

## BUDGET PROPOSAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Department Name: Veteran and Military Resource Center (VMRC)

Create Date: 12/10/2024

Due Date: 02/07/2025

Submitter Name: Juanita Murillo Garcia

UW Email Address: juana1@uw.edu

Phone Number: 25369247810

Department Head Approval: ❌

Department Head: Shannon Carr

Requested Amount: **\$148,423**

## Departmental Information

### STUDENT UTILIZATION

The Veteran and Military Resource Center (VMRC) at UW Tacoma supports military-connected students, who comprise approximately 20% of the student body, by providing specialized resources and services to enhance their transition to college life and support their academic and career success. With this request, the VMRC will expand its offerings to build community, foster a sense of belonging, and provide personal and professional development opportunities.

These funds will directly benefit students by addressing career readiness through initiatives such as Veterans' Employment and Training Services, Lunch and Learn Workshops, and 1:1 advising for resume building and LinkedIn development. Additionally, funding enables military-connected students to attend national conferences like the Student Veterans of America (SVA) National Conference, which fosters professional growth, leadership development, and networking opportunities.

Community-building events such as the Tri-Campus Veterans Appreciation Week and the Gold Star Luminary Initiative create meaningful engagement while enhancing a sense of belonging. Social programs, including the VMRC Video Game Challenge and Success Lunch Breaks, provide informal opportunities to connect with peers and staff, promoting well-being and retention.

Peer-to-peer mentorship through the Peer Advisors for Veteran Education (PAVE) program is a cornerstone of our success strategy, offering tailored support to students transitioning from military to academic life. These comprehensive efforts enhance academic, personal, and career outcomes, helping UW Tacoma remain a leading destination for military-connected learners.

## CORE VALUES/MISSION ALIGNMENT

The Veteran and Military Resource Center (VMRC) provides critical support to military-connected students, aligning with UW Tacoma's strategic goals to advance student success, foster partnerships, promote equity, and build a thriving community.

Students: Advance Student Success Academically, Professionally, and Personally

The VMRC empowers military-connected students by offering career readiness programs like resume workshops, LinkedIn training, and hosting national conferences such as the Student Veterans of America (SVA). Peer mentoring through the PAVE program fosters retention by pairing experienced student veterans with newcomers. These initiatives contributed to 375 military-connected 2023-24 graduates, demonstrating the VMRC's impact on student success.

Communities: Partner in Advancing Strong and Diverse Communities

The VMRC strengthens community connections through partnerships with organizations like Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), the Wounded Warrior Project, and local veteran service organizations. Events such as the Memorial Day Remembrance Lunch and the Gold Star Luminary Initiative honor military contributions and foster engagement with the broader community. Collaborative programs like the "Diversity in Service" event promote inclusivity and cross-cultural understanding.

Equity: Promote Inclusive Excellence and Social Justice

The VMRC supports equitable access to education and resources for military-connected students, addressing challenges like balancing academics, family, and employment. Programs such as the Veteran Success Series workshops and SAVE Training for suicide prevention enhance student well-being and promote inclusivity. The VMRC also provides access to VA benefits, scholarships, and mentorship, ensuring students have the tools for success.

Vitality: Build a Thriving Community

Through events like the Military-Connected & Alumni Ceremony and Dinner, the VMRC fosters belonging by connecting students with alumni mentors and community leaders. Social initiatives like Unity Day Celebrations and the Husky Halloween Hangout contribute to a vibrant campus culture. The VMRC's efforts have earned UW Tacoma #1 ranking in Washington in the 2024 Military Times Best for Vets: Colleges survey, reflecting its vital role in supporting this population.

By aligning with UW Tacoma's strategic goals, the VMRC enriches student experiences and strengthens the campus community.

## SAF-FUNDED PROGRAM OR SERVICES GOALS AND OUTCOMES

The Student Advocacy and Funding (SAF)-supported Veterans and Military Resource Center (VMRC) program at UW Tacoma focuses on addressing the unique challenges of our military-connected population, including student veterans, active duty members, and their families. These efforts aim to enhance professional development, foster mentorship, and build a robust community of resources through collaboration with various campus offices and external partners.

Goals for the Current Year:

### 1. Increase Professional Development and Mentorship:

- Through tailored training, workshops, and events, VMRC supports military-connected students in navigating administrative and educational challenges. Initiatives such as Peer Advisors for Veteran Education (PAVE) have been instrumental in connecting students with on- and off-campus resources.
- Participation in national and regional programs like the Student Veterans of America (SVA) Conferences and partnerships with organizations like the National Association of Veteran Program Administrators (NAVPA) exemplify our efforts to elevate student involvement in professional development.

Outcome: Military-connected students have taken on leadership roles across campus organizations, including the Associated Students of UW Tacoma. PAVE has grown to support not only veterans but also their spouses and children, fostering networking and shared experiences.

### 2. Build a Community of Resources:

- The VMRC collaborates with UW Tacoma departments, student organizations, and external agencies to create campaigns that promote engagement, fellowship, and participation in events. A key partnership includes the Coast Guard College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative (CSPI), which provides scholarships, tuition, and other benefits for transfer juniors and seniors.

Outcome: This initiative has strengthened diversity efforts, aligning with UW Tacoma's status as a Minority-Serving Institution, and resulted in successful recruitment of CSPI candidates. Overall, VMRC continues to expand resource access and community-building for military-connected students.

Collaboration Efforts:

VMRC actively partners with UW Tacoma departments such as Student Services and Faculty Development, as well as external organizations like the Washington State Department of Veteran Affairs. These partnerships help align veteran-focused programs with broader institutional goals, ensuring comprehensive support for students. The Coast Guard partnership highlights our commitment to fostering opportunities for professional advancement and integration into the workforce.

In summary, the SAF-funded initiatives have significantly impacted the UW Tacoma military-connected community, promoting career readiness and resource accessibility while fostering an inclusive and supportive environment.

## STUDENT UTILIZATION (COMPARISON OVER PAST 2 YEARS)

The Veterans and Military Resource Center (VMRC) at UW Tacoma serves approximately 873 military-connected students, including veterans, active-duty members, and their families, representing about 20% of the campus population. This figure reflects consistent engagement and demonstrates the VMRC's impact in supporting this vital community.

Unduplicated Student Data:

For Autumn 2024, PAVE programs and services have already logged significant engagement:

- 886 unique students have participated in either interactions or outreach activities.
- 10 interaction logs were completed, addressing topics such as stress, balancing coursework, and relationships.
- 3007 outreach logs recorded, demonstrating robust communication efforts to keep students connected to resources.

This builds on the steady growth seen in previous years:

- AUT 2023: 845 unique outreach logged
- AUT 2022: 21 unique outreach logged
- AUT 2021: 296 unique outreach logged

Demographic Breakdown:

VMRC impacts a Winter- Autumn 2024 diverse population, including:

Demographic Breakdown (Percentages from GI Bill Request):

1. Veteran Status:

- Discharged Veteran: 49.29%
- Child of US Military Veteran or Active Duty: 36.64%
- Spouse of Veteran or Active Duty: 5.51%
- Reservist: 4.42%
- National Guard Member: 2.34%
- Active Duty: 1.80%

2. Branch of Service:

- Not a Veteran: 44.00%
- Army: 29.83%
- Navy: 12.65%
- Air Force: 9.05%
- Marines: 4.03%
- Coast Guard: 0.44%

3. Top 5 Majors:

- Business Administration
- Computer Science
- Psychology
- Biomedical Sciences
- Information Technology

4. Academic Class Standing:

- Junior: 36.04%
- Senior: 28.35%
- Graduate: 14.45%
- Sophomore: 12.92%
- Freshman: 8.23%

5. VA Educational Benefits Program:

- Chapter 33: 49.95%
- Chapter 35: 32.39%
- Chapter 31: 15.10%
- Chapter 30: 1.31%
- Chapter 1606: 1.25%

Program Initiatives:

PAVE (Peer Advisors for Veteran Education):

In Autumn 2024, seven unique student veterans have engaged in interactions addressing topics like stress, family concerns, and academic challenges.

Advisors referred students to key resources, including the Campus Counseling Center and Tutoring Services, strengthening the program's impact.

Recent branding efforts include launching an Instagram page, distributing PAVE T-shirts, and finalizing a program logo to boost visibility and unity.

Workshops & Events:

Over 18 professional development workshops in 2022-2023 focused on resume building, mental health, and career readiness.

Upcoming Autumn quarter events are being planned to enhance engagement and support.

Key 2023 events like the Veterans Graduation Celebration and Memorial Day Remembrance attracted over 300 attendees, fostering community and celebrating student success.

Community Partnerships:

Partnerships with Boeing and other external organizations continue to lay the groundwork for professional opportunities and student success.

Collaboration with campus departments ensures alignment with current student needs, as demonstrated by ongoing data updates and outreach initiatives.

#### Impact and Growth:

From 350 unduplicated students in 2020-2021 to 886 unique student interactions or outreach logs in 2023-2024, VMRC has demonstrated consistent growth. Efforts such as updated training materials, expanded outreach logs, and detailed interaction tracking reflect the program's commitment to inclusivity and support.

VMRC's strategic branding, outreach, and data-driven approaches have enhanced its reach and effectiveness, ensuring military-connected students receive the resources they need to thrive.

### COLLECTION OF FEEDBACK & IMPROVEMENTS

At the UW Tacoma's VMRC, feedback is collected through various mechanisms to refine programs and services. The primary tracking tool is the Husky ID card scanner, which logs student visits for specific services, such as general counseling, benefits processing, and career support. From AUT23 to AUT24, the center recorded the following interactions:

- Lounge Area: 581 visits
- Phone: 650 interactions
- Benefits: 1,155 visits
- Initial Processing/Benefit Counseling: 49 visits
- Study Area: 431 visits
- VIBE (Veterans Incubator for Better Entrepreneurship): 41 visits
- PAVE Meetings (Peer Advisors for Veteran Education): 14 visits
- Lunch & Learn: 900 visits
- Career Counseling: 50 visits
- SVO Meetings (Student Veteran Organization): 43 visits
- Meetings: 51 visits
- Drop-In Sessions: 45 visits
- VMRC Events: 21 visits
- WDVA Vet Nav: 5 visits
- Social Interactions ("Just to say Hi to Heiko"): 121 visits
- VIBE Donut Thursday: 22 visits

Feedback is also gathered through anonymous surveys, quarterly meetings with the SVO, and collaborative sessions with the Veterans Working Group. These platforms address student concerns, assess campus climate, and foster discussions on enhancing military-connected student support.

Assessment data has directly influenced program improvements. For example, insights from Husky ID scanner data enabled better event scheduling and resource allocation, while survey responses led to an expansion of the "PAVE" Veteran Buddy system. The popularity of "Lunch & Learn" and physical wellness initiatives like "Work Hard + Play Hard" reflects VMRC's ability to adapt to community needs.

By analyzing AUT23-AUT24 data and ongoing feedback, the VMRC has strengthened its role in increasing student retention, persistence, and success, ensuring military-connected students thrive both academically and personally.

### SERVICE BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

The Veteran and Military Resource Center (VMRC) at UW Tacoma demonstrates a transformative impact on military-connected students through a holistic approach to support and community engagement.

#### Meaningful and Significant Benefits:

The VMRC addresses both academic and non-academic needs. Key programs include the Peer Advisors for Veteran Education (PAVE), which pairs new students with experienced mentors to navigate academic life, and workshops on stress management, time management, and academic writing. Career development services, such as resume workshops and LinkedIn training, bridge the gap between military service and professional ambitions, directly supporting retention and graduation rates while closing equity gaps.

Community-building initiatives, such as the Memorial Day Remembrance Lunch and Veteran Appreciation Dinner, foster belonging and educate the broader campus on military-connected experiences. Integration programs like Veteran Allies promote mutual understanding between veterans and non-veterans, enriching the campus culture.

#### Evidence of Impact:

The VMRC's effectiveness is measured through participation data, surveys, and testimonials. For example, there was a 183.72% increase in career counseling appointments from 2020 to 2022. Additionally, student veterans who attended the Student Veterans of America (SVA) National Conference emphasized its role in fostering networking, professional development, and a supportive community.

#### Student 2024 Testimonies:

- *A first-time NATCON attendee described the conference as transformative, providing tools for academic and personal growth.*
- *Another student credited the VMRC with empowering them to become a first-generation graduate and leader while securing career opportunities and scholarships.*
- *A third student highlighted the VMRC's role in alleviating financial and academic concerns, contributing to their peace of mind and ability to thrive.*

#### Conclusion:

The VMRC's comprehensive support—ranging from mentorship to community engagement—addresses the multifaceted needs of military-connected students. Its impact on retention, graduation rates, and student satisfaction underscores its critical role in fostering an inclusive and empowering environment that prepares students for long-term success.

## Staff Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Classified Staff <sup>2</sup>	<p>The PAVE Program Supervisor will support the department in helping new military-connected students and their families transition successfully. This includes overseeing the PAVE program, supporting Student Affairs initiatives, and collaborating with campus partners. (Refer to the Supplemental Document for more details.)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">E001</p>	
	Classified Staff Wages:	<b>\$39,120</b>
	Fringe @ 30.3%:	<b>\$11,853</b>
PERSONNEL TOTAL:		<b>\$50,973</b>

## Other Budget Requests

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Category	Details	Amount Requested
Contracted Services	Military-Connected & Alumni Ceremony/Dinner	S001 \$4,800
	VIBE Trap Tournament (UW Tacoma Military Connected Student Team)	S002 \$200
	Veteran Appreciation Event- Photo Booth	S003 \$1,400
	USO suite at Cheney Stadium, home of the Tacoma Rainiers	S004 \$1,800
	Veteran Appreciation Dinner/Event- Venue	S005 \$4,800
Travel	SVA, NAVPA, PAVE, & NASPA National and Regional Conferences registration fees, airline tickets, hotels, travel expenses, and per diem	S006 \$15,000
Non-Food Supplies & Materials	Military stoles for graduates, military spouses, and dependents	S007 \$15,000
	UWT VMRC Peer Advisors Shirt/vest/jacket (15 Student-Workers)	S008 \$2,000
	UWT Events Winner Trophies, plaques, awards, ect	S009 \$1,000
	UWT Veteran Lapel Pins	S010 \$1,000
	US Stick flags, banners, and awareness signs (Veteran's Day, Memorial Day, Suicide Awareness, etc.)	S011 \$500
	Gold Star Luminary Candles and Supplies	S012 \$100
	VMRC Holiday events, prizes, and seasonal decorations	S013 \$2,000
	UWT VMRC Patches, Stickers, etc.	S014 \$2,000
	Military Family Month (April, May, & Nov.) event with materials and supplies	S015 \$450
	VMRC 5K/march/event Shirts (Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Veterans Day, etc.)	S016 \$5,000
	UWT VMRC Peer Advisors Notch Operator cap (15 Student-Workers)	S017 \$500
	UWT VMRC Challenge Coins & ROTC Coins	S018 \$1,000
	Supplies for VMRC office (pens, paper, files, promotional items, utensils, ink, office maintenance, etc)	S019 \$4,000
	VMRC business cards, brochures, & UWT VMRC notebooks	S020 \$600
Food	Military-Connected & Alumni Ceremony/Dinner- Catering	S021 \$8,000
	Mid-Term/End of Term Sucess lunch breaks- All students are invited to the pizza break; Veterans, spouses, children, ROTC Cadets, friends, family, etc., meet other UWT students	S022 \$2,500
	UWT VMRC's Veterans Graduation Celebration -This event includes the graduates, current or former students, family, faculty, and staff	S023 \$4,000
	Memorial Day Remembrance event w/ keynote speaker and cater food for ceremony attendees including students, families, and UWT employees	S024 \$8,000
	VMRC ROTC Commissioning ceremony with food, music, refreshments	S025 \$500
	VMRC CSPI Commissioning ceremony with food, music, refreshments	S026 \$500
	U.S. Army War College Fellows Presentation Project with food, music, refreshments	S027 \$200
	Veteran Appreciation Dinner/Event- Catering	S028 \$8,000
	Military-Connected New Student Advising & Registration w/UAA Reception	S029 \$500
	Veterans Appreciation Cakes, desserts, and sweets.	S030 \$600
		Games and controllers for the VMRC Video Game Challenge events

Equipment	Electronics, software, and fees	S032	\$1,000
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:			\$97,450

PERSONNEL TOTAL:	\$50,973
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:	\$97,450
<b>COMPLETE PROPOSAL TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$148,423</b>

## Supplemental Documents



### **HUSKY CARD CHECK-IN 2024**

Student ID Card Scanner tracking the number of students utilizing the VMRC suite in TLB307A



### **PAVE PROGRAM SUPERVISOR REPORT**

PAVE Summer 2024 Accomplishments



### **PAVE PROGRAM SPECIALIST POSITION DESCRIPTION**

The PAVE program operates through a licensing fee model within the University of Michigan's network program. This role is essential for sustaining the program while supporting ongoing st. engagement.



### **PAVE PROGRAM SUPERVISOR REPORT**

PAVE Autumn 2024 Accomplishments



### **FEEDBACK FOR 17TH ANNUAL NATCON EXPERIENCE**

2024-25 Student Feedback