

College Vets Unite



Stay Active!

Join the New College Vets Club!

If you're a veteran currently taking college courses and find yourself needing assistance, have questions on your benefits or just miss the camaraderie of military life, a college veterans club may be for you. The Veterans of Foreign Wars is willing to provide resources to help interested veterans join or form a college veterans club in your area. Initially the club will be located at a local VFW Post.

Read on:

- Are you prior military, in the National Guard or Reserve?
- Are you looking to be part of a group with similar interests?
- Are you interested in volunteering your services to fellow veterans in your community?
- Do you need assistance understanding or filing for VA benefits?
- Would you like to make a difference in the lives of those who have already served our country?

Join Us for Our Kick-Off Meeting

WHEN:

WHERE:

SPONSORED BY:



If you said yes to any of the above,
WE'D LIKE TO TALK WITH YOU.

A Post's Guide to Forming a College Vets Club



Members of the Johnson Veterans Club at Cornell University gather for a picture in 2003. Vet clubs are springing up all across America on campuses where veterans attend college. Get involved with the future leaders of our country and VFW.

For more information on forming a college vets club in your community, contact:
VFW National Headquarters
Attn.: Kevin Jones
406 W. 34th St.
Kansas City, MO 64111
Phone: (816) 756-3390
E-mail: kjones@vfw.org



Is your Post located near a college or university campus?

Are you looking for new members to fill your ranks?

Would you like to reach out to younger veterans?

If so, grab this opportunity to host a college veterans club at your Post.

Many veterans are seeking higher education and they may be looking to be part of a group with similar interests.

Here's how you can help them feel the camaraderie that you do by being part of VFW:

- Plan a kick-off meeting at your Post to which you will invite student veterans and your members.
- Customize the enclosed flyer and make copies. Post them at all local colleges and universities on bulletin boards and other designated areas.

- In addition, send news releases to campus and local newspapers, radio and television stations. Use the enclosed sample news release as a guide.

- At the meeting you will introduce students to the benefits of a veterans organization, including employment assistance, volunteer opportunities and making a difference in the lives of other veterans. Be sure your Post service officer or representative is present to answer questions about VA benefits.

- At the meeting's conclusion, offer your Post as a potential location for future college vets club meetings.

- Remember, as representatives of VFW, you should make a favorable impression. While students may express interest in VFW membership, this is not the purpose for inviting them.



Veterans of Foreign Wars NEWS RELEASE

Contact Information

Name: _____

Phone: _____

For Immediate Release College Veterans Invited to College Vets Club Meeting

Date: _____

VFW Post _____
(name and number)

is forming a college veterans club for students who served in the military, National Guard or Reserve. A kick-off meeting is scheduled

at _____
(location)

on _____, at _____.
(date) (time)

Student veterans may come and learn about the benefits a veterans club has to offer, including employment assistance, volunteer opportunities and making a difference in the lives of other veterans.

Great Partnership Potential

VFW National Headquarters is testing the academic waters in the Kansas City metropolitan area to gauge the interest level in college veterans clubs.

In August 2004, about 20 representatives from community colleges and major universities attended a VFW-sponsored luncheon to discuss the possibility of teaming up with VFW Posts to establish such clubs.

Russ Little, a younger veteran intern at VFW while finishing law school at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, conceived the idea after realizing he didn't have a lot in common with the average college student.

"I just feel like this is something VFW can do to reach out to younger veterans," said Little, a Persian Gulf War vet and life member of Post 1 in Denver. "Colleges are untapped resources for Posts located near the campuses."

According to Kevin Jones, assistant director of VFW Programs and coordinator of the effort, the underlying goal is to help promote a positive, energetic image of veterans on college campuses.

"Of course, by doing this, we hope to also introduce students to VFW," Jones added. "Right now, we're just trying to determine what kind of response we will get if we launch this nationwide."

The idea is for these groups to use an area Post home for meetings or activities and to also help VFW in any community service endeavors. Jones sees it as a social organization that blends social activities, camaraderie, benefits and charitable service.

He noted that some Posts indicated interest even prior to the August meeting. Little found a Post in Pennsylvania that has sponsored a vets club since 1968 during the Vietnam War.

Post 321 in State College, Pa., began sponsoring the Pennsylvania State University Veterans Organization when an influx of Vietnam veterans received flack from their fellow students.

Connection to VFW

Both VFW Posts and campus veterans clubs could stand to benefit by joining forces in achieving common goals. Because VFW is looking to reach out to younger generations, it has a natural interest in the student groups. The clubs in turn could use VFW's assistance because some groups have folded due to lack of funding and support.

Some clubs have shown initial interest in a partnership with VFW, but such a connection does not yet exist. "At one point, we were thinking of trying to organize something with the local Ithaca [N.Y.] Post, like a joint care package project for the soldiers in Iraq, but it just never came to fruition," said Tim Alden, president of the Johnson Veterans Club at Cornell University's school of business.

The Military Veteran Student Society at Indiana University in Bloomington, Ind., boasts a link on their Web site to VFW's homepage, and founder Jeff Memmer said he became a member of Post 604 in Bloomington after speaking with the Post commander. He hopes to cooperate with VFW in future service projects and wants to invite Post members to speak at club meetings in order to educate other student-veterans about the organization.

"Honestly, most members have no idea what the VFW or other veteran organizations do or that they even exist," Memmer said. "There is definitely a generation gap within the local VFW Posts that seems to unintentionally project an aura of alienation toward the younger veterans."

However, a relationship between the organizations is not out of the question. When asked about the possibility, most club members were optimistic. "I think the clubs would love to have some help from VFW," said Jeremy Kirsch, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Sloan School of Management veterans club. "There could be a great partnership potential."

Excerpt from the September 2004 VFW magazine.