**UUP Veteran Affairs Committee Meeting Notes**

**May 6, 2011**

*Attending:*

Bill Borgstede, co-chair Aaron Godfrey

John Hain John Hogle

Bob Kasprak Michael Knee

Norman Payne Edward Bush

Bethanne DelGaudio Gina Doty, co-chair

Frank Maravic Ray Gleason, exec.bd. liason

1. NY State Dept. of Veteran Affairs Guest Speakers on the GI Bill and more (Bill Krause and Bill Clark):

Discussion was very informative and the following was covered:

* There are 950,000 vets in NY state and 71 offices located in NY
* Every veteran needs to be registered with the Veterans Administration for healthcare, because the need for medical care may arise in the future.
* Use the toll free phone to locate the correct office near you 1-888-VETSNYS
* Each campus has a VCO (Veteran Certifying Officer) and is the one contact point
* There is a Tuition Award program and to find more information go to :

<http://www.hesc.com/content.nsf/SFC/Military_Corner>

There are other programs operated by the Veterans Administration which are:

--Gold Star Program

--Blind Annuity Program

--Supplemental Burial Program

Applying to use the GI bill usually takes 4-6 weeks to know if the veteran has been accepted. There is a 15 year expiration date to use this bill. This bill is complex and a veteran can transfer the benefit to a family member to use. <http://www.gibill.com/>

There are Post 9/11 programs also, including tutoring that a veteran may require. Up to $12,000 in lab fees are paid for, a book stipend, and lastly there are work study funds available so that a veteran can go to class and work for pay. In the Post 9/11 the money goes to the college.

* 90% of undergraduate degrees can be paid using the GI Bill. A veteran must have their DD 214 and the locations where they have served.
* For veteran students to feel included on their campus, they need to have a place to meet and talk with others like them. The group has more success if they are assigned a faculty advisor to advocate for them.
* We need to find out what our campus Admissions department is doing special for veteran students? (Action Item)
* Here are a few examples of programs that are successful with veterans returning to college.

--Syracuse University has an outstanding veteran’s center and work study program.

--Onondaga Community College has 400 veterans in their program.

--Empire State College has a great program for veterans to succeed.

--The Veteran Certifying officer, Gene Clark, is taking charge at his RIT campus and he moves veterans through the higher education program with professional knowledge due to understanding the academic environment but also the concerns that veterans encounter returning to campus after leaving the military.

* In every county there is a Veteran Service Agency Coordinator which is a resource for vets wanting to obtain a higher education degree.
* Publicizing that your campus is “veteran friendly” may be a tool of success to gaining more student enrollment.
* In 2010 there were 25,000 veterans going to college. The forecast shows that community colleges will be striving to obtain more veterans to attend their campuses.

**Overall Summary of how UUP can get involved:**

There are many military members that will return to college or attend for the first time and they have real money to spend. SUNY should invest in these veteran student’s needs and concerns. If we treat them right, give them help the veteran student will be successful and SUNY will gain in a financial manner and much more. UUP can promote this.

Ray Gleason is a UUP executive board member assigned to our committee, and he strongly felt that UUP could promote veteran students. With the state budget cuts and higher education facilities competing for students, SUNY should be competing for the veteran student to attend a SUNY campus. There is money already available and UUP members can make a positive difference in this special student’s life to result in a career path for employment after graduation.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30pm

Meeting notes written by:

Gina Doty

*(corrections welcome)*