Recently you may have received a message stating that your account was placed on a “VSS Hold”. First let me state that this hold will in not affect your priority registration. I will explain more about this hold in detail, but apologize that this was not communicated to you prior to the hold being placed.

Part of your responsibility as a VA Education beneficiary is to keep our office informed of any changes to program or classes – either drop or add. What we found is that a majority of our students are dropping, adding classes or changing their program (Major) without informing our office which, at times, is either causing a under payment or debt to the student. Another issue is when students mobilize or feel they are getting ready to mobilize. This hold ensures they are coming through our office so they can out process from the University and offices (such as Financial Assistance, Bursar, Registrar and Advisor) completely to ensure a smooth transition back when they decide to return.

To combat this, we have placed holds on our student Veteran accounts so that you come to us and inform our office of the changes you need to make. It is not our intent to prevent any change; it is only a means to keep your account with the VA current and to advise you of any payment changes as a result. We want you to be informed at all times. This is the same type of hold our University uses with its athletes.

This hold will be placed each semester on the Monday after the 100% drop/add period (typically the first full week of class) and extend until the Friday before Priority Registration begins. I appreciate your patience and look forward hearing your concerns.

In Evansville the Echo Housing Corporation hosted ‘House a Hero Family Affair’ Saturday morning at the National Guard Armory.

It’s a program geared towards housing homeless veterans reintegrating into the labor force.

The event included demonstrations, refreshments, and even displays of old military vehicles and artifacts.

This fundraiser was just a piece of what ECHO is doing to support homeless veterans.

ECHO has started the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program that helps homeless veterans with housing and supportive services.

The goal is to help veterans with long term employment and self-sufficiency.

The funds raised from events will go toward renovating the James Bethel Gresham Memorial Home here in Evansville.

The historical home will become transitional housing for ECHO’s homeless veterans programs.

The home was built in honor of Gresham who was the first American soldier to have died in World War I.

"We’ve already enrolled over 200 veterans in the program since we’ve had it," says ECHO Executive Housing Director Stephanie Tenbarge. "And the goal is to get employment for 48 each year and we're on our third year and we've exceeded that goal. We don't have any problem getting the veterans getting the housing is the piece that becomes a bit of a challenge."

Saturday's event alone raised over $40,000 and Saturday night Wal-mart State Giving Program awarded a $50,000 grant at the House A Hero Gala Event for the Housing Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program.

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**QUESTIONS REMAIN ON VSS HOLDS**

**VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3**

**DECEMBER**
- 2 — Am Legion Post 324 Meeting — VSS Office
- 11-17 — FINALS
- 17-18 — STAR Behavioral Health Ph II — Carter Hall
- HOLIDAY BREAK 18 Dec — 11 Jan

**FALL 2014**

**JANUARY**
- 6 — AL Post 324 Meeting
- 8-11 — SVA National Conference — San Antonio, TX
- 12-16 — Proposed O:JRV VETS Course
- 19 — Martin Luther King Day — No Classes — MLK Campus Celebration

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**ECHO HOSTS EVENT FOR HOMELESS VETERANS — BY NATALIE RUSSELL, REPORTER, WFEI**

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VA SECRETARY ADDRESSES ALL VETERANS

An Open Letter to America’s Veterans

At the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), we have one of the most noble and inspiring missions in Government. I accepted this job and joined this mission to better serve you—our Veterans—and improve the delivery of the care and benefits you have earned. It is our privilege to serve you, and I have made clear that as we move forward as a Department, we will judge the success of all our efforts against a single metric—the outcomes we provide for Veterans.

The Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (VACAA), enacted less than 3-months ago, goes a long way toward enabling VA to meet the demand for Veterans health care in the short-term. VA has put considerable focus and attention on ensuring the law is implemented seamlessly, without confusion, and without creating hardships for Veterans. This legislation provides authorities, funding, and other tools to better serve Veterans in the short-term. We are appreciative of this temporary measure to improve access while we build capacity within the VA system to better serve those who rely on us for health care.

From June 1 to September 30, 2014, VA completed more than 19 million Veteran appointments in our facilities and made nearly 1.1 million authorizations for Veterans to receive care in the private sector and other non-VA health facilities—a 46.6-percent increase over the same period in 2013. This was all done under existing programs prior to the passage of VACAA, and sets the stage for strengthening existing partnerships between VA and the private sector. We have much we can share with one another to the benefit of Veterans.

VA has signed contracts with two private health care companies to help VA administer the Veterans Choice Program (Choice Program) under VACAA. The Choice Program is a new, temporary benefit allowing some Veterans to receive health care in their communities rather than waiting for a VA appointment or traveling to a VA facility. It does not impact your existing VA health care or any other VA benefit you may be receiving. We will begin implementing this benefit on November 5, as required by law. A call center is now operational to answer your questions and verify your eligibility for this program.

As part of this new program, we are issuing a Veterans Choice Card to every Veteran who is potentially eligible for the new, temporary health benefit. The Choice Card allows Veterans to elect to receive care outside of VA when they qualify for the new program based on the distance of their residence from a VA care facility, or when wait times for VA health care exceed the standards established in law. The Choice Card does not replace the identification card you already use to access other VA benefits; please do not throw away that identification card.

SCA OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES IN THE VETERANS FIRE CORPS

The Student Conservation Association (SCA) Veterans Fire Corps with your veterans network. The Veterans Fire Corps has given over 130 military veterans the opportunity to continue to answer the call to service, while providing participants with essential training, credentials, and experience to competitively pursue careers in wildland fire and forestry— with no cost to participants.

During 2015, in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, SCA will offer expense-paid programs for Post-9/11 veterans in which members will:

- Work actively in the outdoors
- We anticipate more programming at various times and locations in both National Forests and National Parks throughout 2015, and our Veterans Programs webpage will reflect those upcoming opportunities as they become available.

For more information, contact Jarrod Ball Operations Director, Conservation Corps, Student Conservation Association (SCA) at recruiting@thesca.org or 603-543-1700 x1499
RAYTHEON SCHOLARSHIPS HELP VETERANS PURSUE STEM CAREERS

Washington, D.C. -- Raytheon Company and Student Veterans of America awarded three $10,000 scholarships to military veterans studying cybersecurity and engineering, and also opened applications for a new scholarship being offered to Army student veterans.

The Raytheon/SVA scholarship, now in its second year, marks the organizations’ shared mission to help veterans succeed in civilian life through the study of science, technology, engineering and math. The new scholarship, called the Raytheon Patriot scholarship, will provide $10,000 to two Army student veterans pursuing graduate or undergraduate degrees at accredited universities, and who demonstrate leadership in their local communities.

"We appreciate Raytheon's ongoing support of our efforts to empower student veterans, and we've found three uniquely talented people among a field of excellent applicants," said D. Wayne Robinson, President and CEO of Student Veterans of America. "These scholarships will help them build upon the expertise and training they received while serving their country and pursue careers that are successful and rewarding.”

Army veterans interested in the Raytheon Patriot scholarship can apply on the Student Veterans of America website. The application process will close February 1, 2015.

ARMY RESERVE ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Army Reserve Association (ARA) announced its Scholarship Award Program for 2014-2015.

The ARA will award 50, $1,000 scholarships to deserving Army Reserve Soldiers or their dependents based upon applications submitted and verified by their Command Sergeant Major.

The qualifications are:

- Enlisted member of the USAR not under flag
- MOS qualified in position of assignment
- Attending a regionally or nationally accredited 2-4 year college or vocational school. (Graduate school is not eligible)
- Dependents registered in DEERS may apply if the sponsor meets all the qualifications.

To apply, applications must submit the following documents:
- ARA Scholarship Soldier or Dependent Information Sheet
- ARA Scholarship Form
- Soldier or Dependent Consideration Letter
- Proof of current enrollment on school letterhead
- MSC Letter of Recommendation by the Command Sergeant Major

Packets should be submitted electronically by the MSC CSM to ARA Scholarship Letters of Recommendation by the Command Sergeant Major.

For more information, contact COL (Ret) George Lind at collind@armyreserve.org and Mr. Gregory Pratt at gpratt@usaa.com

SVA—RAYTHEON PATRIOT SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Student Veterans of America and Raytheon Integrated Defense Systems have partnered to provide a scholarship to veterans pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree at an accredited four-year college or university. The Raytheon Patriot Scholarship will support U.S Army student veterans. This partnership will enable returning soldiers to pursue their education goals and position them for success in civilian professions.

The 2015 Raytheon Patriot Scholarship application will open November 11, 2014 and remain open until February 1, 2015 at 11:59 PM Eastern Standard Time. Student veterans must complete an online application, answer three (3) essay questions, attach the required documents, and have one letter of reference be submitted prior to the deadline to be considered.

Funding
Two (2) $10,000 scholarships will be awarded annually to promote collegiate level studies to a deserving U.S. Army veteran.

Eligibility
All successful candidates must:
- Be entering their sophomore, junior or senior year of undergraduate study, or be enrolled in a graduate program for the 2015-2016 academic year
- Be attending full-time at an accredited four-year college or university in the United States
- Demonstrate a commitment to and passion for their chosen field of study
- Demonstrate leadership and engagement in their community
- Be a current student veteran, as proven by a DD 214 and transcript
- Have received an honorable discharge, or be in good standing with his/her branch of service

Essay
Please provide answers to the following three essay questions (maximum of 300-500 words per essay). Your word document should include your name and clearly specify each answer by number.

1. What do you hope to accomplish with your degree? In your answer, please describe how your experiences have influenced the goals you have for yourself.
2. Briefly describe what it means to you to have served in the U.S Army. Provide information if your assignment included service as part of a Patriot unit.
3. Please provide an example of how you have demonstrated leadership. Explain how you were influential and what you were trying to achieve. These need not be demonstrated through formal or traditional leadership roles. Think broadly and examine the many ways you are having an effect on the members of your technical community, your chapter, your university, or your broader community.

Letters of Reference
You must arrange for one letter of reference be emailed directly to SVA at scholarships@studentveterans.org. The email should contain in the subject, "Raytheon Patriot Scholarship Letter of Reference for (Provide Your Name)”. Letters can also be mailed to:

Student Veterans of America
 c/o Raytheon-SVA Scholarship Committee
1625 K Street NW Suite 320
Washington, DC  20006

All letters of recommendation must be sent by the author, signed by the author, and be on official letterhead.

Additional Materials
A complete application must include:
- Current copy of your Resume or Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Unofficial copy of current university transcript updated for the most recently completed semester
- One letter of reference from a professor, adviser or supervisor
- Responses to the three (3) essay questions
- DD 214, Certificate of Discharge

Questions
Should you have any questions, or experience any problems, please send an email to contact@studentveterans.org so an SVA team member may help you.
Since 1998, Community Marriage Builders has addressed the issue of families falling apart in our community. With healthy marriage serving as the foundation for stable families, CMB is working to build strong marriages and reduce divorce by providing marriage enrichment programs in southwest Indiana. CMB offers this advice for the holiday season:

The holiday season can be so crazy with family, decorations, parties, shopping, and everything else you may feel like deck the halls or rocking the Christmas tree. This year the challenge is to find the calm. Look for moments that you can spend with your spouse that don’t involve tinsel or toys, plans or parties. Need some help? Try one of these with your spouse:

- **Build a fire**, make some cocoa and listen to the crackle.
- **Take a quiet drive to look at the lights in a different neighborhood.**
- **Bundle up and take a walk in a park (staying close will help you stay warm).**
- **Ditch one of your Christmas parties and watch a movie instead.**
- **Go out for a fancy dinner instead of making one.**

The holidays should be a time that bring you closer together not farther apart or stressed out. If you want to “find the calm” this year it might mean you have to sacrifice a tradition or change the “game plan”. In the end your marriage and your sanity are worth it. This year, make sure your holiday includes at least one silent night.

For more information on FREE marriage programs offered by CMB, contact Judy Rueger, Participant Recruiter at 812-477-2260 / 1-800-443-8594 or judy@makeitlast.org

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**COMMUNITY MARRIAGE BUILDERS HELPS FAMILIES SEE THE BIG PICTURE**

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**VFW FIGHTS FOR VETERANS’ IN-STATE TUITION — VFW MAGAZINE**

For the last few months, the VFW has been out in force on Capitol Hill calling for equitable tuition for student-veterans attending public schools, testifying before both the House and Senate on this hot-button issue that affects more than 40,000 veterans on college campuses around the country.

In 2008, the Post-9/11 GI Bill was passed with the intention of allowing Iraq and Afghanistan-era veterans to go to college for free at the public school of their choice. In its current form, veterans are entitled to receive up to the full cost of in-state tuition and fees to attend a public college or university. Unfortunately, Student Veterans of America reports that four out of five student-veterans attending public schools cannot attend at the in-state rate because their military service prevents them from satisfying strict state residency requirements for college tuition purposes.

To the VFW, the best solution is to offer in-state tuition to GI Bill-eligible veterans at public schools regardless of residency status. To accomplish this, the VFW has put its full support behind the ** GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013**, which is H.R. 357 in the House and S. 257 in the Senate. Learn more about the VFW’s most recent testimony in support of the Gi Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013. The VFW has seen recent glaring examples of this issue in Virginia and North Carolina, where school systems sought to deny in-state tuition to military veterans who had made a concerted effort to establish residency in those states, but failed to meet strict interpretations of in-state residency requirements. The VFW believes that the North Carolina incident, specifically, was not a malicious act on the part of the higher education system, but rather a sad consequence of an archaic policy that left no legal wiggle room for administrators to make a sensible exception.

Critics have said that legislation extending in-state tuition for veterans would set a dangerous precedent for other non-resident students utilizing federal aid programs. The VFW vehemently disagrees with this notion. Military service members and military veterans are the only cohort of Americans who cannot reasonably satisfy residency requirements for in-state tuition because of circumstances beyond their control. Recognizing these unique circumstances, service members are already offered this reasonable accommodation when using military Tuition Assistance at public schools through the **Higher Education Authorization Act**. However, once a service member leaves the military, this protection goes away.

Eleven states already offer in-state tuition to veterans, eight states offer conditional waivers for veterans in certain circumstances, and 16 states have legislation pending. Of the states that have passed in-state tuition initiatives for veterans, both Republican and Democrat state leaders have all agreed that the financial benefits for the state far outweigh the illusory financial burdens that some in higher education believe would be detrimental to institutional budgets—particularly since graduates of public colleges and universities traditionally pursue careers close to their alma mater.

The **GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013** ensures that public colleges and universities offer in-state tuition to all veterans or forfeit their eligibility to participate in GI Bill programs. The VFW believes all public schools must offer a reasonably-priced education to incoming student-veterans who have no realistic way to satisfy residency requirements because of prior military commitments, which is why our advocates will be out in force over the next few months to build support for the bill.
Suppose "David" - not a real person - was a project manager for a hardware manufacturer on the California Peninsula when he was laid off in July 2010. He was relieved, because he wasn't sure he wanted to spend the rest of his life in high tech. But when David, 37, entered my office 18 months later, he was still unemployed - and now scared. To help David find a job he truly wanted, I took him through my Seven Steps. **Step 1:** Decide if you are willing to embrace a simpler lifestyle to increase your career options. David's wife wanted to buy a home, and David wanted a new SUV. I told him that if he were willing to forego the Bay Area home, he would have more career options to explore. He said he wanted to consider those options. **Step 2:** Identify your career nonnegotiables. David decided that the things he absolutely needed in a job were working for a good cause, the opportunity to be persuasive and a short commute. I told David to convey his nonnegotiables to everyone, from his parents' friends to his college alumni. One of the alums suggested he become a fund-raising specialist. David liked the idea. **Step 3:** Use time effectively to train for your new job or career. The alum suggested that David get a master's in public administration. However, I urged him to consider foregoing State U for what I call "You U," where you select one or two experts in the field and ask, "What should I read? What workshops should I attend? Would you mind if I watched you work?" **Step 4:** Do an intense, two-week job search. Most people who do their job searches sporadically, perhaps answering one ad per week and telling close friends they're looking, are unlikely to succeed. By compressing your job search into two weeks, you're more likely to: Implement it, since you can endure almost anything that will be over in two weeks. Receive encouragement within the first few days, because you're making many more inquiries. Receive multiple job offers at the same time. In Week 1, I asked David to apply for 10 jobs for which he was qualified. I also asked him to tell his networking contacts that he was looking for a fund-raising job in the East Bay and to ask if they knew someone he should talk with. Finally, I asked David to identify 20 East Bay nonprofits he'd be excited to work for, email them a cover letter and then follow up with a phone call. Within a month of his two-week job search, he received two job offers. **Step 5:** Negotiate wisely. When David got an offer to upgrade the fund-raising operation of a small East Bay private school, I told him to delay negotiating and say, "I'm pleased you're offering me the job. Can we set up an appointment to discuss terms in a few days? In the meantime, I'm fortunate enough to have another job offer, so can I speak with a prospective coworker or two? I want to get a better feel for the position." This approach strengthened David's position and gave him a chance to get a sense of the most he could reasonably negotiate for and to gauge whether he even wanted the job. **Step 6:** Make the job fit you. For a career to really work, you must tailor and accessorize it as you would a suit. We next determined how David could tailor this job to his strengths. While he had database skills, he preferred the one-on-one work of cultivating donors. He got the school's head to agree to outsource the database work so he could spend more time with potential donors. **Step 7:** Always look forward. Despite landing a better-fitting job, David still resented being laid off. I told David about my father, a Holocaust survivor. My father rarely discussed the Holocaust and never with bitterness. When I asked him why, he said, "The Nazis took five years from me. They won't get one minute more." If he can resist looking back bitterly, we all can.

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**I AM THE AMERICAN LEGION—BILL CZMYR**

"Veterans Need a Place to Live"

Bill Czmyr doesn’t take no for an answer, especially when he’s working on behalf of veterans. His post — Post 15 in Jewett City, Conn. — was forced to close in 1993. That Memorial Day, he placed flowers on veterans’ graves, working with another member who complained that no one was around to raise the colors. That’s all Czmyr needed to hear. He immediately began to revitalize the post, raise money to erase its debt, and repaint the building inside and out. "Some said, ‘Bill, you are going to need a miracle,’” says Czmyr of the post, which reopened in 1995. "They used to laugh. When we were about to open, I said, ‘Hey, about that miracle ....’ And thanks to Czmyr and others, 18 once-homeless veterans live in individual, two-room furnished apartments in a building attached to the post. They have access to medical care, shopping and a public library. The residents, many of whom were homeless for a decade or longer, are grateful for their new home and what Czmyr’s post has done for them, calling it a blessing. “I always say that I like to help veterans,” he says. “It was the most logical thing to do. Veterans need a place to live.” - Steve Brooks, American Legion Magazine

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**BECOME A MEMBER OF THE ON-CAMPUS AMERICAN LEGION POST 324**

The American Legion conducts many major programs and is a good way to remain active with your comrades in arms. Our Legionnaires participate in many community activities and is one of two on a college campus in Indiana. Like everything else, it lives off of participation and your help is needed. Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month. Contact Pete Snowden, Post 324 commander at alpost324@yahoo.com.
Jennifer Greene of the Reference & Archives in Rice Library is looking for a few good men and women to serve as Student Assistance in the University Archives and Special Collections for 10-12 hours per week, Monday—Friday. Students would assist in providing materials for students, staff and the general public, returning and re-helving books, manuscripts, photographs, and other material, filling out and preparing reports and scanning photographs, documents, and other material. Interested students should have strong organizational skills and attention to detail, good communication and customer service skills as well as self-motivation. Contact Jennifer Greene at (812) 464-1832 for more information.

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Student Veterans Wanted: New Opportunities for Employment On

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Crossroads Veteran Services
Helping Veterans Thrive

Easter Seals Crossroads
5th Floor • 4740 Kingsway Drive • Indianapolis, IN

Focus on Veterans
A Military and Veteran Series of Events

Silouan Green
US Marine Corps Veteran | Speaker | Writer
Wednesday, December 3, 2014 • 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Easter Seals Crossroads
5th Floor • 4740 Kingsway Drive • Indianapolis, IN

If you missed the opportunity to hear Silouan at the 2013 Battlemind conference, this is the chance for you to learn more about PTSD and depression. Silouan educates audiences with workshop presentations as he shares details about his personal journey overcoming adversity.

Silouan will have materials available for purchase at the conclusion of his workshop.

For reservations to this limited seating, free event, RSVP to veteranservices@eastersealcrossroads.org or call 317.466.1000 x2018

The Indianapolis Veteran Job Fair is in 30 Days!

Hello Marina,

Plan on attending the RecruitMilitary Indianapolis Veteran Job Fair, and join the ranks of thousands of veterans who have found new careers at over 500 events since 2006.

Many veteran-friendly employers and organizations will be in attendance offering a great variety of job and career opportunities exclusively for veterans and their spouses. Attending this event will give you valuable face-to-face time with company recruiters.