

# TRIO VETERANS UPWARD BOUND 2025

FACT BOOK 2025



2025



**EMPOWERING VETERANS THROUGH EDUCATION**

**FIRST – GENERATION**

**LOW – INCOME**

**ACADEMIC NEED**



# SERVING THOSE THAT SERVED

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*“Post-secondary education is not as daunting as it may seem. With a little bit of support from programs like VUB, you can squash any doubts you may have in your abilities and be successful in college!”*

Veterans Upward Bound is a free program for qualified veterans, designed to motivate and assist veterans in developing academic and other requisite skills necessary for acceptance and success in a program of postsecondary education. The program provides assessment and enhancement of basic skills through counseling, mentoring, tutoring, and academic instruction. in the core subject areas of mathematics through pre-calculus, laboratory science, foreign language, composition, and literature.

## **Education is the Destination**

The Veterans Upward Bound is dedicated to empowering our brave men and women in uniform through education, a small token of gratitude for the freedoms they’ve defended. Completing the VUB program not only familiarizes veteran participants with student services and resources but also instills a renewed confidence In their academic capabilities.





# HISTORY

VETERANS UPWARD BOUND





# HISTORY OF VETERANS UPWARD BOUND

## HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1965

In the thick of the Civil Rights Movement, ongoing conflict in Vietnam, and historically high levels of poverty the Lyndon B. Johnson administration set in motion social reforms designed to halt the spread of poverty in America as part of his “Great Society.” The War on Poverty focused on key contributing causes to poverty one of which is education. The Higher Education Act of 1965 created the US Department of Education’s TRIO programs helping historically disadvantaged and underrepresented youths have access to higher education. TRIO eventually expanded its services to include adult learners and non-traditional student populations including veterans.

Veterans Upward Bound was created in 1972 as a priority project to meet the academic needs of veterans returning from the Vietnam War. Today, 68 projects are in operation providing program services to nearly 8,500 veterans every year from every war era, and peacetime era since the early 1950’s (Korea, Vietnam, Persian Gulf, OIF-OEF, etc).







# HISTORY OF VETERANS UPWARD BOUND

*“NAVUB began as a response to the unique academic and emotional challenges faced by Vietnam veterans, and it has grown into a lifeline for all eras of veterans.”*

## 1965: Higher Education Act and the Birth of TRIO

In the wake of the Civil Rights Movement, the Higher Education Act of 1965 expanded access to education for historically underserved populations. TRIO programs were introduced to support low-income and first-generation students, laying the groundwork for veterans' inclusion. In 1972, Veterans Upward Bound was born, designed specifically to address the needs of veterans returning from the Vietnam War.

**1979:** The National Association is Formed  
Recognizing the need for a unified voice, NAVUB was established to advocate for veterans' educational success. Initially serving a small group of veterans, the association quickly grew into a nationwide movement.

## Adapting Through the Decades

- **1990s:** NAVUB expanded its scope to include veterans from the Gulf War, addressing new educational and career challenges.
- **2000s:** In response to the post-9/11 conflicts, NAVUB tailored its services to support younger veterans in balancing family, work, and education.
- **Today:** NAVUB serves over 8,500 veterans annually through 68 active projects, providing everything from academic tutoring to career counseling.





*“The GI Bill opened the doors to higher education, but programs like NAVUB ensure veterans are prepared to walk through them.”*

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## SERVICEMEN'S READJUSTMENT ACT OF 1944

The GI Bill, officially known as the **Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944**, was a landmark piece of legislation in the United States that provided a range of benefits to World War II veterans. It was signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on June 22, 1944, during the waning days of the war. The GI Bill aimed to help veterans make a smooth transition back to civilian life after their military service.

One of the most significant aspects of the GI Bill was its impact on higher education and economic growth. It provided financial assistance for veterans to attend college, university, or vocational school, covering tuition, fees, books, and living expenses. This provision led to a significant increase in the number of Americans attending college, helping to shape the post-war workforce and contribute to economic growth.



# SPOTLIGHT: A VETERAN'S JOURNEY

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## Experience with Veterans Upward Bound

After my military service and roughly eleven years after high school, I decided to pursue a bachelor's degree at Boise State University. I was referred to Veterans Upward Bound from the university as my first step in preparing for post-secondary education.

From the moment I met Ben, I was confident that I had made the right decision. I was greeted with smiles and wonderful conversations every time I entered the building. The overall atmosphere within VUB was light-hearted and overwhelmingly pleasant with genuinely incredible people. Soon after enrolling in the program with Ben, I would meet with my Math and English tutors for the next eight months prior to the 2024 Fall Semester. Margaret and Mike are exceptionally talented and brilliant minds with no lack of patience or wisdom. Math and English concepts became more challenging, and I realized I could learn and retain material that I once thought impossible.



# **SPOTLIGHT: A VETERAN'S JOURNEY**

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Gaps in my education were filled like potholes on the dirt road of learning. Month by month, my confidence and skills grew exponentially. In no time, I found myself on the application page for Boise State University. Within two weeks, I was ecstatic to discover that Boise State accepted my application while offering me a substantial scholarship.

I am now in the second semester of my first year of college, looking back on my experience with VUB with the utmost gratitude. If it wasn't for the fundamental skills and concepts I learned, or the support of mentors and tutors who believed in me, I would never have decided to enroll in college. With the help of VUB, I crushed my doubts and anxieties regarding education, and I continue to thrive in academia.

Thank you Veterans Upward Bound!

## **VUB STUDENT:**

### **MYLES MERWIN**

### **BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY**







# NAVUB

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION VETERANS UPWARD BOUND  
EST. 1979



*"VUB gave me the tools to succeed in college and a community that understands and supports veterans' unique challenges."*





# NAVUB

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION VETERANS UPWARD BOUND  
EST. 1979





# NAVUE

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**SERVING  
THOSE THAT  
SERVED**

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**Higher  
Education**

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# NAVUB

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION VETERANS UPWARD BOUND

**"The moment I entered  
the doors of Veterans  
Upward Bound I felt  
welcome and important.  
Everyone in the building  
is excited to help and  
answer any questions  
you may have."**

**-Merwin**



# NAVUB MISSION

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***"VUB INFLUENCED ME TO  
PUSH FURTHER THAN MY  
PREVIOUS GOALS  
REACHED AND I NOW  
WISH TO PURSUE  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
DIRECTLY FOLLOWING MY  
UNDERGRADUATE  
STUDIES".***



The National Association of Veterans Upward Bound (NAVUB) is a 501 ( c ) ( 3 ) nonprofit professional association established in 1979 for Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) projects nationwide to have an identity and voice as they exist in TRIO. The purpose of NAVUB is to centralize and govern professional development for VUB projects nationwide. Veterans Upward Bound is a Federal TRIO.

Program funded by the U.S. Department of Education with the mission to motivate pre-college veterans to complete secondary education and enter and succeed in programs of postsecondary education. NAVUB is governed by Constitutional Bylaws, and leadership comprised of an Executive Board, and ten (10) Commissions. Paid membership is required from institutions that have a VUB Program and want to receive the benefits of NAVUB. NAVUB strives to build partnerships with community agencies, schools, and other veteran organizations at the local, state, regional, and national levels. Members of NAVUB regularly go to Capitol Hill in Washington DC to promote and advocate for VUB Programs.

# NAVUB MISSION CONT.

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NAVUB has a focus on providing professional development to members by hosting an annual conference that is dedicated to having speakers from the Department of Education and Council of Opportunity in Education, providing workshops, facilitating best practices roundtables, and many other valuable experiences that assist in the growth and development of staff which translates to an increase in the quality of services being provided to all VUB military veterans. Other benefits of NAVUB membership include having a strong network for ongoing communication by having an online listserv for staff to ask & answer questions, and receive updates, as well as a weekly online video chat for engagement and connection. Additionally, NAVUB invests in its members' leadership by offering an Emerging Leadership Institute (ELI) annually, providing stipends for members to attend Policy Seminars in Washington DC, and giving scholarships to qualified students in Veterans Upward Bound programs.





These funds can be used to cover tuition, fees, books, and other education-related expenses. Overall, the NAVUB Scholarship is a valuable opportunity for veterans and uniformed members of the Armed Forces to receive financial support and recognition for their academic achievements. The scholarship program helps to honor the service and sacrifice of these individuals by helping them achieve their educational goals and succeed in their chosen careers.

## 2024 WINNERS

Amber Allen

Randy Burns

Madison Cason

Patricia Jansen

Travis Nevers

Gwen Perry

John Townsend

Alacea Thompson

# NAVUB SCHOLARSHIPS

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The NAVUB (National Association of Veterans Upward Bound) Scholarship is a competitive scholarship program designed to support and recognize the academic achievements of veterans and uniformed members of the Armed Forces. The scholarship program offers a total of five separate awards of **\$500** and **\$1,000** each, and one award of **\$2,000**, for a total of **\$7,500** in scholarship funds.





# VETERANS



PROJECT SNAPSHOT  
VETERANS BY THE NUMBERS



# Project Snapshot

## 68 Projects: US and Puerto Rico ...

### New Project Sites



Most funded projects FY23 (6)



22

Million Dollars  
FY 2023 Funding

Highest state cost per  
participant average (\$2723.64)

MONTANA



One of 18 states with only one  
VUB project

Wayne State University's largest  
VUB FY23 funded project  
(\$495,787)



Western Kentucky University  
largest VUB single project (2)

2nd most projects  
funded FY23 (5)



One of 5 states with  
three VUB projects

35 States &  
Territories



89,000 +  
Participants

# VETERANS

## BY THE NUMBERS

# 16.2M

Veterans in the US\*

## BY GENDER



90%

10%

# 26.3%



Post 9/11  
Veterans

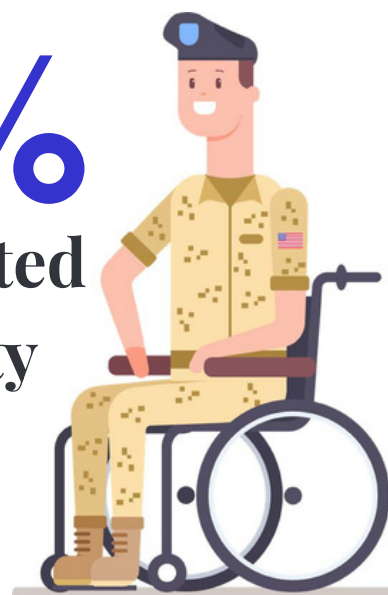
# 5.2M



College-age  
Veterans

# 30%

Documented  
Disability







# HIGHER EDUCATION

There are multiple paths to achieving career success, and college and trade/technical schools offer viable options for students. While a traditional college education provides a well-rounded foundation in various subjects, trade/ technical schools focus on industry-specific technical skills that prepare students for specific jobs. Attending a college or university can provide opportunities for personal growth and intellectual development.

***“VUB is dedicated to empowering our brave men and women in uniform through education.” -Alex***



A college degree may open doors to careers that require a bachelor's degree or higher, such as law, medicine, or engineering. Additionally, a college education can offer networking opportunities, access to internships, and exposure to various subjects and fields. On the other hand, trade/ technical schools provide a practical education that prepares students for a specific career path in a relatively.



# HIGHER EDUCATION

On the other hand, trade/ technical schools provide a practical education that prepares students for a specific career path in a relatively short amount of time. These schools offer hands-on training in fields such as HVAC repair, carpentry, cosmetology, and more. Graduates of trade/technical schools often start working in their chosen field immediately after completing their program.

While a college education can be expensive, trade/ technical schools are relatively affordable, and some offer flexible schedules to accommodate working students. Moreover, eligible students can use the GI Bill benefits to cover the cost of tuition, housing, and supplies. Both college and trade/ technical schools can lead to successful careers, and the choice ultimately depends on the individual's goals and preferences. Some students may prefer this.



***“Together, we are making a meaningful difference in the lives of those who have served our country.” -William***

Some students may prefer the academic rigor and breadth of a traditional college education, while others may be drawn to the practical skills and specific career training provided by trade/technical schools. Whatever path one chooses, it's important to pursue education and training that aligns with one's interests and career aspirations.





# NAVUB IN THE PAST YEAR



## WHY THIS FACT BOOK MATTERS

### For Policymakers:

- **74%** of VUB participants who completed the program in 2015-16 enrolled in postsecondary education by the next reporting year.
- **82%** of veterans who received VUB services in 2016-17 successfully completed the program.
- **27%** of VUB participants earned a postsecondary degree within six years, versus **19%** of military veterans in the general population.

### For Stakeholders:

- VUB participants have higher academic persistence and standardized test score improvements (71% showed academic improvement in the 2016-17 cohort).
- **86%** of participants being first-generation college students.
- **84%** classified as low-income.
- **50%** reporting a disability.

### For the Community:

- Veterans age **45** and older face significant barriers to education, yet **60%** of those with multiple risk factors still enrolled in college after completing NAVUB.
- Veterans who complete NAVUB demonstrate strong program retention rates (**82%**), showing the effectiveness of its support services.

***“Together, we can ensure no veteran is left behind in their pursuit of higher education and personal growth.”***

***-Tyler***

### **Veterans Served:**

Over **8,500** veterans were supported by 68 NAVUB programs nationwide.

### **Scholarships Awarded:**

NAVUB provided **\$7,500** in scholarships to help veterans afford tuition, books, and living expenses.

### **Impactful Workshops:**

Conducted academic workshops on topics ranging from pre-calculus to essay writing.

### **High Retention Rates:**

**74%** of participants who completed the program in the 2015-16 reporting year had enrolled in postsecondary education by the end of the following reporting year.

### **Expanded Digital Tools:**

Rolled out online learning platforms to support rural and remote veterans, ensuring equitable access to resources.

### **Policy Advocacy:**

Collaborated with policymakers to secure increased funding for veteran education programs, resulting in an additional **10%** increase in program capacity.

# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OF NAVUB IN THE PAST YEAR

## DATA BY NUMBERS

### Record Participation:

- Supported over **8,500** veterans through **68** programs, expanding outreach year after year to increase in participation from the previous year

### Scholarships Impact:

- Distributed **\$7,500** in scholarships to veterans, enabling them to pursue their academic dreams without financial burden.

### Improved Outcomes:

- Achieved a **82%\*** program completion rate, with **70%** of participants enrolling in degree programs or technical schools within six months of completing NAVUB.

### Digital Transformation:

- Launched virtual classrooms and online resources, providing access to learning for veterans in remote and underserved areas.



***“TOGETHER, WE CAN ENSURE NO VETERAN IS LEFT BEHIND IN THEIR PURSUIT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND PERSONAL GROWTH.”***

### Advocacy Success:

- Partnered with policymakers to increase federal funding for veteran educational initiatives. NAVUB continues to advocate for increased federal support to expand educational opportunities for veterans.”

### Holistic Support:

- NAVUB offers extensive mentoring, tutoring, and academic counseling to veterans nationwide.

### Economic Impact:

- Veterans with higher education earn significantly more over their lifetime, making NAVUB’s impact invaluable in career development.







# ADVOCATING FOR THE FUTURE

Over the years, NAVUB has championed legislative victories, securing funding increases and advocating for improved veteran access to higher education. The work continues, with a focus on expanding digital tools and reaching rural veterans.

## Looking Forward

As NAVUB celebrates decades of impact, its mission remains clear: empowering veterans to achieve their educational and career aspirations. By 2030, NAVUB aims to serve 50% more veterans, leveraging new technologies and partnerships to ensure no veteran is left behind.



***“All the staff within Veterans Upward Bound are phenomenal. Any time you see them, you'll be greeted with a smile and wonderful conversation. Veterans Upward Bound was a very important foundation for my academic journey, and I am infinitely grateful for all of them”.***

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE ONE VETERAN AT A TIME

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## **A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT**

NAVUB strives to build partnerships with community agencies, schools, and other veteran organizations at the local, state, regional, and national levels. Members of NAVUB visit Capitol Hill in Washington DC on an annual basis to promote and advocate for additional VUB Programs. NAVUB has a focus on providing professional development to members by hosting an annual conference that is dedicated to the professional development of our members. We invite key speakers from the Department of Education and Council of Opportunity in Education and have a full agenda of workshops facilitating best practices roundtables, and opportunities for members to work on commissions to strengthen the association and other valuable experiences to promote the growth and development of each staff member which translates to an increase of quality services provided to veterans in Veterans Upward Bound Programs.

As a reminder, the Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) is a Federal TRIO Program funded by the Department of Education with a mission to motivate pre-college veterans to complete secondary education, and enter and succeed in a program of postsecondary education. VUB stands as a beacon of hope and opportunity for our nation's veterans offering crucial support and resources. There are sixty-eight (68) dedicated programs who provide invaluable services to over 8,500 veterans. Services include academic advising to career counseling, advising on financial aid & the GI Bill, workshops on veteran benefits ensuring veterans receive the support needed to succeed in higher education. There is a core curriculum that is offered as refresher courses in the subjects of Literature, Composition, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, and Foreign Languages. VUB motivates veteran participants with college visits and cultural field trips that is designed to bring vision and reality to their educational goals. VUB remains committed to empowering veterans across the country, championing their achievements and enhancing the lives of those who have served our country.



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE ONE VETERAN AT A TIME

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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

**THE TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW.** It is critical now more than ever that our TRIO community advocates for the continuation of these programs. We continue to engage with lawmakers on Capitol Hill to expand and strengthen our programs. It is key that NAVUB/VUB Programs demonstrate the value of the TRIO Programs in every community and keep U.S. Congress and legislators informed about our programs and veteran participants. By building these relationships, and having supportive stakeholders, we are able to ensure that we have supporters in place ready to speak up and WORK for TRIO, protecting us against any future threats. **TRIO WORKS!**

**-Chevonne Neal  
President, NAVUB  
Southeastern Louisiana University**



# SERVING VETERANS SINCE 1972



National  
Association



Of Veterans  
Upward Bound

[WWW.NAVUB.ORG](http://WWW.NAVUB.ORG)