

BUDGET PROPOSAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Department Name:

Create Date:

Due Date:

Submitter Name:

UW Email Address:

Phone Number:

Department Head Approval: Department Head:

Requested Amount:

Departmental Information

STUDENT UTILIZATION

The Veteran and Military Resource Center (VMRC) supports UW Tacoma's Military-Connected students with specialized resources and advice. These include the career exploration process and assisting in applying for internships, jobs, and graduate programs. Seventeen percent of UW Tacoma Autumn 2021 enrollment of 5040 students is military-affiliated, and in the Military Times annual Best for Vets College Survey, our campus ranked in the top five of the Northwest Region. The ranking was based on the documented operations involving current and former service members and their families. The funding requested in this proposal will continue to lay the foundation for student transition from military to college life.

Examples include:

- Veterans' Employment and Training Services
- LinkedIn, 1:1 Advising, and Resume Building
- Lunch and Learn Workshops
- Student Veterans of America (SVA) National Conference
- Peer Advisors for Veterans Education (Student Staffing)

In addition, the VMRC hosts multiple Veteran oriented events, including the Tri-Campus Veteran Appreciation Week, Memorial Day, and graduation events. These events are open to all UW Tacoma students but geared to the military-related population. Our campus supporters play an integral role in improving our military-connected students' recruitment, retention initiatives, and graduation rates. They do this by actively participating in services offered in our office and also by participating in the following events:

- Quarterly Welcome and Orientation Events
- Mid-Term/End of Term Pizza breaks
- Husky Halloween Hangout
- Chili Cook-Off Competitions
- VMRC Video Game Challenge
- Gold Star Luminary Initiative
- May Mental Health Conference

CORE VALUES/MISSION ALIGNMENT

The VMRC provides a full array of services to prospective and current military-related students on-campus and in our community. These services directly empower students and focus on the following three indicators.

A. Strengthen persistence to graduation for all student populations.

The VMRC provides a solid support system to veterans, active-duty personnel, and their dependents as they transition from the military to a post-secondary environment and beyond. In pursuit of a specific career, they see it as an opportunity for advancement, and it is a personal goal they strive to achieve.

Below is the breakdown of Military-Connected graduates from Winter 2021-Autumn 2022:

- ACTIVE DUTY-9
- CHILD/SPOUSE-206
- DISCHARGED VET-147
- NATL GUARD-8
- RESERVIST-21
- Grand Total=391

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

The VMRC increased student awareness of and satisfaction with resources, support, and infrastructure by hosting workshops and providing networking opportunities both in-person and online to improve accessibility and outcomes for many military-connected students.

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

Military-Connected Career Development Specialist, serving a dual role with the VMRC and Career Services, provides assessments to help military-connected students identify their goals, develop professional skills, and connect with employers for internships and employment.

Building community partnerships is also a goal that the VMRC heavily focuses on:

D. Increase the number of community partnerships, including connecting 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 others within the local community. These partnerships allow our students to participate in the local community activities and engage the global military community.

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

Post-graduation success is seen as a direct result of the investment that the VMRC puts into military-connected students. The VMRC works to achieve this goal by providing work-study opportunities, internal campus resources, and external community resources.

SAF-FUNDED PROGRAM OR SERVICES GOALS AND OUTCOMES

UW Tacoma's Veterans share many characteristics of the average adult learner. Most are 23 or older, married, divorced, or supporting families. They have been away from the formal classroom for several years, possess significant life experiences, demonstrate a more mature focus on learning, and value the practical necessity of finding a job and career. Lastly, they do not relate to younger attitudes and college experiences which is why many Veterans pass their education benefits on to family members. Winter- Autumn 2020, we totaled 389 graduates, most being children or partners of Veterans or Active Duty service members.

Goal 1: Increase professional development and develop mentorship programs catering to our military-connected population through training, workshops, and events. Our universities address the needs of military-connected students' administrative and educational challenges. The VMRC accommodates the specific needs of student veterans and their families attending our campus with student services' veteran benefits staff advisors and the Washington State Department of Veteran Affairs' Veteran Liaison experienced with the military-friendly policies, services, and resources. Our staff and student involvement within military-connected clubs and organizations were established to create a social group that can perform community service projects, advocate for veterans, and help military-connected students integrate into social networks and programs which have the potential to benefit them post-graduation.

Outcome - The VMRC and SVA members' work is recognized within the 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) programs. UW Tacoma is nationally-recognized by our Student Veterans Organization. The military-connected student population advanced their services into various student clubs and programs, including high officer roles in the Associated Students of the University of Washington Tacoma. This leads into our students' testimonies and affirms our Peer Advisors for Veteran Education (PAVE), who help navigate student-veterans with on- and off-campus support.

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

Outcome - The VMRC student population partners with other students and student leaders, registered student organizations, UW/UW Tacoma Departments and Programs, Faculty and Staff, and Community Partners and agencies. Supporters assist the UW Tacoma 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). The Coast Guard is committed to recruiting a more diverse officer force, and UW Tacoma is a prominent Minority-Serving Institution. Renewing our partnership, the Coast Guard will continue to support our transfer junior and seniors with up to two years of paid tuition, full-time Coast Guard salary, housing, and medical benefits.

STUDENT UTILIZATION (COMPARISON OVER PAST 2 YEARS)

COVID-19 has permanently changed how we meet and how the VMRC remotely organizes most of our meetings and events. For most of 2021, hosting an in-person event didn't seem possible. Yet, innovative solutions emerged from this challenging time for staff, students, and families to respond to the needs of our 873 military-connected students in order to bring them the following:

- Welcome and Orientation Virtual Events; the VMRC partners with Academic Advising and Financial Aid to welcome and guide incoming and returning Veterans and Military dependents with UWT Veteran Masks.
- Veterans Virtual Appreciation Week - The VMRC partnered with the UW Tri-Campus Veterans Week Planning Committee to provide branding events for military-connected students, friends, and supporters with 5K virtual funds, flag-planting by the SVO, and a student veteran spotlight campaign.
- Veterans & Military-Connected Appreciation Ceremony Dinner- "Honoring All Those Who Have Served" and with 100 military-connected students RSVP to our special family-friendly ceremony dinner. Keynote speakers for 2021 included the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs Director Lourdes E. 'Alfie' Alvarado-Ramos and our VCFA Vann Smiley.
- The 2022 SVA National Conference was supported by the previous year's SAF, Student Committee, and Community Events Funds. With our Military Career Specialist's support, 5 students attend cross-country events to network and seek career planning opportunities.
- 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 VMRC's Military Career Specialist organizes 13 joint- workshops during FY 2021-22 to provide resumes, cover letter reviews, interview preparation, and career guidance. UWT Student Veteran Organization (SVO), and the VIBE social events incorporate other departments and invite UWT members and families. They also integrate Mid-Term Pizza Break events inviting all students, Veterans, ROTC Cadets, friends, family, etc.
- The Gold Star Luminary Initiative along the Prairie Line Trail- Student Veteran Organization 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.
- 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 focuses 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. 76 military stoles were distributed for 2021 commencement. This event includes the graduates, current or former students, family, faculty, and staff.

COLLECTION OF FEEDBACK & IMPROVEMENTS

The VMRC uses a Husky ID card scanner and anonymous feedback on the quality of services and programming during social events. Since the center opened in February 2017, the chart attached to the proposal's supplemental documents reflects the various reasons.

Below is the VMRC' Statistic Data (quick view) of UWNetID Count of Visitors:

- AUT21 (Post COVID): 496 Students
- WI20-SUM21 (COVID): 5 Students
- WI20 (Pre COVID): 720 Students
- AUT19: 306 Students
- SPR19: 462 Students
- WIN19: 106 Students

The number of student visitors will continue to grow- widely due to our programs growing and the following services provided by the center:

- Quarterly meeting with the SVO to address student success, concerns, issues, campus climate, and brainstorm for future programming.
- SVO meeting 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 composed 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.
- The VMRC tracks services and programming with email and phone counts.
- Virtual/In-person meetings 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.

SERVICE BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

The most meaningful way our program benefits our students is the peace of mind it provides them from knowing that they have a fully engaged support system right on campus. The VMRC interacts with the full spectrum of military-connected students every day. Our advisors and staff address the concern and answer questions on various topics, including education benefits, health care, housing, employment, and more. Building a community where students know they can turn to any issue is invaluable. We know this by the significant increase in student engagement, participation in events, and feedback that we receive directly from the students.

"Now entering college and being faced with a huge responsibility, I couldn't be more grateful for the VMRC and your VA benefits. I'm a college freshman, easily confused by the concept of tuition and having no other experience dealing with military benefits or a paid education. Long story short, I was incredibly lost. I thought the application process to UWT was complicated; getting accepted seemed to be even worse! However, your team has helped me tremendously during this process and getting everything sorted out. I wouldn't be in the second quarter without your benefits and writing this letter!"

Address the students' basic needs and expectations reflect our retention and recruitment.

Autumn 2021:

- % of Military-Affiliated- 17.32
- % of St. with Veterans Benefits-11.69

Autumn 2020:

- % of Military-Affiliated-17.36
- % of St. with Veterans Benefits-10.26

Autumn 2019:

- % of Military-Affiliated-17.57
- % of St. with Veterans Benefits-10.00

For Autumn 2021, the VMRC processed 492 VA educational GI Bill benefits for Military Veterans and their dependents, 155 Washington state tuition waivers, 35 residencies, over 61 books, and supply vouchers for VR&E students. Including a variety of Parent Letters to and from other colleges and universities.

- The GI Bill programs help our Military-Connected students with their tuition and fees for professional certifications or graduate and undergraduate degrees.
- Full-time students qualify for housing and book stipends, which lowers students' time worrying over loans, finances, and expenses.
- The eligible servicemember may transfer all or part of their earned benefits to spouses and children.

More significant services included:

- Military-Connected Career Specialist assists students in career exploration and planning to guide them through the transition from higher education to the workplace. Assistance with resume, cover letter, networking, and other related topics to help prepare students for success.
- 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 Military-Connected Career Specialist) has gone beyond what is expected of him, often replying to my last-minute resume concerns almost immediately. I have directed other students to him for guidance, and he has delivered. I am confident with the help received, I can obtain my desired career after graduation." The word-of-mouth referrals by happy students promote these services. Our Specialist conducted over 122 appointments for 2021-22; the percentage change from his 2020 appointments of 43 is an increase of 183.72%.

Staff Budget Requests

| Category | Details | Amount Requested |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Professional Staff ¹ | VMRC's Program Operations Specialist will assist the department to support the transition of new military-connected students and their families by providing oversight of the PAVE program, supporting the initiatives of Student Affairs, and connecting with campus partners (See Supplemental Document) <small>E001</small> | |
| | | Professional Staff Wages: \$25,750 |
| | | Fringe ⁴ @ 29.4%: \$7,571 |
| | PERSONNEL TOTAL: | \$33,321 |

Other Budget Requests

| Category | Details | Amount Requested | |
|--|--|--|-----------------|
| Contracted Services | Veteran Appreciation Event- Photo Booth | S001 | \$700 |
| | Veteran Appreciation Dinner/Event- Venue | S002 | \$4,000 |
| | Memorial Day Remembrance Speaker, travel expenses, supplies, and display flags. | S003 | \$2,500 |
| Travel | SVA, NAVPA, & NASPA National and Regional Conferences registration fees, airlines tickets, hotels, travel expenses, and per diem | S004 | \$8,000 |
| Non-Food Supplies & Materials | 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 | \$8,000 |
| | US Stick flags, banners, and awareness signs (Veteran's Day, Memorial Day, Suicide Awareness, etc.) | 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 Shirt/vest/jacket (15 Student-Workers) | S012 | \$1,500 |
| | UWT VMRC Patches/Stickers | S013 | \$2,000 |
| | Military Family Month (April, May, & Nov.) event with refreshments | S014 | \$450 |
| | VMRC 5K/march/event Shirts (Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Veterans Day, etc.) | S015 | \$15,000 |
| | UWT VMRC Peer Advisors Notch Operator cap (15 Student-Workers) | S016 | \$500 |
| | Supplies for VMRC office (pens, paper, files, promotional items, utensils, ink, office maintenance, etc). | S017 | \$3,000 |
| | UWT VMRC Challenge Coins | S018 | \$1,000 |
| | 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. | S019 |
| UWT VMRC's Veterans Graduation Celebration -This event includes the graduates, current or former students, family, faculty, and staff | | S020 | \$1,000 |
| Memorial Day Remembrance event w/ keynote speaker and cater food for ceremony attendees included students, families, and UWT employees | | S021 | \$8,000 |
| Veterans Appreciation Cakes (For each of the 7 U.S. Military Birthdays) | | S022 | \$600 |
| VMRC ROTC Commissioning ceremony with food, music, refreshments | | S023 | \$200 |
| VMRC CSPI Commissioning ceremony with food, music, refreshments | | S024 | \$200 |
| U.S. Army War College Fellows Presentation Project with food, music, refreshments | | S025 | \$200 |
| Veteran Appreciation Dinner/Event- Catering | | S026 | \$6,000 |
| Equipment | Games and controllers for the VMRC Video Game Challenge events | S027 | \$540 |
| SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL: | | | \$69,290 |

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|---------------------------------|------------------|
| PERSONNEL TOTAL: | \$33,321 |
| SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL: | \$69,290 |
| COMPLETE PROPOSAL TOTAL: | \$102,611 |

Supplemental Documents



VMRC HEADCOUNT HISTORY

Student ID Card Scanner tracking the number of students utilizing the VMRC suite in TLB307A



AUT21 VMRC SID GRAPH

Husky ID card Check-in



VMRC FEEDBACK

2021-22 Student Feedback



VMRC PROGRAM OPERATIONS SPECIALIST

The roles and responsibilities of the VMRC program manager



SP21 PAVE PROGRESS REPORT

Peer Advisors for Veteran Education (PAVE) is a peer support program that works one-on-one with student Veterans or dependents transitioning into academic life.