A MESSAGE FROM SVA LEADERSHIP

RODRIGO GARCIA, SVA Board of Directors, Chairman

The vanguard for today’s veteran transition is the college campus -- as service members exiting the military trade guard towers for the ivory towers at U.S. colleges and universities. The Post 9/11 GI Bill has bestowed a distinctive opportunity upon 1,000,000-plus veterans to shape not only their own future, but the future of the middle class. At the forefront of this development is the explosion of student-veteran organizations on campuses nationwide.

This is why SVA celebrates not only the immeasurable contributions of military veterans to our freedom, but also their contributions to academic scholarship, business innovation, and public service leadership.

Since 2008, SVA has recognized the tremendous value of educating our servicemembers and veterans. Through the establishment of SVA chapters, student veterans develop a united voice and a national network of success. This advocacy and peer-to-peer network helps strengthen the campus as whole. This year, Student Veterans of America marked the official addition of the 1,000th student-led chapter: Saint Leo University in St. Leo, Florida.

SVAs work has always been grounded in the idea that an investment in today’s student veteran is an investment in this nation’s future. I am proud of SVAs work and impact this year and excited for the efforts in the year to come.

With Warmest Regards,
Rodrigo Garcia
RESEARCH

This year, we released our first set of findings: baseline measures of how many student veterans graduate and how long the process takes—plus the types of schools they’re attending, majors they’ve chosen, and the degrees they’re earning.

The Million Records Project report, released in partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the National Student Clearinghouse, tapped into previously unavailable data to provide insight on student veteran college completion.

The first phase of the report, was made possible through support from Google, The Kresge Foundation, and Lumina Foundation. Over the next year, the Million Records Project will build on this baseline data to determine the policies and programs that work for student veterans. Subsequent research will aim to better understand the on-campus experiences of student veterans and the main challenges that they face as they transition from service to classroom, and from classroom to workforce.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

As the guardians and stewards of the GI Bill, we are committed to addressing the most pressing issues facing student veterans in higher education. Top priorities in 2014 include:

- Investment Impact of the GI Bill
- STEM Education Pathways
- In-State Tuition
- Credits and Credentialing
- Accessibility and Affordability
- Increased Student Veteran Research
- Priority Enrollment
- Student Debt
- SCRA Loan Servicer Compliance

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT INVESTED $10.8 BILLION IN POST-9/11 GI BILL BENEFITS FOR 790,408 VETERANS IN 2013

OUTREACH

In 2014 SVA grew from 900 chapters to almost 1200 chapters. Additionally our outreach efforts have ensured participation at unprecedented levels in SVA’s national program offerings. The strength of SVA is the individual member and chapter, and our Outreach Team is the direct connection to these members.

The 2014 National Conference, held in Scottsdale, Arizona, set a record with 1,207 registrants, 75 percent more participants than last year. This annual event allows SVA to reach members directly. The sharing of best practices and exchanging of ideas keeps chapters successful.
The Leadership Institute is a multi-day program where SVA brings a select group of emerging chapter leaders together for intensive, in-residence chapter leadership training. The curriculum, developed in partnership with the Military Family Research Institute at Purdue, teaches established chapter best practices and operational concepts designed to strengthen the core of SVA, the local chapter.

This year, in partnership with Wal-Mart, SVA hosted 125 student veteran leaders in Bentonville, Arkansas. These accomplished veterans hailed from community, public, and private institutions that represented over 70,000 student veterans from across the country.

SVA’s Local Leadership Summits bring student veterans together to exchange chapter best practices and to explore campus-level concepts that can ease a veteran’s transition from the military to higher education and then to the workplace. Chapters leave Summits with a solid business plan, the know-how to run a successful chapter, the tools to compete for a Chapter Grant and become eligible to participate in the National Business Plan Competition during SVA’s National Conference. Each Summit is hosted with an SVA corporate partner, which gives veterans the opportunity to network and learn from business leaders.

“The Institute was an awesome opportunity to share best practices with other chapters. The conferences provided that opportunity as well, but since only one member from each chapter attends, the institute networking happens more naturally in that setting.”

-Hillary LaFever-Ceja, Arizona State University

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337 LEADERS FROM 225 CHAPTERS

To view public financial reports, please visit: http://studentveterans.org/index.php/aboutus
NATIONAL VETERANS CENTER

In 2014 the NVC hosted 82 separate events, partnering and working with 19 other organizations to provide classes, host events and facilitate trainings during which we directly worked with nearly 3,000 student veterans on issues surrounding the challenges of academics, career planning, and reintegration and navigating the VA.

Army veteran and Rep. Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., speaks at a Veterans Campaign event at the National Veterans Center.

CHAPTER GRANTS

SVA awarded $55,000 to 43 outstanding chapters from across the nation. Recipients submitted detailed business plans demonstrating their need.

The money awarded funded a wide variety of efforts including orientations for student veterans, community service projects, memorial events, and campus involvement activities.

SCHOLARSHIPS

In 2014 SVA gave $240,000 in scholarships to 31 student veterans. These scholarships were given in conjunction with many of our esteemed corporate partners and represent corporate America’s investment in today’s student veterans as they strive to become tomorrow’s leaders.

VET CENTER INITIATIVE

With a $100,000 gift from The Home Depot Foundation, SVA launched the Vet Center Initiative to help colleges improve campus spaces which can ease veterans’ transitions to college life.

Gaven Gregory, Executive Director of The Home Depot Foundation said, “With the Vet Center Initiative, we’re excited to give student veterans a place to connect with one another and build a veteran community on campus.”

One hundred diverse and talented chapters submitted applications, and 11 were selected to share $100,000 in Home Depot gift cards to pay for constructing, rejuvenating or renovating Vet Centers.

This Vet Center at Penn State Mont Alto was renovated thanks to Vet Center Initiative funds donated by The Home Depot.

The 11 schools awarded grants were California State University, Fayetteville Technical Community College, Glenville State College, Louisiana State University, Marywood University, Northern Arizona University, Penn State University, Purdue University, Salem State University, Southern Illinois University, and Truckee Meadows Community College.

GOOGLE RESUME WORKSHOPS

Google and SVA hosted 16 workshops in 14 cities this year. 759 student veterans attended the half-day Google Resume Workshops (GRW), where they were each paired with a Google employee for a thorough resume critique and one-on-one coaching. Each event featured a panel with Google veterans and staffing professionals.

“The resume workshop at Google was the best I’ve been to since separating from the Army in 2009. The Googlers who graciously volunteered their time were phenomenal.”

-Joe Quiggle, University of San Francisco

“Army veteran and Rep. Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., speaks at a Veterans Campaign event at the National Veterans Center.”
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