

Office of Veterans' Affairs

Student Veteran Survey



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key Findings

Demographic Information

- ✓ A total of 82 student veterans responded to the survey and 85.4% of them were male.
- ✓ 43.6% of student veterans were between 25 – 29 years of age and 23.3% were between 20 –24 years
- ✓ The vast majority of respondents (70.9%) were combat veterans and 31.6% were disabled.

College Experience

- ✓ The most used services from the Office of Veterans' Affairs were those services related to veterans' education benefits such as information on veterans' education benefit (82.9%) and assistance with application for benefits (82.9%). bursar deferral (73.2%) and general information and guidance on college processes or services (59.8%).
- ✓ The satisfaction of student veterans with the services/opportunities they received from the OVA was high, "very satisfied" 69.1% and "satisfied" 29.6%.
- ✓ And the vast majority of respondents (84.1%) found the OCC campus "veteran friendly" overall.
- ✓ This result was supported by the positive comments in the following open ended question. Many of the student veterans commented that the OVA was extremely helpful and the professors and fellow students were understanding.
- ✓ Only 19.5% of respondents indicated that they had encountered problems or issues while attending OCC because of being veterans. The problems or issues were more likely related to the political views they found "offensive" and administration process of veteran's benefits.

- ✓ 95.4% of the respondents indicated that they would utilize or find helpful a "quick reference guide" of benefits and services available to veterans, both within and outside the campus.
- ✓ When were asked about willingness to participate in regular social outings or events sponsored by the OVA/Vets Club, 32.9% of student veterans answered they would take advantage of those events while 50.5% indicated that they possibly would.
- ✓ The most frequently suggested activity for veterans was various sports events such as SU games, Chiefs /Crunch games, and other sports activities (bowling, fishing, Poker Runs, etc.). And many of student veterans also suggested picnic and barbeque for social gatherings.

- ✓ On the question about if they would like to hear speakers from within and outside of the OCC campus, a slim majority (55.7%) answered "Yes."
- ✓ President Obama and John McCain were named most frequently, aside from the Veterans Administration representatives, as a speaker they wanted to have.

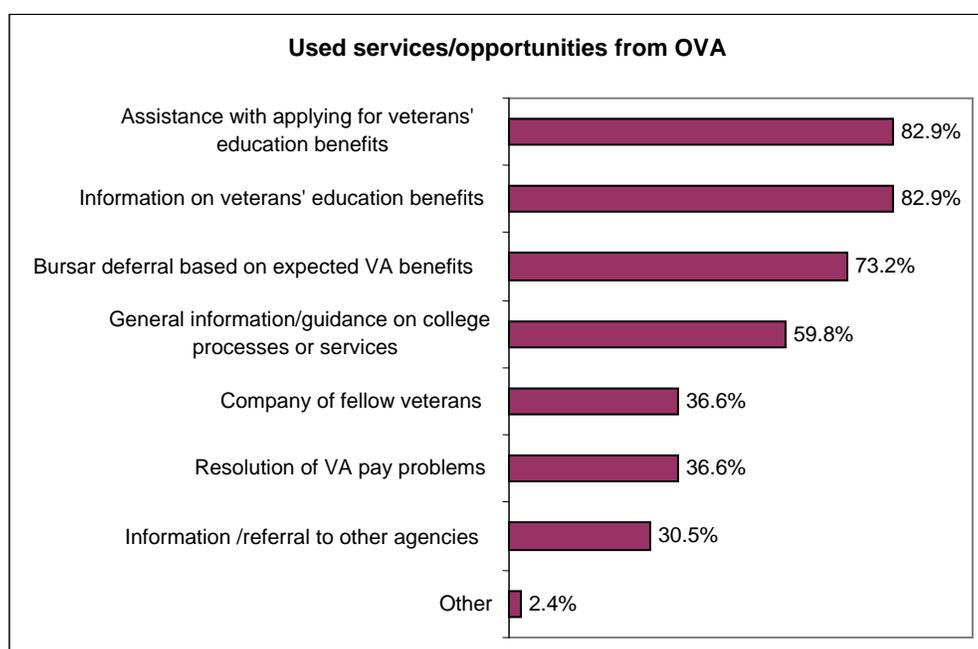
- ✓ Fewer than half (48.7%) of student veterans were interested in a laptop sharing program from the OVA.

Student Veteran Survey

PART A- YOUR COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

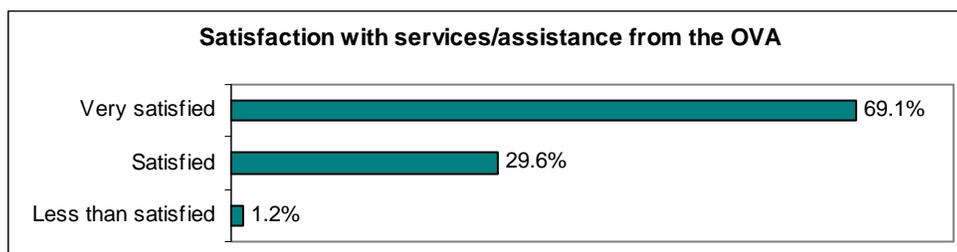
Q1. What services/opportunities have you used from the OCC Office of Veterans' Affairs (OVA)? (Please indicate all that apply.)

	Frequency	Percent
Information on available veterans' education benefits	68	82.9%
Assistance with applying for veterans' education benefits through the VA	68	82.9%
General information/guidance on college processes or services	49	59.8%
Resolution of VA pay problems	30	36.6%
Bursar deferral based on expected VA benefits	60	73.2%
Information /referral to other agencies (Vet Center, VA Medical Center, etc.)	25	30.5%
Company of fellow veterans	30	36.6%
Other	2	2.4%
Total	82	100.0%



Q2. If you have used any services/opportunities from the OVA, were you satisfied with the services/assistance you received?

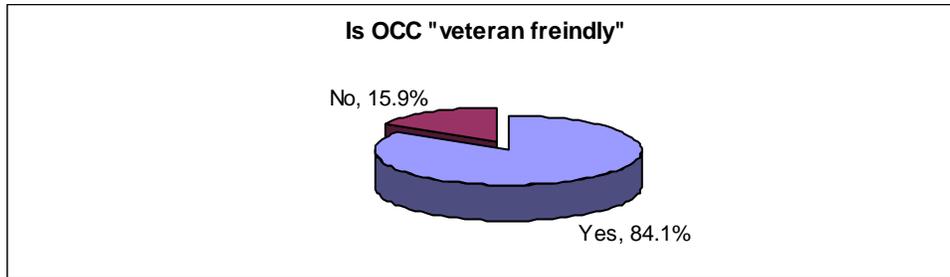
	Number of Respondents	Percent
Very satisfied	56	69.1%
Satisfied	24	29.6%
Less than satisfied	1	1.2%
Total	81	100.0%



Student Veteran Survey

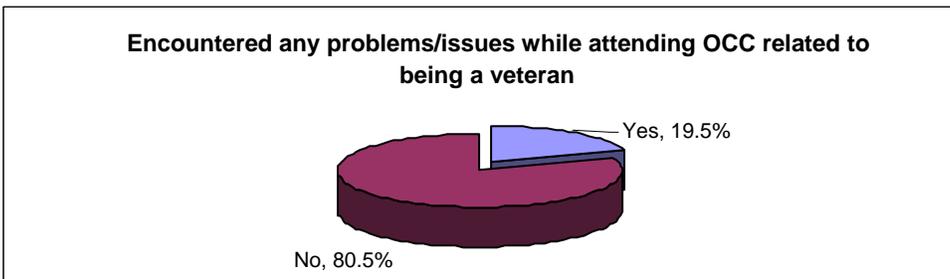
Q4. Overall, do you find the OCC campus "veteran friendly"?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Yes	69	84.1%
No	13	15.9%
Total	82	100.0%



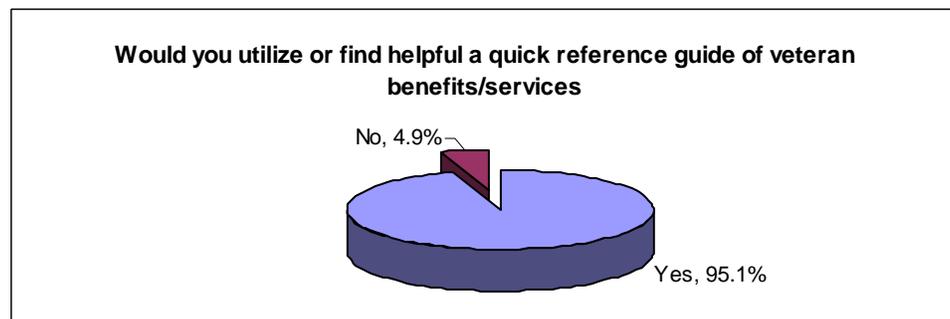
Q6. Have you encountered any problems or issues while attending OCC specifically related to being a veteran?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Yes	16	19.5%
No	66	80.5%
Total	82	100.0%



Q8. If provided, would you utilize or find helpful a "quick reference guide" that outlines the benefits and services available to veterans, both within and outside the OCC campus?

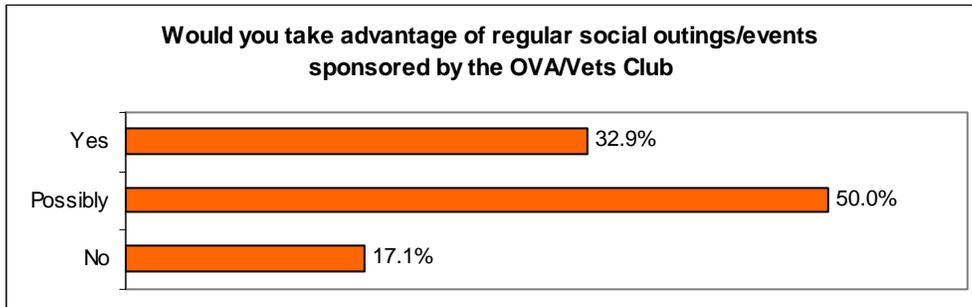
	Number of Respondents	Percent
Yes	78	95.1%
No	4	4.9%
Total	82	100.0%



Student Veteran Survey

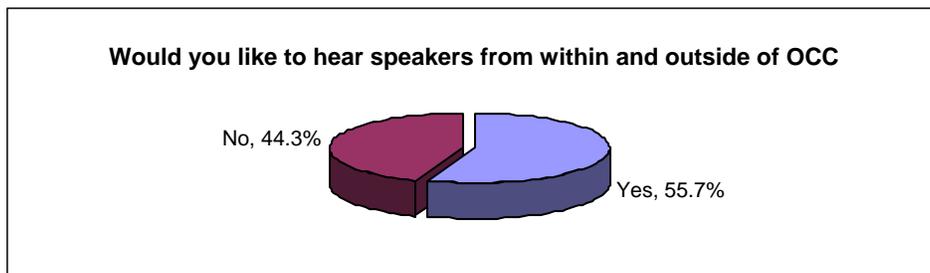
Q9. If offered, would you take advantage of regular social outings or events sponsored by the OVA/Vets Club?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Yes	27	32.9%
Possibly	41	50.0%
No	14	17.1%
Total	82	100.0%



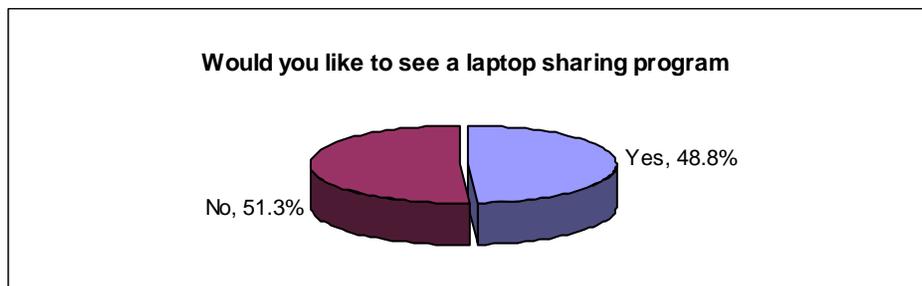
Q11. If offered, would you like to hear speakers from within and outside of the OCC campus?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Yes	44	55.7%
No	35	44.3%
Total	79	100.0%



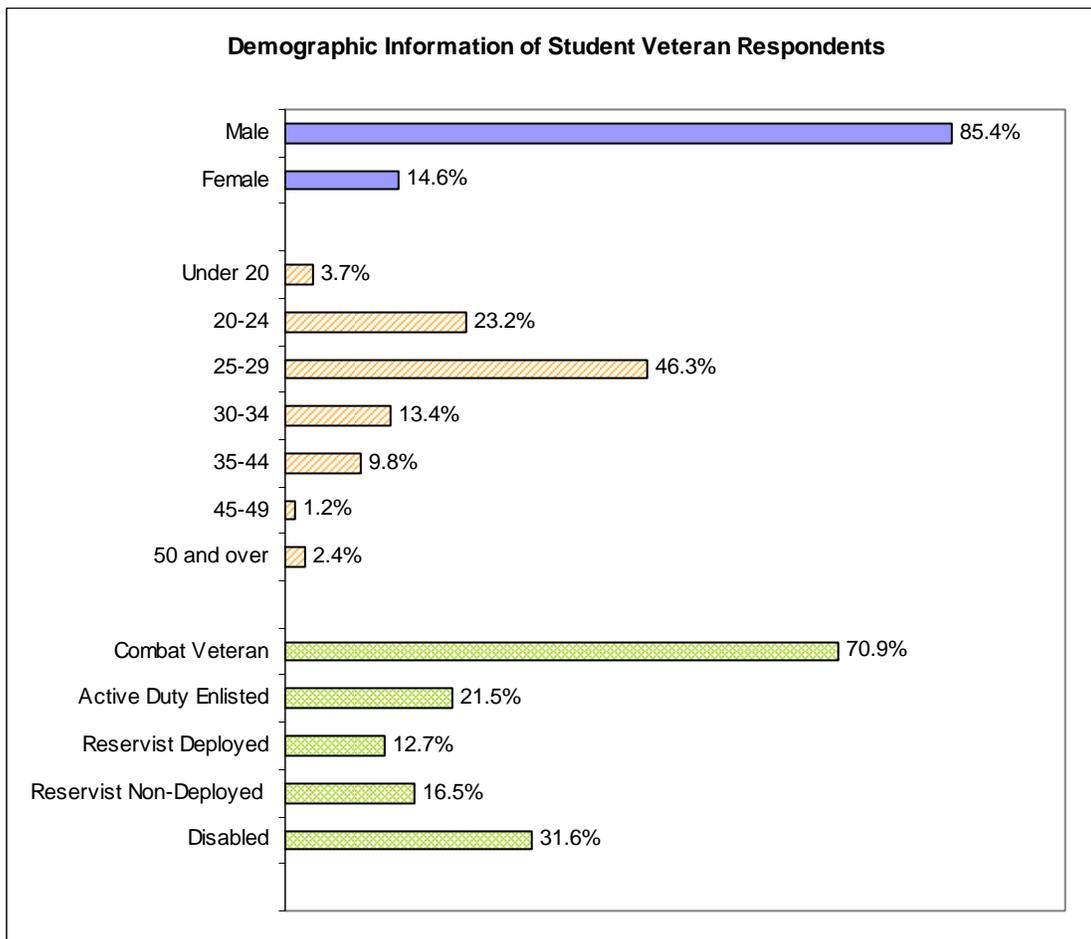
Q13. If offered, would you like to see a laptop sharing program that would allow you to obtain a laptop overnight or on weekends from the OVA?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Yes	39	48.8%
No	41	51.3%
Total	80	100.0%



Student Veteran Survey
PART B – DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Gender		
Male	70	85.4%
Female	12	14.6%
Age		
Under 20	3	3.7%
20-24	19	23.2%
25-29	38	46.3%
30-34	11	13.4%
35-44	8	9.8%
45-49	1	1.2%
50 and over	2	2.4%
Veterans Status, please check all that apply.		
Combat Veteran	56	70.9%
Active Duty Enlisted	17	21.5%
Reservist Deployed	10	12.7%
Reservist Non-Deployed	13	16.5%
Disabled	25	31.6%



APPENDIX

Supplementary List of Other and Open-End Comments

Student Veteran Survey

Q5. If possible, please give an example or two to illustrate your response to Question #4:

Actual veterans are in the veteran office to give help.
Come in contact with fellow vets everyday, its nice to have some common ground, good ice breaker.
Going in there they acknowledge you are there and Paul is great
Haven't experienced any problems with the differed payments. Professors are willing to work with any scheduling issues for Reserves.
I am currently enrolled at the Whitman School of Management, which is across the street from an empty office that has been assigned to VA
I am not sure, nothing has occurred to make me feel uncomfortable so I guess it is friendly The instructors are very understanding if I have to miss class when duty arises
I did notice the welcome veterans sign on the library wall, I just feel we should have veterans day off. We can not afford to forget.
I find that the number of college credits related to military service is inadequate. The professors seem to have the mentality that all of the students are 18 year olds with very little life experience
I have found that there is a lack of understanding among a majority of staff and instructors as to the hearts and minds of veterans.
I have had a lot of help from veteran representatives from school advisement to legal advice
I have had to visit the campus twice in uniform and did not receive any discouraging comments.
I HAVE HEARD SEVERAL INSTRUCTORS SAY HOW MUCH THEY APPRECIATE WHAT THE VETERAN HAS DONE OR IS DOING NOW TO KEEP THE COUNTRY SAFE.
I have used the veterans office twice and both times been helped promptly and without a hiccup.
I haven't found the campus especially "veteran friendly." I simply have not found it at all "unfriendly." There is not a noticeably strong VA presence to those not using the program. There may be even more veterans who don't even know that there is a VA office on campus. Maybe some VA sponsored events that are open to the general student body to inform everyone of the services offered by the OCC VA would help. I didn't know of any of these services available other than assistance with the Chap 30 and other educational benefits.
I haven't seen one event that the school sponsors to bring more veterans to OCC. Neither have I seen a school sponsored event to honor those who have served in any branch of the military
I saw a few banners posted in the quad. The Veteran Center is also extremely useful and friendly.
I think that OCC is a very good school for veterans. I give them the oppportunism to get an associate degree and can prepare them for higher degrees
I've had positive interactions with other students regarding the military and have answered some questions about what the military is like, what benefits they can expect to receive, etc.
It's amazing how many veterans there are when you talk to other students there is always someone who knows how you feel. On the downside, the veteran's office seems to be stuffed away like the college is trying to hide it, its a small room stuffed inside another office.
Never had a problem with any thing being a disabled veteran...Would like to see more American flags flying around campus
Never had any problems to suggest otherwise
No one cares if you are a vet
Not sure what "veteran friendly" means. I haven't been discriminated against in any way.
Other than the Veteran's office, I find it hard to listen to the professors who all speak liberally in class rooms and all promote the democrats in a school environment where the teachers should remain objective and neutral on such matters.
Outside of the VA center and the help they give. There really isn't any vet benefits.
Professors are extremely understanding when military commitments conflict with school requirements. The fact that there is a full time veterans' office is a huge improvement over other schools.

Student Veteran Survey

Professors for the most part understand our backgrounds and use our experience for class participation. Students for the most part mix well with veterans.

So far my experience of being a veteran student has been a positive one at OCC. The other students and faculty have made me feel very comfortable in a college environment. The OVA has been very helpful answering all of my questions and with the help of books for my classes.

Some professors are not very accommodating to some of the issues we are still going through

The bursars office continues to send bills for school although I tell them every year that the military and financial aid pays my bill in full. Yet every semester they send me multiple bills. Now I don't know if this is because the military waits until the last second to pay or if the bursars just don't listen...

The campus is but the financial aid office and the bursars office needs to get a clue. It seems as though they should work together on things yet they have no clue what the other one is doing. Also, they both need instruction and education about the programs available to Veterans.

The people in VA office make themselves very available and are very friendly and helpful.

The professors are supportive of me being a veteran, and fellow students respect the fact that I am a veteran.

The teachers are always willing to help.

The VA office at OCC is always friendly, helpful and respectful. I think most OCC vets feel the same.

The vets club doesn't do anything as far as extracurricular activities

There are a lot of campuses that don't even have VA offices let alone one that's staffed by a few people. It could be larger though due to the fact that 2 people extra in the office and you can't find a place to sit....

There are teachers who teach not only their subject but press their political views. In a political science course this may be acceptable. But not in an English course.

There was always someone there when I needed assistance and the information received was always accurate and helpful.

They have an office dedicated to veterans' affairs.

They treat me like everyone else.

When I've been in the office, they have provided guidance on filing for benefits, and provided guidance on the application process.

Yes, I found that the staff at OCC was very accommodating and appreciative of veterans and our service to our country.

Q7. If your answer to Question #6 was "yes", briefly describe the nature of the problem/issue below:

Arguments with students that are "anti-military"

Fall semester of 2008 my G.I Bill paperwork was misplaced and not turned in.

I don't have any financial aid yet a or GI Bill money so I had to buy my books out of pocket.

Instructors, who are considered experts in their fields, at times incorrectly assume that they understand military thinking and or reasoning. At times statements made by faculty have been grossly offensive.

Its more with financial aid but my G.I. bill really hurts my loan eligibility. My VA benefits pay the bills so I can go to school and I think its wrong for it to affect my loans for tuition

One of my first impressions of OCC was a negative one. My advisor (now department chair) had some un-intelligent words to say about a Vet (myself) right to my face. I professionally shrugged it off but it was still the wrong thing to say.

Parking, 30 percent on one leg and have to walk 1/2 mile in to school

See above description to #5, along with uneducated 18 year olds expressing their views on the war, which does not bother me, but the fact that they back it up with opinion rather than facts.

Smoking policies, i.e.. student association trying to ban smoking on campus all together. Professors who don't really care what you have done, and don't think before they speak badly about the services, and when confronted blow it off.

Student Veteran Survey

Some of the people at the front desk of the student center are short and rude at times. I understand they deal with a lot of young students, but, at the same time, there are mature and older students who should be treated with respect and dignity. As well as the younger students. This relates to veterans in that most of us are older and are more goal oriented.

Some staff misunderstanding of Ch. 31 funding, but straightened out by your office (thanks Paul)

The first time I was to receive my Federal Pell Grant I had problems with the financial aid office and it seems like there are only a select 2 or 3 people in the office familiar with veteran financial aid

There really isn't much financial support for vets who mobilized to support OIF but did not receive the expedition ribbon. Without taking anything away from the guys and girls in the line of fire; we put our careers/education/lives on hold, left our children and lost our marriages when we deployed. But on return we are told "well, you weren't in a combat zone, so you didn't really DO anything."

Q10. If you answered "yes" or "possibly" to Question #9, please enter below a suggestion for an activity/event that you would be interested in:

Comment
All inclusive night to paradise found
An actual poker game.
Any of the above, as well as maybe cookouts in the summer, making trips to the VA Hospital to visit other Veterans, and even just having a group dinner outing to get some food and a few cold beverages with any Veterans, their wives, significant others or friends and family.
Any sporting event, poker tournament
Any thing
Anything active or that can help others.
Anything really, mostly it depends on the time of the event, if I can include my family, and what cost is it to me, if any. The actual event isn't that important as long as it is interesting and fun.
BBQ, karaoke night
Bib, snowball fight, annual largest snowman being built on occ campus, veteran vs non-veteran competitions like mini Olympics, decathlons, snowball fights, science fairs, talent show, etc..
Bills training camp
Bowling, ski trip, SU games, golf, poker runs, movie day/ night, etc.
Bowling, softball
Bowling, chiefs game sound good
Camping or something? Amusement parks.
Casual gathering for pizza, place to go in the morning for coffee
Chiefs game, OCC game, SU game, fishing outing
Chiefs games, SU games of any sport, crunch games, etc.....
Chiefs or Crunch game. Fishing (Project Healing Waters through Trout Unlimited does fishing outings for vets - could hook up with them.)
Community service
I don't know. School life and family life are business enough at this time.
I have always liked the veterans' picnic. Perhaps there could be more than once a year.
I think a meet and greet type event would be beneficial. Some sort of cookout, grill, bring in food and maybe a guest speaker to say a FEW words. I am no longer an OCC student, but this would be great for currents veterans.
I would love to see a veteran basketball tournament
Most events no pref.
Motorcycle poker runs, sporting events
Motorcycle Poker Runs, spring picnic, possible winter skiing trip
Paintball, Possibly get our hands on some weapons and shoot a bit via reserve station.
PERHAPS A DAY TRIP TO OUR CAPITAL TO SEE THE MONUMENTS? PERHAPS A CLAM BAKE?
Picnics, bowling, sports games, skiing

Student Veteran Survey

POKER RUNS, any sports activities, BBQ etc.
Poker runs, Syracuse hockey games (crunch), white water rafting
Poker/Bowling/Football Game etc.
Something on campus. I would have participated if I had known about the hotdog sale last week. I didn't know until I was home that morning.
Sporting events
SU football & basketball games would be great *
Syracuse Crunch game, Syracuse Chiefs game, motorcycle rides,
Syracuse Crunch Hockey game, or being able to be on the sidelines at an SU football game
Syracuse football games, bowling, DC trips, out of country trips
Syracuse sporting events
Unfortunately I live north of Syracuse and it that would be the cause for not attending.

* Highest number of respondents

Q12. If your answer to Question #11 was yes, please enter a name or general description below of a speaker or a group that you would like to hear from (for example, "John McCain" or "Veterans Administration representative"):

Comment
Any great Americans with extraordinary stories of persevering against near impossible odds, being successful in life, and/or any inspirational story of what it means to be American
Barack Obama *
Bill Clinton
Colin Powell
Dr. Bill Cross, John McCain, Honorable George W. Bush, and any other person who is in support of the troops and the job at hand the troops and Veterans have helped take part in, past, present and future.
Glenn Beck, John McCain,
I would do my best to arrange my schedule to see someone but don't want to say yes then no show
I would like any veteran to be able to speak, specifically I would like to Lt.Col. Grossman.
I would like to hear from the DAV. Some veterans are disabled like myself and being able to get their advice would be greatly appreciated.
John McCain
John McCain, Norman Shwartzkoff, Colin Powell
John McCain, Oliver North, Colon Powel, Norman Schwarzkopf, any republican politician
Mike Eversmith
Not John McCain
PERHAPS A VETERAN SERVICE OFFICER? JOHN McCAIN, THAT WOULD BE GOOD. JOHN KERRY, THAT WOULD BE GOOD.
President Obama, John McCain.
PTSD
PVA rep. or some people to really explain all of the benefits that the veteran can receive whether it is educational, medical, compensational.
Richard Dawkins
Sarah Palin
Someone who can really make a difference and is going to use veterans' inputs instead of forget or just make people happy for the moment.
Someone who could tell us what is going on with certain bills in the House and Senate for us veterans. A lot of them have been sitting for a while and not getting voted on. Also someone to give us unto date info. On our disability claims that were submitted a year ago.

Student Veteran Survey

The 10th mt. SGT that was in the movie "Black Hawk Down". Important military members who are able to provide insight and have some historical importance.

VA rep *

VA REPS would be a HUGE help, and political speakers are always great

Veterans support group leaders that can help students access benefits many veterans do not know about. Also, any group that could help veterans network for employment down the line.

** More than one response*

Q14. Please share any comment or information that you think we need to know:

#13 is a good idea, my school offers them to all Mgmt. students

I always had a great experience when visiting Paul and his staff. I went to them for 2 years while pursuing my degree.

I personally rented a ti-84 for 20 a semester and found that useful I now own a 89 but would still rent a 84 for simplicity

I think the veteran program is great. I do think it would be beneficial for the veterans' office to have a training session for veterans. They could instruct us on how to submit our own educational benefits forms to the VA. This would greatly benefit us so that we knew the procedures in case we transferred to a four year school with no veterans' representative.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE VETERANS OFFICE IS MOVING AGAIN. THE CAMPUS SHOULD PROVIDE A LARGE AND PERMANENT OFFICE-MEETING PLACE FOR THE VETERANS WHOSE RANKS ARE CONTINUALLY GROWING.

I would like a Vet only book SHARING opportunity since books are so damn expensive.

If you are looking for anymore help in the office I would like to help out.

John is scary ripped!!!

Maybe there could be another, smaller office or lounge on the other side of the bridge in Mawhinny or academic 1 or whatever it's called.

OCC is a great campus and I have always found the people in the Vets office very helpful.

OVA has been extremely helpful in my education

Questions 11 and 13 are excellent ideas and I think they should be implemented into the campus services. I answered no because I have my own laptop and am a part of multiple other organizations that have regular speakers and probably wouldn't attend VA speaker events.

Recently been picked to deploy to Afghanistan, so am unable to sign up for classes this semester.

That would be helpful to any veteran student who was in need of a laptop for a specific purpose and did not own one themselves.

The OCC veterans' office has done an exceptional job for this veteran

The VA office is very veteran friendly however it's a little cramped. It would be nice if the vets of OCC had a bigger space for just vets. Maybe with a couple of computers w/ printer for them to use when the comp lab is full. Maybe a TV, fridge things of that nature.

There are many things that can be offered to veterans that aren't looked at. When I enrolled in college, there was SOOOO much paperwork, I was overwhelmed. Just when I thought I was done, I found more. Although VERY helpful, there are still things that the veterans in the office were unaware of. More info regarding the different types of GI bills would be a great help. Although the net tells about it, it can be VERY hard to understand.....

Veterans' Office in OCC was the most helpful with providing resources and information. All of the guys are doing a great job.

You guys are doing a great job! Thanks for being there for us!

You guys do a great job in that office and it's nice to know that if I need a hand with something you guys are on my side!