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The Office of Veteran Affairs at the University of Florida would like to welcome you to the August edition of our Monthly Veterans Newsletter.

-UF VA TEAM



Fall Certification Update

You may now request certification for Fall 2009. If you are eligible to receive GI Bill Benefits as a veteran or as a dependant, you must fill out an Enrollment Certification Request in order to receive your benefits. Please stop by 222 Criser Hall, or go to <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/va/PostCert.pdf> if you have applied and been approved for Post-9/11 GI Bill, or <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/va/GeneralCert.pdf> for any other category.

Are You Eligible For Post-9/11 GI Bill?

Veterans who served on active duty, other than for training, for more than 90 aggregate days *after* September 10, 2001, may be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill, also known as Chapter 33. Veterans who were honorably discharged for a service-connected disability after serving 30 days post 09/10/01 may also be eligible for Chapter 33 benefits. Dependants are only eligible for transferred entitlement if their spouse or parent veteran has served at least six years *after* September 10, 2001, and commits to at least four more years of service, or has already served 10 years on active duty. For more details, please visit http://www.gibill.va.gov/GI_Bill_Info/CH33/Post-911.htm.

Post-9/11 Housing Stipend Overview: How It Works

The VA will pay the qualified portion of the student's tuition and fees directly to the school, but the housing and book stipends will be sent to the student. The housing allowance for Gainesville is currently \$1,290 a month. However, the VA will **not** pay the housing stipend if:

- You are on active duty
- You are enrolled at ½-time or less
- You are enrolled in an exclusively online program. You must be enrolled, every semester, in at least one course that meets in a physical classroom (50 minutes) per week per semester hour or two class sessions every other week per semester hour

Are You Aware of All Your Benefits?

There are many benefits offered by the Department of Veterans' Affairs that you may be unaware of. These benefits include:

- Free medical coverage at the VA Hospital for up to five years after discharge for all OIF and OEF veterans
- Low-cost medical coverage (for non-OIF and OEF veterans) and pharmacy at the VA Hospital
- Disability and service-related injury compensation
- VA Home Loan Guarantee, where the VA will guarantee your loan to your lender, often lowering rates and may even waive the requirement for a down payment
- Life Insurance- you can convert your SGLI into VGLI, a low-cost life insurance policy
- Work-study opportunities

The Florida Department of Veterans Affairs (FDVA) also offers some benefits for which you may qualify. The FDVA's benefits brochure can be found at: <http://www.floridavets.org/pdf/fvbg.pdf>. For more information on any of these benefits, please stop by the office in order to be directed to the appropriate locations.

Dependant Benefits-Scholarships and CHAMPVA

The State of Florida provides scholarships for dependants of veterans who have died as a result of service-related injuries or disabilities, as well as dependants of veterans with a disability rating of 100%. Applicants must submit a completed Florida Financial Aid Application by April 1; ensure that the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs certifies the applicant's eligibility. The scholarship pays for tuition and fees for up to two semesters a year, up to 132 credit hours. For more information go to <http://www.sfa.ufl.edu/programs/childrenof.html>

The Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) is a program in which the VA shares the cost of covered health care services and supplies with eligible beneficiaries. Please note that this is not the TRICARE program in which dependants of active duty or retired military are eligible. However, in some cases, you may be eligible for both programs on paper. Please visit the following website for more comprehensive information:

<http://www.va.gov/hac/forbeneficiaries/champva/champva.asp>

Collegiate Veterans Society Preparing For New Year

The University of Florida's Collegiate Veterans Society (CVS) is gearing up for another year. Last year, CVS completed the Veterans Memorial at the Green Pond at Reitz Union and held the dedication ceremony for the Memorial. CVS also helped start the Jonathan Cote and Ehren Murburg Veterans Bridge Scholarships, and advocated student-veterans' concerns to eight US Congressmen in Washington, DC.

This fall we will be helping run the Bikers on Parade event in November. Also, we are in the process of organizing our biannual veterans retreat, a deep-sea fishing trip on August 29, 2009. Funds have been approved, so please contact an officer of CVS if you are interested. You can access us through our

Facebook group, stop by the Office of Veterans Affairs (two of our officers work in the office), or through email. Emails are provided below.

The Collegiate Veterans Society is open to all veterans and anyone who is pro-veteran. Not only do we promote our veterans and the school through these projects, but we provide an outlet for veterans who would like to meet other veterans, or who are looking for help in transitioning to school life. If you would like more information, contact one of the officers.

Student Veteran Organizations

Collegiate Veterans Society

Meeting Time: Fridays at 12:00 p.m.

Meeting Place: Tigert Hall, 2nd floor Conference Room. Please be on time. Normally, we meet at the Office of Veterans Affairs about 15-20 minutes before hand and head to Tigert Hall.

Contact: Justin Levine, President jblevine@ufl.edu

Ernesto Rencel, Vice President enrencel@ufl.edu

Andres Martinez-Alegria, Secretary and Treasurer kubeenyets@ufl.edu

<http://grove.ufl.edu/~veterans>

Omega Delta Sigma – Veterans Fraternity

Meeting Time: Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m.

Meeting Place: ROTC Building, 2nd Floor

Contact: Ben R. Farias farias1@ufl.edu

<http://grove.ufl.edu/~omegadel>

For archived newsletters, please visit: <http://registrar.ufl.edu/va/news.html>