May 14, 2018

To: Christine Davis, M.Ed.
    Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

From: Bill Wilson, Director
    Veteran Services Office

Re: Veteran Services Office 2017-2018 Annual Report

Section 1: The Year in Review

1. Departmental accomplishments and challenges.
   After more than eighteen months of continual staffing turnover and more than a year without a full time Director, Veteran Services Office (VSO) is now almost fully staffed. With the addition of Bill Wilson as the Director in December of 2017, as well as the promotion of Tori Williams and Chris Brasel in the spring of 2018, the new Veteran Services team is now almost completely in place.

   None of this could have been accomplished without the outstanding stewardship of Assistant Vice Chancellor Dennis Wiese, and the support of the outgoing Lead Certifying Official, Travis “Red” Canipe, the Graduate Assistants and VA Work Study students as well as Chris and Tori in their previous roles.

   This past year, the office produced outstanding, on-going programming in partnership with OASES, the Counseling Center, the Career Center and other campus offices. Additionally, stand-alone programming included the November Veterans Week events (Camo Classic, Roll Call, and Warriors Breakfast), programs targeting our women’s veteran population (bi-weekly coffee hours as well as monthly events that have included: brunch, yoga, and community outings) as well as community building efforts conducted throughout the year in the Veterans Lounge.
The VSO also partnered with numerous on and off campus partners in producing and supporting:

- NCSTRIVE (NC Student Transition Resource Initiative for Veteran’s Education) Regional one-day conference (April 2018); Partnered to host
- “Joining Forces for Women Veterans’ Health and Reintegration Conference” (February 2018), Co-Sponsored
- NCDBA (NC Defense Business Association) partnership; worked in conjunction with Charlotte Research Institute, Corporate Partnerships and the Graduate School to conduct western regional meeting as well as plan subsequent sessions on campus.

Additionally, the office continues to maintain the veteran student lounge (temporarily housed in Popp-Martin this past year). The lounge provides a safe space for our student veterans that is helpful as they acclimate to campus life after their radically different experience in the service. The space provides: study, group and lounge space and is staffed by some of the nine VA work study students that the office employs through the VA Work Study program (students entire salaries are paid by the Veterans Administration—and additional source of revenue).

The year began with the office being moved to less than optimal temporary accommodations and separated from the temporary lounge. Absent a full time Director, the staff did an excellent job of meeting the most mission critical role of the office: the certification of education benefits for military affiliated student.

During the 2017-2018 fiscal academic year, the office certified:
- 253 veterans (or dependents using benefits) in summer I 2017
- 208 veterans (or dependents using benefits) in summer II 2017
- 891 veterans (or dependents using benefits) in fall 2017
- 881 veterans (or dependents using benefits) in spring 2018

The error rate on these certifications was less than 0.6%!

These 2,233 certified students took 25,702 credit hours generating more than $7,500,000 in tuition and fees revenue for the university as well as appx. $35,000,000 in housing allowance to the individual students who then spent those monies in the greater Charlotte-Mecklenburg community.
2. **Student success story.**

On Saturday, May 12th the VSO graduated one of our outstanding student veterans, Talacia Cain.

After graduating from East Mecklenburg High School in 2000, Talacia went on to serve twelve years in the United States Marine Corp.

After her time in the Marines, she returned home to Charlotte and began her next pursuit, achieving her dream of earning a college degree. This dream came to fruition this past May when she walked across the stage and was awarded her Bachelors of Art in Communication Studies.

While Talacia was enrolled at UNC Charlotte, she served as an officer in the Student Veterans Association (Female Veteran Liaison) and as a Veterans Administration Work Study student for the VSO. Additionally, she served as a volunteer note taker for the Office of Disability Services.

Talacia accomplished all of this while raising two beautiful children and she is just one example of the excellence, leadership, dedication, resiliency and perseverance that our veteran student population brings to our campus community.

3. **Use of technology.**

The VSO continues to have an active presence on both Twitter (#UNCCvetservices) and Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/UNCCvetservices/); promoting events and activities both in advance and often taking advantage of Facebook’s live-streaming capabilities.

Additionally, this spring the VSO created a “Project” in Canvas. The page’s focus is on event announcements and calendaring, creating a forum for discussion among veterans, and to make resources available to the UNC Charlotte veteran student population. Initially 816 invitations were sent to join the group (these were sent to those certified as of the launch of the site this spring) and of those, all but 134 have joined the site. This site has proven itself as a test of concept this spring and we will continue to use it as an additional means of communication, calendaring and community building moving forward.
## Section 2: Professional Development

### Annual Reporting

**Distinctive & Notable Accomplishments of 2017-2018**

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<th>Dean of Students: Veteran Services Office</th>
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<td>College/Division</td>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning Unit</td>
<td>William Wilson</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** It is not necessary to fill in each box

### Individual accomplishments (Use first and last name)

- Tori Williams: Was promoted from Certifying Official to Lead Certifying Official
- Christopher Brasel: Was promoted from temporary Administrative Assistant position to permanent Certifying Official

### Publications for 2017-2018 (Use first and last name)

NA

### Honors and Awards (Use first and last name)

### Conference Presentations (Use first and last name)

### Professional Association and or Involvement (Use first and last name)

- William Wilson: Southeastern Council on Military Education (SECOME), Board Member at Large

### Grants or Funding obtained (indicate grantor, grantee, amount, and whether funds are new or continuing)

- $75,000: Robert (Bob) Qutub gift to support the Veterans Lounge (this was a named gift)
- $25,000: Robert (Bob) Qutub gift to endow the Corporal Robert Qutub Veterans Book fund
- $15,000: Kenneth R. Miller gift to fund books and supplies to veteran students’
- $5,000: Kenneth R. Miller gift to fund Campus based Green Zone training
- $3,000: Kenneth R. Miller gift to support the Student Veterans Association
- $2,000: Kenneth R. Miller gift to fund Veterans Park
Section 3: Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Title</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Reason for Assessment</th>
<th>Use of Results</th>
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<tr>
<td>Veteran’s Campus Climate Survey</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
<td>Gauge student veteran’s perceptions of campus climate and perceived needs/wants/desires.</td>
<td>To develop baseline assessment to both establish office priorities and office goals in coming semesters.</td>
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Section 4: Plans/Goals for Next Year

The VSO will be looking to move from a re-active, flatfooted approach that has been the norm, both programmatically and with regards to certification while it was going through its re-building/re-structuring phase and looks to emerge in the 2018-2019 academic year as a more forward leaning, customer focused entity. We are overhauling our customer interaction model on the certification side while at the same time, making our programmatic efforts much more focused and intentional.

- Specifically, as we move back into our renovated office and lounge space we will:
  - Take advantage of the proximity to make better use of our VA work study students on the office side; using them to enhance and supplement both the veteran in-take process as well as certification process. Their presence will free-up time for both certifying officials (as well as the administrative specialist) for a more hands-on approach with the veterans as they go through the certification process.
  - Develop more customer focused documentation with “take-aways” that our veteran students can reference back to throughout their time at UNC Charlotte.
  - Work with ITS to make the overall certification process as transparent as possible on our end.
- Use Veteran Campus Climate Survey to help develop a VSO Master Plan
  - Identify top three needs and fast track them
- Develop and implement faculty and staff veteran climate survey
  - Use these results as another foundational piece of the VSO Mater Plan
- Work across campus to help UNC Charlotte live up to its founding ideals
  - Use seed funds to develop UNC Charlotte’s own version (a version that best suits our community) of Green Zone training for faculty and staff
- Continue to enhance campus and community outreach through joint programs with both on and off campus partnerships
- Continued progress on the development of the campus Veterans Park project

The foundation for excellence has been laid for the VSO moving forward and now as we begin to execute our next steps we look forward to developing into a regional and then a national model.