



Student Veterans of America Spring '23 Newsletter

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NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT



On January 23rd of this year, we celebrated the 15th anniversary of Student Veterans of America (SVA). As I reflect on this milestone, 15 years of student veteran success demonstrates that right and proper kind of staying power that owes all of its success to student veterans of our past and our present. I'm excited for what the future holds - and it all starts and ends with our mission.

The first quarter of 2023 has been a busy start for SVA. In January, we welcomed over 2,000 attendees at our 15th annual National Conference (NatCon) hosted at Walt Disney World's Coronado Springs Resort. In February, we announced 16 individual scholarship opportunities, totaling \$164,000. In March, our Government Affairs team represented SVA during Washington Week, hosted in our Nation's capital. Our team, comprised of SVA chapter leaders and Headquarters staff had the opportunity to present SVA's 2023 policy priorities to Congress, network with fellow student veterans, military connected students, family members, and survivors, all while experiencing the rich history of Washington, DC. March also brought the announcement of the official partnership between FourBlock and SVA to bring career readiness programming to student veterans nationwide.

The next quarter brings chapter leadership turnover, finals, and for many, graduation - a very special time of year. The SVA Headquarters team has some wonderful events, trainings, and unique opportunities planned in the months ahead. So stay tuned for more information about Regional Summits, new partnerships, and registration for NatCon 2024.

Best of luck in the months ahead and keep looking for ways to leave it better than you found it.

- Jared Lyon, National President & CEO

The quarterly newsletter is a place to learn about the behind-the-scenes work of SVA Headquarters, review SVA's most recent programming, shine a light on stellar people and chapters in the community, and remain closely informed on the months ahead. As always, SVA is here to see student veterans to, through, and beyond their higher education journey.

NATCON RECAP

The 15th annual NatCon took place January 5 -7 , 2023 at Disney's Coronado Springs bringing together over 2,200 attendees from 46 states.



Nearly 70% of student veterans who attended joined us for their very **first NatCon.**



122 education sessions were available for attendees to attend focusing on chapter management, diversity, equity & inclusion, personal development, health and well-being, policy, and research.



Over 140 Partners were represented and networked with attendees on the Campus.

We are looking forward to seeing you January 4 - 6, 2024 at our 16th annual NatCon in Nashville, Tennessee at the Gaylord Opryland Resort!

WASHINGTON WEEK



On the first days of March, SVA held its first in-person Washington Week since 2020. SVA chapter members, alums, chapter advisors, and supporters worldwide attended this multi-day event that allowed their voices to be heard in the heart of our Nation's capital. Chapter members shared their experience as student veterans with their elected officials, attended a joint congressional hearing to watch SVA present its policy priorities, networked, and experienced the rich history of Washington, DC.

To assist Washington Week attendees before arrival, SVA provided a Washington Week 101 session and the Washington Week Welcome Packet. These resources offered tips on scheduling and conducting a Hill meeting, the dos and don'ts of what to pack, Washington Week Agenda, how to tell your story, and tips on where to visit, stay, and travel in DC. SVA's Washington Week website contained the video session and packet.

In addition to those Chapter members who visited their members of Congress during Washington Week 2023, targeted member meetings occurred earlier in the week. Josh Jones (SVA's Student Veteran of the Year), Allexis Smith (SVA's Chapter of the Year-chapter leader), constituent student veterans, and SVA's Government Affairs team met with members of the Senate and House Committees on Veterans Affairs. All Hill meetings were the opportune time for student veterans to share their stories and leave behind SVA's 2023 Policy Priorities.



SVA's Washington Week ended with a reception and awards ceremony at Microsoft Innovation & Policy Center. The 2022 Sonny Montgomery Student Veteran Champion Award were awarded to US Representative Levin of California, and US Representative Moore of Alabama, for their bipartisan leadership on the 117th US House Committee of Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity. The 2022 Dwight D. Eisenhower Distinguished Public Service Award recipient was the Honorable Sue Fulton, VA's Assistant Secretary, Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs, for her many years of advocacy, and her work at VA provides the Department's key messages to many audiences.

Watch out for more information regarding Washington Week 2024 at the end of this year.

Student Veteran Spotlight



**SVA STUDENT VETERAN OF THE YEAR
JOSHUA JONES**

**SVA CHAPTER ADVISOR OF THE YEAR
JILL WOLFE**



**SVA CHAPTER OF THE YEAR
UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA**

Chapter Spotlight

Marshall University's Student Veteran Association (MUSVA) recently hosted a virtual event with 11 colleges and universities in West Virginia, which was a huge success in raising awareness about support organizations like Student Veterans of America and connecting veterans with key members from their local VA department and Veteran Centers.

Honorable Secretary Ted Diaz, West Virginia Cabinet Secretary of Veteran's Assistance, along with Daryle Bayless, Director of Communications and Legislative Affairs, Dustin Smith, a VR&E officer, and Ben Smith, a Readjustment Counselor at the local West Virginia Veteran Center, attended the event. MUSVA also invited Shawn Seguin, Wounded Warrior Project's Alumni Manager, to speak about their resources and initiatives. Student Veterans of America also had the opportunity to present our scholarships, programs, and support for veterans in higher education.

The event would not have been possible without MUSVA's Chapter President, Jamie Springston. Jamie's leadership abilities and commitment to supporting the veteran community in West Virginia were clearly demonstrated through the event's success. MUSVA plans to meet once again in-person, in collaboration with Secretary Ted Diaz and the Wounded Warrior Project.

Partner Spotlight

FOURBLOCK+
VETERAN CAREER READINESS



FourBlock is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to supporting service members in their transition from military service to meaningful civilian careers. FourBlock recently partnered with SVA to reach out and share services and programs with student veterans across the nation. "This new partnership with SVA exemplifies the power and benefit of the veteran network and works to advance the career development of veterans and their spouses, regardless of where they live and want to work." The FourBlock Career Readiness Program includes a social, cognitive, and teaching element, including instructors, coaches, and corporate partners in a friendly environment deliberately designed to help veterans overcome fears, learn how to engage in the professional world, and promote their own brand and talents.☒

The FourBlock slogan, "Transition better. Achieve more."

Alumni of the Career Readiness Program are going on to find full-time employment and internship offers, most often immediately following the program. Over 50% of FourBlock's volunteer coaches are FourBlock alumni who come back after a year of working in their new careers to coach veterans in the current program.

More information about the FourBlock - SVA partnership can be found here:

<https://studentveterans.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/SVA-FourBlock-Press-Release-scaled.jpg>

Board Spotlight



Frank Gaudio, JD
VICE-CHAIRPERSON & TREASURER

"SVA is uniquely focused in its quest to remove the barriers and promote the mentoring and connectivity needed for student veterans to access the opportunities that an education and job placement present for them. For me, serving on that kind of board - for people who do so much for our country - was, and continues to be, an honor."

"There have been many special individual experiences that have been so rewarding at SVA. But it's the accumulation of all of those, on the continuum of seeing this organization climb to the top tier of NPOs serving veterans, that has been most rewarding and memorable."

SVA DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION LIAISON

Student Veterans of America has partnered with Raytheon Technologies to develop and support our DEI efforts to create the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Liaisons. DEI Liaisons are chapter leaders who connect with the DEI administrators on their campuses to work on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, while also strengthening the campus military culture. They will represent veteran and military connected students in campus DEI discussions and activities, presenting research and data from SVA National Headquarters to help inform a campus culture that is inclusive of veterans and the community. Additionally, DEI Liaisons will work with other chapter leaders to ensure that the chapter exemplifies the ideals of inclusion within and across student organizations.

SVA DEI Liaisons will connect with others from campuses across the country at monthly DEI meetings with SVA Headquarters. They will learn how to connect with DEI Offices on their home campuses, and will coordinate with other student organizations to increase chapter inclusion and visibility. A comprehensive training for DEI Liaisons will be provided through MySVA.

If you are interested in becoming a DEI Liaison and are willing to be an advocate for the military community on your campus, or you want to learn more about the program, email: programs@studentveterans.org

LOCAL CHAPTER NEWS



Our Senior Vice President for Student Veterans, Anthony Paolino, had the privilege of attending the FourBlock event hosted by Booz Allen Hamilton in San Diego. To Paolino's pleasant surprise he bump into some Student Veterans of America chapter leaders from the SDSU Student Veteran Organization. We are thrilled to witness our Partnership with FourBlock grow.



Georgetown University Student Veterans Association and George Washington University Student Veterans Association had the honor of hosting documentary filmmaker Andrea Patiño Contreras and moderating a panel about the award-winning documentary film #IAMVanessaGuillen. The documentary addressed the military sexual violence epidemic that claimed the life of Vanessa Guillen and shared the story of other survivors, including the impact of sexual violence on mental health.



Student Veteran of the Year, Josh Jones, of Loyola University Chicago had the pleasure of having lunch with the Hon. Denis R. McDonough, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. "None of this could have happend without Student Veterans of America finding and fueling my passion to help veterans and the Chicago Brigade for helping me continue my mission. Thanks for everyone that has supported us through our work helping veterans."

SCHOLARSHIPS

General Eligibility Requirements:

- Honorable Discharge (including honorable under general conditions)
- Minimum 3.0 GPA (Proof of Transcript Required)
- Planned enrollment at a 4-Year University for the full 2023/2024 Academic Year
- Have already completed at least 1 full year of College/University (Unofficial Transcript required)

***See SVA's Scholarship Page for most up to date eligibility/application requirements including award specific requirements.

Opening Soon! Google-SVA Scholarship

Application open: 4/18/23 - 5/15/23

As part of Google's commitment to military veterans, the company partners with SVA each year to fund scholarships. The scholarship provides assistance to student veterans who are pursuing university degrees in the field of computer science in the U.S. Selected students will receive \$10,000 for the upcoming school year.



Eligibility

Student veterans must meet the following criteria to apply for the Google SVA Scholarship:

- Currently enrolled as an undergraduate at a university for the 2023-2024 academic year or intend to be enrolled in or accepted as a full-time student at a university in the United States for the 2023-2024 academic year.
- Maintaining a strong academic performance.
- Pursuing a Computer Science or Computer Engineering degree, or a degree in a closely related technical field*.
- Must be a current student veteran (includes members of the National Guard or Reserve) as proven by a DD- 214 and transcript, or a student on Active Duty as proven by submission of - Active Duty orders and a Memorandum of Understanding from your commanding officer indicating that you are currently in good standing with your unit and transcript.
- Has received an honorable discharge or is in good standing with his/her branch of service.

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