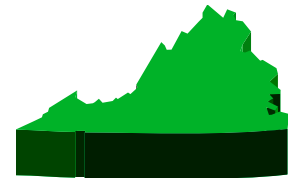


# V.E.T.S. in College Update



VCU-RRTC

June 2012 Final Volume

Virginia Commonwealth University-RRTC, a grantee of the CNI Trust Fund (#10-176), is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution providing access to education and employment without regard to age, race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, veteran's status, political affiliation or disability.



Education coaches last served **23 active participants**. All participants live within the Commonwealth; about half are currently enrolled in a postsecondary program. Of those currently enrolled in a program of study, the majority of veterans use the GI Bill in order to pay for school; however, a few veterans use employer-sponsored tuition assistance and grants.

## Veteran with PTSD Completes Bachelor's degree, Other Wounded Warriors Persist

In its short period of operation, V.E.T.S. in College served over three dozen veterans at a variety of points in their academic journeys. One of those veterans, Peter Harrison, has completed his bachelor's degree in at a public, four-year university in Virginia despite the challenges created by his diagnosed PTSD. Like many other wounded warriors with a variety of injuries from TBI to SCI, Peter struggled with the social isolation and academic challenges his disability and veterans' status posed on campus. When he self-referred to his education coach, Peter was struggling with failing grades and teetering on academic probation. In addition to academic challenges, Peter went through a series of changes in his personal life which included having a new baby and seeking treatment and support for emotional issues.

While Peter was able to complete his bachelor's degree program in the time frame of the V.E.T.S. in College demonstration, a number of veterans also successfully persisted throughout the demonstration project. Greg West transferred his credits from a two-year online university, to a private four-year institution where he will receive a bachelor's degree in rehabilitation counseling. Greg's own recovery from a very serious motorcycle accident and adjusting to life with paralysis contributed to his decision to transition from his active duty Army NCO to career counseling other veterans.

A full evaluation of the V.E.T.S. in College program suggested that timing of injury affected the academic and social readiness of veterans pursuing postsecondary enrollment. Veterans who were receiving outpatient treatment and had more time separated from the date of their injury tended to access program services on a consistent basis. Veterans who had newly acquired injuries or diagnosed disabilities tended to access services more sporadically. Education coaches also worked with many wounded warriors who needed information on the application process and academic environment prior to making any enrollment decisions.

## We are Virginia Veterans on Campus Website

Through a collaboration with the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program, education coaches developed content for the website "Vets on Campus." Program personnel used their expertise in postsecondary education to create multiple pages and videos dedicated to enrollment issues and learning strategies for veterans with a wide array of academic and physical abilities. From the website, veterans can track veteran and disability specific information by institution and program type.

### VETS ON CAMPUS



Visit the website!

<http://www.wearevirginiaveterans.com/Vets-on-Campus.aspx>

