

Veterans Corner
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By: Robert G. Mitchell

Post 9/11 GI Bill Benefits

New York State Division of Veterans Affairs Director James McDonough has assigned a full time counselor in Saratoga Springs to assist veterans with the New GI Education Bill. For more information contact Dan Yates at 587-2100 X 2871 or the VA Education Office at 1-888-442-4551.

Improve GI Bill Benefits

Over 1,100 colleges, universities and schools across the country have entered into "yellow Ribbon" program agreements with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to improve financial aid for Veterans participating in the Post 9/11 GI Bill.

Over, 3,400 agreements were received from the 1,100 schools participating in the Yellow Ribbon Program. "This is a strong response to a new benefit," Keith Wilson, Director of VA's Education Service, said. "We are pleased so many institutions are supporting our veterans."

The Yellow Ribbon program is reserved for Veterans eligible for the Post 9/11 GI Bill at the 100 Percent Benefit Level. This includes those who served at least 36 month on active duty or served at least 30 continuous days and were discharged due to a service-related injury.

The Post 9/11 GI Bill, passed by Congress last year, is the most extensive educational assistance program authorized since the original GI Bill was signed into law in 1944.

The Maximum benefit allows every eligible Veteran, service member, reservist and National Guard member an opportunity to receive an in-state, undergraduate education at a public institution at no cost.

Provisions of the program include payments for tuition and fees, housing, and a books and supplies stipend. Benefits are payable for training pursued on or after August 1, 2009. The tuition and fee benefit is paid directly to the school. For more information call Dan Yates at 58-2100 X 2871 or the VA at 1-888-442-4551.

Supreme Court Says Deceased Employee's Ex-Wife Can get his Pension Benefits

A recent Supreme Court Decision, which is now the law of the land, illustrates the importance of making sure your beneficiary designations are up to date. The court has

unanimously ruled that an employer must distribute a deceased employee's retirement benefits to his ex-wife even though she has renounced the benefits in their divorce.

William Kennedy worked for DuPont Co. and had a retirement plan through the company. His wife, Liv, was the designated beneficiary of the plan. In 1994, William and Liv divorced and the divorce decree stated that Liv waived the right to any of William's retirement plans. However, William never changed the beneficiary designation on his retirement plan.

When William dies his daughter, who was the Executrix of his estate, asked DuPont to distribute the plan to the estate. But DuPont relied on William's beneficiary designation and instead distributed the plan benefits, totaling \$402,000, to Liv.

In an opinion written by Justice David Souter, the U.S. Supreme Court agrees with the Court of Appeals and holds that according to ERISA, DuPont had to follow William's instructions on the original document and distribute the retirement benefits to Liv. The Court notes that William could have changed the beneficiary designation, but he chose not to.

The bottom line, you need to keep your beneficiary designation up to date, to ensure that the person you want to receive the death benefits from your retirement, is the person who will receive the death benefits.

FREE CAR WASH

Hoffman's Car Wash is inviting all active duty and former members of the military to have their vehicle (or vehicles) washed free of charge on Veterans Day, Wednesday November 11th. It is our way of thanking these men and women for the sacrifices that they have made in services to our country.

The only requirement is that the person coming through the car wash let our employees know that they are either active duty or former military. There is no need to show any type of identification – we will take them at their word. If they have more than one vehicle, they are more than welcome to come back through again, and again, and again.