Three years ago, Dr. Schmotter asked the Vice President for Student Affairs to create a campus wide Task Force that would focus its work on enhancing programs and services for veterans on campus. Dr. Bernstein invited a cross section of the campus community to join including faculty, student vets, and staff as well as community representatives. Work began immediately to identify the major issues that were working against success for veterans on campus along with recommended solutions to these problems.

A new Vet Center in the Midtown Student Center was proposed and within a year, with full approval of the Student Center Board, such a space was created and is now heavily utilized by vets. A full informational brochure was created giving key information to the Vets about the important offices on campus providing services. A separate E-mail and phone number was assigned so that vets could quickly contact the university to get help and guidance. An individual in each of twelve critical offices was identified to provide support and give special attention to vet students. Student vets were encouraged and supported to create a Veteran’s Club which is now recognized the SGA.

The Task Force also began to help shape the annual Veteran’s Day Ceremony held on campus. Guest speakers, including WCSU vet students, are regularly invited to attend and speak at the program which also features a wreath ceremony, music and a community reception after the program. The Task Force has been blessed with much cooperation from the community including a number of women’s groups that focus exclusively on veteran concerns. The groups have provided food, money and a variety of other resources specifically designed to enhance life on campus for the veteran students. Most recently the VA has established a Vet Center in Danbury and the university has already created a foundation for future collaboration. Staff from the Vet Center will also be asked to join the Task Force.
“The True Defenders of our Liberties”

By: Kathleen Lindenmayer, Captain, Retired U.S. Navy Veteran & Student

You may be familiar with the reasons why America celebrates the service of her veteran’s on the 11th of November. We have evolved the symbolism and memory of the World War I armistice (that occurred on 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918) into a day to recognize those who have been in service under arms. World War I was the “War to end all Wars” due to its notoriety as one of the bloodiest, most horrific known to mankind. Its most agonizing battle over the eastern French region of Verdun is still today a symbol for suffering, heroism and solidarity. During a trip to this region while stationed in Europe, I saw the infamous scars from 26 million pieces of ordinance that dropped on the region in a 10 month period: the myriads of pock-marked hills, remnants of the miles and miles of trenches, and thousands upon thousands of graves. I was pierced by the undulating fields and eerie silence where complete French villages had once stood. I was in Verdun at 11 a.m. on November 11th, 2007, with a handful of American veterans who traveled there to see and understand. We watched a French “ceremony of remembrance” outside of a building-sized tomb called the Ossuary [housing the remains of 130,000 unknown soldiers.] During this small but solemn ceremony, we were honored to witness the presence of the American Flag and thanks given to America and her veterans for their support and sacrifice to the French and the Allied cause. Peace was won at a great cost, but its promise confirmed to us by the rainbow that appeared in the sky as we were leaving that afternoon.

America is unique in this world. A true land of opportunity, equality and Liberty, we declared our recognition of truth that our Creator gave us inalienable rights, and then we guaranteed the freedom to pursue them with a document: the United States Constitution. And it is this document that every Veteran is sworn to support and defend, with his/her life if required. America is justifiably proud of those who have served honorably from Bunker Hill to Appomattox and Afghanistan. All paid a price, some steeper than others, in answering a call in defense of American principles. Whether these patriots paid these kind of dues for only 2 weeks or for 20 years, or performed duties on or off the battlefield, we should be proud to recognize them all as defenders of our freedoms. These acts, in and of themselves, are causes for thanks and celebration. Thank you, Veterans, for stepping forward, and thank you America for supporting and honoring your veterans!

The American Soldier in Perspective

By: Charles Province, Vietnam Army Veteran

It is the Soldier, not the minister who has given us freedom of religion. It is the Soldier, not the reporter who has given us freedom of the press. It is the Soldier, not the poet who has given us freedom of speech. It is the Soldier, not the campus organizer who has given us freedom to protest. It is the Soldier, not the lawyer who has given us the right to a fair trial. It is the Soldier, not the politician who has given us the right to vote. It is the Soldier who salutes the flag, who serves beneath the flag, and whose coffin is draped by the flag, who allows the protester to burn the flag.
What's a Vet Center?
A Vet Center is a place where Veterans who served in combat, or experienced trauma/harassment, can come for service. Family members of deceased service members can also receive bereavement counseling at Vet Centers.
There are 232 community based Vet Centers located in all fifty states, District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands.
There is a Vet Center here in Danbury.
The first thing you notice is how friendly and welcoming everyone is.
At the Danbury Vet Center, there are smiles everywhere and sincere greetings behind every door. Every Veteran is treated like family.
These are the people in the VA who welcome home war veterans with honor by providing quality readjustment counseling in a caring manner. The first one you will probably see as you walk through the door is Maureen Fitzgerald, our office manager. Maureen sets the positive tone that permeates the entire office with her quick smile and "I love my job" attitude. Tanya Bingham, a readjustment counselor and a Licensed Social worker also brings a great deal of energy and resource networking that gives any and all Veterans many opportunities and choices. Many veterans may not know about our facility, or what we do, so we are fortunate to also have Readjustment Counselor Rodney Davis, who is also our Outreach Specialist, and a veteran from OIF where he served as a Mental Health Specialist. His job at the center is to get the word out that we are here for our Veterans when they need us. The center will soon add a Marriage and Family Counselor.

“The Atrium” 457 N. Main St, Danbury, CT

By: Davis Rodney, Readjustment Counselor

"The Veterans gave so much. They deserve our help. It’s an honor to assist them in every way we can."
Special Event Invitation

In honor of all who have served

Veterans Day
Thursday, Nov. 11, 2010 at Noon
Ives Concert Hall, White Hall

★ Remarks to Veterans
★ Presentation of a wreath of remembrance and reading of the Gettysburg Address
★ Refreshments at Midtown Campus Student Center, Rm. 202

Additional Events

★ Tuesday, 9 November 4:30 PM
★ Town Hall Meeting with Student Veterans and Q&A with Representatives from Student Affairs, Student Veterans, and OIF Veteran Rodney Davis

★ Saturday, 13 November, at 1 PM
★ Tour of the Westside Nature Preserve Lead by DR Frank Dye