The Warrior’s Journal Statement of Purpose

The Warrior’s Journal newsletter serves as a vehicle to highlight program events and student accomplishments, and provides an empowering forum for creative expression within the Veterans Upward Bound community.
Meeting Milestones

VUB Staff Members meet remarkable career milestones.

Dear Students, Staff and VUB Friends –

This year marked a milestone for two VUB Staff Members – Cynthia Baldwin, the VUB Administrative Assistant, has been with the University of Pennsylvania for 10 years and Diane Sandefur, the VUB Director, has been with the University of Pennsylvania for 20 years. Cynthia’s entire 10 year employment has been with VUB while Diane worked in psychiatric research in the School of Medicine for the first 7 years of her employment. The combined 30 years that Cynthia and Diane have been at Penn, almost as long as the 32 years that VUB has been at Penn, is a testament to their perseverance, commitment and passion!

Both Diane and Cynthia have been persistent in reaching these milestones. Diane began college when her children were in grade school. She received her bachelor’s degree from the University of Pennsylvania, graduating Magna Cum Laude in 1995 and in 1997 she received her master’s degree from the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania. Most of her education was accomplished while working full-time at UPENN and as a single parent. Cynthia, a single-parent of five, is currently taking classes at the University of Pennsylvania while working full-time.

It is also a testament of their commitment. Both Cynthia and Diane have fully dedicated themselves to the University of Pennsylvania and to helping our veterans move forward with their educational goals. They welcome the veteran students and try to do all they can to help them meet their academic ambitions. The commitment that they have made is a dedication of their efforts to help veterans in the Philadelphia region.

Lastly, Diane’s and Cynthia’s years at the University of Pennsylvania and the TRIO Veterans Upward Bound Program are a testament of their belief, passion and willingness to help the veterans that come through the VUB doors. They have seen over 1,500 veterans benefit from this TRIO Program. It has been a win:win situation with the veterans growing academically and moving toward post-secondary enrollment while Diane and Cynthia have seen the VUB students overcome many hurdles and hardships while attending VUB. Thank you Cynthia and Diane for your years of service!

Our goal is that the VUB students will fully dedicate themselves to the Spring 2011 Semester with the same perseverance, commitment and passion!

Best of luck to the VUB Students!

TRIO Veterans Upward Bound at the University of Pennsylvania now has a facebook page! To join, log-on to facebook.com and search: “TRIO Veterans Upward Bound at the University of Penn”
I am Eva Upshaw, an army veteran. As a young adult my father always discouraged me from joining the military. My dad went as far as saying he would disown me if I joined the Army. It seemed as if all the men in my family felt as though the military wasn’t made for females. My spiritual advisor tried to discouraged me as well. They all felt that my place was to be married, raising children, and having a more acceptable career such as a nurse, a doctor, or even a lawyer, not a soldier. But my one inspiration was my great-grandmother, who encouraged me to follow my dream.

In 1999, five years after my father passed away, I turned thirty years old. I looked in the mirror and said, “Today I’m going to fulfill a dream.” I wanted to join the United States Military. I was single and determined. My grandfather decided since he couldn’t discourage me, he might as well train me. I was always into sports as a young person, so my grandfather decided to teach me physical endurance. He would wake me at 5:30 am for light cardio and stretching, followed by a 3-mile run. I had to change my diet from all those late night pastries to more fruits and vegetables. I ate a lot of oats, grains, potatoes, and seafood.

My next step was to undergo more rigorous physical training, with mental training of some sort. This time, the training consisted of walking across giant logs on a riverbed to get to the other side without falling, falling backwards and trusting my partner would save me. I had to run up a mountain non-stop, carrying a 40-lb duffle bag on my back. I also had to lift weights as heavy as 100lbs. I began to feel stronger and healthier, but I wasn’t allowed to wear make-up, get my hair or my nails done. I was going to be the best at whatever my grandfather tossed at me. The time had come to learn how to fire a weapon. My grandfather used to take me squirrel-hunting as a kid. I was never too comfortable with a rifle, but I learned to love it.

Months later, I went down to the Army Recruitment office on Broad and Cherry Streets in Philadelphia, with my grandfather in tow. I met Staff Sergeant Moses, who was very eager to spend time with my grandfather and me, telling us what all the military had to offer. Sergeant Moses didn’t seem jaded by the fact that I was thirty or that I was a female. He then gave me a test to take to see what position I could best serve my country. The test consisted of math, reading, mechanics, and life skills questions. I completed and passed with a 110, which meant I could pick any occupation of my choice. Though my grandfather didn’t want to admit it, I could tell he was proud of me. I decided to become an Administrative Specialist for the United States Army.

My date to leave for Basic Training was August 31, 1999. I was bussed from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to Fort Jackson, South Carolina. I was prepared and ready for whatever was to befall me. I deeply thank my grand-dad for believing that I was never too old or nor too young to fulfill a dream. Do you believe this, too?
Types of Training
Presented by Bruce Fritz, VUB Student, at the National Constitution Center on Veterans Day.

My name is Bruce Fritz, and I grew up here in Philadelphia. I joined the United States Navy in 1984, and I was enlisted for six years. I joined the military because I wanted to further my education and training. Fortunately, I went through various types of training after I joined the military, including the Hull Technician A School where I learned about the ship’s operation.

After joining the Navy, I first traveled to the Great Lakes Naval Base in Chicago, Illinois, for boot camp, where I was stationed from February through May. Boot camp taught me several lessons. The first thing we learned was how to fold and pack our belongings, since we would be living in tight quarters. Next, we learned about cleanliness and how to police our area. After that, we were trained about marching in detail formations in order to reach other locations. These locations included huge halls where we performed “PT” (Physical Training) exercises which included push-ups, chin-ups, sit-ups, squat thrusts, running in place, and jogging. There were galleys where we learned to eat in five minutes. In the beginning all of this was difficult, but with training and practice, I got better. Swimming was the last training that I had, and it was the most difficult for me, as swimming was the one task that I had always wanted to learn but had always been afraid of trying.

When I left Chicago, I chose to continue my education and training through the Hull Technician A School, located at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard. The major reason I chose to enroll at the “HT” school was because I wanted to learn how to weld -- but the course that I took also consisted of pipefitting, firefighting, and damage control. The school was easy for me since I had prior knowledge of some of the courses and I was mechanically inclined. Ultimately, I graduated number four out of a class of thirty-nine. That had given me the opportunity to advance to third class, Petty Officer, “H T 3” (E-4).

Later in my military career - out of the many other educational opportunities that were available to me - I chose to train aboard an aircraft carrier, as it offered a broader range of opportunities in regards to ships. Aboard the aircraft carrier, I learned about the operations of the foam that the ship uses to put out petroleum-based fires. I also learned about damage-control and shoring techniques that would protect the integrity of the ship, as well as maintain the many miles of piping.

Indeed, the military has furthered my education and training by teaching me lessons like how to swim, weld, march, and repair and operate aircraft carrier systems. And because of this, I have met new people and learned new skills. And I continue to meet people like you.
I embarked on a journey knowing that I would be taking on a big responsibility—the responsibility to myself to finish Veterans Upward Bound and enroll in college. My journey started back in January 2010. It was then that I knocked on the door of VUB – searching for something to do with my time, trying desperately to stay in a positive frame of mind, and wishing to advance my life forward.

Surely, to graduate from VUB and go to college, one has to be in control and one’s mind and body must be intact. Your mind must be clear of all the negativity, and you must be around positive people. In order to succeed, you (me, too) must be strong and steadfast, and you cannot accept defeat in any shape, form, or fashion. When your back is against the wall, stand tall – grab a hold of someone (your counselor or a friend) and share what you are feeling inside – because one thing is for certain, there are always people willing to help.

Life’s greatest challenges fall upon us whenever we least expect them. In order to survive, one must deal with the good and the bad. It’s so very true – only the strong survive. In setting up your new goals, take it slow – in time, you can speed things up. Don’t be afraid to ask questions. Need to talk in private if you’re shy? Ask to do so.

Remember—Success is what you’re after. To gain that, take advantage of all your resources. Tutoring is there for you. If you miss a few classes, don’t give up – catch up! Failure should never be an option. Even if you have to repeat something. Things happen. It’s life. Problems happen. But there are solutions!

You are a soldier. You have to complete your mission. At VUB, this is still true – only you are carrying books to help you complete your mission, a mission of learning. Remember, you are Number One! Stand Tall. Engage!

William Heggs Jr.
VUB Reflection and Thanks

By John Jones

It was like before the first day of boot-camp, with the anticipation, the strange yet friendly new people, and the wonder of what was yet to come. There was one big difference, as the burly Drill Instructor was replaced by a kind, gentle, friendly, but serious matron - Ms. Diane Sandefur, our leader into the cascade of knowledge that was about to come. Next to be introduced were the two assistant Drill Instructors- Jere Miller and Todd Derby, our counselors. We introduced ourselves to one another, a platoon of fifty at least, and then we got down to business - learning about each other and the courses that would challenge and enrich us for the following weeks.

The weeks flew by at Veterans Upward Bound with not even a chance to exhale, but Ms. Tracey, Ms. Binderman, Ms. Brown, Mr. Horstmann, and Ms. Baldwin will always have a place in my heart and mind as the instructors that gave me back the knowledge I once had and gave me even more knowledge to take into the future. To Mr. Berner, Mr. Parker, Mr. Gay, and Ms. Aglaua—although I did not have you in class this semester, thank you, too. To all of these individuals and to all involved in the VUB program, I have two things to say...

Semper- Fidelis – Always Faithful

Thankfully Yours,

John Marcele Jones

In the Summer or Fall of 2011, John Jones hopes to attend Pierce College in Philadelphia to pursue a degree in Computer Science. This past semester, John ambitiously enrolled in both Computers 100 and 200, performing well in each.
Veterans Upward Bound Memorial Scholarship Fund

One way of making a positive difference in the life of a VUB graduate is to award scholarship monies that will help fund their college education. The TRIO Veterans Upward Bound Program at the University of Pennsylvania offers two scholarships annually in the memory of VUB participants, Stephen Garlanger, and L’Salle Harvey. Stephen Garlanger graduated VUB in 2000. He immediately began attending the College of General Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. He passed away in July 2005 after a lengthy illness. For the last five years Steve and his wife conducted the POW/MIA missing man ceremony at our annual graduation. His wife now continues this tradition and presents a scholarship in his name. Finally, L’Salle Harvey was a student with VUB during the Summer ’06 cycle. He was tragically murdered on the streets of Philadelphia in August, 2006.

To make a tax-deductible contribution to either scholarship fund, please mail your check to: “The Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania”, Attn: Diane Sandefur, Director of VUB, 220 S. 40th St. Suite 260, Philadelphia, PA 19104

CONTINUING ON TO COLLEGE IN SP11

Michael Batts: In the Spring, Michael will attend the Community College of Philadelphia to pursue a degree in Business.

Valerie Booker: In the Spring, Valerie will attend the Community College of Philadelphia to pursue a degree in Culinary Arts.

Gerald Boddie: In the Spring, Gerald will attend the Community College of Philadelphia to pursue a degree in Liberal Arts.

Kevin Chen: In the Spring, Kevin will attend the Community College of Philadelphia to pursue a degree in Computer Science.

Gregory Fitch: In the Spring, Gregory will attend the Community College of Philadelphia to pursue a degree in English. He has been accepted to the Honor’s English Program at CCP.

Charles Harrell: In the Spring, Charlie will attend the Community College of Philadelphia to pursue a degree in Engineering.

William Heggs Jr: In the Spring, William will attend the Community College of Philadelphia to pursue a degree in Automotive Technology.

Nathaniel Hills: In the Spring, Nathaniel will attend Manor College to pursue a degree in Psychology.

Saleem Muwwakkil: In the Spring, Saleem will attend Rowan University to pursue a degree in African Studies.

Richard Russell: In the Spring, Richard will attend the Community College of Philadelphia to pursue a degree in Nursing.

Thomas Sumlin: In the Spring, Thomas will attend the Community College of Philadelphia to pursue a degree in Liberal Arts.

CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD LUCK TO ALL!
Spring 2011 Academic Schedule

1/12: First Day of Classes
1/17: Martin Luther King Day — no class
2/17: Midterms—Computer 100 and Spanish 200
2/21: Midterm—Science 200
2/22: Midterms—Language Lab 100 and 200
2/23: Midterms—Math 100 and Math 200
2/24: Midterms—Literature 100 and Literature 200
2/25: Midterm—Computer 200
4/8: Final—Computer 200
4/11: Final—Science 200
4/12: Final—Computer 100
4/12: Finals—Language Lab 100 and Language Lab 200
4/13: Finals—Math 100 and Math 200 (at 5:30)
4/14: Finals—Spanish 200, Literature 100, and Lit 200
4/18: Final Grades Due

Have a wonderful semester!

Do you love to write?
Ask your counselor about submitting an article, photo, original artwork, or poem to the next edition of the Warrior's Journal.

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