



## Request for 2020-21 Funding Services and Activities Fee Committee

### BUDGET PROPOSAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Department Name: Veteran & Military Resource Center

Create Date: 02/05/2021

Due Date: 02/05/2021

Submitter Name: Juanita Murillo Garcia

UW Email Address: Juana1@uw.edu

Phone Number: 253-692-4810

Department Head Approval: ✗

Department Head:

Requested Amount: **\$78,228**

## Departmental Information

### STUDENT UTILIZATION

The Veteran and Military Resource Center (VMRC) was established in 2016 to enhance our military-connected students' experience and provide support and referrals throughout campus and our community. That includes discharged veterans, active-duty personnel, National Guard, reservists, spouses, and children. During a pandemic, the VMRC continues to have significant engagement with military-connected students through Zoom/TEAMS Office Hours. The funding requested in this proposal will positively affect the lives of UW Tacoma's population with discord server, remote events, and resources for students to succeed, flourish and enjoy their college experience even during the pandemic. The VMRC team will always help our veteran community and congratulate them at the finish line on graduation day and then help students plan for their next transition out of higher education with our career services specialist, who provides career development opportunities, job readiness, and internship opportunities.

Specifically, the funds will continue to support the following remotely:

- Gold Star Luminary Initiative
- Veterans Virtual Appreciation Week
- May Mental Health Virtual Conference
- Memorial Day Remote Remembrance
- Resupply to our Graduation Items
- SVA National Virtual Conference
- Virtual Quarterly Welcome and Orientation Events
- Peer Advisors for Veterans Education (Student Staffing)

Returning to campus, the VMRC will include:

- Mid-Term/End of Term Pizza breaks
- Husky Halloween Hangout
- Chili Cook-Off Competitions
- VMRC Video Game Challenge
- Gold Star Luminary Initiative Veterans Appreciation Week
- May Mental Health Conference
- Memorial Day Remembrance Event
- UWT VMRC's Veterans Graduation Celebration
- SVA National Conference
- Quarterly Welcome and Orientation Events

### CORE VALUES/MISSION ALIGNMENT

Our office recognizes the sacrifices military-connected students have made through their service to the country or their support of a service member. This is why we align our services with "impact goals" and defined indicators of success.

The VMRC's most pronounced goal is Students and the following three indicators.

A. Strengthen persistence to graduation for all student populations.

Student veterans tend to be older than their classmates. Many have family and work obligations, and some with service-related disabilities. Despite any barrier, many of our students genuinely excel in the academic environment. Below is the breakdown of graduates from Winter 2020-Autumn 2020 with Veteran status.

	Count of Student
ACTIVE DUTY	8
CHILD/SPOUSE	196
DISCHRGD VET	149
NATL GUARD	12

RESERVIST 24

Total 389

F. Increase student awareness of and satisfaction with the availability and accessibility of UW Tacoma resources, support, and infrastructure.

Last year the VMRC conducted 50 workshops and networking opportunities. Moving the workshops online has improved both accessibility and outcomes for many military-connected students.

H. Improve the post-graduation success of our alumni, as measured by established indicators.

VMRC's Military-Connected Career Development Specialist, the dual role with the VMRC and Career Services, provides assessments to help military-connected students identify their goals, develop professional skills, connect with employers for internships and employment, etc., mentoring students on jobs that match their strengths and interests.

Another vital goal is Communities.

D. Increase the number of community partnerships, including those that connect to global and local communities.

The VMRC office has strong community partnerships with organizations such as Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative (CSPI), PLU's Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), Washington State Military Transition Council, and the local community, to provide connections with federal, state, and local Veteran and dependent benefits and opportunities.

F. Increase the number of students graduating with high-impact community engagement and leadership experience such as internships.

The VMRC empower these students to achieve their academic goals and connect them to internal campus resources, external community resources, scholarships, work-study opportunities specific to the military-affiliated population, and community networking opportunities to ensure post-graduation success.

#### SAF-FUNDED PROGRAM OR SERVICES GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Goal 1: Increase professional development and develop mentorship programs catering to our military-connected population through training, workshops, and events.

Increase student involvement in national, regional, and local professional development opportunities, such as Student Veterans of America (SVA) National and Regional Conferences, The National Association of Veteran Program Administrators (NAVPA), The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), and others.

Outcome - The military-connected student population is eager to pay-it-forward and enjoys getting involved with on-campus and community events. Our students' testimonies and veteran supporters help navigate other fellow student-veterans to Peer Advisors for Veteran Education (PAVE) programs and the local, regional, and national resources activities based on their military affiliation.

Each year the teams grow and connect more students with resources and create more community for veterans. This year spouses and children started their networking within the program to meet people they can relate to and share backgrounds and college experiences. "It (VMRC) is a space that promotes diversity, inclusion, and equity where veterans and non-veterans can feel safe and utilize. The VMRC has a very welcoming and homely feeling when you enter the space. It is not only a place for business but, also a place to hang out, unwind and relax whether you are done with classes for the day or just need a place to go to in between classes". Since last March, PAVE has allowed mentors to connect with student veterans who can't drop by due to COVID-19.

Goal 2: Build a community of resources for our UW Tacoma's military-affiliated population. Market veteran campaigns offer engagement, participation, and fellowship opportunities through our programs, events, and campus partners.

Outcome - The VMRC student population involves collaboration with our students and student leaders; registered student organizations, UW/UWT Departments and Programs; Faculty and Staff; and Community Partners and agencies. Supporters assist the UWT VMRC student population with opportunities and resources that resonate with the diverse military community.

VMRC has collaborated with various internal and external partners who made significant developments with the Coast Guard College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative (CSPI). In December 2019, the UWT Chancellor and Coast Guard formally signed a memorandum of understanding between the service and the institution. UWT is a prominent Minority Servicing Institution, and the Coast Guard is committed to recruiting a more diverse officer workforce.

Since then, UWT recruited three candidates for the CSPI program. Those accepted into this scholarship program receive full funding for up to two years of college, a full-time Coast Guard salary, housing, and medical benefits.

#### STUDENT UTILIZATION (COMPARISON OVER PAST 2 YEARS)

Although many of our events have been remote or postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, UWT's Military-Connected Population remains steady with enrollment.

The events held at the VMRC included:

- Winter Quarter's Welcome and Orientation Events - The VMRC hosts open house events that welcome incoming and returning Veterans and Military dependents with challenge coins. These events help overcome cultural barriers and help students experience a smooth transition from military life to higher education. It is also an opportunity to meet the VMRC staff and ensure their Veteran education benefits are in order. Our Military-Connected students are provided with information, introduced to UWT resources, and allowed to meet other UWT students.
- The 2020 SVA National Conference was supported by the previous year's SAF, Student Committee, and Community Events Funds. With our Military Career Specialist support, the students were given the opportunity to network and offer career planning opportunities.
- The VMRC's Military Career Specialist organizes various workshops during Husky Hour to provide resumes, cover letter reviews, interview preparation, and career guidance. They also incorporate Mid-Term Pizza Break events, and potlucks invite all students, Veterans, ROTC Cadets, friends, family, etc.
- UWT, UWT Student Veteran Organization (SVO), and the VIBE social events incorporate other departments and invite UWT members and their families. Last year's Chili Cook-Off Competitions included special guest judges Chef Jeremy Bryant from the Seattle Mariners, American Idol Season One Singer Rocky Sandoval, and Mark Glenn, AKA "Sergeant Husky."

Other VMRC activities conducted remotely:

- Welcome and Orientation Virtual Events; the VMRC partner with Academic Advising and Financial Aid to welcome and guide incoming and returning Veterans and Military dependents with UWT Veteran Masks.
- The Gold Star Luminary Initiative along the Prairie Line Trail- SVO and the VMRC honor military families' sacrifice and pay tribute to their loved ones lost while serving in the U.S. military by lighting a luminary on the last Sunday in September. Due to restrictions, the VMRC adjusted the event and the event's location to the VMRC's suite; with a small SVO group, the luminaries were lit as a suite-long window display.
- Veterans Virtual Appreciation Week - The VMRC partnered with the UW Tri-Campus Veterans Week Planning Committee to provided branding events for military-connected students, friends, and supporters with 5K virtual funds, flag-planting by the SVO, and a student veteran spotlight campaign.

Back on campus, UWT students will meet staff, learn about PAVE, career and networking opportunities, and Veteran support organizations. The VMRC will hold the following social events:

- Husky Halloween Hangout, the VMRC collaborates with other departments inviting UWT and their families to a pumpkin painting and moving watching night.
- Autumn/ Winter Break Events with holiday displays, potlucks, and Chili Cook-Off Competitions trophies.
- May Mental Health Conference to focus on chemical dependency, Wellness, disorders, and Veteran-related post-traumatic stress.
- UWT VMRC's Veterans Graduation Celebration - Our annual event celebrates our current military-connected graduates with their military stoles. This event includes the graduates, current or former students, family, faculty, and staff.

**COLLECTION OF FEEDBACK & IMPROVEMENTS**

Before the Winter 2020 quarter shift to remote learning, the VMRC had 720 visitors. A difference of 665 more student visitors compared to the same timeframe last year. The chart attached reflects our student visitors' various reasons from January to the week we went remote in March.

	2019	2020	%Difference	
Benefits		8	69	762.50%
<b>Career Counseling</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>3800%</b>
Drop-In Session		3	9	200%
Education Plans		8	3	-62.50%
General Counseling/Advising		8	196	2350%
Initial Processing		6	18	200%
<b>Meeting</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>6800%</b>
PAVE		2	4	100%
Payments		4	10	150%
Residency		14	1	-92.80%
ROTC/SVO		8	1	-87.50%
<b>Study Area</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>27900%</b>
VMRC Events		3	21	600%
Grand Total		55	720	1209.10%

**Before Covid-19:**

- The VMRC used sign-in sheets (at the office front desk), Husky ID card scanner, and provided anonymous feedback on the quality of services and programming during social events.
- Quarterly meeting with the SVO to address student success, concerns, issues, campus climate, and brainstorm for future programming.
- Meet with the SVO leadership to discuss excellence principles, keys to veteran success, and the future needs to collaborate on current and upcoming projects.
- Meet with the Veterans Working Group comprised of campus staff, faculty, and students to assist military-connected students in transitioning to higher education, completing their college programs, and obtaining career-ready skills.

**During Covid-19:**

- The VMRC tracks services and programming with email and phone counts (see attached Excel).
- Virtual meeting with the SVO & PAVE to address student success, concerns, issues, campus climate, and brainstorm for future programming.
- Virtual meeting with the SVO & PAVE leadership to discuss principles of excellence, regional meetings, keys to veteran success, and the future need to collaborate on current and upcoming projects.
- Virtual conjunction with the Veterans Working Group comprises campus staff, faculty, and students to assist military-connected students in transitioning to higher education, completing their college programs, and obtaining career-ready skills.

**SERVICE BENEFITS TO STUDENTS**

Last autumn, the VMRC processed over 986 VA students' benefits and waivers to veterans, Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve Service members, and military dependents. Ensuring that eligible and potential students are informed about their benefits, new and existing laws, and our veterans' services are available to them through proactive communication.

UWT Military Veterans and their dependents who access their VA educational GI Bill benefits receive support in the following areas:

- The GI Bill benefits programs help our Military-Connected students with their tuition and fees for professional certifications or graduate and undergraduate degrees.
- Full-time students qualify for 100% of their housing and book stipend, which lowers students' time worrying over loans, finances, and expenses.

- Veterans are non-traditional students who offer unique perspectives that enhance campus diversity and learning. Traits of leadership, achievement, and high-level performance are the norm for service members and veterans.
- The eligible servicemember may transfer all or part of their earned benefits to spouses and children.

"The VMRC at the University of Washington Tacoma is the 'behind the scenes' crew that make student life run as smoothly as possible. I have been worried about funds several times over the past two years and have emailed people panicking. I was assured that it was being taken care of and reminded of how tuition is paid at the University. I was always talked to in a kind, professional, and respectful manner. I am so grateful to have such hard-working professionals looking out for my best educational interests."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the VMRC established a virtual community among the Military-Connected students within the UWT campus, strengthened by the PAVE members improving the student population's retention and success.

- VMRC's Military-Connected Career Development Specialist used to build resumes and LinkedIn and help students plan for their next transition out of higher education.
- The VMRC provides career development opportunities with conferences and workshops—increased involvement within the regional and national PAVE and SVO programs.
- The Veterans Corps Navigator identifies and connects Military-Connected students to state and local resources.

"The PAVE program brought me up into the Veteran and Military Resource Center and introduced me to the Veteran Work-studies and VMRC Staff. I felt that all members truly care about Veterans transitioning to civilian life and all of the struggles we go through; it has honestly been one of the best experiences and decisions of my life." UWT students testify to the benefits of the programs, discussions, and services provided by the VMRC Office. The VMRC continues to create a sense of belonging within the university, tri-campus, and the local community.

### Staff Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Professional Staff <sup>1</sup>	<b>Program Support Supervisor This position would provide advice and counsel to prospective and current PAVE Mentors. This supervision position will help track student employee training, schedule, and enforce workplace responsibilities to support the events, campaign, and planning; needed to expand Veteran and Military student enrollment at UW Tacoma. The position will also prepare and accompany our military students and SVO's to the annual conferences and other job-related duties.</b> <span style="float: right;">E001</span>	
	Professional Staff Wages:	<b>\$25,000</b>
	Fringe <sup>4</sup> @ 30.3%:	<b>\$7,575</b>
PERSONNEL TOTAL:		<b>\$32,575</b>

## Other Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested	
Contracted Services	Memorial Day Remembrance Speaker, travel expenses, supplies, and display flags.	S001 \$2,500	
Travel	SVA, NAVPA, & NASPA National and Regional Conferences registration fees, airlines tickets, hotels, travel expenses, and per diem	S002 \$8,000	
Non-Food Supplies & Materials	Promotional items	S003 \$1,000	
	UWT VMRC Challenge Coins	S004 \$3	
	UWT Veteran Lapel Pins	S005 \$1,000	
	UWT Events Winner Trophies (6 per Qrt; 18 total)	S006 \$200	
	Military stoles for graduates, military spouses, and dependents	S007 \$6,000	
	US Stick flags, banner, and awareness signs (Veteran's Day, Memorial Day, Suicide Awareness, ect.	S008 \$500	
	Gold Star Luminary Candles and Supplies	S009 \$100	
	VMRC Holiday events, prizes, and seasonal decorations	S010 \$2,000	
	VMRC business cards, brochures, & UWT VMRC notebooks	S011 \$600	
	UWT VMRC Peer Advisors Shirts (15 Student-Workers)	S012 \$1,500	
	UWT VMRC Patches	S013 \$2,000	
	Military Family Month (April, May, & Nov.) event with refreshments	S014 \$450	
	WT VMRC 5K Shirts (Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Veterans Day, ect.)	S015 \$15,000	
	Food	Mid-Term/End of Term Pizza breaks- All students are invited to the pizza break; Veterans, spouses, children, ROTC Cadets, friends, family, etc. meet other UWT students.	S016 \$1,500
		UWT VMRC's Veterans Graduation Celebration -This event includes the graduates, current or former students, family, faculty, and staff	S017 \$1,000
Memorial Day Remembrance event w/ keynote speaker and cater food for ceremony attendees included students, families, and UWT employees		S018 \$800	
Veterans Appreciation Cakes (For each of the 7 U.S. Military Birthdays)		S019 \$600	
VMRC ROTC Commissioning ceremony with food, music, refreshments		S020 \$200	
VMRC CSPI Commissioning ceremony with food, music, refreshments		S021 \$200	
U.S. Army War College Fellows Presentation Project with food, music, refreshments		S022 \$200	
Equipment	A gaming system for the VMRC Video Game Challenge events	S023 \$300	
SUPPLIMENTAL TOTAL:		\$45,653	

PERSONNEL TOTAL:	\$32,575
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:	\$45,653
<b>COMPLETE PROPOSAL TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$78,228</b>

## Supplemental Documents



### **VMRC COUNTS**

VMRC Remote Traffic



### **2020 PAVE PROGRESS REPORT**

Peer Advisors for Veteran Education (PAVE) is a peer support interactions and events.



### **VMRC SID GRAPHS**

Husky ID card Check-in



### **VMRC FEEDBACK**

Student Feedback



### **VMRC PROGRAM MANAGER JOB DESCRIPTION**

The roles and responsibilities of the VMRC program manager.