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Colleagues and friends,

Welcome to the 2021 fall semester and the second fall semester where we continue to deal with an ongoing pandemic. I must admit I was hopeful in June that we would enter the fall with a sense that we were returning to some semblance of normal. Alas, for now, this is our normal.

I find myself in the same position I was in last year, concerned about the stress the pandemic is causing in our colleagues' and students' lives. Last fall I shared with you a guide produced by the World Health Organization. The guide, titled - [\*Doing What Matters in Times of Stress\*](#) - is a sketchbook filled with simple guidance to help you deal with the stress this type of event generates. A year later that stress has become endemic in our lives. I encourage you to take a look at the guide—it really is mostly pictures. I think it is important (and helpful) to acknowledge the enduring strain on our psyche and health.

**Doing What Matters  
in Times of Stress:**  
An Illustrated Guide



**Board Members**

- Brad Aune
- Carol Cwiak
- Chris Hanson
- Brennan Lemar
- Calie Lindseth
- Shelby Moen
- Jill Motschenbacher
- Devon Patton
- Jonathan Ross
- Craig Schwinden
- Andrea Smith
- Jerry South
- Jim Stoddard
- Amy Tichy
- Nicole Veselka
- Lonnie Wangen
- Thomas Webb



September is National Suicide Prevention Month. This month's *Call to Action* urges you to #BeThere for yourself and others and to seek help if you need it. No one should struggle in silence, help is literally a phone call away. Yet, we know from statistics that too many don't get the help they need when they need it. You will see and hear a lot about suicide prevention this month, but I challenge you to keep it at the forefront of your mind every month. Mental health resources are available to help address this heartbreaking epidemic. We can make a difference in others' lives with our awareness and attention.

It is difficult to know what will be happening in our community a month from now, but I remain hopeful that together we will get to the other side of this health crisis. Remember to be kind to yourself and give yourself the time and space you need to cope with these stressful times. Also, please remind students that NDSU has a number of resources available to them should they need help. For example, the student emergency fund, which is intended to help students with unforeseen financial emergencies that might otherwise prevent them from continuing their college education. The amounts funded average between \$50 - \$500 and do not need to be paid back.

If you have any student veteran matters that you need assistance with, do not hesitate to reach out to me or Jim Stoddard. We will continue to be available regardless of any changes in operations. As always, thank you for your commitment to VALOR and our student veterans at NDSU. Stay safe and well.

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 Ceres 329; or by phone at 701-231-9706; or by email at james.stoddard@ndsu.edu.

#### Health & Safety: Covid-19

NDSU continues to emphasize safe practices and vaccination to reduce the spread of the virus on campus.

Face masks are required in the classroom and recommended in other situations where physical distancing of six feet or more is not possible. There are also reporting requirements for those who test positive for the virus. Let's all do our best to #ProtectTheHerd.

As we head into a new semester and new school year, I thought I'd just pull some raw data and see if this prompts any thoughts or discussions. It's good to know where our military students are and what they're studying to make sure our supportive services are properly aligned.

As of Aug 31<sup>st</sup>, NDSU has only 363 GI Bill students registered for the fall 2021 term, which is down by about 90 from fall 2020 (454). About 75 are new freshmen or transfers to NDSU this fall.

Here's the current distribution of NDSU's military-connected students by College:

Engineering: 85  
Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences: 64  
Business: 48  
Health Professions: 44  
Science and Mathematics: 40  
Human Sciences and Education: 36  
Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources: 35  
Undeclared or Non-degree: 9  
Graduate School: \*2

\* There are 33 military students working on advanced/professional degrees within Colleges other than the Graduate School.

The second-most popular College for our military students, Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, covers a lot of ground. To break it down a bit, over half (37 of 64) are majoring in one of only three programs: Criminal Justice (17), Architecture (12), and Emergency Management (8), with just one or two in all of the other AHSS majors. Similarly, looking closer at the College of Science and Mathematics, the vast majority (34 of 39) fall into one of only two disciplines: Biology/Biological Sciences (20), and Psychology (14).

As most of you are aware, Scott Fuller, NDSU's GI Bill certifying official, left the position at the end of May. Throughout the summer, a staff member from Registration and Records was covering these duties part-time, and more recently, a part-time certifying official was also hired to assist—something that we in VALOR have been advocating for. Welcome to the team, Eric Rasmussen! A replacement full-time certifying official has also been hired, but is not expected to start until the beginning of October. This personnel situation has caused some delay in responding to students' inquiries about the processing of their military education benefits, so we've been advising students to be patient while the new team works through the case load (see Eric Rasmussen's article on page 7).

Veteran space enhancement update: I've been talking for a while about the four ergonomic study pods we are purchasing thanks to a Campus Improvement Project grant from NDSU Student Government. Because of some supply chain issues, they still aren't here, but the new estimated delivery is mid-September. Once they're set up, we'll make sure our military students are aware and can try them out.

The Combined Arms Institute in collaboration with partners recently introduced a brand-new presentation: "[15 Things Military and Veteran Kids Want You to Know](#)", which would be useful to anyone working with military family members. "This short, on-demand video brings the voices of military-connected youth to life, and allows us to take important steps toward cultural humility when interacting with these resilient and amazing kids". We know that military kids serve in their own way, and are often faced with some challenging and sometimes difficult experiences at a much younger age than many of their peers. This can impact, positively and negatively, how they navigate their place in society. This well-done video concisely discusses this from the military kid's perspective.



## Veteran's Voice

*Craig Schwinden*

*VALOR Student Veteran Representative*

Welcome Back Student Military Members and Veterans!

A special welcome to those veterans and military members that are new to NDSU. I hope your time here is positive and all your goals are realized. Those of you who are continuing on or starting your final year here, like me, congratulations for getting this far and buckle down for one more year. As always, thank you all for your service

I hope this monthly article provides you, regardless of where you are at in your education, with information to help you get all of the benefits which you have earned in a timely manner. I will endeavor to pass along information regarding where to go

(website or in-person) for benefits and services. Having said that, here are some important websites that you should follow:

- <https://benefits.va.gov/gibill>
- <https://www.va.gov/education/eligibility>
- <https://gibill.va.gov>
- <https://choose.va.gov/veteran/benefits>

Next, you may have already read in this issue of the VALOR newsletter that we currently do not have a full-time certification officer here at NDSU. While this is not ideal, the Records & Registration office is in the process of filling the position (see page 7 for more certification information). I, for one, have so far received the correct amount for my G. I. Bill benefits. If you have not received the benefits you believe you are entitled to, please reach out to the certification office and ask questions.

Lastly, and especially for new students, please check out our on-campus veteran's organization designed especially for students. The Bison Student Veterans or BSV, is a great organization that has come into its own in the last few academic years. Their Facebook page is

[Bison Student Veterans](#). I encourage you to get involved with this group. The previous leadership (now graduates of NDSU) did a great job of getting the organization off the ground and now a new leadership team is in charge and ready to take the group to the next level. But this organization, like all others, could always use extra help - GET INVOLVED! You can reach the leadership team via email at : [nds.bisonveterans@nds.edu](mailto:nds.bisonveterans@nds.edu).

Also, note that this newsletter spotlights a different student veteran every month. Please check it out and get to know some of the awesome student veterans we have on this campus.

Remember...

- Check out the above links...
- Check out BSV's Facebook page...
- GET INVOLVED!... and follow this newsletter!

If you have any questions, ideas about topics I should cover in future columns, or have something you believe I can help you with, please do not hesitate to contact me via email at [craig.schwinden@nds.edu](mailto:craig.schwinden@nds.edu).

**September is  
Suicide Prevention  
Month**

**#SPM19**

**#BeThere**  
for service members and Veterans.

**Veterans  
Crisis Line**



1-800-273-8255  
PRESS 1



# THE SPOTLIGHT

Name: Tyler Todd

Major/Minor: Criminal Justice

Originally from: Hawley, MN

Current city: Fargo, ND

Career plans after college: Work for a local police department or sheriff's office

Military Service/Awards: I enlisted in 2017 to the North Dakota Air National Guard 119th Security Forces Squadron. I am currently deployed to UAE in support of Operation Allies Refuge. I also work full time at the 119th Wing in Fargo and was nominated as the squadron's 2020 Airman of the Year.

NDSU activities/engagement: I attended Cru and Bison sports events. I look forward to coming home to an open campus.

Community activities/engagement: I volunteer at my hometown church's youth group, where I organize the games and help mentor high school and junior high students.

An interesting tidbit: I have been working on ground school for my private pilot's license and will begin flying with an instructor when I return to Fargo.

Favorite experience/memories/etc. at NDSU: Meeting some of my best friends I have today, who also happen to be veterans as well.



## CALL TO ACTION: **#BETHERE**

As we roll into the second fall of the pandemic, our mental health has become increasingly strained. We are all tired and frustrated and daily struggles seem weightier under the cloud of uncertainty we are under. This coupled with political division, social angst, economic uncertainty, health issues, feelings about the withdrawal from Afghanistan, and other concerns strain our social/emotional/mental bandwidth and create a potentially dangerous situation.

September is National Suicide Prevention Month. Now, more than ever, may we all make an effort to both talk to others about what we are struggling with and be there to talk to and listen to those around us who may be struggling. And if you or someone you know is in crisis, please call the suicide prevention line.

NATIONAL  
**SUICIDE**  
PREVENTION  
LIFELINE™

**1-800-273-8255**



**Fire Watch***Brennan Lemar and Devon Patton, BSV*

Welcome back everyone! We would like to extend an additional welcome to all of our students that are in their first semester here at NDSU. We know that many of us are excited to return to in person learning and these last few weeks have been a refreshing change of pace to say the least.

Over the summer several of us participated in the Brady Oberg Legacy Foundation Ruck March raising awareness for combat related PTSD. In total the march covered 180 miles in just over 56 hours and raised just under \$20,000. Those funds will be used to promote happy and healthy lives for combat veterans through the use of recreational retreats and scholarships. We plan to continue our community involvement in veteran oriented activities throughout the local area as the year progresses.

The situation that has unfolded in Afghanistan over the past few weeks has been tough to witness for many of us and we are sure that many still aren't sure how they feel yet. Please know that your service and your sacrifices are not forgotten. We want to take this moment to remind everyone that while our education is very important, as we navigate through this semester, we need to continue to take care of ourselves and each other. Please do not hesitate to utilize the resources available to you.

We will be starting off our year with our first meeting on Tuesday, September 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM in the Meadow Lark room of the Memorial Union. We are excited as this will be our first HyFlex meeting offered for BSV. We look forward to meeting our new members and starting the year off strong.

We hope to get the ball rolling again with NDSU's University Relations and continue highlighting what our National Guardsmen are doing in response to events around the country. We will continue to support those individuals as they balance both academic and mission success. The NDSU Counseling Center will be attending one of our meetings this fall and collaborating with us on how we can assist that transition back and forth. If you have any experience in helping with these events, please reach out. As veterans we are oftentimes averse to drawing attention to ourselves but know that your support and camaraderie is greatly appreciated.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

- If you have military orders that will result in class absence you can submit your orders to NDSU's official reporting system ([https://www.ndsu.edu/deanofstudents/student\\_advocacy/excused\\_absence\\_policy\\_and\\_notifications/](https://www.ndsu.edu/deanofstudents/student_advocacy/excused_absence_policy_and_notifications/)) and they will notify all your instructors for you.
- The VA has many outreach events scheduled each week on a wide variety of topics relevant to veterans that you can access for free -see them [here](#).
- NDSU Career and Advising Center has teamed up again with JCPenney on Suit Up! This event provides NDSU students, faculty, and staff a special code to save on career apparel. Text 701 to 67292 today to get your 30% off coupon for NDSU's Suit Up! event. To attend, click [here](#)! Coupons can be used online or in-store September 3-11.
- North Dakota Veteran Affairs has an extensive listing of benefits and services available - check it out [here](#).
- Team Rubicon, staffed in large part by veterans, deploys to disaster areas to assist with debris removal, getting supplies into remote areas, and other response and recovery-oriented missions. If you would like to volunteer with this noteworthy organization, you can learn more [here](#).
- [Warrior Rising](#) supplies free support to veterans and their immediate family members interested in starting their own business.



# Career Corner

Jerry South, Assistant Director, Career Coaching, NDSU Career and Advising Center



Welcome back to school! I hope your summer was relaxing and has allowed you to regroup and refocus your energy. Now that you are getting back into a college routine (somewhat back to normal) it is time to start thinking about the plans you have for the future. What do you plan to do with your degree? Have you had the opportunity to network with employers in your industry of choice? Is it time to start thinking about getting an internship or Co-Op to get some experience under your belt; maybe put some of that classroom knowledge into practice? As those gears start turning and the questions of how to explore and prepare to reach these goals arise, let me introduce you to Handshake...NDSU's new job board. If you are a returning student, you may have used CAREERLINK when looking for employment opportunities in semesters past. Well let me tell you that you are in for a real treat with Handshake!

Handshake is very much like Indeed when it comes to the ease of use and visual alignment with your search criteria and viewing job opportunities. Your NDSU blackboard log in credentials have already been imported into the system, so all you need to do is log into the main page using your NDSU (not NDUS) email address, enter your credentials into the CAS login page and start filling out your profile on Handshake. A quick and very important tip: skip down toward the bottom and find the Manage Documents button. Use this feature to upload your resume directly into the system. On the right side of that page after it is uploaded is a button that asks if you want to build your profile using your resume. Click that button and Handshake will read your resume content and automatically develop your profile, you just need to confirm all the imported information is correct...takes about 5 minutes! Handshake also you to make your profile viewable to employer, so they can reach out directly to you if they think you are a good fit for an opening they have available.

All our career fairs and other events are posted in Handshake as well. It is very easy to research the employers, their positions, find their booth number and location for in-person events or schedule a virtual meeting for our online fair. That is right, you heard it here first....we are going back to in-person fairs in the Fargo Dome on September 22<sup>nd</sup> and also having a virtual fair on September 28<sup>th</sup>. These aren't the only fairs we have this fall. We are also hosting Meet the Firms on September 14<sup>th</sup>, and the Sales and Marketing Fair on October 20<sup>th</sup> (both will be held downtown in Barry Hall).

As always, if you need help translating your military experience on your resume, searching for opportunities or practice interviewing, we are here for you. And if you don't have professional interview clothes readily available, we have a Career Closet where you can sign something out for up to two weeks, free of charge. Drop in our zoom or physical studio Monday thru Friday, 10 AM thru 4 PM for assistance. If you would prefer an appointment, just reach out via Navigate.

## PSYCHARMOR: WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED TODAY?



[PsychArmor](#) provides an excellent series of courses, podcasts, and webinars focused on educating the civilian community about military culture. All of the items produced by [PsychArmor](#) are free to the learner. The coursework offerings are compact online training videos delivered by national subject matter experts. Presentations are grouped by topic and by role in working with veterans, so you can easily explore the content that interests and applies to you. You can register for a free account to keep track of your learning, but that's not required to view the presentations. You can also earn [badges](#) for taking small blocks of courses that are topically focused.

*"The purpose of human life is to serve, and to show compassion and the will to help others."  
~ Albert Schweitzer*

**Certification of Benefits****Eric Rasmussen, NDSU Interim VA Certifying Official**

National Guardsmen, Active Duty Members, Reservists, Military Family and Veterans:

If you were not aware, Scott Fuller has left the position of Military and Veterans Representative. We will be hiring a full-time replacement in October.

My name is Eric Rasmussen. I am NDSU's new VA Certifying Official. I was the Minnesota Army National Guard's GI Bill Manager for 12 years and recently moved to North Dakota. I served 15 years in the MNARNG as a combat medic, infantryman, and flight paramedic. Like you, I am also a student and will be splitting my time between this office and attending classes. I will be in the office Monday mornings from 8 AM -12 PM and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 AM - 4: 30 PM.

If Sophia, Kalli, or I are not in the office, please send an email to [ndsuveterans@ndsu.edu](mailto:ndsuveterans@ndsu.edu) to have your questions answered within 72 hours. If you have to drop off documentation, please leave it with Jodi Pierce in the Records and Registration office (below the vets office.)

If you have not done so already, there are four extremely important steps for military students to complete to receive VA and DoD benefits.

Step 1: Apply for your GI Bill and send your certificate of eligibility to the NDSU Veterans Office

The application for the GI Bill is located at: <https://www.va.gov/education/how-to-apply/>. Once you have applied, please send an email to [ndsuveterans@ndsu.edu](mailto:ndsuveterans@ndsu.edu) with your name, student ID number and what chapter of the GI Bill you are applying for. Approximately 30 days after a new application, the VA will send you a certificate of eligibility. Our office needs this document to properly certify you.

Step 2: Apply for your State Tuition Benefits if you are National Guard

Students in the North Dakota National Guard can apply for State Tuition Assistance to receive a 35% tuition waiver up front, followed by a 65% reimbursement to the student at the end of the term. The application is located at: <https://www.ndguard.nd.gov/education-services>.

Students in the Minnesota National Guard will apply for State Tuition Reimbursement at the end of the term with their units/wings. You only need to submit a copy of your bill and grades along with the request form to your Unit Admin NCO or Readiness NCO.

Step 3: Apply for Federal Tuition Assistance

Students serving in all Army components need to create an account at [ArmyIgnited.com](http://ArmyIgnited.com) and select an "education pathway" to get started. The Army has not fully loaded NDSU into their website so they are offering ETPs which are essentially IOUs for payment to NDSU at a later date. Since the date of payment is not know, credit will not be applied to your account until the Army sends payment to NDSU.

North Dakota Air Guard Service Members may now use the FTA pilot program through AFVEC. The application can be completed here: <https://afvec.us.af.mil/afvec/public/welcome>

Step 4: Apply for In-State Tuition if you are not a North Dakota Resident

North Dakota law just changed to allow currently serving guard, active duty, veterans and dependents of veterans to receive in-state tuition at ND state schools. The application can be found in your campus connection account under the e-forms option. This application must be completed no later than September 10<sup>th</sup> to be applied to your account.

*"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." ~Nelson Mandela*



### VACCINATED?? CASH IN!!

NDSU fully vaccinated students can apply now for a \$100 COVID-19 vaccination incentive. Yes, that is correct - everyone who is vaccinated and applies gets \$100!

If you are already fully vaccinated, great! Simply submit the [request form](#) by October 31, 2021.

If you haven't been vaccinated yet, make sure to receive **your first shot by September 15** to allow enough time to get your second shot by October 15, 2021 to qualify. Pfizer/Moderna vaccinations require multiple weeks between the first and second vaccinations. Once you are fully vaccinated you may submit the request form.

After you submit the request form Student Health Service will verify your vaccination and Customer Account Services will process the \$100 payment (approximately two weeks if no problems are encountered in verifying the vaccination).

Information about where to obtain a vaccine can be found at this link. NDSU Student Health Service also provides free vaccinations to students, just call 701-231-7331 to make an appointment. If you have any questions, email NDSU Student Health Service at [ndsu.studenthealthservice@ndsu.edu](mailto:ndsu.studenthealthservice@ndsu.edu) or call 701-231-7331.

## COMING UP

### September

National Suicide Prevention Month	Month of Sept.
National Service Dog Month	Month of Sept.
V-J Day	September 2
Patriot Day	September 11
National POW/MIA Recognition Day	September 17
Air Force Birthday	September 18
Air National Guard Birthday	September 18
Gold Star Mother's and Family's Day	September 26

### October

U.S. Navy Birthday	October 13
Day of the Deployed	October 26

### November

National Family Caregivers Month	Month of Nov.
Warrior Care Month	
National Veterans & Mil. Family Month	
National Veterans Small Bus. Week	November 1-5
Marine Corps Birthday	November 10
Veterans Day	November 11
Armistice/Remembrance Day	November 11

### December

Civil Air Patrol Birthday	December 1
Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	December 7
U.S. National Guard Day	December 13
National Wreaths Across America	December 18

### Local Events

The Veterans Mental Health Conference, sponsored by the Fargo Vet Center and the Veterans Warrior Foundation, will be held **Friday, Oct 29<sup>th</sup>**, at the Holiday Inn (13th Ave S) in Fargo. This all-day conference is focused on helping civilian mental health providers understand military culture and other issues in order to better treat veteran patients. 6 CEU credits will be awarded. For more information contact the Fargo Vet Center: (701) 237-0942.

On **Thursday, Nov 18<sup>th</sup>**, from **Noon to 1 PM** (CST) on Zoom, NDSU's "Including U" discussion series will host a panel discussion on Veteran Perspectives on Campus. These sessions are open to all of the NDSU community: faculty, staff, and students. Panel participants are TBD. <https://ndsu.zoom.us/j/97428576932?pwd=aEJ6K1Y4NINDUm1BQXJiY04yR21EZz09>.

Free Flu Shot Schedule at the Fargo VA Medical Center (2101 Elm St. N) for vets enrolled in VA Health Care (if you're not enrolled, or have questions about eligibility, ask Jim Stoddard).

**-Sept. 22 and 29 and Oct. 6 from 8 AM to 2 PM** via drive-through (follow the signs).

**- Oct. 13 and 19 from 8 AM to 3 PM** in the third-floor auditorium.

**- Oct. 5 and 12 from 4 to 6 PM** in the first-floor primary care department.