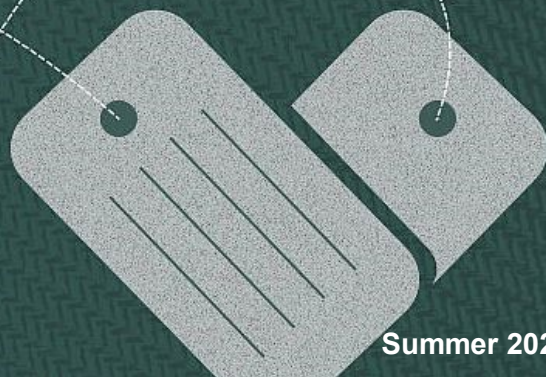


VALOR

VETERAN ★ ALLIANCE



Summer 2023

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Colleagues and friends,

Congratulations, we have arrived at the end of another semester and (fingers crossed) the end of winter weather. As the spring semester sprints to the finish line, I hope you are able to look ahead to more relaxing days. As a fan of daylight, I still marvel at how long our days are as we move toward summer. As soon as our sunsets moved past 8 PM I started getting giddy. It doesn't take much to excite me after what felt like a very long winter.

So here we are two weeks out from commencement, preparing to say so long to some students for the summer and to others indefinitely. Frankly, it leaves me with mixed feelings. I get attached to my students. When they graduate and leave the nest, I am happy for them, but also sad that our time together passed so quickly. Alas, that is how it always goes, time seems to drag on in the days while it appears to have flown by in retrospect.

I would like to thank everyone who has spent time and energy this year helping student veterans. Folks often talk about the power of one, but I think we think those individuals who change lives are other people doing big things. I want you to know that it is *you*—*you* being thoughtful, *you* being kind, *you* going the extra mile to help someone—*you* are the one changing lives in ways you may never fully appreciate. The ripples of our actions extend far beyond what we see; indeed, it is almost scary how powerful a force we can be in the universe. So, thank *you* for showing up for student veterans.

My enduring gratitude to Jim Stoddard who works tirelessly for student veterans and is always delightful to work with as a colleague. I cannot imagine what we would do without him. I also want to thank the VALOR Board Members, some of which have been with us since the beginning, and most who are veterans. They always deliver when we need them.

I wish you a safe, relaxing, and happy summer. Reach out to me at any time if you have questions or concerns that I can assist you with.

Carol Cwiak, J.D., Ph.D.
VALOR Faculty Liaison





VCO Update
Jim Stoddard

You can visit Jim on campus at the Veterans Educational Training Office in Ceres 329; or by phone at 701-231-9706; or by email at james.stoddard@ndsu.edu.

#STILLSERVING



The #StillServing campaign was launched in 2020 to highlight the countless ways veterans continue to serve in communities across America. Now the movement continues to deepen its impact with the annual VFW Day of Service. The event kicks off May 6, marking the start of veteran-led community service projects to take place throughout the month. The VFW is asking VFW Posts, VFW members, community advocates and veterans of every stripe to band together to host a community. Sign up [here](#).

Spring Commencement is coming up soon, and this time we congratulate 39 of our student veterans on finishing their degrees! Great job, everyone! And thank you to all the supporters and allies for helping them succeed!

33 of those 39 expected military veteran spring and summer 2023 graduates (85%!) currently show a GPA of 3.0 or higher, with two Nursing students and one Agricultural Economics major achieving very impressive perfect 4.0s! Watch for them all wearing the red, white, and blue honor cords at the ceremony!

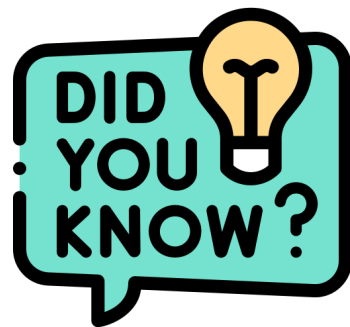
NDSU recently announced a partnership with the Boeing Company that guarantees an interview with the company to any student veteran or ROTC graduate of NDSU. Candidates must meet the minimum qualifications for the position they're applying for, but this puts our military students ahead of the line in the hiring process at one of the U.S.'s most iconic, industry-leading corporations. There are positions available all around the country, as well as remote work opportunities that can be done from anywhere. For more details about this partnership, check with NDSU's Career and Advising Center, or visit Boeing's application portal (<https://jobs.boeing.com/veterans>).



After the extended winter we had, I sure don't want to completely jump ahead to fall, but here are just a few things we're already thinking about for fall. First, Todd and I should be fully moved into, and working out of, the new combined veteran resource center in Morrill Hall 112 when students return. This is very exciting, and we're looking forward to providing a more convenient support experience for military students.

Next, we hope to conduct another military student lunch during Welcome Week. More details as we get closer, but this has been a great chance for new military students to meet informally with each other and with key staff and faculty supporters to get them off to a good start at NDSU.

I work throughout the summer, so please let me know if I can help with any student issues that are related to military connections!



There is a benefit called the Rural Relocation Benefit (from the US Department of Veterans Affairs). Students who qualify for the Post 9/11 GI Bill are eligible for a one-time payment of \$500 if they relocate at least 500 miles from a county of less than 7 persons per square mile in order to pursue a program of education under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Eligible students just have to fill out the required VA form (VBA-22-0848-ARE.pdf at va.gov) and send it along with the listed supporting documents to their VA Regional Processing Office. This would include dependent students whose military parent or spouse has transferred their Post-9/11 GI Bill eligibility to them. If you want to learn more, see [here](#).

THE SPOTLIGHT

Name: Ellyssa Derrig

Major/Minor: Bachelors of Science in Architecture - May 2023, and I will continue on to get my Masters in Architecture. I have also completed a minor in Interior Design.

Originally from: West Fargo, ND

Current city: West Fargo, ND

Career plans after college: I plan to move to the cities and pursue architecture with a focus in health care.

Military Service: I am currently a senior airman in the 119th wing here in Fargo. I have served for 5 years and currently cook and serve meals for our members during drill weekend. The best part of this job is being able to meet and see everyone on base during a busy weekend.



NDSU activities/engagement: I am a member of Tau Sigma Delta, which is the honor society for architecture we plan events for NDSU SODAA community and get involved within the community.

An interesting tidbit about the veteran: I am a third generation 119th member. My grandpa served, my dad served, and now myself. This is something I am very proud of and love telling people.



Ellyssa Derrig with family

SPRING 2023
Commencement Ceremonies
Saturday, May 13th, Fargodome
10 AM & 2 PM
Find more details here:
<https://www.ndsu.edu/commencement/>

*"Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other."
~ John F. Kennedy*

The Salty Times*Brennan Lemar and Devon Patton, BSV*

Hello everyone! As the spring semester comes to a close, we have a few parting thoughts from Bison Student Veterans. First, we are welcoming a group of new motivated officers to lead BSV for the next academic year.

President: Beatrice Jaszczak

Beatrice was active-duty Navy for 4 years as an Interior Communications Electrician and is studying Natural Resource Management with a minor in Rocks.

Vice President of Program and Member Development: Andrew Hatori

Andrew was active-duty Army for ten years as a Combat Medic and is studying Nursing.

Vice President of Communications and Marketing: KK Swinland

KK was active-duty Army for 3 years as a Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear specialist and is studying Human Resources.

Vice President of Finance: Gideon Blazek

Gideon serves in the Minnesota Army National Guard as a tanker and is studying Civil Engineering.

To finish this semester BSV will be having one more meeting on May 4th. We will also be handing out honor cords to graduating military students. We are in the final steps of implementing our General Credit Appeal process to make overseas time count toward Cultural Diversity and Global Perspective credits. The process will be completing a form on the registration and records website and once the form is uploaded the officer team will send out a "how to" on filling it out to all our members.

Looking into the fall semester we will continue hosting meetings twice a month, the first is the regular meeting and the second will be the social hour. Meetings will be held on the first and third week of the month, day and time are currently being voted on. Results will be sent out to all members of the organization. We hope you have a great summer and will see you in the fall.

Connect with BSV via [email](#) or [Facebook](#).



VALOR congratulates all our NDSU spring 2023 graduates, but particularly our graduating student veterans. We hope this next chapter of your life is filled with happiness and success. Thank you for your service and thank you for trusting NDSU to help you advance your career directives.



In January 2023, the VA launched a new life insurance program called Veterans Affairs Life Insurance (VALife), which provides guaranteed acceptance whole life insurance coverage to Veterans age 80 and under, with any level of service-connected disability. Learn more [here](#).

Career Corner

Brandon Schutz, Career Coach, NDSU Career and Advising Center



The weather may be having trouble deciding what season it is, but the month of May is fast approaching! Many of you are still looking for positions and will hopefully have a lot of success with your applications. One part of the application process that makes people nervous is getting offered a big interview and not feeling confident in how to answer questions. Today we will cover how you can create shared definitions of your skills and abilities during an interview.

The most important thing you want to do in an interview is create a shared definition of your skills and abilities. If you asked twenty different soldiers to write their definition of what being organized looks like you will likely get twenty different answers. It is important for an employer to know what YOUR definition of being organized is. You don't want to be vague or leave out important details. There are three equally important things you need to do to create a good shared definition in an interview.



The first thing you need to do is answer the question that was asked. If they ask you "what are your top three strengths?" and you give me one strength or fifteen strengths then you didn't really answer the question that was asked. Take a moment to think about why they are asking you that question and have your answer in your head before you start to respond. It's perfectly fine to take five to ten seconds before you answer the question or to ask for more time if needed. If you don't answer the question that is being asked, then no matter how good your response is it won't make a difference.

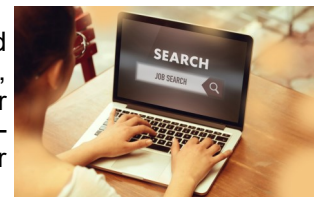


Next, is creating context of what your skills looks like and why they matter regarding the job you are interviewing for. If you say you are organized you should go into detail about how you do that. That could be calendars, planners, lists, white boards, filing systems, e-mail, reminders, etc. Help the interviewer understand your version of organized, and then relate why being organized is important for this job. The more specific you can get with what a skill means to you and why that matters for the job the more an employer can picture what hiring you would look like.

The third part, even if you are not directly asked about it, is to provide real world examples of your successful use of that skill. Examples should highlight a specific instance that actually happened, not a hypothetical or scenario in which you might do something. These examples help an employer visualize how you will perform in specific situations that would require the skills you are talking about.

A shared definition is like a triangle where you are trying touch each part of: answer, context, and example. Employers aren't looking for perfect employees, they are looking for people who are good enough and who will be a good fit for their organization. By creating shared definitions, you are letting them know who you are and what you would look like in their company.

The Career and Advising Center offers services year-round. Those services are free to students and alumni. Questions or assistance regarding resumes, cover letters, job searches, interviews, job offers, employment trends, networking, and other career support is available both in-person and remotely. For those looking for internships or jobs this fall don't forget about our career fairs, including our big Career Expo with about 270 employers in all industries, our Part-time Jobs Fair, Sales and Marketing Fair, and our Meet the Firms event (for accountants).



*"The truth is that you always know the right thing to do.
The tough part is doing it."*

~ General Norman Schwarzkopf

#servicematters



valor.veteran.alliance.organization/

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Todd Yackley

Greetings from the Military and Veterans Certification Office.

As you should know, Army Ignited changed last semester to 2.0 and required each student to create their own tuition assistance Request or TAR. The deadline to apply for Tuition Reimbursement is always 60 days before the semester starts to 7 days before the semester starts. This goes for every semester including summer. You can still request STR if you are a MN Guard member up to 90 days after the semester ends. ND Guard is a bit different and you must sign up for STA by 7 days before the semester. Any questions on STA should be directed to Chief Bohl at the ND Education Office for the Guard at



701-333-3064. The MN Education office for STR can be contacted at 651-282-4589. Please do not wait until the last date. These are firm dates and cannot be busted or you will not get FTA.

Here are the dates for signing up for FTA and STA:

Summer Semester: March 13th through May 6th

Fall Semester: June 22nd through August 15th

We still haven't moved offices but my guess is it will be some time over the summer. Myself and Jim Stoddard will be co-located in Morrill Hall. Watch for notifications when we expect to move. I have open office hours on Teams every Tuesday from 10-11:30 AM and every Wednesday from 1-2:30 PM. The link for Teams is <https://ndsu.zoom.us/j/95316134900?pwd=MHZrVUxCYU1GRDJXQjc3eDNVV1I6UT09>. You can also reach me via phone at the number below. One last thing, I hope everyone knows when it comes to registration, military-affiliated students get priority registration and can register on the first date registration is open.

As always if you have any questions, I can be reached at 701-231-9782 or by email at todd.yackley@ndsu.edu.

Hooligans Recognize Outstanding Airmen of the Year 2022: Congratulations Maria Sornsin!

The North Dakota National Air Guard (NDANG) recently named Senior Airman Maria Sornsin, of the 119th Mission Support Group, Airman of the Year. Maria who was born and raised in Fargo is a Construction Management major at NDSU.

From the NDANG: *Maria joined the NDANG in 2018, and currently serves as a services journeyman in the 119th Civil Engineer Squadron. Her major 2022 accomplishments include identifying 425 safety hazards resulting in the creation of 1,700 work orders for corrective action. Her efforts improved the quality of life for 7,200 joint coalition warfighters and earned her the U.S. Air Force Central Top Performer award. In July 2022, her humanitarianism took her to Medjugorje, Bosnia where she engaged in activities that provided shelter, necessary medical care, pharmaceutical treatment, nourishment, supplies and critical winter clothing. These efforts directly contributed to the health and wellness of the local community. Finally, Sornsin supported the movement of 825 total force students within 12 different career fields, from 25 visiting teams at the 119th Civil Engineer Squadron's Regional Training Site. Her most memorable 119th Wing moment was a deployment for training to Yokota Air Force Base, Japan. (See the NDANG Press Release from March 4, 2023 [here.](#))*



Maria Sornsin (far left),
NDANG Airman of the Year
Image credit: North Dakota Air National Guard

COMING UP

Local Events

On the **second Wednesday of every month** from **10 AM-12 PM** you can visit the **Fargo Air Museum** located at 1609 19th Ave N in Fargo) for **Veterans' Coffee Hour**. Complimentary coffee and donuts are available.



On the **third Monday of every month from 1-4 PM**, there is a **free walk-in legal clinic** to help low-income veterans with civil legal matters at the **Fargo VA's Community Resource and Referral Center (CRCC)**. Note: this service is not at the VA hospital; the CRRC is on 1st Ave N in downtown Fargo, next to the Federal Courthouse.

Many businesses offer special discounts to members of the military and veterans during May, which is **National Military Appreciation Month**. In fact, many businesses offer discounts year-round. If you are in doubt about discount policies, please ask. Also check out the [Military.com list](#) for national companies offering discounts during the month of May.



Connect Locally via Facebook

NDDVA

facebook.com/NDDVA/

DAV North Dakota

facebook.com/davnorthdakota/

American Legion Post 2

facebook.com/americanlegionpost2/

American Legion Post 21

facebook.com/legionpost21/

North Dakota American Legion

facebook.com/NDAmericanLegion/

Dilworth VFW Post 1223

facebook.com/VFW-Post-1223-106022496155155/

Fargo VFW Post 762

facebook.com/fargovfwclub/

West Fargo VFW Post 7564

facebook.com/VFW7564.org/

North Dakota Veterans Educational Training

facebook.com/VeteransEducationalTraining/

Bison Student Veterans

facebook.com/BisonVeterans

VALOR

facebook.com/valor.veteran.alliance.organization/

May

Month of the Military Caregiver	Month of May
National Military Appreciation Month	Month of May
Silver Star Service Banner Day	May 1
Loyalty Day	May 1
VE Day	May 8
Military Spouse Appreciation Day	May 12
Children of Fallen Patriots Day	May 13
Armed Forces Day	May 20
Memorial Day	May 29

June

D-Day Invasion Anniversary	June 6
Flag Day	June 14
Army Birthday	June 14
Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday	June 23
National PTSD Awareness Day	June 27
Operation Red Wings Observance	June 28

July

Independence Day	July 4
Korean War Veterans Armistice Day	July 27
Army Chaplain Corps Anniversary	July 29

August

Coast Guard Birthday	August 4
Purple Heart Day	August 7
National Spirit of '45 Day (V-J Day)	August 14
Military Marriage Day	August 14
National Airborne Day	August 16
Marine Forces Reserve Birthday	August 29



The annual **Veterans Memorial Celebration** will be held **Thursday May 25, 2023, from 3-7 PM** at **Bonanzville** (located at **1352 West Main Ave in West Fargo**).

This free event is for active military, veterans and their families in honor of Memorial Day. There will be a picnic around 5:30 PM served by The Vietnam Veterans Of America, Chapter 941. Trudy Maninga is the scheduled speaker, the Red River Concert Band will perform, and there will be door prizes.

Free admission to the pioneer village and museum is extended to the general public after 3 PM. This event is sponsored by West Funeral Home.

Local Summer Fun

Did you know that Fargo was recently recognized by USA Today as one of the 10 best cities in the country to see art?? When you live in a place you can sometimes forget all the things it offers. Make no mistake, the Fargo-Moorhead area has a lot to do, particularly over the summer months. If you are looking for some fun outings this summer check out these [Fargo](#) and [Moorhead](#) attraction sites that provide a plethora of choices to fill your summer days and nights. In particular, check out the [Murals of Fargo-Moorhead](#) page to see where you can visit some of the terrific mural artwork in our community. You may be surprised about just how much there is to see! And to make sure you don't miss anything, they have a map.

In particular, be sure to check out the VFW wings located at the Downtown Fargo VFW (202 Broadway N, Fargo). And please feel free to send us your #VFWwings photos for a future edition of the VALOR newsletter (send to Carol.Cwiak@ndsu.edu). Have a happy,



