



For Immediate Release

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Tennessee Higher Education Commission Honors Veterans on Veterans Day

Nashville, TN – November 10, 2023 – The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) proudly joins the nation in paying tribute to all those who have served in our armed forces this Veterans Day. On this special occasion, THEC reaffirms its commitment to supporting veterans as they pursue their educational goals.

Veterans Day, observed on November 11th each year, provides an opportunity for our nation to express its gratitude to the military personnel who have selflessly defended our freedoms. THEC recognizes the dedication and sacrifice of veterans and is dedicated to facilitating their educational journeys.

"Veterans Day is a time to honor those who served," Dr. Steven Gentile, Interim Executive Director of THEC, stated, "We have more than 18,000 student veterans and military family members on Tennessee's VETS campuses who have decided to pursue higher education and build upon the skills they learned in the military. As our student veterans return home to continue their service, we are committed to ensuring that veterans have access to the highest quality education and support as they transition from military service to the civilian workforce."

In alignment with this commitment, THEC has implemented a range of programs and initiatives to assist veterans in achieving their educational aspirations, including:

- **The Tennessee Reconnect Program:** This program provides tuition-free access to eligible adults, including veterans, to pursue an associate degree or technical certificate or diploma at one of Tennessee's community colleges, Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs), or an eligible public or private university.
- **Veteran Reconnect Grant:** Each year, campuses across Tennessee compete for funds to develop innovative networks, research, and programs that recruit, retain, and support student veterans in higher education.
- **Veterans Education Transition Support (VETS) Campuses:** THEC designates institutions across the state as VETS Campus where, veterans can access comprehensive support services tailored to their unique needs.
- **The Tennessee Servicemembers Opportunity Portal (TN-SOP):** THEC collaborates with institutions to establish and promote pathways for veterans to maximize the transfer of their



military training and experience as college credit, making higher education more accessible and affordable. Veterans can visit the portal at <https://tn-sop.tn.gov/> to view potential credits.

- Military Outreach and Support: THEC provides outreach and training to a network of faculty, staff, and partners in the community, connecting them to resources, educational opportunities, financial aid, and career services.

To celebrate Veterans Day 2023, THEC staff attended college celebrations of service at Carson Newman University and East Tennessee State University. As they travel throughout East Tennessee, they will visit many of the community colleges and other VETS Campuses in the area.

Dr. Gentile concluded, "As we celebrate Veterans Day, let us remember that supporting our veterans is not just a one-day event; it is an ongoing commitment. THEC is proud to be a part of this mission, and we stand with our veterans, recognizing their valuable contributions to our society and our future."

To learn more about the Tennessee Higher Education Commission's initiatives to support veterans and their educational goals, please visit the THEC website at www.tn.gov/thec.

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The Tennessee Higher Education Commission was created in 1967 by the Tennessee General Assembly. The Commission develops, implements, evaluates postsecondary education policies and programs in Tennessee while coordinating the state's systems of higher education, and is relentlessly focused on increasing the number of Tennesseans with a postsecondary credential.