

**BUDGET PROPOSAL CONTACT INFORMATION**

Department Name: Veteran & Military Resource Center

Create Date: 01/14/2026

Due Date: 02/06/2026

Submitter Name: Juanita Murillo Garcia

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Department Head Approval:

Department Head: Shannon Carr

Requested Amount: **\$124,394**

**Departmental Information**

**STUDENT UTILIZATION**

Student Activities Fee Committee (SAFC) funding directly supports the Veteran & Military Resource Center's (VMRC) mission to reduce barriers, improve persistence, and foster belonging for military-connected students at UW Tacoma, including veterans, service members, dependents, and survivors. These funds allow the VMRC to provide targeted, student-centered programming and services that address both academic and non-academic challenges unique to military-connected populations.

SAFC funding complements high-impact initiatives such as Peer Advisors for Veteran Education (PAVE) and institution-wide efforts recognized through UW Tacoma's Military Times *Best for Vets* designation. Through these integrated supports, students receive consistent guidance on education benefits, enrollment processes, financial assistance, and academic pathways, reducing confusion and delays that can negatively affect persistence.

Data reported through *Best for Vets* submissions demonstrate that military-connected students at UW Tacoma perform at or above institutional averages in GPA, course completion, retention, and persistence, reflecting the effectiveness of coordinated support structures. SAF-funded programs help sustain these outcomes by supporting peer engagement, transition programming, and community-building activities that reinforce academic momentum and connection.

By offsetting participation costs, supporting peer-led outreach, and maintaining inclusive spaces, SAF funding ensures equitable access to support and strengthens student success for a population that disproportionately balances work, family, and service-related responsibilities.

**CORE VALUES/MISSION ALIGNMENT**

VMRC SAF-funded programs and services align closely with UW Tacoma's strategic priorities, particularly those centered on access, belonging, student success, and community engagement. The VMRC advances the university's commitment to equity by supporting a population that often navigates complex institutional systems while balancing service-related, financial, and family responsibilities.

Our work directly supports strategic goals related to student retention and timely degree completion by reducing administrative and informational barriers tied to education benefits, enrollment, and campus navigation. Through proactive outreach, peer support, and coordinated programming, the VMRC helps students connect to academic advising, financial aid, disability resources, and wellness services, contributing to indicators such as persistence, credit momentum, and graduation rates.

The VMRC also aligns with UW Tacoma's emphasis on belonging and holistic student development. SAF-funded community-building and leadership programs foster meaningful peer connections, promote civic engagement, and encourage students to participate fully in campus life. These efforts support success indicators related to student engagement, sense of belonging, and participation in co-curricular learning.

Finally, the VMRC advances the strategic plan's focus on partnerships and regional impact by collaborating with campus offices and community partners, including student organizations, academic units, and external veteran-serving organizations. Through this alignment, SAF-funded VMRC programming contributes to a coordinated, inclusive, and student-centered campus ecosystem.

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

For the current year, the VMRC's SAF-funded program goals focus on three primary areas: (1) improving access to information and resources, (2) strengthening community and belonging, and (3) supporting student persistence and leadership development.

Key goals include increasing student participation in VMRC programs, expanding peer-led engagement opportunities, and strengthening cross-campus collaboration to reduce duplication and improve service coordination. SAF-funded initiatives include orientation and transition programming for new military-connected students, benefit and academic navigation workshops, wellness and community-building events, and leadership and advocacy opportunities connected to student organizations and civic engagement.

Outcomes data to date indicate steady growth in program participation and increased engagement across multiple touchpoints, including events, advising referrals, and peer interactions. Students report greater awareness of campus resources, increased confidence navigating university systems, and stronger connections to peers and staff.

Collaboration is central to the VMRC's approach. SAF-funded programs are developed and delivered in partnership with offices such as Financial Aid, Admissions, Advising, the Center for Equity and Inclusion, Student Health Services, Counseling Services, and student-led organizations including the Student Veterans Organization (SVO). These collaborations enhance program quality, expand reach, and ensure services are integrated into the broader student support infrastructure.

The VMRC also collaborates with Advancement, external partners, and community organizations to supplement SAF resources, extend program impact, and connect students to regional opportunities. Together, these efforts support a cohesive, sustainable model of student support that aligns with institutional priorities and student needs.

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

The VMRC serves a substantial and growing population of UW Tacoma students each year. SAF-funded programs and services reach hundreds of unduplicated students annually through advising referrals, workshops, events, peer engagement, and community activities.

Utilization trends are informed by multiple data sources, including PAVE interaction logs and institutional reporting submitted as part of the Military Times *Best for Vets* survey. These data reflect consistent engagement by military-connected students across academic years and demonstrate strong academic outcomes when compared to non-military-connected peers.

Institutional data reported through *Best for Vets* indicate that military-connected undergraduate students achieve comparable or higher GPAs than non-military-connected students, with baccalaureate military-connected students reporting a combined GPA of approximately 3.55. Course completion rates for military-connected undergraduates exceed 88%, and persistence and retention rates remain strong across undergraduate and graduate populations.

Students served by the VMRC include veterans, active-duty and reserve service members, National Guard members, dependents, and survivors. Demographic trends reflect a diverse population across age, race and ethnicity, gender identity, academic level, and college affiliation. A significant proportion of students served identify as first-generation college students, adult learners, students with dependents, and students balancing employment alongside coursework.

The VMRC tracks unduplicated students and demographic patterns to ensure SAF-funded programs remain equitable, responsive, and aligned with demonstrated student needs. Supplemental reports and data tables are provided as attachments where appropriate.

### COLLECTION OF FEEDBACK & IMPROVEMENTS

The VMRC uses multiple assessment and feedback mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of SAF-funded programs and services. These include event sign-in sheets, digital registration and attendance tracking, advising referral logs, PAVE interaction data, and post-event surveys.

Student feedback is collected through informal conversations, structured surveys, focus groups, and partner feedback from collaborating campus offices. Participation and engagement data are reviewed regularly to identify trends related to timing, access, and student needs.

Data-informed improvement example: Review of PAVE interaction logs and post-event feedback indicated that students were more likely to engage in benefit and academic navigation support when services were embedded within existing campus events and offered during mid-day and early evening hours. In response, the VMRC adjusted program scheduling, increased co-sponsored events with partner offices, and expanded peer-led outreach during high-traffic periods. Subsequent attendance data showed increased participation and repeat engagement, particularly among first-year and transfer military-connected students.

Assessment data are also used to refine communication strategies, strengthen cross-campus referrals, and prioritize programs that demonstrate the greatest impact on student engagement and persistence. This continuous improvement approach ensures SAF-funded resources are used effectively and remain responsive to evolving student needs.

**SERVICE BENEFITS TO STUDENTS**

The most meaningful impact of VMRC SAF-funded programs and services is their role in sustaining strong academic outcomes while reducing barriers and fostering a sense of belonging for military-connected students. This impact is reflected both in student feedback and in institutional performance data.

Data reported through the Military Times *Best for Vets* survey show that military-connected students at UW Tacoma demonstrate high levels of academic success, including strong GPAs, high course completion rates, and persistence and retention rates that meet or exceed those of non-military-connected students. These outcomes suggest that coordinated supports, including SAF-funded programming, PAVE peer advising, and VMRC services, play a critical role in helping students navigate complex systems and maintain academic momentum.

Qualitative feedback further reinforces this impact. Students consistently report that the VMRC serves as a trusted entry point to the university, providing clarity around benefits, reducing administrative stress, and creating a welcoming community where students feel recognized and supported. Peer-led engagement, transition programming, and collaborative events help students build social capital and confidence, particularly during key transition points such as enrollment, benefit certification, and degree planning.

Beyond individual student outcomes, SAF-funded VMRC programs strengthen institutional capacity by increasing awareness of military-connected student experiences and embedding best practices across campus offices. This dual impact, supporting individual student success while reinforcing institutional effectiveness, demonstrates the meaningful and measurable value of SAF investment in the VMRC.

**Staff Budget Requests**

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Classified Staff <sup>2</sup>	<b>Counseling Services Coordinator- Peer Advisors for Veteran Education (PAVE) Program</b> E001	
	Classified Staff Wages:	<b>\$42,033</b>
	Fringe @ 32.5%:	<b>\$13,661</b>
	PERSONNEL TOTAL:	<b>\$55,694</b>

## Other Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Contracted Services	Venue for UW Tacoma's Annual Veterans Day Ceremony and Dinner	S001 \$5,000
	Venue for UW Tacoma's Military Connected + Alumni and Dinner	S002 \$5,000
Other Services	Uniform sweatshirts, nametags, ect for staff.	S003 \$4,100
Travel	Conference and Travel Spending fund allotted to cover expenses for Travel, Lodging, and/or Registration for conferences for currently enrolled students.	S004 \$15,000
	Salute to Service game shuttle bus (Tailgate & Game Nov2026)	S005 \$2,500
Non-Food Supplies & Materials	Budget for office supplies and non-food items for microwave kitchenette.	S006 \$1,600
	Marketing and outreach materials, branding, event flyers, training materials, and office supplies	S007 \$2,000
	Military stoles for graduates, military spouses, and dependents.	S008 \$10,000
	VMRC Holiday events, prizes, and seasonal decorations	S009 \$2,000
Food	Trainings, workshops and social events, welcome receptions, mid/end of the year celebration, open houses	S010 \$2,000
	Catering for UW Tacoma's Annual Veterans Day Ceremony and Dinner	S011 \$15,000
	UW Tacoma VMRC's Veterans Graduation Celebration/ Dinner	S012 \$4,000
Equipment	Electronics, software, and fees	S013 \$500
SUPPLIMENTAL TOTAL:		\$68,700

PERSONNEL TOTAL:	\$55,694
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:	\$68,700
<b>COMPLETE PROPOSAL TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$124,394</b>

## Supplemental Documents