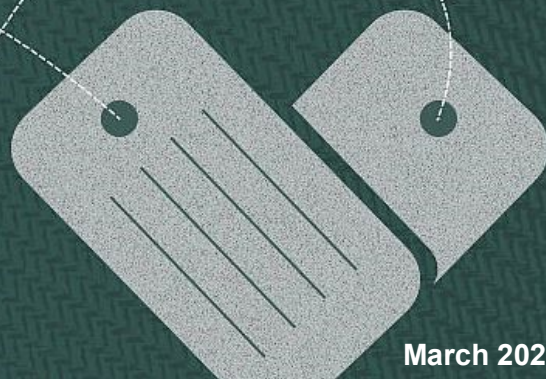


# VALOR

VETERAN ★ ALLIANCE



March 2020

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As we face a raucous political season, uncertainty with the Coronavirus, and a myriad of other national and global issues, it seems appropriate to take a moment to reflect upon the individuals who have committed themselves to the defense of the freedoms and liberties this country holds dear. Our currently serving members of the military and our nation's veterans are the backbone of our democracy, they are the ones who have given unyielding support for America's ideals. As you go about your days busy with the comings and goings of every day life, please take the time to thank those who have served or are currently serving. They deserve our recognition and gratitude.

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

## Did you know...

- VALOR Ally training has been restructured and now uses PsychArmor's free training ([nds.edu/valor/readings/](https://nds.edu/valor/readings/)).
- You can find a whole list of scholarships at North Dakota Department of Veteran Affairs ([nd.gov/veterans/benefits/veteran-scholarships](https://nd.gov/veterans/benefits/veteran-scholarships)).
- Operation Paperback collects gently-used books and sends them to American troops overseas, as well as veterans and military families here at home—check out their website to see how you can donate books ([operationpaperback.org/](https://operationpaperback.org/)).
- There is a searchable military and veterans affair state legislative base that tracks all state level legislation ([ncsl.org/research/military-and-veterans-affairs/military-veterans-affairs-state-leg-database.aspx](https://ncsl.org/research/military-and-veterans-affairs/military-veterans-affairs-state-leg-database.aspx)).



**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](mailto:james.stoddard@ndsu.edu).



➔ See the Cass County Veterans Services page for a list of veteran organizations in Cass County, ND ([casscountynd.gov/our-county/veterans-services/county-veterans-organizations](http://casscountynd.gov/our-county/veterans-services/county-veterans-organizations)).

There are many updates to share this month. First, updates on current projects:

- We have started a series of monthly health-related presentations on topics of special interest to student veterans. In February, we had subject matter experts from the Fargo VA HCS inform students on the importance of proper sleep to their overall concentration and performance. In March, the subject will be “eating healthy in an ‘on-the-run’ life-style”. Watch for announcements about the time and location of these presentations.

- We have also started this semester’s follow-ups on instructor concerns regarding student veteran course performance. This is a test program started in fall 2019 and is modeled on what NDSU has been doing for student athletes, conditionally-admitted students, and other special populations. I contact the identified students to offer guidance and to offer assistance with matters affecting their studies or attendance.

- We are currently attempting to place a VA-funded work-study student within the NDSU Office of Disability Services. The intent of this effort is to: 1) Bridge any gaps between the student veteran community and the Disability Services office and to ensure student veterans are aware of and utilizing helpful resources as effectively as possible; 2) Improve the military cultural competency of the Disability Services staff to help overcome some of the cultural barriers to seeking accommodations; and, 3) Consider how to get information to the student veteran population in ways that will resonate with them.

I also want to pass on a few things I brought back with me from a symposium on military-connected students I attended in Seattle, WA earlier this month:

- I placed copies of many of the symposium presentations in the cross-departmental X: drive “VALOR” folder (accessible by NDSU-connected VALOR board members). For off-campus partners, I will post them on the VET website (<https://www.ndsu.edu/vet/>).

- I also brought back a few hard copies of a research report focused on a student veteran business model produced by the Institute for Veterans and Military Families. The report, “Student Veterans: A Valuable Asset to Higher Education”, is available online at <https://ivmf.syracuse.edu/article>.

- A representative from The College Board (managers of the SAT, Accuplacer, and other standardized college-readiness assessments) presented on a pilot program in which military students that take CLEP tests can opt in to TCB’s Student Search service. Opting in allows participating institutions to receive student test scores and interest profiles for recruiting purposes. NDSU’s Admissions Office is currently exploring whether this is something we want to participate in. There’s no cost during the pilot program, other than providing back some data and other feedback.

- Student Veterans of America shared results from last year’s Life Cycle Atlas survey, which polled student veterans nationally on what supportive elements were most needed or helpful in pursuing their education. They are currently repeating this survey and student veterans are encouraged to participate (<https://atlas.studentveterans.org/>).

- Breakout session topics covered many areas of student affairs and student engagement to include: mental health; graduate education; recruiting; designing recognition events; low-cost strategies for providing services; college credits for military training; cultivating relationships with donors, alumni, and off-campus partners; veteran career readiness; and, others.

- The next NASPA Symposium on Military-Connected Students is scheduled for February 2021 in Denver, CO; just an easy direct flight from Fargo! I’m planning to go, and would love to have others join me!





## Veteran's Voice

*Craig Schwinden*

*VALOR Student Veteran Representative*

Greetings!

According to Military.com, one of the five biggest hurdles to veterans attending college after their service is isolation. Here at NDSU and the local community, we have lots of great organizations where you can be among friends, get help with benefits, attend fun events and even help other veterans and/or current military members.

Here on campus, the Bison Student Veterans association (active on the campus since September of 2018) holds meetings twice monthly. An outgrowth of the former NDSU American Legion Post #400, the BSV has seen fantastic growth in the four semesters it's been active. Just this past semester, they had a pizza party, organized a drive to collect and send care packages to our deployed troops and coordinated

with NDSU's athletic department to have a veterans' celebration with NDSU's volleyball team over the Veterans' Day weekend.

Off campus, there are many veteran organizations that do great work for veterans, military members and local citizens. The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) organization has Posts in Fargo (Post #762), in West Fargo (Post #7564), and in Dilworth (Post #1223). These organizations are an integral part of their communities. Between spaghetti feeds, burger fries and craft shows, these organizations raise funds for our communities and our veterans. For you former Cub Scouts, Post #762 just hosted their annual Pinewood Derby for Adults! It was a lot of fun and raised funds for local veterans.

In Moorhead, American Legion Post #21 hosts community events, feeds and other events to raise money (and awareness) for our veterans. This facility is more restaurant and bar than a Legion post. Great food, good times and lots of fun activities for veterans.

The fun and friendship can't be underestimated and the people who make up these organizations are working for you - our current and past serving members of the

military community. Not only do they help the local veterans who need assistance with VA benefits or who may be hungry and homeless, they are OUR voice in Washington, Bismarck and St. Paul. Whenever you hear about VA or military funding being cut, you can bet the American Legion, the VFW and other veteran organizations are there fighting all the way to get what you and I have earned, especially our wounded brothers and sisters. I encourage you to support these organizations. You don't have to become a member if you prefer not to, but you can still make a difference among your fellow veterans by participating in the activities. The days of the dark, dank and smoky veterans' centers are gone. Check out this month's schedule for dates, times and locations of these fun and important places.

The subject of this month's student veteran profile is a soldier, family man and student. Make sure you check out Holger Loor's profile in our student veteran spotlight, it is an interesting read. Thanks for your service and all you do in our community, Holger!

Thanks for reading, and as always, you can reach out to me for more information or to share ideas for articles at [craig.schwinden@ndsu.edu](mailto:craig.schwinden@ndsu.edu).

## CONTINUE TO SERVE



limited resources. Through continued service, many veterans find a new purpose, community, and identity, three intangibles that are often lacking while transitioning to civilian life." To learn more, see <https://teamrubiconusa.org/service/>.



"The Mission Continues empowers veterans to continue their service, and empowers communities with veteran talent, skills and preparedness to generate visible impact." For more information on this community-based engagement, see <https://missioncontinues.org/>.



### Holger Loor

Major/Minor: Emergency Management/Criminal Justice

Originally from: Ecuador, South America

Current city: Moorhead, MN

Career plans after college: Emergency Management or National Guard

Military Service : Army National Guard

NDSU activities/engagement: Member of the Emergency Management Student Association and Criminal Justice Club

Community activities/engagement: Army funeral honors services; counselor at the juvenile detention center; raised over \$8,000 for the Clay County Sheriff's Department to expand the department's K-9 program; volunteer Spanish interpreter (Metro Interpreter Resources Center) for West Fargo and Dilworth Public schools; interpreter for Access of Red River Valley; and, volunteer helper for West Fargo's Police Department's Citizen Academy and Youth Academy.

College scholarships, awards, etc.: Received two scholarships for academic achievements - Cass Clay Security Society (C.C.S.S) and Fargo Rotary on (2018).

An interesting tidbit about the veteran: Originally from Ecuador, I am married, and I have four beautiful children. I came to this country with the goal of gaining an education to contribute to my family and neighbors. My objective is to obtain an emergency management and/or law enforcement position and be helpful to my community. I joined the U.S Army National Guard earning multiple recognitions for physical fitness, leadership and marksmanship performance. I believe a willingness to learn and an emphasis on teamwork are essential qualities of a successful law enforcement officer, soldier or EM professional.

Favorite experience/memories/etc. at NDSU: I have had multiple good experiences at NDSU. I had an excellent experience attending the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) conference in Georgia. It was very productive to me because I had the opportunity to hear from professional people in the EM field talk about the topics that I want to be expert at.



Holger Loor and his family

**When  
you  
go  
to  
war,  
my  
heart  
goes  
to  
war.**

### CALL TO ACTION: **Veteran Suicide**

The 2019 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Report produced by the Department of Veteran Affairs reinforces the enduring veteran suicide epidemic and emphasizes that veteran suicide is a national priority. The suicide rate for veterans is 1.5 times that of non-veteran adults. Veteran suicide has been cited as high as 22 veterans a day and suicide rates among veterans show no signs of slowing. According to the 2019 report, a firearm was used in approximately 70% of male veteran suicide deaths and 43% of female veteran suicide deaths. Limiting veterans' access to lethal force has been a key focus of preventative efforts. The VA's National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide 2018-2028, seeks to put in place four interconnected strategies to curb veteran suicide, but these strategies will come too late for the veterans who are struggling now.

This is a call to action, call and write your legislators and tell them you want to see more resources and attention focused on preventing veteran suicide. And take the time to learn more about what you can do to help veterans who are struggling. Keep the veteran crisis line and local VA hospital contact information handy and provide it to veterans who are struggling. Suicide is not be the way their stories of VALOR should end.



VALOR/March 2020

Dates	Meetings and Events
March 2	AMVETS Meeting, 6:45 PM VFW Post #7564 444 Sheyenne St., West Fargo
March 4	Cass VSO VA Outreach, 9:00 AM–3:00 PM VA HCS, Fargo
March 4	Understanding PTSD & Treatment 1:00–2:00 PM (NDSU discussion 2:00-3:00 PM) VITAL Webinar Series U.S. Dept of Veteran Affairs Location CI & IND ENG, 207 (NDSU) <a href="http://va-eerc-ees.adobeconnect.com/vitalseries/">http://va-eerc-ees.adobeconnect.com/vitalseries/</a>
March 5	New Veteran Orientation (about the Fargo VA Health Care System) 2–4:00 PM, Fargo VA, 2101 Elm Street N., Fargo
March 6	Bison Student Veterans Meeting, 3:00–5:00 PM Peace Garden Room (MU/NDSU)
March 10	VFW Post #7564 Meeting, 7:00–8:00 PM 444 Sheyenne St., West Fargo
March 11	Veterans Coffee Hour, 10:00 AM –12:00 PM Fargo Air Museum, 1609 19th Ave N, Fargo
March 11	VALOR Board Meeting, 3:00 PM Rose Room (MU/NDSU)
March 11	VFW Post #762 Meeting, 6:00 –7:30 PM 202 N Broadway, Fargo
March 12	FMWF Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee, 11:00 AM Hjemkomst Center, Moorhead
March 12	DAV Chapter 1 Meeting 7:00–8:00 PM Super Buffet, Fargo
March 16-20	NDSU Spring Break - No Classes
March 21	Vietnam Veterans Day, 11:00 AM–3 :00PM Moorhead American Legion Post #21
March 25	Free Walk-in Legal Clinic (for low-income veterans) 1:00–4:00 PM, Fargo VA HCS, Room 1C86
March 29	Vietnam Veterans Day
March 31	Women's Warrior Luncheon 11:00 AM–1:30 PM VFW Post #1223, 1505 Center Ave., Dilworth
March 31	Part-Time & Summer Job Fair 11:00 AM–2:00 PM Ballroom (MU/NDSU)

Dates	Meetings and Events
April 1	Cass VSO VA Outreach, 9:00 AM–3:00 PM VA HCS, Fargo
April 3	Bison Student Veterans Meeting, 3:30 PM Ceres Hall (NDSU) <a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/bisonstudentveterans/">https://www.facebook.com/groups/bisonstudentveterans/</a>
April 4	Spring Craft Show & Silent Auction Fundraiser 10:00 AM–3:00PM Moorhead American Legion Post #21
April 6	AMVETS Meeting, 6:45 PM VFW Post #7564 444 Sheyenne St., West Fargo
April 8	Veterans Coffee Hour, 10:00 AM –12:00 PM Fargo Air Museum, 1609 19th Ave N, Fargo
April 8	VALOR Board Meeting, 3:00 PM Rose Room (MU/NDSU)
April 8	VFW Post #762 Meeting, 6:00 –7:30 PM 202 N Broadway, Fargo
April 9	FMWF Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee, 11:00 AM Hjemkomst Center, Moorhead
April 9	DAV Chapter 1 Meeting 7:00–8:00 PM Super Buffet, Fargo
April 14	VFW Post #7564 Meeting, 7:00–8:00 PM 444 Sheyenne St., West Fargo
April 21	Bison Student Veterans Meeting, 3:30 PM Ceres Hall (NDSU) <a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/bisonstudentveterans/">https://www.facebook.com/groups/bisonstudentveterans/</a>
April 22	Free Walk-in Legal Clinic (for low-income veterans) 1:00–4:00 PM, Fargo VA HCS, Room 1C86
April 26 & 27	North Dakota and Minnesota Honor Flight <a href="https://www.veteranshonorflightofndmn.org/">https://www.veteranshonorflightofndmn.org/</a>

**EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT QUESTIONS?**

You can connect with the Military and Veterans Certification services at <https://www.ndsu.edu/veterans/> or visit their office located in 211 Ceres Hall or call 701-231-7985 or email [ndsu.veterans@ndsu.edu](mailto:ndsu.veterans@ndsu.edu).

***"This will remain the land of the free so long as it is the home of the brave." ~Elmer Davis***