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**Our Veteran Online Partners**

Texas Adjutant General's Department  
[www.agd.state.tx.us](http://www.agd.state.tx.us)

Texas Veterans Commission  
[www.tvc.state.tx.us](http://www.tvc.state.tx.us)

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
[www.thecb.state.tx.us](http://www.thecb.state.tx.us)

Texas Veterans Land Board  
[www.texasveterans.com](http://www.texasveterans.com)

Texas Workforce Commission  
[www.twc.state.tx.us](http://www.twc.state.tx.us)

Partners Across Texas and 211 Texas  
[www.texvet.com](http://www.texvet.com)



## Student Work-Study Allowance Program

By Dan Galindo, Program Specialist  
TVC Veterans Education

If you're receiving VA education benefits for attending school at least ¾ time or more, the Student Work-Study Allowance program can also provide a way to earn working wages while pursuing your education career goal. This program is available to eligible:

- Service members
- Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) participants
- Selected Reserve
- Post-Vietnam era veterans
- Dependents Educational Assistance Program participants
- National Call to Service Participants

Elaine Morin Zavala's experience is an excellent example of how this program works. Elaine is a dependent of a veteran and is a two-year junior at the University of Texas at Austin. She is also a part-time employee in the Marketing Department at the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC), while pursuing her bachelor's degree.

As Elaine explains, this work-study situation fits perfectly into her plans as she is able to go to school and plan her work hours around her classes. She said her work with the marketing department meshes well with her educational goal, advertising. Were it not for her father, a disabled veteran, Elaine may not have had this opportunity.

While visiting the VA Medical Center in San Antonio, Mr. Zavala noticed a work-study information sheet on the bulletin board. He thought it might work for his daughter and encouraged Elaine to check the program out. She applied at VA and found a facility meeting the VA-related work activity requirements (TVC). In coordination with the agency, she completed and submitted VA Form 22-8691, Application for Work-Study Allowance, to the VA Regional Office in Muskogee, Oklahoma. A Student Work-

Study Agreement form was completed, signed and sent to VA. Elaine has been working for TVC for over 5 months and earning \$6.55 per hour tax free. Time sheets are completed and verified by the TVC after 50 hours of work are completed.

Interested individuals can apply at any TVC office, local veterans county service office (VCSO), VA regional office, VA benefit office, VA Vet Center, veteran organization representatives or by contacting the Reserve Education and Incentive Officer. There are many different facilities available where VA-related work is performed from schools or VA offices to VA medical facilities and cemeteries.

It is important to understand that the number of applicants selected will depend on the availability of VA-related work at the school or at VA facilities in the area, and how VA selects students for the work-study program. Factors include:

- Disability of the student
- Ability of the student to complete the work-study contract before the end of his/her eligibility to educational benefits
- Job availability within the student's normal commuting distance
- Veterans with service-connected disability or disabilities at 30% or more will receive the highest priority

Remember, a work-study allowance is available under most education programs and eligibility is based on full time or ¾ time attendance in a college degree, vocational or professional program.

For additional information, visit [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) or call 1-888-442-4551. If hearing impaired, call 1-800-829-4833. You may also find contact information for all TVC offices, VCSO and VA facilities in Texas at [www.tvc.state.tx.us](http://www.tvc.state.tx.us).★



## In the Spotlight

# Veterans and Asbestos Exposure

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, there are currently 25 million living individuals who have served in the United States' Armed Forces.

Hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of these living veterans were exposed to toxic asbestos-containing materials during military service.

Widely used by every military branch, asbestos was highly regarded for its heat resistance and fireproofing capabilities. In fact, asbestos was so valued that the military even mandated widespread usage before eventually phasing out the material in the 1970s.

Most military divisions utilized the caustic substance mainly for insulation purposes, but more than 300 products containing asbestos were used by the military, primarily by the Navy from the 1930s through the 1970s. Every ship and shipyard built by the Navy before the mid-70s was fitted with numerous asbestos-containing materials.

These materials were extensively used in engine and boiler rooms and other areas below deck for fire safety purposes. Navy personnel who worked below deck were heavily exposed to asbestos, but all sailors are at risk, as the deadly compound was used in navigation rooms, sleeping quarters, and mess halls. Products such as brakes, gaskets, valves, cements, adhesives, and floor and pipe coverings all contained asbestos.

Clearly, virtually no portion of a naval ship was asbestos-free between the '30s and mid-70s, making Navy veterans and shipyard workers one of the

most at-risk groups for developing asbestos-related diseases.

According to a revealing statistic, more than 30 percent of Americans beset with mesothelioma (a rapacious cancer that attacks the internal lining of the lungs, abdomen, and heart) were exposed to asbestos during military service. Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) veterans benefit counselors are a valuable resource offered by [www.asbestos.com](http://www.asbestos.com) and are available to help guide you through the process of filing a VA Claim or exploring your legal options at no charge. If you have any questions or concerns, the counselors are well educated and can help alleviate concerns and inform you of your options.

Due to common military practices, veterans who served between 1940 and 1970 have a great risk of developing asbestos-related illnesses. Additionally, Navy personnel and workers employed in shipyards from the 1930s through the 1970s hold a greater risk of developing a disease caused by asbestos exposure.

For more information on veterans and mesothelioma, products that are known to have contained asbestos or to file a claim with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, contact a TVC veterans benefit counselor or your local veterans county service officer. Contact information is available on the TVC website at [www.tvc.state.tx.us](http://www.tvc.state.tx.us), or by calling toll-free at 1-800-252 VETS (8387). More information on mesothelioma is available online at [www.asbestos.com](http://www.asbestos.com).★

*SOURCE: Ben Grayson  
National Awareness Coordinator & Veteran Liaison  
Mesothelioma Cancer Center*

**Did you know** there is a specific federal statute outlining the proper manner in which to wear a Flag Lapel Pin?



According to USC, Title 4, Chapter 1, Section 8, Paragraph (j), "No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen, and members of patriotic organizations."

The law goes on to state, "The flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing. Therefore, the **Lapel Flag Pin** being a replica, should be worn on the left lapel near the heart."

For more information regarding United States Flag statutes, visit the Office of the Law Revision Counsel at <http://uscode.house.gov>.★

## "Taps" for Tuition Program

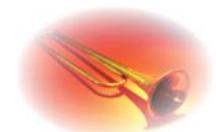
### Attention Students!!

Do you play the bugle,  
trumpet or coronet?

Do you want to  
earn \$25 vouchers  
for your education?

*Call the Texas  
Veterans Commission  
for details today!*

**Call (512) 463-5538  
or email  
[info@tvc.state.tx.us](mailto:info@tvc.state.tx.us).**



## VA Outpatient Clinic on Galveston Island Reopens

The Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center held a special Ribbon Cutting Ceremony officially re-opening its VA Outpatient Clinic on Galveston Island on March 4, 2009. Among those present at the event were officials from Senator John Cornyn's office, Senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson's office, Congressman Ron Paul's office, the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center in Houston, and the Texas Veterans Commission.

The new Galveston Island VA Outpatient Clinic is centrally located on Galveston Island at 3828 Avenue N. The newly renovated building is close to many restaurants and businesses and staffed by highly qualified and experienced VA physicians, nurses, technicians, and administrative staff.

The clinic, open Mondays through Fridays, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., will provide primary care, telemedicine, mental health care, phlebotomy, electronic patient records, and women's health services, in addition to local radiology services, to veterans in the area.

Veterans from both Galveston Island and the mainland can now obtain health care at the new Galveston facility. The Texas City Community Based Outpatient Clinic at 9300 Emmett Lowry Expressway in Texas City permanently closed on February 27, 2009. The search for an appropriate new location for this clinic is on-going.

Veterans, who need medical advice, appointments, or other information, are asked to call the VA Network Telecare Center Hotline at (713) 794-8985 or toll-free 1-800-639-5137. Registered nurses, pharmacists, and administrative clerks are ready to answer veteran health care questions 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Veterans with life-threatening emergencies should immediately call 911.★

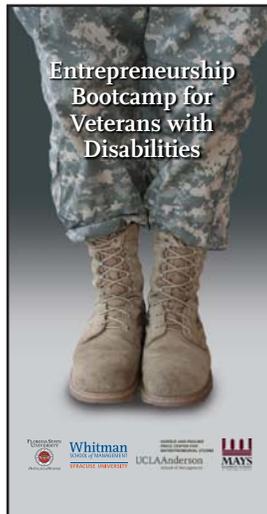


From left: Nathan Cook, Deputy Regional Director, Office of U.S. Senator John Cornyn; Linda Sullivan, Veterans/Military Caseworker, Office of U.S. Representative Ron Paul; Francisco Vazquez, Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center Assistant Director; James Richman, Director of Claims Representation and Counseling, Texas Veterans Commission; Albert Cheng, Deputy Director, Office of U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson; and Jack Molho, District Director, Office of U.S. Representative Pete Olson.

## Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities

The 'Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities' (EBV) offers cutting edge, experiential training in entrepreneurship and small business management to post-9/11 soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines disabled as a result of their service to our country. The intent of the EBV is to open the door to entrepreneurial opportunity and small business ownership to veterans by developing competencies in the many steps and activities associated with creating and sustaining an entrepreneurial venture and by helping coordinate efforts with programs and services for veterans and others with disabilities.

The EBV was first introduced by the Whitman School of Management at Syracuse University (SU) in 2007. In 2008, the EBV Consortium of Schools was launched, a national partnership with UCLA Anderson School of Management, Florida State University's College of Business, and Mays Business School at Texas A&M. Each of these world-class business schools offers EBV on their campuses, beginning Summer 2008.



Universities, delegates are exposed to the 'nuts and bolts' of business ownership through experiential workshops and lessons from world-class entrepreneurship faculty representing nationally ranked programs around the country.

- **Phase III:** delegates are provided with 12 months of ongoing support and mentorship from faculty experts at the EBV Universities.

### Costs, Logistics and Eligibility:

This program is entirely free to veterans. As a result of the generous support of the EBV Universities and the private giving of individuals and corporations, all costs (including travel, lodging, and meals) are covered for delegates accepted to the EBV. EBV applications will be accepted from veterans with a 'service-connected disability' as designated by the Veterans Administration or Department of Defense, and who have served on active duty after September 2001.

### Mays School of Business at Texas A&M University

Texas A&M University, currently enrolling more than 45,000 students, is the oldest public university in the state. One of its most cherished traditions and legacies is the Corps of Cadets. With the exception of the service academies, A&M's Corps makes up the nation's largest uniformed student body, with approximately 1,800 students participating, and annually commissions more officers than any other institution. To date, more than 220 former cadets have achieved the rank of general or admiral. Since 1968, Mays Business School has been training ethical business leaders to impact the global society. Mays is nationally ranked among public business schools for the quality of its academic programs and faculty scholarship and currently enrolls more than 4,000 undergraduate students and 875 graduate students.

Specific dates vary by university and early application is encouraged. For information regarding topics, scheduling and application procedure, contact EBV Program at Texas A&M at <http://mays.tamu.edu/ebv> or call (979) 862-7091 or (979) 845-4882 ★

Like bootcamp, this program is intense, rigorous, and challenging. Building upon key elements of SU's nationally ranked entrepreneurship curriculum, the bootcamp consists of a series of training modules designed to assist you in growing businesses successfully and profitably. A team of experienced faculty and successful entrepreneurs will work with veterans, providing a fun, interactive and informative experience. They will introduce entrepreneurship ideas and concepts, and show how to apply them to your current or potential business. The EBV is designed around two central elements: a) focused, practical training in the tools and skills of new venture creation and growth, reflecting issues unique to disability and public benefits programs; and b) the establishment of a support structure for graduates of the program. The practical elements of the program will involve three phases:

- **Phase I:** delegates participate in a self-study curriculum, facilitated by an online discussion and assessment module, which will be moderated by entrepreneurship faculty and graduate students from one of the partner EBV Universities. During this phase delegates will work on the development of their own business concepts.
- **Phase II:** during the 7-9 day residency at one of the four EBV

## Free Veterans Benefit & Health Fairs Open to All Veterans, Their Families and Dependents!

### Veterans Benefits & Health Care Fair

Friday, March 13, 2009  
9:30 am to 12:00 pm

Reunion Room/Fair  
Park Auditorium  
1000 N. Commerce  
Childress, TX 79201

*Valuable personal assistance with your questions and claims will be given by experts from:*

Texas Veterans Commission, County Veterans Service Officers, Texas Veterans Land Board, VA Benefit Counselors, Amarillo VA Veterans Health Care System & other veterans organizations.

Bring pertinent case information to discuss pending cases.

Contact Del Summers at (940) 937-3402 for further info.

### Veterans Benefits Fair

Saturday, March 21, 2009  
10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Abilene Civic Center  
1100 N. 6th Street  
Abilene, TX 79601

*Co-Sponsored by:*  
Texas Veterans Commission  
& Texas Veterans Land Board

Representatives from State & Federal agencies will be available.

Bring pertinent case information to discuss pending cases.

Call 1-800-252-VETS (8387) for further info.

### Veterans Benefits Fair

Saturday, March 21, 2009  
10:00 am to 2:00 pm

City View Jr/Sr High School  
Commons Area  
1600 City View Dr  
Wichita Falls, TX 76306

*Co-Sponsored by:*  
Texas Veterans Commission  
Wichita County Veterans Service Office

Representatives from State & Federal agencies will be available.

Bring pertinent case information to discuss pending cases.

Contact Glen Eickman at [Glen.Eickman@co.wichita.tx.us](mailto:Glen.Eickman@co.wichita.tx.us) or call (940) 716-8599 for further info.

### Veterans Benefits Fair

Saturday, April 4, 2009  
10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Eastland VFW  
918 Hwy 570  
Eastland, TX 76448

*Valuable personal assistance with your questions and claims will be given by experts from:*

Texas Veterans Commission, County Veterans Service Officers, Texas Veterans Land Board, VA Benefit Counselors, Amarillo VA Veterans Health Care System & other veterans organizations.

Bring pertinent case information to discuss pending cases.

Contact Larry Monroe at (254) 631-9226 for further info.

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### March 20th deadline nears for veterans' assistance grants proposals

For more than 80 years, the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) has been dedicated to assisting veterans and their families with benefits and services across the State. Now, the TVC has the opportunity to further help these valuable Texans through the **Fund for Veterans' Assistance**. This special fund, administered by the TVC, has been established by the State to improve veterans' assistance programs and make grants to local communities to address veterans' needs.

#### Statement of Purpose

In accordance with Texas Government Code, Chapter 434, the Texas Veterans Commission seeks to fund grant proposals for the transportation of veterans from their place (or area) of residency to medical facilities.

#### Eligibility

The grant funds may be awarded to Non-profit, charitable, or governmental organizations under I.R.S. code 501(c)(3), 170(c)(1), or 170(c)(19); and, as applicable, organizations must be in compliance with the Texas Non-profit Corporation Act and §5.062 of the Texas Business Organizations Code. Joint efforts between eligible entities will be considered, and a proposal may include a request for funding of a project to be conducted by more than one entity.

#### Deadline and Submission Information

Proposals should be submitted to Connie Lyssy, Grants Coordinator, Texas Veterans Commission, P.O. Box 12277, Austin, Texas 78711. The street address is 1700 North Congress, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Austin, Texas 78701. **Proposals must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. March 20, 2009.** One original and seven copies must be submitted. Additionally, an electronic copy should be e-mailed to [connie.lyssy@tvc.state.tx.us](mailto:connie.lyssy@tvc.state.tx.us). Fax copies will not be accepted.

For details such as objectives and criteria, eligible and ineligible expenses, submission and reporting requirements, and more contact Connie Lyssy at (512) 463-1981 or via email at [connie.lyssy@tvc.state.tx.us](mailto:connie.lyssy@tvc.state.tx.us) or visit [www.tvc.state.tx.us/FundVeteransAssistance.html](http://www.tvc.state.tx.us/FundVeteransAssistance.html). ★

### Camp Lejeune water study registry

Did you live or work at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune 1987 or before? If so, please register with the Marine Corps by visiting [www.marines.mil/clsurvey](http://www.marines.mil/clsurvey) or by calling the Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water Call Center at 877-261-9782, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST.

Two solvents, trichloroethylene (TCE) and perchloroethylene (PCE), both unregulated at the time, were found in two water systems in the early 1980's. Certain drinking water wells were identified as the source of the chemicals and were taken out of service in 1984 and 1985.

The Department of the Navy is funding two independent research initiatives. The Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry (ATSDR) is determining if there is an association between exposure to the water and certain adverse health effects.

Upon completion of the research, the Marine Corps will directly notify those on the registry through direct mail and email.

Camp Lejeune water meets or exceeds all environmental standards today. ★



Please send suggestions or comments pertaining to this newsletter to:

John House  
Director of Marketing  
& Training  
Texas Veterans Commission  
P.O. Box 12277  
Austin, TX 78711-2277  
[john.house@tvc.state.tx.us](mailto:john.house@tvc.state.tx.us)