



Education and Incentives Center

NEWSLETTER

Volume 3, Issue 1

January 2025



Mr. Israel Miller with wife, Dana, and sons, Cayetano and Alejandro.

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Welcome Back Mr. Israel Miller!

The Education and Incentives Center is excited to announce the arrival of Mr. Israel Miller! Mr. Miller returns to the Education and Incentives Center to fill the newly added Outreach Coordinator role. This role serves as a bridge between the Center and academic institutions with a focus on building stronger relationships and creating new opportunities for members of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. Additionally, the Outreach Coordinator supports efforts to ensure Soldiers, and their families, are aware of the educational benefits available to them.

Join Our Teams Channel!

Stay up-to-date on education programs and bonus processing for you and your Servicemembers – join the [Education & Incentives Division MS Teams Channel](#) under PAJFHQ_G1 (External).



Photo Credit: Mr. Wayne Hall, State Public Affairs Officer.

Congratulations 2024 Scholarship Recipients!

FORT INDINATOWN GAP, Pa. – Ten members of the Pennsylvania National Guard were awarded scholarships from the 28th Infantry Division Association, the Pennsylvania National Guard Association (PNGAS) and the Pennsylvania National Guard Foundation (PNGF), during PNGAS’s annual holiday party Dec. 11, at the Keystone Conference Center. Ethan Glass, Ashlie Hash-Ziri and Jessica Barb were awarded 28th ID Association scholarships; Derek Stakem, Yara Wehbie and Miranda Sosa were awarded PNGAS scholarships; and Tesean Jackson, Jolene Riley, Katera Hill-Hines, and Mariah Littlejohn were awarded PNGF scholarships

(Cont. from page 1 Welcome Back Mr. Israel Miller!)

Mr. Miller joined the Army in 1999 starting his career as a 37F Psychological Operations Specialist at Fort Bragg. Mr. Miller transitioned to the Pennsylvania Army National Guard in 2005 switching his MOS to 42A Human Resources Specialist. He commissioned shortly thereafter in 2006 as a 42B Human Resources Officer and 46A Public Affairs Officer. 2006 also marked Miller’s first stint with the Education and Incentives Center serving as the FTA Manager from 2006 – 2012 before transitioning into a leadership position that served as the first incarnation of the Division Chief role currently filled by Captain Danielle O’Keefe.

VA Expands Access to GI Bill Benefits for Veterans!

Veterans who have served multiple periods of service may now be eligible for expanded access to GI Bill Benefits.

To learn more about this change, eligibility requirements, and the application process, please visit <https://benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/rudisill.asp>.

Five Reasons to Meet with a Military Guidance Counselor

Getting perspective. Military Guidance Counselors can help you find the degree that will meet your strengths; academic and personal. Counselors have a unique perspective and can help Servicemembers see a broader view of the college decision, beyond the details and emotional aspects. Similarly, Guidance Counselors can add a vantage point different from that of a Family member or mentor since they are objectively invested in your school choice.

Finding the college fit for you. Another great reason to get to know your Military Guidance Counselor is their knowledge of different colleges. Guidance Counselors work with colleges and know what benefits they offer our Military students. They are also the first to know about application requirements and changes.

Coordinating a College Visit. Once you begin to narrow in on the right college, you may want to visit several schools. Your Guidance Counselor can help you facilitate a visit to your school – often tailored to a Military student.

Paying for College. Maybe the most advantageous part of working with your Military Guidance Counselor is filling out applications for available programs like FTA, GI Bill and EAP. Did you know we can also help with the scholarship process? Your Military Guidance Counselor can not only help you think about scholarships specific to the colleges, but they can also help with local and state scholarships related to your interests and affiliations.

Fine-tuning Application Materials. Guidance Counselors also know what different colleges are looking for in application materials. When you get to the point in the application process where you are close to turning in your materials, your Education Center is an excellent resource. We can review and help you adjust both required and supplemental application items. Seek our advice on revising your essay and other materials — and make sure you start the process six to eight weeks before the due dates.

Make your appointment today --

Fort Indiantown Gap janet.l.hooper.civ@army.mil

Western Pennsylvania steven.p.wilt.civ@army.mil

Career Path DECIDE

Career Path DECIDE is a decision support tool provided by the Defense Department. The tool helps Servicemembers and veterans identify, prepare for and increase their employment qualifications. This can help them as they transition from military service to the civilian workforce. Try it now – there are loads of possibilities <https://www.careerpathdecide.org/>

Resolve Your School Concerns

Postsecondary Education Complaint System (PECS)
The Department of Defense maintains the Postsecondary Education Complaint System (PECS) that provides military students the opportunity to file complaints against a school. Examples of education-related issues may include, but are not limited to, misrepresentation or deceptive actions regarding private or institutional loans, high-pressure recruitment tactics, false representations about degree programs, and misleading statements regarding accreditation.

PECS will track, manage, and process student complaints at one of three levels, depending on the user assigned to manage the grievance. Students using federal education benefits and programs will be able to register their complaint online. The system electronically records information about the educational institution, nature of the issue/complaint, and the complainant's contact information. The agencies cited in the Executive Order (Departments of Defense, Education, Justice, Veterans Affairs, and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau) will be responsible for tracking, managing, and providing a response to student complaints.

Website (you will need a CAC to log in):
<https://pecs.militaryonesource.mil/pecs/>

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Education & Incentives Center is now an authorized CLEP testing center. CLEP exams provide the opportunity for individuals to test out of introductory courses and move to more advanced courses sooner, saving you time and money while pursuing your degree. For more information, please contact the Education & Incentives Center (717.865.4529) OR Education Center West (724.613.1021) for more information.

Credentialing Assistance Changes Effective 11 December 2024

Changes were made to Credentialing Assistance for FY25! See what's new below!

- The fiscal year limit is decreased from \$4K to \$2K per Soldier.
- Soldiers are limited to one credential per FY.
- Soldiers are limited to three credentials for 10 years of service.
- Soldiers who receive CA funding for training must take the associated examination (Soldier who don't take the exam within 180 days of completing the training or fail the exam will be recouped).
- The \$1K fiscal year limit for selected aviation credentials is applicable to all Army Components (Active, ARNG, and USAR).
- Soldiers must complete CA 101 training and MilGears prior to requesting CA (https://www.cool.osd.mil/army/costs_and_funding/index.html?credentialingassistance)

Additional changes are expected to arrive with the updated Army Regulation 621-5 due out sometime in late spring 2025. One such update will **prohibit the use of CA by Officers**. Until then Officers can continue to use CA as normal. Updates will be provided as new information becomes available.

FY 25 Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) Updates

FTA Amount Increased

Fiscal year cap has been increased to 18 semester hours and \$4,500.

ArmyIgnitED 101 Training & Career Path Decide Requirement

As of 1 October 2024, Soldiers requesting their first ArmyIgnitED education goal must complete ArmyIgnitED 101 training before a counselor is permitted to approve your goal. This is a mandatory "one-time" requirement to receive Tuition Assistance funding.

ArmyIgnitED 101 Training is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/H4Ksr6dF5sc>

To complete your training: Watch YouTube video, Submit Education Goal, Go to ArmyIgnitED, click on 'Messages', create new message with subject "ArmyIgnitED 101 Training Completed". Next update the day/month/year in the following statement, "I reviewed the ArmyIgnitED 101 slide presentation/YouTube video and completed my required training on [day/month/year]" and paste it in the message body. Lastly, submit your message. An education counselor will approve your goal in the order it was received.

As of 11 December 2024, Soldiers will have to also complete the Career Path Decide assessment along with their education goal. A full tutorial is available. If needed, please contact the FTA team via the AIED messaging tool OR your Guidance Counselor, Steven Wilt at steven.p.wilt.civ@army.mil.

FY25 Course Swaps (School Cancellations Only)

In the event **a school cancels a TA-approved** class less than 5 business days before, or any time after the class start date, the Soldier must immediately open an ArmyIgnitED message and request TA for a replacement class (if desired) not later than 5 business days from the school's notification of class cancellation.

Soldiers must follow the instructions from their school for withdrawing from a class and ensure that the school posts the grade of "W" into the ArmyIgnitED portal

FTA Funding Request Timeline

Soldiers may submit TA Requests (TARs) within ArmyIgnitED up to 60 days before the term start date but must submit the requests no later than seven (7) days prior to the term start date.

Getting to Know Your Education Benefits

GI Bill Programs

GI Bill Programs are statutory entitlements that are administered by the military services and the Department of Veterans Affairs. Soldiers may receive up to 36 months in any one DVA educational assistance program and a maximum of 48 months of combined benefits if eligible for two or more DVA educational assistance programs. For the most current GI Bill information visit the DVA website located at benefits.va.gov/gibill/

Qualifying for GI Bill Programs

Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33)

Serve at least 90 cumulative days in a period of qualifying Active Duty on or after September 11, 2001.

- Title 10 USC Sections 688; 12301(a), (d), (g), (h); 12302; 12304, 12304a, 12304b
- AGR under Title 10 or Title 32
- Title 32 USC Section 502(f) as follows:
 - Operation Noble Eagle Sep 11, 2001 – May 31, 2002
 - Southwest Border (Operation Guardian Shield) Feb 15, 2019-January 20, 2021
 - COVID-19 Pandemic Response March 22, 2020-Present
 - Capitol Police (59th Inauguration): January 11, 2021 – May 23, 2021
- If Soldier has eligibility for another GI Bill program(s), one of the programs must be relinquished when electing Post-9/11.

Montgomery GI Bill – AD (Chapter 30)

- Served on Title 10 Active Duty after 30 June 1985.
- Served on Title 32 AGR after 29 November 1989.
- Complete a DD Form 2366.
- Contribute \$1,200.
- Receive an Honorable Discharge

Montgomery GI Bill (Chapter 1606)

- Complete the requirements of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent.
- Agree to a six-year National Guard enlistment obligation (for enlisted this is accomplished using a DD Form 4 or DA form 4836, officers use a DA Form 5447-R).
- Complete Initial Active Duty for Training (IADT) or Basic Officer Leaders Course (BOLC)
- Remain a member in good standing in the National Guard

****Soldiers mobilized on Title 10 Active Duty may receive an extension of their period of eligibility for the length of the mobilization plus four months. This is a DVA process that occurs after the Soldier Separates from the Selected Reserve.**

Funding Received

Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33)

- Tuition and Fees:
 - Up to 100% of in-state tuition at public schools
 - Up to \$27,120.05/year at private or foreign schools
- Books and Supply Stipend:
 - Up to \$1000/academic year (1.67/credit hour)
- Monthly Housing Allowance:
 - Equal to BAH rate—E5 with dependents
 - \$988 if attending only online classes
- Percentage Tier based on Qualifying AD Time
 - **910 to 1,094 days** (30 to 35 months): 90% of the full benefit
 - **730 to 909 days** (24 to 29 months): 80% of the full benefit
 - **545 to 729 days** (18 to 23 months): 70% of the full benefit
 - **180 to 544 days** (6 to 17 months): 60% of the full benefit
 - **90 to 179 days** (90 days to 5 months): 50% of the full benefit

Montgomery GI BILL – AD (Chapter 30)

- A monthly payment paid directly to the Soldier based on amount of active duty served.
 - **Full-time enrollment:** \$2,438.00 for each full month
 - **3/4-time enrollment:** \$1,828.50 for each full month
 - **1/2-time enrollment:** \$1,219.00 for each full month
- **Top Up Program:** If on active duty, you can use the MGIB-AD to pay tuition expenses not paid by FTA.
- **Optional Plus-Up Program:** Allows Soldiers to contribute up to an additional \$600 which will increase the monthly benefit up to \$150 per month.

Montgomery GI Bill (Chapter 1606)

Institutional Training

- **Full-time enrollment:** \$481.00 for each full month
- **3/4-time enrollment:** \$360.00 for each full month
- **1/2-time enrollment:** \$240.00 for each full month
- **Less than 1/2-time enrollment:** \$120.25 for each full month

Apprentice and On-the-Job Training

- **Months 1 to 6:** \$360.75 for each full month
- **Months 7 to 12:** \$264.55 for each full month
- **After the first year:** \$168.35 for each full month

IAW PPOM 22-038a dtd 21JUN23: Effective immediately and retroactive to 1OCT22, enlisted Soldiers who change their MOS or UIC no longer require an ETP to avoid termination of their Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) Kicker. Soldiers must remain qualified in their contracted MOS, maintain it as a SMOS, become DMOSQ in their new MOS within 24 months, and remain deployable. UIC changes: new unit must be an MTOE or authorized TDA.

Federal Tuition Assistance

Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) is available for both classroom and distance learning college courses. Servicemembers can request FTA by visiting <https://www.armyignited.army.mil>



Qualifying for Federal Tuition Assistance

Federal Tuition Assistance Eligibility Requirements

- **All Soldiers** should establish an ArmyIgnitED account to access information on voluntary education programs and services.
- Be currently serving in good standing in the ARNG and have a Common Access Card (CAC).
- Soldiers cannot have a hold on their ArmyIgnitED Account (once created).
- Must maintain a 2.0 or higher GPA for undergraduate courses or a 3.0 or higher GPA for graduate courses.

Soldiers are NO LONGER required to complete Basic Combat Training to utilize FTA but must be issued a CAC by their unit to use FTA benefit

Service Req./Obligation:

- **Enlisted:** Have an ETS or MRD after completion of FTA funded course(s)
- **Officers and Warrant Officers:** Subject to a two-year active-duty service obligation (ADSO) or four-year reserve duty service obligation (RDSO)

Additional Criteria:

- Academic Institutions must have a signed DoD MOU to receive TA funding. Check your school here: <https://www.dodmou.com/Home/InstitutionList>
- Use the helpdesk messenger for TA assistance. Link is located on the left side of your student homepage (see next page for example)
- **Contact us first if you have any questions!**

How Much Does FTA Pay?

- Cost of tuition (no fees) up to \$4500 per Fiscal Year.
- Up to 18 semester hours per fiscal year (1 Oct - 30 Sep)
- Lifetime FTA Caps:
 - Undergraduate 130 semester hours
 - Graduate 39 semester hours
 - One Time Academic Certification 21 semester hours

Things to Know Before Applying!

1. Before requesting TA the Soldier must establish an ArmyIgnitED account. Account registration and activation may require Soldiers to update their personnel record through their unit S1 administrative office. Soldiers encountering problems with ArmyIgnitED should contact their local education center or office or create an ArmyIgnitED helpdesk case for assistance.
2. Soldiers must sign an electronic user agreement acknowledging compliance with Army TA Policies and procedures each time they create a TAR.
3. Soldiers **must complete** ArmyIgnitED 101 Training and Career Path Decide before submitting their education goal.
4. Soldiers may submit TARs up to 60 days before the class start date but **no later than** eight (8) days prior to the class start date.
5. Soldiers must request TA in the ArmyIgnitED portal prior to registering with their Academic Institution for classes.

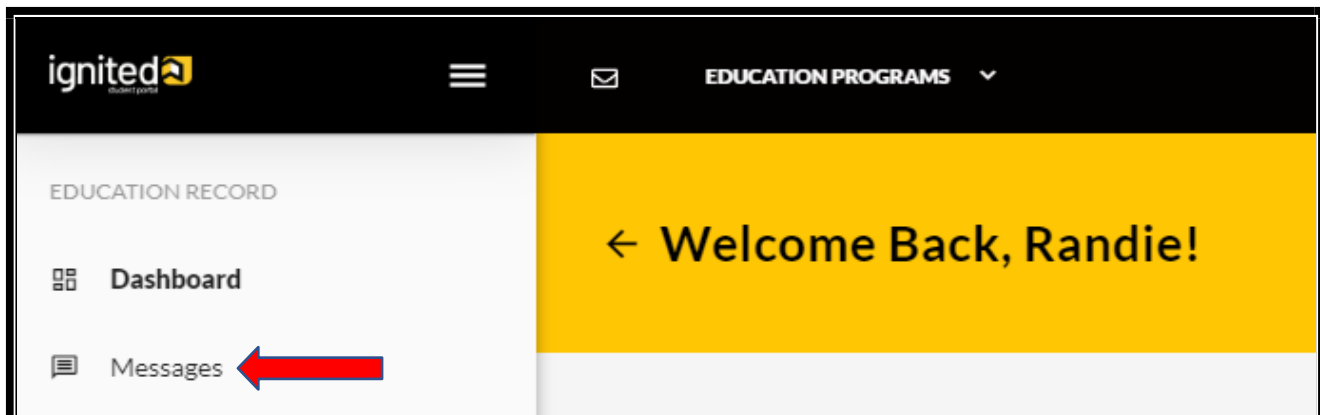
Who Can I Contact?

Your NGB Education Specialist is Mr. Sean Stricek. Mr. Stricek is the FTA Manager for the Pennsylvania and Delaware ARNG.

Use the AIED Helpdesk Messenger to submit a helpdesk ticket!

Please be proactive! Calls, emails, and voicemails may take up to 3 business day to resolve.

Find the Helpdesk Message Link on AIED!



Credentialing Assistance

Credentialing Assistance allows Soldiers to develop marketable skills, not necessarily aligned to their military occupational specialty, which will help them find civilian employment post-service. The program supplements the Army's current credentialing programs offered through Army schools as part of institutional training. Credentials offered through this program will have a military nexus to ensure the Army benefits from the program during the Soldier's service. The Army's Credentialing Assistance (CA) Program provides Soldiers with funding for more than 1,800 credentials.



How do I qualify?

- Be currently serving in good standing in the ARNG and have a Common Access Card (CAC).
- Soldiers cannot be flagged.
- Soldiers must complete CA 101 training and MilGears prior to requesting CA.
- Complete credential prior to separation/ETS.
- **Soldiers are NO LONGER required to complete Basic Combat Training to utilize CA.**

What do I get?

- Soldiers are eligible for up to \$2000/fiscal year for Credentialing Assistance with a \$1000 fiscal year limit for selected aviation credentials.
- Soldiers are limited to one credential per FY and limited to three credentials for 10 years of service.
- All expenses are paid prior to course/exam start date (Soldiers who pay out of pocket will not be reimbursed)

How do I apply?

- Ensure your credential is listed on Army COOL at: <https://www.cool.osd.mil/army/index.html>
- Apply online at: <https://www.armyignited.army.mil> – CAC REQUIRED!

Additional Information

- Soldiers must complete credential prior to separation/ETS.
- Soldiers are required to take the associated examination for certifications funded by CA. If associated exam is not complete within 180 days of completing the training OR the exam is failed, Soldier will be recouped.

****Changes expected in Spring 2025 will prohibit use of CA by Officers, please watch your inbox for updates as they become available. ****



Request a CA Virtual Counseling Session at:

https://www.cool.osd.mil/army/costs_and_funding/index.html?credentialingassistance

Select the CONTACT AN ARMY CA COUNSELOR button and complete the requested information.

Educational Assistance Program

The Educational Assistance Program (EAP) is a state funded program; it provides educational assistance for eligible members of the Pennsylvania National Guard. EAP funding is awarded regardless of financial need.

Eligibility Requirements

- Members must have a six-year service agreement with the PA National Guard, sign a Statement of Understanding and a Promissory Note prior to submitting an application.
- Be an active satisfactory participant in the PA National Guard in good standing. (Less than 9 AWOLS in any 1-year period and meet eligibility criteria per updated flag codes in PMR 621-5 – not all flags disqualify SMs from payment.)
- Be an eligible member of PA National Guard prior to the first day of class.
- Be enrolled in a degree-granting or certificate-granting curriculum, course of study or training program required for entrance into a specific career to be pursued on a full-time or part-time basis or its equivalent at a school located in Pennsylvania and approved by the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA). There are approximately 400 schools.
- A member is not eligible for EAP benefits if receiving a Line ROTC Scholarship. However, if the member is receiving a Guaranteed Reserve Forces Duty Scholarship or a Dedicated National Guard Scholarship through the ROTC program, member is still eligible for EAP funding.
- **The 14 State System of Higher Education schools are:**
 - Bloomsburg, California, Cheyney, Clarion, East Stroudsburg, Edinboro, Indiana, Kutztown, Lock Haven, Mansfield, Millersville, Shippensburg, Slippery Rock, West Chester
- EAP can provide full-time funding for students up to the first bachelor's degree. Once a bachelor's degree has been obtained, eligible member can only receive funding up to 11 (part-time) credits or its equivalent, even if the member is enrolled as a full-time student.
- Mobilized members that had to withdraw from classes due to deployment may be eligible for an extended EAP deadline after discharge.
- Eligible EAP members who receive a discharge for a disability incurred in the line of duty may be eligible for EAP benefits after their discharge.

Funding Received

- Full-time Grants – the tuition plus technology fee or \$4,097.00 whichever is less per semester. Full-time students must take 12 or more credits per semester.
- Part-time Grants for members who may or may not possess a baccalaureate degree – the tuition and technology fee per credit or the \$342.00 per credit tuition and technology rate charged by PASSHE, whichever is less per semester. Part-time students can be funded up to 11 credits per semester.
- The EAP award amount can be applied to tuition costs, fees, books, and room and board up to the allowable cost of attendance for members using FTA and GI Bill (Chapter 33) for the same term.
- Funding is limited to 10 full-time semesters or 120 part-time credits.

Application Process

To apply for benefits, eligible members must log into www.pheaa.org, sign on as a student and complete an EAP Form 2 (Educational Assistance Program Application). Yearly submission of an EAP application is required, the application should be used to request benefits for the entire academic year (i.e., fall, winter, spring, and summer semesters).

EAP applications for the 2024-2025 academic year (fall-summer 2024-2025) can be submitted on the PHEAA portal starting 1APR24. Students should apply for funding for all semesters they may attend – it's easier to remove semesters than add them later! The 2023-2024 will be closed on the portal 1APR. Submit your applications via www.pheaa.org today!

Military Family Education Program

The Military Family Education Program (MFEP) is a state funded program designed to provide educational assistance for dependents of eligible members of the Pennsylvania National Guard.

Eligibility Requirements

- Members must have completed an initial contract and then commit to a six-year service agreement with the PA National Guard and sign a statement of Understanding (MFEP Form-1) and a MFEP Member Promissory Note, MFEP Form-4 and upload DD Form 1172. ****Member cannot be in an MFEP and EAP contact during the same period of service****
- Be an active satisfactory participant in the PA National Guard in good standing. (Less than 9 AWOLS in any 1-year period and meet eligibility per updated flag codes in PMR 621-5 – not all flags disqualify SMs from payment.
- Be enrolled in a degree-granting or certificate-granting curriculum, course of study or training program required for entrance into a specific career to be pursued on a full-time or part-time basis or its equivalent at a school located in Pennsylvania and approved by the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA). There are approximately 400 schools.
- **The 14 State System of Higher Education schools are:**
 - Bloomsburg, California, Cheyney, Clarion, East Stroudsburg, Edinboro, Indiana, Kutztown, Lock Haven, Mansfield, Millersville, Shippensburg, Slippery Rock, West Chester

Funding Received

- Full-time Grants – the tuition plus technology fee or \$4,097.00 whichever is less per semester. Full-time students must take 12 or more credits per semester.
- Part-time Grants for members who may or may not possess a baccalaureate degree – the tuition and technology fee per credit or the \$342.00 per credit tuition and technology rate charged by PASSHE, whichever is less per semester. Part-time students can be funded up to 11 credits per semester.
- The MFEP award amount can be applied to tuition costs, fees, books, and room and board up to the Allowable Cost of Attendance for members using FTA and GI Bill (Chapter 33) for the same term.
- Funding is limited to 10 full-time semesters or 120 part-time credits.

Application Process

Applying for MFEP begins with the Servicemember. Servicemembers must go to PHEAA.org and create a username and password. Once set, the Servicemember will log into their account and complete basic items related to their military service. The Servicemember will then sign an MFEP Form 1 Statement of Understanding and the MFEP Promissory Note. Servicemembers will be asked to upload their re-enlistment/extension contracts (Oaths of Office for officers) and record briefs. Additionally, Servicemembers will need to upload MFEP Form 4 with dependent(s) information and upload a DD Form 1172. If you recently reenlisted or extended for MFEP or plan to, you will complete your MFEP Form 1A Statement of Understanding at the time of your reenlistment/extension.

Once approved by the MFEP team, your dependents will create a username and password of their own, sign the promissory note, and enter all school information. Dependents will then apply for the school year starting with fall of that year and ending with summer of the following year. Dependents must go on the PHEAA portal every year to fill out information for the new school year. Under **NO** circumstances should Servicemembers sign into their student-dependent's account to fill out information on their behalf.

MFEP applications for the 2024-2025 academic year (fall-summer 2024-2025) can be submitted on the PHEAA portal starting 1APR24. Students should apply for funding for all semesters they may attend – it's easier to remove semesters than add them later! The 2023-2024 will be closed on the portal 1APR. Submit your applications via www.pheaa.org today!