

SERVICE MEMBER EDUCATION BENEFITS



As a member of the U.S. Military, one of the advantages of serving is the wide range of education benefits available to you, your spouse and dependent family members. Many of the education benefits apply to service members still in uniform, and others are also available after you transition to the civilian world, such as the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill and Veterans Education Assistance Program (VEAP).

POST-9/11 GI BILL

If you have at least 90 days of aggregate active duty service after September 10, 2001, are still on active duty, or were honorably discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days, you may be eligible for this VA-administrated program.

The Post-9/11 GI bill provides up to 36 months of education benefits. Other benefits may also include:

- » Monthly housing allowance
- » Annual books and supplies stipend
- » One-time rural benefit payment

Some service members may also transfer unused GI Bill benefits to their dependents

For details of this program, visit gibill.va.gov or call (888) 442-4551.

Each service branch also offers its own scholarships, college funds, tuition assistance, work-study programs, loan repayment programs and other forms of assistance.

ADDITIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION ASSISTANCE

Anyone who enlists in the armed forces may be eligible for one of the following education assistance programs:

THE MONTGOMERY GI BILL: This program, which is available to active duty members and reservists with a six-year obligation who are actively drilling, provides education benefits in exchange for contributions made by the service member.

VETERANS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (VEAP): Some states may offer Veterans Affairs benefits that are transferable to family members. Check with your state's veterans' organizations to see if education assistance is available.

SURVIVORS' AND DEPENDENTS' EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: This program provides education and training to dependents of vets who are permanently and totally disabled due to a service-related condition, or vets who die on active duty OR as a result of a service-related condition.

MARINE GYSGT JOHN DAVID FRY SCHOLARSHIP: This program provides benefits to children and surviving spouses of service members who died in the line of duty, while on active duty after September 10, 2001.

RESERVE OFFICERS TRAINING CORPS (ROTC) SCHOLARSHIPS: Offered at hundreds of colleges nationwide, ROTC allows students to attend school full-time while preparing for a career as a commissioned military officer. Some ROTC cadets qualify for scholarships that are awarded based on merit only—not financial need.

UNDERSTANDING ACCREDITATION

When you're evaluating an educational institution, it's very important to pay close attention to accreditation. When a school is accredited, it means an outside organization has conducted an evaluation and determined the school meets certain standards for providing a quality education.

ACCREDITATION IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT DIRECTLY AFFECTS:

- » Whether other schools will allow you transfer credits from that school
- » Whether employers will be impressed by the work you've done
- » Whether licensing boards will accept your education

Not all accreditation is the same. There are two major types: national and regional. It may seem counter-intuitive, but regional accreditation is much more valued than national accreditation.

You'll also want to make sure that not only does the school have the right accreditation, but that the specific program you're considering is accredited too.



IN-STATE TUITION FOR VETERANS

At state colleges and universities, there can be a huge difference between the tuition charged to residents of that state and what's charged to non-residents.

As a veteran, though, you may get to pay the in-state resident rate even if you haven't established residency in that state thanks to a provision in the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act.

This applies to the Post-9/11 GI Bill, Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty and the GySgt John D. Fry Scholarship. Learn about time limits and other details at benefits.va.gov.

