

February 26, 2026

Vanessa Gomez,
U.S. Department of Education,
Office of Postsecondary Education,
400 Maryland Avenue SW, 5th floor,
Washington, DC 20202
via email to negregnominations@ed.gov

Docket ID ED-2025-OPE-1042

Dear Ms. Gomez,

The undersigned submit the following nominations for consideration for the upcoming negotiated rulemaking Committee on Accreditation, Innovation, and Modernization (AIM).

These nominations reflect the interests of servicemembers, veterans, and military family members who are directly affected by the regulations expected to be developed through this process. The nominees are advanced to ensure representation of U.S. military servicemembers and veterans on the Committee.

Each nominee is prepared to participate in the negotiated rulemaking process in a nonpartisan manner and to engage substantively across the range of issues anticipated before the Committee.

- *Primary: Julie Howell, Associate Legislative Director for Government Relations, Paralyzed Veterans of America*
JulieH@pva.org, 202-416-7695, 1875 Eye Street NW Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20006

Julie Howell is a 5-year Army veteran who deployed twice to Iraq. Transitioning from the military, Julie pursued her passion for culinary arts, honing her skills as a chef for over a decade before returning to academia. Utilizing her GI Bill benefits, she earned a BA in History followed by a master's degree in public policy through the VR&E program. Julie's journey into veteran advocacy began during her undergraduate years, where she served as a research and policy intern for Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA). Continuing her commitment, she worked as the Veteran Program Coordinator at the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) while pursuing her graduate studies. Currently, at Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), Julie leads a dynamic portfolio focusing on veteran economic opportunity, disability benefits, and issues affecting women veterans. Her expertise extends to broader policy areas concerning the disability community, particularly in employment and housing. Additionally, Julie served as the alternate negotiator for the rulemaking Committee on Accountability in Higher Education and Access

through Demand-driven Workforce Pell (AHEAD), and the Department would greatly from her experience serving on that Committee.

- *Alternate: Steven Betsch, Policy Associate, National Veterans Employment and Education Division, The American Legion*
sbetsch@legion.org, 202-263-2982, 1608 K Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20006

Steven Betsch works on veteran education and employment policy at The American Legion, where he focuses on how federal education programs function for veterans in practice. He is a former U.S. Navy Petty Officer Second Class with five years of active-duty service and brings that operational perspective to his policy work. After leaving the Navy, Steven used his own education benefits to earn a bachelor's degree in political science and later a master's degree in public administration at American University. While in school, he worked directly with student veterans as the Veteran Services Coordinator and later the Assistant Director of Veterans Services, supporting benefits administration, compliance, and day-to-day problem-solving for veteran students navigating higher education systems. He also currently chairs the American University Veteran Alumni Network, maintaining close ties with veterans transitioning from service to education and civilian careers.

We believe that together, Ms. Howell and Mr. Betsch, combine deep expertise in these regulatory topics with the direct knowledge of the interests of service members, veterans, families, and survivors that the Department seeks to include in the process. They are both committed to participating in good faith and would do their utmost to contribute to the work of the Committee.

Signed and submitted on behalf of:

Paralyzed Veterans of America
The American Legion
Commissioned Officers Association of the USPHS
Elizabeth Dole Foundation
Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America
Jewish War Veterans of the USA
Military Officers Association of America
Minority Veterans of America
National Association of State Approving Agencies
National Military Family Association
Student Veterans of America
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors
Veterans for Common Sense
Vietnam Veterans of America