



COMMUNITY VETERAN ENGAGEMENT BOARD **CVEB TASK FORCE**

Resource Guide

January 19



Background

The Community Veteran Engagement Board (CVEB) Task Force, a coalition of CVEB Co-chairs and leadership from several national veteran’s service organizations, convened over several months to find ways to enhance the impact of CVEBs on their local communities. After much research and deliberation, the Task Force recommended the following:

- All CVEBs monitor a common set of core outcome areas to understand the needs of community and to provide a basis for comparison across communities.
 - Monitoring does not necessarily mean resources are expended to create change in these core outcomes areas, but rather that data is available to evaluate the current status of these areas.
- CVEBs will select a few target outcomes from their entire slate of potential outcomes, on which they will work to effect change and monitor progress.
- CVEBs remain flexible to target and monitor other outcomes areas based on local community needs.

This Resource Guide is intended to provide a foundational understanding of what each of the core focus areas entails and the ways in which CVEBs can monitor or address these outcomes. This Resource Guide is not a comprehensive plan, nor rules to be followed. The intent is to provide CVEBs a common definition for core focus areas and ideas for how to think about these veteran challenges in the community. This Resource Guide is meant to be a living document to which additional experience and expertise can be added to refine the content.

For more information about the CVEB Task Force and its recommendations for enhancing the impact of CVEBs, please see the accompanying CVEB Strategy Document.

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Focus Area | Outreach

What does this outcome mean or entail for CVEBs? Why is it important?

Outreach - literally the act of reaching out - is the heart of all support services. Outreach programs may differ by community. Some are narrowly focused on a few issues such as homelessness or food deserts; others take more of a holistic approach to needs within the community. If a needs-based service gap is identified in the local community, the community outreach is a good place to start to address it.

The collective success of local community outreach and support programs is gauged by their outcomes. CVEBs play a key role by looking generically at veterans and what their holistic needs may be, as well as who provides support to veterans and how veterans are connected to those services.

The CVEB's desired outcome concerning outreach is that veterans have access to the right support services when needed. In this matter, the CVEB monitors the availability of services that support the needs of individual veterans. If any of those services are unavailable, the CVEB must address them as a gap.

Outreach outcomes are significant to CVEBs because they:

- Validate our existence as a CVEB and underscore the added value we bring to the local community
- Help identify any needs-based support gaps within the local community
- Give real and accurate feedback to our partners and stakeholders who are providing community support and other resources to veterans

What is the role, or roles, a CVEB should play to impact this outcome?

CVEBs have the potential to be the front line of communication and awareness to the community concerning the wellness of local veterans. Collectively, the CVEB is the pulse of the nation's veterans' health and wellness status.

The role of the CVEB as it relates to outreach is this:

- To communicate with outreach programs and understand their goals.
- To participate in local events
- To be a known partner within the community
- To host events, training, town-halls, and seminars
- To meet with leaders and influencers in the local community
- To promote/support VA services/events/programs
- To identify/develop mechanisms to reach veterans (different demographics may prefer different mechanisms, such as social media, hardcopy newsletters, flyers at local VA clinics,

email distribution lists through VSOs, etc.) so that the full range of veterans in the local community can be reached.

What are the potential resources a CVEB can leverage to impact this outcome?

A great resource that the CVEB may leverage to meet stated outcomes is a veteran referral service such as AmericaServes (<https://americaserves.org/>). This is a coordinated system of public, private, and non-profit organizations working together to serve veterans, transitioning service-members, and their families. There are other comprehensive referral networks as well. CVEBs should seek to partner with a referral service that works best for their needs. There is no need for CVEBs to require or keep any personal and private information of veterans. Strict policy and protocol must be followed concerning any collection of personal information. CVEBs may use mentioned referral services as well as the organizations listed below as a data collection source for non-personal/private information.

1. United-Way, Goodwill, and other large organizations
2. Veteran Support Services (VSOs)
3. Local government - City, County, and State
4. Veteran needs-based referral services (AmericaServes etc.)
5. Local officials, first responders, health and medical services, military bases (if local), veteran service providers, and veterans
6. CVEB member entities
7. Local businesses with large veteran employment base and/or desire to support veterans
8. Other CVEBs and veteran support organizations

What metrics should a CVEB should be monitoring to measure progress and impact regarding this outcome?

Some outcomes are easier to measure than others. CVEBs should keep outcome measurement as simple, but as meaningful, as possible. It is important to note that that outcomes are expressed collectively of all outreach as they pertain to veteran satisfaction. CVEBs may also determine if they are doing enough to collect needed information through community and organizational engagement by measuring the following:

1. Number of outreach meetings attended
2. Number of requested commitments made and completed by the community
3. Frequency of one-on-one interaction with the community
4. Number of community meetings held by CVEB
5. Number of Veteran Referrals by Service Type, Organization, etc.
6. Number of veterans reached through outreach events/activities
7. Increased awareness of VA and community resources (possibly measured by surveys)

Who else (for example, other CVEBs, the VA, MSOs, nonprofits, foundations, government, academic, etc.) is working on the same outcome that could be a useful reference?

Collective outreach outcomes differ from an organization's outputs. The former is the result of the latter but the metrics for each are not the same. The CVEB has an opportunity to bring organizations together and educate them on the value of collective outcomes and what that means to the organization, the community and veterans.



Focus Area | Mental Health

What does this outcome mean or entail for CVEBs? Why is it important?

- Mental health is an underlying common denominator behind other needs and problems facing veterans such as employment, relationship problems, housing, and physical health.
- A focus on mental health is necessary to address the barrier of stigma, especially with those who served. There are many reasons that military members do not want to ask for help including career concerns, gun rights, and the opinions of friends and family. Some see it as a sign of weakness. Some providers are not military culturally competent.
- Healthy relationships are important.
- Mental health needs often go unaddressed.
- Partnering with organizations and individuals who can provide alternative and complementary interventions that may work and be tailored to individual veterans provides additional resources.
- Community based solutions should be the driving force behind CVEB operations.
- Sometimes, the current legislation is created/written so that it encourages abuse of the system. For example, "If you recover, your rating could decrease."
- Mental health issues stemming from trauma from military service can impact discharges that are less than honorable. A role for CVEBs here would be educating the community on how Military Discharge Reviews Boards are taking a deeper look these cases.
- Veterans can then be encouraged to go back to the review boards to clean up their records.
- Veteran Treatment Courts should also be used as a mental health resource.
- *We do not do enough to prevent mental health issues from negatively impacting veterans and their families.*

What is the role, or roles, a CVEB should play to impact this outcome?

- Focus on prevention.
- Bring everyone to the table (partnering) and break down silos.
- Network by convening groups to discuss concerns and initiatives. We are better together vs. apart/individually.
- Petition local, state and federal government to advocate for better suicide prevention and mental health resources.
- Focus on raising the awareness of needs as well as proposing solutions that are feasible and sustainable.
- Help educate the community on what the military lifestyle is like during and after service; focus on addressing the bias issues.
- Recommend/promote further education for VA employees on military lifestyle and challenges unique to military service members.

- Serve as a voice for the community to provide feedback to the VA and Congress to shift emphasis to the need to change treatment models, focus more on prevention, establish pilot initiatives or whatever else is indicated by the feedback from local military community members.

What are the potential resources a CVEB can leverage to impact this outcome?

- Civilian resources such as free clinics, Community Services Board, local, state and federal resources
- Family resources
- Churches, schools
- Funders/foundations interested in helping promote changes within the community
- Government stakeholders: local, state and federal
- Media outlets
- Team RWB, Team Rubicon, The Mission Continues and their work within the community
- Tools such as Purdue’s Measuring Communities, VA’s CVEB Toolkit, Give an Hour
- Speakers, to tell their own story or teach their methods
- DOD behavioral health statistics from the provision of behavioral health theater in the combat zone

In other words, ANYONE! Keep an open mind. Do not assume a resource/organization is not interested. The possibilities are endless if you are willing to keep an open mind and think outside the box.

What metrics should a CVEB should be monitoring to measure progress and impact regarding this outcome?

- Surveys; potentially a database of suggested questions to ask
- Outcomes of the veteran treatment courts
- Success rates
- Diagnoses by rate

As metrics could potentially drive funding, it is important to quantify services and success rates. Consider creating your own metrics based on your own definitions of successful outcomes, taking into consideration what funders want to see. There is no one-size-fits-all model.

Who else (for example, other CVEBs, the VA, MSOs, nonprofits, foundations, government, academic, etc.) is working on the same outcome that could be a useful reference?

- Purdue Measuring Communities
- Veterans Crisis Line
- VA’s “Be There” Campaign

- State campaigns, local campaigns
- Wounded Warrior treatment programs
- Law Enforcement
- College students who are researching these issues could potentially create a database with research papers on issues
- DOD Is studying what has been done down range that worked
- RAND Corporation
- VA Hospitals; Vet Centers, Universities



Focus Area | Access to Healthcare

What does this outcome mean or entail for CVEBs? Why is it important?

The health and well-being of veterans and their families is an overarching goal of CVEBS and veteran support organizations in each community. The public generally assumes that all veterans and their families have lifetime access to healthcare through the VA following their military service, but this is not the case. Some veterans may not be aware of the veterans' health benefits they do have, and rural veterans may have limited access to VA services. Those who don't have access to the VA may not know where or how to obtain adequate, affordable care, and many veterans and families rely on Medicaid for healthcare. Ensuring access to healthcare, including preventative care and early intervention services, for veterans and families, benefits the overall community.

What is the role, or roles, a CVEB should play to impact this outcome?

CVEBs may play an *advocacy* role, informing the general public and policy makers regarding the realities of healthcare access (or lack thereof) for veterans and families. This role may inform policy decisions and identify needs for additional VA or other healthcare services, including non-veteran-specific services, that may be lacking in a community. CVEBs may also play an *educational* role, acting as information conduits, working with veteran and other community organizations to make sure veterans/families are aware of available VA and non-VA services and helping them connect to those services. Helping inform non-veteran specific providers regarding cultural competence (i.e., the unique needs and challenges of veterans and families) could be another role for CVEBs. Some CVEBS may also play a *service provision* role, providing ancillary services, such as transportation, to help ensure access to VA and community health care services.

What are the potential resources a CVEB can leverage to impact this outcome?

- VA national resources, local medical center or CBOCs
- State/county health departments
- Local non-profit or other health care providers
- Purdue University - Military Family Research Institute (MFRI).
- Local health care agencies
- Local colleges/universities
- Entity to be central repository of information/data, if possible
- Referral services, such as 211 or AmericaServes
- Local military and veteran service organizations

What metrics should a CVEB be monitoring to measure progress and impact regarding this outcome?

- Number of veterans/family members insured (public health data – RWJF County Health Rankings; state/local health departments; surveys/other assessment tools

- Distance to local VA services (VA)
- Number/type of services available at local VA facilities (primary care, specialty care, behavioral health, etc.) (VA)
- Decrease In numbers of no-shows at VA facilities (VA)
- Access to caregiver services
- Number/type of affordable services available in community (public health data/Medicaid data; resource mapping-TBD)
- Survey monkey, other survey tools. mailing surveys,

Who else (for example other CVEBs, the VA, MSOs, nonprofits, foundations, government, academic, etc.) is working on the same outcome that could be a useful reference?

- United Health Foundation, America's Health Rankings
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, County Health Rankings
- Local health foundations
- VA medical facilities and VAROs
- State and local public health departments
- Local medical facilities and medical societies
- State departments of veterans affairs
- Local veteran service organizations
- Local VA and non-VA service providers (social workers, etc.)
- National nonprofits with local presence (United Way, Red Cross, etc.)

Possible Action Steps

- Work with local VA staff and health care providers to inventory available VA services in the local community, as well as utilization rates, including wait times, no-show rates, etc.
- Identify non-VA health care providers serving veterans and family members (possibly conduct a survey or focus groups) and invite them to participate in the CVEB.
- Offer training opportunities for community providers regarding military/veteran cultural competence. The local military installation and VA staff may have existing resource/trainings; local veterans in the health care field may also be advocates; online trainings, for example, Psych Armor, is also available.
- Survey local veteran community regarding perceived access to care (VA and non-VA) and barriers to care as well as potential solutions.
- Develop an action plan to decrease barriers and increase access to services based on survey results (such as identifying transportation needs, creating an outreach campaign to increase awareness of VA services, promoting VA clinic orientation classes, resource fairs, VA-community partnerships, etc.)
- Develop and/or distribute existing fact sheets regarding available health care benefits to help veterans as they transition out of the military (or those who have been out longer) know what VA and non-VA health care resources are available for them and their family

members; utilize VA, TRICARE, Veterans Service Officers as resources and to help disseminate their Information.

- Use events such as town halls, resource fairs, etc.in partnership with VA and community providers, as well as social media to educate veterans and families regarding health care.
- Emphasize the need to eliminate no-shows when making appointments.



Focus Area | Suicide Prevention

What does this outcome mean or entail for CVEBs? Why is it important?

According to Weiner J, Richmond TS, Conigliaro J, Wiebe DJ - *BMC Public Health* (2011), suicide is the second leading cause of veteran deaths. Statistics today report that 22 veterans commit suicide each day nationally.

Outcomes assist in gauging the collective success of local community outreach and support programs. CVEBs play a significant role by looking generically at veterans' suicides and suicide attempts within their community and the local community programs that work to prevent it. The overall outcome desired is to help reduce the frequency of veteran suicide within the local community.

Outcomes are important for CVEBs because they:

- Validate our existence as a CVEB and underscore the added value we bring to the local community.
- Help to identify the effectiveness of support program's outputs.
- Identify potential outreach and support gaps (needs based).
- Allow a method of giving real and accurate feedback to our partners and stakeholders who are providing suicide intervention and prevention resources.

What is the role, or roles, a CVEB should play to impact this outcome?

CVEBs have the potential to be the front line of communication and awareness to the community concerning the wellness of local veterans. Collectively, the CVEB is the pulse of the nation's veterans' health and wellness status.

A completed suicide is an act that cannot be reversed. Suicide prevention is one of the few areas where CVEBs can partner as a potential service provider. Mental health issues, such as depression, can lead to thoughts of suicide. There is no discrimination as to who, where, what, or when. All community supporters should be trained in suicide prevention and intervention and protected by public law. At minimum, they should have a good response plan and know of professional referrals for crisis intervention.

The role of the CVEB in suicide prevention is straightforward: Be an active member and partner in suicide intervention services.

What are the potential resources a CVEB can leverage to impact this outcome?

1. Participate in local suicide prevention meetings.
2. Get suicide prevention training and recommend that service providers do as well.
3. Facilitate town hall meetings and bring together other support organizations, veterans/families, and mental health professionals.

4. Communicate and plan with local officials, first responders, health and medical services, military bases (if local), veteran service providers, and veterans.
5. Be aware and know how to contact and communicate with the local Veterans Crisis Hotline and become a strategic partner.

What metrics should a CVEB be monitoring to measure progress and impact regarding this outcome?

1. Number of veteran suicides and attempts. (Quarterly).
2. Local community's plan to suicide awareness. (Annually)
3. What is the number of suicide prevention support groups and who they are. (Semi-annually)

Who else (for example, other CVEBs, the VA, MSOs, nonprofits, foundations, government, academic, etc.) is working on the same outcome that could be a useful reference?

There are many entities who are working to reduce the numbers of suicides within the local communities. These are useful sources of data collecting and reporting:

1. Local Police and Sherriff Departments
2. County and City Public Health Services
3. Veteran Support Organizations
4. Outreach
5. Veterans Administration, Homeland Security, DoD, and others
6. State Departments



Focus Area | Homelessness

What does this outcome mean or entail for CVEBs? Why is it important?

The CVEB's overall outcome regarding veterans' homelessness is to support the reduction in its numbers within the local community. About one-third of the adult homeless population have served in the Armed Services. Current population estimates suggest that about 76,000 veterans (male and female) are homeless on any given night (<http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2053>) and perhaps twice as many experience homelessness at some point during a year.

Many homeless veterans suffer from mental illness, alcohol and other substance abuse problems and some become homeless after being released from prison. This clearly means that other support services are necessary to address the veteran homeless problem in a holistic manner. The whole veteran - not just the presenting problem - must be treated. If this is not done, the veteran will likely return to a state of homelessness.

What is the role, or roles, a CVEB should play to impact this outcome?

Ensuring that all members of the CVEB understand potential consequences of veterans exposed to homelessness/chronic homelessness and how it can cause a chain reaction of issues to occur that have negative/permanent consequences. CVEBs should also ensure they are soliciting feedback from other players in the community that provide services that can mitigate homelessness so that they are aware of the potential drivers behind why a veteran could end up homeless in that community. By understanding the entities that provide services to veterans and by assessing the statistics of homeless veterans in their community, they can properly assess those drivers and institute potential safeguards.

CVEBs have the potential to be the front line of communication and awareness to the community concerning the wellness of local veterans. Collectively, the CVEB is the pulse of the nation's veterans' health and wellness status.

The role of the CVEB as it relates to homelessness includes the following:

- Communicating with outreach programs and understanding their goals.
- Participating in local events
- Becoming a known partner within the community
- Hosting events, training, town-halls, and seminars
- Meeting with leaders and influencers in the local community
- Providing Letters of Support (LOIs) for grant applications as determined

What are the potential resources a CVEB can leverage to impact this outcome?

The VA has created a national homeless directory that CVEBs can utilize to identify institutions/organizations that provide services to homeless veterans. Utilizing the directory and vetting these resources can play a positive role in providing quality options. Below are other support resources.

1. United-Way, Goodwill, and other large organizations
2. Veteran Support Services and organizations (VSOs)
3. Local government - City, County, and State
4. Veteran needs-based referral services (America Serves, 211, etc.)
5. Local officials, first responders, health and medical services, military bases (if local), veteran service providers, and veterans
6. Other CVEBs and veteran support organizations
7. Federal Government Departments
8. Work-groups
9. Local homeless shelters

What metrics should a CVEB should be monitoring to measure progress and impact regarding this outcome?

1. Reduction in the number of veterans who are homeless in the local community.
2. Number of requested commitments made and completed by the community
3. Frequency of one-on-one interaction with the community and local officials
4. Number of community meetings held by CVEB

Who else (for example, other CVEBs, the VA, MSOs, nonprofits, foundations, government, academic, etc.) is working on the same outcome and could be a useful reference?

The eradication of veteran homelessness is a national concern. There are many organizations who focus in this area. CVEB has an opportunity to bring these organizations together and educate them on the value of collective outcomes and what that means. A collective collaboration of support services to reduce veteran homelessness is a key component.

The VA has instituted metrics and established Homeless Veterans Coordinators at all VA Regional Offices and VA Hospitals that provide outreach and service options to homeless veterans through their areas of jurisdiction. In some areas of the country, VA Hospitals have established VA Community Resource & Referral Centers (CRRCs) that are specifically designed to address and provide services to chronically homeless veterans. They can be found on the va.gov website and are easily accessible and primarily located in areas where homeless veterans predominate.

Focus Area | Employment

What does this outcome mean or entail for CVEBs? Why is it important?

Economic stability is contingent on low unemployment rates and gainful employment for citizens. Veteran participation in the larger US economy occurs with the addition of unique circumstances that can help or hinder the start and growth of a post-military service career. Veterans may enter the workforce with service-connected disabilities or may find that their job search has them competing with civilian counterparts who established years of industry experience while the veteran served in uniform. Concurrently, veterans often find that employers value and seek out the characteristics, traits, and experience that comes from years of military service.

Employment is a crucial outcome for CVEBs to focus on because it is indicative of the stability of a veterans' community within a larger society and can affect nearly every other outcome with which the CVEB is tasked. Without gainful employment, a veteran could be forced to derive a livelihood from other, more precarious means, and face a significantly increased risk of homelessness. Financial stability and mobility are crucial for achieving health, relationship, spiritual, and self-worth outcomes. Employment fosters economic opportunity, which leads to the overall stability and well-being of an individual and household, and therefore promotes a sustaining, thriving and inclusive community.

What is the role, or roles, a CVEB should play to impact this outcome?

A CVEB should seek to be aware of local veterans who are unemployed and seeking employment, and if capacity exists, to also be aware of local veterans who are underemployed and seeking better employment. Veterans who are unemployed and seeking should be priorities and the CVEB should ensure that these veterans are made aware of both traditional unemployment resources such as local unemployment offices, as well as veterans' hiring initiatives and other similar employment opportunities that specifically pertain to the veteran community.

The role that CVEBs should play here is an informational one and caution should be exercised to keep from creeping too closely into case-work territory. Veterans should be referred as needed to organizations and agencies that provide that specialty care. There are structures that exist to address unemployment generally as well as among the veteran community and CVEBs would do well to facilitate access to these resources. CVEBs should be aware of job opportunities and seekers within their communities and become the connective tissue between resource and customer. CVEBs should advocate and educate potential employers about the benefits of hiring veterans.

What are the potential resources a CVEB can leverage to impact this outcome?

A variety of employment related resources exist for veterans to utilize. However, it is up to the CVEB to determine which resources can have the greatest impact within their own locality. Some resources are below:

- Unemployment Offices - Unemployment insurance programs pay money to workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own. Workers must meet certain eligibility requirements as determined by their state. <https://www.dol.gov/general/location>
- Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) - If a veteran has a service-connected disability that limits the veteran's ability to work or prevents him from working, the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program—also referred to as Chapter 31—can help. <https://www.vets.gov/employment/vocational-rehab-and-employment/>
- Educational and Career Counseling - Veterans soon to leave active service may be eligible for free educational and career counseling. <https://www.vets.gov/education/tools-programs/education-career-counseling/>
- Veterans can convert their military experience into civilian language that hiring managers can easily understand. <https://www.vets.gov/employment/job-seekers/skills-translator>
- Veterans can utilize resume refinement and feedback tools such as VMock, to provide instant personalized feedback their resume based on criteria gathered from employers and global best practices. <http://studentveterans.org/programs/program-resources/vmock-resume-platform>
- Veterans can identify mentors to help them become sharper, more polished applicants and introduce them to the 80% of job opportunities that exist only in personal networks. <https://www.veterati.com/sva/>
- Veterans can post their resume to their state job bank. Follow the instructions on state job bank website to post resumes. <https://www.careeronestop.org/JobSearch/FindJobs/state-job-banks.aspx>

What metrics should a CVEB should be monitoring to measure progress and impact regarding this outcome?

CVEBs can quantify their referrals provided to local veterans who are unemployed and seeking. These veterans receive informational packets from CVEBs, and these referrals are recorded.

Who else (for example, other CVEBs, the VA, MSOs, nonprofits, foundations, government, academic, etc.) is working on the same outcome that could be a useful reference?

There are a wide variety of organizations providing employment related resources to veterans. These organizations span the landscape of government, nonprofit, foundation, and private sector entities. Some government, foundation, and nonprofit resources are below:

- The US Department of Labor helps veterans put together a successful job search with resources on resumes, interviewing, networking and finding job openings. <https://www.dol.gov/veterans/findajob/>
- Hiring Our Heroes through the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation, is a nationwide initiative to help veterans, transitioning service members, and military spouses find meaningful employment opportunities. <https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/hiring-our-heroes>

- Through personalized career preparation, Hire Heroes USA empowers US military members, veterans, and military spouses to succeed. <https://www.hireheroesusa.org/>
- Student Veterans of America works with a coalition of Fortune 500 companies to connect student veterans and veteran graduates with high growth, high demand roles in the economy. <https://studentveteransofamerica.jobs/>
- <https://yourjobpath.com> offers a consolidated bank of jobs, mentoring and built-in Military Skills Translator



Focus Area | Education

What does this outcome mean or entail for CVEBs? Why is it important?

Nearly 115,000 veterans begin their education each year after service, joining the nearly 1.1 million student veterans currently pursuing degrees. They succeed at very high rates, with approximately 100,000 degrees awarded annually to student veterans: 27% in business fields including accounting, finance, marketing, and others; 14% earn degrees in STEM, including computer science and engineering, mechanical and aerospace engineering, and math disciplines; another 10% earn degrees in health fields.

This outcome means that veterans both understand the value of a college degree, and understand how to pursue one via benefits utilization, school/major selection, avoiding predatory practices and becoming an informed consumer of higher education.

US President Barack Obama has referred to a college education as “the surest ticket to the middle class.” This is certainly the case with US veterans. Student veterans arrive on campus with their tuition bill paid by the federal government. The Post-9/11 GI Bill funds 100% of tuition and fees for eligible veterans and provides annual book stipends as well as a monthly housing allowance. In fact, as of May 2017, the Post-9/11 GI Bill has paid \$75 billion in tuition, fees, and stipends to America’s colleges and universities in support of student veterans. As a result, more than half of student veterans do not have to seek financial aid or other sources of support beyond the GI Bill to fund their college education. 82% of student veterans served in the enlisted ranks of the military and utilize their GI Bill as a direct pathway to college.

This pathway to college directly translates into increased lifetime earnings as veterans with bachelor’s degrees earn about \$84,255, which is higher than their non-veteran counterparts who earn about \$67,232. Veterans with more than a bachelor’s degree earn about \$129,082, which is higher than their non-veteran counterparts who earn about \$99,734. Additionally, the pathway to college directly translates into lower unemployment numbers among veterans. Veterans with a college degree have a similar unemployment rate compared to their non-veteran counterparts. (2.7% compared to 2.6%)

What is the role, or roles, a CVEB should play to impact this outcome?

CVEBs have the opportunity to assist local veterans communities by reinforcing the value of higher education among these populations, particularly among the former enlisted ranks of the post 9/11 generation of veterans who do not uniformly take advantage of their GI Bill benefits. By identifying veterans who have not utilized their GI Bill benefits, CVEBs can serve as a on-ramp to the pathway to college, and by extension, the middle class for local veterans who are unsure of how to begin their higher education journey. This role is an informational one, with a focus on highlighting access to local university options with Yellow Ribbon Program funding, state-based higher education resources for veterans, and prominent student veteran communities.

What are the potential resources a CVEB can leverage to impact this outcome?

The most important resource that a CVEB can utilize when interacting with members of a local veterans community who have not utilized their GI Bill benefits, but due to their age, career stage, and income would benefit from doing so, is a human one. These human resources are the CVEB leaders themselves who can encourage veterans to take advantage of their GI Bill benefits by articulating the financial reasons, such as long-term earning potential, as well as the personal growth benefits that stem from success in higher education.

Once a veteran has decided to utilize their GI Bill benefits in pursuit of higher education, the CVEB can provide the veteran with access to the resources below. Additionally, CVEBs should encourage veterans to utilize the veteran resource centers at universities or colleges where they are matriculated.

- College Factual provides the most extensive resources for college selection on the planet. Supported by Student Veterans of America's national student support hotline. <https://collegefactual.clickfunnels.com/sva>
- US News & World Report calculates the top-ranked schools that participate in federal initiatives helping veterans and active-duty service members pay for their degrees. <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rankings/national-universities/veterans>
- Institutions of Higher Learning (Degree Granting Institutions) may elect to participate in the Yellow Ribbon Program to make additional funds available for your education program without an additional charge to your GI Bill entitlement. The veteran should understand this program and be aware of which institutions participate in it. https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/yellow_ribbon.asp
- Some US states offer supplemental education benefits for qualified veterans. CVEBs must inform local veterans of opportunities that are available to them in their current state of residence. <https://www.legion.org/veteransbenefits/state>
- The decision to matriculate at a particular university or college is not one to make lightly. CVEBs can connect local veterans with local student veteran communities who can advise these veterans and speak to the realities of attending class at a particular university or college. Once matriculated, these local student veteran communities play a critical role as the peer-to-peer support structure for student veterans at a particular university or college. This peer-to-peer support structure is the primary determining factor in the academic success of the community's constituents. <http://studentveterans.org/chapter/directory>

What metrics should a CVEB should be monitoring to measure progress and impact regarding this outcome?

CVEBs can measure their progress and impact with regards to educational outcomes by measuring GI Bill utilization rates among local veterans. This would be achieved by distinguishing between officer and enlisted ranks as well as veteran era. (Gulf War, Post 9/11, etc.) The greatest potential for impact here would be among the former enlisted ranks of the Post 9/11 era of veterans, and therefore this population in particular should be the focus for GI Bill utilization measurement among veterans' communities served by CVEBs.

Who else (for example, other CVEBs, the VA, MSOs, nonprofits, foundations, government, academic, etc.) is working on the same outcome that could be a useful reference?

Additional organizations working to serve this outcome among the US veteran population include the following:

- Student Veterans of America - SVA delivers programs and services to student veterans via the nation's largest campus-based, peer-support network known as the SVA chapter. Each chapter provides peer-to-peer support that has been linked to improved academic outcomes for student veterans. Since SVA's founding in 2008, the network has grown from the original 20 chapters to more than 1,500 institutions of higher learning in all 50 states and four countries. <http://studentveterans.org/>
- Warrior Scholar Project - The Warrior-Scholar Project (WSP) empowers enlisted military veterans by providing them with a skill bridge that enables a successful transition from the battlefield to the classroom; maximizes their education opportunities by making them informed consumers of education and increases the confidence they will need to successfully complete a rigorous four-year undergraduate program at a top-tier school. <https://www.warrior-scholar.org/>
- Veterans Education Success - VES is committed to protect and defend the integrity and promise of the GI Bill and other federal education programs for veterans and servicemembers. <https://veteranseducationsuccess.org/>
- Institute for Veterans and Military Families (At Syracuse University) - The IVMF is higher education's first interdisciplinary academic institute, singularly focused on advancing the lives of the nation's military veterans and their families. <https://ivmf.syracuse.edu/>
- Military Family Research Institute: (At Purdue University) MFRI conducts research and outreach for communities and professionals who serve military and veteran families. <https://www.mfri.purdue.edu/>

