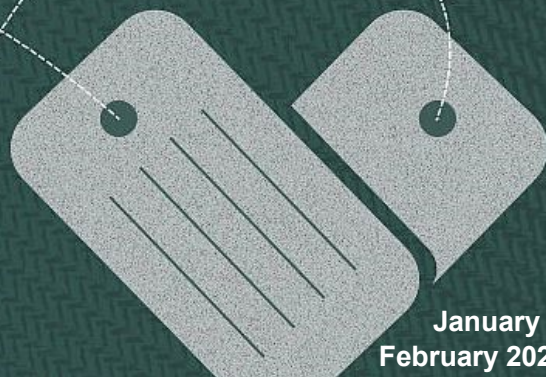


# VALOR

VETERAN ★ ALLIANCE



January &  
February 2024

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Colleagues and friends,

I want to thank all of you who attended the annual campus Veterans Day ceremony on November 9<sup>th</sup> at the Memorial Union. I had an out-of-state conference commitment and could not be there this year, but the event was fastidiously managed by my esteemed VALOR colleague Jim Stoddard. By all accounts it was a meaningful event with comments from President Cook, Jim Stoddard, and the keynote speaker, U.S. Army veteran Rev. Steve Giddens, an NDSU doctoral candidate, teacher and supervisor in NDSU's Counselor Education and Supervision program, and also a VALOR Board Member.

As is customary, NDSU's Color Guard accompanied by the Army and Air Force ROTC detachments, conducted the somber flag raising ceremony. Taps was played by Hannah Baum, who is an instrumental music major (many thanks to Dr. Jeremy Brekke from the Challey School of Music for his longtime collaboration in identifying soloists for this event).



## Board Members

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NDSU President David Cook remarked, "These individuals enrich our campus community through their willingness to take responsibility for the well-being of the people around them, to solve problems and think creatively, and to bring a broad, global perspective and their experience working with people of diverse backgrounds to accomplish great things together."

I couldn't agree more Dr. Cook. Our campus, classrooms, and community benefit greatly from the engagement of veterans and currently serving military members as students, staff, and faculty. With

their presence we are reminded of the selflessness involved in service to our country's ideals; a service which does not come without cost, and one which we should never take for granted. My sincerest gratitude to all who have served or are currently serving, may you always know how important your contributions are.

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 Morrill 112; or by phone at 701-231-9706; or by email at james.stoddard@ndsu.edu.



The veterans jobless rate has dropped to the lowest average in more than 20 years. Read more about this [here](#).

97 lawmakers with military backgrounds were elected to Congress in 2022 - 80 in the House and 17 in the Senate. Of that group, 58 veterans (60%) served at least part of their enlistment after 2001. Read more about this [here](#).

Let's start with some great news: 32 student veterans graduated from NDSU in December 2023, and 27 of them (84%!) had a GPA of 3.0 or better. Congratulations to all of them on these achievements, and thanks to all the faculty and staff who helped them perform so well and prepared them to excel in the civilian workforce. We wish them all fair winds and following seas as they begin their next adventures!

In other news, we continue to track statistics about GI Bill beneficiary students. The Spring 2024 numbers represent those registered as of January 3, 2024, and are preliminary: Spring 2024 - 303; Fall 2023 - 343; Spring 2023 - 328.



President Cook with student veterans

Here is what our military-connected students are studying by college:

Arts and Sciences: 95

Engineering: 66

Health Professions and Human Sciences: 63

Business: 54

Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources: 22

Currently Undeclared or Non-degree: 2

Graduate School: \*1

\*34 of our 303 military students are working on advanced/professional degrees within Colleges other than the Graduate School.

With the recent restructuring of colleges, the College of Arts and Sciences now hosts the greatest number of military students. Within this college, almost half (45 of 95) are in one of only four majors: Psychology (14), Criminal Justice (13), Biological Sciences (10), and Architecture (8).

Prior to the realignment of colleges, the College of Engineering had typically been the most popular for our military students, and still has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest number of students. Here, 48 of 66 (almost 75%) are in one of the following three disciplines: Construction Engineering/Management (19), Computer Science/Software Engineering (15), or Mechanical Engineering (14).

Post realignment, the College of Health Professions and Human Sciences is now home to the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest group of military students. 46 of 63 (almost 75%) are majoring in one of only three programs: Nursing (26), Human Development & Family Science (12), Pharmacy/Pharm Sciences (8).

Within the College of Business, nearly half of military students (22 of 54) are majoring in Business Administration, with another cluster (7) choosing Finance.

This semester, NDSU's Community Counselling Services will be hosting **discussion groups for military-affiliated students every Tuesday at Noon in Morrill Hall 214 starting January 30th**. Students don't have to commit to all sessions; just come when you can! Topics will be whatever the day's group participants want to discuss, and will be moderated by master's-level grad students under the supervision of the professional counseling staff.



Please reach out to me if I can help with any student issues that are related to military connections!

"There is nothing nobler than risking your life for your country." ~ Nick Lampson

**The Salty Times**

Beatrice Newman and Andrew Hatori, BSV

We have a busy semester ahead of us as Bison Student Veterans, and we are excited to start the new semester off strong! We have plenty of things in the works.

Events looking ahead:

- **January 11, Morrill 111, at 5 PM:** Welcome Back BSV Meeting
- **January 18, Suite Shots, at 5 PM:** Social Hour
- **January 20, Scheel's Arena, 6:05 PM:** Fargo Force Hometown Hero Event
- **January 22, Memorial Union, 10 AM-2 PM:** Bison Student Veterans Involvement Booth
- **January 23, Memorial Union—Meadowlark Room, 9 AM-3 PM:** Military Service Day
- **February 1, Morrill 111, 5-7 PM:** Veterans Employment Office (tentative)
- **February 15, Labby's Bar and Grill, 5-7 PM:** Social Hour

Vet Center Updates

Pop on into the Vet Center to use the new refrigerator! Brennan and Devon (now BSV Alumni), worked with Doug at Midwest Appliance in West Fargo to obtain a new refrigerator for the space. We have purchased some flags and are working on hanging those up. The items we are looking for are a coffee bar sort of table and some service items to put in the display case. If you are interested in helping out either with service item donations or with design inputs, please let us know! We are trying to fill our display case to ensure NDSU KNOWS WE ARE HERE!

Fall Graduates

We are proud to have supported 32 military-affiliated students through their graduation this past December!

Military Services Day

We are looking to host a few different organizations on campus to provide a "one-stop-shop" of services to our military students. We will have Tony Baker, from the Cass County Veterans Affairs Office, Ian Anderson, from Disabled American Veterans, possibly a representative from the Fargo VA Hospital, Brooke Kummer, our student military and veteran's representative on campus, and BSV students. This event will be held in the Meadow Lark Room, in the upper Memorial Union, starting at 9 AM and ending at 3 PM.

Budget

Our treasurer, Gideon Blazek, worked on our budget for the 2024/2025 school year and is looking ahead to send 3-4 BSV students to the National Conference in 2025.



**S-Sierra**  
Engines Going Astern

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

The [Giving Hearts Day event](#) opens at the beginning of January with early giving and culminates on February 8, 2024 (Giving Hearts Day). \$26.2 million was donated last year to support charities in our area.

There are 612 charity funds from our area that are participating in the 2024 event. You can see the list [here](#). There are a number of funds that are dedicated to meeting the needs of veterans and military service members.

A sampling of these funds are:

- #142 - Fargo Memorial Honor Guard
- #376 - Red River Valley Veterans Concert Band
- #478 - Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN
- #482 - Walcott Veteran's Memorial
- #608 - Impact - Support Our Veterans (SOV) Fund  
& Fisher House North Dakota

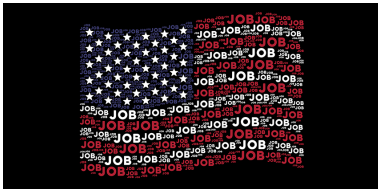


Your donation of \$10 or more to charities in our area allows them to continue to do the amazing work they do for community members and organizations who need support. Please consider [donating today](#).





Join us as we ring in a new year filled with new opportunity. The career side of the Career and Advising Center has just recently added a ton of tools to enhance our Federal Employment services. Olivia Buller and myself completed an eight-week training program, through the Partnership for Public Service, which was designed to teach us how to better help students looking for work within government agencies. It improved our understanding of how to navigate and prepare federal applications, as well as greatly expanded our insight on the variety of hiring agencies for full time and internship opportunities. Keep an eye on our website this coming semester as we update it with links and resources to help students find government jobs.



As always, if you need help translating your military experience on your resume, searching for opportunities, or practice interviewing, we are here for you. And if you don't have professional interview clothes readily available, we have a Career Closet where you can pick out and keep up to four items a year to help expand your professional wardrobe, absolutely free. Drop by our studio Monday thru Friday, 9 AM thru 4 PM for assistance with all of your career related needs. If you would prefer an appointment, just reach out via Bison Advise.



Don't miss our upcoming events!

**Tuesday, January 23, 9–11 AM** – HDR: Company Spotlight Day

**Thursday, January 25, 2:30–4:30 PM** – Onsite Tour @ John Deere

**Wednesday, January 31, 9 AM–Noon** – Marketing & Sales Hiring Fair; Barry Hall

**Wednesday, February 7, 11 AM–3 PM** – Spring Career Expo; Fargo Dome

**Thursday, March 14, 1–4 PM** – Part-Time & Summer Job Fair; Memorial Union

**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/

**Fargo VFW Post 762**  
facebook.com/fargovfwclub/

**West Fargo VFW Post 7564**  
facebook.com/VFW7564.org/

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

**NDSU Bison Student Veterans**  
facebook.com/BisonVeterans/



**Tight on money?**

**Need food?**

**Check out NDSU's free pantry offerings.**

**Learn more [here](#).**

**Benefits Update**

**Military and Veteran Certification Office**



Todd Yackley

Greetings from the Military and Veterans Certification Office.

The fall semester was a crazy busy semester with a lot of changes. Army Ignited continued to improve with payments going out when 19% of the semester is completed. The deadline to apply was midnight on December 30, 2023, with everyone required to get them in by last Friday due to the holiday.



If you didn't get it in, there is no way to apply late. The Army gave a hard deadline and I sent out multiple emails and texts telling everyone about the deadline and requirements. 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 the start of the semester with a requirement to sign up for FTA as well. Check with Chief Bohl at the ND Education Office for the Guard at 701-333-3064.

With almost 500 students being tracked, it is imperative that you help me when you don't want benefits. Please let me know as soon as you can so we can refrain from submitting and causing a debt on your behalf. I do my best to ensure we catch everyone.

On another note, if you are taking classes at another institution, you must let me know so I can do a parent letter. This tells the other school to submit you for your GI Bill certification. This has a huge effect when you are not full time at NDSU and the other school puts you over full-time status.

We are enjoying our new location in Morrill Hall. More changes are expected in the office with the VET program and the Bison Veteran Club. As always if you have any questions, I can be reached at 701-231-9782 or by email at [todd.yackley@ndsu.edu](mailto:todd.yackley@ndsu.edu)

**January**

- New Year's Day January 1
- Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday January 16

**February**

- Four Chaplains Day February 3
- USO Birthday February 4
- National Salute to Veteran Patients February 11-17
- President's Day February 19
- Coast Guard Reserve Birthday February 19

**March**

- Navy Reserve Birthday March 3
- Hug a GI Day March 4
- Seabee Birthday March 5
- K9 Veterans Day March 13
- American Legion Birthday March 15
- Rosie The Riveter Day March 21
- Medal of Honor Day March 25
- National Vietnam War Veterans Day March 29

**April**

- Gold Star Spouses Day April 5
- Air Force Reserve Birthday April 14
- Army Reserve Birthday April 23
- National Military Brats Day April 30

**Local Events**

**Veterans Coffee Hour** (this is a free event), is held regularly at the **Fargo Air Museum** (located at 1609 19th Ave N.) on the **second Wednesday of every month from 10 AM-12 PM**. Join other veterans for coffee, conversation, and free Sandy's Donuts.



**Vaccinations** are available at the Fargo VA Health Care System for veterans enrolled in VA healthcare. For questions about **eligibility for the flu vaccine**,

call **1-800-410-9723, ext. 3428**. To set up an **appointment for the Covid-19 vaccine** call **1-855-846-8154** and select **option 2**.

Join the American Red Cross Military & Veteran Caregiver Network (MVCN) **online for 15 minutes each Wednesday - 12-12:15 PM (CT)** to focus on your wellbeing as a caretaker.



Register for this free virtual event [here](#).

## IN MEMORIAM



Maj. Jeff Hoernemann

Maj. Jeff Hoernemann, a 2014 NDSU graduate, died November 29, 2023, at the age of 32 with seven other airmen in an Osprey crash in Japan. The below segment about Jeff is from an [article](#) from the *Air Force Times* that highlighted those killed in the crash.

*Hoernemann was a CV-22 instructor pilot and the chief of weapons and tactics at the 21st Special Operations Squadron at Yokota Air Base, Japan.*

*He began his journey to military service when he moved from the Minneapolis suburb of Andover, Minnesota, to the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at North Dakota State University. There, Hoernemann earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering in 2014 as well as his officer commission, and entered active duty in March 2015.*

*He trained to fly the CV-22 and proved himself as a passionate, competent aviator, the Air Force said. Hoernemann was a humble, "gentle giant" at the schoolhouse, with a passion for learning and flying, said Andrew, a former instructor in the CV-22 community. Air Force Times agreed to withhold his last name because he was not authorized to speak to the press. When Hoernemann graduated from Osprey training, Andrew said, his sense of humor shone through in a speech that highlighted how small the Air Force's CV-22 community is.*

*Hoernemann held jobs at the 8th Special Operations Squadron and 1st Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field, Florida, and deployed to Afghanistan multiple times as part of Operation Freedom's Sentinel. At the 21st SOS, "Jeff was the unit's subject matter expert on CV-22B employment and shouldered the responsibility for developing new tactics, techniques and procedures," the Air Force said.*

*His military honors include the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Aerial Achievement Medal and the air and space commendation and achievement medals, among others. "His character was the benchmark of officership in the United States Air Force," 21st Special Operations Squadron Commander Lt. Col. Tyler Oldham said in a statement. "Jeff was the best of us. His selflessness and leadership through example have left enduring marks upon the culture and values of the members of Air Force Special Operations Command."*

*To know Hoernemann was to love him, the airman's wife, Jess Boozer, said Dec. 4 in a [public tribute on Facebook](#). The couple had been together for more than eight years. "If I knew Wednesday morning when you left for work would be the last time I saw you, I would have hugged you tighter and never let you go," Boozer wrote. "You will always be my best friend and the greatest love of my life."*



Lt. Shelly Fink

Lt. Shelly Fink, a 2014 NDSU graduate and North Dakota National Guard Airman, died December 24, 2023, at her home in Barnesville, Minnesota. She was 33. Shelly was well-known in the region and loved by many.

Shelly served in the 119th Wing's Happy Hooligans since 2009. She served full-time for the North Dakota Air National Guard as a recruiter from 2014-2022. In 2022, Shelly became a commissioned officer. Since 2023, she served as the 119th Wing Public Affairs Officer. In her civilian occupation, she served as the Director of Growth for Hatch Realty in Fargo.

In a statement released by the North Dakota National Guard, Maj. Gen. Alan Dohrmann, North Dakota's Adjutant General, extended the NDNG's "deepest condolences" and added, "Lt. Fink served her country and the State of North Dakota with a determination that could not be matched. She will be greatly missed."

Col. Mitch Johnson, 119th Wing commander stated, "The entire Hooligan family is deeply saddened by the loss of one of our own. We are heartbroken beyond words. Lt. Fink had such a huge personality and her infectious energy touched so many lives throughout the wing."

Shelly's husband, Zack, posted, "Shelly died on Christmas Eve. I don't know what to say, but I do know that the person I love the most in the whole world - the most kind hearted, fun, joyous, and beautiful person inside and out, is gone. She brought joy to so many people's lives, if you're reading this you're probably one of them. You may be hurting too, we will all miss her so much. In lieu of the normal sympathy comments, share a story, or a photo, or a laugh you shared with her. She'd want it that way."

You can read more about Shelly Fink's life and her far-reaching impact on others [here](#). A celebration of life will be held on Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, from 2-5 PM at the Sanctuary Events Center in Fargo, ND.