

VALOR

VETERAN ★ ALLIANCE

March &
April 2024

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Colleagues and friends,

April is Pride Month at NDSU and I want to take this opportunity to share with you some information about LGBTQ+ service members and veterans. I also want to strongly encourage you to participate in campus events being held in the month of April that highlight inclusion for LGBTQ+ community members.

The military policy “don’t ask, don’t tell” which was struck down in 2011, resulted in an estimated [14,000 gay and lesbian service members being subjected to less-than-honorable discharges](#). This type of discharge blocks access to services traditionally afforded to veterans. There was [an all out ban against transgender individuals serving in the military from 1960 until 2016, and again from 2019 to 2021](#). Interestingly, despite the ban, [as many as 20 percent of transgender individuals have served in the military at some time in their lives](#).



An analysis by the [Center for American Progress in 2022](#) found that roughly 79,000 LGBTQ+ individuals were currently serving in the armed forces. According to the [Disabled American Veterans](#) (DAV), “there are an estimated 1 million veterans who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer” and these veterans can face increased health risks and unique challenges in accessing quality health care.” The VA has created a series of health care factsheets for [transgender men](#), [transgender women](#), [gay, bisexual, and queer men](#), and [lesbian, bisexual and queer women](#) that are designed to provide information and resources specific to their health needs.

There are also a number of national advocacy groups such as [American Veterans for Equal Rights](#), [Blue Alliance](#), [Knights Out](#), [USNA Out](#), [Modern Military Association](#), and [Transgender American Veteran Association](#) that serve LGBTQ+ service members and veterans. At NDSU, there is a [Pride Alliance](#), [Safe Zone](#) training for allies, and information on [other resources and events](#). A primary event, NDSU Pride Month (themed **Rainbow Rush!** this year), is set for April and is filled with opportunities for students, staff, and faculty to show their support for the LGBTQ+ community. Whether it is participating in “Wear Your Rainbow” days on Fridays in April, decorating your office, department, student lounge, etc. in honor of NDSU Pride Month (p.s., there is a competition across a variety of categories April 1-5, sign up [here](#)), or attending featured events over the month of April (see *page 5 of this newsletter* for a list) - remember visibility matters.

Thank you for all that you do for our students, particularly our currently serving military and veteran students. Your efforts, big and small, make a difference in the lives of our students and create a more welcoming campus.

Carol Cwiak, J.D., Ph.D.
VALOR Faculty Liaison



VCO Update
Jim Stoddard

You can visit Jim on campus at the Veterans Educational Training Office in Morrill 112; or by phone at 701-231-9706; or by email at james.stoddard@ndsu.edu.



Meet Congressional Gold Medal recipient Army Pvt. Romay Catherine Johnson Davis, shown here at Montgomery City Hall, Montgomery, Ala., July 26, 2022.

President Joe Biden approved the Congressional Gold Medal presentation to the women of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, an all-female, all-African American unit that resolved a backlog of more than 17 million pieces of mail during World War II. Mrs. Davis is the oldest living member of the 6888th.

One resource I want to highlight and recommend this month for both student veterans and those of us who advise them is the revamped Student Success Hub from Student Veterans of America - studentveterans.org/success-hub.

This website provides excellent free resources helpful to student veterans at all stages of their college career. The site covers the gamut - from exploration and preparation, to the academic experience, and finally to post-education employment. The National Academic Advising Center area provides personalized advising for transitioning service members, and guidance on maximizing their GI Bill benefits. Students can use the “What can I do with this major” tool to help match their career and education goals, and have access to success coaches. A section with academic support services is expanding, so check back often.



The Hub’s “Resource Center” will be a space containing wellness, financial, and personal development resources and tools that support a veteran’s success to, through, and beyond college. As students get closer to graduation and are looking for internship or employment opportunities, the Hub’s “Career Center” area helps students with employment readiness, building effective résumés, and networking with top employers.

To access some of these services, students will need to create a free account on the “MySVA” portal: <https://studentveterans.my.site.com/s/login/SelfRegister>.



In mid-February, the Veterans Educational Training Office added a new staff member. Blake Sykes came on board as the VET Program Coordinator, and will help me provide supportive programming to student veterans both at NDSU and throughout the state of North Dakota. Blake is a military veteran with overseas deployment time and aircraft maintenance experience, and comes to us already very plugged in to the local veteran support network. You should soon be hearing more from him and meeting him as he gradually gets more involved in our VALOR board and other veteran assistance projects.

For the past few weeks, NDSU’s Community Counseling Services has been hosting informal discussion groups for military-affiliated students every Tuesday at Noon. These will continue until the end of the semester, and potentially resume in the fall. Any military student is invited to come chat with others about whatever is on their mind as they are navigating through the NDSU experience. Students don’t have to commit to all sessions; just come when you can! The group meets in Morrill Hall 214.



LET’S TALK

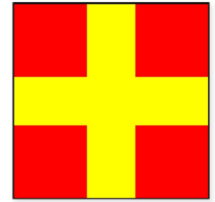
In the month of March, the VET staff will once again be assessing and following up on alerts reported by instructors through the Bison Advise system on military students that seem to be struggling. Thank you to all those who’ve taken time to submit these reports! We’ll be trying to connect any students having academic difficulties with helpful resources.

Please let me know if I can help with any student issues that are related to military connections!

The Salty Times

Beatrice Newman and Andrew Hatori, BSV

We have been actively engaged with Bison Student Veterans! In January, we had a packed schedule that included a welcome-back meeting where we discussed our goals for the semester and new times. We also had a welcome-back social hour at Suite Shots, a local venue. Additionally, we hosted a booth during involvement week, allowing us to introduce our organization to the entire student body and connect with new members.



**R-Romeo
Do Not Pass
Ahead of Me**

On January 23, we organized our first Military Services Day, where we invited representatives from various organizations such as the Disabled Veterans of America, VA Veterans Benefits Administration, Becker County Veterans Affairs Office, NDSU's Veterans Certifying Official, NDSU's Veterans Educational Training, and our organization, BSV. The primary objective of this day was to provide military students with a convenient "one-stop-shop" to access the benefits they might require or desire.

At the end of March, we will be hosting elections. The following positions will be available and **MUST** be filled:

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer



Positions that are open, but are not required by NDSU:

- Event Coordinator/Personal Relations
- Secretary/Historian

New office holders will be announced at our first April meeting.

Graduation Cords will be handed out during "dead week" (April 29-May 3) for eligible military-affiliated students. A table will be in the Memorial Union April 29, 12-4 PM, and May 2, 12-5 PM.

The Student Veterans of America Conference National Conference for January 2025 has been announced, BSV is looking to send members to this conference that will be held in Colorado Springs, CO. Fundraising and preparations have started.

****Meetings are now the 1st Wednesday and the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Monthly meetings are still at 5 PM in Morrill 111.****



- March 13: Monthly Meeting: cut short due to mandatory leadership training Morrill 111, 5-5:50
- March 20: Monthly Social Hour: Labby's Bar and Grill
- April 3: Monthly Meeting: BOLF's Ruck March, election results, Morrill 111, 5-7 PM
- April 17: Last Social Hour, location TBD
- May 1: Last meeting, Morrill 111, 5-7 PM

Connect with BSV via [email](#) or [Facebook](#).



March is Women's History Month. Please join VALOR in recognizing and honoring the contributions of women who have served or are currently serving in the U.S. military. The Department of Defense is honoring the contributions and achievements of women throughout March by featuring them on their website (see [here](#)). Learn more about the ways in which women have served, and continue to serve, our country.



Hi all, Olivia here with this edition of the Career Corner.

As we emerge further and further in the spring semester, I thought it may be helpful to highlight a few tools and resources that we have related to career exploration and job search. Whether you are looking for an internship over the summer, a full-time job, or wanting to expand your network these tools may be right for you.



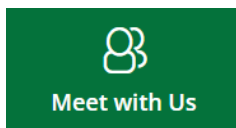
Do you ever wonder about the possibilities within your major or career field – what you can do with it, the type of organizations you can work for, or just overall tips for finding employment? Well then, the [What Can I Do With This Major?](#) tool is right for you! It can also give you language to help search for positions in job boards and give you a stronger understanding of what is out there for you.

[O*NET](#) is resource that breaks down careers and shows you what a typical day may look like. It highlights tasks, technology, skills, education, abilities, values, and even work styles to give you an idea if it is a career you would



enjoy or thrive in. One useful feature in O*NET is the Military Crosswalk where you can look at careers that line up with previous experience in the military.

Our [employment trends tool](#) is useful if you are job searching, looking to justify a negotiation/raise, or to see the companies that hire for a particular industry. It allows you to narrow down the data by state, and county to get the most accurate information.



If you want to sit down and talk with anyone regarding these tools, or about your own job search, you can [schedule a meeting with us](#) or stop by Ceres Hall 306, Monday – Friday, 9 AM – 4 PM. We look forward to chatting with you!

- NDDVA**
facebook.com/NDDVA/
- DAV North Dakota**
facebook.com/davnorthdakota/
- American Legion Post 2**
facebook.com/americanlegionpost2/
- American Legion Post 21**
facebook.com/legionpost21/
- North Dakota American Legion**
facebook.com/NDAmericanLegion/
- Fargo VFW Post 762**
facebook.com/fargovfwclub/

West Fargo VFW Post 7564
facebook.com/VFW7564.org/

Dilworth VFW Post 1223
facebook.com/VFW-Post-1223-106022496155155/

NDSU Bison Student Veterans
facebook.com/BisonVeterans/



Meet the Tinker Rosies
The first all-female engine crew at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., works on a B-25 engine in 1943.
#WomensHistoryMonth

Benefits Update

Military and Veteran Certification Office



Todd Yackley

Todd can be reached by phone at (701) 231-9782 or by email at todd.yackley@ndsu.edu

Greetings from the Military and Veterans Certification Office.

We are on our way to another year down. Things have been busy, but have been going smooth as well. I want to remind everybody that you should be getting early registration. This allows you to register with the seniors and the athletes. If your registration date is incorrect. Please let me know right away so I can get it corrected.



The window for summer FTA will open March 15th. Don't forget, it closes seven days before the start of each semester. Fall FTA will open up around June 20th and will close seven days prior to the semester start.

If for some reason, you are missing a spring CERT, let me know ASAP.

Continue to have a great semester. I am here if you need anything, don't hesitate to reach out.

Coming Up

March

Navy Reserve Birthday	March 3
Hug a GI Day	March 4
Seabee Birthday	March 5
K9 Veterans Day	March 13
American Legion Birthday	March 15
Rosie The Riveter Day	March 21
Medal of Honor Day	March 25
National Vietnam War Veterans Day	March 29

April

Gold Star Spouses Day	April 5
Air Force Reserve Birthday	April 14
Army Reserve Birthday	April 23
National Military Brats Day	April 30

Local Events

Veterans Coffee Hour (this is a free event), is held regularly at the **Fargo Air Museum** (located at 1609 19th Ave N.) on the **second Wednesday of every month from 10 AM-12 PM**. Join other veterans for coffee, conversation, and free Sandy's Donuts.



Vaccinations are available at the Fargo VA Health Care System for veterans enrolled in VA healthcare. For questions about **eligibility for the flu vaccine**, call **1-800-410-9723, ext. 3428**. To set up an **appointment for the Covid vaccine** call **1-855-846-8154** and select **option 2**.



- April 1-5 2nd Annual Decorating Contest , 2024 Theme is Rainbow Rush—sign up [here](#).
 - April 3,10 & 17 Safe Zone Training—Levels 1-3 (via Zoom) Register [here](#).
 - April 5,12, 19 & 26 “Wear your Rainbow” Day—every Friday in April
 - April 6 LGBTQ+ Student Visit Day—see [here](#).
 - April 10 Including U Panel LGBTQ+ on Campus
 - April 12 National Day of Silence
 - April 12 Speaker, Taylor Brorby, Author of “Boys and Oil”
 - April 18 Lavender Graduation: Celebrate our graduates at MN State Technical College
 - April 27 A Day at the Games: Attend the Softball Game at 12 PM & the Baseball Game at 2 PM
- Contact Christopher.whitsel@ndsu.edu with questions.