

# Welcome to Fullerton

April 12, 2013

Student Veterans

Dependents

&

Parents



# Outreach & Certification

Brenda Estrada, M.S.  
Certification Official



# What is Certification?

- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs offers educational benefits to veterans, service personnel, and dependents under the GI Bill. All qualified recipients must apply for educational benefits by filing the proper forms with the department of Veteran Affairs and once correspondence is obtained they must file paper work with Veteran Certification Office at CSUF  
LH -540

# Veteran Certification

- This is a unit primarily works with Veteran students and their dependents to ensure that they are receiving their G.I. Bill benefits and complies with all requirements set forth by the Department of Veteran Affairs.

# Certification Process

1. Student must complete their file with our office prior to certification
2. Student must be registered for their courses in order to be certified
3. All courses the student register for must be towards their degree
4. Once you complete your paperwork you will receive a contract that outlines what our responsibilities are to you the student and what you the student must do to comply with the VA policies for certification
5. Please note that the VA does not allow us to certify any courses that are not required towards a degree. Should you have a special situation you must come in to see the Veteran Certification Official

# Types of Benefits

The Veteran Certification Office works with Veterans as well as their dependents. This office processes paperwork for the following:

- Chapters:
  - 33/Post 9-11,
  - 35
  - 30
  - Vocational Rehabilitation chapter 31
- Cal Vet Fee Waivers
- Grades for Go Army Ed
- Grades for National Guard
- Letters for dependents that need to have their insurance continued
- Parent letters for students who wish to take additional courses at other institutions

# Veteran Certification Contact information

- Veteran Certification (657) 278-2373
- Brenda Estrada (657) 278-2334

# Veterans Student Services

Catherine Ward, M. S.

Veterans Student Services Program Coordinator

Daniel Akers, B. A.

Veterans Student Services Assistant Coordinator

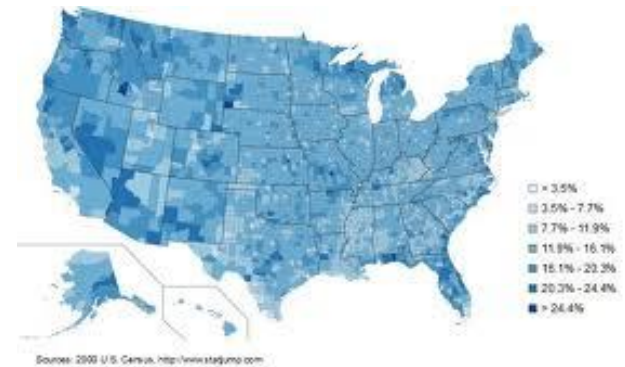


CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
**FULLERTON**<sup>™</sup>



# Orange County Veteran Demographics

- 133,000 veterans in Orange County
  - 7% of the states veteran population
  - 3rd largest population of veterans (per county)
- California College demographics
  - 28,000 veterans attend community colleges
  - 32,000 veterans attend private colleges
  - 5,500 veterans attend CSUs
  - 1,500 veterans attend UCs
- Cal State Fullerton
  - Approximately 500 CSUF student veterans
  - We have seen a steady increase in enrollment over the last several years
    - With the exception of Spring 2013
    - We expect to see an increase in Fall 2013



# History

- Veterans Student Services (VSS) was established in 2008
  - University responded to the growing need of specific support services for the veteran student
  - VSS consisted of one office, and a program coordinator
- In 2010, VSS secured a Department of Education, Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education, Center of Excellence for Veterans Student Success Grant
  - CSUF was the only California state university that received this grant
  - Our team now consists of a program coordinator, assistant coordinator, student assistant, two tutors, webmaster, 3 VA work-studies, and 3 interns (12 in total)
  - We are mostly, grant funded (in our final year)

# Mission Statement

Veterans Student Services (VSS) assists veterans and dependents at California State University, Fullerton in successfully navigating the academic environment through **guidance, support services, and resources.**

VSS is committed to offering personalized services to veterans by providing a unique learning community that facilitates the veterans social and academic integration into the university.



# Services

- Study Center
- Community College Campus Visit
- Veterans Welcome and Info Session (Orientation)
- New Student Program Welcome: Veteran Dependents
- Veterans Sponsorship Program (Mentoring)
- Tutoring
- Veterans Discussion Groups
- Women Veterans Community
- On-campus Resources and Referrals
- Off-campus Resource and Referrals
- Childcare Assistance
- Workshops & Special Events
- Campus Outreach and Awareness Events
- Faculty and Staff Education
- Veterans Career Connection
- Internships
- VA Work-study
- Veterans Scholarship for Success
- Support Counseling and Guidance



# Welcome and Information Sessions

- VSS partners with New Student Programs, Academic Advising, and Veterans' Certification to offer a veteran specific orientation to newly transferred student veterans and dependents
  - Check your email, VSS website, Transfer Orientation website for dates and times
  - Students are informed of the Certification process
  - Students learn about the services offered to veterans and dependents
  - Students meet staff from Academic Advising
  - Opportunity to sign up for our Sponsorship Program
  - Meet other student veterans already attending CSUF
  - Tour of the Campus

# Student Center

- The student center is a place for student veterans
  - To receive information of both on campus and off campus resources
  - Access guidance and support from the VSS staff
  - To Interact with one another
    - Promotes academic and social engagement
- Student Center
  - Computers
  - Printing
  - Supplies
    - available to student veterans and dependents



# Utilization

- Students visited the VSS offices 4,574 times during the Spring and Fall semesters of 2012
- Trend: Utilization is linked to higher GPAs, retention, and graduation



# Data

- The GPA of student veterans that utilize services through VSS is 3.10
  - The GPA of student veterans that do not utilize services is 2.75
  - The GPA of all CSUF students is 2.82
- The retention rate from the first year to the second year for CSUF student veterans is 83%
  - The retention rate from the first year to the second year for all CSUF students is 70%
- The graduation rate for CSUF student veterans is 68% after 4 years
  - The graduation rate for all CSUF students after 4 years is 64%





# Data

- 82% of students who responded to an independent survey said services were “effective or extremely effective.”

“The center has had a great impact on the academic performance of those who have used their services, and there should be a strategy implemented to advertise or market the resources as to reach a greater amount of veteran students who could benefit from these services.”

Center for Research Educational Access and Leadership

# Sponsorship Program

- A pre-semester program where a continuing student veteran sponsor and newly transferred student veteran connect to address any concerns the student veteran may have before the semester begins
  - In the first two semesters of the program 75% of the new students who attended our Welcome and Info Session signed up for the program
  - Paired according to major
  - Assists in engagement




# Women Veterans Community

- Discussion Group
- Community Brunch
- Annual Conference
  - Attend the CalVet Women Veterans Conference
  - Holding the first - Women Veterans Conference in Higher Education in California
- Women in the Military History Week Leadership Opportunities
  - SVA
  - Internships
  - VA Work-study

CSUF Veterans Student Services & WoMen's Center

**Community Brunch  
for Female Student Veterans**




**Female Student Veterans**  
Come join us for a monthly community brunch event to get to know one another, share our experiences, and benefit from network opportunities.

**Date: Sunday, October 23rd**  
Time: 10:30 am—1:00 pm  
Location: Fullerton Marriott  
2701 E. Nutwood Avenue  
Fullerton, CA 92831  
714-738-7809  
(N57, Exit Nutwood and Turn Left or S27, Exit Nutwood and Turn Right)

**Cost: \$13.99 (includes tax and gratuity)**  
The first 10 individuals to RSVP will receive a \$5 discount  
Special Guest: Tanya Fleet, B.S.  
North Orange County Veterans Center

Please RSVP by October 21st: 657-278-3928



# Dependents

- Partnering with New Student Programs
  - New Student Orientation VSS representation
  - Meet with parents
  - Marketing Campaign
    - Campus Outreach
    - Directed Flyer
    - Bulletin boards
    - Monthly emails



# Veterans Advisory Board

- Comprised of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs
  - Represents student veterans support across all university divisions
  - Meets two times a year
- Academic Advising
  - Admissions and Records
  - Associate Students Incorporated
  - Assistant Deans
  - Career Center
  - Children's Center
  - Counseling and Psychological Services
  - Disabled Student Services
  - Educational Opportunity Program
  - Financial Services
  - Financial Aid
  - Freshman Programs
  - Health Center
  - Outreach/Certification
  - New Student Programs
  - University of Extended Education
  - University Learning Center

# Community Partners

- AMVETS
  - Long Beach VA
    - Vocational Rehab
    - Women’s Health Center
    - Women’s Mental Health Center
  - Veterans First
  - Working Wardrobes
  - Employment Development Department (EDD)
  - Project Sister
  - CalVets
  - American Legion (Brea and Fullerton post)
  - Public Law Center
  - Volunteers of America
  - Military Women Veterans in Need
  - Reboot
  - Orange County Veterans Advisory Council
  - Region 8 (community college consortium of student veteran service leaders)
  - Student Veterans of America
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- Daniel and I sit on the Governor's Interagency Veterans Council Education Group
  - I participate in the Orange County Women Veterans Network



# Student Veterans Association



- Daniel serves as the Co-advisor
  - Camaraderie, Networking, and Advocacy



# Campus Outreach





# Veterans Appreciation Night

- Culmination of the Academic Year
  - Annual Dinner: May 4, 2013
    - 350 guests
  - Celebrate our Graduates
    - Community service medals
  - Honor students who are deploying
  - Award our Scholarship
    - Two one-time scholarship of \$1000 to continuing students

