**University of Oklahoma, OK**

**P116G230044**

The University of Oklahoma recognizes education as a transition catalyst from military service to a successful civilian life. OU commits to maintaining a high level of service to veteran students through facilitation of successful collegiate experiences; therefore, we choose to address both the absolute priority and competitive priority #1 in the Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success grant application.

Our model program consists of a Veteran Success Center (VSC) with veteran support staff and campus partners. The veteran support staff includes the director, coordinator, certification specialists, graduate assistant tutor, VA work study students, and the Peer Advisors for Veteran Education (PAVE) team leader and peer advisors. Campus partners will collaborate from Admissions and Recruitment, Financial Aid, Bursar Services, Registrar, Graduation and Persistence Support, Project Threshold, Accessibility Services, Health Services, Green Zone Faculty/Staff, Career Services, and any other departments crucial to student success. Staff and campus partners are focused on achieving the intended objectives of increased enrollment, persistence, and degree completion. Designed to support a seamless transition not only from military service through education but also from education to the career environment, the service areas are titled Boots to Backpacks, Veteran Success, and Education to Vocation.

In addition to assistance with VA education benefits, comprehensive support services in a one-stop format are a focus of the VSC. Tools for success span beyond the affordability of education and include transitioning to student life and the civilian workforce; utilizing networking, tutoring, and mentorship; tracking early warning alerts for retention; equipping students to understand higher education, policies, practices, transfer of academic credits, and disability-related rights and protections; and promoting wellness and mental health counseling. Tools must be offered with ease of accessibility for the success of veteran students.

Based on experience, research, and best practices, program activities fall within outreach, recruitment, special admissions assistance, orientation, financial aid counseling, personal mentoring, academic support, career networking, tutoring, academic skill-building instruction, financial literacy education, veteran student events, and active support for student organizations. Short-, mid-, and long-term activity outcomes will be evaluated to ensure achievement of the targeted objectives - increased enrollment, persistence, and degree completion. With a one-stop effort coordinating comprehensive support services for veteran students, we hope to better serve the students who fulfilled their duty to the country in protection of our freedoms.

**Kansas State University**

**P116G230036**

Kansas State University (K-State) is submitting this grant proposal to establish a Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success on our main campus to provide a single point of contact to coordinate comprehensive support services as its absolute priority. K-State will provide for students’ social, emotional, and academic needs with a full-time coordinator and two staff members specializing in advising and counseling. KState is proud to be the nation's first operational land-grant university; established in 1863. Our first military-connected student, Albert Copeland, was in attendance. Today the university boasts four campuses and has the highest veteran and military student population in Kansas; serving 2,742 military-connected students.

K-State has Institutionally Focused and Student Focused project goals for the

Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success:

Institutionally Focused Goals: Develop University-wide Infrastructure; Create Greater

Student Support Services Synergy; Grow University Connections; Focus on CEVSS

Project Sustainability beyond the grant period

Student Focused Goals: 15% Increase in Enrollment by 2025; Increase the Rate of Veteran Student Persistence; Increase 6-Year Completion Rate of Undergraduate

Veteran Students; Support On-Time Degree Completion for Veterans Earning a

Graduate Degree; Support Holistic Veterans Well-Being

The K-State Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success will support our expansive military-connected student population and will serve as an institutional hub for advancing institutional competency and efficacy in all aspects of academic enrollment, persistence, completion, and wellness.

**Old Dominion University, VA**

**P116G230037**

Old Dominion University’s (ODU) proposed Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success (CEVSS) will expand our current Military Connection Center (MCC) by recruiting, enrolling, retraining, supporting, and graduating veteran students living in the Hampton Roads Region and throughout the U.S. with significantly expanded and targeted resources, both on-the ground and online, to ensure holistic success for all veteran students.

Despite ODU’s location within two miles of the largest naval base in the U.S. and its willingness to provide services to student veterans, these support resources are limited. The MCC currently has one full-time staff member and two part-time administrative assistants who work with 1,143 veterans and 5,563 military-affiliated students. Annually, ODU has nearly 2,500 students who use the GI Bill. The addition of staff members will help provide intensive and direct support throughout the college experience to ensure a smooth transition into ODU’s degree programs for veteran students. The CEVSS staff will work to create healthy student veterans by reducing the obstacles that prevent student veterans from succeeding. With this award, ODU will accomplish the following goals:

* Hire one full-time professional staff member (Veteran Student Success Coach) to serve in the newly created CEVSS upgrade a part-time position to a full-time position and hire a graduate student.
* Establish and train a university-wide student veteran support team to streamline and improve services and programming that address veteran students’ physical, psychological, and financial needs.
* Improve transition support for student veterans including enrollment, transfer, and orientation support.
* Enhance training for faculty and staff to grow understanding and leverage the strengths of student veterans and military-affiliated students.
* Provide veteran student programming and share best practices in veteran support with other higher education institutions.

The above-mentioned goals are designed for veteran student success. They will be measured using the following outcomes:

* Increase enrollment rates of veteran and military-affiliated students by 5% each year of the grant period through providing increased services, staff, and academic success skills.
* Increase veteran and military-affiliated student recruitment by 5% annually during the grant period by working with Admissions and ODU*Online* to launch marketing campaigns geared toward veteran and military populations.
* Increase retention and academic achievement of veterans and military-affiliated students from 68% to 75% over the grant period through increased academic success touch points.
* Increase graduation rates of veterans and military-affiliated students from 49% to 55% over the grant period through increased services and support with the grant-funded positions.
* Perform an annual review of student usage through student surveys to assist in the revision and adjustment of offerings and track veteran and military-affiliated student attendance. ODU CEVSS addresses both Absolute Priority and Competitive Preference Priorities for this proposal. Evidence that outcomes are achieved during the grant period will offer a basis for institutional support to sustain the program and positions upon completion of award funding. Additionally, ODU will serve as a resource to other higher education institutions seeking to improve access, equity, and success among student veterans across the United States.

**Central Oregon Community College, OR**

**P116G230007**

This project will expand and improve existing supports for student veterans at Central Oregon Community College (COCC) by developing a model Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success (CEVSS) on the COCC campus and corresponding support for student veterans. These efforts will improve student veteran’s social, emotional, and academic development by focusing on trauma-informed programming and activities that are aimed to help student veterans, with a specific focus on helping students at risk of academic failure. The project will be built off proven methods for supporting student veterans. Because of the project activities, COCC will achieve several goals, objectives, and outcomes related to improving supports for student veterans.

**Goal 1:** Increase the rate at which student veterans enroll, persist, and complete their educational objectives. **Objective 1.1:** Provide academic, social, and emotional support for student veterans: a) Host a veteran-specific student orientation including a college transition course; b) Conduct intensive outreach and recruitment to veterans on campus and in the community; c) Provide veteran-specific tutoring; d) Provide veteran-specific academic advising and academic objective planning; e) Provide veteran-specific career counseling; f) Assist student veterans in obtaining financial aid and other financial supports; and g) Develop an early-alert system customized for student veterans at risk of academic failure. **Objective 1.2:** Foster a sense of belonging and being supported at COCC among student veterans: a) Provide support for the student veteran club and student veteran club events; b) Develop a monthly support group for student veterans; and c) Develop a Peer-to-Peer support program for student veterans. **Goal 2:** Build COCC’s long-term capacity to serve student veterans. **Objective 2.1:** Develop a coordinated, sustainable model program and the infrastructure to sustain it: a) Develop a full-service veterans center staffed by a Veterans Program Coordinator and Veterans Outreach Specialist, with support from a multi-disciplinary team at COCC comprised of the Veterans Network and Veterans Advisory Committee; b) Conduct numerous trainings for COCC faculty and staff on how to better serve student veterans; c) Provide professional development for the COCC veteran support team; d) Strengthen and expand partnerships with veterans-serving organizations in the community; e) Create long-term policies and practices at COCC that better serve student veterans; f) and Develop a plan for sustaining the COCC Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success following the grant period.

These objectives will result in the following outcomes: Outcome 1 - Increase student veteran enrollment by 2% during each year of the grant period, for a 6.1% total enrollment increase by the end of the grant period; Outcome 2 - Increase student veteran graduation rates by 2% during each year of the grant period, starting at 28% and ending at 34%; Outcome 3 - Increase fall-to fall retention rates by 2% during each year of the grant period, starting at 43% and ending at 49%; Outcome 4 - Increase feelings of being supported at COCC among student veterans.

The project will be implemented by an interdisciplinary team at COCC comprised of faculty and staff who are veterans themselves or are experienced working with veterans, community-based veteran-serving organizations, and will also rely on peer-to-peer support among student veterans. COCC has the largest percentage of student veterans among Oregon community colleges and public universities (8.5% of degree-seeking student population), and the second-largest overall student veteran population (average of 562 student veterans per year). Therefore, this project has the potential to positively impact many student veterans and veteran-connected students. The project will address both the competitive priorities and the absolute priorities.

**Stephens College, MO**

**P116G230018**

We propose *Establishing a Women's College Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success and Mission Promise Kept at Stephens College*. We want women veterans to benefit from Stephens College's strong reputation of being a leader in higher education for improving and enhancing the lives of women.

We are aligned with the grant’s purpose: establish a Veterans Center for a single point of contact and a veteran support team, hire a dedicated coordinator, monitor veteran data, and develop a plan to further enhance the Veteran Centers outreach and programming after the grant period. This grant would allow us to accelerate our efforts and invest in recruitment and research.

Of the veteran students, we anticipate we will support 10-15 new veteran students each year in our living and learning residential community, Mission Promise Kept, which can also be home to the children of single parents. The Director and Coordinator will implement a holistic, person-centered approach that is data-driven and research-informed and will focus on preparing, mentoring, and empowering veteran students to achieve academic success, graduate, and experience professional success. Our objective is to support the veteran student through every step of their educational process – from admissions to graduation into professional placement. Veteran students need ongoing, specialized attention and support to offer the best possible opportunity for them to achieve their personal goals.

Founded in 1833, we remain one of only thirty-two women’s institutions and 32% of our student body is domestic non-Caucasian students. We educate women, transgender women and non-binary women. In addition, we believe at least 40% of our student body identify as

LGBTQIA+. Stephens embraces women veterans as critical to and consistent with our mission.

The project is designed around research produced by military and veteran centric organizations, which was then refined by additional research we conducted with women veterans and interviews with professionals serving women veterans and women in the military. The research to further enhance the program is a strength-based wellness framework. The framework has already been utilized to develop campus-wide programming at Stephens College. The assessment instrument identifies students’ strengths and measures changes in those strengths. The analytics that come from the assessment identify needed programming, activities, and interventions to increase the sense of wellness. Effectiveness will also be seen in the overall rates of veteran student enrollment, persistence, and completion.

Project partners include stakeholders and service providers on campus that form the veterans care team: Admissions, Accounting, Office of Retention, Institutional Research, Counseling Center, Financial Aid, Career Center, Student Success Center, Academic Affairs,

Registrar, Advancement and Alumnae Engagement, Student Development, and the Children’s School. External partners include veteran and military serving organizations, community organizations providing training and support, Columbia Public Schools, community colleges, regional veterans centers, and donors.

**Bluegrass Community and Technical College, KY**

**P116G230027**

Bluegrass Community & Technical College (BCTC) in Central Kentucky proposes a Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success (CEVSS) to be established on its Leestown campus with in-person and virtual services to veterans on regional campuses. The Center will provide a single point of contact for veterans seeking service/assistance and will coordinate comprehensive programing support for veteran students by establishing a support team composed of a Coordinator and an Educational/Career Coach supported by representatives those offices responsible for admissions, registration, financial aid, veterans’ benefits, academic advising, student health, mental health counseling, career advising, disabilities services, and any other office of the institution that provides support to veteran students on campus. The Coordinator, assisted by Center staff and under the direction of the Project Director, will monitor the rates of veteran student enrollment, persistence, and completion and take action to ensure implantation of project objectives relating to four objectives which include reducing or eliminating problems veterans face due to bureaucratic processes at the college; reducing or eliminating problems arising from integrating VA education benefits into the college’s billing system; increasing the retention and graduation rate of veteran-connected students with degrees leading to high paying, high demand credentials; and encouraging more veterans to seek postsecondary education and the financial benefits that accrue from postsecondary qualifications and training. After three years of federal funding that result in the expected improvements in veteran recruitment and retention, the college administration will evaluate these benefits and if merited move Center funding on to the college’s recurring budget funds.

BCTC will address Competitive Preference Priority 1 by reassigning highly trained faculty to support student social, emotional, and academic. Two faculty will support these needs employing strategies such as weekly drop-in for veterans to meet with and talk with faculty in group setting or privately. The Center will address academic and career needs by the deployment of an Educational/Career Coach who will focus on career development and degree completion with a focus on underserved students including underrepresented minority students in Lexington and low-income students in the rural counties that the college serves. One faculty member brings expertise in addressing childhood trauma and building resilience. Another brings 20 years’ experience in teaching academic reading skills, and social work credentials and development that is trauma-informed, such as addressing exposure to community based.

BCTC will also addressed Competitive Preference Priority 2 because the college is a community college with about 50% of its students needing federal financial aid to attend, and with a service region that includes areas of high poverty and low uptake of postsecondary credentials.

The college will implement a program of formative and summative assessments that will be assessed by an advisory committee appointed by the college president. A review the Center’s impact on the local community will thus be available and will help both the Center staff to manage significant changes in veteran student education, and the college administration to assess the importance of maintaining the Center beyond the funding deadline.

**Howard, University, DC**

**P116G230058**

Howard University, a private, historically Black university in Washington, D.C., proposes a new Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success (CEVSS) under the current Office of Military and Veteran Services (OMVS) to support Howard's rapidly growing veteran student population. Specifically, the center would offer Howard University student veterans and service members additional resources to encourage higher retention rates, higher 4-year and 6-year graduation rates for undergraduates, more efficient service related to benefit use, more programming to promote physical and mental health among veterans, and more one-on-one support to help veterans navigate their educational experience.

Understanding that many Howard University student veterans have unique challenges as veterans and as students of color, the Howard CEVSS will provide a physical space for veterans to feel known and respected. The plan for the CEVSS includes identifying and hiring additional personnel who can work with veteran students individually. Moreover, other knowledgeable staff will be available who can serve veterans and relate to their unique experiences. Also, the plan consists of building out our veteran's lounge and veteran work-study office to accommodate students better and securing additional funds to be used for technology that contributes to a veteran's sense of belonging and emotional, mental, and academic health. The requested funds will also provide professional development opportunities for Howard University employees in Student Counseling Services, Enrollment Management, Student Services, and Student Affairs and faculty members.

Howard University is pursuing both Competitive Preference Priorities. Under Competitive

Preference Priority #1, Howard University will use the funds to elevate our coordinator to an Assistant Director and establish a Veterans Case Manager and Program Coordinator position to serve student needs related to social, emotional, and academic needs. Howard's student population is predominately students of color, an underserved demographic nationally. Howard University also meets Competitive Preference Priority #2 as a historically Black university. The application also meets the Absolute Priority of the grant as we seek to establish a Center of

Excellence for Veteran Student Success. We propose hiring a Veterans Case Manager and Program Coordinator to contribute to the center's day-to-day operations and create an assessment culture in the center that guides center improvement. We also seek to grow our veteran support team by identifying allies across all service units and providing training and professional development opportunities for them.

While Howard University's administration has already committed to institutional support after the first three years of funding are used, we will also actively work to find additional funding sources to sustain and grow the new CEVSS at Howard University.

**Daemen University, NY**

**P116G230059**

Daemen University, located in Amherst, New York, will implement a Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success (CEVSS) program that will significantly improve veteran student enrollment, retention, and graduation rates through the establishment of a Veterans Success Center (VSC). Daemen’s CEVSS program will implement intentional strategies to enroll and support student veterans, ensure consistent communication and monitoring of progress toward educational goals, connect student veterans to internal and external supports, and provide cocurricular supports throughout their academic career.

The CEVSS will provide activities and program to enroll, retain, and graduate veterans; support the program’s timeline and objectives; and ensure appropriate administration and attainment of all goals. A comprehensive summative and formative evaluation plan will measure the program’s effectiveness and will produce objective and quantifiable data to track enrollment, academic progress, persistence, and graduation rates to be used in practice and research.

**Program Objectives:**

***Overall Activity Objective 1: Coordination of Veteran Services.*** By Fall 2025, student satisfaction with veteran services and facilities in the CEVSS as measured on a 5-point Likert scale will increase 50% over the Fall 2022 established baseline.

***Overall Activity Objective 2: Faculty and Staff Development.***  By Fall 2025, a minimum of 60% of faculty will have demonstrated that they have mastered at least one professional development workshop topic.

***Overall Activity Objective 3: Enrollment.*** By Fall 2025, the enrollment of student veterans will have increased by 50 over the Fall 2021 baseline.

***Overall Activity Objective 4: Persistence.*** By Fall 2025, the retention rates for student veterans will have increased six percentage points each over the average overall year to year Fall 2021 baseline.

***Overall Activity Objective 5: Graduation.*** By Fall 2025, the four-year graduation rates for veterans will have increased five percentage points over the Spring 2021 baseline.

The CEVSS program addresses the Absolute Priority and Competitive Preference Priority 1: Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs.

**Santa Clarita Community College, CA**

**P116G230054**

The Santa Clarita Community College District, known as College of the Canyons, is a fully accredited California Community College, federally designated Hispanic Serving

Institution (HSI), and an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving

Institution (AANAPISI). California is home to 1.5 million veterans, the most in the nation; and Los Angeles County has 252,129 veterans, the most in the state. It is the only public college district in its 367 square-mile district and consists of two campuses – a westside campus in Valencia and the other in Canyon Country, 9.8 miles to the east. COC has successfully operated a Veterans Resource Center at its Valencia Campus since 2010, with the college district ranking in the 90th percentile for the highest enrollment of student veterans at community colleges nationwide. However**,** no designated space for veterans currently exists at the rapidly growing Canyon Country Campus. College of the Canyons seeks to address this crucial issue through this project, which will address the Absolute Priority and both Competitive Preference Priorities 1 and 2. Project overarching goals and outcomes:

* Establish a single point of contact, new CEVSS at the Canyon Country Campus which currently lacks the space and services
* Develop a veteran student support team consisting of its internal staffing, support from the student services office, and community partners to address students’ academic, financial, physical, and social needs
* Address student needs by building out supports in a virtual environment
* Use grant funding to support a program coordinator who can dedicate the majority of his time to building the resources of the CEVSS
* Coordinate with the Veteran Student Success Team and COC’s Office of Institutional Research and Planning to monitor veteran enrollment, persistence, and completion, and then use this data to make informed decisions about future CEVSS activities; and
* Develop and implement a sustainability plan for the CEVSS and disseminate information to help surrounding community colleges build their own CEVSS services

 Project objectives:

* Increase the veteran student enrollment rate by 25%, from 496 veteran students to 620
* Increase the veteran student one-year retention rate by 15%, from 60% to 69%
* Increase the veteran student completion rates by 10%, contingent upon time to completion
* Increase the veteran student transfer-level English and Mathematics course pass rates by 15%
* Increase the veteran student financial aid application rate by 35%, from 36% to 49%

 Overview of key project activities:

* Academic Needs – Developing and offering veteran-specific English and Math educational materials and workshops, tutoring services, educational resources, and enhanced online enrollment/advisement
* Financial Needs – Bridging the gap to ensure veterans process all paperwork necessary to claim their benefits, and connecting veterans to Veteran Student Support Team resources
* Physical Needs – Partnering with on-campus student services and community partners to provide mental and physical health services, trauma-specific counseling, and basic needs
* Social Needs – Creating a welcoming environment with cultural events, lunch and learns, and peer mentoring to help veterans assimilate into civilian and academic life.

**Ashland University, OH**

**P116G230055**

Overview: Ashland University’s *Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success* application to the Office of Postsecondary Education proposes to increase services to over 600 veteran and military affiliated students over the next three years. Ashland’s newly established center, The Jack W. Liebert Military and Veterans Resource Center currently serves 344 veteran affiliate students. We recognize that the needs of veteran students are unique.

Our Project Objectives are to expand support staff to veteran students by 1) providing a single point of contact at the Center, and 2) adding two admissions/academic advisors to increase veteran student enrollment, persistence, and completion by 30% annually over 3 year. We will continue to develop innovative programming and cultivate donor support to sustain the Center beyond the grant.

In addition to hiring the Veterans Concierge and Admissions/Academic Advisors, Project Activities include the continued development of robust services specific to veteran students relating to admissions, enrollment, financial aid, retention, career services, trauma informed mental health, accessibility, and housing.

Our Intended Outcome is to meet the overall social, emotional, and academic needs of our veteran students as we increase the number of veterans and military connected students served by increasing our overall rates of enrollment, persistence, and completion.

This application addresses Absolute Priority 1 to hire a Veteran Concierge who will serve as a single point of contact to coordinate comprehensive support services for military and veteran students as we continue to develop The Jack W. Liebert Military and Veterans Resource Center on the campus of Ashland University.

Ashland serves all students including minorities, women, and those with disabilities.

**Atlanta Metropolitan State College, GA**

**P116G230023**

Atlanta Metropolitan State College (AMSC), a four-year public access college located in Atlanta, Georgia, is home to 8% of Georgia’s veterans. As a ground-breaking academic leader offering 14 associate degree programs, AMSC is uniquely poised to support veteran students by establishing a model Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success (CEVSS).

There are 14 associate degree programs, five bachelor’s degree programs, and nine certificates of proficiency or completion where student-centered instruction, civic/community engagement, and quality support services lead to the success of inter-generational 21st-century graduates.

The number of veteran students enrolling in AMSC has been increasing over the past several years, from 47 students in Fall 2018 to 87 students in Fall 2021. This increase is primarily due to a strategic commitment from the University’s leadership to increase the scope of services for existing student veterans and recruit more veterans to the student body. Among the current population of 87 student veterans, 100% are undergraduates.

The proposed project aims to establish a model CEVSS that will provide veteran students with tools to realize their dreams in higher education in an atmosphere of respect. The Center will intentionally engage the AMSC community in understanding and supporting the needs of its veteran students to create a military-ready campus culture in which all veteran students, faculty, and staff become an integral part of campus-wide success. The model CEVSS will increase veteran student enrollment, persistence, and degree completion.

Critical components of this CEVSS project are: (1) proposed activities and services aligned with the required and authorized activities outlined in the *Absolute Priority* to address needs, gaps and weaknesses by implementing systemic and institutional improvements and changes; (2) increasing enrollment 25% annually, persistence 60% annually, and graduation rates 15% annually; (3) establishing a one-stop-shop for the purpose of creating a seamless, consistent network of support for all veteran students that encourages a growth mindset to help cultivate career paths, get on that path, and build velocity in the direction of their goal; (4) provide support prior to, during and after each semester to help ease veteran students’ transition to higher education and begin to build rapport and peer support; (5) creation of a new, veteran and military-specific “First Year Experience” course; (6) facilitate Green Zone training, Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) training, and best practices for staff, faculty, mentors and volunteers to ensure veteran students have a positive experience in the classroom and on campus; (7) establish a comprehensive veteran student support team (VST); and (8) grow the sustainability plan to maintain the CEVSS with institutional funds when grant funds expire.

**Community College of Baltimore County, MD**

**P116G230014**

The Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) seeks to establish a Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success with funding from the U.S. Department of Education. The proposed project objectives include: a 20% increase in enrollment of veteran students with an emphasis on underrepresented groups likely to need academic and financial assistance, 20% increase in completion and retention for students, development of a Sustainability Plan for the Center, and establishment of a Veterans Student Success Team (VSST) responsive to students.

Programs will be developed to increase student veteran completion, persistence and retention. Two full-time Coordinators and two part-time Student Veteran Navigators will be hired and located in the existing campus offices. The VSST will be comprised of representatives of veteran services agencies, government agencies and CCBC faculty and staff from financial aid and student services.

The VSST will be advisory to the Center. The Center’s new programs will include increased screening for mental health issues, supplemental instruction for veterans on issues such as, mentoring, tutoring, personal and academic counseling, financial aid, personal counseling, job readiness, job placement, and participation in education and cultural events.

The Center will increase the number of student veterans receiving benefits to attend classes and support them as they navigate college, transfer, and career exploration. Other expected outcomes include: increased evaluation of prior learning, increased development of career pathways to streamline coursework toward completion and retention rates and increased supplemental instruction services and events specific to veteran populations.

The Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) addresses the Absolute and

Competitive Priorities in its application.

**Indiana Wesleyan University, IN**

**P116G230030**

Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU) continually demonstrates an unwavering commitment to serving military and veteran students through programs designed to maximize the transfer of military-based learning, increase speed to a degree, and reduce the cost of degree attainment. Now that IWU offers five (5) stackable degree pathways for military and veteran students, it is time to shift the focus to developing exceptional holistic student support services. To that end, IWU will create a new division, called the Division of Military Excellence (DOME), dedicated solely to positively impacting military and veteran student success outcomes.

The comprehensive plan, which addresses Absolute Priority and Competitive Preference Priority I, will allow IWU to centralize its concentration on identifying, analyzing, and developing support structures to meet military and veteran students' unique needs. IWU will hire a Senior Coordinator of Military Support, two Military Student Success Mentors to act as coaches and singular points of contact for students, and implement a Military Advisory Council tasked with elevating all aspects of the military and veteran student experience. In addition, IWU will deliver extensive and ongoing training to all military student-facing personnel to continually improve institutional understanding of and encourage superior care for this most deserving population. Going further, IWU will expand its current military student data collection and disaggregation from the rest of the student body. This will allow for improved analysis of students' needs and outcomes.

Finally, IWU outlines plan to develop comprehensive assessments, resources, tools, and pathways to support military students’ mental, emotional, military-to-civilian transition, and career needs.

**The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, IL**

**P116G230013**

The Chicago School of Professional Psychology (TCSPP) has an ongoing mission to advance the study of psychology by providing education at the baccalaureate, masters and doctoral levels to grow the number of skilled professionals in the field. During fall 2021 there were 322 (5% of enrollment) veteran/active miliary students and 79 (1.3%) military spouses for a total of **401 (6.6%) Military or Veteran Connected students**. Enrollment of these students has increased 31% over the past five years.

To address the needs of this growing population of students, TCSPP will create the Soldiers Center for Academic Resources and Support (SCARS) program. SCARS will establish a single point of contact for coordination of comprehensive veteran student support from admissions through graduation. It will develop and deliver supportive advising, peer mentoring, mental health counseling, as well as academic, personal, social and emotional support to increase the enrollment, persistence, and completion rates of veterans at TCSPP.

The specific **objectives** of the project are:

* Create a one-stop center for veterans on the Anaheim, CA campus which will be fully accessible online with both synchronous and asynchronous programming.
* Develop and implement the SCARS Bootcamp, four-week, online orientation specifically tailored to the needs of veteran students.
* Develop and implement SCARS peer mentoring program for veteran student support which pairs upper-level with lower-level veteran graduate students to ease the soldier to student transition.
* Develop and implement a telehealth behavioral counseling service, specifically for veterans, which will be housed at the SCARS center on the Anaheim campus and accessible online.

Anticipated **outcomes** from achievement of these objectives are:

* Veteran student enrollment will increase from an average of 19 students per year to 25 additional students each year (15% increase.)
* Veteran student persistence toward doctoral degrees will increase from 63 to 73% and master’s degrees from 60 to 70%, by the end of the project period.
* Veteran student completion rates of master’s degrees will increase from 34 to

40% and doctoral degrees from 18 to 25% by October 2027

Due to strong university leadership support, SCARS will be fully institutionalized and sustained by the end of the project period.

This application addresses the absolute priority and competitive preference priorities one and two.

**University of Florida, FL**

**P116G230028**

The University of Florida (UF), a public, four-year institution located in Gainesville, Florida, proposes the development of the UF Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success (CEVSS) program to support 570 veteran students. UF, a top-five ranked public institution, provides students with financially accessible education and experiences of the highest quality (University of Florida - Profile, Rankings and Data | US News Best Colleges, n.d.). The proposed UF CEVSS will provide student-veterans with centralized, comprehensive support from university admission through graduation to support UF veteran enrollment, persistence, retention, and graduation.

UF recognizes the challenges student-veterans face pursuing their postsecondary degree, such as limited sense of belonging; retention and graduation rates; few veterans resources on campus; and mental-physical health and wellbeing that may impede their academic achievement. UF is uniquely positioned to meet veteran needs and empower their academic success as leaders in the classroom. This proposal addresses identified needs, gaps, and weaknesses within campus services and resources by implementing institutional improvements and changes. UF is a first-time, new applicant to the CEVSS, and the outlined program based on best practices aligns with **Absolute Priority** activities.

Goal 1: Establish a single point of contact veteran program coordinating comprehensive support services for veteran students. Objective 1.1: Recruit, hire, and cross-train 2.5 FTE to coordinate the veteran supportprogram. Objective 1.2: Form a campus veteran success team and advisory board.  Objective 1.3: Facilitate the creation of an internally accessible dashboard to monitor veteran success metrics: enrollment, persistence, retention, and graduation. Objective 1.4: Create case management implementation to monitor veteran support.

Goal 2: Expand veteran services and engagement to improve veteran enrollment, persistence, and retention and progression to graduation. Objective 2.1: Develop at least three transitional support programs to increase veteran enrollment, persistence, retention, and graduation.

Objective 2.2: Create two guided, structured pathways to increase veteran enrollment, retention, and graduation. Objective 2.3: Formulate a process to identify and support academically at-risk student veterans.

Furthermore, this program will address **Competitive Preference Priority 1**

Goal 3: Expand campus capacity to meet student veterans social, emotional, and academic needs. Objective 3.1: Train 3,000 UF faculty and staff on military cultural competency and trauma-informed education. Objective 3.2: Deliver two campus programs raising non-veteran students' military awareness. Objective 3.3: Conduct a needs assessment to identify and address the needs and wants of graduate student veterans.

**Loyola University of Chicago, IL**

**P116G230016**

Loyola University Chicago (LUC) is a four year, private, Jesuit Catholic institution that serves the local Chicago communities to the Global community by preparing people to live extraordinary lives through service for others. This is achieved through an education that stresses the importance of knowledge, curiosity, global perspectives, and cura personalis, which translates to “care for the whole person.” Named after Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits and an injured Spanish combat veteran, LUC currently serves approximately 230 veterans’ students, annually.

Currently, LUC veteran students are less likely to persist (81%) and complete their program (71.4%) compared to LUC’s non-veteran student population (87.5 & 76%, respectively). As veteran students transition from military service into LUC, they are faced with challenges and barriers unique from the traditional college student. Therefore, appropriate services and resources are necessary to ensure veteran students are equally successful in & out of the classroom and beyond their time at LUC as their non-veteran classmates.

The LUC Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Services (CVS) project is designed to address the academic, financial, physical, and social needs of veteran students. This proposal will provide a detailed review of the needs, gaps and/or weaknesses of services and/or resources currently available and activities to be used as outlined in the absolute priority and authorized activities to create sustainable support services and resources to lead to veteran student success. This proposal will also address competitive preference priority 1: meeting students’ social, emotional, and academic needs.

Success of the LUC CVS program will be measured from two impact areas:

* Utilization of veteran-centered services and/or programming & veteran student rates of success while at LUC.
* University awareness & readiness to better serve veteran students.

The first impact area focuses directly on the veteran student population with primary objectives including: 1. Establishment of a Center of Excellence, 2. Hire staff to manage the center and develop programming and/or services for veteran students. 3. Increase retention and completion rates of veteran students to meet or surpass the non-veteran undergraduate rates by the end of the funding period. 4. Increase veteran student enrollment by 20% over the grant period.

The second impact area focuses on university structures and cultural climate with the following objectives: 1. Creation of a veteran advisory council to support veteran students and advocate for veteran-inclusive policies, 2. Increase the cultural awareness of non-veteran connected LUC stakeholders. 3. Commitment of resources from university for continued and sustainable support of veteran students.