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SPRING 2022

Education Guide

March 10, 2022

THE GI BILL:
USE IT FOR
NON-COLLEGE
PROGRAMS

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SKILLS WITH
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LEARNING

PREPARE
FOR HIGHER
EDUCATION
IN 5 EASY STEPS

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TIPS FOR GOING BACK TO SCHOOL AS A MILITARY SPOUSE

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USING THE GI BILL FOR NON-COLLEGE DEGREE PROGRAMS

Find out how to use the GI Bill to pay for specific training programs, like HVAC repair, truck driving, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training, and barber or beautician school.

Courtesy of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Am I eligible for education benefits for a non-college degree program?

You may be eligible for education benefits through the GI Bill if you meet both of these requirements.

Both of these must be true:

- You qualify for the GI Bill, and
- You enroll, or plan to enroll, in a non-degree program at an approved school

Who's covered?

- Veterans
- Service members
- Qualified dependents

What benefits can I get?

- Help paying for tuition
- Money for books and supplies, up to \$83 a month

How do I get these benefits?

You'll need to apply for benefits. Visit <https://www.va.gov/education/how-to-apply/> for more information.

How much money will I get?

The amount you get depends on which GI Bill program you use and what school you go to. We pay you at the end of each month for the hours you've spent training, and we give you a monthly housing allowance based on the location of the school.



Review current payment rates

- **Post-9/11 GI Bill:** For training offered at non-degree schools, we pay the in-state tuition and fees up to the national maximum.
- **Other GI Bill programs:** We pay a monthly rate that depends on your specific program and your length of active service.

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ADVERTISING, CONSULTANTS

FABRIZIO DANOVA,

COREY HENDERSON,

GERARD KELLY, MARY VANDENBERG

ENGAGEMENT DIRECTOR

CHRIS VERIGAN

ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

VIVIAN DANDRIDGE-CHARLES

PUBLISHING & MEDIA DESIGN,

DIRECTOR

MARIE WOODS

VISUAL INFORMATION MANAGER

DOUGLAS GILLAM JR

PUBLISHING & MEDIA DESIGN,

CONTENT PRODUCER/DESIGNER

ALYSSA McBETH

VISUAL INFORMATION LEAD

SPECIALIST

ELLEN CHEUNG

VISUAL INFORMATION SPECIALIST

AMY WEBB

ADVERTISING OFFICE

633 3rd Street NW Suite 500

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT VETERANS TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION COURSES

Courtesy of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

If you want to gain computer experience to start or advance your career in the high-technology industry, find out if you're eligible for our Veteran Employment Through Technology Education Courses (VET TEC) program that matches you with a leading training provider to help you develop high-tech skills.

Am I eligible for this program?

You may be eligible for VET TEC if you meet all of the requirements listed below.

All of these must be true. You:

- Aren't on active duty or are within 180 days of separating from active duty, and
- Qualify for VA education assistance under the GI Bill, and
- Have at least one day of unexpired GI Bill entitlement, and
- Are accepted into a program by a VA-approved training provider

Note: Your VET TEC training won't count against your GI Bill entitlement, and you need only one day of unexpired GI Bill benefits to participate.

What types of training does VET TEC cover?

You can get training in one of these high-demand training areas:

- Computer software
- Computer programming
- Data processing
- Information science
- Media applications

What benefits can I get through this program?

With VET TEC, you can get:

- Tuition for a full-time, high-tech training program
- Money for housing during your training

Note: If you're on active duty, you're not eligible to receive a housing allowance.

If you attend your training program in person, your housing stipend will be equal to the monthly military Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) for an E-5 with dependents. This is based on the zip code where you attend your training.

If you participate in an online program, your stipend will be half of the BAH national average for an E-5 with dependents.

Note: If you don't attend a training for a full month, we'll prorate your housing payment for the days you train.

How do I apply?

You can apply for the VET TEC program online at [VA.gov/education](https://www.va.gov/education).

If we determine that you're eligible for VET TEC, you'll then apply to the VA-approved training provider of your choice. Your training provider may review your qualifications to assess whether they think you'll be able to successfully complete their training program and find meaningful, relevant employment.

VET TEC is a five-year pilot program. You can par-

ticipate as long as the funding is available.

Note: If you haven't already applied for VA education benefits, you'll also need to fill out an Application for VA Education Benefits (VA Form 22-1990) or apply online at [va.gov](https://www.va.gov).

How can I show that I've completed the program?

After you complete your training, you'll receive a certification of your new skills.

VET TEC training providers

For Veterans: Browse the list of VA-approved VET TEC training providers (<https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/FGIB/VetTecTrainingProviders.asp>).

A provider is considered "preferred" if the training facility agrees to refund tuition and fees if a student doesn't find meaningful employment within 180 days of completing the program.

For training providers: If you're a training provider interested in participating in the VET TEC program, you can learn more and apply at the training provider website.

Get more information

If you have questions about the program or how to apply:

- Call us at 888-442-4551. We're here Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ET. If you have hearing loss, call TTY: 711.
- Or email us at VETTEC.VBABUF@va.gov.



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5 STEPS TO PREPARE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Courtesy of Military OneSource

Perhaps you’ve decided to pick up some new skills or helpful knowledge. Maybe you’re leaving the service and want to recreate yourself or redefine your career. No matter why you’re pursuing higher education, you need a game plan — a course of action to get you from today to that moment you walk across the stage holding your diploma in hand. Here are some practical steps to take.

STEP 1: Contact the Voluntary Education Program

Before you get buried in college brochures, speak with an education professional through the Voluntary Education Program. An education professional can help guide you through planning and paying for your education, as well as eligibility requirements. Find your service-specific contact information below:

- [ArmyIgnitED](#)
 - [armyignited.com](#) or
 - 210-466-0470
- [Marine Corps Voluntary Education Program](#)
 - [usmc-mccs.org](#) or
 - 703-784-3340
- [Navy College Program](#)
 - [navycollege.navy.mil](#) or
 - 877-838-1659
- [Air Force Education Programs](#)
 - [afpc.af.mil](#)

- [Coast Guard Voluntary Education](#)
 - [forcecom.uscg.mil](#)
- [Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support, or DANTES](#)
 - [dantes.doded.mil](#)

STEP 2: Choose a college

Deciding which college to attend is much easier when you have the right information. As a service member, you have access to useful resources such as College Navigator, a free online tool from the National Center for Education Statistics. College Navigator provides information on more than 7,000 postsecondary education institutions so you can compare schools’ tuition, financial aid, accreditation information, graduation and retention rates, and more.

TA DECIDE is another helpful tool for comparing schools and programs. Designed for participants of the Department of Defense Military Tuition Assistance Program, it provides education costs and outcomes, as well as information about other military students who are participating in the tuition assistance program.

Still have questions about selecting a college or program? Contact your service-specific Voluntary Education Program listed above or contact your installation’s education center. Education counselors can help you decide which programs are the best fit based on your goals and help you find:

- Contact information for military-friendly schools and institutions that allow you to transfer previous

- college credits
- How to get your credentials converted and diplomas translated to meet state- or country-specific requirements
- Profiles on specific colleges and their credentials

STEP 3: Take your college admission exams

Get ready for some studying even before college begins. Most colleges and universities require admission exams with your application, such as the SAT Reasoning Test, the SAT Subject Tests, the American College Testing, or ACT, Readiness Assessment, Graduate Record Examinations or GRE, Graduate Management Admission Test or GMAT, and the General Education Development Test.

The Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support, or DANTES, can help you prepare for registration and cover the cost of some academic tests. DANTES also offers college prep resources that can help you prepare for these admission exams, sharpen study skills and identify your interests and aptitudes in choosing an area of study or career path. Visit [dantes.doded.mil](#) to learn more or to contact an education counselor.

STEP 4: Military Experience = College Credit

The tests you endured in combat can count just as much as quizzes in a classroom. The Joint Services Transcript converts your military experience into civilian college credit, provid-

ing documented evidence to colleges and universities of professional military education, training and occupation experiences. The Joint Services Transcript is a collaborative transcript program that replaces previous programs, making it easier for colleges to read and recommend credits.

STEP 5: Understand your financing options

As a service member, you have several options that can help fund your schooling so that you can concentrate on studying rather than paying the bills. Contact your installation’s education center for assistance with your college financial plan. Department of Defense education counselors can help you identify grants and other kinds of assistance for which you are eligible. Here is a sampling of programs and loans available:

- **Military tuition assistance** — provided by each service branch, offering up to \$4,500 of assistance per fiscal year
- **Montgomery GI Bill® and MGIB Tuition Top-Up Programs** — funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs
- **Tax credits and deductions** — such as the American Opportunity Tax Credit and the Lifetime Learning Credit
- **Federal grants and loans** — such as the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Perkins Loans, Stafford Loans and Federal Supplemental Education Opportunities Grant

GOING BACK TO SCHOOL AS A MILITARY SPOUSE

You’ve made the rewarding choice to go back to school. By pursuing your education goals, you can expand your job opportunities and boost your earning power. But where should you start? And what military spouse scholarships are out there to help?

Start with Spouse Education and Career Opportunities — SECO

The SECO program can provide you with the resources you need to get back in the education game.

- The MySECO website, designed exclusively for military spouses, ensures you have 24/7 online access to information for a successful return to school.
- Visit the MySECO Pursue Your Education section to identify your education path, plan for your education and compare colleges.
- You can also connect with a SECO career coach who can help you decide on an education path and how to pay for it.

Choosing the right education and training

Got a career in mind? The career you choose will determine the type of program you’ll need. Take a look at the differences between each program and decide what’s best for you.

Educational Programs	Length	Overview
Certificate programs	Weeks, months or years	Typically focus on specific skills and are offered by community colleges or technical schools
Associate degree	2 years	Offered by community colleges, an associate degree focuses on entry-level specialization within a field
Bachelor’s degree	4 years	Four-year colleges or universities award a bachelor’s degree in the arts or sciences
Advanced degree	2-4 years	Degrees beyond the bachelor’s degree can include master’s, specialist, professional and doctoral degrees

Options for a mobile military life

Don’t let a move stop you from going back to school. Consider online education or satellite campuses. You can discover and compare schools based on location, learning format, the ability to transfer credits and more with the College Scorecard on MySECO.

Scholarships for military spouses

Wondering how much is this going to cost you? There’s help out there.

- Check MySECO for financial assistance resources and career development opportunities offered specifically to military spouses and family members.
- The My Career Advancement Account Scholarship is a workforce development program that provides eligible military spouses with up to \$4,000 in financial assistance for the pursuit or maintenance, including continuing education courses, of a license, certification or associate degree necessary to gain employment in an occupation or career field. Spouses can also use funds for national tests to earn course credits required for the degree approved under the program, including the College Level Examination Program tests.
- Military spouses can sometimes take advantage of their spouse’s GI Bill® benefits. See Military OneSource’s veterans benefits section for more.
- The Department of Education provides billions of dollars of educational loans and grants for qualifying students each year. In order to be considered for financial aid, you’ll need to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

Visit MySECO today and begin your journey to learn, advance and succeed.

STEM education: the building block for career success

An education with a focus on STEM encompasses a broad series of disciplines that opens doors to many career fields.

In her own words, Maj. Esther Cleggs-Burns talks about how she began her career with an education in plant science with concentration in biotechnology from Fort Valley State University. Leveraging her skills and education gained at FVSU, she expanded her reach working for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency as the farm loan chief.

FVSU gave me the foundation to think through problems critically which has assisted in my development as an officer working in plans and operations. In addition, I joined ROTC my junior year which gave me a solid military foundation. Combining these backgrounds and experiences into a career, I didn't do it alone. I leaned on mentors and family as inspiration.

In high school, I had the desire to pursue biomedical engineering or become a pediatric physical therapist. During my senior year, my vice principal spoke to me about scholarships that were available in agriculture that were not available in other sectors. He enlightened

Courtesy of 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support), Army Reserve

me on different agriculture degree programs that would allow me to take the prerequisites I'd need to pursue the career I wanted and scholarships that would pay for my education. The USDA gave me a full ride to attend Fort Valley State University.

I learned the importance of chosen family while at college. The historically Black college and university experience is like none other. It was a family atmosphere that allowed the freedom to experience life, but also kept me focused on the goal of graduating. My professors, department head, and dean were all integral parts of my matriculation and development as a young adult. They afforded me opportunities for work-study, internships, and serving as an agriculture ambassador. They taught me the importance of building relationships, relationships I still have.

A lot of the men in my family served (my dad and all his brothers, my grandfather, my mom's brother, and my brother) and I wanted to follow in their footsteps and make them proud as the only woman in my family to serve.

In my military career, I have

had the opportunity to deploy with the Army Reserve to both Afghanistan and Qatar. Most recently, I commanded 85 Army Reserve soldiers, as part of Urban Augmentation Medical Task Force 005-1's deployment to Elmhurst Hospital in New York City in support of COVID-19 relief.

As a health service plans officer, I wasn't dealing directly with COVID patients but utilizing my civilian and Army skills to manage the team and keep these critical medical providers sharp and ready.

I am honored to serve in the military. Every assignment stretches me in a different way which benefits not only my military career, but my civilian career and personal development.

Yes, my family is sometimes nervous, fearful, and disheartened, but they are always proud. I have an extremely supportive husband and family that will be there for him as needed with our two girls. They serve when I serve. Along with family, prayer and meditation is how I deal with stress in my life.

I am fulfilled by what I do. I take pride in what I do. I enjoy the duality of having a civilian and military career.



Maj. Esther Cleggs-Burns has had the opportunity to deploy with the Army Reserve to both Afghanistan and Qatar. Most recently, she commanded 85 Army Reserve Soldiers, as part of Urban Augmentation Medical Task Force 005-1's, deployment to Elmhurst Hospital in New York City in support of COVID-19 relief.

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- ❖ Mentoring program with our top-field alumni, from veterans to veterans!
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TACKLE THE TRANSITION BACK TO THE U.S. FOR COLLEGE



By Julia Cahill | Stripes Europe

Starting college or university can be just as terrifying as it is exciting. The whole experience is full of the unknown. There's so much independence and responsibility – especially when your family is an ocean away. Don't worry! You can do this. Your school wouldn't have accepted you if they didn't think you could.

Here are my top tips and tricks to tackle the transition back stateside for college.

Practice “adulthood”

First thing's first. You're about to enter adulthood. It's much easier if you embrace it. This may mean different things for different people, but if your parents are still doing your laundry, this summer is a good time to change that. Can you grocery shop on your own? Go to the bank and use the ATM? Keep your room clean? Really take care of yourself? Use this brief time before you're plunged into the real world as a test run. Ask your parents all the questions you've yet to ask, and remember if you mess up it's not the end of the world. College is the time to learn from your mistakes.

Learn how to be alone

College is all about independence; it's time to start doing things on your own. Try going to a restaurant or a movie by yourself. Not with friends or your family, simply alone. Learning how to be on your own is a valuable life lesson. This was a major growing pain for me when I first started college. I was used to having my family nearby 24/7, and since they were in Europe while I was back in the States, it felt like I had no one to talk to. If I could go back and change that, I'd focus on learning how to better myself and feel all right being on my lonesome. Being alone isn't a bad thing. Over my college career, I've learned that it's simply time to enjoy your own company and get to know yourself a little better.

Be your own boss

The only person who is going to tell you what to do in college is yourself. I'm partial to virtual to-do lists (on fun interactive sites like Habitica) and a color-coded Google calendar to keep me doing what I need to do. Your intrinsic motivation is the only thing that determines if you go to class, maintain a semblance of hygiene, do your homework, stick to a budget, or even eat regular meals. There's no one to hold your hand or make sure that you're on track to succeed in college. That's your job. You are responsible enough to do this. It's time to prove it.

Travel smart and pack light

Have you looked into what it takes to fly the 7+ hours back stateside on your own? Even if someone is dropping you off this semester, it's nearly inevitable that you're going to make the trek by yourself. Do some research. Look into the Joint Travel Regulation (JTR CH7 Part C). If you qualify, it can be a lifesaver. Make sure your passport is up to date and that you're

comfortable with the travel route.

Try to avoid shipping things from Europe that you can buy once you've arrived on campus and avoid overpacking. I moved into my freshman dorm with two stuffed suitcases and tons of dinged-up boxes shipped through the university mail full of things I was convinced I absolutely needed. I had to go to my local mall to pick up things I'd forgotten anyway; all the boxes were just a hassle. Half of them ended up being ignored and stored under my bed all year. When it was time to move out, I donated most of the things I was convinced I needed to a local charity.

Health care

On a logistical note, make sure your health insurance is valid where your college or university is. TRICARE has same-day transfer coverage, you just have to go into your local TRICARE office and talk to a representative about switching your location. Private insurance may require a phone call or a visit, so get this done sooner rather than later. Make sure you know the emergency numbers for the services on your campus. Figure out how your local pharmacy works for medication and how the clinic nearest you provides care before you get there. This is something for you to do, not your parents. You'll be the one receiving care!

Don't forget loved ones

Call your parents — and not just because you need something. The time difference may be something to adjust to, but they miss you just as much as you are probably refusing to admit that you miss them. If your parents are anything like mine, help them figure out how to use software like FaceTime or Skype before you go. Figure out how to message and call your family (you could look into using popular programs like WhatsApp, Kakao Messenger, or iMessage) and do so on a regular basis. Take some photos of your favorite people with you to decorate your dorm. Going off to college doesn't mean that your parents no longer matter. I realized how much I took mine for granted when I left to live on my own. Although life gets hectic and it always seems like there's no time for nearly anything, talking to your family should be a priority.

Flexibility

My biggest tip to surviving your transition into freshman year? Be flexible. Go with the flow and learn things as you do. This is the time to get excited for the new life experiences coming your way. Revel in the time you have left living with your family. Everything is about to change.

Get more money for school through the Tuition Assistance Top-Up program

Courtesy of Department of Veterans Affairs

Does your college tuition cost more than what's covered by the Department of Defense (DoD) Tuition Assistance (TA) program? Find out if you can get more money to help pay for school through the Tuition Assistance Top-Up program.

Am I eligible for Tuition Assistance Top-Up?

You may be eligible for Tuition Assistance Top-Up if you're approved for federal TA and you meet both of these requirements:

- You qualify for Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty (MGIB-AD) or Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, and
- The cost of the course and fees is more than TA will cover

Who's covered?

Veterans and service members

What benefits can I get?

You can get more tuition funding to cover the difference between the full cost of a college course and the amount covered under active-duty TA for up to 36 months.

If you're using the Montgomery GI Bill

You'll get the difference between the DoD payment and the total cost of the course.

This benefit will be reduced, or charged, one month of entitlement for each payment received that is equal to the full-time monthly GI Bill rate.

Note: The combined amount paid by DoD and Tuition Assistance Top-Up can never be more than the total cost of the course.

If you're using the Post-9/11 GI Bill

VA will pay back your school the difference between the DoD payment and the authorized (approved) maximum tuition and fees.

This benefit will be charged based on training time no matter how much money you're paid back. Half-time training rates reduce your GI Bill benefit by a half-month for each month you're enrolled.

Note: The Post-9/11 GI Bill will often cover the full cost of tuition and fees, with the same amount of entitlement charged no matter how much is covered by TA. Be sure to consider your options before deciding to use both of these programs for the same courses. If you use these benefits separately, you're more likely to maximize your educational benefit funding.

Will it affect my GI Bill benefits if I use Top-Up?

Yes. You'll want to think carefully about your situation before applying for benefits through this program. You can talk with your education officer and use the GI Bill Comparison Tool to help you make your decision. If you're going to take more courses after leaving the military, figure out if the GI Bill benefits you have left will cover your needs.

How do I get these benefits?

You'll need to apply for education benefits. Visit <https://www.va.gov/education/how-to-apply/> for more information.

WHAT SCHOOLS ARE AVAILABLE TO CHILDREN ON MILITARY INSTALLATIONS?

Courtesy of Military OneSource

When it's time to relocate, it's important to know what education opportunities are available for your children at the new installation. The Defense Department is committed to making sure all military children receive a quality education that prepares them for success.

More than 60,000 school-aged military children are enrolled in 160 Department of Defense Education Activity, or DODEA, schools around the world. All other military-connected children are enrolled in public or private schools or participate in home-school programs. Schools on installations are either DODEA schools or public schools.

DODEA schools

DODEA's mission is to educate, engage and empower military-connected children to help them succeed in a dynamic world. DODEA schools are 100% accredited and globally positioned. Schools are grouped into three geographic areas:

- **DODEA Americas:** Over 21,000 students are enrolled in 50 schools in 17 locations, including Alabama, Cuba, Georgia, Kentucky, New York, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina and Virginia.
- **DODEA Europe:** On the continent, 64 schools educate approximately



25,000 students in 26 locations including Bahrain, Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

- **DODEA Pacific:** In this region, 45 schools in 17 locations in Guam, Japan and South Korea serve approximately 22,000 students.

The **DODEA Virtual School** is another education option, offering a variety of online academic and career-oriented courses that meet all DODEA graduation requirements.

Public schools on military bases

Currently, 161 public schools operate on military installations across the United States. Traditional public schools are the most common available schooling options for military families near military installations, according to the Government Accountability Office analysis of the 2018-2019 Department of Education statistics. In addition to traditional public schools, nine out of 10 installations had at least one public schooling option nearby, such as a charter or magnet school.

DOD strategies make sure that both public schools on military installations and DODEA schools comply with quality standards. For assistance selecting the best schooling option for your child's education, reach out to your local school liaison. School liaisons are located at each installation and support children grades pre-K through 12, parents, and educators who serve military students. School liaisons provide a wide variety of services which includes addressing educational concerns, challenges and issues. School liaisons can assist with transition support such as school selection and transfer of credits. They can also connect you to the Exceptional Family Member Program and your school's special education department, as well as help you navigate your new school district's special education program.

If you still need help figuring out school options for your children, Military OneSource education consultants are available 24/7/365 to help. Call 800-342-9647, set up a live chat or view overseas calling options to schedule a free and confidential consultation. You can also visit the DODEA site to learn more about education opportunities for military-connected children.

STUDY IN PARIS WITH A VETERANS SCHOLARSHIP

The American University of Paris proudly supports veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families. As a member of the Yellow Ribbon Program, we accept the Post 9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33) and the Survivors and Dependents Ed Assistance Program (Chapter 35). Students who qualify may be eligible for assistance for tuition, fees, books, and housing.

Yellow Ribbon Program funding, in combination with the University's own Veterans Scholarship (an additional €2,500 per semester or €5,000 annually), results in financial aid that covers almost all of the cost of AUP's full tuition fee.

AUP.EDU/US-VETERANS

AUP

The American University of Paris

Staying connected with your child’s teachers during deployment



Courtesy of Military OneSource

No matter where you are around the country or the world, you can take an active role in supporting your child’s education. With communication technology and strong interest, you can keep up with their grades and stay in touch with teachers. Children tend to perform better in school when their parents are involved in their education. Set the stage for success. Let your child know that school and education are important — whether you’re home or deployed.

Plan ahead to stay involved

Make a plan to stay active and involved in your child’s education at every stage.

- **Take advantage of Plan My Deployment.** Let the Plan My Deployment articles and resources, including the printable list of pre-deployment tasks and considerations, help you manage your numerous tasks, including setting the stage for your child’s education while you’re deployed.
- **Meet with teachers prior to deployment.** Set up a meeting before you prepare for deployment so you can work out your plan for staying connected.
- **Talk about how to stay in touch.** Ask your child’s teachers before you go about the best way to stay in touch. It might be through email, a school website or even texting.
- **Discover technologies.** Find out what

communication technologies you can access once you deploy.

- **Use the school’s online resources.** Department of Defense schools use GradeSpeed to keep families up to date on grades and attendance. Civilian schools may offer similar services.
- **Take advantage of the EFMP & Me services.** EFMP & Me can help you effectively navigate through the Department of Defense’s network of services and support for families with special needs, especially during deployment.
- **Share when you want to be informed.** Tell teachers what specific issues you want to know about, such as a low grade or an unexcused absence. It’s a good idea to let your child know what you’ve asked their teachers to share, and it’s also helpful to ask your child to share his or her school issues and concerns throughout your

deployment, too.

Keep in touch

There are lots of creative ways to stay in touch with your child and support his or her education. Try these ideas:

- **Stay in regular contact with your child’s teachers.** Check in as frequently as your mission allows via email or telephone.
- **Send a class gift.** Pick up something special from the area of the world where you’re deployed. You’ll be the students’ favorite parent. If it relates to what the class is studying, you’ll be the teacher’s favorite parent, too.
- **Ask your partner or child’s guardian for assistance.** Your partner can be your “boots on the ground” for all things educational. Reinforce your partner’s role to your children, and set your partner or guardian up for success. Your child’s designated guardian can oversee homework, talk with teachers and help your child get to school on time. Discuss successes and challenges with your care partner regularly. If your partner or child’s guardian has difficulty speaking English, ask the school to provide a translator.

Find time during your deployment to work on strengthening your connection with your child’s school. Your commitment to staying involved can set them up for success in the classroom and beyond.

Your local school liaison is your primary point of contact for all school-related matters, including helping with your child’s education questions and concerns while you’re deployed. You can also contact Military OneSource to speak with an education consultant. Call 800-342-9647. OCONUS/International.



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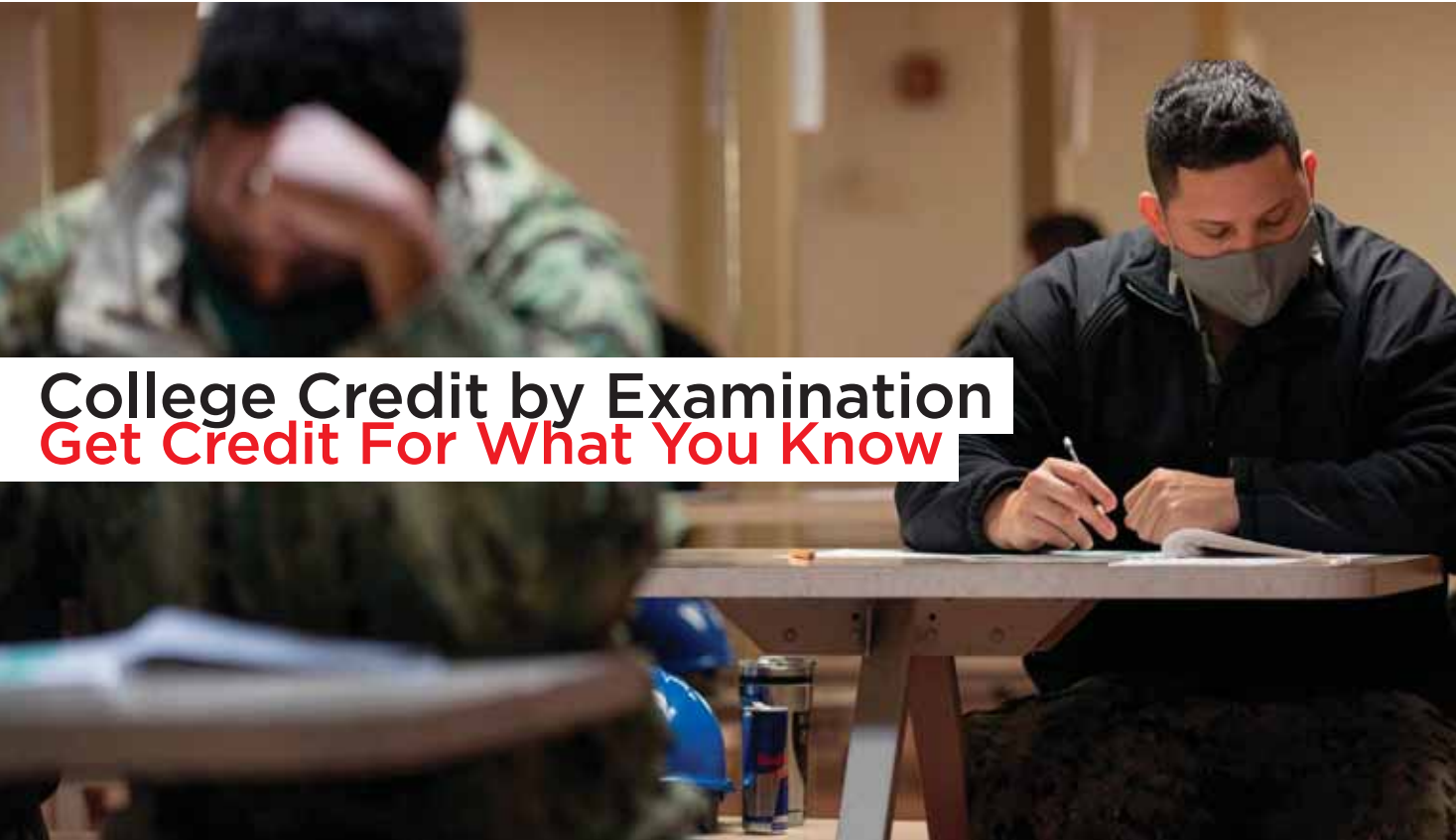
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Courtesy of Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Programs (DANTES)

College Level Examination Program (CLEP) and DSST

The College-Level Examination Program® (CLEP) offers you the opportunity to earn college credit for what you already know by taking any of the 33 introductory-level college subject exams. DSST exams are college subject

tests that you can take to earn college credit for knowledge you acquired outside of a traditional classroom. There are 38 subject exams from which to select in disciplines such as Business, Humanities, Mathematics, Physical Science, and more. Because both exams are funded by DANTES, you could save hundreds

or even thousands of dollars towards your degree. **Student benefits:** DANTES sponsors DSST and CLEP exams that test the level of knowledge gained through previous experiences. Both the DSST and CLEP exams are comparable to final undergraduate college course

exams. Taking and passing these exams enables Service members to gain college credit* that can be applied to meet degree requirements. Multiple exams are available, covering material commonly required for most degree programs. These exams can be taken at on-base and community-based National/International Test Centers. *College credit recommendations for these exams are made through the American Council on Education (ACE) and are subject to the acceptance of individual academic institutions.

- Earns college credit for prior knowledge
- Reduces course completion time; the average exam takes only a few hours vs. 8-15 weeks of course attendance
- Decreases time to complete degree; reduces the number of courses taken to complete a degree
- Saves money; DANTES funds one attempt per exam title for eligible examinees
- Avoids tuition assistance (TA) costs for courses replaced by credit earned through testing
- Exam scores are included on a Service member's Joint Services Transcript (JST)
- Free test prep and study



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materials are provided online, via mobile apps, and at installation libraries and education centers

Program eligibility:

- **Service Members:** Military personnel, to include active duty, Guard and Reserve components, U.S. Coast Guard, and USCG Reserve members must have and maintain a valid government-issued Common Access Card (CAC) to be eligible for DANTES funding.
- **U.S. Coast Guard Spouses:** Spouses of active duty and Reserve Coast Guard members must have and maintain the Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card, DD Form 1173 to be eligible for DANTES funding.
- **Air Force Civil Service employees:** Non-contract US Air Force civilian employees are eligible for DANTES-sponsored CLEP testing, but must test at on-base or fully-funded test centers.

Personnel not funded by DANTES

- Inactive Guard, Inactive Reserve, and Coast Guard Auxiliary
- Military Retirees
- Separated/Discharged Veterans
- DoD Acquisition Workforce Personnel
- Spouses, Dependents, and Civil Service employees of active duty Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force
- Spouses, Dependents, and Civil Service employees of National Guard and Reserve components
- Employees of the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Reserve

Cost and retest policy:

DANTES provides upfront funding of DSST test

fees, for the first attempt on all exam titles, for eligible military members. Military members who retest should use the civilian test registration procedures to pay for test costs. DANTES does not pay for retesting. If military test takers want to retake an exam previously funded by DANTES, a 90-day wait and self-payment of the current exam fee and administrative fees are required by the test center.

Locate a test center:

There are two types of test centers:

- **Fully-Funded:** Test centers may be located on or off base. DANTES funds the administration and test fees for service members.
- **Test Fee Only:** Test centers are off-base colleges and universities that provide testing. DANTES funds the test fee. Service members are responsible for paying the administration fee. Fees vary by institution.

To find a national or international DSST Test Center near you, visit <http://getcollegecredit.com/institutions/search>



Soldiers and Airmen used their prior knowledge to gain college credit with DANTES Credit-by-Exam pilot program downrange. The DANTES European Advisor and Central Texas College staff provided contingency area education support to deployed members during the 6-day event.



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MilLife Learning Courses to Grow in the New Year

Courtesy of Military OneSource

MilLife Learning is not just for military training. It offers diverse courses for personal and professional growth. It is a lifelong learning hub that has something for everyone, including:

- Service members, spouses and families
- Survivors
- Veterans
- Leaders
- Service providers
- Defense Department civilians
- Civic groups who work with the military community

With MilLife Learning, you can:

- Take free, online courses that fit into your schedule
- Learn at your own pace
- Enhance your life with ongoing learning
- Gain new skills
- Advance your career
- Stay current with training requirements

Check out the following courses to help you reach new heights professionally and stretch you personally in the new year.

Personal growth

With free, self-paced courses, you can hop online anytime to learn something new. The following courses can help you build resilience, use your voice and recognize others' service. They can also help you learn how to access resources and reduce financial stress.

- Special Operations Cognitive Agility Training (3 hours; audience: all). Learn practical exercises and strategies to improve your decision-making skills. You'll also learn how to quickly adapt to the changes and challenges of everyday life.
- EFMP: Advocacy Communication Tips (4 minutes; audience: all). We all want to be heard and understood. This video offers communication tips and techniques you can practice daily. You'll learn how to express your thoughts and concerns in a respectful and productive manner.
- Recognizing Military Service (7 minutes; audience: all). Review the history behind the service flag and the Gold Star Lapel Button. Learn who is eligible to display the flag or wear the Gold Star or Next of Kin of Deceased Lapel buttons. It's important to recognize and honor them when you see a button or flag.
- Sponsorship and You: Sponsorship Awareness (90 minutes; audience: family members). Discover military moving resources for singles, couples, exceptional family members, children and pets.

Learn what resources would be most helpful for you and your family.

- Developing Your Spending Plan (45 minutes; audience: service members and their families, service providers). Are you setting money aside in your savings account each month? Use this course to help you create a spending plan for your financial success. Check out other finance courses.

Professional advancement

MilLife Learning knows you are busy and that courses need to be concise and engaging to have the most impact. Check out the following trainings.

- LinkedIn Basics for Military Spouses (45 minutes; audience: all). Use this course to learn how LinkedIn can assist you in reaching your professional goals.
- LinkedIn Premium: Access Training for Military Spouses (45 minutes; audience: all). Use this course to learn how LinkedIn Premium can take your job search to the next level. At the end of the course, you'll receive your LinkedIn Premium code to get a free upgrade via the MySECO website.
- Operating in an Inclusive Culture (2.5 hours; audience: all). Learn how to create an inclusive culture through your MWR programs.
- Introduction to the Military Family Readiness Program (10 minutes; audience: service providers). Learn what the three distinct training tracks cover. New service providers, leaders, unit volunteers or anyone interested in MFRP can take this course.
- Key Spouse: Initial Training, Part 1 (120 minutes; audience: key spouse appointees). This course includes the first set of four modules. To become a key spouse, complete Parts 1 and 2, and the final assessment.

Create an account, enroll in a course and launch it today. Come back to MilLife Learning and take as many courses as you can this year. At the end of the year, when you look back, you'll be able to see how much you've grown.



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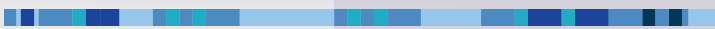


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