



THE CITADEL

VETERAN STUDENT
SUCCESS CENTER



The Veterans Voice

April 2024

VSSC Launching New Education Benefits System!

Over the summer the Veteran Student Success Center (VSSC) will be partnering with VA Works to implement a new certification system here at The Citadel!

The goal is to expedite and simplify the certification process across campus. Please be patient as we test and work through the implementation of this new system and do not hesitate to email us at VA_Benefits@Citadel.edu if you have any questions or concerns.

We will send out additional information next month as we near the launch date in July!

Upcoming Events

Veteran & Active Duty Student Services Feedback Focus Group

Friday, April 5, 2024

1 PM to 2 PM

Veteran Student Success Center

Led by a third-party contractor, this focus group will allow Veteran and Active Duty students to voice their concerns or feedback regarding Veteran student services across The Citadel campus. Please make your voice heard and join us for this special opportunity!

The Citadel Student Veterans Association (CSVA) Meeting

Friday, April 5, 2024

2:15 PM

Capers, Room 2170

Join The Citadel Student Veterans Association for their monthly meeting as they introduce the 2024-2025 Executive Board, discuss important accomplishments made this past year, and talk about upcoming strategic initiatives.

Mentorship Program Information Session

Thursday, April 18, 2024

12 PM

Veteran Student Success Center

Interested in the Veteran Student Mentorship Program? Join us to learn more from program director Jim Whetstone! This will be an informational meeting with the opportunity to ask questions regarding the program. Students do not have to commit to the program to attend.

Java with the General

Thursday, April 18, 2024

8 AM to 9 AM

The President's Office

Have coffee and network with General Glenn Walters in an informal setting. This event is limited to seven (7) students in total. If you are interested in participating, please email Melissa West, MWest5@citadel.edu.

Graduation Celebration

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

10 AM to 1 PM

The Citadel Beach House

Celebrate the Class of 2024 at The Citadel Beach House! We will have food, music, and fun, families are welcome. [Please RSVP](#) here so that we can have an accurate head count.

Fall 2024 Veteran & Active Duty Student Orientation

Friday, August 16, 2024

8 AM to 3 PM

Bond 295, The Citadel Campus

Open to ALL Veteran and Active Duty students no matter your year, degree or program, orientation is an opportunity to learn more about resources to help you succeed as well as study tips for adjusting to academic life. Students can ask questions of campus offices including financial aid, the Student Success Center and more! RSVP link coming soon.

Back to School Beach Bash

Friday, August 23, 2024

4 PM to 6 PM

The Citadel Beach House

Join us for some fun in the sun and dinner at the beach! Bring your family and enjoy a hotdog or hamburger, beach games and fellowship with Veteran and Active Duty students.

Spring Registration reminders... early registration opens on April 4!



Excited to register for courses? Here are a few important reminders!

In addition, please meet with your academic advisory prior to registration to ensure you are taking the appropriate classes to graduate on time.

Click here to view the [Credit Hour Equivalencies Chart \(located under Request for VA Enrollment Certification\)](#).

VSSC Hosts Camo & Cocktails

Our Veteran students have served their country and have since chosen The Citadel to continue their education and pursue their passion. Often they attend classes as caregivers, employees, and reservists creating undue financial burden juggling other commitments and school.

Scholarships awarded to students who demonstrate academic success and financial need would alleviate some of the stress for our most dedicated students and allow them to focus on their studies.

Last month the VSSC hosted Camo & Cocktails to announce the launch of the Veteran Student Scholarship fund created to develop scholarship opportunities for our Veteran students.

Thank you to our amazing supporters who attended the event!

[If you are interested in supporting our Veteran students click here to give towards the campaign!](#)





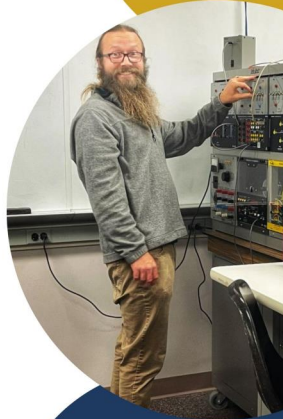
Brandon's Story:

Brandon, dad to two young boys, husband, Veteran of the United States Navy, and an electrical engineering major is working to earn his bachelor's degree at The Citadel.

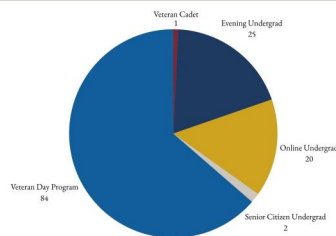
Thanks to scholarships, Brandon's family has been able to afford to send him to school while they sustain their household on one income. Scholarships have also allowed Brandon to apply for graduate school, an ambition he wasn't sure was possible.

He is proud to model determination and success for his sons and is able to dream bigger because of generous donors who are passionate about helping Veteran and Active Duty students attend The Citadel.

Thank you for your support!

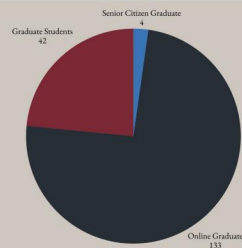


Veteran Students



132
Veteran
Undergraduate
Students*

179
Veteran
Graduate
Students*



32
Active Duty
Students

3.45
Average Veteran
Student GPA

82.6%
Veteran Student Retention
Rate

*Veteran Students Self-Identify as such.

Programs and Services

Provided by the Veteran Student Success Center (VSSC)

- **Veteran Student Lounge**
 - Kitchen with Coffee Maker, Microwave, Refrigerator and Kitchen Supplies
 - Lounge with Television
 - Study Room Equipped with 4+ Computers, Printer, and Office Supplies
 - Wi-fi Access
 - Free Food Pantry (Partnership with the Lowcountry Food Bank)
 - Professional Attire Linen Closet
 - Free School Supplies Cabinet
- **Academic Coaching**
- **Resiliency Coaching**
- **Career Coaching**
- **Veteran Student Mentorship Program**
- **Veterans Integration into Academic Leadership (VITAL) Program**
 - In partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- **Assistance with VA Education Benefits Processing**
- **Veteran Emergency Relief Fund**
- **Student Veterans Association (SVA)**
- **Yearly Events**
 - New Student Orientation, Welcome Back Beach Bash, Holiday Party, Graduation Party, Gold Star & Dean's List Luncheons, etc.

Veteran Student Scholarship Fund



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DONATE NOW





Thank
you!



Veteran Specific Freshman Seminar Courses now Available!

Starting in Fall 2024, Freshman Seminar and Freshman Seminar Writing Intensive courses will have one section each dedicated to Veteran and Active Duty students.

The courses, which should be taken together, will be Sci Fi, Fantasy and Human Nature themed and are scheduled for MWF from 10 AM to 10:50 AM (FSWI101-01) and 11 AM to 11:50 AM (FSEM101-01).

Taught by Dr. Melanie Maddox, Associate Professor in the History Department (FSEM101), and Dr. Jennifer Adair, Senior Instructor in the English, Fine Arts and Communications Department (FSWI), these courses are an excellent opportunity to learn alongside fellow Veteran and Active Duty students and discuss topics related to the theme and your military experience.

To register for these courses simply add them to your schedule with CRN 51515 & 51514.

Both courses are required to graduate for all Veteran Day Program students and all Active Duty students.

Volunteer Opportunity with Camp Rise Above at the Cooper River Bridge Run

The Krause Center is looking for a few Veteran student volunteers at the Cooper River Bridge Run! If you are interested in participating, please [email Christina Soyden Arnold, Director of Service Learning and Community Engagement.](#)

Volunteers will be at the Finish Festival at Marion Square from 7 AM to 12 PM.

The Citadel Student Veterans Association Announces 24-25' Executive Board



President: Chris Harris

Chris Harris is a six-year Navy Seabee veteran who was stationed in Rota, Spain for four years with EOD Mobile Unit Eight where he was responsible for facilities maintenance and project oversight. He was responsible for the construction of platoon team spaces/upkeep as well as the construction of crick platforms for MK5 boats for jump operations in the Atlantic Ocean. After his tour in Spain, he was sent to Port Hueneme for Builder "C" school advanced to be prepared to fill the orders of his billet in Redzikowo, Poland. While stationed in Redzikowo, BU2 Harris had oversight and saw the completion of seven BOSC contractor projects including being part of the commissioning team for the Navy's newest Aegis Ashore Missile Defense Agency (September 2020). Once his two years in Poland were complete, Chris moved to

Charleston with his wife Sadie and their two dogs and two cats. He is an Exercise Science major with the pursuit to go into Healthcare Administration upon his graduation at The Citadel.



Vice President of Programs & Member Development: Sean Ludwick

Hello, my name is Sean Ludwick! I am originally from Georgia, and I have lived in South Carolina since 2019. I am also an Air Force veteran, having served four years in active-duty service, and still currently serving in the Air Force Reserves as an AGE technician. During my time in active-duty service, I had the privilege of doing countless POTUS missions that had me travel across the southeast as well as supporting Operation Afghan Refuge. I was stationed at JB Charleston and was part of 437th MXS and I am still there serving with the 315th MXS. Currently, I am a junior majoring in Finance. I plan to attend graduate school to get my MBA with a concentration in finance. Regardless my passion is in finance and helping others reach their financial goals no matter how large. When not attending school, working, or drilling with the reserves I enjoy being outdoors, and reading various books. I am also passionate about veteran issues, primarily mental health and well-being of veterans. I look forward to being your VP!



Vice President of Recruitment & Member Engagement: Hannah Birdzell

My name is Hannah Birdzell and I just started here at The Citadel pursuing a master's degree in project management. Originally from Arizona, I served in the Navy for six years as a Russian linguist being stationed in Chicago, Monterey, DC, and studying at a university in Latvia. After serving in the Navy I lived in Ohio for a year where I graduated from Kent State University with my bachelor's in psychology. I now live here in the great city of Charleston and am looking forward to this next chapter in my education and career!



Vice President of Finance & Fundraising: David Schley

David J. Schley is a management major at the Baker School of Business. He joined the US Navy in December 2011, serving on the USS San Juan (SSN-751), and later as an instructor at Nuclear Power Training Unit on MTS-701 where he separated from the Navy in February 2022. He is married to Dupre Schley (née Moseley) since October 2016 living in Mt. Pleasant, SC.



Vice President of Communications & Marketing: Mackenzie Baker

Mackenzie Baker is from Colorado Springs, CO and new to the Charleston area. After her husband received a job offer from Boeing, Mackenzie decided that the move from Fort Drum, NY would be the perfect time to finish her education. Mackenzie is a double major in Marketing & Business Development and Supply Chain Management with a minor in Spanish. She is also a mom of a 2 ½ year-old girl. After 7 years of active duty army aviation (serving in roles such as aircraft hydraulic/pneumatic mechanic, aircraft powerplant mechanic, aircraft ground support equipment supervisor, and maintenance supervisor), she is currently serving as a Drill Sergeant in the US Army Reserves supporting Fort Jackson. After graduation, she would like to pursue a corporate career in the aviation industry where she is able to lead a team. She is passionate about the military, coaching and mentoring others, and supporting her fellow veterans.

[Join the Combined Arms Network](#)



Combined Arms brings together veteran-focused nonprofits and agencies and communities across the nation committed to serving those who served. These **250+** best-in-class organizations

provide **1200+** resources that empower veterans to lead the successful civilian lives they want, making our community stronger than ever.

CAREER SERVICES RESOURCES

- Career Mentoring
- Professional Attire
- Interview Coaching
- Professional Networking
- Job Placement
- Resume Writing
- LinkedIn Coaching
- Technical Training & Certificates

MENTAL WELLNESS RESOURCES

- Personal & Family Counseling
- Marital Counseling
- Post Traumatic Stress Counseling
- Anxiety & Depression Support
- Military Spouse Groups
- Addiction Counseling
- Behavioral Health Education
- Personal Growth

VETERAN BENEFITS RESOURCES

- Mortgage & Rent Assistance
- VA Disability & Benefits Appeals
- eBenefits
- Homeless Services
- Utilities Assistance

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- Mortgage & Rent Assistance
- Utilities Assistance

- Homeless Services
- Financial Literacy Courses

Please follow the link to create a profile:

<https://www.combinedarms.us/>

Get Ahead with Academic Coaching

Academic coaching, how is it different from advising?

Academic coaching provides students with the “soft skills” associated with success in their college experience. Academic advisors guide students through potential coursework and degree requirements.

Academic coaches work with students on developing academic skills including but not limited to...

- Time Management,
- Note-Taking,
- Goal Setting,
- Effectively Utilizing Campus Resources,
- Reading Strategies,
- Communicating with Faculty and Staff,
- Balancing the Demands of Academic and Personal Life,
- Managing your Email, Notes, etc.,
- Testing Strategies, and
- More!

Program Elements

- 20-minute student and coach sessions led by the student’s needs and current challenges.
- Provides student not only with assistance on developing the soft skills needed to succeed in school but connect them to internal and external resources for additional help.
- Academic coaching sessions will be available online or in-person depending on the student’s preference and availability.
- Time slots will be available similar to office hours with one day bi-weekly providing office hours in the evening.

[Click here to make an appointment with Melissa West](#), the VSSC's academic coach dedicated to Veteran and Active Duty students.

Tillman Honor Run Comes to Charleston

Ready to run?

Find and register for your Tillman Honor Run below!

[Sign up for your next Tillman Honor Run](#)

About Tillman Honor Runs

The ASU Alumni Association, in partnership with the Pat Tillman Foundation, wants to thank the thousands of runners across the country who participated in the 2023 Tillman Honor Runs.

Your generosity and Sun Devil spirit make a difference. By registering for a run, you raised funds for the Pat Tillman Foundation's Tillman Scholars Program, which provides scholarships to members of our nation's active-duty service members, veterans and military spouses.

Tillman Honor Runs are held each April to honor the legacy and impact of former Sun Devil and Army Ranger Pat Tillman.

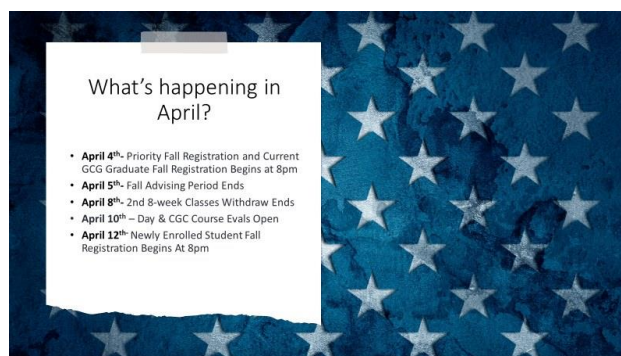
These fun run-walks are hosted by ASU Alumni chapters and clubs in multiple cities across the U.S. The 4.2-mile race routes in each city represents the No. 42 Pat wore on his jersey as a Sun Devil scholar-athlete.

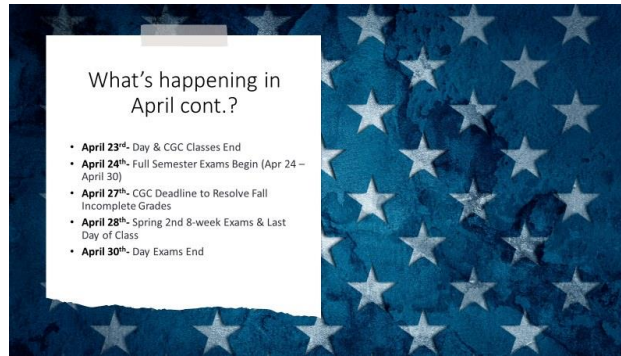
We hope many of you can participate in the 2024 Tillman Honor Runs, and thank you again for participating in this annual tradition.

Charleston Run Details:

Charleston (Daniel Island) April 20, 2024 9 a.m.

April Academic Calendar





Tip from VITAL

Stressed? Maybe meditation can help.

What are the biggest benefits?

Meditation has been around as long as 1500 B.C. (at least!) and has been hailed throughout history as a practice that can calm the mind, sharpen the senses, and lead to new ways of thinking. There has been more recent research connecting consistent meditation practice with a reduction in depression, post-traumatic stress, and cardiovascular conditions like hypertension.¹

Some of the biggest benefits mentioned in research on meditation include enhancing breathing quality, improving nervous system function, and providing greater emotional control. By harnessing the power of the breath, we can see short-term benefits like a more focused state of mind, reduced heart rate, and even decreased inflammation levels in the body. Longer-term benefits of consistent practice can include improved mood regulation, decreased depression levels, and even a reduction in size of the amygdala². In 2017, the American Heart Association endorsed meditation as an evidence-based practice for improving physical health.³

What counts as meditation?

If you're not a big fan of doing yoga, that's okay. Meditation can include spending a few minutes a day practicing your breathing in a calm environment where it's easier to focus, or it could take the form of an enjoyable activity where you can be fully present, like playing golf. One of the most important components of meditation is finding something that you're able to fully participate in on a consistent basis.

Anything else?

There isn't necessarily one type of meditation that is better than another, so you can truly customize this practice to be exactly what you need when you need to use it. Some of the easiest forms to practice are methods like "box breathing" or "progressive muscle relaxation" because they revolve around regulating your breathing and can be done anywhere, anytime. These methods also do not require any equipment to use and examples are readily available on YouTube!

Have questions or want to discuss more? Jordan Watkins, your VITAL Coordinator, is available in person every Thursday morning from 8:00am-12:00pm in the Veteran Student Success Center.

References

1 Reynolds, Thomas (2019). *How Meditation Improves Mental and Physical Health*. Accessed via

2 Leung MK, et al. *Meditation-induced neuroplastic changes in amygdala activity during negative affective processing*. *Soc Neurosci*. 2018 Jun;13(3):277-288. doi: 10.1080/17470919.2017.1311939.

3 Levine GN, et al. *Meditation and Cardiovascular Risk Reduction. A Scientific Statement From the American Heart Association*. <https://doi.org/10.1161/JAHA.117.002218>.

2024 -2025 Mentorship Program Applications OPEN!

There are just a few spots left to participate in the Veteran Student Mentorship program for the 2024-2025 academic year!

This voluntary program provides the student with an opportunity to engage in a mentorship relationship with a valued member of The Citadel and/or Charleston community. Mentees (students) will meet with their mentors on a regular basis as well as attend four (4) informational sessions throughout the school year which will cover topics such as personal finances, setting goals and leadership skills.

[Click here to learn more and apply!](#)

Veteran Student Mentorship Program

The Veteran Student Mentorship Program provides dedicated one-on-one mentoring for Veterans based on the student's career aspirations following graduation and personal goals. The program focuses on helping students develop academic, professional, and personal skills.

- Program open to all sophomore and junior Veteran Day Program and Active Duty students with 2.5 GPA and higher.
- Participants attend regular events as a group as well as meet one-on-one with their mentor.
- Mentors are members of the community who have achieved success in their chosen field.



For more information contact Melissa West at MWest5@Citadel.edu.

Keep in Touch



1 - [Like us on Facebook](#)



[2 - Follow us on Instagram](#)



3 - Email us at VA_Benefits@Citadel.edu.



4 - Call us at 843-953-9824.