



Request for 2024 Funding Services and Activities Fee Committee

BUDGET PROPOSAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Department Name: Veteran & Military Resource Center (VMRC)

Create Date: 02/05/2024

Due Date: 02/07/2024

Submitter Name: Juanita Murillo Garcia

UW Email Address: juana1@uw.edu

Phone Number: 253-692-4810

Department Head Approval:

Department Head: Shannon Carr

Requested Amount: **\$149,840**

Departmental Information

STUDENT UTILIZATION

Military-connected students, who constitute approximately 20% of the UW Tacoma population, stand to gain significantly from the requested funds for the VMRC. This funding will reinforce Goal 1 of the strategic plan and directly address recruitment, enrollment, retention, and graduation rates, with a particular emphasis on closing equity gaps. By implementing a strategic enrollment management plan, engaging with internal and external stakeholders, and creating institutional teams for student success, our proposal aligns seamlessly with the plan's overarching objective to expand access to higher education and create an environment where every student can thrive.

In this year's "Best for Vets" college ranking by Military Times, UW Tacoma is ranked number 30 in the nation on a list of 325 ranked schools and number 1 in the Northwest. The campus was ranked 49 out of 311 schools in 2022 and 133 out of 366 in 2021. The ranking was based on the documented operations involving current and former service members and their families. The funding requested in this proposal will continue to lay the foundation for students' transition from military to college life.

The VMRC is a resource for our military-connected students and a hub of inclusivity for the entire UW Tacoma community. We host multiple veteran-oriented events, including the Tri-Campus Veteran Appreciation Week, Memorial Day, and graduation events. While these events are geared towards the military-related population, they are open to all UW Tacoma students, fostering a sense of unity and mutual understanding among our diverse student body.

CORE VALUES/MISSION ALIGNMENT

Students

The VMRC is committed to the success of our Military-Connected students and to providing multiple supports for them as they transition from the military to academia. These student veterans are as committed to contributing to their communities post-graduation as they were to fulfill their military missions. However, they juggle unique challenges that traditional college students don't often face, such as achieving high academic performance while managing competing priorities of family life and employment, accessing benefits, maintaining sound financial health, and finding the right resources to address issues they may be experiencing and align our services with the following goals and indicators of success.

Indicator 1: Ensure every student has opportunities to engage in high-impact practices.

VMRC's Military-Connected Career Development Specialist, the dual role with the VMRC and Career Services, supports those post-graduation successes, providing assessments to help military-connected students identify their goals, develop professional skills, connect with employers for internships and employment, and mentoring students on jobs that match their strengths and interests.

Indicator 2: Enhance student well-being.

The VMRC increased student awareness and satisfaction with resources, support, and infrastructure. Last year, the VMRC conducted in-person and online workshops and networking opportunities to improve accessibility and outcomes for many military-connected students.

Communities

Indicator 3: Create and strengthen entry points for the community to partner with UW Tacoma.

The VMRC office has strong community partnerships with organizations such as Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative (CSPI), PLU's Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), Washington State Military Transition Council, and the local community, to provide connections with federal, state, and local Veteran and dependent benefits and opportunities.

Indicator 4: Enhance the economic vitality of the region.

The VMRC empowers these students to achieve their academic goals and connects them to internal campus resources, external community resources, scholarships, work-study opportunities specific to the military-affiliated population, and community networking opportunities to ensure post-graduation success.

SAF-FUNDED PROGRAM OR SERVICES GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Goal 1: Increase professional development and develop mentorship programs catering to our military-connected population through training, workshops, and events. Our university addresses the needs of military-connected students' administrative and educational challenges. The VMRC meets the specific needs of student veterans and their families attending our campus with student services, veteran benefits staff advisors, and the Washington State Department of Veteran Affairs Veteran Liaison, who are experienced with military-friendly policies, services, and resources. Our staff and student involvement within military-connected clubs and organizations were established to create a social group that can perform community service projects, advocate for veterans, and help military-connected students integrate into social networks and programs that have the potential to benefit them post-graduation.

Outcome: The VRMC and SVA members' work is recognized within the Student Veterans of America (SVA) National and Regional Conferences, The National Association of Veteran Program Administrators (NAVPA), and The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) programs. Our Student Veterans Organization nationally recognizes UW Tacoma. The military-connected student population advanced their services into various student clubs and programs, including high officer roles in the Associated Students of the University of Washington Tacoma. This leads to our students' testimonies and affirms our Peer Advisors for Veteran Education (PAVE) program, which helps navigate student-veterans with on- and off-campus support.

Goal 2: Our second objective is to build a robust community of resources for UW Tacoma's military-affiliated population. We have marketed veteran campaigns that offer a range of engagement, participation, and fellowship opportunities through our programs, events, and campus partners. These resources are designed to support and enhance the experience of our military-affiliated students.

Outcome – The VMRC student population partners with other students and student leaders, registered student organizations, UW/UW Tacoma Departments and Programs, Faculty and Staff, and Community Partners and agencies. Supporters assist the UW Tacoma VMRC student population with opportunities and resources that resonate with the diverse military community.

VMRC has collaborated with various internal and external partners who made significant developments with the Coast Guard College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative (CSPI). The Coast Guard is committed to recruiting a more diverse officer force, and UW Tacoma is a prominent Minority-serving institution. Renewing our partnership, the Coast Guard will continue to support our transfer juniors and seniors with up to two years of paid tuition, full-time Coast Guard salary, housing, and medical benefits.

STUDENT UTILIZATION (COMPARISON OVER PAST 2 YEARS)

The VMRC has undeniably impacted the lives of student veterans and the broader veteran community through a diverse range of programs, events, and initiatives over the past academic year. The following highlights six impactful endeavors that exemplify our commitment to advocacy, community outreach, and addressing student veterans' unique needs and challenges.

Memorial Week Flag Displays and Remembrance Ceremony: Memorial Week Flag Displays and Remembrance Ceremony stand as powerful tributes to honor the sacrifices of veterans. These events pay homage to the fallen and create a sense of unity and shared purpose among student veterans, fostering a supportive community that extends beyond academic pursuits.

Mental Health Workshop: Recognizing the critical importance of mental health, organizes a Mental Health Workshop each year, demonstrating a commitment to addressing the unique challenges faced by student veterans. By providing resources and support for mental well-being, the chapter has not only advocated for the mental health of its members but has also contributed to breaking down stigmas surrounding mental health in the veteran community. This year's mental health workshop focused on alleviating stressors through art.

Veterans Week Flag Planting and Gold Star Luminary: SVOUWT's active participation in Veterans Week Flag Planting and the Gold Star Luminary initiative underscores its commitment to community outreach. By engaging in these events, the chapter raises awareness about veterans' contributions and extends its impact beyond the campus, fostering a deeper connection with the broader veteran community.

"Sergeant Husky's Operation Turkey Drop" addresses the campus population's hunger and food insecurity. This event aims to provide Thanksgiving turkeys, hams, and gift cards for Student Veterans and their families at the University of Washington Tacoma. Our organizations will learn how to fundraise, collaborate, and understand more about social vulnerability. Sergeant Husky and staff will discreetly distribute the gift cards to any students who request support at the VMRC.

Veteran and Military Connected Appreciation Dinner and Friendsgiving: The Veteran and Military Connected Appreciation Dinner and Friendsgiving creates a sense of belonging and appreciation. These events celebrate the diverse experiences of veteran-connected individuals and contribute to the chapter's overarching goal of fostering a supportive community that transcends traditional academic boundaries.

Collaboration with WDVA and Career Services: The Washington Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) and Career Services demonstrate a holistic approach to addressing the needs of student veterans. Welcome Socials, Open Houses, Mid & End Term Student Success Breaks, Lunch and Learn Workshops, LinkedIn Workshops, and Resume Prep Workshops collectively contribute to a comprehensive support system encompassing social, academic, and professional aspects.

In addition, the VMRC's involvement in Wreaths Across America, Halloween Party (see attachment 'FY Events'), and the Veterans Incubator for Better Entrepreneurship (VIBE) Business Plan Competition further highlights VMRC's diverse engagement, emphasizing its commitment to solemn remembrance and fostering a vibrant, inclusive community.

COLLECTION OF FEEDBACK & IMPROVEMENTS

The UW Tacoma VMRC has had over 3039 student interactions during Winter- Autumn 2023 (see 'Husky Check-In 2023' attachment). The figures below show last quarter's check-in Husky ID card scanner. This data did not capture all students attending events and didn't swipe in.

Category/Visits**AUT 2023:**

General Counseling and Advising
46
Benefits
176
Study Area
144
VIBE
94
Lounge Area
248
Career Counseling
27
Vet Nav
1
Drop-In Session
9
VMRC Events
9
Meeting
11
Phone
233
SVO
13+ 3 (PAVE)
Lunch & Learn
251
Initial Processing/Benefits Counseling
46

AUT 2022

General Counseling and Advising
96
Benefits
41
Study Area
79
VIBE
3
Lounge Area
194
Career Counseling
2
Vet Nav
n/a
Drop-In Session
7
VMRC Events
17
Meeting
7
Phone
196
SVO
7
Lunch & Learn
41
Initial Processing/Benefits Counseling
18

The VMRC uses this assessment data to identify the pressing need for resources, and engagement is evident in the growing number of student visits to the VMRC each week and outlined well-considered programs to enhance the college experience for military-connected students. With the assurance that these funds will be promptly and effectively utilized, we commit to the swift implementation of these programs. The staff will implement regular updates and transparent reporting mechanisms to provide the committee and our partners with real-time insights into the progress and impact of the funded initiatives.

SERVICE BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

A significant programming element is our Military-Connected Career Coach, who assists students in career exploration and planning to guide them through the transition from higher education to the workplace. This includes assistance with resumes, cover letters, networking, and other related topics to help prepare students for success. Some students worked with our Military-Connected Career Coach to prepare themselves to attend the Annual National Conference (NATCON) as a culminating event in their career search. Attendees of NATCON provide feedback regarding the impact of NATCON on their career search and future aspirations. Recent feedback received from NATCON 2024 attendees is attached. Below are quotes from the attendees' testimonials from this year's event.

"One of the highlights was the opportunity to converse with the CEO of the Student Veteran's Association, whose support and inspiring words resonated deeply. Feeling heard and understood, I believe our collective concerns will find their way to the appropriate channels in Congress. Natcon 2024 has broadened my horizons and equipped me with the knowledge and connections to confidently navigate the next chapter of my journey. "

"At this conference I learned of Veterans who've struggled to find their college community and had to pave the way so that other veterans like them could experience a more accommodating college experience. I learned that Veterans had to stick up for themselves and advocate at the Capitol in order to expand on the policies that govern their GI Bills—the same ones that I've been processing for over 2 years. And yet even amongst their adversity, I learned that Veterans always made time to receive feedback because that is what leads to unity and improvement (i.e. listening to the voices rather than the metrics)."

The VMRC's programs and services profoundly impact our students by fostering integration into civilian communities and providing essential support. Our post-graduation survey validates the meaningfulness of our services by capturing the sentiments of veterans who have successfully transitioned from military to academic and civilian life. The survey assesses if students felt that the VMRC supported their military-connected identity. It explores what aspects of their experience at UW Tacoma and the VMRC they found most enjoyable. Our collective efforts consistently demonstrate that we contribute significantly to the well-being and success of our military-connected students. Through mentorship programs, academic support initiatives, and community-building events, we create an inclusive environment where veterans feel understood, supported, and integrated into the broader student community. The data collected from these surveys provides tangible evidence of the positive impact of our programs and services on the lives of our military-connected students, emphasizing the necessity of continued SAF funding. The VMRC's commitment to supporting military-connected students and enhancing their college experience is evident in the success of our programs and services. These funds are crucial to ensuring these initiatives' sustained effectiveness and growth, ultimately benefiting the entire student body at UW Tacoma.

Staff Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
	PAVE Counseling Service Coordinator (see attachment) E001	
Professional Staff ¹	Professional Staff Wages:	\$41,000
	Fringe ⁴ @ 39%:	\$15,990
	PERSONNEL TOTAL:	\$56,990




Other Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Contracted Services	Military-Connected & Alumni Ceremony/Dinner	S001 \$6,000
	Veteran Appreciation Event- Photo Booth	S002 \$700
	VIBE Trap Tournament (UW Tacoma Military Connected Student Team)	S003 \$200
	Salute to Service Shuttle	S004 \$2,500
	Veteran Appreciation Dinner/Event- Venue	S005 \$6,000
Travel	SVA, NAVPA, & NASPA National and Regional Conferences registration fees, airlines tickets, hotels, travel expenses, and per diem	S006 \$8,000
	PAVE National and Regional Conferences registration fees, airlines tickets, hotels, travel expenses, and per diem	S007 \$4,000
Non-Food Supplies & Materials	Military stoles for graduates, military spouses, and dependents	S008 \$10,000
	UWT VMRC Peer Advisors Shirt/vest/jacket (15 Student-Workers)	S009 \$1,500
	UWT Events Winner Trophies (6 per Qrt; 18 total)	S010 \$400
	UWT Veteran Lapel Pins	S011 \$1,000
	US Stick flags, banners, and awareness signs (Veteran's Day, Memorial Day, Suicide Awareness, etc.)	S012 \$500
	Gold Star Luminary Candles and Supplies	S013 \$100
	VMRC Holiday events, prizes, and seasonal decorations	S014 \$2,000
	UWT VMRC Patches/Stickers	S015 \$2,000
	Military Family Month (April, May, & Nov.) event with materials and supplies	S016 \$450
	VMRC 5K/march/event Shirts (Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Veterans Day, etc.)	S017 \$5,000
	UWT VMRC Peer Advisors Notch Operator cap /beanie (15 Student-Workers)	S018 \$600
	UWT VMRC Challenge Coins & ROTC Coins	S019 \$1,000
	Supplies for VMRC office (pens, paper, files, promotional items, utensils, ink, office maintenance, etc).	S020 \$3,000
VMRC business cards, brochures, & UWT VMRC notebooks	S021 \$600	
Food	Office materials and supplies	S022 \$2,000
	Mid-Term/End of Term Success breaks- All students are invited to the pizza break; Veterans, spouses, children, ROTC Cadets, friends, family, etc., meet other UWT students	S023 \$1,500
	UWT VMRC's Veterans Graduation Celebration -This event includes the graduates, current or former students, family, faculty, and staff	S024 \$3,000
	Memorial Day Remembrance event w/ keynote speaker and cater food for ceremony attendees including students, families, and UWT employees	S025 \$6,000
	VMRC ROTC Commissioning ceremony with food, music, refreshments	S026 \$1,000
	VMRC CSPI Commissioning ceremony with food, music, refreshments	S027 \$1,000
	U.S. Army War College Fellows Presentation Project with food, music, refreshments	S028 \$200
	Veteran Appreciation Dinner/Event- Catering	S029 \$10,000
	Military-Connected & Alumni Ceremony/Dinner- Catering	S030 \$10,000
	Military-Connected New Student Advising & Registration w/UAA Reception	S031 \$500

	Veterans Appreciation Cakes (For each of the 7 U.S. Military Birthdays)	S032	\$600
Equipment	Games and controllers for the VMRC Video Game Challenge events	S033	\$500
	iPad for surveys in VMRC called the "Happy Or Not" kiosk or SEER Analytics Survey. Cost for kiosk, stand, and software	S034	\$1,000
SUPPLIMENTAL TOTAL:			\$92,850

PERSONNEL TOTAL:	\$56,990
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:	\$92,850
COMPLETE PROPOSAL TOTAL:	\$149,840

Supplemental Documents

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[**PAVE COUNSELING SERVICE COORDINATOR**](#)
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[**HUSKY ID CARD CHECK-IN 2023**](#)
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[**NATCON 2024 FEEDBACK**](#)
 Student Testimonies