

Community partners identification assignment



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There are several important groups that I would want to get letters of support from that operate in the community. These groups have demonstrated an interest in the health and welfare of veterans over the years. Some of them are founded specifically for this purpose so gaining their support for a program that helps veterans adjust to university life should fit nicely with their established mission statements.

The first group I would solicit for the content of a letter is the local chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, or VFW as it is more commonly known. The VFW would be a great place to start soliciting these letters because all of the men and women that are members of this society are veterans and have experienced the difficulties related to adjusting to life after service and combat. There is also a need on the behalf of the VFW to engage these new returning veterans. Many posts recognize the need to recruit young veterans to sustain the organization into the future. Supporting the program could be good public relations for local VFW chapters near the university.

Another veteran's organization is the AMVETS. This is an advocacy group for American veterans. They already sponsor several scholarship funds, so their commitment to education for returning veterans is already demonstrated. The AMVETS have an outstanding communications network, so a letter of support offering help by making the university program known to returning veterans would be especially helpful.

Other groups outside the university could include major educational and social foundations that are not directly linked to veterans or the military. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is dedicated to improving education in America. While their focus is on K-12 education, the organization also deals with some higher education concerns.

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Within the university community, the first group to be contacted with for a letter would be the office of the Dean of Continuing Education or the department that oversees non-traditional students. These returning veterans are mostly the age of many undergraduates, but their service in the military places them in a different category than a student coming to college straight from high school or prep school. Some of their needs will be different, especially if they have served in very stressful situations. The mental health services at the university should be contacted so a letter of arranged services is described for these returning veterans. Posttraumatic stress disorder is a barrier to success in nearly all aspects of civilian life, including education.

Another letter should be solicited from the student union organization. This student body could be requested to organize social events that help these young veterans to transition to university and civilian life. Campus based activities that are designed to form friendships among students of different backgrounds and experiences should be made available to these veterans. The list of organizations outside the university and within that should be enlisted to send letters of support for the veteran's program is extensive. These are only a few suggestions to start with.