

RESOURCES FOR VETERANS

▶ **Make the Connection – VA's mental health outreach campaign**

<http://maketheconnection.net>

MakeTheConnection.net is a one-stop, video-rich website where Veterans and their loved ones can privately explore information on and watch personal Veteran and Service member testimonials about health and life challenges. Make the Connection is also on Facebook and YouTube.

▶ **Online Guide to Veteran Education Benefits by Accredited Online Colleges**

<http://www.accreditedonlinecolleges.org/resources/veteran-continuing-ed/>

▶ **FREE Nationally Accredited Online Trainings**

<http://www.aheconnect.com/citizensoldier/courses.asp>

▶ **VA offers assistance to vets with subprime mortgages**

Veterans with conventional home loans now have new options for refinancing to a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) guaranteed home loan. These new options are available as a result of the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2008. It will allow the VA to assist a substantial number of veterans with subprime mortgages by refinancing into a safer, more affordable VA guaranteed loan. As a result of the new law, VA can now assist veterans in refinancing their subprime or conventional mortgage up to 100 percent of the value of the property. These loans were previously limited to 90 percent of the value. For more information please visit <http://www.makinghomeaffordable.gov>.

▶ **American Legion offers scholarships, booklet on their Web site**

The American Legion has scholarship information on their Web site - www.legion.org - including the 152-page booklet, Need a Lift, which is a complete financial aid reference guide for veterans, family members and the American Legion family. When you get on the site, click on "Scholarship Information" in the "Useful Links" block.

▶ **Web site provides support to separating military members**

TurboTAP (Transition Assistance Program) is an easy to use, interactive Web portal that provides life-long support to separating military service members (Active Duty, Guard and Reserve) and their families. It is a single source starting point for accessing key resources available for service members transitioning out of the military at any point in their military career. Resources include Department of Defense, Department of Labor, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Education, Small Business Administration, the National Veterans Corporation and the National Guard Bureau. For more information go to www.TurboTAP.org or email TAPHelp@military-inc.com.

▶ **Monmouth University looking for volunteers for veterans program**

Monmouth University is looking for volunteers to help launch its Yellow Ribbon Mentorship Program to help student-veterans as they pursue their degrees at the West Long Branch university. Paul Gaffney, the university president a retired U.S. Navy vice admiral, said he envisions the mentorship program as an extra benefit to students who are attending the school using the Post- 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008. Although the tuition assistance provided under the act is substantial, Gaffney wants the university to also be able to respond to all of the needs of their student-veterans. The volunteers could assist university staff with needs such as job networking, fellowship, and family help.

Gaffney believes students who have served in the military would benefit from having mentors who are veterans. If you live in the general vicinity of Monmouth University, and are interested in volunteering or finding out more...please contact program coordinator Jose Siandre at Jose.Siandre@glacialenergy.com.

▶ **Always A Soldier**

Sergeant First Class Ray Davis was preparing for what he thought was the end of his military career five years ago. After 20 years of service, Davis was at his last duty station in Fort Knox, KY preparing for life as a civilian when the Army came calling again.

Through the US Army Materiel Command's (AMC) Always a Soldier Program, Davis was recruited to work for the Software Engineering Center's Software Assurance Division at Fort Monmouth, NJ.

Always a Soldier is an AMC-based employment initiative for disabled Soldiers who have completed their service to the Nation in uniform but wish to stay in the fight through employment at AMC.

"The program's goal is to provide Veterans with opportunities for career advancement, job mobility, family well-being and greater financial security while continuing to support their fellow Warfighters," said Debra Coleman, Program Manager. "By providing job opportunities for these Veterans, AMC gains a dedicated employee who is already familiar with the military; someone with practical, hands-on experience along with the discipline and work ethic that were instilled in them throughout their military training."

From Davis' perspective, the program has allowed him to come full circle with his career. "I started fresh out of high school as a private and loved every moment of being a Soldier. Instead of having the typical clear beginning and end, I now see my Army career as a continuous circle, and this is just another phase."

"It is a 'win-win' for the Veteran and the Army. The program allows for a rewarding civilian career experience that capitalizes on the unique qualifications and work experience of our priority customer...the Soldier," said Davis.

For more information about the Always a Soldier Program or to refer a disabled Veteran to apply, visit www.amc.army.mil/alwaysasoldier or call 703-806-8140.

▶ **Vet Career Connect helps military members find jobs**

Vet Career Connect is a program designed to connect military service members with New Jersey employers. Vet Career Connect matches veteran's specific abilities, drives and interests with jobs requiring those specific abilities. Participants complete a Caliper Profile, which is an on-line self assessment. They will receive an Individual Developmental Guide outlining personal motivators and areas of developmental opportunity. Participants will then have the opportunity to place the results of the Caliper Profile, their resume and military achievements onto a database which will be viewed by New Jersey-based companies who have indicated a strong interest in employing veterans.

Vet Career Connect program is available at no cost to service members. In order to participate in this program, or if you have additional questions please email or call Barbara Foos, Project Administrator, at 609-524-1228 or bfoos@calipercorp.com.

▶ **Battlemind supports Soldiers, families through deployment cycle**

Battlemind is a term used to describe combat readiness. The first Battlemind product was a mental health post-deployment briefing. It quickly became a training system supporting Soldiers and families across the seven phases of the deployment cycle. The Battlemind system includes separate pre-deployment training modules for Soldiers, unit leaders, health-care providers and spouses. Psychological debriefings are given in theater and upon redeployment. There is also a post-deployment module for spouses and several post-deployment modules for Soldiers. Pre-deployment Battlemind tells Soldiers what they are likely to see, to hear, to think and to feel while deployed - by describing the worst-case scenario. Post-deployment Battlemind addresses safety concerns, relationship issues, normalized combat-related mental health reactions and symptoms -- along with teaching Soldiers when they should seek mental health support for themselves or for their buddies.

▶ **DoD develops compensation and benefits handbook**

DoD announced today it has developed a comprehensive handbook describing compensation and other benefits service members and their families would be entitled to upon separation or retirement as a result of serious injury or illness.

"The Compensation and Benefits Handbook is the one source of information that covers everything a seriously ill and injured service member will need during his or her recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration," said Ronald A. Winter, principal deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force for manpower and reserve affairs.

"The handbook describes the disability eligibility process, various program qualifications, application procedures, and numerous resources with associated contact information," said Sharon Gunselman, policy and resource analyst for the Department of Defense.

Web sites and toll-free numbers are provided, and the electronic version includes hyperlinks. The electronic version of the handbook will be updated frequently and the hard copy of the compensation and benefits handbook will be updated annually.

The electronic version of the handbook can be found on the five Web sites listed below:

<http://turbotap.org>

<https://www.nko.navy.mil>

<http://www.npc.navy.mil>

<https://www.my.af.mil/gcss-af/USAF/AFP40/d/1073755231/Files/C&BHandbook>

▶ **Helmets to Hardhats**

The New Jersey State Building and Construction Trades Council's Helmets to Hardhats Program (NJ H2H) is designed to help transitioning military personnel, National Guardsmen and Reservists find the careers in the building and construction industry. The program seeks to help military members find a career in one of 15 affiliated trades, such as electrical workers, carpenters and painters.

They work in cooperation with the national Helmets to Hardhats program, adding a personal component to the program's on-line services. NJ H2H offers veterans preparation for successful application to any of New Jersey's registered apprenticeship programs in the building and construction trades. Services include career counseling, entrance test preparation and referral to supportive services.

For program registration and information, visit online at www.njbctc.org/h2h or contact at 732-499-7295 or at H2H@njbctc.org.

▶ **Military Pathways**

Military Pathways™ has launched a brand new online screening tool with a new look and feel that allows service members and their families the opportunity to assess their mental wellbeing anonymously and to identify symptoms linked with mental health disorders before a problem becomes serious. Failure to recognize depression and other mental health issues such as PTSD can have devastating consequences, underscoring the importance of detecting these disorders early. This is where online screenings can help.

Military Pathways™ online screening, funded by the Department of Defense, is available 24/7 and includes free, anonymous self-assessments for depression, alcohol problems, bipolar disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, and posttraumatic stress disorder. In addition to detecting an individual's potential risk and their need for further evaluation, the new online tool offers advanced options that provide users with specific resources in their communities as well as enhanced learning materials and resources.

<http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org/military/index.aspx>

► **Project Stars launched - new program women veterans**

A new program was launched in October 2009 for female veterans and service women as they return to New Jersey following deployment to Iraq and Afghanistan called Project Stars. Located in the Women's Rights Information Center, 108 West Palisade Avenue, Englewood, the program is designed to address the unique needs of women veterans as they return from active duty. The three primary areas of focus will be academic, career services and legal assistance.

Project Stars offers free training and services. Some of the programs available include:

- Office technology computer training programs - earn a Microsoft Office Specialist certification
- Daytime classes at Farleigh Dickinson University, Hackensack campus, technology center or the evening classes at the Women's center
- Meet with college Director of Veterans Services to learn about Yellow Ribbon program and how the program can pay for your college education
- Job advice, interviewing skills and more with the career Counselors
- Free, private consultation with an attorney from Women Lawyers in Bergen to receive support counseling and confidential referrals to non-military specialists for advice on marital law, child custody rights or other family issues or personal concerns.

Visit www.womensrights.org or call 201-568-1166 for more information.

► **Information on Housing and Mortgages for Veterans:** <http://www.mortgageloan.com/veterans/>

OTHER USEFUL LINKS:

Appeals http://www.warms.vba.va.gov/admin21/m21_1/mr/part1/ch05.doc

Center for Minority Veterans <http://www1.va.gov/centerforminorityveterans/>

Center for Women Veterans <http://www1.va.gov/womenvet/>

[Compensation for Disabilities Associated with the Gulf War Service](http://www.warms.vba.va.gov/admin21/m21_1/part6%20ch07.doc)

http://www.warms.vba.va.gov/admin21/m21_1/part6%20ch07.doc

Compensation Rate Tables, 12-1-03 <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Rates/comp01.htm>

Department of Veterans Affairs Home Page <http://www.va.gov/>

Directory of Veterans Service Organizations <http://www1.va.gov/vso/index.cfm?template=view>

[Disability Examination Worksheets Index, Comp](http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Benefits/exams/index.htm)

<http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Benefits/exams/index.htm>

Due Process http://www.warms.vba.va.gov/admin21/m21_1/mr/part1/ch02.doc

Duty to Assist http://www.warms.vba.va.gov/admin21/m21_1/mr/part1/ch01.doc

Environmental Agents <http://www1.va.gov/environagents/>

EVALUATION PROTOCOL FOR GULF WAR AND IRAQI FREEDOM VETERANS WITH POTENTIAL EXPOSURE TO DEPLETED URANIUM (DU)

<http://www1.va.gov/gulfwar/docs/DUHandbook1303122304.DOC>

See also, Depleted Uranium Fact Sheet

<http://www1.va.gov/gulfwar/docs/DepletedUraniumFAQsheet.doc>

EVALUATION PROTOCOL FOR NON-GULF WAR VETERANS WITH POTENTIAL EXPOSURE TO DEPLETED URANIUM (DU)

<http://www1.va.gov/gulfwar/docs/DUHANDBOOKNONGW130340304.DOC>

Forms and Records Request <http://www.va.gov/vaforms/>

Geriatrics and Extended Care <http://www1.va.gov/geriatricsshg/>

Guideline for Chronic Pain and Fatigue MUS-CPG
http://www.ogp.med.va.gov/cpg/cpgn/mus/mus_base.htm
Guide to Gulf War Veteran's Health <http://www1.va.gov/gulfwar/docs/VHlgulfwar.pdf>
Gulf War Veteran's Illnesses Q&As
<http://www1.va.gov/gulfwar/docs/GWillnessesQandAsIB1041.pdf>
Hearings http://www.warms.vba.va.gov/admin21/m21_1/mr/part1/ch04.doc
Homeless Veterans <http://www1.va.gov/homeless/>
HSR&D Home <http://www.hsr.d.research.va.gov/>
Index to Disability Examination Worksheets C&P exams
<http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/benefits/exams/index.htm>
M21-1 Table of Contents http://www.warms.vba.va.gov/M21_1.html
Mental Disorders, Schedule of Ratings
http://www.warms.vba.va.gov/regs/38CFR/BOOKC/PART4/S4_130.DOC
My Health eVet <http://www.myhealth.va.gov/>
NASDVA.COM <http://nasdva.com/>
National Association of State Directors <http://www.nasdva.com/>
Neurological Conditions and Convulsive Disorders, Schedule of Ratings
<http://www.warms.vba.va.gov/regs/38cfr/bookc/part4/s4%5F124a.doc>
Policy Manual Index <http://www.va.gov/publ/direc/eds/edsmps.htm>
Prosthetics Eligibility http://www1.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=337
Publications Manuals <http://www1.va.gov/vhapublications/publications.cfm?Pub=4>
VA Best Practice Manual for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
<http://www.avapl.org/pub/PTSD%20Manual%20final%206.pdf>
VA Loan Lending Limits and Jumbo Loans http://valoans.com/va_facts_limits.cfm
VA National Hepatitis C Program <http://www.hepatitis.va.gov/>
VA Trainee Pocket Card on Gulf War <http://www.va.gov/OAA/pocketcard/gulfwar.asp>
Vet Center Eligibility - Readjustment Counseling Service <http://www.va.gov/rcs/Eligibility.htm>
Veterans Benefits Administration Main Web Page <http://www.vba.va.gov/>
Veterans Legal and Benefits Information <http://valaw.org/>
VHA Forms, Publications, Manuals <http://www1.va.gov/vhapublications/>
VHA Public Health Strategic Health Care Group Home Page www.publichealth.va.gov/
Vocational Rehabilitation <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/>
VONAPP online <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp>
WARMS - 38 CFR Book C <http://www.warms.vba.va.gov/bookc.html>
Welcome to the GI Bill Web Site <http://www.qibill.va.gov/>

Print this out and save it in your VA files. There may be a time for use in the future.