



Department of
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News Release

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**Over 700 Schools Partner with VA to Help Veterans Pay for Education
*Interested Colleges and Universities Must Sign Up for Yellow Ribbon
Program before June 15 Deadline for 2009-2010 Term***

WASHINGTON - The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today that it has entered into more than 700 agreements with institutions of higher learning across the nation to participate in the Post-9/11 GI Bill's "Yellow Ribbon Program."

Many schools signed agreements for participation in not only undergraduate programs, but graduate and doctoral programs as well. Some schools entered into one agreement that covered all their campuses throughout the United States.

"VA is very pleased with the wide-spread interest in the program," said Under Secretary for Benefits Patrick W. Dunne. "We strongly encourage any interested universities to formally sign-up with the agency before the June 15 deadline to ensure participation in the 2009-2010 academic year."

The Yellow Ribbon Program is a provision of the Post-9/11 GI Bill that allows degree-granting institutions to voluntarily enter into a formal agreement with VA to fund tuition and fee expenses that exceed the highest public, in-state undergraduate rates.

The institution can contribute up to 50 percent of those expenses and VA will match this additional funding for eligible students. This may enable qualified students to potentially attend school tuition-free.

This program is reserved for participants at the 100 percent benefit level, specifically those who have served at least 36 months on active duty or served at least 30 continuous days and were discharged due to a service-related injury.

Congress intended the Yellow Ribbon Program to be utilized by universities to make up the difference in the costs for out-of-state, private or graduate tuition, although some institutions may choose not to participate.

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Yellow Ribbon Program 2/2/2/2

Some universities have announced their desire to participate in the program but have not signed a formal agreement with VA, which is required under federal law. VA suggests schools interested in the program contact the Department or visit our Web site for more information.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill, passed by Congress last year, is the most extensive educational assistance program authorized since the original GI Bill was signed into law in 1944.

The maximum benefit allows every eligible Veteran, servicemember, reservist, and National Guard member an opportunity to receive an in-state, undergraduate education at a public institution at no cost. Provisions of the program include payments for tuition and fees, housing, and a books and supplies stipend.

Benefits are payable for training pursued on or after August 1, 2009. The tuition and fee benefit is paid directly to the school and is not meant to exceed the established (or actual) in-state charges at a public institution.

With the large numbers of Veterans and servicemembers expected to sign-up for the new Post-9/11 GI Bill program, VA projects a 20 to 25 percent increase in the total number of participants in VA's education programs.

VA has received more than 60,000 claims for education benefits during the first five weeks since Veterans and service members could apply online. Up to 460,000 students are expected to participate in the program during the first year.

For information on specific schools participating in the Yellow Ribbon Program, go to www.gibill.va.gov/GI_Bill_Info/CH33/YRP/YRP_List.htm.

Additional information about the Post-9/11 GI Bill and Yellow Ribbon Program, as well as VA's other educational benefit programs, can be obtained by visiting VA's Web site www.gibill.va.gov or by calling 1-888-GIBILL-1 (or 1-888-442-4551).

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