



VETERANS
EDUCATION SUCCESS

2020 Annual Report

A Voice for Military-Connected Students

KEY WINS

SECURING BIPARTISAN SUPPORT & LEGAL CRACKDOWNS

"Protect the GI Bill Act": After many years of educating policymakers, we secured unanimous passage in Congress for:

- Risk-based reviews of schools;
- No GI Bill for fake law schools and schools cut off by the Education Department or accreditors;
- Clear information for veterans to choose a school;
- Restoring GI Bill when schools close or are disapproved;
- Stopping deceptive and aggressive recruiting;
- Protecting veterans from tuition clawbacks and holding schools accountable (bringing VA in line with Education Department methods);
- Providing in-state tuition for all veterans, regardless of state residency.

COVID Response: We helped Congress address COVID student relief and funding to digitize the GI Bill, and pushed back against restrictions on veterans' getting COVID aid.

Borrower Defense: We worked hard to achieve a strong bipartisan rebuke in Congress of Betsy DeVos' Borrower Defense rule. Our [TV Ad on Fox News](#) urged President Trump to stand with veterans.

Legal Wins: We [exposed](#) illegal practices by colleges & websites and demanded a government response. We also secured 2 court wins for students' rights against loan servicers, successfully cut off 2 scam schools from GI Bill, and aided state AGs.

State Laws: Our successful state-level [work](#) brought new Maryland laws closing the 90/10 loophole, requiring orderly school closures, and tracking "covert" for-profit colleges, as well as a similar California law on "covert" for-profits.

Consumer Education: We successfully urged the Defense Department to ensure Sen\$e app, on every servicemember's smartphone, now features VA's video we helped on, "[Know Before You Go](#)," to help veterans make a good college choice and avoid predatory colleges.

IN THE NEWS

DRIVING THE CONVERSATION & NARRATIVE

TV Ad on Fox

Our TV Ad on *Fox News* talked directly to President Trump about veterans' need for Borrower Defense.

Quoted in Media

Our team was quoted in more than 84 major news outlets including the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*.

Op-Eds & Advice Columns

We published:

- 6 op-eds in national news outlets
- 6 policy blogs
- 4 advice columns in *Military Times* and *Military.com* on what student veterans need to know during COVID, how to handle student loans, and the loan rights of disabled veterans

Press Conferences

We spoke at 4 press conferences on:

- Servicemembers' student loan rights
- Betsy DeVos' borrower defense rule (House and Senate)
- Disabled veterans' student loan rights

Learn [more](#) about how we're in the news.

Veterans Education Success 2020

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

A TRUSTED SOURCE FOR EXPERTISE & INSIGHT

We testified four times and submitted 10 Statements for the Record on COVID-19, oversight and accountability for colleges, and more.



Vice President Tanya Ang testified before the House Veterans Affairs Economic Opportunity Subcommittee on our legislative priorities for 2021

Learn [more](#) about our policy advocacy.



State Policy Manager Ramond Curtis testified before the Oregon Senate Education Committee about the 90/10 loophole and before the Maryland House Economic Matters Committee about abusive debt collection tactics



Research Director Walter Ochinko testified before the National Advisory Council on Institutional Quality and Integrity about accreditor quality and compliance

ELEVATING VETERAN VOICES

LEADING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATING THE PUBLIC

We help servicemembers and veterans speak up to educate policymakers and the public.

Nearly 100 veterans participated in our advocacy actions this year, sending emails to federal and state policymakers about their experiences in college.

We elevated 40+ veterans' voices in 2 Congressional press conferences, 5 testimonies, 10 meetings with Congressional offices, a House Committee report, a national conference, a student panel for 20+ congressional offices, a student panel for *Stars & Stripes*, 8 major national news stories, and 5 YouTube social media videos.

"While it has taken over 12 years, lots of tears and frustration, it is a relief now. It gives me hope that these predatory schools will finally be caught and made to pay for their actions."

- Raylynn M., Military Spouse

LEGAL ADVOCACY

DRIVING CHANGE THROUGH LAW ENFORCEMENT & THE COURTS

Casework: We helped nearly 450 veterans with their consumer & GI Bill rights.

Law-Breaking Colleges: We exposed—and petitioned the FTC and VA to act against—illegal practices by:

- The University of Phoenix
- Colorado Technical University
- Ashford University (twice)
- A cult bible college
- A scam dog training school
- A coding boot camp

Deceptive Websites: We petitioned the FTC to act against deceptive websites and also against schools that paid for illegal websites.

Student Loan Rights: We filed court briefs for veterans' GI Bill rights and for bankruptcy protection for student loans. In addition, courts in the 11th Circuit and Montana ruled in our favor to allow students to use state law to sue loan servicers.

Whistleblowers: We worked with whistleblowers from half a dozen colleges, bringing their information to law enforcement.

Law Enforcement: We alerted California to a coding boot camp's illegal actions. We helped 4 state Attorneys General with victims, whistleblowers, and evidence of illegal practices by colleges, and asked states to take action against the University of Phoenix.

"I was devastated without any light at the end of the tunnel before working with Veterans Education Success."

- Senna, GI Bill Student

RESEARCH

CONTENT THAT MAKES AN IMPACT

Learn [more](#) about our research and reports.

Investigative

Analysis:
Advertising Trends for Selected Postsecondary Institutions During COVID-19 Pandemic

Report:

COVID-19 and Postsecondary Enrollment: Lessons from the Last Recession

Report:

Veterans' Use of Private Student Loans: A Primer

Report:

Impact of Disability on First-Time Veterans' Persistence and Attainment

Report:

Coronavirus-Related Legislation: It's Relevance to GI Bill and Other VA-Supported Students

Report:

Post-9/11 GI Bill: Teasing Out Insights About Veterans' Success in Postsecondary Education

Factsheet:

Schools with Repeat Law Enforcement Settlements

Factsheet:

Are Student Veterans Going to Be Denied Access to CARES Act Emergency Relief Funds?

Factsheet:

Analysis of Allocation of Higher Education Relief Funds for Coronavirus Across Sector

Factsheet:

Oregon: Institutional Sector Comparisons

Factsheet:

Maryland: Institutional Sector Comparisons

Factsheet:

New York: Institutional Sector Comparisons

RACIAL JUSTICE & EQUITY

STANDING UP FOR VETERANS OF COLOR

America must ensure equity and access to higher education for students of color because an education is the path to economic success. This is especially true for the veteran & military community, which is significantly more racially diverse than the general population.

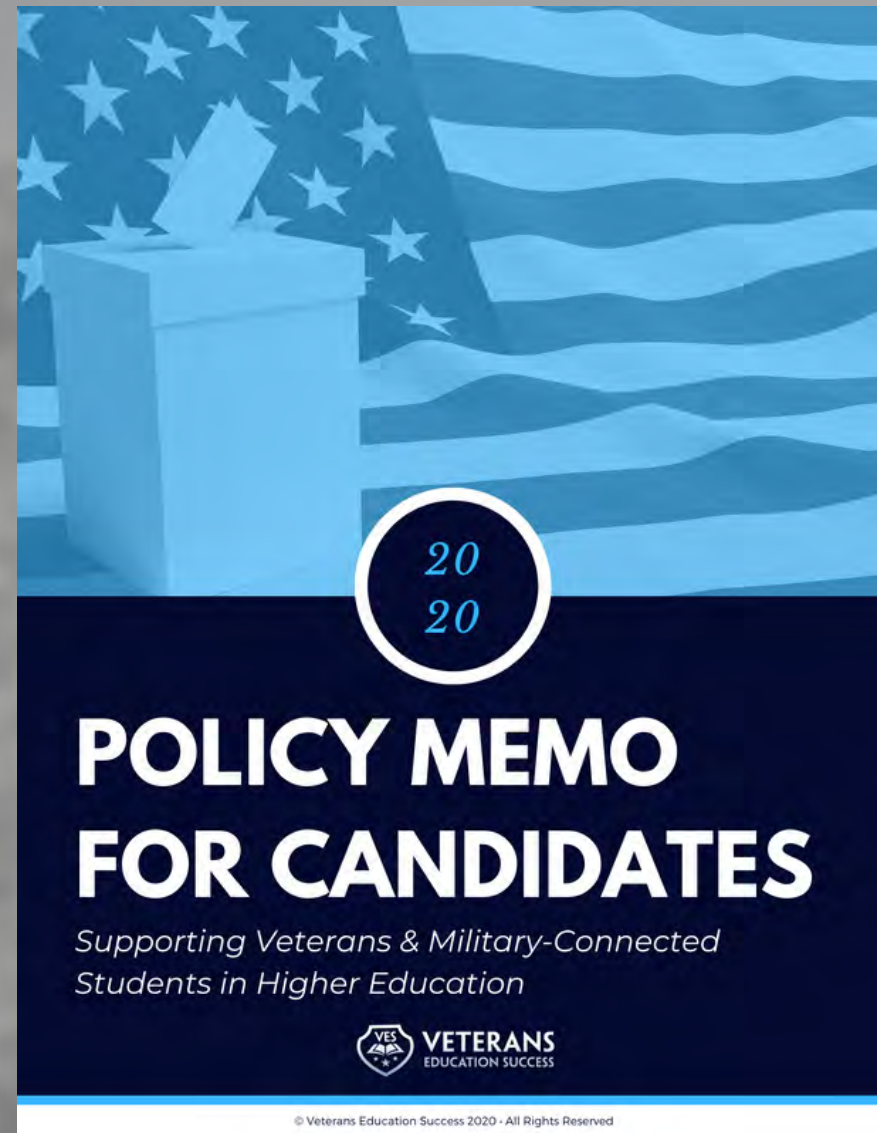
We hired a Director of Racial Justice to elevate racial equity concerns in veterans' education policy and transition to civilian life and we spoke out in support of race-conscious admissions policies and closing the educational attainment gap for veterans of color.



Isaac McMahan
Director of Racial Justice

NEXT GENERATION OF POLICY

INFORMING NEW POLICYMAKERS ABOUT THE KEY ISSUES



"We applaud Veterans Education Success for producing a sensible and straightforward guide for empowering states to protect students, especially veterans, service members, and military families." - Brian Frosh, Maryland Attorney General

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