



**ILLINOIS  
JOINING  
FORCES**

Update on  
Illinois Joining Forces (IJF)  
Education Working Group (EWG)

July 27, 2016



# EWG Structure



- Current slate of officers
  - Co-chairs
    - Amy Sherman, CAEL
    - Roman Ortega, Lewis University and SVA-IL
  - Vice chair
    - Kim Eck, ISAC
  - Secretary
    - Amanda Winters, IBHE
  - Seeking volunteers for new slate of officers for 2017
  
- Established five subgroups in 2014
  - Each group developed its own set of goals and action plans at the 2015 summer retreat
    - Membership, Promotion and Communication
    - Prior Learning Assessment
    - Student Veteran Education Benefits
    - Support Services for Veteran Education Professionals and Providers
    - Student Veteran Services and Outreach
  - Re-defined focus at 2016 summer retreat

# Early Accomplishments

- Workshops
  - Military Prior Learning Assessment
    - American Council on Education (ACE)
  - Cultural competency training
  - Faculty training program
    - Vet Ally
- Webinars
  - Military Prior Learning Assessment
  - Student veteran policy
  - Veteran education benefits
    - State and federal
  - Kognito
- Input on the annual Discharged Servicemember Task Force report
- Quarterly newsletter

# Recent Accomplishments



- Illinois Military PLA Scan
  - Conducted in summer 2015 in collaboration with IBHE, ICCB, IDVA and CAEL
  - Presented survey results to higher education professionals in fall 2015
- Student Veterans Leadership Day
  - Partner in conducting 2nd annual event on April 5, 2016 in Springfield
- Webcast for student veterans
  - Brief scenario-based explanation of how Montgomery GI Bill works with Illinois benefits
- Promotional flyer to recruit new IJF members
  - To distribute at industry events, conferences, etc.
- Education Working Group Summer Retreat
  - Held second annual retreat on July 12, 2016 at Chez Wounded Warrior Center, UIUC
- Partnering on efforts to prepare for and conduct a Student Veteran Symposium at UIUC in October

# 2016 Retreat Discussion



- Re-defined EWG's focus
- Instead of subgroup approach, will focus on two lines of effort
  - Resources
    - Identify a comprehensive array of resources to help student veterans and their families successfully navigate the higher education landscape
  - Informed Choice
    - Provide mechanisms and access to tools that can help student veterans and their families make informed decisions about their career and educational goals and how to best utilize the benefits available to them
- Relevant subgroup projects will be incorporated into this re-defined focus

# 2016-17 Lines of Effort

## 1. Resources

- Compile/assess reliable, reputable student veteran resources
- Identify best practices
- Develop delivery methodologies
  - Online
  - Well-trained “corps” of experts
  - Train-the-trainer resources
  - Orientation programs
- Implement (who, what, etc.)
- Measure success

## 2. Informed Choice

- Advisor network
- Workforce development
- Higher education
- Appropriate degrees
- Education benefits
- Workshops with ESO and centers of influence (train the trainer)



# Some Key Partnerships ...

- Veterans Higher Education Affinity Group (VHEAG)
- Military PLA Task Force
- Discharged Servicemember Task Force
- Student Veterans of America (SVA)- Illinois
- Student Veterans Leadership Day
  - Richard Tapia, IBHE
  - Dan Wellman, IDVA
- Chez Family Center for Wounded Veterans In Higher Education
  - Dr. Nicholas Osborne
- Student Veterans Leadership Symposium
  - Survey of Student Veterans and Veteran Coordinators
    - Patricia Starks, Chez Family Center for Wounded Veterans In Higher Education
    - Brittany King, Master's of Social Work Candidate



Questions?  
Comments?  
Suggestions?  
Feedback?

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