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THEC Awards Veterans Reconnect Grants to Tennessee Colleges

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – *August 7, 2018* – The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) announced today that 14 colleges and universities in Tennessee will receive funding and program support through the Veteran Reconnect Grant to assist veterans and service members in their pursuit of college degrees.

THEC is awarding \$889,277 in funding to support programs and services for student veterans at campuses across the state. THEC will also provide technical assistance to Veteran Reconnect campuses around prior learning assessment for veterans. Veteran Reconnect 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 grants are focused on improving the assessment of prior learning for student veterans returning to college. Prior learning assessment (PLA) at colleges and universities examines a veteran's prior military training and grants equivalent college credit for those skills attained during service. This results in a student veteran completing their postsecondary credential in an accelerated timeframe.

"Many veterans in Tennessee put their education on hold to serve our nation in the armed forces, and as a state, we have an obligation to support them in completing their education," Governor Haslam said. "Through the Drive to 55, we can connect veterans with the postsecondary credentials that will help them further stand out in the workforce. Veteran Reconnect is one more way that Tennessee is investing in veterans and their future."

Institutions receiving the grants will develop and implement improved evaluation processes for translating military training into academic credit, while also ensuring that prospective and incoming student veterans have easy, clear access to the information. Veteran Reconnect aligns with legislation passed last year by the Tennessee General Assembly which directs THEC to develop an online web platform to assist veterans in translating their military experience to academic credit. As part of that effort, institutions receiving grants will map out opportunities already available to students through their campuses.

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“Earning college credit for military training can be the difference between a student applying to a school, or moving on to the next opportunity,” said THEC Executive Director Mike Krause. “When a veteran is able to use credit for their military training towards their college degree, they are more likely to persist and finish their program of study.”

The current round of funding marks the fourth time THEC has awarded Veteran Reconnect grants to institutions.

2018-19 Veteran Reconnect Grants:

- Bethel University | \$58,400
- Northeast State Community College | \$80,000
- Tusculum University | \$80,000
- University of Tennessee at Knoxville | \$72,250
- Tennessee State University | \$69,200
- University of Tennessee at Martin | \$78,570
- Roane State Community College | \$80,000
- Lane College | \$66,984
- Nashville State Community College | \$71,605
- Walters State Community College | \$60,588
- Pellissippi State Community College | \$25,000
- Middle Tennessee State University | \$22,526
- East Tennessee State University | \$25,000
- University of Memphis | \$21,054

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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.