



## *Front Lines – January 2017 Edition*

Greetings and welcome to this the January 2017 edition of *Front Lines*, the unofficial newsletter of Cuyahoga Community College's Veterans' Initiative.

First and foremost... Happy New Year! May all of you enjoy much success this coming semester both at school and at home. Second... welcome to the newest members of our veteran campus community here at Tri-C. Here's a very full look at what's happening...

**Veteran Campus Support Teams Ready To Go:** All student veterans -- especially those of you new to Tri-C this semester -- are reminded that the Veterans Campus Support Teams at each respective Tri-C campus (EAST, METRO, WEST, WEST SHORE, The Veterans Education Connection Center at Louis Stokes VAMC – Wade Park), and the Veterans Service Office at Brunswick University Center) are “open for business.” The Support Teams will be able to assist you with day-to-day access to resources and opportunities both here at the College and in the Greater Cleveland Community. These folks are your “first starting point” in helping you with veteran issues both on and off campus. Your Veteran Campus Support Teams are comprised of specialists from key departments which data tracking has shown are those departments in which veterans require services. A complete listing can be found in the Veterans Guidance packet downloadable off the College Veterans website at: [www.tri-c.edu/veterans](http://www.tri-c.edu/veterans)

**Note:** In all cases, it is recommended to call first to schedule an appointment with the Support Team members at your campus.

**GI Bill Certifying Officials:** All student veterans using any form of the GI Bill are also reminded that whenever you register for classes, add classes, or drop classes... **YOU MUST SEE YOUR CAMPUS GI BILL CERTIFYING OFFICIALS.** The Certifiers are the direct link with the Regional VA Educational Benefits Office in Buffalo. Your GI Bill Certifiers are as follows:

At WEST and Brunswick it is Mr. Damian Thorkelson (216-987-5203) and Kristie Ignacio (216) 987-5406. At EAST it is Ms. Vanessa Traylor (216-987-2009) and Maria Oriti (216) 9897-2118. At METRO it is Ms. Della Hilbert (216-987-4164). At Corporate West & Westshore it is Michelle Knoll (216) 987-5884.

**Veterans Upward Bound – At the Ready:** Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) at Tri-C provides FREE comprehensive support services to eligible veterans who need additional help in Math, English and Science to complete their first degree. If you are enrolled or have been placed in a remedial Math or English course and are in need of additional help in these areas, please call the VUB main office at 216-987-4938 to schedule an appointment with our Student Advisor. Classes begin soon, so don't delay! Check out the VUB website at: [www.tri-c.edu/apply/specialinterest/veterans/Pages/VeteransUpwardBound.aspx](http://www.tri-c.edu/apply/specialinterest/veterans/Pages/VeteransUpwardBound.aspx).

**Veterans Today Club:** With several hundred student veterans at Tri-C you should all be aware that there is a great opportunity for networking through the Veterans Today Club. For further information about joining and participating, contact your campus Veterans Today Club coordinator at 216-987-4938.

**Afghanistan Veterans Encouraged to Apply for the Ohio Veterans Bonus** (*Bonus payments range from \$500 to \$1,500*): The Ohio Veterans Bonus continues a tradition of awarding bonuses to Ohio veterans that dates back to the Civil War, according to the Ohio Department of Veterans Services (ODVS).

“Ohio veterans answered the call to service when our nation needed them most,” said Chip Tansill, director of the Ohio Department of Veterans Services. “It is an honor to reward these brave men and women who fight for our nation’s freedom. The payment is \$100 a month to veterans who served during the eligible periods in Afghanistan up to a maximum of \$1,000. For veterans who served in other parts of the world during these times, the payment is \$50 a month up to a \$500 maximum. Veterans medically discharged as a result of combat service can receive \$1,000, regardless of how much time they spent in theater, plus up to \$500 for months of service elsewhere. Family members of those killed in action or who died from disease as a result of their in-theater service can receive a bonus of \$5,000 plus whatever the service member was eligible for, up to \$6,500.

The eligible time period for service in Afghanistan or any location outside Afghanistan is from Oct. 7, 2001 through a date to be determined by the President. Eligible veterans must have been Ohio residents at the time of their entry into the service, and must be Ohio residents at the time they apply. As of December 10, 2015 the Ohio Veterans Bonus program has paid 89,771 claims, amounting to more than \$73.3 million. The Ohio Veterans Bonus is not financed with taxes. Ohio voters overwhelmingly approved a constitutional amendment allowing the state to sell bonds to provide a special payment from the Ohio Honors Veterans Fund to servicemen and women.

To apply for the bonus, visit [www.veteransbonus.ohio.gov](http://www.veteransbonus.ohio.gov), or any County Veteran’s Service Office (see [www.dvs.ohio.gov](http://www.dvs.ohio.gov) for an interactive map of the county offices). Veterans and military families can also call toll-free to 1-877- OHIO VET (1-877-644-6838).

**Military One Source eNewsletter!** The link below will take you directly to the new MOS eNewsletter. Each month, this newsletter covers topics of interest to both single service members and military families: Healthy Living, Family Life in the Military, Personal and Family Readiness, Career and Education Spotlight, and Tools and Resources. By clicking on any one of those topical panels, you will be able to access the monthly article! Read all five articles or just one, the choice is yours, but all of the options are available within one easy to use format! <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/enewsletter>

**Veterans Benefits List:** Follow the link the below for a list of Web sites that provide **information on Veterans benefits and how to file/ask for them**. Accordingly, there are many sites that explain how to obtain books, military/medical records, information and how to appeal a denied claim with the VA. Nearly 100% of this information is free and available for all Veterans, the only catch is: you have to ask for it, because they won't tell you about a specific benefit unless you ask for it. You need to know what questions to ask so the right doors open for you and then be ready to have an advocate who is willing to work with and for you, stay in the process, and press for your rights and your best interests. [Veterans Benefit List](#)

**January Ohio Department of Veterans Services Newsletter:** Here is the link to the January 2017 edition of the Ohio Department of Veterans Services electronic newsletter. We hope it is both interesting and useful to you. Please share it with other veterans: [http://www.dvs.ohio.gov/HOME/Monthly\\_Newsletter](http://www.dvs.ohio.gov/HOME/Monthly_Newsletter) Also, please take the time to check out our social media pages at [www.ohiovet.gov](http://www.ohiovet.gov) and encourage other veterans to subscribe to our news updates.

**[Connect to the Ohio Department of Veterans Services online](#)**

ODVS web: <http://dvs.ohio.gov/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/ohiodepartmentofveteransservices>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/#!/OhioVets>

**FREE Legal Aid Clinics:** The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland will be sponsoring a series of FREE legal aid clinics in the coming weeks. At these clinics, attorneys are available for free brief advice on legal matters relating to shelter, safety, consumer issues, and legal issues related to health, education, work, income and immigration.

In addition to providing help via neighborhood clinics – people in need can contact Legal Aid anytime for help – see details at: <http://lasclev.org/contact/>

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1**

**Special Clinic for U.S. Veterans**

**2:30 – 4:00pm**

*Call 216-391-0264 for an appointment*

**More info:** <https://lasclev.org/event/02012017/>

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2**

**Expungement Clinic**

*By Appointment Only – Please Call 888-817-3777*

**More info:** <https://lasclev.org/event/02022017/>

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4**

**10:00 AM – 11:30 AM**

West Side Catholic Center, 3135 Lorain Avenue

**More info:** <https://lasclev.org/event/02042017/>

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8**

**2:00 PM – 3:30 PM**

Catholic Charities Ashtabula, 4200 Park Avenue, Third Floor

*Call 440-992-2121 for an appointment*

**More info:** <https://lasclev.org/event/02082017/>

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11**

**10:00 AM – 11:00 AM**

Cleveland Public Library – Memorial-Nottingham Branch, 17109 Lakeshore Blvd

**More info:** <https://lasclev.org/event/02112017/>

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14**

**2:00 PM – 3:30 PM**

Oberlin Community Services, 285 South Professor Street, Oberlin

*Call 440-774-6579 for an appointment*

**More info:** <https://lasclev.org/event/02142017/>

That's it for now... More as I get it...

*CDR Rick DeChant, USCG (ret)  
Executive Director  
Veterans Initiative  
Cuyahoga Community College*