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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **THEC Awards Veterans Reconnect Grants to Tennessee Colleges**

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** – *September 21, 2018* – The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) announced today that three universities in Tennessee will receive funding and program support through additional Veteran Reconnect Grant awards to assist veterans and service members in their pursuit of college degrees. Austin Peay State University, Fisk University, and Tennessee Technological University will join 14 colleges and universities who received Veterans Reconnect Grants in for the 2018-2019 academic year.

THEC is awarding a total of \$149,896 in funding to support programs and services for student veterans at campuses in Tennessee. The agency will also provide technical assistance to Veteran Reconnect campuses around prior learning assessment for veterans. The Veteran Reconnect Grant is part of Governor Bill Haslam’s Drive to 55 initiative to increase educational attainment in the state to 55 percent by the year 2025.

The 2018 Veteran Reconnect Grant proposals focused on improving the assessment of prior learning for student veterans returning to college. Prior learning assessments (PLA) at colleges and universities examine a veteran’s prior military training and grants equivalent college credit for those skills attained during service. By utilizing PLAs, veterans can complete their postsecondary credential in an accelerated timeframe.

Institutions receiving these new grants will also develop guided academic pathways to support veterans as they transition from the military to college campuses and prepare them for the civilian workforce.

“Translating military experience into the civilian workforce can be challenging for many veterans,” said THEC Executive Director Mike Krause. “The academic pathways supported by this program will ensure we are creating enhanced opportunities for veterans to bring their leadership and technical skills to Tennessee employers.”

The 2018-2019 academic year marks the fourth year that THEC has awarded Veteran Reconnect grants to institutions. An estimated 2,100 veterans will have access to Veteran Reconnect services at the three institutions receiving grant funding.

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**2018-19 Veteran Reconnect Grants:**

Tennessee Technological University | \$50,000

Austin Peay State University | \$49,896

Fisk University | \$50,000

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***About the Tennessee Higher Education Commission***

*The Tennessee Higher Education Commission was created in 1967 by the Tennessee General Assembly. The Commission develops, implements, and 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.*