



Maryland College Commission for Student Veterans Commission

December 20, 2019

The Honorable Larry Hogan, Governor of Maryland
The State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Thomas V. "Mike" Miller, Jr., President Senate of Maryland
The State House, H-107
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Jeffrey Lesch
Chairperson

Danielle
Dabrowski
Vice Chair

Vacant
Secretary

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones, Speaker
Maryland House of Delegates
The State House, 1-1-101
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Report of the Maryland College Collaboration for Student Veterans Commission (MCCSVC) required by State Government Article § 9-946 (5) MSAR #: 10921

Gentlemen:

Please find enclosed a copy of the 2019 Annual Report for the MCCSVC. The 2019 report includes all requirements stated in sections §9-946 (5) of the State Government Article.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Lesch
Chair, MCCSVC

Kristin Byerly
Cathryn Camp
Wanda Colon-Canales

Matthew Fraling III
Tonya Mason
Matt Power
Antonio Silas

Denise Nooe —
Designee for MDVA
Secretary

cc: Sarah Albert, Department of Legislative Services (5 copies)

PURPOSE:

Senate Bill 606, passed by the 2016 Maryland General Assembly, establishes the Commission’s purpose. It is to ensure the educational success of returning veterans, including their recruitment, successful transition into higher education and eventual graduation. The Commission accomplishes this by facilitating the sharing of best practices, and potential adjustment of policies and procedures, among the institutions of higher education and state agencies regarding academic programs and support services designed for returning veterans. Commissioners, representing institutions of higher education in the state, address the following issues: awareness of veteran reintegration challenges; communication and coordination of available veteran services at the institution, state and federal level – including financial aid and GI Bill support services, mental health services and the use of career and transition services, at the education institution, to facilitate post-educational employment.

PARTICIPANTS:

For 2019, the Commission consists of the following appointed members and guests.

- Chair: Jeff Lesch | University of Baltimore (UB)
- Vice-Chair: Danielle Dabrowski | Frostburg State University (FSU)
- Secretary: Open
- MDVA Secretary Designee: Denise Nooe | Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs
- Appointed Commissioners:
 - Cathryn Camp | Prince Georges Community College (PGCC)
 - Dr. Tonya Mason | Montgomery College (MC)
 - Antonio Silas | University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC)
 - Wanda Colon-Canales | Washington Adventist University (WAU)
 - Benz Armstrong (Towson University) Chairperson through 24 January 2019 meeting
 - Left Towson effective 1/31/19
 - David Aaron Urbanski (McDaniel)
 - Left McDaniel effective 9/11/19
 - Christina Duncan | Community College Baltimore County (CCBC)
 - Left CCBC effective 12 July 2019
 - Keith Hauk | University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC)
 - Resigned commission effective 04 Sept 2019
 - Matt Power | Maryland Independent Colleges & Universities (MICU)
 - Kristin Byerly | University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC)
- Guests
 - MHEC: Trish Gordon-McCown | Maryland Higher Education Commission
 - Artie Travis | Bowie State University (BSU)
 - Bradley Dennis | Washington Adventist University (WAU)
 - Curtis Roberts | Washington Adventist University (WAU)
 - Dena Allen-Few | Towson University (TU)
 - Dr. Jeff Graham VP Student Affairs | Frostburg State University (FSU)
 - Jason Franklin | Montgomery College (MC)
 - Katie Hershey | University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USM)
 - Tracey Jamison | University System of Maryland (USM)

QUARTERLY MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS. In accordance with the legislation establishing its existence, the Commission meets four times per year. Meetings locations rotate between the various institutions represented on the Commission.

1. January 24, 2019 | University of Maryland Baltimore | Host: Jeff Lesch
2. April 24, 2019 | Washington Adventist University | Host: Wanda Colon-Canales
3. September 17, 2019 | Frostburg State University | Host: Danielle Dabrowski
4. November 12, 2019 | Prince George's Community College | Host: Cathryn Camp

MINUTES AND SIGNIFICANT HIGHLIGHTS FROM COMMISSION MEETINGS.

1st Session: January 24th, 2019 | University of Baltimore

The Maryland College Collaboration for Student Veterans Commission (MCCSVC) conducted its first meeting of calendar year 2019 on January 24th, 2019 at the University of Baltimore. The MCCSVC Chairperson convened the meeting at 1100. Attendees were:

Benz Armstrong (Towson University) Chairperson
Cathryn Camp (Prince Georges Community College)
Wanda Colon-Canales (Washington Adventist University)
Danielle Dabrowski (Frostburg State University)
Bradley Dennis (Washington Adventist University)
Christina Duncan (Community College Baltimore County)
Trish Gordon-McCown (Maryland Higher Education Commission)
Tracey Jamison (University System of Maryland)
Jeff Lesch (University of Baltimore) Vice-Chair
Denise Nooe (Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs)
Curtis Roberts (Washington Adventist University)
Antonio Silas (University of Maryland Baltimore County)
Artie Travis (Bowie State University).

Handouts:

12/18/18 Letter from MHEC
Spreadsheet of Commission Members

The Chairperson welcomed the Commissioners and thanked Jeff Lesch and University of Baltimore for hosting the January meeting. The Chairperson requested that the Commissioners conduct introductions around the room.

Chairperson invited Commissioners to share upcoming events/news about their campuses:

FSU (DD) – Welcome back for student veterans/Superbowl Party; possible grant opportunity for expansion of the Veterans Center.

UMBC (AS) – Welcome back reception, UMBC serves three groups: veterans. Transfers, and non-traditional groups. In the developmental stage, on current job 6 months, Veterans Faculty Fellows, other special events.

WAU (CR) – Spring semester has started

USM – (TJ) promoting the Commission, relaying information to the Chancellor's Office.

PGCC (CC) – Has a new space but will soon outgrow the space, currently sharing the space with other student groups and VOCREHAB has an office in the space; PGCC certifies 500, but not sure of the exact number of veterans.

MDVA (DN) - February 7th event in Annapolis 2019 Year of the Veteran – Many Anniversary’s this year to include Armistice Day 100th, D-Day 75th, MDVA 20 years serving veterans in MD. Would like a showing of younger Veterans to attend the Feb. 7th event.

MHEC (TGM) – here to support students and SCOs as well as the VA. Working to ensure that SCOs are attending the mandatory trainings (Colmery Act) Will meet with (segmental meetings) MAC on upcoming mandates – general things to be aware of for supporting & representation the SCOs on campuses – To make sure that the same communications will include reporting fees.

UB (JL) – Representation from more schools

MDVA (DN) Noted that the size of the Commission is shrinking, not growing. Please encourage your colleagues from other Colleges & Universities to attend.

PGCC (CC) – wanted clarification on who is supposed to attend the meetings and what the Commission advocates for

TU (BA) – Members of the Commission have an array of roles they play on their campuses and interact with veterans on different levels. Our discussion focuses on how we are to better serve student veterans in higher education. We need to reach out further.

WAU (WCC) – Voiced her excitement over being part of the Commission, discussed having a broader base, discussion on what we have done marketing wise for the Commission, wants the Commission to have more of a voice. Suggested a possible group chat forum.

MHEC (TGM) – Highlighted the Education Spot Light – Can we get back into it?

MDVA (DN) – Elaborated on what the Spot Light has – institutions supply the information to DN. Requests that the Commissioners supply information to her and she will promote the Commission in the Spot Light – Keith Hauk was voluntold for this 😊.

UMBC (AS) – Commented that he has been in his position for a short time and serves three populations of students and the Commission has been very helpful to him.

WAU (BD) – Submitted the DoD MOU in September, waiting on approval. He has consistently attended the meetings and has passed the information on to the team.

Chairperson then asked about training offered on campuses for faculty & staff:

UMBC & CCBC – Green Zone Training both on Blackboard & Face to face (not mandated)

FSU – KOGNITO training, started in 2015 scenario based, suggested responses, gift card incentives for participation (not mandated)

TU (BA) – Question to the group: Does any institution have Faculty/Staff day training/Retreat All Day? Yes – (CCBC, UMBC, Towson, & PGCC)

Green Zone Training:

CCBC (CD) is starting an early alert program; Green Zone Training. UMBC (AS) asked to connect with CCBC on the training. Discussion continued about the Green Zone Training and sensitivity training. TU (BA) asked if it was more beneficial to go in and complete training online/was Green Zone Training in person. CCBC

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(CD) & UMBC (AS) said that yes, the Green Zone Training is in person but they are trying to transition to a blended module. PGCC (CC) asked if the training needed to be mandatory – the consensus among the Commission was yes.

Further discussion about training whether it was mandated thru HR or thru academics, varies by institution, PGCC (CC) has mandated training with reporting requirements; UMBC (AS) requested training & TU (BA) is developing training.

MDVA (DN) – Maryland’s Commitment to Veterans - Military Cultural Competence FSU (DD) – MCV Resource List People/Contact will provide the information to Denise Nooe to share with the Commission. Melissa Barber is the POC (melissa.barber@maryland.gov)

WAU (WCC) - Discussion returned to marketing of the Commission/ central platform for information

USM (TJ) - Physical application of a central information site is unrealistic due to limited representation of the Commission; also mentioned the undertaking of keeping all the information updated. TU (BA) – brought up about the sensitivity of information – think about a platform to share information. What is our Mission – do not want to get away from it. USM (TJ) – to MDVA (DN) is there other commissions that have a digital present – DN – not that she knows of other than the MVA website for informational purposes. TU – GroupMe suggestion, USM (TJ) – GroupMe who would be on the GM list? TU (BA) – only those on the Commission that would consent to be on it. Informal Q&A for the Commission – Quick & short nothing too elaborate, PGCC (CC) Suggested a tool to get prepared for upcoming meetings,

MDVA (DN) – The Commission subject to the Open Meetings Act – not sure how the text meetings would work.

MOU In-State - Clarification

Chairperson called on FSU for a question/clarification about the 12/18/18 letter sent to IHLs regarding catalog addendums to reflect compliance with new legislation.

MHEC (TGM) – Amendment to the Choice Act (now called the Expiring Authorities Act) – Definition of Covered Individual – VOCREHAB is incorporated clarified on the Update to covered individual – Addendum to be added to the catalog – Letters went out to the IHL Presidents & SCOs for the Public Institutions.

USM (TJ) –USM will sign off for all institutions – Communications sent to the Registrar – Provosts & Presidents – she will follow up with the university administration – the President’s Office. Also, Finance

MHEC (TGM) - The reason the presidents got this is because the catalogs need to be updated and it will be checked during compliance surveys and if they aren’t in the catalogs – no VA Benefits. IHLs still need to sign the MOU and return to MHEC by the deadline Also asked if possible, complete a second check for when a student is charged Out of state or Regional Tuition so that we can get a better handle on it. Determine issues – students, policies, SCOs.

USM (TJ) – Suggested an infinity group of USM registrars to make sure that USM schools are doing it correctly.

MHEC (TGM)- Back to back Legislation/Mandates it is getting confusing. Have a meeting with everyone concerned on campus to relay the update to covered individual.

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TU (BA) – Relevant legislation – DN – nothing has really dropped down yet from congress – building on the reimbursement for service animals and extending it to Horses.

TU (BA) & MDVA (DN) Elections for the Commission:

Chairperson – Jeff Lesch

Vice Chair – Danielle Dabrowski

Secretary – Keith Hauk

CD – Chesapeake Veterans Alliance – VA based organization. Cyber certificate

JL – VA Work Study – Processing time for VOCREHAB student applications. You should certify your VOCREHAB students in VAONCE and wait to submit the application for work study at least two weeks to submit the work study application to Buffalo. This will give the VR&E case managers time to update their system and the application will not be denied by the RPO.

The MCCSVC Chairperson noted that the next meeting of the MCCSVC would be held in the spring, April 23, 2019 Meeting at Washington Adventist University 1100 – 1300 (Back up date April 23, 2019); formal notification will follow later.

Third meeting for the Commission will be in September at Frostburg State University.

Hearing no further action or issues, the MCCSVC Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 1:30 pm.

2nd Session: April 24, 2019 | Washington Adventist University

The Maryland College Collaboration for Student Veterans Commission (MCCSVC) conducted its second meeting of calendar year 2019 on April 24th, 2019 at Washington Adventist University (WAU) in Takoma Park. The MCCSVC Chairperson convened the meeting at 11:00 am.

Attendees were:

Commissioner Jeff Lesch (University of Baltimore) Chairperson

Commissioner Danielle Dabrowski (Frostburg State University) Vice-Chair

Commissioner Keith Hauk (University of Maryland University College, UMUC) Secretary

Commissioner Cathryn Camp (Prince Georges Community College, also representing the Maryland Association of Community Colleges)

Commissioner Wanda Colon-Canales (WAU)

Commissioner Dr. Tonya Mason (Montgomery College)

Commissioner Christina Duncan (Community College of Baltimore County, CCBC)

Commissioner Matt Power (Maryland Independent Colleges & Universities, MICU)

Bradley Dennis (WAU)

Curtis Roberts (WAU)

Dena Allen-Few (Towson University)

Antonio Silas (University of Maryland Baltimore County, UMBC)

Jason Franklin (Montgomery College)

Trish Gordon-McCown (Maryland Higher Education Commission, MHEC)

Tracey Jamison (University System of Maryland, USM)

Denise Nooe (Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs)

Newly appointed Commissioner Aaron Urbanski (McDaniel College) was unable to attend, and sends his regrets

New Business

Chairperson Lesch welcomed the Commissioners and other attendees, and thanked Commissioner Canales and WAU for hosting the meeting. The WAU Provost Cheryl Kisunzu graciously provided welcoming remarks to the Commission and thanked them for their work.

Chairperson Lesch then welcomed several guest speakers that then spoke to the Commission.

Sam Sidwell (Maryland Veterans Commission, Vietnam Veteran, Infantry). He briefed Commissioners about his role on the Maryland Veterans Commission, and his willingness to speak to student-veterans at Maryland institutions of higher learning about various programs, to include: military preference; credit for military training & education, and its applicability to higher ed for academic credit; and the disability process. Mr. Sidwell provided the group with handouts on his presentation.

Ed Roberts (CCBC, Cyber Security Program). He discussed the program, and its applicability to Veterans, how it is targeted to get people employed, and how it provides for accelerated industry credential certification, in the various Cybersecurity and IT certifications, to work in the government sector. Students are able to take 4 courses in a 16-week term, and then, based on successful course completion, be prepared to sit for the industry certification exam. Mr. Roberts likewise provided the group with handouts on his presentation.

Old Business

Chairperson Lesch raised the idea, discussed at the previous meeting, of using the 'Group Me' app for communication amongst the MCCSVC Commissioners. The Commission unanimously endorsed the idea.

Several points of discussion then ensued concerning continuing VA implementation of legislative requirements tied to "Forever GI Bill" as well as the requirement to implement Priority registration for veterans.

- Regarding Priority Registration, Commissioner Dabrowski shared that she attended an AACRAO conference at which the VA discussed this issue; the VA made clear, to that group, that the intent of the statute and policy is that veterans must have a day as far as registration. Ms Gordon-McCown, from MHEC, who serves as the Maryland SAA for VA educational benefits echoed this point, stating that institutions "must have policy" concerning priority registration, but that codifying that policy in the institution's academic catalog was OK.
- Regarding "Forever GI Bill" implementation, several attendees (Ms Gordon McCown, Commissioner Dabrowski, Commissioner Hauk), who had attended VA focus group meetings on April 16-18 shared with the Commission feedback from those meetings. The meetings were held by the VA Education Service, and their IT contractor for "Forever GI Bill" implementation, Accenture, to update key stakeholders on VA's implementation progress and plan. AS a reminder, VA is required by Congress to complete the "reset" of "Forever GI Bill" implementation by December 1, 2019. Subsequent discussion centered around two issues – use of classroom

locations to pay Post-9/11 GI Bill MHA, and how the VA would manage that, and training for SCOs on “Forever GI Bill” changes. Several schools represented on the Commission raised concerns regarding the definition of “classroom locations.” The Commissioners that attended the April 16-18 VA meetings stated that the VA had promised forthcoming guidance, and Ms Gordon-McCown, as the Maryland SAA, stated that schools would be required – once the VA issued its clarifying guidance – to report all Maryland locations to MHEC. Additionally, regarding new training requirements, for SCOs, under “Forever GI Bill,” Ms Gordon McCown stated that they were also awaiting clarifying guidance from the VA as far as what would “count,” other than the VA’s on-line training for newly-appointed SCOs, to satisfy training requirements. Several Commissioners stated that they expect conference attendance (such as NAVPA or AVECO) would continue to meet training requirements.

The Commission then discussed the VA VITAL (Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership) program at the Baltimore VA Medical Center. Several Commissioners, and their institutions, had developed strong working relationships with previous VITAL leadership, and expressed a desire to invite new VITAL leadership to a future Commission meeting. Attendees enthusiastically supported the idea, and Chairperson Lesch stated he would look in to it.

Ms Gordon-McCown stated that MHEC and her office will be hosting a 75th Anniversary celebration on June 18, 2019, from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm, at the World Trade Center in downtown Baltimore. Additional details and information will be forthcoming.

The MCCSVC Chairperson Lesch noted that the next meeting of the MCCSVC would be held in the fall, at Frostburg State University. Exact date is to be determined, but was tentatively set as Tuesday, September 17, 2019. Formal meeting notification will follow at a later date. The November 2019 meeting will be at Prince Georges Community College. Commissioner Camp stated that she would explore dates and finalize the plan prior to the September meeting.

Hearing no further action or issues, the MCCSVC Chairperson Lesch thanked WAU for hosting the meeting and adjourned the meeting at 1:30 pm.

3rd session: September 17, 2019 | Frostburg State University

Minutes for 3rd Quarter Meeting:

Date: 17 September 2019

Location: President’s Conference Room, Hitchins Hall Room 218, University of Maryland, Frostburg

Convened: 11:18

In Attendance:

- Commissioner Jeff Lesch (University of Baltimore) Chairperson
- Commissioner Danielle Dabrowski (Frostburg State University) Vice-Chair
- Commissioner Kristin Byerly (University of Maryland Global Campus)
- Dena Allen-Few (Towson University)
- Katie Hershey (University System of Maryland at Hagerstown)
- Trish Gordon-McCown (Maryland Higher Education Commission, MHEC)
- Denise Nooe (Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs)

- Dr. Jeff Graham (VP Student Affairs, Frostburg State University)

Dr Graham - Opening remarks from FSU VP of Student Affairs, Dr. Graham

- Welcome – Interim VP for student affairs. USM gave good plug for MCCSVC meeting this week. Wants to get Danielle help – office of 1. Can't create new roles but hoping to use existing position by attrition. FSU has approx. 105 current vets as students

Host Comments/Remarks: Danielle

- Welcome
- Regarding Conferences and Required SCO Training: NAVPA does count as mandatory training. Danielle is on Exec Board so reach out if assistance is needed.

Introductions: New Members

- Katie Hershey from USM Hagerstown
- Kristin Byerly from UMGC.
 - Keith Hauk had to vacate position due to change in job at UMGC

Denise: MDVA Update

- Commission appt is for 2 years
- Get new letter if needed – Ask if you are unsure of your renewal date
- Annual Report turned in 12/20. Due date is now 12/20/19
- Veterans Events send info to Denise in order to advertise if possible
- Spotlight on Education: Any programming information that benefits veterans can be advertised

Addressing Secretary Vacancy – Kristin volunteered to run for position, did not have a quorum so Denise will send an email for voting. This would fill the position until January when new elections take place.

Trish Gordon: MHEC Update

- Tiffany is Trish's admin.
- Trish is legislative chair for state Commissions.
 - Recommend issues work through Joe Wescott, Lobbyist. Strength in numbers
 - Compile all info and work through Wescott to get issues addressed.
- Will send info about spotlight and OJT
- 2019 Day of Service kick off participation for a 5k run/walk
 - Capt Brodie from MDNG spoke
- MHEC welcomes invitation for attendance at events
- Colmery is main topic – provisions are rolling out
- Tackled 103 to not issue late payments or stop enrollment, If there is an issue, include MHEC
- 303 Priority Enrollment – All policies are updated. Most were already in place
- Current Focus: Section 107 – payment by zip code which how monthly housing payment is addressed
- Send branch locations/extensions to MHEC – they are creating to send to VA. Due Sept 30th, but we are trying to be early

Regarding Section 107: Danielle received an email that stated zip codes are coming from middle states report. Inaccurate and will be addressed. If not an approved site on the middle states report, cannot use it. If not must complete process to. Told currently they are not including the teaching/clinical rotations in round one.

- Handling individual sites and at the wait and see stage. VA has promised to have this completed by Dec 1st. Email MHEC directly if you have not submitted locations, found out one you have not been aware of.
- Question from Jeff: Regarding guidance on process
 - Recommend that you closely follow the webinars.
 - Last guidance was, get your locations in!
 - Any location outside of main campus keep spreadsheet and get ready to have to re-certify.
 - Webinar on Thursday 9/19 – You can pull down previous presentations. On main page there is a link to Colmery Updates. It will give updates for 107 and training requirements. If you have more than 20 students, the training is required.
 - Recommendation: Chat room is distracting. Please use to keep on task not to hold sidebar conversations.
MHEC is working with VA to try and work through denials. Keep a current list of programs. VA is doing a random review of more than 50% and is causing a lot of kickbacks – no more free rides.

Regarding Conferences and Required SCO Training: Dena inquired about conference she attended completing SCO training requirement. Trish: She has verbal approval that AVECO (Association of Veterans Education Certifying Officials) does count but will try and get written confirmation. Topic of Banner program was discussed at conference. Clarified the Banner is system used by many schools for operational/administrative processes regarding students to include veterans. Other schools use systems such as PeopleSoft.

Regarding catalogs submission requirement: Catalog on disk can be sent to VA education address. Do not send actual catalogs. System can now take the PDF uploads. This is an annual requirement even if no changes. For UMGC and name change, need to send all catalogs and marketing materials at one time. PDF uploads are allowed but links are not. MHEC will take PDFs and upload send all three divisions at one time.

Regarding approval process: Danielle inquiring on status of letter of approval for Frostburg. Deadline to submit was September 1, 2019.

Regarding MHEC training: Pending VA changes, plan to have late January to early February. Will be by webinar but if part in person, will need a site to host. Purpose is to determine what is working and what is not.

Regarding TA DoD MOU (5-year renewal cycle) issues. Change was made that has caused some issues for the schools. The requirement may force the school to set a different refund policy for TA students then for all other students. DoD wants refund back to them of up to 60% - appears to be a change.

Requirements have changed and no one seems to want to address the changes. DoD is forcing to change refund policy to allow for money back to the DoD and ultimately forcing a debt on the student. Policy may not follow schools refund schedule. Many schools do not know what to do with the process.

- MHEC Recommendation: This should be a state driven issue and then filter down. If USM starts the process and then pushes it down to the individual institutions, it will streamline the process and cause less confusion and issues with approval. Need to find a USM POC to do this.
 - Recommend getting Tracy on conference call to address. Need people on board to address this as a more comprehensive issue. MHEC usual process is to create and then take language and push to all schools. Trish will have Danielle send information to get a better process. USM should send something to DoD that this is our policy and then each school update individually. 6 years ago, USM stepped in and said pause for about a year while pending a DoD revision. Needs the coordination and approval of FA and the billing office to complete.
- Impact of this new regulation: Danielle submitted, and it was returned. VA sent a sample requiring adjustments to their catalog. Changes need to be approved by Financial Aid/Billing. Frostburg was suspended and not notified. Student had to inform. Baltimore had the same issue with need of a quick policy to stop a potential suspension.

Regarding Financial Aid/Chapter 31 issue/concern from Jeff: Is it a Federal Law that funding (FA, Loans, Grants etc) is held until VocRehab is paid out? If eligible for FA as a Chapter 31 student, the money is held until Chap 31 pays out. Won't disburse anything until VA pays.

- What can SCOs do to help? Danielle found a POC: William.Streitberger@va.gov. Streitberger oversees all Voc Rehab - Send name, last 4 of social and date. He will help and wants to make the process more transparent.

Regarding Communication: Discussion of Congressional committees and changes without input from the staff that completes the work. How do we address this?

From MD Dept of Veterans Affairs: Denise Nooe

- What we do: 5 core missions: Service & Benefits, Veterans Homes, Cemetery and Memorial Program, Outreach & Advocacy, Maryland Veterans Trust
- Offer to interview and review for complete benefit checkup. See link to verify Voc Rehab percentages based on active duty or veteran and additional requirements to determine eligibility: https://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/eligibility_and_entitlement.asp
- Offices around the state
- Opening new site in Glen Bernie
- Ribbon cutting is tentatively set for October 20
- Just hired a recently retired USVA Rater and a Benefits Specialist
- Tell veterans to ask their county for property tax break for veterans
- Each state/territory has something for Veterans outside of Federal programs
- Edward T. Conroy & Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship Program, created by the Maryland General Assembly: The Edward T. Conroy and Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship Program is

designed to provide financial assistance to sons and daughters of deceased, missing in action or prisoner of war United States armed forces personnel, sons and daughters of deceased public safety personnel, surviving spouses (who have not remarried) of deceased public safety personnel, disabled public safety personnel and sons, daughters and/or surviving spouses of victims of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, attending a Maryland postsecondary institution

- Entry to state parks is free to veterans who residents of MD. Take your DD214 and the Veteran symbol will be placed on your driver's license

From Trish: Scholarship info:

- Scholarships:
 - Promise Scholarship
 - Teacher Grant
- Any Scholarship that says tuition and fees only must be offset
- Teacher Grant includes Room and Board and does not need to be offset when certifying
- MHEC Scholarship on the website can give more details
- Scholarship Grant Employer Pay – expect to have to offset
 - Questions call start with FA and then MHEC

From Kristin: UMGC (Formerly UMUC)

UMGC is hosting the VA School Tour – everyone is welcome to attend but please RSVP

- Register Here: fgibschooltourumucumgc.splashthat.com

Veterans Event on November 11, 2019

From Dena: Towson is hosting: [Contemporary Conflicts Film Series](#) - 2 documentaries and 2 feature films about Afghanistan and Iraq, Friday nights from October 15 – November 15

Jeff will reach out to PGCC Commissioner for details on next meeting

- Consensus early Nov
- These are public meetings and need at least 30 days' notice to post

Two things to send out:

- Next meeting date: **November 12th, 2019 11 am – 2 pm 2 PGCC. Exact location TBD**
- Elections for secretary
- Jeff recommended a “Group Me Chat” room to establish communication

Meeting ended at 1:24 pm

4th session: November 12, 2019 | Prince George's Community College

The Maryland College Collaboration for Student Veterans Commission (MCCSVC) conducted its fourth meeting of calendar year 2019 on November 12, 2019 at Prince George's Community College in Largo. The MCCSVC Chairperson convened the meeting at 11:05 am.

Attendees:

Commissioner Jeff Lesch (University of Baltimore) Chairperson

Commissioner Cathryn Camp (PGCC, also representing the Maryland Association of Community Colleges)

Commissioner Kristin Byerly (University of Maryland Global Campus, formerly UMUC) Acting Secretary
Commissioner Matt Power (Maryland Independent Colleges & Universities, MICU)
Elizabeth Atherton (McDaniel College)
Kat Schorr (Anne Arundel Community College)
Denise Nooe (Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs)
Tracey Jamison (University System of Maryland)

Welcome from Cathryn Camp: Host School

Welcome from Jeff Lesch: Introductions of those in attendance

GUEST SPEAKER:

Steve Fyfe, Vet Center at Dundalk

Vet Center <https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/>

- Provides mental health counseling for active duty and veterans
- If served in combat theater (tax free money helps to designate) of self-reported for sexual trauma, anything in the combat arena they are a resource
- 8 locations in MD
- Talk therapy
- Most counselors are veterans themselves
- Can talk to family members
- Access point for the vet center if needed – may have someone come out to the campus. Can be for anything they want to talk about. They counsel but no medication administration
- Added layer of privacy – does not document through the VA center unless requested
- Discussion regarding work study options
- Brochures available and handed out

OLD BUSINESS:

DoD Mou for schools using TA

- 5 year renewal cycle
- Schools that were up for renewal had 180 days to go through website
- Towson and Frostburg both had issues with the renewal process.
- Refund portion of the policy (VA DoD wanting refunds all the way up to 60% of the semester) was causing some issues.
- USM Discussion
 - Finance is not under the purview of USM – they are academic affairs
 - No institutions have brought anything officially forwarded
 - How many schools even use TA? What is the perception if you don't?
 - AACC does. Does MAIC?
 - McDaniel does not use TA – Reserve unit asked about it.
 - Brings up case of who addresses this and brings it forward?
 - Is it worth the manpower?
 - Tracy Jamison will bring up concerns at the meeting this week
 - Tracy will go back to University presidents and ask for status of each school

- Jeff noted as a veteran himself, it is important but understands the administrative burden

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Trish got new position with MHEC – no information on the transition
2. Transition coming in January for VA changes regarding implementation of FGIB
 - a. MHEC is working on all school's data being entered correctly
3. Need to complete MCCSVC Final Report. Final submission, NLT December 20, 2019
4. Challenges for Veteran Departments:
 - a. Director of Veterans Services for new person – how to help?
 - i. Ideas? Subject matter expert list?
 - ii. Increase communication among this group. If challenges, reach out!
 - iii. Is there a calendar of timelines and deadlines for items such as DoD renewals, Chapter 31 payment, debt letters etc.? List of requirements for VA process?
 - iv. Often processes seem to be re-active vice pro-active
 1. Recommend a timeline of sorts. Maybe a calendar?
 - b. Disparity among number of veteran students per institution: UB 140 (seems to be about maximum for one person.) AACC has 700, McDaniel has about 50. Recommendation: find a site like your own
 - c. Students come to Veteran center for issues such as Financial Aid and advising
 - i. Recommendation from UB: One person for Vet center and one person for technical and MOU requirements
 - d. Question raised about how advising approaches veteran students. Do they try and help or transfer to veteran department?
5. How can this committee better assist these challenges?
 - a. Try and partner with a school that is like you for shadowing or questions – mentor?
 - b. Create a drive or location where we can share ideas?
 - c. Ideas for design of your specific vet center? Is it in your student affairs? Is there an existing model?
 - d. Possible white paper/chart of how your school operates for review by commission. Have it list what is done, strengths and weaknesses. Bring to commission one month for review.
 - e. Jeff has done presentations at Ft Meade to show how we do business and try to increase participation and growth.
6. Chapter 31 is behind partially due to how the system is set up.
 - a. Tungsten is new system that VA is working on. Should put them on par with Chapter 33 students as far as timeliness of receipt of benefits
 - b. Inquiry about responsibility for Chapter 31 payments? It is basically invoicing/Bursars office.
7. Working towards next year:
 - a. Elections will be held at first meeting
 - b. Need:
 - i. Chair
 - ii. Vice Chair
 - iii. Secretary
 - c. Dates for 2020: Reviewed best options to maintain quarterly meetings.

- i. Maintain a consistent day of the month: Tuesdays were recommended
- ii. Late January or early February for first meeting – Jeff will review conference schedules and other items that impact month/date
- iii. Still need schools to sign up (listed in red).
 1. Meeting #1 February 11, 2020 hosted by **UB**
 2. Meeting #2 (Apr 2020) hosted by **FSU**
 3. Meeting #3 (Jul 2020) hosted by **UMGC**
 4. Meeting #4 (Oct 2020) host TBD
- d. Work towards increased participation: Current enrollment of 10 appointed commissioners
 - i. 16 Community Colleges
 - ii. 12 Campuses under the University System of Maryland
 - iii. 13 Independent Colleges

Meeting Adjourned at 12:58

THE COMMISSION'S GRATITUDE AND WAY-AHEAD

The MCCSVS extends their gratitude toward the hosting Universities, Presidents and staff for their continued support and hospitality. We look forward to continued partnerships and expansion of the commission's initiatives, to best serve our veteran community.

For Calendar Year 2020, the MCCSVC establishes the following tentative meeting schedule:

- Meeting #1 February 11, 2020 hosted by UB
- Meeting #2 (Apr 2020) hosted by FSU
- Meeting #3 (Jul 2020) hosted by UMGCC
- Meeting #4 (Oct 2020) host TBD

RECOMMENDATIONS for 2020

The Commission reiterates its strong recommendation that all institutions of higher education in the State of Maryland embrace and adopt the "8 Keys to Success: Supporting Veterans, Military and Military Families on Campus" articulated in Presidential Executive Order 13607 dated April 12, 2012.

The Commission renews its recommendation that these items be added to the purpose of this Commission:

1. Share upcoming events at local campuses.
2. Check in on—and follow—relevant legislation and trends (at both the state and federal levels) affecting military-affiliated students, (which includes service members, veterans or their dependents using transferred veterans' educational benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill). As appropriate, based on specific legislation or trends, make recommendations to legislators /governing bodies concerning potential actions.
3. Update members on challenges and other relevant information concerning military-affiliated students.
4. Collaborate and use the commission as a sounding board – resource: Share best practices and even mistakes.
5. Create a center location such as a Google Drive

6. Gather more membership/recruitment – maybe send out a letter from chairperson
7. Establish a Pre-set agenda. For example: Programming, Resources, SCO
8. Utilize guest speakers
9. Recommend a replacement if Commissioner is not able to make it.
10. Aim for consistency in meetings to further garner participation

Report Submitted: December 20, 2019