



# VETERAN TALON



## Patrick to Represent USI in Veteran Initiative in Washington D.C.

Chaze Patrick has been selected to be one of 25 students nationwide to represent USI in Washington D.C. this summer for the Veterans Employment Trajectory (VET) Initiative sponsored by Prudential Insurance.

and workforce preparedness. It is a 10-week professional immersion program that serves as a platform for increasing veterans' access to quality jobs and preparing them to transition from university life to the civilian working world.

devotion to mission success. I can not think of a better student and person to represent our university on a national stage" said Joel Matherly, Assistant Director of the USI VMFRC.

The VET Initiative in an internship opportunity designed to cultivate veterans' career advancement

"Anyone who has come in contact with Chaze knows his professionalism, work ethic and

Patrick will attend this program from May 24 - August 5.

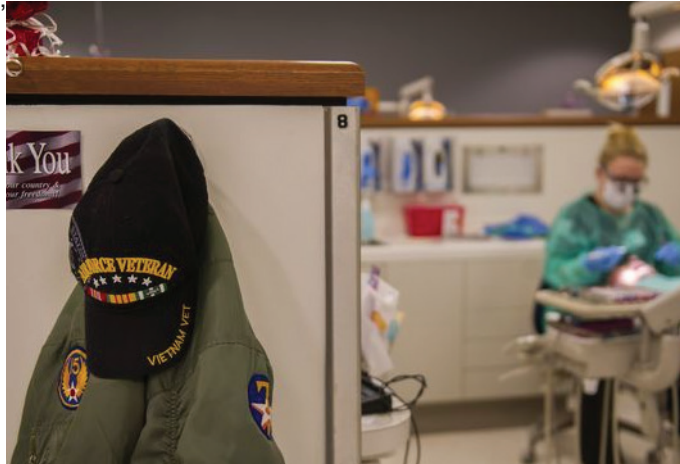
## Veterans Get Free Dental Cleanings at USI Clinic - *By Mark Wilson, Evansville Courier & Press*

Elissa Corbitt came to the University of Southern Indiana to study dental hygiene after leaving the Navy, where she served as a corpsman and surgical technician.

Resource Center at USI, said most veterans don't meet the criteria for free dental care from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and if they did, they would have to travel to the VA clinic in Marion, Illinois, to receive it.

Faculty such as Corbitt and fellow instructor Kathy Seib check on and approve the student's work before the appointment ends. "We are usually pretty full. We usually see about 12 per clinic (day)," Seib said. "I was kind of surprised how many show up."

Now, as an instructor at USI's Dental Hygiene Clinic, Corbitt is helping other veterans. Junior and senior students at the university's dental hygiene program are combining education and community service by providing free teeth cleaning to veterans this week.



Many of the veterans return every year, or even every six months, she said, which provides a service to them and practice for the students.

The clinic doubled the number of available appointment times, including evening hours, through Thursday.

Until Cecil Gurganus began coming to the clinics several years ago, he said his only regular dental care was "brushing my teeth."

Although veterans receive the services free of charge anytime, the dental hygiene clinic periodically makes a concerted effort to reach out to them. The clinic provides teeth cleaning, fluoride and X-rays.

"This is our way of filling a need in the community while giving our students that experiential learning," he said. "We have a great dental (hygiene) department and the students are eager to learn.

An Air Force veteran who was stationed in Japan during the Korean War, Gurganus said he has no dental insurance. "This is a tremendous program for veterans. They do a great job," he said.

"It's a way we can show them we appreciate their service," Corbitt said. "You can get dental insurance separately through the VA but it does cost. If they come here, it's free."

Jerry Schapker served as a flight engineer in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War. He attended the clinic Wednesday after hearing about it from a friend. "It's great. They do a very thorough job," he said, after receiving a cleaning from Sami Harpenau, a senior student.

Senior student Paige Hall said she enjoys working with the veterans. "I think it's great. They served our country and this is just a way to give back," she said.

Joel Matherly, manager of the Veteran, Military & Family

"I like learning what each individual needs and how to communicate with them," Hall said.



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## Local Pets for Vets Chapter Seeking Veterans for Companionship



### Healing Vets and Saving Pets

At Pets for Vets, we believe our country owes military veterans a debt of gratitude.

Our troops have been brave but many of them have returned with physical and emotional injuries that have made it difficult to transition back to civilian life. Some estimates state that as many as 20% of returning military veterans suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

### Pets for Vets is helping.

Our goal is to help heal the emotional wounds of military veterans by pairing

### Saying Thank You

Pets for Vets is a concrete way to thank U.S. Military Veterans for their service.

- Featured on NPR, CBS2 and CNN, PBS and the Pentagon Channel
- Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law
- Serving veterans in our chapter areas
- With each veteran-pet match we provide the necessary equipment for them to start their new life together

Veterans in our chapter areas who could benefit from having a companion animal and who are also able to care for an animal are eligible to receive a Pets for



them with a shelter dog that is specially selected to match his or her personality. Professional animal trainers rehabilitate the dogs and teach them good manners to fit into the veteran's lifestyle. Training may also include desensitization to wheel chairs or crutches as well as recognizing panic or anxiety disorder behaviors.

### It's win-win.

Needy shelter dogs receive a second chance at life while giving our returning troops a second chance at health and happiness. The bonds of friendship formed between man and animal have the power to ease the suffering of our troops when they return from overseas.

Vets companion animal. Pets for Vets is a national organization with 32 chapters around the nation. SW IN Chapter started 3 years ago, and to date have placed 20 dogs and 1 cat. We will place any domestic animal that we can adopt from a local shelter or rescue group.

From application to receiving your new best friend takes anywhere from 2-5 months. You can apply at [www.petsforvets.com](http://www.petsforvets.com)

Pets for Vets thanks our veterans. For more information, please contact Marti Vanada, Director, Southwest Indiana Pets for Vets at 812-853-5400.

## SVA Receives \$1.2 Million Grant for Transitioning Service Members - *By Barrett Y. Bogue, Vice President of Communications, SVA National*



Washington D.C. — Student Veterans of America (SVA) announced today that it received a \$1.2 million, multi-year grant from the PwC

Charitable Foundation, Inc. in support of SVA's Student Veteran Educational and Employment Decision Tree Initiative. The three-year research initiative will explore the decision-making process for separating service members, with the intent of identifying potential opportunities and barriers to a successful transition from college into the workforce. This builds on the success of SVA's groundbreaking research into the academic outcomes of nearly one million student veterans using the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

"Imagine you're about to leave the military, you're not entirely sure you want to go to college or into the workforce. You can't make up your mind and your peers are giving you advice that's all over the map. This is where our Decision Tree Initiative will help. Thanks to the PwC Charitable Foundation, we're going to show separating service members, not only how to persist towards a degree, but the path most likely to lead towards graduating," said Mr. Jared Lyon, SVA's President and CEO.

Using a sample size of more than 1,000 veterans and service members, the research will determine the strength and impact of key decisions when transitioning

into higher education or employment by focusing on three key areas: transition out of the Armed Forces, life as a student veteran and transition from student to professional.

At the conclusion of the research, SVA will launch an adaptive tool that student veterans can use to measure the effectiveness of any program or initiative designed to help service members' transition from the military to college or employment. The Decision Tree Initiative aims to provide a much needed tool for transitioning service members and veterans to see through evidence-based research the best path to take to achieve their professional goals upon separation by mapping the effectiveness and outcomes of graduation and employment decisions.

"We are proud to support SVA in its mission to empower transitioning military veterans with the resources and tools to be successful in education and employment," said Frank Gaudio, PwC Charitable Foundation Trustee and Veterans Liaison. "At the conclusion of this research initiative essential information will be extracted that will help guide future generations of service members to construct a successful roadmap based upon the experience of others to achieve their career goals. Continual research is critical to identify leading practices to advance and scale solutions that will better serve so many veterans with this tool, and to work with SVA in doing so, is a unique step forward in the interaction between research and job

**VETERAN HOLDS**—Veteran holds are placed on the Monday following the 100% drop/add period and run until priority registration. They are reestablished after the PR period ends and will come off during finals.

**PRIORITY REGISTRATION**— If you are currently using VA Benefits (GI Bill), you qualify for priority registration regardless of your academic alignment (Freshman—Senior). Plan your next semester before this date and schedule an appointment with your advisor.

**VA CERTIFICATE OF ENROLLMENT FORM DUE EACH SEMESTER** you plan to use benefits. Find this form at <http://www.usi.edu/reg/ssl/vaformlogin.asp>. Complete yours as soon as you register for classes.

**VFW 1114 Dining Room Open to Public—Friday, Saturday, Sunday** Brunch  
Breakfast \$6.00 1st/3rd  
Saturday  
Prime Rib 1st/3rd Saturday  
Buffet Friday Night \$9.95

**File you DD214 for FREE:**  
Vanderburgh County Chief  
Deputy Recorder at 1 NW  
Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Rm  
231  
Evansville IN 47708  
812.435.5215

FEB 2017

### VETERAN UNEMPLOYMENT UPDATE

# 3.9%

\* REMAINS BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE



VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**August 5, 2017**

# Kentucky Women Veterans Unite: Standing Up & Speaking Out

## Statewide Womens Veterans Conference

**Marriott Griffin Gate**  
**1800 Newtown Pike**  
**Lexington, KY 40511**

Hosted by the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

### American Legion Advocates for Veteran Entrepreneurs, Access to Capital - *By Joe Plenzler*



The American Legion testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Small Business Subcommittee on Contracting and Workforce today to represent the views of entrepreneurial veterans and press for additional assistance for veterans who want to start small businesses.

Joe Sharpe, director of the Legion's National Veterans Employment and Education Division, urged members of Congress to give veterans the resources they need to start businesses in order to further stimulate the nation's economic recovery.

Sharpe said, "Veterans, when compared to their civilian counterparts,

are more likely to start a business and are generally more successful at creating a lasting small business."

One of the top impediments facing entrepreneurial veterans is access to capital to develop a minimally viable product or service, create a market, and scale their businesses. "One of the leading barriers to small business financing is requiring that debt be secured by equity in fixed assets," said Sharpe.

Most veterans leaving military service lack the equity necessary for traditional bank loans.

Sharpe said, "One solution is to reintroduce legislation such as S.1870 - The Veterans Entrepreneurial Transition (VET) Act of 2016," that the American Legion spearheaded last Congressional session.

U.S. Sens. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., and Jon Tester, D-Mont., sponsored the bill and successfully navigated it through the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship last year, but was canceled with the end of the 114th Congress last November.

The 2016 VET Act would have created a pilot program to enable veterans who did not desire to go to college to use money from their G.I. Bill benefit to start a small business.

Committee chairman Rep. Steve Knight, R-Calif., expressed interest in the Legion's VET Act legislation and requested more information.

"It's ideas like this that drive our economy forward," Sharpe said. "It is veterans who will lead the way."

See more at [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org).

### Senate Passes Bipartisan Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act - *By Senator Donnelly Office Media*

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senators Joe Donnelly (D-IN) and Pat Toomey (R-PA) and want to recognize and honor the veterans of the Vietnam War.

On Friday, the Senate passed the Donnelly-Toomey bill to designate March 29th as "National Vietnam War Veterans Day."

March 29th marks the anniversary of the day that combat and combat support units withdrew from South

Vietnam. The bipartisan Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act now goes to the House for consideration.

"This bipartisan bill would help our country honor our Vietnam veterans – who didn't get the recognition they deserved when they returned home. These are our friends and neighbors who should have our gratitude for their selflessness and sacrifice. I'm glad to work with Senator Toomey on this effort to mark Vietnam War Veterans Day" said Senator Joe Donnelly (D-IN)

"In many cases, Vietnam veterans did not receive the warm welcome they deserved when they came home. It's time we put a heartfelt thank you to Vietnam veterans into law, and I will continue working with Senator Donnelly to advance this bipartisan legislation" said Senator Pat Toomey (R-PA).

This legislation is supported by Vietnam Veterans of America and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

**VFW Survey: Veterans Want VA Fixed, Not Dismantled** - 'The VFW prides itself in evaluating what works at the VA and in identifying what needs to be fixed' - *VFW National Magazine* - <http://www.vfw.org/>



WASHINGTON — President Trump announced Monday the creation of the White House Office of American Innovation to “bring together the best ideas from government, the private sector, and other thought leaders to ensure that America is ready to solve today’s most intractable problems, and is positioned to meet tomorrow’s challenges and opportunities.” One of the new White House office’s targets is to fix an old problem — the Department of Veterans Affairs — and the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States wants to help be part of the solution.

“The VFW prides itself in evaluating what works at the VA and in identifying what needs to be fixed,” said VFW National Commander Brian Duffy. “Veterans turn to VA for the high-quality, individualized care they provide, but there is always room for improvement, especially in the areas of information technology, scheduling, data analysis, and access to quality care out in the communities,” he explained. “I hope the White House recognizes that the VFW’s expertise, perspective and relevance would add

great value to their new team.”

The VFW this month released the results of its sixth nationwide survey of veterans, a copy of which was delivered to every congressional office earlier this month during the VFW’s National Legislative Conference, and the results of which were personally discussed with the president on March 17. The purpose of OUR CARE 2017: A Report Evaluating Veterans Health Care, is to continue to evaluate the impact of the Veterans Choice Program, which was enacted in 2014 in response to the VA’s crisis in access to care. The VFW’s initial survey, Hurry Up and Wait, was published in September 2014 and based on feedback from 6,000 veterans. All other VFW reports on VA health care can be found [vfw.org/VAwatch](http://vfw.org/VAwatch).

More than 10,800 veterans responded to the VFW’s 2017 report, which is categorized under six major sections:

- Veterans want to fix, not dismantle the VA health care system
- Veterans are starting to notice improvements
- Patient satisfaction has improved
- Veterans are waiting less for their health care appointments

- Quality of care is paramount when choosing a health care provider
- Where veterans prefer to receive care depends on their options and experiences

“The most important takeaway is the overwhelming majority of respondents said they want to fix, not dismantle the VA health care system,” said the VFW national commander, who believes the VA is on the right track, but that much work remains, such as the need to hire more doctors, hold wrongdoers accountable, improve customer service, and to make VA’s programs and systems more user-friendly.

“All things are possible with the right information, focus and authority,” said Duffy, “and the VFW is ready to help the new White House Office of American Innovation succeed in ensuring the VA is able to provide high-quality and accessible care to our nation’s wounded, ill and injured veterans.”

Read the actual report at: <https://www.vfw.org/-/media/vfwsite/files/advocacy/vfw-our-care-2017--executive-summary.pdf?la=en>

See more at [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org).

**NO BATTLE MORE IMPORTANT THAN PROTECTING YOUR INTERESTS AT HOME**  
**Join Your local Veteran Service Organizations Today and Preserve Your Future**



# WHAT'S THE WORD: EDUCATION BENEFITS

## VA Education Benefit Spotlight - Fry Scholarship & CH 35 DEA

- By Curtis L. Coy, Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Everyone knows VA provides many programs for veterans and their families to assist with life after the military, but did you know that VA has GI Bill programs that offer education assistance to survivors and dependents of veterans?

There are many wonderful nonprofit organizations that offer scholarships to the families of our heroes. We honor and encourage all of them, but want everyone to ensure they do not accept them in lieu of what the VA provides. Families have earned the programs discussed below – it is not an either or situation.

### The Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship

The Fry Scholarship is available for children and spouses of Service members who died in the line of duty while serving on active duty on or after September 11, 2001. Children may use benefits until their 33rd birthday; and spouses' eligibility ends at the earlier of 15 years from the date of death or the date of remarriage. See our fact sheet for more detailed information.

Eligible beneficiaries attending school may receive up to 36 months of benefits. This includes full in-state tuition and fees for public schools, and private or foreign school tuition & fees are capped at a statutory

maximum amount per academic year. Additionally, students may receive a monthly housing allowance and stipend for books & supplies. We've worked hard to support and implement laws that make programs like this available. On December 16, 2016, a new provision of the law extended the benefit eligibility period to , for the spouses of Service members that died between September 11, 2001 and December 31, 2005. This provides surviving spouses with additional time to use the Fry Scholarship benefits. Check out our letter to spouses for more information on what has changed.

Federal law also requires schools to charge in-state tuition and fee amounts to qualifying dependents using the Fry Scholarship at a public institution of higher learning located in the state where they currently live. We're working to ensure that all states come into compliance, and the public can track our progress through the use of a map available on our website.

### VA Chapter 35 DEA

Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) offers education and training benefits to the spouses and children of veterans who are permanently and totally disabled due to a service related condition, veterans who died while on active duty, or who died as a result of a

service related condition.

Children must generally use benefits between the ages of 18 and 26; and spouses generally have a 10 year period in which to use benefits, or a 20 year period for spouses of Service members who die on active duty or veterans that receive a permanent and total rating effective of release from active duty.

Benefits may be used for degree and certificate programs, apprenticeships, and/or on-the-job training. See our DEA pamphlet for more detailed information.

Sometimes it can seem as though the VA is a giant government organization that only processes claims. However, the majority of our employees here are either veterans or the family member of a veteran. In fact, many of us use or have used these benefits ourselves. We assure you that each day we're working hard to provide the best care and benefit programs and upholding the VA motto, "to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan."

For the most updated information on this and other VA Educational Benefits, visit <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>.

## QUESTIONS TO THE VMFRC - Student Q&A Passed to You!

### GI BILL KICKERS ADD VALUE - DO YOU HAVE ONE?

**I was promised a kicker, by my records do not include one - what can I do?**

You will have to provide the VA a copy of your own record of the kicker that was promised. DO NOT

SEND THE ORIGINAL. You may send in both a copy of DA Form 3286-66 along with your application for benefits (VA Form 22-1990 - VONAPP). Without documentary evidence to support your claim for a kicker, it will be denied.

**I'm in the Reserve Component, just completed AIT and my Drill Sergeant told me I get Chapter 33 Benefits.**

Historically unless you have completed 24 months of qualifying active duty time, your basic and AIT time will not count and you do not qualify for Chapter 33. In this instance, Chapter 1606 is the benefit you would apply for. For the best benefit information, visit <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>.