

Bringing Educators and ARNG Recruiters Together: A Strategy That Works

SOCGuard and the ALARNG conduct college and recruiter workshops in tandem

Recently SOCGuard staff introduced a different approach to conducting college workshops and recruiter training. During one week in early February, SOCGuard Project Director Mack Brooks and LTC Wayne Davenport, the ALARNG Education Services Officer conducted a series of Army National Guard Education Benefits Workshops and Army National Guard Recruiter Training sessions, in five different cities in Alabama. The educator workshops were conducted during the first half of the day, followed by a two-hour recruiter training session, each in the same venue. This was a unique operational model for SOCGuard.

This arrangement allowed Mr. Brooks, LTC Davenport, and CPT Gary McLeod, the Recruiting Operations Officer, to address educators and recruiters in the same timeframe, while providing an opportunity for each community to meet the other. In addition, recruiters in each location experienced minimum downtime because the sessions were close to their recruiting territory.

The agenda for an Educator Workshop typically covers SOC and SOCGuard functions and capabilities, and how colleges can best market themselves and work with the Guard. Also emphasized are the ARNG's mission, federal and state education benefits, eligibility criteria, and details on processing FTA.

Mr. Brooks and LTC Davenport expanded their agenda and encouraged the educators present to be creative in developing MOS-specific programs for ARNG members. Furthermore, CPT McLeod delivered a presentation stressing the importance of a spirit of cooperation between the educators and recruiters.

The recruiter training followed a break for lunch. Mr. Brooks opened each session with a SOC/SOCGuard overview, followed by the "Targeting College Markets" presentation. Using examples and stories from their peers, this presentation describes how recruiters can effectively market the Guard on college campuses. The "Need \$ for College" presentation, included in the recruiter tool kit developed by SOCGuard, encourages recruiters to help prospective recruits view college as an investment and show them how Army National Guard education benefits may cover most of their college costs. ESO and recruiter anecdotes and comments were encouraged throughout the training. Mr. Brooks concluded the training with a demonstration of the use of the Education Calculator. Using a local college's cost profile, this Excel spreadsheet calculates the amount of edu-

cation benefits available to the soldier, and out of pocket expenses after those benefits are applied.

These five workshops concluded an excellent first step in uniting education and recruiting efforts in Alabama. Those who attended the workshops and training responded very positively to the experience. LTC Davenport and CPT McLeod displayed not only their personal commitment, but an ability to recognize the value of SOCGuard's participation, and a willingness to try something new that would bring together the education community and the recruiting force.

SOCGuard staff members conduct college workshops and recruiter training throughout the year. We encourage ESOs and RRM's who are interested in holding similar sessions in their state to give us a call at 1-800-368-5622, or email socguard@aascu.org.

Mobilization GI Bill, Reserve Education Assistance Program — Chapter 1607: Are You Eligible?

REAP was established as a part of the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005. This education benefit program is designed to provide educational assistance to members of the Reserve components called or ordered to active duty in response to a war or national emergency (contingency operation) as declared by the President or Congress. This new program makes certain individuals who were activated after September 11, 2001 are either eligible for education benefits or eligible for increased benefits.

The program is similar to the Selected Reserve GI Bill in that the military services determine initial eligibility, notify soldiers, and fund the program while the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) administers payments to the soldier. Soldiers must remain in an active participating status in the Reserve Component to be entitled to this benefit.

On or after 11 September 2001, RC members may receive educational assistance under the REAP provided:

- the servicemember was mobilized for 90 days or more in support of a contingency operation defined in section 10 US Code (USC) 101 (a)(13).
- the servicemember performed full time National Guard duty under 32 USC 502(f) for 90 consecutive days or more in response to a Presidential or Secretary of Defense declaration of a national emergency supported by federal funds.
- the servicemember was ordered to active service in either of the first two categories above and released before completing 90 consecutive days because of an

ARNG Education News

injury, illness or disease incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

Soldiers may receive up to 36 months in any one DVA educational assistance program and a maximum of 48 months of combined benefits. In addition to Chapter 1607, further DVA educational assistance programs include the following:

1. Selected Reserve GI Bill (Chapter 1606)
2. Active Duty GI Bill (Chapter 30)
3. Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP - Chapter 32)
4. Vietnam Era GI Bill (Chapter 34)
5. Survivors' & Dependents' Education Assistance Program (DEA - Chapter 35)

To apply for benefits:

- Complete an Application for Education Benefits (VA Form 22-1990) and write "REAP" in section one. If you are already eligible for VA Education benefits under another program, submit VA Form 1995 and notate that you now wish to use REAP. Coordinate with the VA representative at the college (or your place of employment if you are in a job training program).
- The VA Rep will complete an Enrollment Certificate (VA Form 22-1999) and submit it, along with the VA Form 22-1990, a copy of your DD Form 214, and your eligibility notification to the RPO for processing.
- In order to continue receiving benefits, you must verify your enrollment each month by completing a Student Verification of Enrollment (VA Form 22-8979). You may submit VA Form 22-8979 through the VA Web Automated Verification of Enrollment (WAVE) online at <http://www.gibill.va.gov/> or by telephone at 1-877-823-2378. When the system tells you that you're certified, the verification is complete and you do not have to return the form.

The ARNG will verify your status and send you a written notification of your eligibility for Chapter 1607 benefits. Direct any questions concerning your eligibility to the GI

Bill Support Team at ESC at 1-866-628-5999 or email esc@pec.ngb.army.mil.

For current information and rates, visit the Department of Veterans Affairs web site at <http://www.gibill.va.gov/>. Click on "Education Benefits" then "Payment Rates."

GED Plus Enlistment Program

Enlist in the Guard and earn an equivalency diploma

As with the other services, one must have a high school diploma, or a GED to enlist in the United States Army. Even so, the Army only allows about 15 percent of their total enlistments each year to have a GED (See Military ASVAB/ Education Minimum Levels).

However, the Army National Guard is now participating in a special enlistment program, specifically designed for disadvantaged youths who have neither a high school diploma, nor a GED. It's called the GED Plus Enlistment Program.

The GED Plus Program enables applicants who currently do not possess a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate to be sponsored by the ARNG to obtain a GED for enlistment purposes. This program is available only in certain areas (mostly inter-city areas where most disadvantaged youths live) and for limited numbers. In order to qualify, you must:

- Be 18 years old and withdrawn from high school for at least one year
- Not be able to return to high school to fulfill your high school diploma requirement
- Be in good moral standing (i.e., requires no moral waivers).
- Score 50 or higher on the Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test
- Score 46 or higher on the Assessment of Individual Motivation (AIM) test
- Possess a letter of enrollment into a GED program with a start and completion date
- Not require a Drug and Alcohol waiver

ARNG Education Matrix Available for Distribution

The ARNG Education 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. Currently, orders are limited to 250 per order, however, you may place as many orders as you want until the supply is exhausted. Use your DANTES ID number when placing your order.

To learn more about ARNG education go to:

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

The ARNG Guide to Education Benefits is under revision. We will announce procedures for ordering the Guide as soon as it is available.

Scholarship Support for Military Spouses

National Military Family Association offering \$1,000 scholarships

The National Military Family Association has announced that it will provide \$1,000 to military spouses who are studying for professional certification or attending post-secondary or graduate school. The funds may be used for tuition, fees, books and campus room and board. Eligibility includes spouses of active-duty, reserve component and retired servicemembers, as well as surviving spouses of deceased servicemembers. Named for Joanne Holbrook Patton, wife of the late Army General George S. Patton, Jr., the scholarship program is in its third year of providing education opportunities for more military spouses. To learn more or to submit an application visit http://www.nmfa.org/site/PageServer?pagename=Spouse_Scholarship.

Scholarship Support for Military Children

Fisher House Foundation teams with Defense Commissary Agency to offer \$1,500 scholarships

The Scholarships for Military Children Program is funded by manufacturers and suppliers whose products are sold at military commissaries worldwide. The purchase of products from these companies funds the scholarship program, which is administered by the Fisher House Foundation. Now in its sixth year, more than \$3.2 million in scholarships has been awarded.

A minimum of one \$1,500 scholarship will be awarded at each of the 268 commissary locations where qualified applications are received. More than one scholarship per commissary may be available based on response and funding. The scholarship provides for payment of tuition, books, lab fees and other related expenses. Authorized applicants include unmarried children under age 21 of active duty, Guard or Reserve, or military retiree families. Applicants may also range up to 23 years in age if they are enrolled in school.

Visit <http://www.militaryscholar.org/about/about.shtml> for more information, including how to apply for a scholarship.

NGB Welcomes New Team Members And Says Goodbye to Others

Please welcome **1LT Shannon Cummings**, the GI Bill Programs Manager at National Guard Bureau for the Army National Guard. 1LT Cummings is from Wisconsin, where she served as the GI Bill Manager/Guidance Counselor/ATCO. **CPT Nicole Brugato** came to NGB from Oregon as an ADSW bringing her legal expertise to the Education and Incentives Section.

After more than 40 years of federal service, **Chuck Martin**, the federal employee providing support to the Education and Incentives Section at NGB, is retiring to Florida. We wish Chuck and his family all the best. **Ray Holdeman** ends his brief tenure at NGB to assume a DAC, GS position with the ARNG, G-1, ARH Division effective 3 April. Good luck in the new job, Ray!

MAJ Ron Lee, Incentives Manager at NGB, will assume the position of Reserve Component Advisor at DANTES in Pensacola, effective 17 April. His last day at NGB is 7 April. Congratulations, MAJ Lee!

Three people have joined the GI Bill Support Team in Little Rock. **Jessica Hughley** is a former member of the MNARNG; **Anthony Richardson** was the GI Bill Manager for the CAARNG; and **Tinthy Harper** was formerly a technician in the ARARNG.

The ESC has also expanded its ranks. **Karen Burkett** came to the ESC as a Degree Planner in February from the Navy College Center in Pensacola, FL. **Jim Harkey** is an Administrative Specialist, who comes from the 233rd RTI (Regional Training Institute), Camp Robinson, North Little Rock, AR.