

January 12, 2009

Dear Higher Education Executive,

You recently received an informational letter about the Yellow Ribbon Program. The Yellow Ribbon Program is a benefit authorized under the Post-9/11 GI Bill that allows your institution to enter into an agreement with VA to provide additional assistance to individuals who are charged tuition and fees that exceed the highest public in-State undergraduate rate in your State.

Purpose

This letter provides you with detailed information on the terms of the agreement that VA proposes to use to implement the Yellow Ribbon Program to assist you in determining if your institution will participate in the program. VA published a proposed rule on December 23, 2008, that includes the terms listed in this letter. The proposed rule is open for comments through January 22, 2009, and is available for viewing at www.regulations.gov. If your institution is interested in participating in the Yellow Ribbon Program, please complete and return the attached survey. The information on the survey will be used to estimate the level of participation in the program and notify the public of schools that anticipate participating.

Participation Requirements

VA proposes that institutions participating in the Yellow Ribbon Program will:

- Provide contributions to eligible individuals who apply for the Yellow Ribbon Program, on a first-come, first-served basis, regardless of the rate at which the individual is pursuing training in any given academic year;
- Provide contributions during the current academic year and all subsequent academic years in which the student maintains satisfactory progress, conduct, and attendance according to the regularly prescribed standards of the institution;
- Make contributions toward the program on behalf of the individual in the form of a waiver;
- Waive the same percentage (up to 50 percent) of established charges that exceed the in-State maximum for all eligible individuals in any given academic year; and
- State the maximum number of new Yellow Ribbon Program applicants for whom contributions will be made in any given academic year.

VA will match the amount that is waived by the institution, up to 50 percent of the amount that exceeds the highest public in-State undergraduate rate in your State. For example, a student attending your institution is charged tuition and fees that are \$10,000 greater than the highest public in-state undergraduate tuition rate in your State. Your institution has entered into an agreement to waive

50 percent of the tuition and fees that exceed the in-State maximum. Under the Yellow Ribbon Program, your institution would waive \$5,000 and VA would send the other \$5,000 via electronic funds transfer directly to your institution on the student's behalf.

Yellow Ribbon Program Participating Institutions

Veterans, Reservists and Guard members, Active-Duty servicemembers, and dependents will be able to view a list of potential Yellow Ribbon Program participating institutions beginning on April 1, 2009, on the Search for Approved Programs link at www.gibill.va.gov. Additionally, individuals will be able to view the maximum number of new Yellow Ribbon Program applicants for which contributions will be provided and the percentage the institution plans to waive for each participant during the 2009-2010 academic year.

Yellow Ribbon Program Payments

Benefits are payable for training pursued on or after August 1, 2009. Your institution's VA certifying official will be responsible for certifying Yellow Ribbon Program students. VA will update its training information for VA certifying officials to include specific instructions for completing enrollment certifications. The institution will be responsible for documenting the number of students certified for the Yellow Ribbon Program and ensuring it limits the certification of newly admitted individuals to the number of individuals designated in the agreement. VA will send tuition and fee payments and Yellow Ribbon Program payments for eligible students via electronic funds transfer directly to the institution after the enrollment certification is received and processed. Institutions will be able to distinguish Yellow Ribbon Program payments from other tuition and fee payments. Any charges above what is covered by tuition benefits, VA matching funds, and the institution's contribution will be the responsibility of the student.

Yellow Ribbon Program Agreement

VA will notify institutions when the formal Yellow Ribbon Program Agreement is available. The agreement may then be downloaded from VA's website at www.gibill.va.gov. Institutions will be required to confirm participation in the Yellow Ribbon Program on an annual basis. Formal agreements must be signed by a designated individual who is authorized (in writing) to enter contracts with other entities, including VA. The agreement will become effective upon its acceptance by a duly authorized officer of VA.

Yellow Ribbon Program Survey

If your institution anticipates participating in the Yellow Ribbon Program, please complete the enclosed Yellow Ribbon Program Survey, and return it to VA. All surveys should be received by February 27, 2009. Surveys may be emailed to

the Yellow Ribbon Program corporate mailbox at yellow.ribbon@va.gov or sent via postal mail to the following address:

Department of Veterans Affairs
Education Service (Yellow Ribbon Program)
810 Vermont Ave NW
Washington, DC 20420

Additional Information

VA will determine the highest public in-state undergraduate tuition rate in your state by reviewing information obtained from public institutions, with the assistance of your State Approving Agency. We will post the tuition rates by State on our website at a later date. You can find more detailed information on the Yellow Ribbon Program on the Information for Educational Professionals link at www.gibill.va.gov, or you may send specific questions to the Yellow Ribbon Program corporate mailbox.

VA looks forward to working with IHLs to provide the best educational opportunities possible to our nation's veterans and their dependents.

Sincerely,

Keith M. Wilson
Director, Education Service

Enclosure

YELLOW RIBBON PROGRAM SURVEY

If your institution anticipates participating in the Yellow Ribbon Program, please complete the following.

1. Name of Institution:

2. Address of Institution:

3. Facility Code (if known):

4. Dates of the 2009-2010 Academic Year:

5. Maximum number of individuals for which the institution anticipates providing contributions:

6. Percentage anticipated to be waived for each participating individual:

7. Yellow Ribbon Program Contact Information (name, email, telephone number):

Surveys may be emailed to the Yellow Ribbon Program corporate mailbox at yellow.ribbon@va.gov or sent via postal mail to the following address:

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Education Service (Yellow Ribbon Program)
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