



DANTES
DOD VOLED PROGRAMS

Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Joseph Swafford

Navigating through College Comparison Resources

In this issue: Top 3 Tools To Help Military Choose

By Katrena King, Education Programs Department, DANTES

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A simple Google search for a “college finder” tool will return hundreds of websites, mobile apps, books, and videos all claiming to be the official or best source in finding colleges and universities. With all of these options, how can potential students be confident that the information they are viewing is trustworthy? Education counselors who serve Service members, veterans, and their family members have three options that they can recommend to students who are researching postsecondary education options. In this issue

we expand on TA DECIDE, the GI Bill Comparison Tool, and the College Scorecard which are all publicly-available tools designed to ensure that students are able to make informed decisions when selecting a college, university, or training provider. These comparison tools all use official school and student data collected and reported by federal entities. Each one can help students find education options tailored to their unique needs as they navigate the myriad of information online.

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The Department of Defense (DoD) launched TA DECIDE in April 2015.

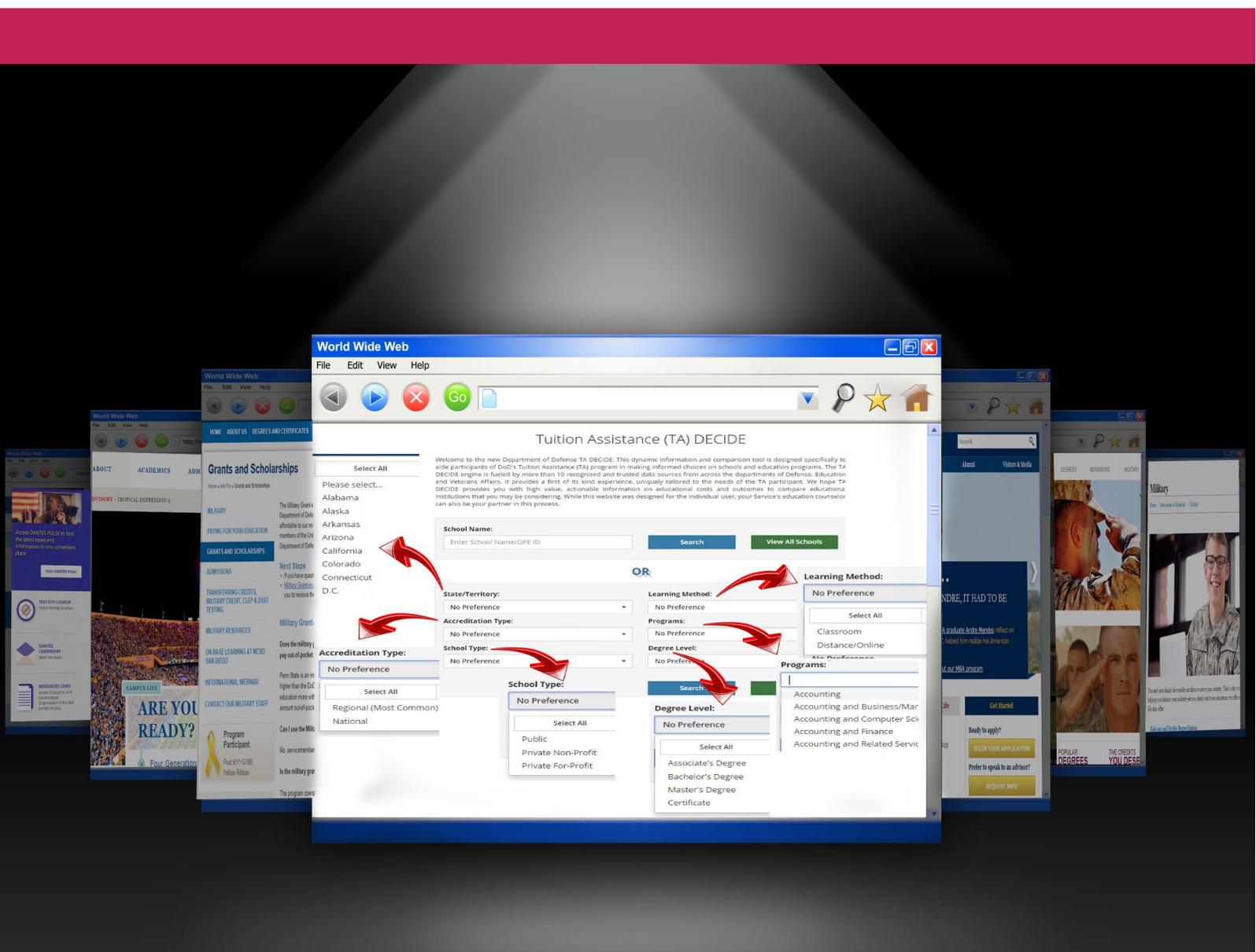
Since the launch of TA DECIDE, more than 33,000 people have used the tool to research and compare the 2,700+ academic institutions that are eligible to participate in the tuition assistance program. All schools have been vetted by DoD and signed agreements to adhere to the principles of excellence. Uniquely different from other comparison tools, TA DECIDE is designed with information specifically for military members using tuition assistance benefits. The tool is fueled by more than 10 recognized data sources across the Departments of Defense, Education (ED) and Veteran Affairs (VA).

Dawn Bilodeau, Chief, DoD Voluntary Education stated, "The department is committed to ensuring military students, especially tuition assistance ben-

eficiaries, are equipped with the details they need to make school and program choices that meet their individual education and career goals. The TA DECIDE tool is one giant step reflective of the department's meaningful efforts to provide service members with high value, actionable information on educational costs and outcomes that are specific to their own military demographic."

Students can use TA DECIDE to compare up to three academic institutions at a time. The flexible search options also allow students to search by viewing all schools, searching by name, location, learning method, accreditation type, degree program, school type, or degree level.

Learn more about TA DECIDE by visiting <https://www.dodmou.com/TADECIDE> 🎓



The Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) created the GI Bill Comparison Tool in 2014 to make it easier to research colleges, universities and employers approved for the GI Bill. This comparison tool provides an estimate of GI Bill benefits and information about a facility's value and affordability for Service members using their benefits, to include veterans and eligible family members.

By answering a few short questions about their military status, education benefit type, cumulative service time, preferred method of taking classes, etc., students are presented with VA approved schools, training programs, and employers. Additional filter features allow students to search by location or by the following school features:

- Student veterans group offered
- Yellow Ribbon program participation
- Principles of Excellence agreement
- VetSuccess program on campus
- Support of the 8 Keys to Veteran Success

- Approval to receive tuition assistance (TA)
- Institution type (public, private, for-profit, flight, or on-the-job training)

The GI Bill Comparison Tool enables students to see how many veterans attend the school or training facility and view veteran student outcomes in terms of retention rate, graduation, and loan repayment rates. Average salaries for all students vs. veterans students after graduation can be compared to the national average. A potential student will also find estimates for tuition, housing allowance, book stipend benefit payments, information on accreditation, and review student complaint history. The VA offers this resource as a way to empower veterans by arming them with the information they need to navigate the volume of choices.

Learn more about the GI Bill Comparison Tool by visiting <https://www.vets.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool>. 🎓



College Scorecard

The Department of Education announced the launch of the redesigned College Scorecard in September 2015. This interactive consumer tool was designed to help students, parents and their advisers make better choices among the more than 7,000 accredited colleges and universities. For military students and family members who may be considering the use of Federal Student Aid to assist with college funding, the tool provides important information about an institution's students, costs, and outcomes.

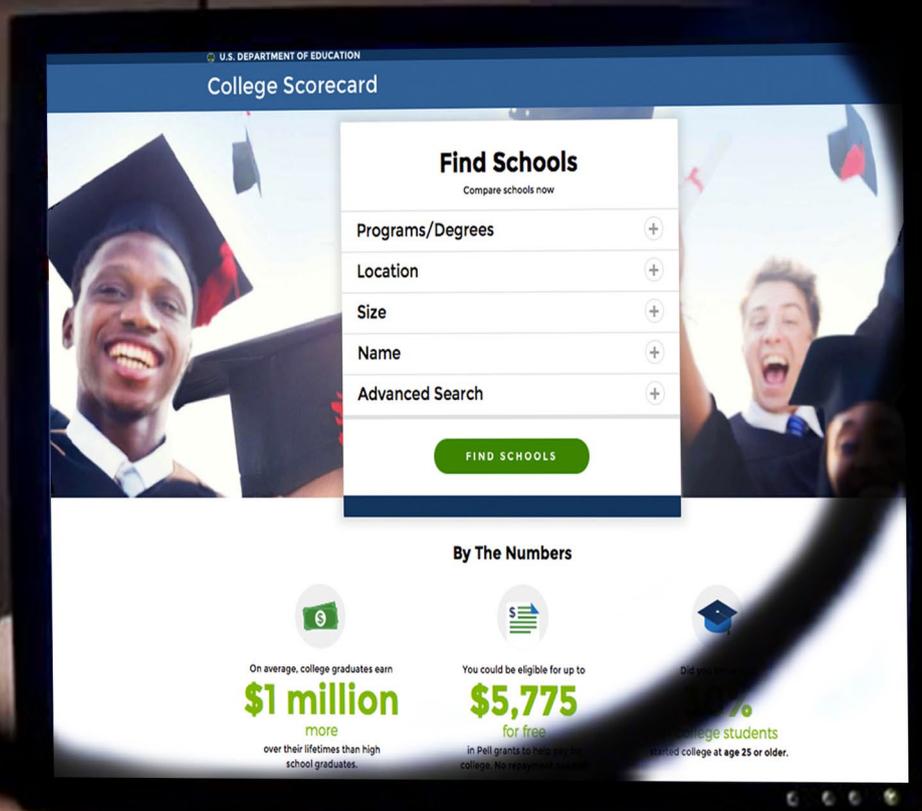
Search features of College Scorecard are similar to TA DECIDE. However, students are presented with additional institutional information on student outcomes for various backgrounds (i.e. first generation college students and Pell grant recipients), average monthly student loan debt payments, and much more.

The redesign included several new features such as:

- The first-ever, nationally comparable data on post-college earnings
- The addition of over 700 predominately certificate-granting institutions
- The removal of institutions that recently closed down
- Updated "caution flags" for schools that may be facing financial or federal compliance issues

These features enable users to find information on potential earnings, experience more robust options when searching the website, help ensure accountability for schools, and protect the interests of both students and taxpayers.

Learn more about the College Scorecard by visiting <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/> 🎓



USAG Ansbach CLEP-a-thon is a Success!

By Irina V. McNemee, ESO, USAG Ansbach

U.S. Army Garrison (USAG) Ansbach DHR Education Center hosted the 2016 installation CLEP-A-THON on August 26. The event was a great opportunity for service members to take advantage of CLEP and DSST exams in order to expedite their degree completion.

The UMUC Europe staff took the lead on the pre-registration for CLEP exams and the event execution. Education center staff provided support and assistance with GoArmyEd, tuition assistance (TA), degree plan mapping, VA benefits, and much more.

During the event, all participants had an opportunity to meet one-on-one with education center counselors and representatives from the University of Maryland University College-Europe (UMUC),

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU), University of Oklahoma (OU), and Central Texas College (CTC). There was a computer lab available for examinees to take advantage of some extra study time while waiting for their turn to test and meals were even provided to test takers making this an incredibly, successful event.

Not only did members get an opportunity to test their knowledge on various subjects and earn potential college credit, but education center personnel also provided transportation for the Rotational Forces Soldiers from the 3-501st Attack Helicopter Battalion, which is about 30 minutes away from Ansbach. KUDOS to all involved! A total of 63 semester hours of college credit was earned - the equivalent to an Associates Degree. 🎓



Be October's Spotlight!

*We want to share your success stories such as highlighting education counselors, Service members and events that may inspire others?
Email us at: dantes_outreach@navy.mil for more information.*



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kelvin Green

Hot News

Exams Paper-Based Reimbursements Not Accepted after October 1

The DANTES Exams Reimbursement Program utilizes the online Electronic Reimbursement Request. This is the only option available for Service members to receive an after-the-fact reimbursement to cover the cost of test fees incurred for exams taken at National or International Test Centers. Paper-based Reimbursement Request Forms have been retired and are no longer accepted.

The DANTES Exams Reimbursement Program includes reimbursement of test fees for the following exams:

- GED (beginning Oct 2016)
- GMAT
- GRE General and GRE Subject
- Praxis Core and Praxis Subject Assessment
- ACT and SAT*

A policy change from paper to automation was effective March 1, 2016. However, the department continues to receive on average 25 paper-based

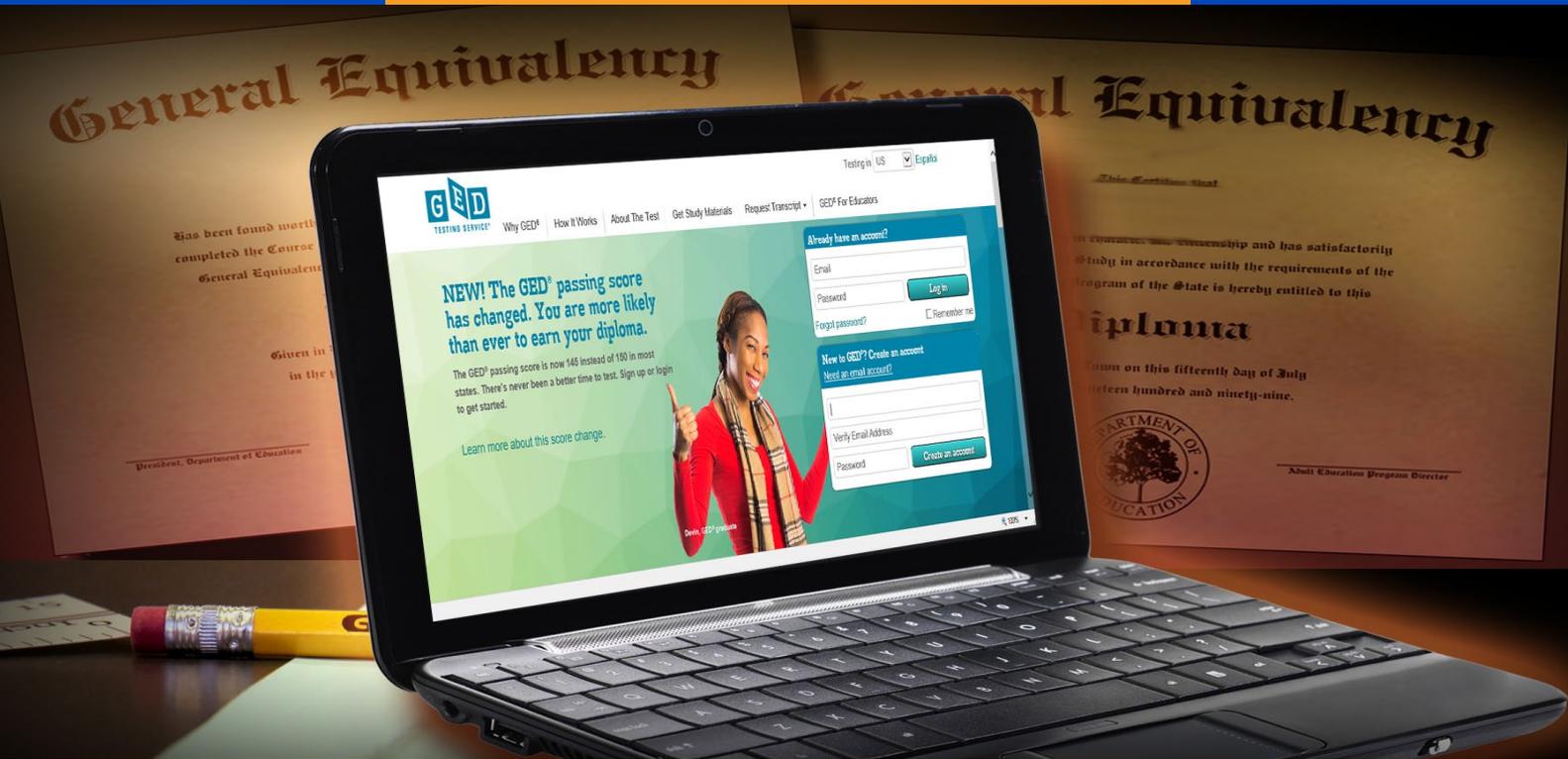
reimbursement requests in the mail each week. The change to policy has already proven to be beneficial. The online process is easier than using the mail and Service members taking advantage of the Electronic Reimbursement Request are now receiving their payments quicker than before. As such, DANTES will no longer physically process paper-based reimbursements received after October 1.

Please ensure that all personnel, to include Service members, military leadership, education office personnel, and testing personnel are aware of this policy change.

Service members should submit the Electronic Reimbursement Request online through the DANTES website at <https://www.dantes.doded.mil> > Examinations > Reimbursement Eligibility.

Access to the DANTES Exams Reimbursement Center is only available to Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve members with a valid Common Access Card (CAC). Additionally, both a score report and payment receipt are required and must be uploaded for reimbursement approval.

*Refer to the closest on-base Education Center prior to applying for reimbursement of the ACT or SAT. Additional funding option exists for DANTES administrations of the ACT and SAT. 📎



GED Testing Is Changing For The Better

As of Oct. 1, 2016, the GED® test will no longer be available as a DANTES-sponsored program through GED Testing Service (GEDTS). GEDTS and DANTES are preparing for close-out of the DANTES jurisdiction, which will result in the following:

- GEDTS capabilities for registration under the DANTES jurisdiction are no longer available
- URLs/links on the GED website with reference to DANTES are no longer active
- DANTES can no longer issue DANTES-sponsored voucher codes to TCOs

If you have a student who has already started their journey under the DANTES program, they are encouraged to study and complete their remaining GED® test subjects by Sept. 30. After Sept. 30, they will not be able to finish the GED® test as part of the DANTES program.

Helping Service members reach their education goals remains DANTES primary focus. Beginning Oct. 1, DANTES will re-activate the after-the-fact Electronic Reimbursement Request for GED. If you know a Service member that needs to take the GED, here's what you can do next:

- Encourage them to pursue this key step to achieving a brighter future
- Have the Service member log in to GED.com and

finish the program

- Send them to GED Testing Service to locate a Pearson Vue Test Center at <http://www.gedtesting-service.com/ged-testing-service>
- For more information, contact GEDTS at 1-877-EX-AM-GED (877-392-6433)

As of Oct. 1, if Service members are seeking reimbursement information, they should visit <http://www.dantes.doded.mil> > Examinations > Reimbursement Eligibility.

- Access to the DANTES Exams Reimbursement Center is only available to active duty, National Guard and Reserve members with a valid Common Access Card (CAC)
- A copy of the Score Report (must show exam completion) and Payment Receipt (must show how much was paid for the exam fee) are required for online reimbursement

DoD Tutoring Services 24/7

Having difficulty with your homework? The DoD provides online tutoring from Tutor.com at no cost to Service members. Eligible students can connect to a LIVE tutor for one-to-one anonymous help with homework, test preparation, proofreading and more in over 40 subject areas. Services are available 24 hours a day, 361 days a year! Eligible students can create an account and log in at:

<http://www.tutor.com/military>. 🎓



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jason Dangel

Redesigned SAT Coming In October!

DANTES test sites will begin receiving the newly designed SAT in October 2016. As part of a commitment to move beyond delivering assessments to delivering opportunity, the College Board announced it would redesign the SAT in 2014. First administered in the civilian community in March 2016, the new SAT focuses on what matters most for college and career readiness and better reflects what students are learning in class

In redesigning the SAT, the College Board:

- eliminated the penalty for guessing
- shortened the number of multiple choice answer options from 5 to 4
- returned to a 400-1600 scale with two required sections:
 - (1) Evidence-Based Reading and Writing
 - (2) Math
- removed obscure vocabulary and focused on the meaning of words in context
- focused the math on areas that research shows are critical for success in college
- provides new, online score reports

Also, the SAT's essay component has had a total makeover:

- it's optional — but some schools will require it. DANTES requires the essay portion.
- test takers have 50 minutes to complete the essay, 25 minutes more than the previous version
- test takers won't be asked to agree or disagree with a position on a topic or to write about their personal experience

A new, free practice app, located at <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/practice> and <https://www.khanacademy.org/sat>, allows students to “scan and score” paper SAT practice exams, get detailed feedback right on their phone or tablet, and connect to the free Khan Academy practice resources.

SAT Reimbursement:

DANTES-funded test takers are required to take the essay portion of the SAT, whether they take the exam at a DANTES test site or at a SAT National or International Test Center. If taken at a DANTES test site, the exam is funded upfront by DANTES. If taken at a SAT National or International Test Center, the SAT is not DANTES-funded upfront; however, Service members may seek reimbursement for the SAT test fee. Go to www.dantes.doded.mil for more information.

Attention DANTES Testing Personnel:

TCOs will no longer be able to receive paper-based copy of the students score report with the new SAT.

Also, SAT tests and materials are not automatically shipped each new testing year. New materials are available annually in September and may be administered upon receipt; however, answer sheets will not be scored until October. TCOs at stocking test sites may place the initial FY17 order for SAT 75 after September 1 and must ensure that all previous year's exams and materials (SAT 73) have been returned. 📦



What is TTT?

Troops to Teachers (TTT) is a DANTES-managed Department of Defense program that helps Service members and Veterans begin a second career as a teacher, in K-12 public, charter or Bureau of Indian Affairs schools



www.proudtoserveagain.com

Coast Guard Commander Shares His Worldly Views

By Troy Gipps, former New England TTT Coordinator

The road to teaching after military service is not always a straight one. Initial post-service career choices may at first seem unrelated to a second career in public education. As time passes though, many of these choices remind veterans of their desire to teach and mentor, which in turn leads them to the front of public school classrooms. This was the case for retired U.S. Coast Guard Commander Richard Kermond, who teaches ninth grade World Civilization and tenth grade Modern World History at Westwood High School in Westwood, Massachusetts—ten years after his military retirement.

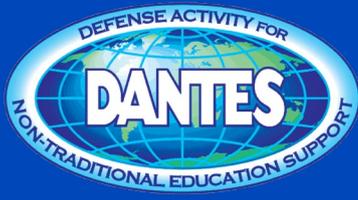
“My first post-service career choice was consulting,” said Kermond. “I developed and taught emergency management courses and it turned out to be a natural segue to pursuing a full-time teaching career. I found that what I liked most about my Coast Guard job was the opportunity to take young officers and enlisted members and ensure they had the skills to succeed first in the Coast Guard and then later in life. When I retired, that was what I missed most.”

Kermond began his formal transition to teaching in January 2013 when he enrolled in a master’s degree program at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. The program included classes in the late afternoon and evenings, geared for those working full or part-time, and then required a student teaching component.

Kermond holds an initial license to teach History in grades 5-12, which includes a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) endorsement, but like many of today’s job seekers, he faced a very tough market. He provides the following advice to other veterans seeking teaching positions. “First, understand the market is tough. Persistence and patience are essential if you want to land a job,” Kermond stated. “Apply everywhere and follow-up, talk to as many people as possible. Opportunities will come, but you have to stay positive and focused during the long campaign,” Kermond said. “Also, understand that you are different – not the run-of-the-mill, newly, certified teacher. You have led teams, mentored subordinates and made tough decisions under stressful conditions. Your resume needs to show, in language that the teaching community can understand, how your skills fit.”

Finally, Kermond recommends taking advantage of any opportunities that can get you in the door, such as volunteer opportunities, seminars, substitute teaching or professional groups. “These opportunities may not be in something you are immediately drawn to,” he said. “But remember, it is not the end of the road – it is the beginning.”

For information on teaching in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, Pennsylvania, New York or West Virginia, contact the North Atlantic Region Troops to Teachers office at infoTTTNAR@troopstoteachers.net 📧



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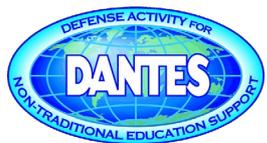


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DANTES INFORMATION BULLETIN



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DANTES Information Bulletin

The DANTES Information Bulletin is published monthly to inform education personnel about DANTES programs and to help promote more efficient customer service to Service members.

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