

# Graduate Student Veteran Resources

Developed by:

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## Transitioning out of Service

The [Columbia University Center for Veteran Transition and Integration](#) (CVTI) supports excellence and innovation in transition programming for current and former members of the armed forces. CVTI is dedicated to creating free courses that will help to break down barriers to your successful transition between military service, student life and civilian workforce.

### [University Studies for Student Veterans](#)

This course helps veterans transition smoothly from military service to college, and helps them maximize their success once they arrive.

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## Student Veteran Educational Financing and Benefits

Many of Columbia's schools and programs are participating in the Yellow Ribbon Program, an initiative authorized by the Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (the Post-9/11 GI Bill), in which educational institutions provide eligible student veterans with a tuition waiver or grant matched by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. This program supplements the base educational benefits provided by the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Student-veterans regardless of their veteran educational benefits eligibility can apply for and receive federal student aid. Typically with the combination of the Post 9/11 GI Bill at 100% and the Federal Pell Grant, student-veterans' tuition and fees are nearly completely covered depending on their enrollment. Student-veterans can also be eligible for federal student loans which typically are not utilized by most student-veterans. Those students who do not receive Pell are ineligible usually due to income/assets or they have already received their first BA. Students receive a Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) as well.

The [Office of Military and Veterans Affairs](#) provides an overview of graduate student veteran benefits and resources

### [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

The [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#) provides veterans the world-class educational benefits and services they have earned.

### **New York State Division of Veterans Affairs**

[New York State Division of Veterans Affairs](#) Provides benefits counseling and advocacy for veterans.

### **Financial Literacy Platform**

Columbia University offers a platform for financial wellness and literacy to assist with creating budgets, paying bills, balancing checkbooks, investing, and planning for the future [Columbia.igrad.com](http://Columbia.igrad.com)

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## **Student Veterans Orientation Events**

Organized by the School of General Studies' Senior Assistant Dean of Student Veteran Initiatives for incoming student veterans from around the University, Columbia officials speak about veterans resources from the areas of Student Financial Services/Veterans Benefits, Columbia Health, Counseling and Psychological Services, Office of Disability Services, and Career Education.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs officials deliver a comprehensive presentation regarding veterans benefits, VA hospitals, veterans centers, disability claims, and all benefits/VA services in general.

Veterans Service Organizations like American Corporate Partners, FourBlock, and the Travis Manion Foundation present on their organizations at a Veteran Resource Fair.

A student and alumni panel led by the student group, Military Veterans of Columbia University, addresses questions and concerns about the transition from service to student.

This event is held prior to each semester, with an invite sent out to incoming undergraduate students by the School of General Studies and to graduate students by the Office of Military and Veterans Affairs.

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## **Student Group and Affiliation Support**

### **Graduate Student Groups and Affiliations**

There are many other campus groups and initiatives across the University including Columbia Military in Business Association, Columbia Law School Military Association, Columbia School of International and Public Affairs Veterans Association, School of Social Work's Military and Veteran Social Work Caucus, School of the Arts' Veteran Writing Groups, etc. If you wish to be

connected to these groups, others, or start your own, please visit your own School or the [Inter-School Governing Board](#) site for more information.

### **Columbia University Student Veteran Alliance**

The Columbia University Student Veteran Alliance is an inclusive group of all student veteran groups and individuals across campus, whether undergraduate, graduate, staff, faculty, or affiliate. The group responds to veteran and veteran-related issues, on and off campus, that warrant cross-campus efforts, such as the [student veteran coalition of support for those affected by the Afghanistan crisis](#) which formed in August of 2021. For more information please connect with [Senior Assistant Dean David Keefe](#).

### **Military Veterans of Columbia University (open to graduate students)**

MilVets provides military veterans with resources, opportunities, and support at Columbia University, in order to facilitate a successful education and to provide a strong foundation for years to come.

Site: <https://milvets.columbia.edu>

Email: [milvets@columbia.edu](mailto:milvets@columbia.edu)

### **MedVets (open to graduate students)**

Student veteran postbac students and those interested in pre-med

Email: [medvets@columbia.edu](mailto:medvets@columbia.edu)

[Flyer \(PDF\)](#)

### **Women Student Veterans Community Support (open to graduate students)**

Women Veterans providing support, resources, and opportunities for women and those that identify as women who have served in the military

### **Coalition for Community Support and Assisting the Efforts around Afghanistan**

The Center for Veteran Transition and Integration (CVTI), the Columbia University School of General Studies (GS), and a Columbia University student veteran alliance of undergraduate and graduate student veteran groups, individuals, and allies have come together since August 2021 to create a [student veteran coalition of support for those affected by the Afghanistan crisis](#).

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## **CU Veterans and Families Health and Wellness Consortium**

In order to best serve the health needs of veteran students at Columbia University and their families, the below organizations at Columbia University established a consortium with the following mission and goals.

School of General Studies

Teachers College Resilience Center for Veterans & Families

VITAL Program (Dept. of VA)

Dean Hope Center  
Columbia Health  
Alice! Health Promotion  
Counseling and Psychological Services  
Disability Services  
Gay Health Advocacy Project (GHAP)  
Medical Services  
Sexual Violence Response  
Student Health Insurance Office

### **Mission**

Synchronize the efforts of health-related organizations at Columbia University to ensure that veteran students at Columbia University and their immediate families/partners receive seamless and world-class support, thus facilitating veteran students to succeed in the classroom and in life.

### **Goals**

1. Establish a Columbia University Veteran and Families Health Consortium consisting of organizations at Columbia University that provide health-related services to veterans and their families and organizations that have a vested interest in the success of student veterans at Columbia University
2. Integrate information for Columbia, and non-Columbia University health-related service organizations that provide support for veteran students and their families
3. Create and annually update this packet based on lessons learned and feedback from health-related organizations, non-health-related organizations, and veteran students and their families
4. Ensure that veteran students and families are seamlessly referred, and receiving requested services, in a timely manner through frequent dialogue and monthly meetings among consortium members (after signed consent by student veteran)
5. Maximize awareness of the contents of this packet through outreach and by informing all colleges and organizations at Columbia University

[Columbia University Veterans & Families Health and Wellness Resource Packet for Students](#)

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## **Student Veterans Health and Wellness Resources at Columbia**

### **Columbia Health Resources**

[About Columbia Health Brochure](#)

[Live Well Learn Well](#)

### **Veterans Concerns at Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS)**

CPS' program Veterans Concerns has five counselors on staff with training from the VA and experience working with veterans, including 2 counselors on staff with experience in the Israeli Defense Force. These counselors encourage veterans to utilize their drop-in hours and the veteran support group. Please [Columbia Counseling and Psychological Services \(CPS\) Veteran's Concerns \(website\)](#) for more information.

### **Office of Disability Services (DS)**

Students seeking accommodations or support services from Disability Services are required to register with the office. Make sure to [submit your paperwork early here](#). If you have questions, please contact [disability@columbia.edu](mailto:disability@columbia.edu).

### **Medical Services**

Medical Services provides a full range of health care services for Columbia University students. If you are utilizing the Columbia student health insurance plan, Medical Services will serve as your primary care provider. To book a same day appointment, click [here](#). You can book by phone at 212-854-7426 or in-person at John Jay Hall, 3rd Floor Information.

After hours, weekends, or University Holidays, call 212-854-7426 for 24/7 support. In an emergency, call CUEMS/Public Safety at 212-854-5555, or dial 911.

### **Opting out of Insurance - VA Health Benefits as Alternate Coverage**

In order to request a waiver or exception of enrollment in the Columbia Plan, you must have alternate coverage that meets the University requirements as outlined below. You must provide sufficient information regarding your alternate health insurance plan to allow independent verification that your plan meets the University requirements.

If you are registered with the VA, it will count as alternate coverage and you can [request a waiver](#). Consult the website for the deadlines to request a waiver.

### **Gender Based Misconduct**

*Sexual Violence Response (SVR)* provides trauma-informed, confidential support through crisis counseling and intervention. Support is available 24/7 via the SVR Helpline at 212-854-4357. You can also walk into any of their three locations for help. For more information and location information, visit their site [here](#).

[Information about Relationship Abuse](#)

[Information about Sexual Violence Prevention](#)

*The Title IX Coordinator* works to ensure a safe, welcoming, and harassment free-environment for all members of the community - students, faculty and staff. To learn more information and/or to report an incident, visit their site [here](#).

If you have any questions, reach out to Columbia Health Units specifically or fill out [this form](#) in advance of any referral for an assessment.

### **The Resilience Center at Teachers College**

The Resilience Center, part of the Dean Hope Center at Teachers College, provides counseling psychological assessments on a sliding scale. For an assessment, you must register with DS and get a referral first.

### **Nutrition Services**

Columbia students can meet with a Medical Services registered dietitian who will provide individual counseling and help students understand and meet their unique nutrition needs. To book a same day appointment, click [here](#). You can also book by phone at 212-854-7426.

### **Alice! Health Promotion**

Alice! Health Promotion aims to help connect students with information and resources to make informed decisions regarding a broad range of health-related topics. To schedule an appointment, call 212-854-5453 or email [alice@columbia.edu](mailto:alice@columbia.edu) To learn more about their services, visit their site [here](#).

### **Gay Health Advocacy Project (GHAP)**

Gay Health Advocacy Project offers drop-in hours for peer support around sexual health, HIV antibody testing, birth control education, and post-exposure prophylaxis consultation . No appointment necessary. Click [here](#) for more information about the drop in schedule and location. You can also call 212-854-6655.

### **Dodge Fitness Center**

If you are a full time student, or a part time student who has elected the health and related service fee, you have access to the Dodge Fitness Center. For more information about the facility, visit their site [here](#).

### **The Columbia Recovery Coalition**

A student group dedicated to supporting anyone in the Columbia community who identifies as being in recovery or seeking recovery from any condition. To find out more information check-in meetings and open AA meetings, email them at [recoverycoalition@columbia.edu](mailto:recoverycoalition@columbia.edu)

### **Office of the University Chaplain**

The Office of University Chaplain works collaboratively with schools across the university to promote interfaith and intercultural awareness. The office provides spiritual counseling upon request. For more information, visit their site [here](#). You can also email [chaplain@columbia.edu](mailto:chaplain@columbia.edu) or call 212-854-1493.

### **Ombuds**

A confidential University resource for students, faculty, and staff to assist in the management and resolution of workplace and/or academic issues. [ombuds@columbia.edu](mailto:ombuds@columbia.edu) or 212-854-1234.

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## Student Veterans Health and Wellness Resources Outside of Columbia

### VITAL (PDF)

Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL) is a VA program to help transition the service member to student by offering benefits access, counseling, community, and work study opportunities. VITAL is located at the Teacher's College Resilience Center For Veterans and Families.

### VA Healthcare

If you are enrolled in VA Healthcare - call your [nearest VA facility](#), log in to [HealthVet](#), use [VA telehealth](#) or connect with [VITAL](#) to consult with a VA provider about your symptoms before you plan to visit a VA facility in person. For questions, please call 866-651-3180 or 703-234-4483, Monday through Saturday, 7 a.m. - 11 p.m. ET.

### Veteran Disability Claims

[Veteran Affairs' Veteran Benefits Administration \(VBA\)](#)

[NYC Department of Veteran Services](#)

[Disabled American Veterans](#)

### Veterans Affairs

[Bronx VA Medical Center](#)

[Harlem Vet Center](#)

For more information on VA Benefits, please visit [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov).

The [GS Veterans Initiatives and Resources website](#) includes a comprehensive list of veteran health and wellness resources.

### Military Family Center at NYU Langone Health

The Military and Family Center at NYU provides *free and confidential* individual, couples, family, and group therapy for veterans and their family members regardless of discharge status, combat exposure, or era served. To book an appointment, call the intake line at (855) 698-4677 or e-mail: [militaryfamilyclinic@nyumc.org](mailto:militaryfamilyclinic@nyumc.org). Click [here](#) for more information.

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## Student Veterans in Crisis

### Crisis and Emergency Contacts:

For emergencies, please call 911 or Columbia Public Safety at (212) 854-5555.

For after-hours mental health concerns, please contact CPS at (212) 854-2878.

For immediate psychiatric care, go directly to Mt. Sinai - St. Luke's Hospital Emergency Room at 113th Street and Amsterdam Avenue or call [\(212\) 523-3347](tel:(212)523-3347).

**Veterans Crisis Line:**

Call: 1-800-273-8255 then press 1

Chat: [Start a chat](#)

Text: any message to [838255](tel:838255)

[Guide to Responding to Student Veterans in Distress and Showing Signs of Depression, and Crisis Response](#)

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## Academic Support for Student Veterans

### Columbia University Center for Veteran Transition and Integration

The Columbia University Center for Veteran Transition and Integration online course [University Studies for Student Veterans](#) helps veterans transition smoothly from military service to college, and helps them maximize their success once they arrive.

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## Career Exploration

[Columbia University Center for Career Education \(CCE\)](#) works to empower you to make smart career choices, develop the tools necessary for a successful internship/job search, and connect professionally with employers through workshops, career events, online resources, and meetings with counselors.

[Veteran Career Action Plan \(PDF\)](#)

[Career Resources for Veterans and Service Members \(PDF\)](#)

[Creative Resources for Veterans \(PDF\)](#)

### Find Your Calling

Visit [Columbia University's Center for Veteran Transition and Integration](#) for access to free online courses to help your transition into graduate school and the workforce

### Higher Education Recruitment Consortium

[Higher Education Recruitment Consortium](#) seeks to support [Veterans Transitioning into Higher Education Jobs](#)

### Veterans Career Initiative (VCI)

In partnership with the Military Veterans of Columbia University, networking and recruiting opportunities are provided for student veterans to engage with hiring managers from a wide range of employers.



Some of these organizations include:

Accenture, Bank of America, Arts in the Armed Forces, Ayni Brigade, Moody's, AlixPartners, Anheuser Busch, Institute for Defense Analysis, State Department, FBI, Citi, TD Bank, Deloitte, McKinsey, DataMner, Deutsche Bank, IBM, Google, Facebook, and many more

For more information, please connect with the [Military Veterans of Columbia University](#)

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## Graduate School and Fellowship Resources

Columbia University, School of Professional Studies offers [Veteran Resources](#). The School of Professional Studies is a proud participant of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs [Yellow Ribbon Program](#). [Learn more](#).

Visit [Planning Your Future](#) for graduate school coaching, networking and more.

### Fellowships, Scholarships, Research and Grant Opportunities

The [American Australian Association Veterans Fund](#) wants to entice U.S. military veterans to study Down Under with a generous year-long fellowship. Veterans are welcome to pursue any field, whether at either the graduate or undergraduate level. You may apply for this scholarship before securing a place in an Australian university; do that next, with the help of the Association's own staff.

The [Anna Sobol Levy Foundation](#) supports American college graduates pursuing a master's degree in diplomacy or conflict in Israel. The Foundation especially seeks veterans and others interested in careers in diplomacy or intelligence.

The [Tillman Military Scholarship](#) offers renewable grants in the \$10,000 range (depending on financial need) to veterans and active-duty members of the U.S. armed forces who are pursuing their college degrees on a full-time basis. Besides military service, applicants should have a record of personal achievement and a demonstrated potential for leadership.

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## NROTC and ROTC Support

Columbia participates in the [Army, Air Force, and Naval ROTC programs](#). These programs include students from schools throughout the New York City area.

- The New York City Army ROTC program is based at [Fordham University](#).
- The New York City Air Force ROTC program is based at [Manhattan College](#).
- The New York City Naval ROTC program is based at [SUNY Maritime College in the Bronx](#). GS also organizes and supports cross-campus [Commissioning Ceremonies](#) for the Naval ROTC program when GS students are commissioned upon completion of their undergraduate degree at General Studies.

For more information, please contact the Office of Military and Veteran Affairs at <https://www.sfs.columbia.edu/departments/veterans-service>

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## Leaving for Duty

Any student who is a member of the National Guard or other reserve component of the armed forces of the United States or of the state-organized militia and is called or ordered to active duty will be granted a military leave of absence for the period of active duty and for one year thereafter.

Upon return from military leave of absence, the student will be restored to the educational status attained prior to being called or ordered to such duty without loss of academic credits earned, scholarships or grants awarded, or tuition or other fees paid prior to the commencement of active duty. *(This does not mean being restored in the same class(es) of which work and attendance were missed due to service, in any given semester - makeup work and time must be worked out with the Academic Advisor, Senior Assistant Dean of Veteran Initiatives and the class instructor(s) prior to the student leaving for duty).* The University will credit any tuition or fees paid for the period of the military leave of absence to the next enrollment period or will refund the tuition and fees paid to the student, at the student's option.

**TIP:** *Notify your Advisor and Class Instructors prior to the start of the semester that you serve in the Reserves or National Guard and you will have to report once a month (or more) and may be called up for duty at any time. Create a plan with these support systems so you can make a calculated decision on how you will navigate missed time and classwork, or a missed semester.*

Students in need of a military leave of absence should contact their advisor at their School and the Office of Military and Veteran Affairs.

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## More On-Campus and Off-Campus Connections

[ACP | \(PDF\)](#)

[Academic Resource Center](#)

[Columbia University's Center for Veteran Transition and Integration](#)

[DAV](#)

[FourBlock | \(PDF\)](#)

[Headstrong](#)

[Hope for the Warriors | \(PDF\)](#)

[IAVA](#)

[Mission Continues](#)

[NYC Department of Veteran Services](#)

[NYC Veterans Alliance](#)

[Psych Armor](#)  
[Stephen A Cohen Military Family Center at NYU Langone](#)  
[Student Veterans of America](#)  
[Team Rubicon](#)  
[Travis Manion Foundation I \(PDF\)](#)

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## Veteran Alumni

### Columbia Veterans

[Columbia Veterans](#) is a nonprofit organization that serves Columbia University alumni, faculty, staff, students and the greater community in which we interact. Our mission is to promote the welfare of this diverse population by cultivating a spirit of community and pride. We seek to help advance and assist in the professional, personal and academic growth of the community through connections to the University and to each other. Throughout these efforts, we will continue to foster camaraderie, fellowship, and a sense of service.

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## Columbia University Military Ball

The [Military Ball](#) celebrates Columbia's distinguished veteran student community, uniting them with the leaders and scholars of New York City and the world. Established in 2010, the Military Ball continues to be regarded as the premier event uniting veterans across the University community. Proceeds help underwrite academic and career transition programming for all veterans and military family members nationwide, financial aid for veteran students at Columbia University, and veteran student and alumni programming. If you have any questions or wish to obtain more information, please email [Senior Assistant Dean David Keefe](#)

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## Red, White, & Light Blue: A Brief History of the Military at Columbia

*The following originally appeared in the [Spring 2008 issue of The Owl](#)*

During the American Revolution, the fate of Columbia University, like the fate of the United States itself, hung in the balance. Although some King's College students fought for the colonies—such as Alexander Hamilton, who spent his mornings drilling with a volunteer militia before classes—most professors and students were Loyalists, including British spy John Vardill and College President Myles Cooper, who was driven out of his home and back to England by a Revolutionary lynch mob. An interim president briefly took over, but after classes were suspended from 1776-1784 and College Hall used as a hospital by occupying British forces, the postwar viability of the young school was in doubt, until a new charter and a name change offered a fresh start.

Columbia participated far more modestly in the U.S.'s 19th-century wars, including, somewhat surprisingly, the Civil War, which claimed the lives of two percent of the nation's population. Columbia students enlisted at rates far below those of students at other colleges, and less than a dozen alumni died in battle. By 1917 a more prominent, more diverse University was able to present a more comprehensive response to World War I with Extension Teaching offering classes in trench warfare and vegetable gardening (for victory gardens), among numerous other topics. The University also hosted a branch of the SATC (Student Army Training Corps, the forerunner to the ROTC) and mandated drilling for all undergraduates in the fall of 1918.

Columbia's response to World War I—and, three decades later, World War II—helped lay the foundation for the modern University. The first Core Curriculum course, Contemporary Civilization, began in the fall of 1918 as “War Aims,” a current-events class for SATC members. The aftermath of World War II brought not only Supreme Allied Commander Dwight D. Eisenhower to Morningside Heights, but also the GI Bill®, a financial blessing for the University, which was still reeling from the Depression. In the years following WWII, half of Columbia's students were veterans, most in the extension program, which, as its director noted in 1946, “found places for more than three thousand veterans, and it may be said that no veteran qualified to do work on the college level was turned away.” In 1947, partly to meet the needs of returning veterans, including women from the WACS (Women's Army Corps) and WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service), the extension program was reorganized into an undergraduate college, the School of General Studies. Since its founding, GS students have served in all of America's conflicts and participated on all sides of the debates surrounding them. Sixty years later, servicemembers no longer constitute the majority of the student body, but the school's commitment remains unchanged: GS continues to be a place where veterans—of other countries' armed services as well as of the United States—can begin the next chapter of their lives in a supportive community.