



VETERANS EDUCATION SUCCESS

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Congressman Bobby Scott meets with Virginia Veterans about GI Bill Issues

*Active duty and former service-members earn educational benefits through
Honorable service, but some schools target veterans with dishonorable practices*

NEWPORT NEWS, VA – U.S. Congressman Bobby Scott (D-VA) yesterday met with a group of Virginia military veterans who were targeted for fraud when they utilized their GI Bill educational benefits. From excessive fees to withholding transcripts to signing students up for loans they had not authorized, Virginia veterans have faced numerous unethical practices by schools eager to cash in on their federal benefits.

Raymond Lowe served in the U.S. Navy from 1997 until 2010. During his second combat deployment in 2005, he was cited for extraordinary heroism when he bravely drew insurgent fire towards his own position and away from his teammates. For his actions, Raymond was awarded a Bronze Star with Valor, and he earned the first battlefield promotion in the Naval Department since Vietnam. Raymond returned from deployment, and in 2007 while working as a corpsman instructor at Great Lakes Naval station, he used Tuition Assistance to earn his Bachelor's degree in Health Science from Excelsior College online.

In 2009, he completed his Master's degree with Touro College, also with DoD tuition assistance. Prior to his retirement and Honorable discharge from the Navy in 2010, Raymond enrolled in an online PhD program at Capella University, which he continued as a civilian with his GI Bill benefits. At first things appeared normal. Raymond promptly completed his coursework and comprehensive exam. However, things deteriorated when he entered the program's final dissertation stage. Incredibly, for the next four years, Capella added countless unnecessary delays that seemed designed to draw out his GI Bill benefits, which eventually ran out. At the cost of several thousand dollars a semester, Raymond was forced to take on over \$165,000 in student loans. He is currently employed as a regional manager with the U.S. Navy.

Kip Malone served in the U.S. Navy from 1994 to 2001. After his Honorable discharge, in 2007 he used his Montgomery GI Bill benefits to attend ITT Technical Institute in Norfolk where he first earned an Associate's degree in Visual Communications, then a Bachelor's degree in Project Management. During his time at ITT Tech, Kip encountered many issues that negatively affected the quality of his education. For example, students were only given trial software for

required projects, which forced students to acquire their software through other means. Supplied books were often outdated, there were no test-preparation materials for a mandatory project manager exam, and the post-graduation career services that were promised fell flat. In addition, Kip's GI Bill benefits eventually ran out and he had to take out \$10,000 in student loans to finish his Bachelor's. From there he continued his education at DeVry University in Norfolk, where he earned two Master's degrees; one in Project Management, the other in Public Administration. Despite his military service and extensive educational training, Kip remains unemployed and unable to locate suitable employment in his field. With a wife and children to care for, he has nearly \$64,000 in student loan debt.

Brandon Fabiani enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 2001, where he currently operates as an Electronics Engineer. During his enlistment, Brandon used DoD Tuition Assistance to attend East Coast Polytechnic Institute. However, due to dramatic cost increases from the school, Brandon also had to use Tuition Assistance Top-Up, which utilized his GI Bill educational benefits to cover the difference. By the time he finished his Bachelor's degree with ECPI, Brandon had used most of his GI Bill benefits in addition to accruing \$16,000 in student loan debt.

"We thank Congressman Scott for meeting with these veterans today, and offering his assistance," said Sean Marvin, Legal Director at Veterans Education Success, which provides free assistance to veterans who were deceived or defrauded by a college. "Too many colleges see veterans as nothing more than a revenue source. Our schools should treat America's heroes with honor and respect, and not as targets for consumer fraud."

Lawmakers in Congress have taken action to restore benefits to some student veterans who, through no fault of their own, were targeted with fraudulent and deceptive practices by unethical colleges and schools. For example, H.R. 3218, the 'Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017' recently passed the House of Representatives and Senate by unanimous votes, and awaits signature by the President. Congressman Scott is an original co-sponsor of this legislation, the full text of which you can read [here](#).

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