

# VETERAN TALON



University of Southern Indiana Veteran Military & Family Resource Center

## AL Post 324 & SVA Offers FREE Tickets for Military Appreciation Basketball Game

On January 26th our American Legion Post 324 and Student Veteran Association will offer **FREE** tickets to all veterans and military on our campus and in the community for the 7th annual "Hoops for Troops - Military Appreciation Basketball Game".

The Screaming Eagles will take on Drury University in the PAC Arena. The game times are 1:00 p.m. for the women and 3:15 p.m. for the men.

"This is something we look forward to doing every year. While we would like to see more of our community come out to support the teams, it's just a

fun day to see everyone within the veteran community" said Joel Matherly, Assistant Director of the Veteran Military and Family Resource Center.

The event is open to veterans of all eras and includes up to five (5) tickets for all guests. Tickets can be picked up the day of the game at the veteran ticket window in the PAC.

"We hope that the veterans will come out so we can expand on what we can offer to our campus and community," said Matherly.

The mobile Vet Center will also be on site

to welcome veterans and their families.

Both the SVA and American Legion Post 324 agree that this is a growing event that is well attended by all veterans.



**If a student experiences financial hardship due to a delay in payment, we ask that they contact the Education Call Center at 888-442-4551 between 7 a.m. – 6 p.m. Central Time, Monday-Friday. The VA will expedite any hardship request.**

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA

# HOOPS FOR TROOPS

MILITARY APPRECIATION BASKETBALL GAME

JANUARY 26, 2019  
WOMEN'S GAME 1 P.M. /  
MEN'S GAME 3:15 PM  
PAC ARENA

**FREE TICKETS FOR VETERANS & GUESTS\***

\*Proof of service required. Tickets are limited to five (5) per veteran and may be picked up the day of the game at the PAC arena veteran ticket window. Brought to you by the American Legion Post 324 and the USI Student Veteran Association.



## USI to Host STAR Behavioral Health Seminars

USI CAMPUS - The University of Southern Indiana's Veteran Military & Resource Center with coordination with Southwest Indiana Area Health Education Center (SWI-AHEC) and the Military Family Resource Institute (MFRI) will host all three phases of the STAR Behavioral Health Seminars.

Star Behavioral Health Providers (SBHP), which began in Indiana, is a resource for veterans, service members and their families to locate behavioral health professionals with specialized training in understanding and treating military service members and their families. Those listed in this registry have completed a series of trainings that are intended to make them better able to understand, assess and counsel members of the military.

### PHASE I

Will be held in Carter Hall, A-C in the University Center, West on December 5, 2018.

Tier One introduces military culture, including information about the impact of deployment on families and children. We encourage you to complete an optional online training prior to attending the classroom training if military culture is new to you, as the concepts presented during the classroom session will be discussed quickly.

### PHASE II

Will be held in Room 1027 of the Health Professions building on January 29-30, 2019.

Tier Two training teaches behavioral health providers information about challenges and difficulties clients may present with that are often associated with military

service. Tier Two is a two-day classroom training. As a reminder, to attend Tier Two training, you have to have completed Tier One training.

### PHASE III

Will be held in Carter Hall, A-C in the University Center, West on March 6-7, 2019.

Tier Three offers behavioral health professionals specific clinical skills that focus on evidence-based treatment to address some of the behavioral health issues facing service members. One training option is Prolonged Exposure (PE) Therapy for PTSD and another option is Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT). Additional options listed will also be available at different times. Tier Three trainings are two day classroom trainings. To attend Tier Three trainings, you must be accepted into the registry and have completed Tier One and Tier Two. You may, however, register for the training before being accepted into the registry in order to reserve your spot. If you choose this option, you must complete your application and be accepted into the registry when you are notified by the SBHP administrator. If this is not completed, you will not be able to attend the training and your registration will be canceled.

To register for any tier, visit <https://starproviders.org/providers/states/indiana/application-page-id-7>.

For more information, contact:  
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## Veterans Needed to Serve as Mentors

The Vanderburgh County, Indiana Veteran Treatment Court is seeking volunteer veterans to assist in mentoring court participants.

Mentors are vital to the Veterans Court as they act as a coach, friend and guide to participating veterans.

The Veterans Treatment Court mission is to successfully rehabilitate veterans involved in the court system using evidence based treatment to positively change their behavior and lead to productive, law-abiding civilian lives.

The program helps Veterans through court to put their non-violent charges behind them and create a fresh start.

"We've been involved much more than some of the other mentors are and mentees, and we've spent a great deal more time together than most," said Thweatt.

The two do not go more than a day or two without talking, whether it is coffee, lunch, or even lending a hand.

If you or a Veteran you know may be interested in being a mentor, contact Gene Thweatt at (812) 204-3438 or [thweattgene@aol.com](mailto:thweattgene@aol.com).

## Post 9/11 GI Bill update information for students and schools

Because of continued information technology difficulties with implementing sections 107 and 501 of the Harry W. Colmery Educational Assistance Act of 2017 (Forever GI Bill), both of which change the way monthly housing allowance payments are calculated, VA Secretary Robert Wilkie has directed Under Secretary for Benefits Paul R. Lawrence to take the following actions:

- Effective Dec. 1, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) will reset its implementation efforts for sections 107 and 501 of the law to give the department the time, contracting support and resources necessary to develop the capability to process Spring 2020 enrollments in accordance with the law by Dec. 1, 2019. ◦This includes soliciting bids from contractors for support in the areas of program integration, systems implementation, and software development.

- During this time, VBA will pay monthly housing allowance rates for the Post-9/11 GI Bill at the current academic year uncapped Department of Defense (DoD) Basic Housing Allowance (BAH) rates. ◦For many students, this DoD BAH rate will be equal to or higher than their current payment.

- VBA will also correct retroactively

any underpayments.

- If a student was overpaid due to the change in law or because of VBA's challenges in implementing the law, the student will not be held liable for the debt.

- Also, for the current academic year (2018-2019), VBA will pay housing allowances based on the location of a school's main campus, rather than the physical location of the student.

- This interim policy will terminate by Dec. 1, 2019, upon implementation of a fully developed IT solution for sections 107 and 501 of the law.

- Finally, VBA will define a training site as a "campus" when the following conditions are true: the physical site of the training is either owned or leased by the school, and the school has ownership or control over the student's classroom instruction or the faculty conducting the instruction. This approach reduces the administrative burden for schools and students from VBA's initial interpretation of the law.

As these changes are implemented, VBA will remain in continuous contact with Veterans, Congress, Veterans Service Organizations and other stakeholders to ensure everyone is informed and knows what to expect.

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



## VA Bears Responsibility to Make Student Veterans Whole, Says VFW

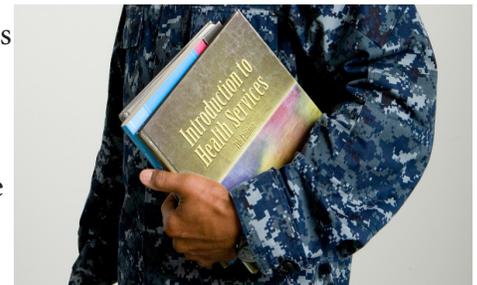
National Commander calls on VA to give student veterans the benefits they deserve

VFW National Magazine - <http://www.vfw.org/>



The Department of Veterans Affairs released a statement yesterday regarding the implementation of Forever GI Bill changes that were supposed to have been enacted this past August. VA Secretary Robert Wilkie has now directed the Veterans Benefits Administration to cease attempting to implement the changes and instead reset the entire effort in order to get the job done correctly. The reset begins this Saturday, with the full implementation date now shifting to December 2019. Student veterans are expected to see positive effects of the changes in the spring 2020 semester.

VA Bears Responsibility to Make Student Veterans Whole, Says VFW “The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States was disappointed to learn about the 12-month delay in implementing this amazing benefit, but we recognize why hitting the reset button was necessary in order for the VA to get this right,” said VFW National Commander B.J. Lawrence.



The Forever GI Bill changed student housing allowances to reflect the ZIP codes where students attend the majority of their classes. This change was required to go into effect on Aug. 1, 2018, but the VA admits that its antiquated computer system was unable to simultaneously handle individual ZIP code changes and the influx of students registering for the fall semester.

“Shifting the implementation deadline a year isn’t a free pass for the VA to arbitrarily pay student veterans less than they are due simply because it was unable to correct internal problems in time,” said Lawrence. “I appreciated hearing the VBA undersecretary in testimony this morning address the need to make student veterans whole, and I pledge that the VFW will continue to push for the proper implementation of the Forever GI Bill so that all student veterans receive the prompt and full benefits they earned and deserve,” he said.



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## Why veterans should consider careers in law enforcement

From Military.com | By Sean Mclain Brown



Just because you didn't serve with the military police doesn't mean a career in criminal justice is off the table. One of the most important lessons you can learn about your service to this country is your MOS doesn't dictate your future. And this is especially true for careers in criminal justice.

Don't have your degree? No problem. Some police departments have programs that waive initial degree requirements and allow veterans to serve as a police officer while earning their degree part-time. In addition, many law enforcement agencies give hiring preferences for veterans.

Typically, the criminal justice system consists of three major components: (1) law enforcement (police, sheriffs, marshals, border patrol, national parks); (2) adjudication (courts which include judges, prosecutors, defense lawyers); and (3) corrections (prison officials, probation officers, and parole officers). In a criminal justice system, these distinct agencies operate together under the rule of law and are the principal means of maintaining the rule of law within society.

There are many reasons why law enforcement agencies actively seek veterans to employ within their ranks and why veterans are attracted to the field of law enforcement upon retirement. For one, the structure of a police force is very similar to that of the military. Secondly, many of the same traits that make a person successful in the military are also required for success in a law enforcement agency. Here are five reasons why veterans make good law enforcement candidates:

1. Veterans possess a high level of discipline, integrity, and responsibility.
2. Teamwork.
3. Critical thinking, especially during high-stress situations.
4. A Community of Shared Values.
5. A Desire to Serve Others.

### Understanding the Military Experience:

PROVIDING CARE TO SERVICE MEMBERS, VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Service members and their families have made sacrifices for all of us. You can return the favor by helping them.

#### STAR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDERS

is a training program that will help you better understand and serve veterans, service members and their families as clients. You can also join an online registry of providers that will help them find you!



**Trainings & CEUs are FREE.**  
Space is limited—register today!

**UPCOMING AREA EVENTS**  
University of Southern Indiana

**Tier One** - December 5, 2018  
Carter Hall A-C

**Tier Two** - January 29-30, 2019  
UC 226-227

**Tier Three** - March 6-7, 2019  
Carter Hall A-C



For more information or to register, visit [www.starproviders.org](http://www.starproviders.org)



United Way  
of St. Joseph County

# University of Southern Indiana Veteran Talon

## Volume 5, Issue 4

### Your Benefits Now - "Forever GI Bill" Latest Update Questions and Answers from the VA

As discussed in a previous article, continued information technology difficulties with implementing sections 107 and 501 of the Harry W. Colmery Educational Assistance Act of 2017 (Forever GI Bill), both of which change the way monthly housing allowance payments are calculated, have left students with questions.

Below is a list of frequently asked questions and the VA's response:

#### **What should beneficiaries do now?**

Students can benefit from planning ahead of time, enrolling early, staying in contact with their School Certifying Officials, and avoiding changes in their schedules once enrolled.

If students do drop/add hours, they should immediately contact their School Certifying Official to mitigate potential overpayment.

Students can expect payments to be in line with normal processing times and VA will continue to pay students based on the location of the institution's main campus.

VA will provide beneficiaries with housing benefits at the current academic year uncapped DoD BAH rate for an E-5 with dependents.

VA made this decision because it allows the department to update the housing rates, and is in line with what most students should be receiving each month. VA will not inconvenience any student by collecting any overpayments.

The anticipated workload for the spring is normal, and VA is positioned to complete the work within its timeliness standards.

#### **What should schools do now?**

School Certifying Officials can submit enrollment documents as early as 6-months in advance, and we are encouraging certifying officials to submit enrollment documents as soon as they are available.

VA will not require schools to resubmit enrollments for terms that started prior to the IT solution.

#### **What is VA doing to communicate these changes to students and schools?**

VA will be communicating these changes with a multi-faceted approach:

- VBA is sending an email to student Veterans
- The Post-9/11 GI Bill and VBA social media accounts will be publishing links to this update and FAQ for its more than 650,000 combined followers
- VBA is notifying the 35,000+ School Certifying Officials and higher education leadership teams, as well as the state approving agencies and national school associations.

#### **Why didn't VA update the rates in August?**

Initially, VA scheduled the annual updates for release at the same time as the IT solution for the Sections 107 and 501 of the Colmery Act. Since the IT solution deployment did not occur at that time, VA did not update the rates in August.

#### **What is the difference between the 2017 and 2018 housing rates?**

On average, approximately one percent.

How did the housing rates change?

Prior to the passage of the Colmery Act, Post-9/11 GI Bill MHA payments were based on the DoD BAH rates for an E-5 with dependents at the location of the main campus of the

school. DoD assesses BAH rates every January 1, and reports them to VA; VA then calculates the VA rate (typically about one percent higher than the DoD rates effective August 1 of the same year).

Section 501 of the Colmery Act removes the exemption and aligns MHA with DoD's BAH. However, VA is delaying implementation of this provision until Spring 2020.

#### **What types of claims are affected?**

All Post-9/11 GI Bill claims associated with a housing allowance will be impacted by these changes.

#### **What is VA doing to avoid/mitigate the peak enrollment delays that occurred in Fall 2018?**

For the Fall 2018 term, VA asked schools to hold enrollments that would have been affected by the implementation of Section 107. When VA asked schools to submit those enrollments in July, it caused a significant increase in the pending workload and took approximately eight weeks to return to typical processing times.

VA is asking schools to submit enrollments as soon as possible for the Spring 2019 term. The anticipated workload for the Spring is normal, and VA is positioned to complete the work within its timeliness standards.

#### **Will VA provide students with any assistance if I have a hardship?**

If a student experiences financial hardship due to a delay in payment, we ask that they contact the Education Call Center at 888-442-4551 between 7 a.m. – 6 p.m. Central Time, Monday-Friday. VA will expedite any hardship request.

For more information, visit the GI Bill website at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>.