



## **Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California Signs Partnership with Excelsior College® to Draw Younger Vets Seeking Educational Opportunity**

*VFW spouses and domestic partners are also eligible for Excelsior degree programs, with reduced tuition and fees under new statewide education partnership*

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**Sacramento, CA** – The Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California has signed an [education partnership agreement](#) with Excelsior College®, a regionally accredited nonprofit distance learning institution based in Albany, New York.

The California initiative reflects a national VFW goal: to attract younger veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars who are returning home and considering their higher education options. Under the new agreement California VFW members, their spouses and domestic partners are eligible for [reduced tuition and fees](#) for degree programs in Excelsior's schools of Liberal Arts, Health Sciences, Business and Technology and Nursing.

In addition to extensive online programming, Excelsior is also home to Excelsior College® Examinations, an extensive credit-by-examination program that provides an additional option for degree completion.

Among the estimated 2 million veterans living in California, approximately 95,000 are members of the California VFW and its 360 posts around the state. An estimated 30,000 veterans are between the ages of 25 and 55, similar to the age of Excelsior's adult students who are pursuing degree completion.

“We need to welcome our younger members, and this is another way of providing a truly valuable membership benefit,” said James R. Rowoldt, state adjutant/quartermaster of the VFW, Department of California.

"Excelsior College is pleased and excited about its new relationship with the California VFW," said Excelsior President John F. Ebersole. "As a long-time former resident of California while on active duty and later, I have observed the positive role that veterans play in the life of the state. We are honored to partner with the California VFW to assist these men and women in continuing their education."

Similar partnerships are in place between Excelsior and VFW departments in New York, Vermont and Nevada. In New York, [the partnership has already begun to pay off](#) for VFW members.

Excelsior College, established in 1971, has a long and successful history of providing education to veterans and service members. The College has an extensive range of support services tailored to veterans, including financial counseling on veteran benefits and other financial aid and academic advisors who are veterans themselves. The College offers a range of academic support programs and career counseling services tailored to veterans.

The College accepts prior military training in the form of academic transfer credit based on recommendations from the American Council on Education's Military Evaluations Program. Each year, Excelsior accepts approximately 50,000 military training program credits per year toward completion of undergraduate degree programs.

In November 2011, the College was named by *Military Times Edge* magazine as a top school for veterans, and has been repeatedly named a top "military friendly" school by *GIIJobs* magazine.

Excelsior College's education credentials include:

- Excelsior's course, "Success Strategies for Military and Veterans" earned the 2010-2011 Innovation Award from the Center for Transforming Student Services (CENTSS). The course provides college orientation to veterans and military members and teaches transition strategies for those entering the civilian workforce after a military career.
- Excelsior is a recipient of the Council of College and Military Educators' (CCME) Institutional Award.
- Excelsior's military academic advising team includes veterans who are uniquely attuned to the unique needs of military students, veterans, and their spouses.
- Susan Dewan, executive director of Excelsior's Center for Military Education is the recipient of the 2011 William E. Kennedy Award from the Council of College and Military Educators (CCME), which recognizes leadership in providing higher education programs to personnel at U.S. military installations.

- Excelsior President Ebersole is a U.S. Coast Guard veteran who served in Vietnam and received the Secretary of the Army Public Service Award in 2010 for his leadership in contributing to the Army's educational mission.

For information on joining the VFW in California, visit <http://www.vfwca.org/membertools/membershipinformation.html> .

For information about the California VFW education partnership with Excelsior College, email [veterans@excelsior.edu](mailto:veterans@excelsior.edu) or call 888-647-2388 ext. 1352.

### **About the VFW, Department of California**

*The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is a nonprofit veterans' service organization composed of combat veterans and those who currently serve on active duty or in the Guard and Reserves. Founded in 1899 and chartered by Congress in 1936, the VFW is the nation's largest organization of war veterans and is one of its oldest veterans' organizations. With 2.1 million members located in 7,700 VFW Posts worldwide, the VFW and its Auxiliaries are dedicated to "honor the dead by helping the living" through veterans service, legislative initiatives, youth scholarships, Buddy Poppy and national military service programs. Annually, the VFW and its Auxiliaries contribute more than 11 million hours of community service to the nation. For more information or to join, visit the organization's Web site at [www.vfwca.org](http://www.vfwca.org).*

### **About Excelsior College**

*Excelsior College <http://www.excelsior.edu> is an accredited, nonprofit distance learning institution that focuses on removing obstacles to the educational goals of adult learners. Founded in 1971 and located in Albany, NY, Excelsior is a proven leader in the assessment and validation of student knowledge. It offers more efficient and affordable access to degree completion through multiple avenues: its own online courses and college-level proficiency examinations, and the acceptance in transfer of credit from other colleges and universities as well as recognized corporate and military training programs. Excelsior College is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.*