <p style="text-align: center;">Lot 38 (118 Veteran Units)</p>
EUL Emergency Abatement B156/B157	D/B	\$3.21M	06/24/21 09/29/21	
Total:		\$22.32M		 <p style="text-align: center;">B207 (59 Veteran Units)</p>



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs 7


Robert McKenrick, Deputy Director, VAMC, The Master Plan Budget for VA Healthcare is different from the budget that will address additional needs that go into building up a community for homeless veterans. Things like building up the Master Plan on the North Campus the turnover projects for the parcels, the upgrading of utilities is a separate budget. There are aspects to homelessness that overlap but the budgets are separate. The North Campus budget is approved for 2021 and 2022. The 2023 budget is in the works. All funding requested has been approved and it appears that the funding has caught up to where there are no funding challenges.

Budget (cont.) - FY22 EUL Infrastructure Projects


EUL Project(s) Supported




B300 (72 Veteran Units)




Lot 48 (72 Veteran Units)




158 (71 Veteran Units)



MacArthur Field Phase 1
(75 Veteran Units)





Lot 38 (118 Veteran Units)



B210 (41 Veteran Units)

FY22 PROJECT NAME	EST. COST	EUL PARCELS SUPPORTED
Parking Lot Construction and Expansion, North Campus	\$6.2M	Lot 36, Lot 46
B233 (hazmat) Demolition Assessment, Demolition, and Replacement	\$1.2M	Lot 46
B206 Partial Renovation	\$4.6M	B210
Parking Lot 38 Fill Project (Capital Contribution to EUL Developer)	\$2M	Lot 38
MacArthur Field Fill Project (Capital Contribution to EUL Developer)	\$3.2M	MacArthur Field
B300 Remediation	\$600K	B300
B027 Physical Security Design Manual Renovation (Relocate OIT)	\$3.66M	B300, B158
B158 Remediation	\$1.5M	B158
Upgrading Fire and Water Distribution system Ph1 (DBB \$20M, pending 100% Design)	\$20M	All North Campus
Total:	\$42.06M	

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division met with the Advisory Committee on Homeless Veterans to discuss the effectiveness of homeless policies and to hear directly from the U.S. Secretary of Veteran Affairs.



The purpose of the Committee is to provide the Secretary of Veterans Affairs with an ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of the policies, organizational structure, and services of VA in assisting Veterans at risk of and experiencing homelessness. The Committee reviewed information related to the needs of homeless Veterans and advised on the most appropriate means of assisting this Veteran population. The Committee will make recommendations to the Secretary regarding such activities.

Secretary McDonough is committed to ensuring top quality care for veterans, their family and loved ones. VA is committed to living up to the fundamental principle of advocacy (VA will lead in advocating for veterans) VA will provide world class resources to end homelessness and suicides by seeking new ways to ensure most vulnerable veterans have access to care. Veterans will determine the outcome of success because veterans are the judges of the quality of care they receive. Good data helps provide quality healthcare and evidenced based decision making in all efforts to serve veterans is the standard for VA. All veterans are welcomed, and it is a must that everyone feels safe. Diversity is a fundamental strength and never a weakness in the country and at VA.

A joint statement was issued by Secretary Fudge and Secretary McDonough affirming their commitment to end Veteran Homelessness. In the April 12, 2021, statement there was a call for homelessness with a commitment to five key areas:

- Make ending homelessness a top priority
- Lead with and evidenced-based Housing First approach
- Reached underserved Veterans
- Ensure the delivery of quality supportive services
- Increase the supply of and access to affordable housing

A team of Housing Urban Development (HUD), United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), and VA staff collaborated to develop action steps from this joint statement. The objectives include troubleshooting progress and measuring the performance of VA and HUD programs, reinforce adherence to Housing First by VA and HUD homeless programs, ensuring effective implementation/utilization and targeting of HUD-VASH, enhance access to legal services, employment services, and financial counseling/benefits. Many more objectives were established as an outcome to the three organizations collaborating. The committee was able to hear directly from homeless veterans or veterans who were once homeless and identify areas where there is room for growth in meeting the needs of homeless and at-risk veterans.

Homelessness Trends, 2010 - 2020		
Homeless Population	2010 - 2016	2016 - 2020
Overall	↓ 14%	↑ 6%
Veterans	↓ 47%	↓ 6%
Families	↓ 23%	↓ 12%
Individuals	↓ 10%	↑ 15%
Chronic	↓ 27%	↑ 43%
Unsheltered	↓ 24%	↑ 28%



VA TO AWARD MILLIONS IN GRANTS TO IMPROVE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING FACILITIES

The Department of Veterans Affairs is awarding 36 capital grants totaling approximately \$64.7 million to community organizations under VA's [Grant and Per Diem program](#) to improve the quality of housing options for Veterans experiencing homelessness.

The new awards will allow grantee organizations to construct new buildings and renovate existing transitional housing facilities that provide more than 900 beds nationwide for homeless Veterans.

The funds will also decrease mass housing and create more individualized unit-style living, thereby improving personal safety and reducing risks associated with close-quarters living.

“The Grant and Per Diem program fills a targeted role in [VA’s evidence-based approach](#) to preventing and ending homelessness by ensuring Veterans facing housing crises have safe and healthy accommodations during their path to permanent, stable housing,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “These grants allow VA, alongside community partners, to amplify efforts to reduce homelessness and to protect the dignity of our most vulnerable Veterans.”

The GPD program has provided community-based transitional housing with supportive services for Veterans since 1994 as they transition back to permanent housing. View previous [GPD grantees](#) and details about the program, and information about the [current state of Veteran homelessness](#).

These grants are supported with funds authorized through the [American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#) and are a part of limited series of [capital grants](#) designed to continue relief efforts in response to COVID-19.

The American Legion supports the Department of Veterans Affairs in its mission to end homelessness by awarding community organizations. This aligns with us [Resolution No. 24: Support Funding and Changes to the Department of Veterans Affairs Grant and Per Diem Program](#).

Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs. (2016, September 1). Veterans Affairs. Go to VA.gov. Retrieved March 30, 2022, from <https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5775#:~:text=WASHINGTON%20%E2%80%94%20The%20Department%20of%20Veterans,options%20for%20Veterans%20experiencing%20homelessness>



**SMALL BUSINESS
& GOVERNMENT
CONTRACTING**

BLUE CYBER INITIATIVE PROVIDES ROAD MAP TO CYBERSECURITY SUCCESS FOR SMALL BUSINESS

The largest corporations in the world have been the targets of cybercrime. What chance does a small business with just a few employees have of fending off malicious exploitation?

If Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) or Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) firms follow the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement clauses in their contracts to the letter, their chances of being cyber-secure are excellent.

The problem is that defense industrial base small businesses struggle to comply with the complicated DFARS security requirements. They may need to obtain the help of cybersecurity experts to support their business.

Recently, the Department of Defense has put new effort into existing regulations to ensure small businesses contracted by the government are prepared to provide adequate protection to their networks, their intellectual property and DoD's sensitive data.

To assist in compliance, a new initiative called Blue Cyber is assisting Air Force small businesses better understand the DoD cybersecurity requirements, making them easier to navigate while also providing an outreach forum for support.



The Blue Cyber program reaches out to Air Force, Space Force and DOD contractors to ensure they are aware of the cybersecurity and information protection requirements in their contracts and then supplies them with the state and federal resources to implement them. The goal is for no questions to go unanswered.

Kelley Kiernan recognized the need for small business cybersecurity outreach while serving as the Chief Technology Officer in the SBIR/STTR program office.

“As small businesses drive innovation and support the Department of the Air Force missions with cutting-edge technologies, it is vital we work together to protect sensitive data and networks,” Kiernan said.

Kiernan, a scientist, engineer and small business champion, reached out to the Air Force Chief Information Security Officer to propose a solution. She was subsequently detailed to the office, and in her new role created the Blue Cyber initiative which is supported by the innovation arm of the Air Force and Space Force -- AFWERX.

Blue Cyber has three components; the first is 20 short, ultra-relevant presentations created so that Department of the Air Force contractors, prospective companies and their government partners can understand the DoD cybersecurity and information protection regulations at their own pace.

The second component is the “Air Force/Space Force Chief Information Security Officer’s Blue Cyber Ask-Me-Anything” webinar which provides current cybersecurity content and guest speakers from organizations such as National Institute of Standards and Technology and the Department of Defense Cyber Crime Center, or DC3.

The unique, live events are held every Tuesday from 1-3 p.m. ET via Zoom. Kiernan and her team talk with over 100 current Department of the Air Force contractors every week, with the goal to reach prospective companies as well.

These events and other Blue Cyber news may be found on LinkedIn by following USAF SBIR/STTR.

Finally, Kiernan allocates three hours each day where she takes one-on-one calls. She hears company's unique challenges and directs them to federal and state resources to guide them to cybersecurity compliance success. This outreach has the direct effect of aiding the Air Force small businesses by help them protect their own intellectual property, their employee personal information and sensitive DoD data.

"Failure to protect our sensitive data will put service members and military missions at risk. We must match the aggressiveness of our cyber adversaries with radical teamwork to bring our small businesses up-to-speed in the most modern methods for comprehensive protection of DAF sensitive data and networks," said Kiernan.

Future Blue Cyber efforts will include a free Cybersecurity Boot Camp to supply contractors and prospective contractors with the most current resources. The outreach targets for 2022 include academic and research institutions as well.

Blue Cyber is a roadmap to fulfillment of the DoD's cybersecurity requirements and increased opportunities for small business innovation.

For further information on the Blue Cyber Education Series see:

www.safcn.af.mil/CISO/Small-Business-Cybersecurity-Information/

or contact Kelley Kiernan at:

kelley.kiernan@us.af.mil.

In [Resolution No. 12: Cybersecurity Protections for Veteran-Owned Small Businesses](#), the Legion states, "Data has surpassed oil as the most valuable global commodity, and the need to protect data is a crucial matter of national security. Veterans receive funding from the Small Business Administration (SBA) to start their small businesses, it is in the best interest of the SBA that their grants create jobs that do not go to waste in the event of a cyber-attack on a funded small business."

Ruff, M. R. (2022, February 7). Blue Cyber Initiative provides road map to cybersecurity success for small business. Tinker Air Force Base. Retrieved April 13, 2022, from <https://www.tinker.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/2925770/blue-cyber-initiative-provides-road-map-to-cybersecurity-success-for-small-busi/>

BAKER LAUNCHES NEW \$75M SMALL BUSINESS RELIEF FUND

Amelia Goncalves came to the United States from Angola in 1996, and by the early part of the next decade she and her family had opened a restaurant in Brockton serving the types of West African dishes she had grown up on.

Like any restaurant, Luanda Restaurant and Lounge has gone through ups and downs with the economy over the years. But the COVID-19 pandemic that arrived in early 2020 really put a strain on the business.

When Gov. Charlie Baker's administration put together a \$668 million small grant program for small businesses in late 2020, the Goncalves family applied and received \$75,000, the maximum grant available.

"It helped us pay a lot of bills and keep us in business," Goncalves said Wednesday as she played host to Baker and other state leaders to announce the availability of a new round of funding, albeit a smaller sum, for small businesses still hurting from the pandemic.

Baker traveled to Brockton on Wednesday to relaunch a small grant program for small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, visiting the Golcalves's West African restaurant to mark the opening of the application window that will end with \$75 million going to support businesses like Luanda Restaurant and Lounge.

The program is being funded with money from the American Rescue Plan Act and last year's state budget surplus, and is the successor to a

\$668 million small business relief fund Baker set up in late 2020, which also relied heavily on federal funds. The Legislature recapitalized the program as part of the \$4 billion ARPA relief bill passed late last year.

to apply for grants of up to \$75,000 that can be used on everything from payroll, mortgages and rent to COVID-19 safety supplies or outdoor dining upgrades.



Lt. Governor Karyn Polito speaks at the launch of a \$75-million small business relief program.

(PHOTO: | COURTESY OF MASS.GOV)

"This program has proven to be a lifesaver and game changer for so many businesses here in the Commonwealth," Baker said.

The ARPA-surplus bill made \$50 million in

grants available to small business impacted by COVID-19, with priority given to businesses that serve socially and economic disadvantaged

communities and those owned and operated by minorities, women, veterans, members of the LGBTQ community and those with disabilities.

The other \$25 million in grants are being reserved for businesses that did not previously qualify for relief funding under the initial program. The application period opened at noon on Wednesday, and businesses will have five weeks

Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation President Larry Andrews, who will administer the grants, said his goal is to start awarding money by the end of April or early May. Andrews said the timing of the awards will depend, in part, on the volume of applications received, and he is expecting the program to be oversubscribed.

"To the small business owners who may be watching this right now, your resiliency and optimism is contagious and really inspiring. We thank you and want to support you further," Andrews said.

Jaysen Goncalves, Amelia's son, said the grant his family received last year helped the restaurant build an outdoor dining area, which they had always wanted, and to stay afloat when other businesses were failing. But restaurants are still

dealing with supply chains issues, inflation and higher prices for ingredients.

"It was very helpful during a very tumultuous

time. But the effects of the pandemic are still being felt, especially for a lot of small businesses like ours," Jaysen Goncalves said.

Jon Hurst, president of the Massachusetts Retailers Association of Massachusetts, has been

vocal in support for state and local government to direct more federal dollars to support small businesses, but he said the size of this newest grant program barely scratches the surface of need.

"You have to wonder what local and state government are waiting for to spend more of their ARPA funds," Hurst said. "Are they waiting for more dark storefronts? Are they waiting for COVID to be totally in the rearview mirror so they can spend it on unrelated purposes?"

The state still has about \$2.3 billion in uncommitted ARPA funds, and Democratic leaders have yet to lay out a timetable for when they might look to spend that money. Cities and towns also received their own pots of money from the federal relief bill.

"Those who believe the small business failures are over don't understand that you can't survive indefinitely with both lower sales and far higher costs," Hurst said.

Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito said "it's on us" to support local businesses by shopping and dining at locally-owned establishments.

"Make a plan to go out with friends and family and really support the small businesses that make up the fabric of our commonwealth," Polito said. Baker lamented that the event took place in the morning, and not in the evening when he might have ordered food to take out. After promising to be back with his wife and friends to dine, Jaysen Goncalves told him that delivery to the State House was an option.

"Do you really deliver to the State House?" Baker asked. "Awesome. I'm all over that."

State House News Service. (2022, February 24). Baker launches new \$75M small business relief fund. Worcester Business Journal. Retrieved April 14, 2022, from <https://www.wbjournal.com/article/baker-launches-new-75m-small-business-relief-fund>

Staff Meetings on Small Business Topics

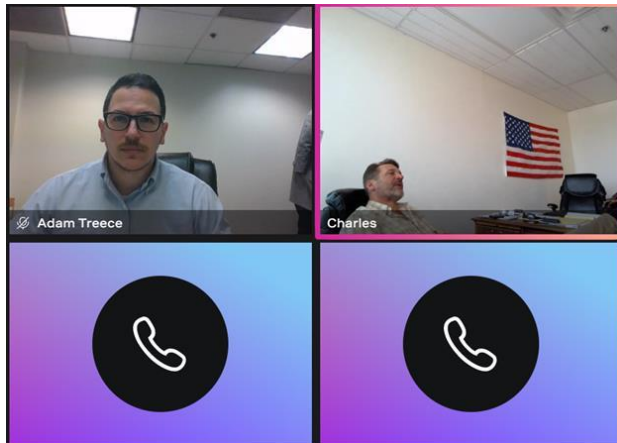
The National Veterans Employment and Education Division met with congressional staff (minority) from the House Small Business Committee to discuss the American Legion's Small Business legislative portfolio. Specifically, members of The American Legion Staff highlighted the need to improve outcomes in SDVOSB utilization among federal agencies.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division participated in a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Veteran Affairs committee on Veteran Business Affairs, wherein Legion staff provided an update on the development of the Task Force's biannual report to the White House.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division met with members of the American Legion Small Business Task Force to develop a strategy for advancing Vets First draft legislation within the House and Senate Armed Services Committees.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division met with representatives from the Department of the Treasury to discuss how the Community Development of Financial Institutions Fund can better serve veterans seeking access to capital.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division met with Charles Fowler, President of Global Procurement, Keith Forkin, CEO of Semper Sozo, and Representative Michael Waltz's office (RL-FL-6) to discuss strategy on what can be done to move Vets First to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Waltz's office spoke with the Small Business Committee to receive committee referral. The Small Business Committee flagged areas of possible opposition outside of the committee regarding minority and women's groups. Additionally, Waltz's office spoke with the Congressional Research Service regarding contract award threshold differences between the DoD and VA.



Given that Waltz's office intends on introducing Vets First as a standalone before the NDAA, they provided two objectives:

First, the office recommended procuring waivers from the Small Business and Veteran Affairs Committees, which would prove to be the biggest obstacle in the legislative process.

Second, the office recommended conducting messaging and advocacy with the VA to see if the Vets First program has been successful, and why it needs to be applied to DoD.

Waltz's office will follow up to provide preliminary feedback from general council to see if the waivers are needed prior to NDAA markup along with identifying committee staff to engage with. In the interim, VE&E will provide its small business taskforce as well as Waltz's office an updated procurement scorecard that measures how well federal agencies are reaching their small business and socio-economic prime contracting and subcontracting goals.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division met with the Small Business Administration office in regards to a veterans disabled own company that was subcontracting with a prime - US Army Corps of Engineers to assist with compliance issues.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division attended a truckers meetings along with the Department of Labor and Teamsters to discuss supply chain issues.

The National Veterans Employment and Education Division attended a hybrid hearing presented by the 'Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies' titled, "Expanding Broadband Access: Department of Commerce Broadband Programs in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act."



The main purpose of this hearing was to discuss the upcoming programs which promise to deliver “reliable, high-speed internet to every American, lower the price of internet service, and help close the digital divide.” Gina M. Raimondo, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce, was the sole witness and provided her testimony.

Gina M. Raimondo is the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce. During her testimony, she talked about how too many Americans don’t have access to quality broadband service. This lack of internet connectivity equates to a lack of opportunity. Therefore, President Biden set a goal to change that. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will provide \$65 billion to deliver reliable, high-speed internet to every American, lower the price of internet service, and help close the digital divide. Of those funds, \$48.2 billion is allocated to Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). Specifically, the law provides \$42.45 billion for the Broadband Equity, Access & Deployment Program (BEAD), \$2 billion for Tribal broadband grants, \$2.75 billion to fund the Digital Equity Act, and \$1 billion for middle-mile connections to build a high-speed backbone to help reduce the cost to serve households, businesses, and anchor institutions. Gina M. Raimondo has emphasized how flexibility will be key in the execution of this program; the program will be implemented by the individual states as they know the specific challenges and needs their state faces. She states, “In Rhode Island, where I come from the challenge there is less about physical broadband infrastructure and more about ensuring affordability. It does no good to live in a location where broadband is available if you can’t afford to get it. Many rural communities, on the other hand, have no broadband. Our task ahead is to lay the infrastructure and ensure people in even the most rural corners of our country can get online. Essentially: it doesn’t make sense to address Kansas challenges with Rhode Island solutions. That’s why the law has built-in flexibility to address each states’ specific needs.” She underlines how important stakeholder engagement will be throughout this process to ensure that, by the end, everyone will have access to affordable, quality broadband service.

Senator Jeanne Shaheen presides as the Chair of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies. During the first rounds of questioning, Senator Shaheen asked Hon. Gina Raimondo about the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) maps which the BEAD program will rely on to know which areas need to be focused on in terms of implementing broadband infrastructure. The timeliness and accuracy of the maps are vital and the accuracy of the maps in the past has been sub-par. Gina Raimondo says the maps should be completed sometime in the summer and the accuracy should be better considering the maps are based on individual households and not are broad, census-based maps as they were in the past.



During Senator Jeanne Shaheen’s second round of questioning, she inquired about the workforce needs that this massive project will require. Gina Raimondo says their numbers show the project will create between 100,000 and 200,000 jobs. She also says that states will be allowed to use their BEAD and Digital Equity money to fulfill the workforce and training needs that the program demands.



Senator Jack Reed is a Majority Member of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies. During his questioning, he asked how the Affordable Connectivity Program and the Digital Equity Grants created by the act would help low-income families get connected affordably. Gina Raimondo says any Internet Service Provider who receives funding for the

project must certify that they offer a low-cost plan under guidelines created by the Department of Commerce to ensure it is actually low cost.

Senator Susan Collins is a Minority Member of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies. During her time questioning, she asked if funding for the broadband projects will be used to prioritize unserved communities and then underserved communities. Gina Raimondo says the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides a clear framework to prioritize unserved then underserved. She assured Senator Collins that their main concern is getting broadband to the people that don't have it, then getting broadband to people who may have low-quality broadband.



The American Legion supports the mission to expand broadband access to rural areas. Expanding access to quality and affordable internet connection will help close the digital divide and open up new opportunities to those who currently lack broadband. Per [Resolution No. 1: Expansion of Broadband in Rural Areas](#), the Legion encourages the Federal Government to improve access to broadband as it is a vital tool used for successfully running a small business.

SPOTLIGHT

REGISTRATION OPENS FOR NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK VIRTUAL SUMMIT, “BUILDING A BETTER AMERICA THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP”

The [U.S. Small Business Administration](#) (SBA) announced that registration for its 2022 [National Small Business Week](#) Virtual Summit, “**Building a Better America Through Entrepreneurship**,” is now open. This year’s National Small Business Week (NSBW), held May 1-7, 2022, will acknowledge small businesses from across the country for their resilience, ingenuity, and creativity. It will also recognize SBA partners for their involvement in entrepreneurial development, disaster recovery, government contracting, financial development, and overall support for small businesses and entrepreneurship.

During National Small Business Week, the SBA will hold its NSBW Virtual Summit from May 2-5, 2022, in cosponsorship with [SCORE](#). Attendance is free of charge, but registration is required. Visit online at [National Small Business Week 4-Day Virtual Summit Registration \(onlinexperiences.com\)](#) to register.

In a [new video](#), also released today alongside its NSBW events registration opening, the SBA spotlighted the tenacity and contributions of America’s diverse entrepreneurs. They have played an integral role in powering our nation’s historic economic comeback and navigated challenges from various variant waves, supply chain disruptions, and inflation, as we pivot and continue building a better America. The American entrepreneurial spirit has grown stronger – new business applications grew by nearly 30 percent during the pandemic, with 5.4 million applications in 2021 alone.

[Watch the SBA’s video on YouTube](#)

This year's NSBW virtual summit will feature access to federal resources, educational workshops, and networking to help our nation's 32.5 million small businesses pivot, grow, and seize new opportunities. NSBW will offer entrepreneurs across America in rural, suburban, and urban communities tools, information, and access to resources to help them achieve the American dream of business ownership and success.

The 2022 Small Business Persons of the Year award winners from each state, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, will be honored, and the SBA will announce the 2022 National Small Business Person of the Year from among the state winners represented.

To register for National Small Business Week and for other event information, visit www.sba.gov/NSBW.

Cosponsorship Authorization# 22-1-C. The SBA's participation in this cosponsored activity is not an endorsement of the views, opinions, products, or services of any cosponsor or other person or entity. All SBA programs and services are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis.

About National Small Business Week

For more than 51 years, the President of the United States has issued a proclamation announcing National Small Business Week, which recognizes the critical contributions of America's entrepreneurs and small business owners. More than half of Americans either own or work for a small business, and they create about two out of every three new jobs in the U.S. each year. As part of National Small Business Week, the U.S. Small Business Administration takes the opportunity to highlight the impact of outstanding entrepreneurs, small business owners, and others from all 50 states and U.S. territories. Every day, they're working to grow small businesses, create 21st century jobs, drive innovation, and increase America's global competitiveness.

About SCORE

SCORE, the nation's largest network of volunteer, expert business mentors, is dedicated to helping small businesses get off the ground, grow and achieve their goals. Since 1964, SCORE has provided education and mentorship to more than 11 million entrepreneurs. SCORE is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and a resource partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

About the U.S. Small Business Administration

The U.S. Small Business Administration helps power the American dream of business ownership. As the only go-to resource and voice for small businesses backed by the strength of the federal government, the SBA empowers entrepreneurs and small business owners with the resources and support they need to start, grow, expand their businesses, or recover from a declared disaster. It delivers services through an extensive network of SBA field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations. To learn more, visit www.sba.gov.

PRESS RELEASE. (2022, April 1). Registration Opens for National Small Business Week Virtual Summit, "Building a Better America Through Entrepreneurship." Registration opens for National Small Business Week Virtual Summit, "Building a better america through entrepreneurship". Retrieved April 13, 2022, from <https://www.sba.gov/article/2022/apr/01/registration-opens-national-small-business-week-virtual-summit-building-better-america-through>

**AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS**

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA:

American Legion Ronald Reagan Palisades Post 283 Remodel Approved By Palisades Design Review Board: Palisades.

Scan QR Code



[WATCH VIDEO HERE](#)

DEPARTMENT OF NEW JERSEY:



2022

VETERANS CASINO CAREER FAIR

All Job Seekers Are Welcome

Veterans pre-register at: www.njccc.gov/vets

WALK-INS are welcome

**Thursday,
April 28**
10:00AM - 1:00PM

Casino Control Commission
(Parking lot)
1325 Boardwalk & Tennessee Ave.
Atlantic City, NJ 08401



For additional information contact:

Patricia Tatum (609) 703-2467
p.tatum@njamericanlegion.org

Bob Looby (908) 894-0746
r.looby@njamericanlegion.org

All Active Duty, National Guard, Reservists, Veterans,
and family members are encouraged to attend

Sponsored by the NJ Casino Control Commission. In collaboration
with the NJ Department of Veterans Affairs, American Legion, NJ
State Parole, Department of Veterans Affairs, Casino Reinvestment
Development Authority.



Meet & Greet

Haven't been invited to a virtual or in-person
interview?

Come out, meet, and network with hiring representatives.
Find out what recruiters are looking for in high demand
positions. Bring your resume!

Casinos On-site

Bally's
Borgata
Caesars and Harrah's
Golden Nugget

Hard Rock
Ocean Casino
Resorts
Tropicana

Quick Casino Facts

Did you know the casino industry has a fast
paced work environment?

Using your transferable skills such as, attention to detail,
integrity, and teamwork is important to accomplish daily
missions in a timely manner.

Every unit or section requires technology skills and the
ability to perform under pressure, as it hosts many types of
events all year long.

Face Coverings Required

Department of New Jersey is hosting their 4th dedicated Casino Career Fair with 1,000+ job openings. Similar to their redesigned Mobile Stand Downs during COVID, they've adapted and overcame the restrictions laid upon them. See flyer.



CAREER FAIRS

MCAS Cherry Point, NC

**April 19, 2022
8am - 4pm ET**

Jerry Marvel Training & Education Building
Bldg. 4335, C St.
MCAS Cherry Point, NC 28532

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CHERRY POINT CAREER SUMMIT

Military community job seekers will meet, network, and interview with regional and national employers at this education and hiring event, presented by MCAS Cherry Point.

*Presented by [Hiring Our Heroes](#)
[More information](#)*

Camp LeJeune, NC

**April 21, 2022
8am - 4pm ET**

Marston Pavilion
730 Seth Williams Blvd.
Camp LeJeune, NC 28547

CAMP LEJEUNE CAREER SUMMIT

Military community job seekers will meet, network, and interview with regional and national employers at this education and hiring event, presented by Camp Lejeune.

*Presented by [Hiring Our Heroes](#)
[More information](#)*

Virtual Job Fair

**April 21, 2022
1pm - 3pm ET**

VIRTUAL HIRING EVENT: HEALTHCARE

Military community job seekers from around the globe will meet, network, and interview with healthcare industry employers at this interactive virtual hiring event.

*Presented by [Hiring Our Heroes](#)
[More information](#)*

Albuquerque, NM

**April 27, 2022
10am - 2pm MT**

American Legion Post 13
1201 Legion Road NE
Albuquerque, NM 87102

7TH ANNUAL OPERATION HIRING HEROES

Veteran-focused hiring event, also open to the public.

[More information](#)

Atlantic City, NJ

**April 28, 2022
10am - 1pm ET**

New Jersey Casino Control Commission
1325 Boardwalk and Tennessee Avenue
Atlantic City, NJ 08401

VETERANS CASINO CAREER FAIR

All active duty, National Guard, reservists, veterans, and family members are encouraged to attend. Pre-registration is available but walk-ins are welcome.

Presented by New Jersey Casino Control Commission, American Legion Department of New Jersey, New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs, New Jersey State Parole, and Casino Reinvestment Development Authority.

[More information](#)

Andrews Air Force Base, MD

**April 28, 2022
10am - 2pm ET**

The Club at Andrews
1889 Arnold Avenue
Andrews Air Force Base, MD 20774

ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE JOB FAIR (in-person and virtual)

Event will be held both in-person and virtual.

Presented by [JobZone](#)

[More information](#)

Please see the message below from VA's Veterans Experience Office:

We need your help with gearing up for National Volunteer Week (April 17 – 23) and what we are calling **VetServe 2022**, a campaign to build capacity across the nation by leveraging our country's greatest assets – VETERANS – to volunteer on **April 21, 2022**.

If you need ideas on how to volunteer or what opportunities exist out there to volunteer here are some links below to consider:


- [HUD](#)
- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [United We Serve](#)
- [Citizen Corps](#)
- [Volunteer.gov](#)
- [National Park Service](#)
- [United We Serve](#)
- [American Cancer Society](#)
- [American Red Cross](#)
- [Habitat for Humanity](#)
- [Rebuilding Together](#)

- [Points of Light Foundation](#)
- [United Nations Volunteers](#)
- [VolunteerMatch](#)
- [Volunteer Solutions](#)
- [Operation Gratitude](#)
- [Volunteers of America](#)
- [Mission Continues](#)
- [Team Rubicon](#)
- [Team RWB](#)

Additional references:


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODRIUO_UEHE

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/04/16/a-proclamation-on-national-volunteer-week-2021/>



VETSERVE 2022

Join VA in supporting a
National Day of Service!
APRIL 21
#VETSERVE2022





Calling our greatest civic assets—
VETERANS!

FOR BOOTS ON GROUND SUPPORT!



JOIN US ON
RP RALLYPOINT
to share YOUR service,
success stories and any
organizational recognitions!
[Click here to begin sharing!](#)

**We are all a
part of the
Veteran
community!**
#VetServe2022



 If you have any questions about #VetServe Day of Service, email VAVEQCommunications@va.gov

Download the VA Welcome Kit www.va.gov/welcome-kit/
 Subscribe to #VetResources www.va.gov/vetresources/
 Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255, Press 1
 The one number to reach VA: 1-800-MyVA411

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Experience Office

The American Legion is working on future in-person/virtual workshops and career fairs.

The American Legion's National Veterans Employment & Education Commission's Mission is to take actions that affect veterans' economic well-being, including issues relating to veterans' education, employment, home loans, vocational rehabilitation, homelessness, and small business.



LEGISLATION TRACKING

EDUCATION, LICENSING & CREDENTIALING PORTFOLIO

H.R. 5545 - Responsible Education Mitigating Options and Technical Extensions (REMOTE) Act:

This draft bill would extend expiring provisions established to support student veterans using educational entitlements during the pandemic.

Status: 12/21/2021 - Became Public Law No: 117-76

[Resolution No. 318: Ensuring the Quality-of-Service member and Veteran Student's Education at Institutions of Higher Education](#)

S. 1607 - Student Veterans Transparency and Protection Act of 2021: This bill would improve veterans' access to information about higher education and allow the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to restore benefits that veterans use at schools subject to civil enforcement.

Status: 12/15/2021 - Referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Ordered to be reported without amendment favorably.

[Resolution No. 327: Support further Assessment and Evaluation of Institutions of Higher Learning to Enable Veterans to Make Informed Education Choices](#)

H.R. 4233 - Student Veterans Counseling Centers Eligibility Act: This bill would award grants to community-based Veteran Centers to provide counseling and mental health services to veterans using VA higher education benefits.

Status: 11/17/2021 – Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

[Resolution No. 318: Ensuring the Quality-of-Service member and Veteran Student's Education at Institutions of Higher Education](#)

H.R. 1836 - Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parity Act of 2021: This bill would expand eligibility for the post-9/11 GI Bill to count every day that a servicemember is paid and in uniform toward benefit eligibility in order to achieve GI Bill parity for National Guard and Reserve members.

Status: 11/4/2021 – Ordered to be Reported (Amended) by Voice Vote.

[Resolution No. 349: Support Legislation to Improve the Post-9/11 GI Bill](#)

H.R. 5676 - PREP Act: This bill establishes, within the Bureau of Prisons, an Office of Prison Education. The office must provide educational services to incarcerated individuals, including veterans, in federal prisons and correctional institutions. It would also require the office to inform eligible incarcerated veterans of their earned VA educational benefits.

Status: 11/02/2021 - Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity.

[Resolution No. 318: Ensuring the Quality of Service member and Veteran Student's Education at Institutions of Higher Education](#)

H.R. 5509: Student Veteran COVID-19 Protection Act of 2021: This draft bill would extend expiring provisions established to support student veterans using educational entitlements during the pandemic.

Status: 10/25/2021 - Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity.

[Resolution No. 318: Ensuring the Quality-of-Service member and Veteran Student's Education at Institutions of Higher Education](#)

H.R. 5483 – Informing VETS Act: This bill would award grants to community-based Veteran Centers to provide counseling and mental health services to veterans using VA higher education benefits.

Status: 10/25/2021 – Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity.

[Resolution No. 318: Ensuring the Quality-of-Service member and Veteran Student's Education at Institutions of Higher Education](#)

EMPLOYMENT & TRANSITION PORTFOLIO

S.1944- Vet Center Improvement Act of 2021: To improve Vet Centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

Status: 12/15/2021 – Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Ordered to be reported without amendment favorably.

[Resolution No. 8: Child Care at Vet Centers](#)

S.2274 - Federal Cybersecurity Workforce Expansion Act: To authorize the Director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to establish an apprenticeship program and to establish a pilot program on cybersecurity training for veterans and members of the Armed Forces transitioning to civilian life, and for other purposes.

Status: 11/13/2021 – Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. Ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably.

[Resolution No. 25: Support and Expand Apprenticeship Opportunities for Servicemembers](#)

HOMELESSNESS & HOUSING PORTFOLIO

S. 1838 - Building Credit Access for Veterans Act of 2021: This bill expands access to housing for veterans and current servicemembers by establishing a pilot program using alternative credit scoring information for veterans and service member.

Status: 11/17/2021 - Referred to Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

[Resolution No. 319: Expanding Veterans Employment and Homeless Services within the Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

H.R. 5783 - Reaching Every Homeless Veteran Act of 2021: This bill amends title 38, United States Code, to improve homeless veterans reintegration programs.

Status: 10/28/2021 - Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs

[Resolution No. 319: Expanding Veterans Employment and Homeless Services within the Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

H.R. 2190 - Helping Homeless Veterans Act of 2021: This bill permanently establishes existing programs that assist homeless veterans and other veterans with special needs.

Status: 6/16/2021 - Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity

[Resolution No. 319: Expanding Veterans Employment and Homeless Services within the Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

SMALL BUSINESS & GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING PORTFOLIO

H.R. 4977 - Better Cybercrime Metrics Act: This bill establishes enhanced cybercrime reporting mechanisms.

Status: 12/8/2021- Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary. Reported Favorably

[Resolution No. 12: Cybersecurity Protections for Veteran-Owned Small Businesses](#)

H.R. 3193 - Eliminating Barriers to Rural Internet Development Grant Eligibility Act: This bill authorizes the Department of Commerce to award economic development grants for public-private partnerships and certain consortiums to carry out specified broadband projects.

Status: 11/15/2021 - Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

[Resolution No. 1: Expansion of Broadband in Rural Areas](#)

H.R. 4515 - Small Business Development Center Cyber Training Act of 2021: This bill would amend the Small Business Act to require cyber certification for small business development center counselors.

Status: 11/03/2021 Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

[Resolution No. 12: Cybersecurity Protections for Veteran-Owned Small Businesses](#)

H.R.3469 - Veteran Entrepreneurship Training Act of 2021: This bill provides statutory authority for the Boots to Business Program, which provides entrepreneurship training to individuals including veterans and active members of the Armed Forces, to be administered by the Small Business Administration.

Status: 11/03/2021 – Passed in the House of Representatives

[Resolution No. 222: Reaffirm Support of the Small Business Administration’s Office of Veterans’ Business Development](#)

S. 2812 - Veterans Jobs Opportunity Act: This bill would establish a small startup tax credit for veterans, military spouses, army reservists and national guard members seeking to start small businesses.

Status: 9/27/2021 – Referred to the Senate Committee on Finance

[Resolution No. 14: Enhancing the Work Opportunity Tax Credit \(WOTC\) for Veteran Workers](#)

H.R.5354 - Veterans Jobs Opportunity Act: This bill would establish a small startup tax credit for veterans, military spouses, army reservists and national guard members seeking to start small businesses.

Status: 9/27/2021 – Introduced in the House Committee on Ways and Means

[Resolution No. 14: Enhancing the Work Opportunity Tax Credit \(WOTC\) for Veteran Workers](#)

S.1687 - Small Business Cyber Training Act of 2021: This bill requires the Small Business Administration to establish a program for certifying at least 5 or 10% of the total number of employees of a small business development center to provide cybersecurity planning assistance to small businesses.

Status: 5/18/2021 – Introduced in the Senate Committee on Entrepreneurship

[Resolution No. 12: Cybersecurity Protections for Veteran-Owned Small Businesses](#)

ACTION TAKEN ON LEGISLATION

EDUCATION, LICENSING & CREDENTIALING PORTFOLIO

H.R.6112 – MOVE Act: To extend the delimiting period for certain individuals to use educational assistance benefits administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Action Taken: VE&E Testified on 9/21/21

Status: 12/01/2021 – Referred to the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

[Resolution No. 318: Ensuring the Quality of Service member and Veteran Student’s Education at Institutions of Higher Education](#)

H.R. 5918: To amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs repays members of the Armed Forces for certain contributions made by such members towards Post-9/11 Educational Assistance.

Action Taken: VE&E Testified on 9/21/21

Status: 11/29/2021 – Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity:

[Resolution No. 318: Ensuring the Quality of Service member and Veteran Student's Education at Institutions of Higher Education](#)

H.R.5151 - Col. James Floyd Turner IV U.S.M.C. GI Bill Transfer Act of 2021: To amend title 38, United States Code to provide for the transfer of entitlement to educational assistance under Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program of Department of Veterans Affairs when an eligible individual dies after approval of transfer and before transferring all of the individual's entitlement, and for other purposes.

Action Taken: VE&E Testified on 9/21/21

Status 11/04/2021: Ordered to be Reported (Amended) by Voice Vote

[Resolution No. 318: Ensuring the Quality of Service member and Veteran Student's Education at Institutions of Higher Education](#)

Draft Bill - VET Student Loan Act: This draft bill would eliminate the time limits on many veterans' education benefits retroactively.

Action Taken: Bill Reviewed - Support

Status: Draft – Not yet introduced

What's Next: Waiting for formal introduction of legislation

[Resolution No. 318: Ensuring the Quality of Service member and Veteran Student's Education at Institutions of Higher Education](#)

Draft Bill - Boldly Repaying America's Veterans with Education Act (BRAVE Act): This draft bill would amend Section 108(f) of the Internal Revenue Service Code to eliminate the taxability of discharged student loans for veterans who died or were left permanently disabled as a result of their service.

Action Taken: Bill Reviewed - Support

Status: Draft – Not yet introduced

What's Next: Waiting for formal introduction of legislation

[Resolution No. 347: Veterans Education Debt Forgiveness](#)

Draft Legislation on SCRA for Education: "To amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to establish protections under that Act for a member of the Armed Forces who leaves a course of education, paid for with certain educational assistance, to perform certain service."

Action Taken: VE&E Testified on 9/21/21

Status:

What's Next: Waiting for formal introduction of legislation

[Resolution No. 318: Ensuring the Quality of Service member and Veteran Student's Education at Institutions of Higher Education](#)

EMPLOYMENT & TRANSITION PORTFOLIO

S.2761 – Every Veteran Counts Act of 2021: To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to maintain demographic information regarding veterans and publish such information on a website of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Action Taken: Bill Reviewed - Support

Status: 12/15/2021 – Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Ordered to be reported without amendment favorably.

[Resolution No. 378: United States Census to Include Veterans Information](#)

H.R.2196 - Justice for Servicemembers Act: To amend title 9 of the United States Code to prohibit predispute arbitration agreements that force arbitration of certain disputes arising from claims of servicemembers and veterans.

Action Taken: Bill Reviewed – Support. Joint Letter of Support submitted 11/17/2021.

Status: 10/19/2021 - Referred to the Subcommittee on Antitrust, Commercial, and Administrative Law.

[Resolution No. 85: Support Employment and Reemployment Rights of National Guard and Reservists Returning from Deployment](#)

Draft Legislation on WARTAC Report: To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to report on the Warrior Training Advancement Course of the Veterans Benefit Administration.

Action Taken: VE&E Testified on 9/21/21

Status:

What's Next: Waiting for formal introduction of legislation

[Resolution No. 105: Support and Expand Warrior Transition Advancement Course \(WARTAC\)](#)

HOMELESSNESS & HOUSING PORTFOLIO

H.R. 5529: Veterans Justice Outreach Improvement Act: To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make certain improvements to the Veterans Justice Outreach Program, and for other purposes.

Action Taken: Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on 10/08/2021

Status: 11/04/2021 Ordered to be Reported (Amended) by Voice Vote.

What's Next: Pending Action by House

[Resolution No. 145: Veterans Treatment Courts](#)

H.R. 5624 - SSVF Report Requirement: To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a report on the shallow subsidy program under the supportive services for veteran families program, and for other purposes.

Action Taken: VE&E Testified on 9/21/21

Status: 11/02/2021 Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity

What's Next: Pending Action by Committee

[Resolution No. 340: Support Permanent Authorization for the Supportive Services for Veteran Families \(SSVF\) Program](#)

H.R. 5606- Return Home to Housing Act: This bill amends title 38, United States Code, to adjust the rate of per diem payments provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to grantees that provide services to homeless veterans.

Action Taken: Testimony on 9/21/21 and Quote for Support on 10/13/2021

Status: 10/25/2021- Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity

[Resolution No. 24: Support Funding and Changes to the Department of Veterans Affairs Grant and Per Diem Program](#)

H.R. 5301 - Homelessness Tech Assistance: To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide technical assistance to recipients of grants for supportive services for very low-income families in permanent housing and comprehensive service programs, and for other purposes.

Action Taken: VE&E Testified on 9/21/21

Status: 09/30/2021 Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity

What's Next: Pending Action by Committee

Resolution: Pending Draft Resolution

H.R. 5025 - Homelessness Extend HVRP: To amend title 38, United States Code, to increase and extend the authorization of appropriations for homeless veterans reintegration programs.

Action Taken: VE&E Testified on 9/21/21

Status: 09/09/2021 Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity

What's Next: Pending Action by Committee

[Resolution No. 319: Expanding Veterans Employment and Homeless Services within the Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

H.R.492 - Supporting Veteran Families in Need Act: To amend title 38, United States Code, make permanent the Secretary of Veterans Affairs' authority to provide financial assistance for supportive services for very low-income veteran families in permanent housing.

Action Taken: This bill was submitted for testimony, Letter of Support submitted 4/21/2021

Status: 3/16/2021 - Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity

What's Next: Pending Action by Committee

[Resolution No. 331: Support Housing Preference for Low-Income Veterans in the Department of Housing and Urban Development](#)

H.R. 711 - West Los Angeles VA Campus Improvement Act of 2021: This legislation would direct the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) West Los Angeles Medical Center campus to use revenues from leases and easements as a dedicated funding source to build additional housing for homeless veterans, offset the high costs of housing construction, and help fund the provision of supportive services for veterans in the community.

Action Taken: This bill was submitted for testimony, Letter of Support submitted 4/21/2021

Status: 6/23/2021 - Became Public Law No: 117-18

What's Next:

S. 2172 - Building Solutions for Veterans Experiencing Homelessness Act: This bill improves grants, payments, and technical assistance provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to serve homeless veterans.

Action Taken: This bill was submitted for testimony, Letter of Support submitted 6/23/2021

Status: 07/28/2021 Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Ordered to be reported without amendment favorably

What's Next: Pending Action by Senate

[Resolution No. 319: Expanding Veterans Employment and Homeless Services within the Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

Draft Legislation on Homeless Grant Elimination of Matching: Adjustment of Grants Awarded by the Secretary of Veteran Affairs for Comprehensive Service Programs to serve homeless veterans.

Action Taken: VE&E Testified on 9/21/21

Status: Not Yet Introduced

What's Next: Waiting for formal introduction of legislation

[Resolution No. 319: Expanding Veterans Employment and Homeless Services within the Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

Draft Legislation on Eliminate Loan Limitations: To amend title 38, United States Code, to eliminate the Freddie Mac conforming loan limitation for loans made to veterans with remaining guaranty or insurance loan entitlement under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

Action Taken: VE&E Testified on 9/21/21

Status: Not Yet Introduced

What's Next: Waiting for formal introduction of legislation

[Resolution No. 314: Support Elimination of the VA Home Loan Funding Fee](#)

Draft Legislation on Homelessness Substance Abuse Pilot: To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on substance use and alcohol use disorder recovery for homeless veterans, and for other purposes.

Action Taken: VE&E Testified on 9/21/21

Status: Not Yet Introduced

What's Next: Waiting for formal introduction of legislation

Resolution: Pending Draft Resolution

Draft Legislation on Increase Homelessness Per Diem: To amend title 38, United States Code, to adjust the rate of per diem payments provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to grantees that provide services to homeless veterans.

Action Taken: VE&E Testified on 9/21/21, Provided Quote in Support of Bill on 10/13/2021

Status: Not Yet Introduced

What's Next: Waiting for formal introduction of legislation

[Resolution No. 24: Support Funding and Changes to the Department of Veterans Affairs Grant and Per Diem Program](#)

Draft Legislation on Homelessness Elderly Pilot: To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on grants for care for elderly homeless veterans, and for other purposes.

Action Taken: VE&E Testified on 9/21/21

Status: Not Yet Introduced

What's Next: Waiting for formal introduction of legislation

[Resolution No. 319: Expanding Veterans Employment and Homeless Services within the Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

SMALL BUSINESS & GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING PORTFOLIO

H.R.4433 - Veterans Entrepreneurship Act of 2021: This bill would amend the Small Business Act to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to carry out a pilot program on issuing grants to eligible veterans to start or acquire qualifying businesses, and for other purposes. This bill would provide the opportunity for veterans to utilize their GI Bill benefits to start and finance their small businesses.

Action Taken: Supported by the National Commander in a Letter of Support submitted 08/03/2021

Status: 07/16/2021 Referred to the House Committee on Small Business

What's Next: Committee Vote

[Resolution No. 150: Expanding Post-9/11 GI Bill for Entrepreneurship](#)

H.R. 2082 - VA Supply Chain Resiliency Act: This bill would make certain improvements relating to the supply chain of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Action Taken: This bill was submitted for testimony, Letter of Support submitted 4/21/2021

Status: 5/4/2021 - Voted 22 - 6 by House Committee on Veterans' Affairs

What's Next: A full vote in the U.S. House

[Resolution No. 55: Mandatory use of the Veterans First Contracting Program](#)

GLOSSARY OF FREQUENTLY USED TERMS

Acronym	Definition
ACE	American Council on Education
ACP	American Corporate Partners, a veteran's support organization
ATLAS	Accessing Telehealth through Local Area Stations, a V.A. telehealth initiative
BLS	Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics
C&P	V.A.'s Compensation and Pension exam
CAVC	Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims
CCME	Council of College and Military Educators
COLA	Cost-of-living adjustment
CSAAVE	California State Approving Agency for Veterans Education
DIMO	Defense Security Cooperation Agency/Defense Institute for Medical Operations
DOD	Department of Defense
DOL-VETS	Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Services
EdCounsel	Higher education consulting firm
EIDL	SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GPD	V.A.'s Grant and Per Diem Program for homeless veterans
GWB	George W. Bush Higher Education Policy Work Group
HEROES ACT of 2003	Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students Act of 2003. Grants the Secretary of Education the authority to waive requirements that impede military borrowers' access to critical repayment protection during the war, military operation, or national emergency.
HVAC	House Veterans Affairs Committee
MCAI	American Legion's Military Credentialing Advancement Initiative
MSLP	The Federal Reserve's Main Street Lending Program
MSO	Military Support Organization
NAICU	National Association of Independent Colleges & Universities
NASAA	National Association of State Approving Agencies. Responsible for approving school funding for GI Bill
NAVPA	National Association of Veterans Program Administrators
NCA	V.A.'s National Cemetery Administration
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
NLD	American Legion's National Legislative Division
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
PPP	Paycheck Protection Program
RBS	Risk-Based Survey Model
RPIC	Rural Placemaking Innovation Challenge
S2S	Service to School, a veteran's organization
SAA	State Approving Agency, responsible for approving school funding for GI Bill
SBA	Small Business Administration
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Medical
SVA	Student Veterans of America, a veteran's organization

SVAC	Senate Veterans Affairs Committee
TAPS	Transition Assistance Program for Survivors, a nonprofit for Gold Star Families
TEAM Act	Senate Bill 4393, to improve the provision of health care for veterans who were exposed to toxic substances from burn pits
TFA	American Legion's Temporary Financial Assistance program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USERRA	Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act
VA&R	American Legion's Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Division
VACO	Veterans Affairs Central Office
VBA	V.A.'s Veterans Benefits Administration
VE&E	Veterans Employment and Education Division
VES	Veterans Education Success, a veteran's organization
VSO	Veterans Service Organization

RESOURCE PAGE

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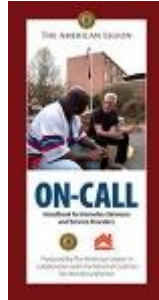
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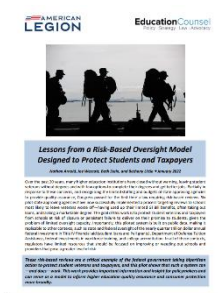
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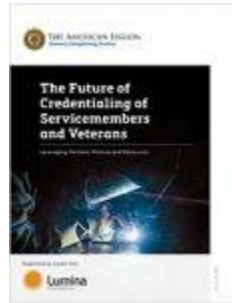
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Joseph C. Sharpe, Jr., Director
Veterans Employment & Education Division
1608 K St NW., Washington, DC 20006
Phone #: 202.861.2700 ext. 2989
E-Mail: JSharpe@legion.org