

Date: July 13, 2011

To: Dr. Greg Chamberlain, President

From: Dr. Joyce C. Ester, Associate Vice President for Student Services

RE: Veterans Resource Center Update

With your endorsement and support, I have convened a group of campus and community members who have been charged with the creation of a Veterans' Resource Center. Since our first meeting on May 3, 2011 members of the group have been meeting collectively and in small workgroups to accomplish our task. In order to complete our task, there are some items that require the assistance from the college. Below you will find a list of tasks and/or action items that need to be addressed before we can open the Center in Fall 2011 as anticipated.

1. Location: Attached you will find a document that gives a synopsis of our comparison of possible campus spaces. Of the three spaces, the space formerly used by the Martin Luther King Center (now being used for storage) is the optimal space. Identification of the space allows us to better plan for the services and activities that we can offer.
2. In addition to setting up an account in the foundation office, we have requested donations and monetary resources from the Wounded Heroes Funds. Because there is a need to have staffing in the space, the majority of the funds received initially will be used to support staffing for the Center. We have been informed that there are ways to get low or no cost Veteran's assistance in the form of student workers but there has to be supervision. Until external funds can be secured, we are requesting financial support from the College. I am requesting that because the Veterans' Resource Center will be a resource and specifically for students who are Veterans that the Student Development Fund be used for this purpose for an initial 2 year period. The approximate cost of a full time staff member (including benefits) is about \$85,000 (about \$29,000 part time). The amount contributed by the College would decrease as a result of external funds received. Operational costs of the Center is anticipated to be about \$5,000 to cover the printing of promotional and resource material and to fund a "grand opening celebration". (We will look for sponsors for this event to defray the costs.)
3. There have been many community members who have expressed interest in serving as resources and to staff the Center as appropriate (District volunteer forms have been distributed). It is unclear as to the kind of supervision needed for the Center i.e. does there have to be a Bakersfield College employee there at all times or can the Center be open with an approved volunteer? This information will help us to determine the hours that the Center can be open in the absence of a dedicated staff member. Current Student Services employees can be used as appropriate (based on classification) to provide on-site service to students as an option for staffing.

It has been a pleasure to work with a very dedicated group of campus and community members. Members of the group include Veterans, Civilians, Therapists, Counselors, Religious Leaders, and Activists. In addition to their commitment to the cause, each of them brings with them additional connections and resources that will help Bakersfield College better serve our students who are veterans. We are dedicated and committed to seeing this project become a reality and need to know what else we need to do to move this project forward.

With a focus on student success, the establishment of a Veterans' Resource Center on the campus will provide dedicated resources for a segment of our population who's success depends on the ability to navigate the transition from "Service to Student". Thank you for your support of this endeavor. I and other members of the group will be happy to meet with you to respond to any questions or concerns you have and to do whatever it takes to make this a reality.

Encl:

1. List of Committee members
2. Space comparisons
3. Document sent to Wounded Heroes fund requesting donations.