

WILLIAM & MARY



MILITARY & VETERAN AFFAIRS NEWSLETTER

Letter from the Special Assistant

KATHLEEN T. JABS

Happy New Year and Almost Happy Spring...

It seems like the students just arrived back and now we're hearing plans for Spring Break – the winter session has been fast, cold and exciting. The energy we feel when the students are back is infectious. We have several new initiatives underway, and we continue to pilot, grow, and expand our networks to reach more military connected and veteran students. A few highlights from these past few months are included in this newsletter. We had so many unique events – it's hard to pick only a few!



One true stand-out event for the entire team was the Conversation with Chancellor Gates we hosted for our military and veteran students on Charter Day. More than 40 students from across campus—Army ROTC, undergraduate and Business, Education and Law graduate students—were treated to a question-and-answer session moderated by Charlie Foster. We are very grateful to Chancellor Gates for sharing his wisdom, experience and humor with this group.

We hosted retired Marine Corps Brigadier General Terry Williams, Senior Vice President, Global Fixed Assets & Corporate Security at PenFed Credit Union on campus January 26. Terry toured our facilities, met with students at lunch, then spoke to a large group of military and veteran students. In another angle of our developing relationship with PenFed, I wrote an op-ed with their CEO, James Schenck, about how companies and universities can help with military recruiting shortfalls. The article was published on military.com, Feb 6, and reprinted here in the newsletter. To show how we intend to pair companies and universities on a veteran talent pipeline, PenFed will host W&M Day at their headquarters Feb. 27. We're taking 12 undergraduate and graduate veteran students for an industry day where the students will meet with PenFed senior veteran leaders, have their resumes reviewed and learn networking tips and other transition opportunities.

Another new partnership we've developed is with Wear Blue: Run to Remember, a national non-profit with the mission to honor the service and sacrifice of the American military through active remembrance. We hosted our inaugural run, Sat., Feb. 3 and look forward to growing the circle with first Saturday of the month walks and runs throughout the year. The event is self-paced, family friendly and quite moving. We invite all of you to join us outside Miller Hall if you are up at 8am on a first Saturday.

As you review the newsletter, please reach out with any questions, comments or suggestions. We're eager to expand our corporate outreach and partnerships and look forward to providing opportunities for our veteran students at all stages. Your input and your connections are valuable in helping us spread the word about all that William & Mary has underway with Military and Veteran Affairs.

Thank you for your support,
Go Tribe!


Kathleen

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Events Recap

Student Veterans of America (SVA) NaCon Conference | Nashville, TN



Thanks to our generous donors, W&M students Colleen Grace '24 and Margaret Xu '24 and Charlie Foster, Director of the Office for Student Veteran Engagement, attended the SVA National Conference (NatCon) January 4-6th. At the conference, students had the opportunity to share ideas, best practices, and network with student veterans, as well as corporate, government, and nonprofit partners. NatCon is the largest gathering of student veterans anywhere in the world.

Saturday Mornings with Wear Blue: Run to Remember

W&M Military & Veteran Affairs hosted the first Wear Blue: Run to Remember of the year on February 3rd at W&M. Beginning at the Mason School of Business, military and veteran students and staff joined Wear Blue to honor the service and sacrifice of the American military.

Please join us and Wear Blue: Run to Remember every first Saturday of each month! Family and pups are welcomed!



Events Recap (cont.)

Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA) Military-Connected Student Symposium

W&M presented three sessions entitled “7 Ways to Celebrate Military Kids on Your Campus,” “Moving Beyond Being Veteran Friendly: How Institutions Can Transform into Veteran Empowering Organizations,” and “Engaging Military Veterans Early in the Onboarding Process.” Presenters included representatives from the Raymond A. Mason School of Business, the Office of Student Veteran Engagement, and Student Engagement Transition Programs.



William & Mary Green Zone Training

On February 15th, William & Mary's VET staff provided Green Zone Training with a facilitated curriculum and a panel of military and veteran students, faculty, and staff who reflected on their experiences as they transitioned from the military to the university.



Highlights

Charlie Foster nominated Student Veterans of America (SVA) Chapter Advisor of the Year Award

Charlie Foster, Director of the Office of Student Veteran Engagement, was nominated for the Student Veterans of America (SVA) Chapter Advisor of the Year Award. The nomination acknowledges the exceptional mentorship, service, and advocacy provided by a campus staff or faculty member to an SVA chapter as an advisor. Charlie was one of five chapter advisor finalists who have dedicated themselves to the student veterans on their campuses



Photo by SVA

Charter Day Conversation with Chancellor Gates

On February 9, Chancellor Gates held a special conversation for 40 W&M military and veteran students at the Mason School of Business. Active duty military students from the Major General James Wright program, students from Army ROTC, and military and veteran graduate and undergraduate students were given the unique opportunity to engage Chancellor Gates in a Q&A. Moderated by Charlie Foster, students asked insightful questions about the state of foreign affairs, the Chancellor's leadership journey, and especially about his experiences as the former Director of the CIA and as the former Secretary of Defense. Chancellor Gates also provided inspirational leadership and career advice. It was an empowering Charter Day event, and emblematic of the personalized education William & Mary fosters.



Military and Veteran Student Spotlight



Thomas Elmore, '25

IN HIS OWN WORDS

I joined the U.S. Navy after a failed attempt at college back in 2010. When I signed my contract, I thought, "Right, I no longer have to worry about academics or studying; I can lay back and see where the sea takes me." I then spent my first two years of enlistment in the Nuclear power program. It is a rigorous, if not one of the hardest, academic institutions in the military. We were tested in calculus, nuclear engineering principles, reactor mechanics, and thermodynamics, to name a few. I had unknowingly thrust myself into a program with a primary focus on knowledge, resourcefulness, and grit.

It was a very dichotomous relationship. I am not much for sugarcoating; I hated the program and the job a good part of the time, and as sharp as a sentiment it is, it is very accurate. On the other hand, I can not deny how my thirst for knowledge grew as my time continued. My *self* became forged. I developed an inner steel that I knew would carry me through all sorts of challenges. I am forever grateful to the Navy and my time at sea.

I didn't know how much I would need that grit. I did not choose to leave my position or my field, I instead was diagnosed with a rather large brain tumor. Luckily, it was benign, but it had to be resected, nonetheless. Through those trying times, with the help of my amazing wife, I had to heal and come to terms with the fact that I needed a new direction due to my injuries that will never heal.

I applied to William & Mary in 2021 but was rejected. I was crushed but convinced I wanted to attend school with the Tribe. After a brief stint at Old Dominion University, I reapplied in 2023. I was accepted into the Mason School Of Business, where I would pursue a marketing major with a concentration in entrepreneurship. The rigor and academic instruction with how the classes are structured are, bar none, some of the best. Much like the Nuke pipeline that converted a kid from Florida to a trained nuclear operator, William & Mary has imparted the skills needed to succeed in a technical and professional landscape to someone locked away at the bottom of a ship for a few years.

The Office of Student Veteran Engagement (OSVE) and the Center for Military Transition (CMT) have been instrumental in my short time at William & Mary. Without these resources, I honestly do not know what my last six months would have looked like. My aspirations are becoming more apparent and my goals are closer in reach than ever. After all, I don't have to go it alone; I found my Tribe.

Thomas Elmore '25 distinguished himself through exemplary service in the United States Navy, achieving the rank of Machinist Mate First-Class. After completing the Navy's demanding nuclear training program, Thomas was assigned to the USS Truman (CVN 75), where he played a pivotal role during the 2015-2016 deployment in support of Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR). In his capacity as Work Center Supervisor, he adeptly led a team of 35 sailors, overseeing the maintenance of both Auxiliary and Main propulsion equipment. Additionally, as the Chief Machinery Operator for Watch Team One, he directed a nine-member team, ensuring the safe and efficient operation of the propulsion train under nuclear power. Subsequent to a transformative experience, Thomas embarked on an academic journey at William & Mary, where he is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Marketing with a focus on entrepreneurship.

Kathleen Jabs Pens Op-Ed with PenFed President & CEO James R. Schenck

Companies and Universities Can Help Reverse Military Recruiting Shortfalls Threatening America's National Security

Military.com | By James R. Schenck and Kathleen T. Jabs
Published February 06, 2024 at 9:47am ET

Military recruiting shortfalls threaten our national security during a critical time as two wars that could quickly escalate are being waged.

Why aren't high school and college students today considering a career or even a term in the military? As veterans of the Army and Navy, we know the value of service and the diverse skills and backgrounds of our fellow service members, including people from every community, ethnicity and economic status, united in their commitment to support and defend the United States.

The Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard all missed their recruiting targets last year, while the Marine Corps and Space Force narrowly met theirs. The National Guard is seeing shortages at all ranks and in all states.

Employers and universities can help address our recruiting shortfalls by providing transition assistance to those who have served our nation. We need to ensure young people feel confident about their military training and service and highlight how it leads to quality post-military careers and the opportunity to attend college and earn a first or advanced degree.

More young people will take the step to join and serve when they understand how incredibly valuable military service is for personal and professional development.

Wherever they are assigned -- in a helicopter squadron, on a ship, or as part of a cyber or drone crew -- today's military members learn new cutting-edge skills. They learn hard technical skills required for their position, and the more nuanced soft skills that are critical in today's competitive workplaces. Military service members know how to plan, be flexible, reliable, dependable and accountable. They also know how to work as part of a team.

Integrity, discipline and the ability to get along with others are not buzzwords when you're living in close quarters and training to fight and defend your country. These are the ethos of military service and the values that give life purpose, meaning, focus and direction.

(continued on page 8)



Click to listen to the
article at [Military.com](#)

In the News (Cont.)

Kathleen Jabs Pens Op-Ed with PenFed President & CEO James R. Schenck

Companies and Universities Can Help Reverse Military Recruiting Shortfalls Threatening America's National Security

(cont.)

By the time a service member decides to leave the military, they have experienced and practiced different leadership styles and been assigned tremendous responsibility for people and equipment, often under arduous conditions and in austere and even hostile environments. They have an ingrained sense of purpose and commitment to mission success that is in their DNA.

These experiences don't often translate into neat resumé bullets. It can be hard to summarize acquired skills and experiences, as well as articulate value and grit, especially when automation and keywords drive a talent search. That's why it's important for corporations and universities to build military talent connection pipelines.

With the right coaching, mentorship, education and training on how to apply their skills to new environments, veterans have the potential to transform companies and communities. As leaders, we can set goals to accelerate veteran transition, provide avenues to launch veterans on corporate career pathways, and build a mentorship pipeline between C-suite leaders and transitioning military members.

Forming partnerships to stake out pathways for veterans is one way to highlight the value of military service as well as to improve corporate bottom lines and talent pools. We can inspire the next round of military recruits and encourage support for their decision to join with an even brighter future following their service.

At PenFed, our [Military Employment Program](#) offers comprehensive support for transitioning service members and their families. At William & Mary, we have developed a specialized [Veteran to Executive Transition \(VET\)](#) class for high-performing transitioning military members.

As Americans, we have a shared interest in maintaining a strong military to ensure our national defense. As leaders at corporations and universities, we have the power to inspire the next generation of young people who will defend our freedom and continue to serve as leaders throughout their careers. Military talent brings incredible value to our organizations, and we encourage leaders to support and hire our nation's veterans. It's both an investment in your institution and our national security.

-- James R. Schenck is the president and CEO of PenFed Credit Union and CEO of the PenFed Foundation. He is a U.S. Military Academy graduate and served as a Black Hawk helicopter pilot in the U.S. Army.

-- Kathleen T. Jabs is special assistant to the president for military and veterans affairs at William & Mary. The former acting secretary of veterans and defense affairs for the Commonwealth of Virginia, she is a U.S. Naval Academy graduate and retired Navy captain.

Association of 1775



Charles R. Bowery, Jr., SES, '92

IN HIS OWN WORDS

The Association of 1775 (Ao75) is William & Mary's affinity group for military and civil service alumni, parents, family and friends. A group of Army ROTC alumni originally formed Ao75 in 1993 and maintained it until career commitments forced them to disband in 2004. In 2016, a small group of veteran alumni partnered with the William & Mary Alumni Association to reestablish Ao75 and expand its membership to include alumni who have served or are serving in any of the military branches or in other roles across the Federal Government.

Today, Ao75 is growing its network of military and civil service alumni through service to our alma mater and its students, and service to our nation and our communities. We continue to partner with W&M Office of Military & Veteran Affairs and the W&M Veteran-to-Executive Transition (W&M VET) program, and Kathleen T. Jabs, special assistant to the president for military & veteran affairs, Jonathan "JD" Due, executive director, Center for Military Transition, Kay Floyd '05, Ph.D., director, Whole of Government Center of Excellence, and Charlie Foster M.Ed. '17 director, Office of Student Veteran Engagement.

The coming year will be a milestone in the history of the new Ao75, as the Alumni Association will establish an assistant director position to support the Ao75 in conducting an expanded range of programs. Once this new position is in place, we are planning for a Leadership Circle event to charter an Ao75 alumni advisory board, moving to a more formalized structure and adding increased value to our alumni network. If you are a civil service or military member, past, present, or future, come join us! By joining the W&M One Network, you can self-identify as a member of our alumni community, and you will be plugged into our events and opportunities. You can also reach me with questions about the Ao75 at cbowery@hotmail.com.

Go Tribe!

Charles R. Bowery, Jr., SES, '92
President, Association of 1775

W&M Alumni Engagement is Hiring! Assistant Director, Affinity Engagement

*Please spread the word and encourage those
who may be interested to apply!*

LEARN MORE AND APPLY NOW

Looking Ahead

Wear Blue: Run to Remember Upcoming Events

March 2nd

Join W&M military & veteran students, staff, and community on this Wear Blue: Run to Remember run/walk

SATURDAY MORNINGS WITH WEAR BLUE

Join us for a no-cost run or walk hosted by *wear blue*. Each gathering begins with a Circle of Remembrance, honoring the service and sacrifice of the American military, and is followed by a self-paced run or walk through the community. It is a place of connection, support, and healthy living for athletes of all abilities.

First Saturday of the month at 8 AM

William & Mary Business School | 101 Ukrop Way



RUN. HONOR. BELONG. *wear blue:*
run to remember®

March 23rd

By joining this effort, you are also recognizing the sacrifices of women from Indigenous and other underrepresented communities. Together, we can show we value and appreciate all women in the military. Beginning at the Mason School of Business at 0800. More details from W&M VET to follow. Click the image to learn more about the challenge



One Tribe One Day is Next Month!

A green rectangular graphic with white and yellow text. On the left, "TR1BE DAY" is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font, with the "1" in "TR1BE" being significantly larger than the other letters. To the right of this, in a smaller font, it says "GIVE BACK & PAY IT FORWARD". Below that, "JOIN US ON MARCH 26" is written in a large, bold, yellow sans-serif font. At the bottom right, in a small white font, it says "W&M Military & Veteran Affairs".

Mark your calendar for March 26th #OneTribeOneDay!
Help spread the word to make it our biggest giving day yet.

Military Appreciation Men's Basketball Game

A promotional poster for a basketball game. The background is a collage of images: a basketball court, a basketball hoop, and a group of people. The text "W&M" is in the top left corner. The main title "MILITARY APPRECIATION" is in a large, bold, white sans-serif font. Below it, "WILLIAM & MARY vs. HAMPTON" is written in a smaller white font, and "SAT., MAR. 2 • 2 PM" is written in a yellow font on a black background.

We're looking forward to the Military Appreciation Men's Basketball Game, Saturday, March 2, at 2:00, and hope to pack the stands. Please join us!