

Lewis & Clark named Military Friendly School for 7th consecutive year

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GODFREY - For the seventh consecutive year, Lewis and Clark Community College has been named to the Military Friendly® Schools list.

The 2017 Military Friendly[®] Schools list honors colleges, universities and trade schools that are doing the most to embrace America's military service members, veterans and spouses as students and to ensure their success on campus.

Institutions completed a survey of more than one hundred questions that judged 10 categories, including military support on campus, graduation and employment outcomes, and military spouse policies.

L&C offers a variety of services and benefits to veterans and their families. L&C's Veteran Services office serves more than 260 military and veteran students, their spouses and their dependents each academic year. These groups receive assistance with a variety of State of Illinois and VA education benefits such as the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment and Dependents' Educational Assistance as well as information on employment, physical and mental health, campus events, community agencies offering services, etc.

The Veterans Club on campus also serves military and veteran students as well as any student interested in the club and its activities. The club sponsors blood drives, collects shoes and eyeglasses for re-use, conducts fundraisers and donates to campus and community activities such as area veteran memorials, Wreaths Across America, VA hospitals, honor flights, etc.

A Veterans Resource Center has been established on the third floor of Baldwin Hall on L&C's Godfrey campus. The center provides computers, a TV and resource materials in a relaxed atmosphere where veterans can study or talk with peers. Madison County Veterans Assistance Commission, Illinois Department of Employment Security, Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs and VA Vet Center veteran representatives also utilize the center for meeting with students.

“We are very proud to be recognized for our commitment to helping military and veteran students achieve their education goals,” said Terry Lane, director of Career and Veteran Services at L&C and a veteran himself. “Their representation in the student body is significant, and we continue to explore ways to address and anticipate their needs.”

College and Foundation Board Member Dwight Werts and his wife Cheryl Werts have made significant contributions to establish and maintain a Veteran Emergency Loan Fund for L&C military and veteran students. The Werts family donation to establish the fund was matched by the L&C Foundation's President's Circle. Their support has continued in subsequent years which has allowed the fund to stay available to veterans in need.

“The Veteran Emergency Loan Fund has time and time again made a huge difference for veteran students and their families.” Lane said. “Without this fund many veterans would not be able to get their books, buy gas or food, pay rent, etc. For some veterans, the fund literally means the difference between going to school and not being able to attend.”

The Military Friendly[®] Schools media and website, www.militaryfriendlyschoools.com, features the list of schools, interactive tools and search functionality to help military and veteran students/spouses find the best school to suit their unique needs and preferences. The colleges, universities and trade schools on this year's list exhibit leading practices in the recruitment and retention of students with military experience.

“Post-secondary institutions earning the 2017 Military Friendly[®] School award have exceptionally strong programs for transitioning service members and spouses,” said Daniel Nichols, Chief Product Officer of Victory Media and Navy Reserve veteran. “Our Military Friendly[®] Schools are truly aligning their military programs and services with employers to help students translate military experience, skills and training into successful careers after graduation.”

The 2017 list of Military Friendly[®] Schools was compiled through extensive research and a data-driven survey of VA-approved schools nationwide. Ernst and Young LLP independently verified the survey tabulation process, methodology and weightings that comprise the 2017 list.

Each year schools completing the survey are held to a higher standard than the previous year via improved methodology, criteria and weightings developed with the assistance of an independent Advisory Board consisting of higher education and recruiting professionals from across the country.

A full story and detailed list of 2017 Military Friendly[®] Schools is available at www.militaryfriendly.com.