

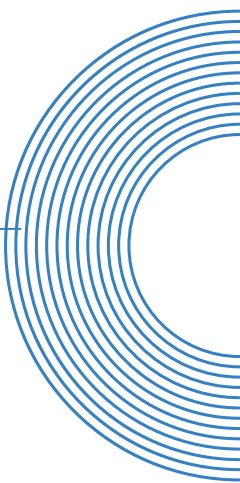


**FY 2024  
ANNUAL  
REPORT**



**APRIL 1, 2023 - MARCH 31, 2024**

**STUDENT VETERANS  
OF AMERICA®**



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*Cover Image - Students at 16th Annual NatCon*

STUDENT VETERANS OF AMERICA® FY2024 ANNUAL REPORT

# WELCOME

*Walt Braxton and Jared Lyon*

As I reflect on all we accomplished, I am inspired by the progress and resilience of our student veterans and the vibrant community that supports them. Together, we have achieved remarkable milestones, setting a strong foundation for the future.

SVA continued to champion the success of student veterans across the nation. At the center of our work, the Success Hub, which ties the journey of servicemembers, veterans, and their families from the SVA Advising Center to the SVA Chapters, and then to the SVA Career Center, has seen marked investments, upgrades, and engagements. Through initiatives aimed at leadership development, academic achievement, and career readiness, we have upheld our mission to empower those who have served. Highlights of the year include:

- **Nearly 3,500** student veterans participated in our flagship programs, including the Leadership Institute, Regional Summits, Washington Week and our hallmark event, NatCon.
- A total of **81 advocacy meetings and four testimonies** ensured that veterans' voices were heard in Washington, D.C., leading to a submitted statement with the Senate Committee on Armed Services and Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

The impact of these efforts is measured not only in numbers but in the transformative stories of veterans reclaiming their futures. Whether it's a student veteran like Michael Sanchez who created a dedicated space that offered an inclusive environment where veterans could connect, share experiences, and find solidarity in their academic journey or the SVA Chapter at University of Washington Tacoma that recognized the importance of mental health and tailored workshops during Memorial Day and Veteran Day to address the unique challenges face by student veterans, the ripple effects of your support are undeniable.



# THANK YOU FOR BEING A CHERISHED PART OF THE SVA MISSION

Looking ahead, we remain steadfast in our commitment to innovation and advocacy. In 2024, we will focus on enhancing our programs, expanding our reach to underserved student veteran populations, and driving policy change that reflects the evolving needs of our community.

None of this would be possible without you—our dedicated supporters and funders. Your strong belief in our mission fuels the growth and success of SVA and its members. Together, we are proving that investment in student veterans is an investment in leadership, innovation, and the future of our nation.

Thank you for standing with us. Here's to another year of empowering veterans to succeed.

With gratitude,

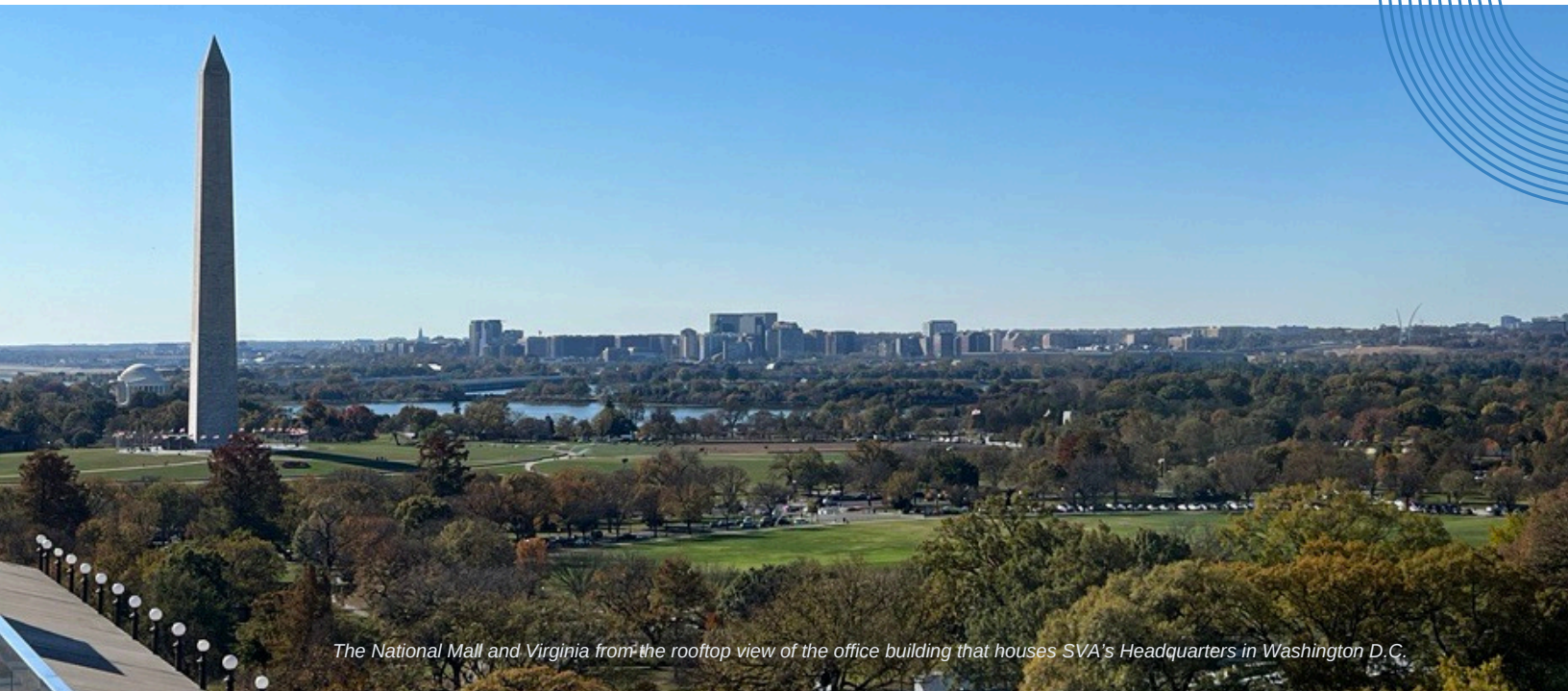
**JARED S. LYON, MPA**  
SVA National President and CEO



**Jared Lyon** was appointed National President and CEO of Student Veterans of America in 2016. He leads the organization's efforts to empower student veterans using the transformative power of higher education. Since he took office, Lyon has overseen SVA's growth to a network of more than 1,600 chapters on campuses in all 50 states and three countries representing over 750,000 student veterans.



# ABOUT STUDENT VETERANS OF AMERICA



*The National Mall and Virginia from the rooftop view of the office building that houses SVA's Headquarters in Washington D.C.*

**SVA's National Headquarters oversees the provision of programs and services that empower student veterans to succeed to, through, and beyond higher education by focusing on the chapter-centric life cycle of student veterans. In order to lower technical barriers to success, SVA's team of legislative and policy experts oversees advocacy efforts including preserving the integrity and evolution of the GI Bill. As a data-driven organization, SVA's research arm collects, analyzes, and interprets data from national partners as well as institutions and chapters, and then tells the story of our nation's most talented group of college students.**

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# WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO FOR STUDENT VETERANS

Student Veterans of America (SVA) is the premier organization leading service, research, programs, and advocacy for veterans in higher education.

## MISSION

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Act as a catalyst for student veterans success by providing resources, network support and advocacy to, through, and beyond higher education.

## VISION

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Empowering student veterans to lead and live their best lives.

*Amond Bailey, Marshall University*



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE



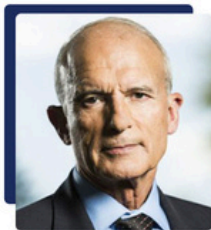
**Sherry Shi**

BOARD MEMBER (Q1-Q2)  
Software Engineer  
Facebook  
San Francisco, CA



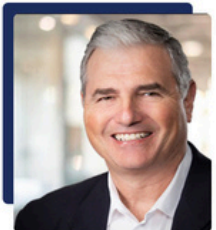
**Mary Reding, JD**

BOARD MEMBER (Q3-Q4)  
Alexandria, VA



**Major General Chris Cortez (USMC, Ret.)**

BOARD CHAIR (Q1-Q2)  
USMC (Ret.), MA  
Vice-Chairperson Vice President of Military Affairs, Microsoft  
San Diego, CA



**Joseph Sautter**

BOARD MEMBER (Q1-Q2)  
TREASURER (Q3-Q4)  
General Manager of Sports Logistics & Event Management at ESPN  
Wide World of Sports and runDisney at the Walt Disney World® Resort  
Orlando, FL



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**Frank Gaudio, JD**

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**Fontaine Stegall**

BOARD MEMBER (Q1-Q2)  
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MRC Global  
Houston, TX



**Josh Jones**

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBER  
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**J. Ford Huffman**

SECRETARY (Q1-Q2),  
CHAIR (Q3-Q4)  
Independent News-Media Strategist  
Washington, D.C.



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BOARD MEMBER  
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New Orleans, LA



**Allexis Smith**

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBER  
Columbia, SC



**Scott Blackburn**

BOARD MEMBER (Q1-Q2)  
VICE CHAIR (Q3-Q4)  
Software Engineer,  
Facebook  
San Francisco, CA



**Jared Lyon**

BOARD MEMBER  
National President & CEO of Student Veterans of America (SVA)  
Alexandria, VA



**Katherine Martinez**

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBER  
Chesapeake, VA



**Philomena Mantella, Ph.D.**

BOARD MEMBER (Q1-Q2)  
SECRETARY (Q3-Q4)  
Fifth President of Grand Valley State University (GVSU)  
Allendale, MI



**John Edelman**

BOARD MEMBER  
Managing Director of Global Engagement and Corporate Responsibility,  
Edelman  
Chicago, IL



**Dr. Nick Mararac, Ph.D.**

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBER  
Washington, D.C.



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# FINANCIALS

## AS OF MARCH 31, 2024

### ASSETS

Cash and Cash Equivalents	5,736,267
Accounts Receivable	20,062
Investments	521,964
Grants and Contributions Receivable (Net)	2,030,276
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets	296,058
Right-of-Use Asset Operating (Net)	86,673
Property and Equipment (Net)	108,687

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<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$8,799,987</b>
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### LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	199,876
Lease Liability - Operating	121,280

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<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$321,156</b>
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### NET ASSETS

Without Donor Restrictions	2,800,558
With Donor Restrictions	5,678,273

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<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$8,478,831</b>
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<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$8,799,987</b>
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# COLLABORATING PARTNERS



SVA and our student-veteran-led chapters have convened a diverse network of corporations, foundations, and nonprofits that support our shared mission to act as a catalyst for student veteran success by providing resources, network support and advocacy to, through, and beyond higher education. This collaborative effort has enabled our chapter leaders to build inclusive communities on their college campuses that empower student veterans to achieve their greatest potential. **We thank our partners for their many years of dedication in support of student veterans, military-affiliated students, their families, and allies.**

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# PROGRAMS AND CHAPTER SERVICES



Jared Lyon and Jess Gavin at Leadership Institute

**Student Veterans of America’s National Headquarters administers Programs and Chapter Services that empower student veterans’ success to, through, and beyond higher education by focusing on the chapter-centric life cycle of student veterans.**



Xavier Rodriguez and Katesha Goodson, Howard University



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# THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR NATIONAL CONFERENCE

JANUARY 4-6, 2024



## CHANGING LIVES

361 veterans were served through the Veteran Affairs (VA) Claims Clinic



## SHARING BEST PRACTICES

Nearly 4,500 participated in the 104 breakout sessions over the three-days



Keynote Speaker, Colonel Merryl Tengesdal (ret.)

### CHAPTER OF THE YEAR



MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

### STUDENT VETERAN OF THE YEAR



ANGELINA TRILLO

### ADVISOR OF THE YEAR



DENNY COSMO

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# EMPOWERING VETERANS AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE

NatCon brought together over **2,200 attendees** in Nashville, TN. Over 60% of students reported that breakout sessions were relevant to their needs. NatCon helped increase the social capital of students with around 75% agreeing that the event helped them increase their peer networks, develop **high quality relationships**, and connect with individuals who have the ability to help them access resources they otherwise would not be able to attain.

While around 27% of students noted coming to NatCon with intent on **finding employment**, 38% said they would be following up with contacts from the NatCon campus about future employment, and 39% of partners reported **interviewing** or scheduling an interview with a NatCon attendee.



Opening General Session at 16th Annual NatCon in Nashville, TN



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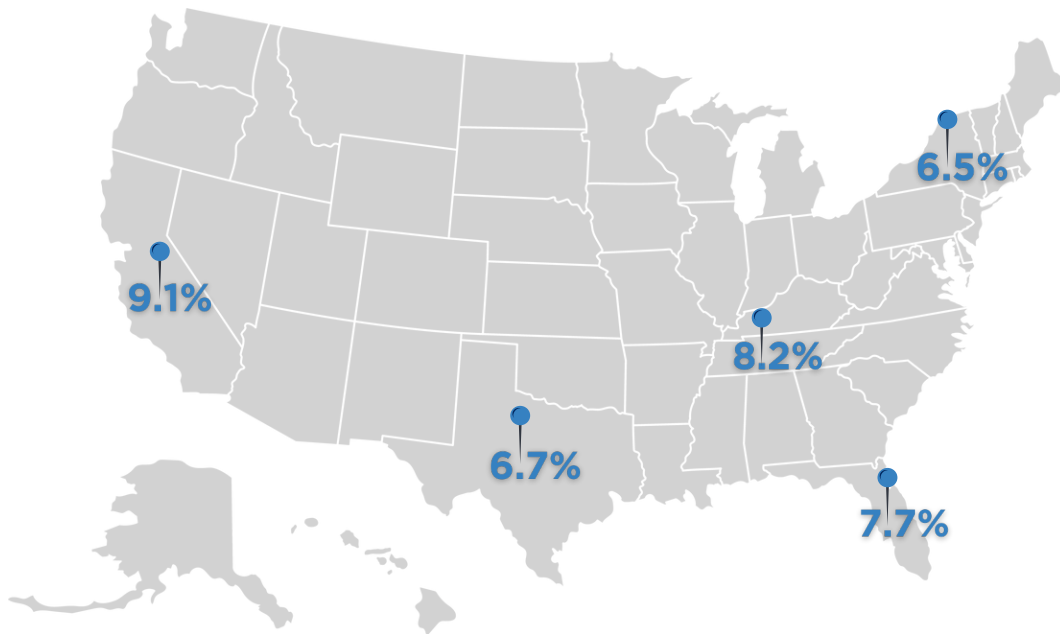
# NATIONAL CONFERENCE GEOGRAPHIC IMPACT

**48 STATES  
REPRESENTED**

**273 INSTITUTIONS  
REPRESENTED**

The District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands were also represented.

29% were MSI and 43% of attendees came from an MSI (HBCU, HSI, ANAPISI, and others).



\*Top five represented states and student percentages in attendance at NatCon



University of Georgia Student Veterans with Jared Lyon at 16th Annual NatCon



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# MAKING VOICES HEARD AT WASHINGTON WEEK

MARCH 5-7, 2024

Washington Week empowered Student Veterans of America chapter members to amplify their voices in the heart of our Nation's capital. In preparation for this week, the Bruce Johnson II, Director, Federal Legislative Affairs and Steve Bachmann, Vice President, Legislative Affairs from the Boeing federal government affairs team provided invaluable information and a Q&A session, equipping student veterans with essential knowledge and strategies.



*Student Veterans: James Solano, Brandy Merrell, Amond Bailey, Jaylan Mobley, and Nicole Camarillo*

## 95%

**FELT MORE CONFIDENT IN ADVOCACY**

This impactful student experience was made possible by Boeing's investment.

## 78K

**STUDENT VETERANS IMPACTED AS A RESULT OF PARTICIPATION**

Growing the impact on each student's campus, community, and country.

## STUDENT VETERANS EMPOWERED TO ADVOCATE AND NETWORK THROUGH BOEING-SPONSORED SESSIONS AND RECEPTION

Participants reported that they felt better prepared to share their stories with their representatives and advocate on important issues after attending the session. Later in the week, student veterans visited Boeing Headquarters for a reception that enhanced connections and provided networking opportunities for attendees.

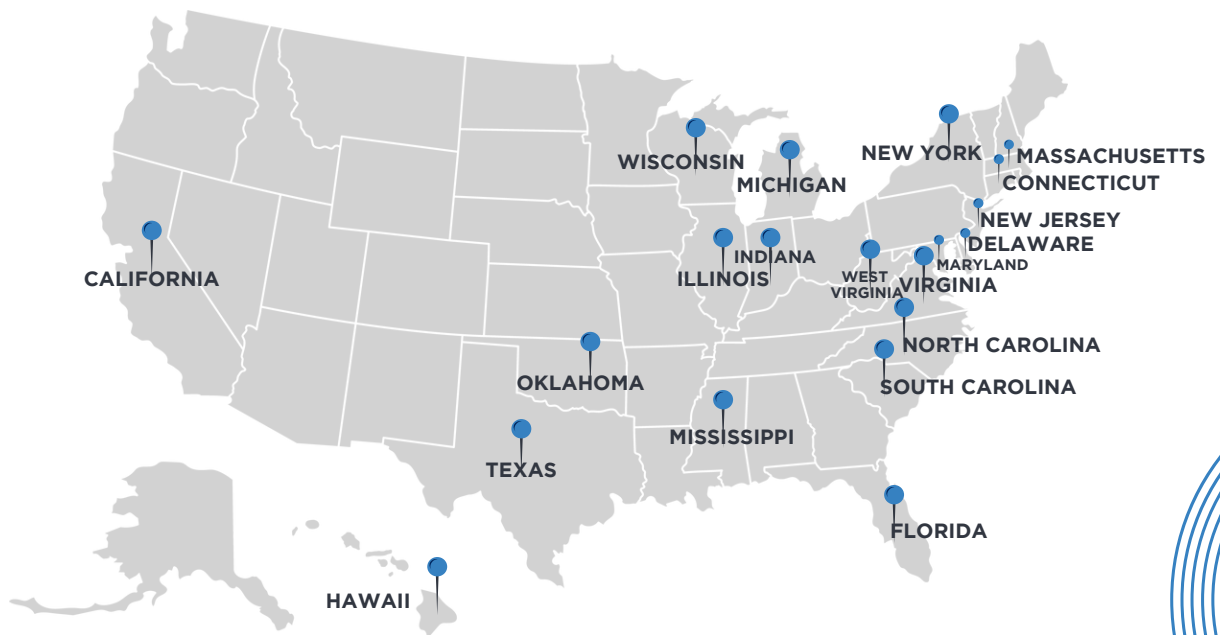
# WASHINGTON WEEK GEOGRAPHIC IMPACT

**20 STATES  
REPRESENTED**

**52 INSTITUTIONS  
REPRESENTED**

While there is a concentration of DMV schools, attendees came from as far as California, Hawaii, Texas, and Michigan.

18% of attendees came from an MSI (HBCU, HSI, ANAPISI, and others).



*Students at 2024 Washington Week in Washington D.C.*



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# FORGING AN IMPACT AT REGIONAL SUMMITS

JULY - AUGUST 2023



## SHAPING FUTURE LEADERS

32% of attendees were chapter presidents and 22% were chapter advisors or Veteran Resource Center staff



## MAKING CONNECTIONS

95% of attendees made new connections and **237** institutions were represented



Nashville Regional Summit Attendees Around Table Built at Program's Service Project

## BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY

SVA's Regional Summits are essential for Chapter continuity and growth, designed to equip SVA Chapters and their student veteran leaders—**67% of whom are first-generation college students**—and their faculty or staff advisors with the tools to strengthen their on-campus communities. Thanks to Boeing's investment, over **84% of attendees feel confident** applying the curriculum's lessons, believing the skills learned will help their chapters grow. The Regional Summit experience has empowered these future leaders and fostered a stronger, more connected community.



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# REGIONAL SUMMITS

## GEOGRAPHIC IMPACT

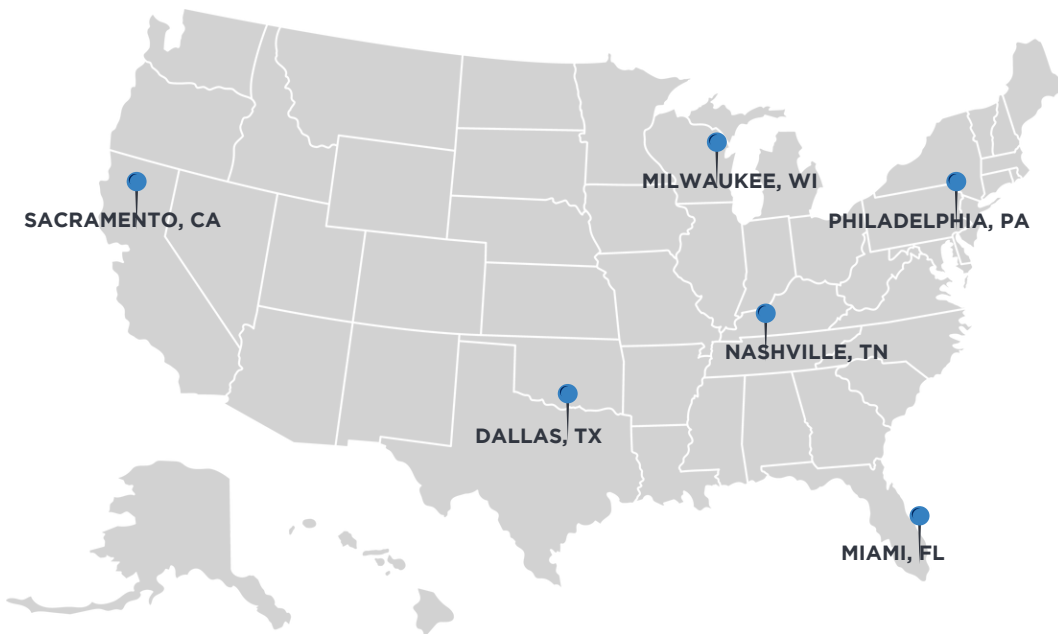
### SIX REGIONAL SUMMIT LOCATIONS

**35** STATES REPRESENTED

42% were women and gender minorities and 53% were racial/ethnic minorities

**237** INSTITUTIONS REPRESENTED

129,729 veteran and military-affiliated students indirectly impacted by chapter attendance



\*Regional Summit Event Location

SPONSORED BY 

Philadelphia Regional Summit Cemetary Clean Up Service Project



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# CREATING CONNECTIONS AT LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

OCTOBER 18-21, 2023

SPONSORED BY



Leadership Institute brought together 77 of SVA's top chapter leaders to Washington, D.C. for a four-day intensive workshop focused on honing their leadership ethos. This event aims to empower student veterans by building their confidence, fostering a sense of belonging, and aligning their personal values with their leadership roles.



2023 Leadership Institute Fellows, Matthew DeBoard and Scott Leeper

## 95%

**FELT AN IMPROVED ABILITY TO INSPIRE OTHERS**

This transformative experience would not have been possible without Boeing's investment.

## 97%

**POSITIVE IMPACT ON DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP IN OTHERS**

This event grows the influence on each student's campus, community, and country.

## DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP ETHOS

Prior to attending, all participants reported experiencing imposter syndrome and feelings of not belonging. However, after completing the program, **97% felt a strong growth as a leader**, **93% reported increased confidence in their leadership abilities**, and greater comfort with their personal values.

The end result is the **development of personal leadership ethos**—that “force” that guides beliefs, behaviors, and actions—as well as a tight-knit community of fellow chapter leaders and mentors to support personal growth.



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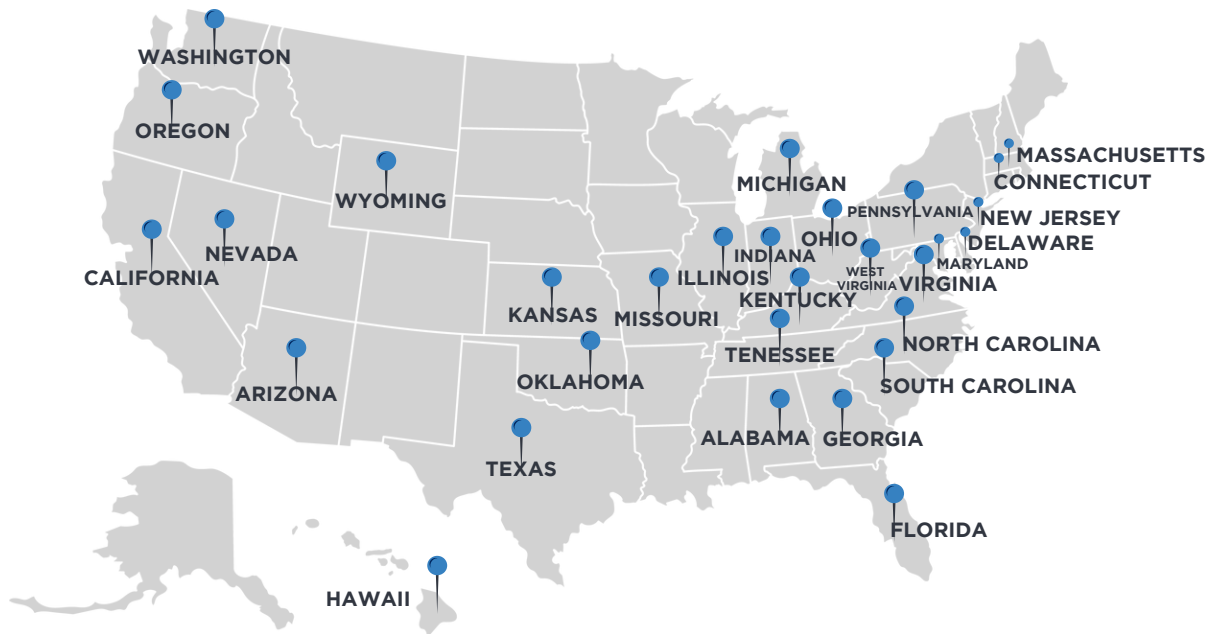
# LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE GEOGRAPHIC IMPACT

**30** STATES REPRESENTED

**64** INSTITUTIONS REPRESENTED

42% of attendees were women and gender minorities and 44% were racial/ethnic minorities

97% of attendees were positively impacted by a mentor and 85% were veterans ranked E-5 and below



\*States Represented

SPONSORED BY



2023 Leadership Institute Fellows at Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C.



[www.studentveterans.org/programs-events/leadership-institute](http://www.studentveterans.org/programs-events/leadership-institute)

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# INAUGURAL NATIONWIDE VISIBILITY EXCHANGE

SEPTEMBER 2023 - MARCH 2024



## SHAPING FUTURE LEADERS

39% of attendees were chapter leaders and 13% were chapter advisors



## MAKING CONNECTIONS

309 individuals made new connections and 95% felt the program will help strengthen their chapter community and sense of belonging



University of Nevada, Las Vegas Visibility Exchange

## BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY

SVA’s National Headquarters traveled to college campuses across the country hosting Visibility Exchanges: programming focused on key topics like campus visibility, allies and resources, and storytelling. This program aims to leave attendees with practical skills to build a supportive culture in their SVA chapter and reshape the narrative about student veterans on campus.





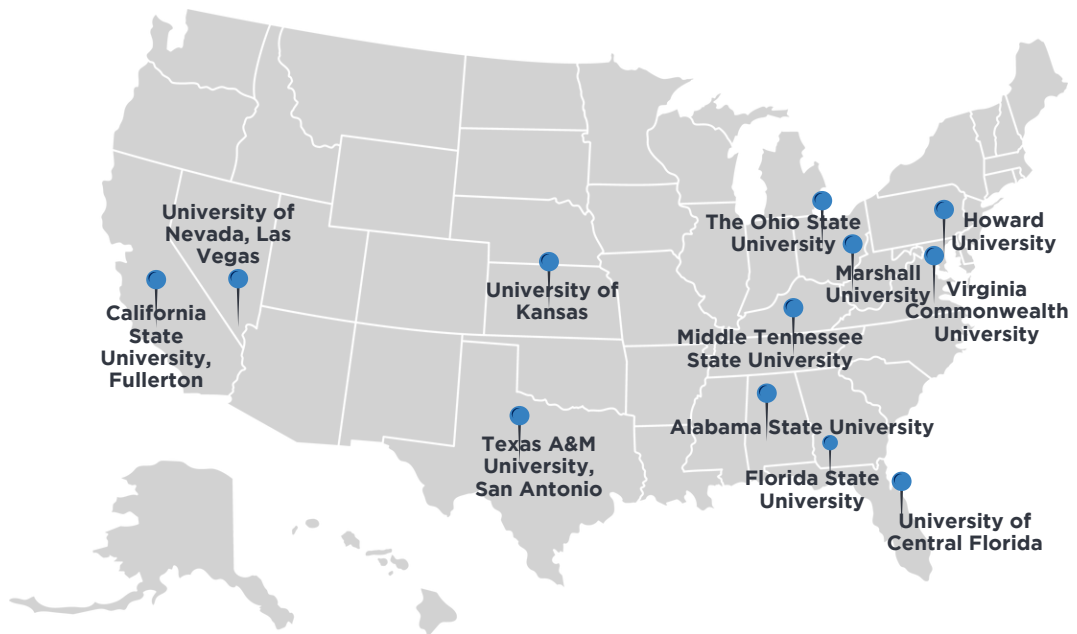
# VISIBILITY EXCHANGE GEOGRAPHIC IMPACT

**12** **CAMPUSES REPRESENTED**

**67** **INSTITUTIONS REPRESENTED**

75% of attendees reported that the program will help them grow representation of potential members in their chapter

62,981 student veterans and military-connected students indirectly impacted



\*Campuses Represented

SPONSORED BY  **RTX**



[www.studentveterans.org/programs-events/visibility-exchange](http://www.studentveterans.org/programs-events/visibility-exchange)

Alabama State University student veterans at SVA Visibility Exchange

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## PARTNERS PROVIDING SCHOLARSHIPS

Every year, SVA works with its partners to provide scholarships to deserving veterans and military affiliated students. Since 2008, SVA has awarded more than \$2 million in scholarships.

### COMCAST NBC UNIVERSAL SCHOLARSHIP

**Conner Litt**, University of Southern California  
**Leslie Waddle**, Saint Ambrose University

### GOOGLE SVA SCHOLARSHIP

**Chris Norton**, University of Massachusetts - Dartmouth  
**Cole Eastlund**, Cal State Fullerton  
**Emily Otis**, Auburn University  
**Kacie Turley**, Mesa Community College  
**Patrick Taylor**, Purdue University - West Lafayette  
**Randolph Morris**, University of Maryland - College Park  
**Timothy Ingram**, Fayetteville Technical Community College  
**Travis Bowman**, Lawrence Technological University

### JOHN EDELMAN SCHOLARS SCHOLARSHIP

**Scott Leeper**, Indiana University - South Bend  
**Ryan Rector**, Carroll College

### RAYTHEON PATRIOT SCHOLARSHIP

**Kyle Guerre**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
**Alexandra Negrin-Perea**, Saint Leo University - Duluth

### RAYTHEON SPY-6 SCHOLARSHIP

**Janneth Najera**, Texas A&M University - College Station  
**Raymond Villareal**, University of California - Irvine

*Alexis Smith,  
University of South Carolina  
and SVA Board Director*



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# SVA HIGHLIGHTS THROUGHOUT 2023-2024



Josh D'Amaro and Jared Lyon at Disneyland Resort Anaheim

## SVA AND DISNEY LAUNCH CAREER CENTER

Student Veterans of America was the recipient of a \$1 million donation from The Walt Disney Company, establishing Disney as the founding sponsor of the SVA Career Center. This visionary gift will empower SVA to revolutionize career support for the nation's student veterans and pave the way for their successful transition into the civilian workforce.

The *WALT DISNEY* Company

**HEROES WORK HERE**



## RTX IS COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING STUDENT VETS

Thanks to our partners at RTX, The Advising Center, one of SVA's newer resources, was designed to transform the veteran transition experience, is part of the SVA Success Hub which serves as a comprehensive one-stop source for information, guidance, and coaching for academic and career success.



RTX volunteers and Jared Lyon at NatCon in Nashville, TN



# ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS THROUGHOUT 2023-2024



SVA staff and student veterans attended

## WHITE HOUSE STATE ARRIVAL CEREMONY



SVA staff and student veterans attended

## WREATH LAYING AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

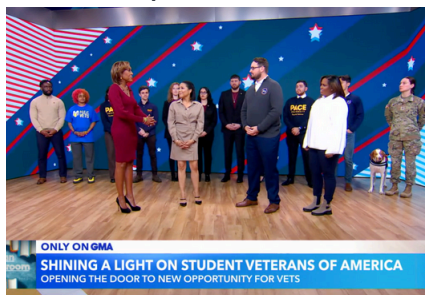


2024 Washington Week Attendees: Aaron Barkley, Keegan Dentinger, and Angelina Trillo

## SYRACUSE VETERANS VISIT D.C.



## SVA ON GOOD MORNING AMERICA TO ANNOUNCE \$1M GIFT



## GWU VETS VISIT THE STATE DEPARTMENT





# RESEARCH

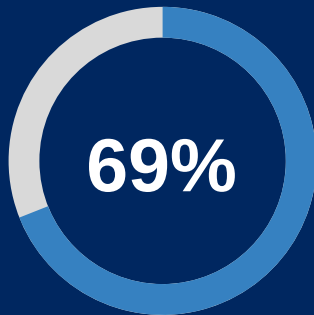


*Student Veterans at NatCon in Nashville, TN*

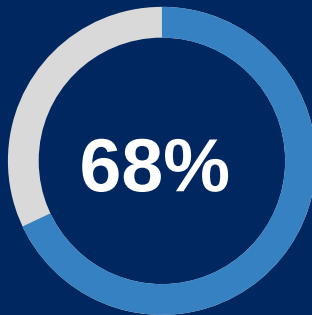
**Student Veterans of America works to inform the public, stakeholders, policy makers, and others on the concerns of students and military-affiliated students through empirical research. By investing in research, SVA is filling the void in data collection on the student veterans experience, highlighting their challenges and successes. We also use surveys and program evaluations for data collection and improving programs.**

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# CENSUS SURVEY COLLECTS NATIONAL DATA



Enrolled in School More Than Half Time



Have a Service-Connected Disability

Fewer than 20% have Participated in Other Student Organizations on Campus

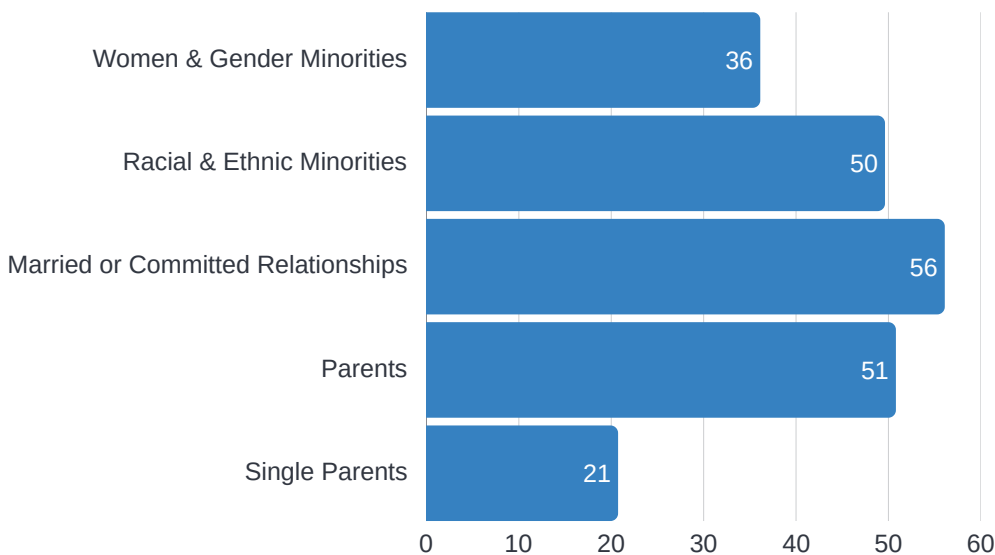
Over 60% are Members of an SVA Chapter

Those who are over 40% Participate in Other Campus Organizations



## 3.4 AVERAGE STUDENT GPA

### DEMOGRAPHIC DATA



Note: graph data is in percentages

Each year, SVA creates and distributes a survey focused on collecting demographic data on student veterans and alumni for use in discussions with policy makers, partners, and the public.



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# GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS



2024 Washington Week Testimony

**SVA's Government Affairs Department shapes policy proposals and regulations on behalf of veterans in pursuit of career advancement through higher education. Our team works closely with Congress, the White House, and the federal government to promote forward-looking policies that will help veterans acquire the education they need to thrive in the modern workforce.**

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# POLICY MOVEMENTS FOR STUDENT VETERANS

The Government Affairs (GA) team focuses on a myriad of issues, and analyses a wide variety of proposals concerning matters that impact veterans in higher education. As subject-matter experts on higher education and veterans policy, the SVA GA team is frequently called upon from Congress and senior government officials to deliver testimony regarding topics facing student veterans.

## INCREASE TO ONLINE MONTHLY HOUSE ALLOWANCE

**H.R. 5702**, Expanding Access for Online Veteran Students Act, will establish the full national average monthly housing stipend under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program for individuals who pursue summer education program solely through distance learning.



The SVA Government Affairs team worked hard to advocate for SVA 2023 policy priorities by testifying before Congress, meeting with Members of Congress and their staff, and partnering with other VSO/MSOs. Be the catalyst for change to address challenges, champion rights, and bring about positive adjustments that align with your unique circumstances.

-- Vice President of Government Affairs, Tammy Barlet



## RESTORE VA EDUCATION BENEFIT ENTITLEMENT

Create **Student Veteran Benefit Restoration Act** aims to make the student veteran “whole” by instructing the VA not to charge an individual if the VA determines the student could not complete the course or program because:

- it was suspended or terminated based on information gathered through a VA risk-based survey; or
- The Department of Education determines the institution committed an actionable act or omission that detrimentally affected direct loan borrowers.



*Amound Bailey, Abraham Barr, Angelina Trillo, Jose Acevedo, and Tammy Barlet*



# CONTINUED POLICY MOVEMENTS

## IMPROVE AND EXPAND VA WORK STUDY PROGRAM (VAWS)

Several pieces of legislation look to make improvements and expand the VAWS.

- Expand eligibility to students who are half-time basis
- Expand the type of qualifying activities participants can pursue to better align with academic and professional goals
- Increase pay
- Modernize the time-keeping process
- Require VA to report detailed information about how the program serves participants



Angelina Trillo, Christopher Boykin, Representative Michael Bost, Jose Acevedo, Jamie Springston, and Tammy Barlet advocating for SVA on Capitol Hill

## EXPAND VA'S NATION VETERANS SUICIDE PREVENTION REPORT

**H.R. 4157**, Not Just a Number Act, aims to enhance accountability and transparency in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) regarding suicide prevention efforts. The bill requires the VA to produce an annual National Veterans Suicide Prevention Report and make it publicly available. It also mandates a review of VA mental health and suicide prevention services based on Government Accountability Office recommendations.

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# EVEN MORE POLICY MOVEMENTS

## IMPROVE VA PAYMENT SYSTEM TO FOREIGN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Language from **S. 1090** will direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to update the VA's payment system to enable electronic fund transfers of educational assistance to foreign institutions of higher education.

## RUDISILL V. MCDONOUGH AMICUS BRIEF

SVA tracked this case's developments, as it can impact many current and future student veterans. The majority opinion clarified that veterans with dual entitlements can access their benefits independently, as long as they stay within the 48-month cap. In August 2023, SVA submitted an **Amicus Brief** supporting the veteran before the Supreme Court proceedings.

## EXTEND VET-TEC PILOT PROGRAM

The **VET-TEC Authorization Act of 2023** would require VA to extend enrollment for an additional 4,000 veterans per year the opportunity to enroll in high technology programs of education that provide non-degree training or skills related to computer programming, media application, data processing, or information sciences to help them develop skills to start or advance their careers in high-tech industries.



*Jamie Springston, Jared Lyon, Amond Bailey, Jaylan Mobley, Angelina Trillo, Justin Klassen, and Jose Acevedo advocating for SVA on Capitol Hill*



# VFW-SVA LEGISLATIVE FELLOWSHIP CHANGES STUDENTS' PATH

In keeping with its shared commitment to student veterans' success, every year the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) teams up with SVA to host the VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship program, providing an opportunity for up to 10 exemplary VFW members who are student veterans to make their voices heard on Capitol Hill and in their community.

The VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship is another example of the strong collaboration between VFW and SVA that resulted from a memorandum of understanding signed by the two organizations at the SVA National Conference in January 2013.



2023 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellows with White House and SVA staff



Our partnership with the VFW focuses on strengthening the opportunities and outcomes available to veterans, and this fellowship ensures Capitol Hill hears directly from those impacted by the programs and services we advocate for.

-- SVA National President & CEO, Jared Lyon



# HELP US INSPIRE AND SUPPORT TOMORROW'S LEADERS

Through a network of more than 1,600 on-campus chapters, SVA has been inspiring tomorrow's leaders since 2008 to ensure they achieve their greatest potential.

## CONTACT INFO

For questions about this report or upcoming SVA programs and events please contact us.

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202-223-4710

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Washington, D.C. 20005

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[programs@studentveterans.org](mailto:programs@studentveterans.org)

