

ARNG Education News

Excellence Through Education

A Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Communiqué

March 2007

How to Finish Two Semesters of College in Seven Days

Reprinted courtesy of the WVARNG

The WV Army National Guard Education Services Office provides many educational opportunities to soldiers to include college and career counseling, certification testing, scholarship information, tuition assistance, GI Bill information, bonuses, and loan repayments. In addition, the Education services Office provides college level testing to all branches of the military and their spouses. There are 323 college hours for which tests are available. This story is an example of how a service member has successfully utilized these benefits.

James Coffey was born to American parents in Nurnburg Germany. His father was in an armored unit based in Erlangen and had previously spent two tours of duty in Vietnam. When he was 3 or 4 years old his mom and sister brought him back to WV. After his parents divorce, James' mom remarried a soldier who took James' family to Aberdeen Proving Ground, Fort Bliss, Fort Ord, and Fort "Lost in the Woods."

James said, "Hey the Army is in my blood" and showed this to be true when he entered active duty 18 days after he graduated high school. After 4 months at the Field Artillery Training Center at Fort Sill he went to Fort Campbell. Two months later he was at Camp Eagle II Saudi Arabia serving with the distinguished 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). After taking part in the largest Air Assault Operation in history he returned unscathed to Ft Campbell.

SSG Coffey started a new career with the US Postal Service eleven years ago and joined the West Virginia Army National Guard in 1997. He has served with HHB 1-201FA and now with HHT 1-150ARS. The last activation that he took part in was OIF II with 1-150 and attached to 30th ESB, along with the 1st ID.

SSG Coffey attended 2 semesters at Southern West Virginia Community College and also attended West Virginia State University. He had originally planned to pursue Forensic Science, but had found that he earned more as a Letter Carrier than most CSI types. A Regents B.A. became the plan to finish his bachelor's degree. SSG Coffey contacted the Education Services Office and signed up for all the DSST, CLEP, and Excelsior examinations that he needed to accomplish this goal.

SSG Coffey completed nearly 30 hours worth of exams in only 7 days of actual testing. He finished his degree on July 10. These exams were absolutely free; the Education Services Office also provides free study guides and other information regarding testing opportunities on their website at www.wv.ngb.army.mil/education. SSG Coffey now intends to ap-

ply for a direct commission. He modestly states, "I did not do this on my own." SSG Coffey credits his achievements to faith in God and the love of his wife Melanie and that of his children.

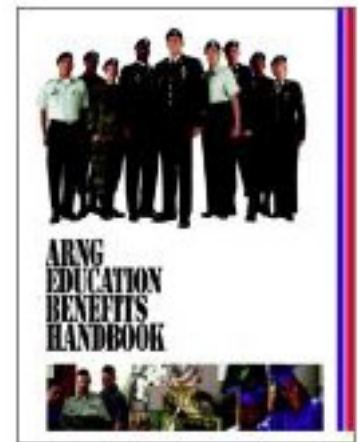
ARNG Education Benefits Brochure and ARNG Education Benefits Handbook Available For Distribution

Publications provide comprehensive information on all ARNG education programs

The ARNG Education Benefits Brochure has been updated and is now available from DANTES. This publication contains a matrix of all education benefits available to Army National Guard members, dependents, and employees. Supply is limited and we will fulfill orders until the supply runs out. Use your DANTES ID number when placing your order.

The ARNG Education Benefits Handbook (formerly titled **Uncle Sam Never Went to College - You Can! ARNG Guide to Education Benefits**) has a new look! Now completely revised and updated, the Handbook is a comprehensive resource on education benefits for ARNG Soldiers including a description of all education programs, how to determine eligibility for a benefit or program, and how to apply.

NGB notified the field via EIOM with details on ordering both publications from DANTES. If you need assistance or ordering information, contact Mack Brooks, Marcy Shapiro, or Dan Riggle at 1-800-368-5622.



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NGB Welcomes New Team Members

Major Kathryn Poynton started at NGB in 2003 assigned as an Actions Officer in the AGR Policy Section, NGB-ARH. Within 6 months she became the AGR Policy Section Chief until June 2006. She deployed to Iraq and served as the ARFOR Manager for the entire RC Component group deployed to Iraq. Following her deployment she has been reassigned to the Education and Incentive Section, NGB-ARM. She will be responsible for renewing and staffing policy for the Section.

NGB-ARM-EI is pleased to welcome **Major Troy M. Gipps** back to the ARNG Education Community. MAJ Gipps served for 6 1/2 years as the Education Services Officer and Montgomery GI Bill Manager for the Massachusetts National Guard from 1997-2003 and the National ESOC Chair from 2002-2003. He co-designed and taught the initial ESO courses and is an expert in the use of GI Bill benefits for registered apprenticeship and on-the-job training programs. MAJ Gipps will be stationed at the National Guard Professional Education Center in North Little Rock, Arkansas where he will provide contract oversight to both the Education Support Center and the GI Bill Support Team. He will also work a variety of additional projects.

1LT Ellieth Larios joins us from NGB-ARC-Financial Services Center located in DFAS-Indianapolis. She will serve as the Resource Manager. A major part of her responsibilities will include Resources and Budget Management for the Education and Incentive Branch.

Welcome to all of you and we look forward to working with you!

Virginia Advisory Council on Military Education's Holds Its First Annual Conference in Williamsburg, VA, March 14-15

Forum for discussing current issues on military education in Virginia

The Virginia Advisory Council on Military Education (VA-ACME) sponsored its First Annual VA-ACME Conference Wednesday, March 14-15, 2007 at the Holiday Inn Patriot in Williamsburg, Virginia. The first day, Wednesday, March 14 included exciting events such as a Keynote address by Delegate Terry Suit, and a panel discussion during lunch with representatives from the Voluntary Education of the Armed Services. Concurrent sessions, which ran on both days, included topics related to military education issues and planning for the future. The General Session on Thursday, March 15 included legislative updates and conduct of other

VA-ACME business. Educational exhibitors were on hand to share information regarding their programs.

Military service members, educational institutions serving the military and organizations that actively supports and promotes quality education programs to the military attended this inaugural

event. The \$100 Conference fee included FY07 VA-ACME membership. Active Duty Military registration fee was \$25 and also included FY07 VA-ACME membership.

The VA-ACME was founded to promote, support, and deliver meaningful education within all branches of the Armed Services, while encouraging educational institutions to be innovative and flexible in meeting service members' educational needs. You can learn more about VA-ACME by visiting <http://www.va-acme.org>.



Florida Advisory Council on Military Education 2007 Conference

The Florida ACME will hold its first of two conferences this year in Trumbo Palms, NAS Key West on April 16 - 18. ACME is a Florida-based organization with members from Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and surrounding states, and welcomes as members educators and officials regardless of location as long as they share our dedication to providing educational opportunities for members our nations armed forces and their families--active, reserve/guard, or retired. ALL are welcome at ACME! For information, contact Debbie Wiggins at wiggi569@erau.edu, or visit their Web Site at <http://www.fla-acme.org/>.

To learn more about ARNG education go to:

<http://www.virtualarmy.com/>
and follow the "Education" link.