

Lee named a Military Friendly® School fifth year running

Selection comes as Veterans Center hosts fifth anniversary celebration & Veterans Job Fair

BAYTOWN, TX — As the Lee College Veterans Center celebrates its fifth year of helping military students and their families successfully pursue higher education and transition into civilian careers, Lee College has again earned designation as a national Military Friendly® School.

Victory Media released Thursday the 2017 Military Friendly® Schools list, which recognizes the colleges, universities and trade schools around the country that are doing the most to embrace military students and dedicate resources to ensure their success in the classroom and beyond. Those that received the Military Friendly® School credential were evaluated using public data sources and responses from a proprietary, data-driven survey in which more than 1,600 institutions participated.

With input from the Military Friendly® School Advisory Council of independent leaders in higher education and military recruitment, Victory Media assessed institutions' ability to meet thresholds in several areas: student retention, graduation, job placement, loan repayment, persistence and loan default rates for all students and student-veterans, specifically.

Ehab Mustafa, a U.S. Army veteran and licensed counselor who serves as director of the Lee College Veterans Center, attributes the college's continued effectiveness with student veterans to the one-on-one support they are given during their educational journey and beyond.

"We work as a team," said Mustafa, who was recently named to U.S. Rep. Brian Babin's Veterans Advisory Council. "It's not just a job for us, and it's not about recognition. We care about the veteran."

Established in 2011 as part of the College Credit for Heroes program and a grant from the Texas Workforce Commission, the Lee College Veterans Center strives to be a warm and friendly home away from home for more than 450 military students and their dependents. The center provides academic advising and development of individual education plans; advising about educational benefits, like the G.I. Bill and Hazlewood Exemption, and the certification process; and moral and mental health support that includes career guidance, peer tutoring and individualized counseling. The center also works to ensure military students are connected with prospective employers through special job fairs, workshops and networks for internships and other opportunities.

Students are always welcome to drop by the Veterans Center, grab a snack or a cup of coffee, study from one of the textbooks in the Veterans Library, use the computers and free printing, and spend time with their fellow veterans. They can join the Student Veterans of Lee College and the nationally recognized Student Veterans Honor Society, and are encouraged to continue their service to others through participation in events like regular visits to local hospice and nursing home facilities, and fundraising for veterans in need.

As a 2017 Military Friendly® School, Lee College will be showcased in Victory Media's annual Guide to Military Friendly® Schools, special education issues of G.I. Jobs and Military Spouse magazines and on www.militaryfriendly.com.

"Our ability to apply a clear, consistent standard to the majority of colleges gives veterans a comprehensive view of which schools are striving to provide the best opportunities and conditions for our nation's student-veterans," said Daniel Nichols, a Navy Reserve veteran and chief product officer at Victory Media. "Military Friendly® helps military families make the best use of the Post-9/11 GI Bill and other federal benefits while allowing us to further our goal of assisting them in finding success in their chosen career fields."

For more information about the Lee College Veterans Center and its support of military students and their dependents, visit www.lee.edu/veterans or call 832.556.4300.