



**THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM AND OPERATION COLLEGE PROMISE
ANNOUNCE LAUNCH OF THE *VETERANS EDUCATION SUPPORT NETWORK*, AN
ONLINE INTERACTIVE RESOURCE FOR VETERANS' SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Joint Listserv Project to Link Hundreds of Campuses Nationwide

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TRENTON, NJ - The Texas A&M University System and Operation College Promise (OCP) announced today a new collaborative communications effort to support veterans' service providers and their military-affiliated enrollees on college and university campuses across the country. Through the project—the *Veterans Education Support Network (VESN)*—the A&M System's extensive Military Friendly Listserv will be joined by hundreds of professionals from institutions across the country that have completed OCP's Certificate for Veterans' Service Providers (CVSP) training. The result will be the nation's largest interactive network of higher education veterans' support specialists.

The A&M System launched its Military Friendly Listserv in 2010 in response to requests to create better ways for veterans' support and services staff to share information. Initially intended for the A&M System members, it rapidly expanded to include more than 325 participants from institutions of higher learning, as well as a variety of local, state and federal agencies. It is the only Listserv of its kind, directed primarily to those who provide front-line support to student veterans and is frequently used by government agencies to disseminate information to the higher education community.

Through partnership with OCP, the Military Friendly Listserv will more than double in size, becoming one of the nation's foremost channels for coordination and networking on all issues affecting student veterans, from education, to health, and to jobs.

"Our Military Friendly Listserv has provided yet another example of the A&M System's historic and crucial role in supporting America's military and veteran communities," said Texas A&M System Chancellor John Sharp. "Joining forces with Operation College Promise

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and the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities creates a truly national partnership that will exponentially increase the power of communications on behalf of America's student veterans, military personnel and their families wherever they study, live or are deployed. This kind of service has been at the core of the A&M System since our land grant flagship in College Station was created in 1876. It's an honor to join OCP in continuing our mutual mission of service to this population."

The primary professional development program of OCP is the signature CVSP program—a two and one-half day curriculum to support veterans' service providers to become better equipped to serve their military-affiliated population. The VESN joint Listserv project will enable participants in the six previous CVSP trainings to interact with the current A&M Listserv members along with both members of their CVSP class and attendees from other regions of the country. To date, over 500 professionals from about 30 states—representing higher education and the non-profit sector—have attended this programming which has been held in New Jersey, Texas, North Carolina and California.

"Having spent 13 years at Texas A&M, I have witnessed the university's ongoing commitment to their military-affiliated students first-hand, a tradition I am pleased to emulate," said Herman J. Saatkamp, President of the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. "With more than 400 of our students having served or currently serving in the military—we continue to strive to support them in their next mission—that of attaining a college degree. We are proud to be a founding member of Operation College Promise and the host of the inaugural CVSP, which through this new dynamic partnership with A&M, will continue to lead the way in finding collaborations and disseminating innovative practices for professionals serving this population. Together, this initiative will benefit thousands of our nation's bravest as they reintegrate to our campuses and beyond."

For information on joining the VESN, please contact Lauren DelRicci at: lmelricci@njascu.org

Operation College Promise (OCP): *Operation College Promise (OCP) is a national policy, research and education program based in Trenton, New Jersey, which supports the transition and postsecondary advancement of our nation's veterans. The program's mission is to support student veterans "To, Through and Beyond" the attainment of their higher education objectives. Founded in 2008 as a web-based resource, the project was initiated by the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities (NJASCU) to centralize transition information for servicemembers on a comprehensive website. For more information, visit: www.OperationCollegePromise.com*

About the A&M System: *The A&M System is one of the largest systems of higher education in the nation, with a budget of \$3.3 billion. Through a statewide network of 11 universities, nine state agencies and a comprehensive health science center, the A&M System educates more than 120,000 students and makes more than 22 million additional educational contacts through service and outreach programs each year. Externally funded research expenditures exceed \$780 million and help drive the state's economy.*

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