

STUDENT VETERANS ASSOCIATION



PORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Southeast Campus
Mount Tabor Hall 110

February 6, 2017

We are the Co-Coordinator of the Portland Community College Southeast Campus Student Veterans Association (SVA), a Chapter of the Student Veterans of America. We attend PCC Southeast using VA Post-9/11 GI Bill and Vocational Rehabilitation benefits. The SVA is the recognized student organization representing Student Veterans at Southeast Campus. PCC Southeast is the only PCC Campus that does not have a Veterans Resource Center (VRC).

Student veterans face many challenges entering the academic setting. Our military careers were based on structure, teamwork, and peer connections. Student veterans often struggle with acclimation and acculturation to the college environment, particularly its lack of structure for the student, compared to military life.

80% of us are over the age of 25, and we feel out of place, and that we don't fit in with the typical 18 to 21-year-old community college student population. Our life experiences are so vastly different from those of our classmates that it can be difficult for us to relate to each other.

It would certainly be beneficial for student veterans at PCC Southeast Campus to have a Veterans Resource Center, a dedicated space with study tables, couches and comfortable seating for student veterans to study and relax in a welcoming setting, to promote camaraderie, mutual support, and a sense of community... offering opportunities for peer mentoring, VA work-study campus jobs, and a space for a student veterans organization to hold meetings and activities. Preliminary research shows that the best predictor of Veterans' success in college is being connected with a community of fellow Veterans who can help them adjust and cope with the challenges they face in making 2 separate transitions simultaneously - from the military to the civilian and the academic environment.

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