

# WILLIAM & MARY



## MILITARY & VETERAN AFFAIRS NEWSLETTER

### Letter from the Special Assistant

KATHLEEN T. JABS

Happy Spring!

Daffodils are blooming, trees are greening, and our military and veteran programs and engagements are growing. We're excited about recent visits we've hosted with the military representatives of U.S. Senators Mark Warner and Tim Kaine as well as the President of the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and The Adjutant General of the Virginia National Guard. With every engagement, we highlight our military connected and veteran students as well as the opportunities for transitioning service members.

We remain mindful that our students are the focus now. It was impressive to watch our undergraduate military and veteran students lead and host the Ivy League Student Veteran Council (ILSVC) Conference at William & Mary in February. As President of the ILSVC for 2022-2023, W&M graduating senior Colleen Grace is our featured student veteran this month, and you can learn more about her journey and her plans on page 3.

April promises to be another busy month for the Military and Veteran Affairs team. We'll be celebrating Month of the Military Child and are partnering with the McLeod Tyler Wellness Center to promote recreational opportunities for military and veteran students and their families, including canoe and overnight camping trips.

On April 6, the Whole of Government Center of Excellence will host the National Security Conference at the Sadler Center. With a focus on climate and port resiliency and guest speakers such as retired Admiral James G. Foggo, Dean of the Center for Maritime Strategy, and Rear Admiral Ann Phillips, head of the Maritime Administration, we are expecting a full house. [Click here to register.](#)

On April 18th, we'll have the whole team active at our One Tribe One Day table in the Sunken Garden. If you're in the area, we'd love for you to stop by. If you won't be traveling to Williamsburg in April, you can still participate in our OTOD outreach by making a gift to our W&M [Military & Veteran Affairs fund](#).

Thank you for all of the outreach and support. The entire Veteran-to-Executive Transition team is grateful for the opportunity we have to make a difference, educate for impact and be part of transformational efforts for our Nation's veterans, for William & Mary, and for our country.

Go Tribe,

Kathleen T. Jabs

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# Events Recap

## Ivy League Veterans Council (ILVC) Conference



During the February 18th ILSVC Conference held at W&M's Mason School of Business, more than 45 military and veteran students from W&M, Brown, Dartmouth, and Princeton University gathered to hear from impressive guest speakers, including representatives from the FBI, PWC, Booz Allen Hamilton, Accenture, Pat Tillman Foundation, Skillstorm, and Hillvets. Current W&M student veterans and alumni spoke on panels and Colleen Grace, President of ILSVC and W&M student veteran, emceed the conference.



## SXSW-EDU Shark Tank Pitch Competition

On March 7th, JD Due, W&M Executive Director of the Center for Military Transition, pitched his idea "A model to help military veterans connect with higher education" at SXSW EDU Conference's "Shark Tank: Edu Edition" in Austin, TX. Learn more below!



[Click to Read \*The Chronicle for Higher Education\* article featuring JD](#)



Hear the recording of JD's pitch by clicking on the blue play button.



# Military and Veteran Student Spotlight



## Colleen Grace, BA '23

### IN HER OWN WORDS

“Think James Bond – but with boots,” my Navy recruiter said after informing me that, based on my pre-enlistment aptitude test, I would be a good fit for intelligence. He explained the extra training I would receive meant I would sign a six-year contract; this seemed reasonable, even without the tux. Pleased with the job I had been signed up for, and eager to join the ranks of American patriotism personified, I began to map out the next six years.

During my intelligence training, I quickly learned two lessons, the first was never to assume, but rather, assess. And the assessment I made just a few months earlier turned out to be incorrect. Six years would not be nearly enough time to earn a college degree. I had planned to take classes online year-round, so even if I was not a full-time student, I would be able to graduate and apply for a commissioning program before it came time to reenlist. The second lesson I learned was the best way to avoid an incorrect assessment is to aggregate information from multiple sources. Being the first person in my family to serve, my understanding of military life came by way of blockbuster film, an understanding corroborated by my recruiter. I had no idea how busy I would be, or how unreliable internet connectivity could be downrange, or that using the education benefits promised to active-duty service members required permission from the chain of command.

The Navy’s intelligence training command is located in Virginia Beach. On a free weekend, some friends and I drove up to Colonial Williamsburg. I fell in love with Williamsburg and the College of William & Mary. I bought a sweatshirt from the bookstore and promised myself I would one day be a member of the Tribe. Just as fiercely as sailors try to avoid getting orders to Naval Station Norfolk, I tried for the rest of my career to get orders back to Virginia. And while it seemed like I received orders everywhere else, I don’t regret joining the military. It was, obviously, nothing like what I saw in the movies, but I was taught invaluable interpersonal and analysis skills, given a Top-Secret security clearance, and above all, I was taught how to learn and to think. At the end of most days, I felt fulfilled. However, what was decidedly unfulfilling was the fact that I could only take one or two classes per semester and only in between deployments. So, having long scrapped my six-year plan, when the time came to reenlist, I chose instead to leave active duty and go back to school full-time.

My partner, who was still on active duty at the time, chose orders to Norfolk, over those of Hawaii, Texas, and Florida, so that I could have the opportunity to attend the school that I had spent the last eight years chasing. This made the act of applying to William & Mary seem especially mountainous. Eight years is a long time to pursue anything, and despite using that time to cultivate relationships with my professors at the school I was currently at, and earn impactful fellowships while maintaining a 4.0 – I had convinced myself that the admissions staff, charged with protecting the legacy of the Alma Mater of the Nation, would take one look at my application and see a kid who ran away to the navy because she wasn’t ready for college. That intelligence failure was, thankfully, my most egregious; because from the very first transfer information Zoom meeting I attended with Monica Pinier and Charlie Foster, I was met with nothing but overwhelming warmth, authenticity, and encouragement.

I share the long and winding story above about my equally long and winding journey to William & Mary in the hopes of illustrating both, my penchant for unrealistic expectations (i.e., James Bond), and my commitment to disseminating accurate information so that when I say I am humbled, every day, by the support I have ceaselessly received here as a student veteran, you believe me. You need a mentor? You’ll get three. They will want to buy you coffee. You have an idea about how to improve the student veteran experience, but you think it’s a bit lofty? Failure is next to impossible, and flourishing is all but inevitable with the plethora of resources you’ll be given to make it happen. You’re feeling down because life at 28 is a bit more complicated than life at 18 and it’s difficult not to compare yourself to your peers? Step into the Office of Student Veteran Engagement or the Center for Military Transition and Charlie, Becca, JD, or Lindsay will remind you that you belong here and that you are worthy. My experiences at William & Mary have surpassed even my most unrealistic expectations. With regard to the team they have built to support the student veterans of William & Mary, the administration got it right.



# Announcements

## W&M Earns Gold Military Friendly® School Designation

William & Mary announced last week that it has earned the 2023-2024 Military Friendly® School Gold designation for the entire campus, the Law School, and the Raymond A. Mason School of Business.

Institutions earning the Military Friendly® School designation were evaluated using both public data sources and responses from a proprietary survey. More than 1,800 schools participated in the 2023-2024 survey with 665 earning special awards for going above the standard.

The 2023- 2024 Military Friendly® Schools list will be published in the May and October issue of G.I. Jobs magazine and can be found at [www.militaryfriendly.com](http://www.militaryfriendly.com).



## Dr. Elizabeth Burgin Receives 2023 Carl D. Perkins Government Relations Award



W&M Associate Professor, Dr. Elizabeth Burgin, received the 2023 Carl D. Perkins Government Relations Award from the American Counseling Association (ACA) for her work advancing policy for military-connected populations. This is a HUGE award, and it recognizes Dr. Burgin's impact on the field and ability to work with policymakers. It will be awarded at a ceremony held at ACA's annual conference later this month.

Moreover, this is Dr. Burgin's THIRD major award this academic year, with two of the three highlighting her efforts at improving legislation and policy for people in the military or veterans and their families. These other awards included the 2022 Outstanding Advocacy Award from the Military and Government Counseling Association and the 2022 Research Award from the Association for Play Therapy.

Dr. Burgin is also a Tillman Scholar and is the Director of the W&M Clinical Mental Health and Veterans Counseling program . An Army spouse, Dr. Burgin is an outstanding scholar and advocate for military populations, and W&M has one of the only VA accredited program in the country. Elizabeth has been advancing not only services for these constituents but also advocating for policy change.

# Announcements (cont)

## From Theory to Practice:

Fostering Climate Resilience for a More Secure World

The 3rd Annual National Security Conference

**APRIL 6, 2023**

CHESAPEAKE ROOMS, SADLER CENTER

(Click the image to register & learn more)



Mark your calendar for April 18: #OneTribeOneDay! Join us to celebrate 10 years of giving back and paying it forward. Help spread the word to make it our biggest giving day yet.

**GIVE HERE ON**  
**APRIL 18TH**

## Flourishing Through Life Transitions Certificate is Now Open!

William & Mary's Veteran-to-Executive Transition (W&M VET) certificate program- *Flourishing Through Life Transitions*-emphasizes a comprehensive approach centered on wellness & self-discovery. Our certificate program trains veteran & service members to transition to high-level civilian positions, while flourishing in their careers and personal lives.

- Format: *In-Person June 11-23, 2023. This custom program will enroll approximately 40 transitioning veterans and spouses*
- Certificate Fee: *Free. Housing, parking, course materials, program events, and some meals are included free of charge to participants.*

For more information on applying, please contact [flourishing@wm.edu](mailto:flourishing@wm.edu) or scan the QR code



# Military & Veteran Affairs Department Spotlight

## W&M | ASSOCIATION OF 1775

William & Mary alumni serve across the U.S. government and military, using their liberal arts education and relationships forged through William & Mary to make a difference. The Association of 1775 takes its name from the Revolutionary War service of our student ancestors. Ao75 was originally chartered in 1992 by alumni of the College's Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC). The new Association of 1775 is about establishing a robust network of William & Mary alumni serving across the U.S. government. It is our affinity group, a community of people with two important things in common: a love of our alma mater, and a passion for service and leadership.

Our Association of 1775 now exists to build this network, and also to serve as a resource for two communities on campus: students seeking to enter government service or the military (whether as a part of ROTC or not), and student military veterans. We see great power and potential in connecting these three groups with so much in common. Together, we hope to advance President Katherine Rowe's vision of a William & Mary that leads the nation and world in the future of learning, work, and service. Military and government alumni, future military personnel and civil servants, and student veterans have precisely the skill sets, experiences, and leadership skills to advance our university in all three areas. The Association of 1775 will use the passion for mentorship and leadership of our alumni to provide a helping hand and guiding force for our future leaders and our student veterans, who will embark on the next phase of their lives after their time in Williamsburg.



**LEARN MORE  
ABOUT Ao75**

Jon Armstrong Photography