On Friday, August 24, 2012, the 2011-12 Veterans Upward Bound graduating class proudly walked across the stage of Houston Hall to receive their certificates and awards. The graduation ceremony was the culmination of the graduates’ collective hard work, late nights, perseverance, courage and grit. Members of the 2011-12 graduating class are now studying at Penn State, University of Pennsylvania, Community College of Philadelphia, Peirce College, and Montgomery County Community College. To our graduates—bravo! We are overflowing with pride, happiness, and hope for your academic and professional futures.

~ The VUB Team
Welcome VUB Students and Staff!

We are very excited to have YOU, our U.S. Veterans, with the TRIO Veterans Upward Bound Program here at the University of Pennsylvania! It is a true honor to serve you and to offer you the academic services and support you need to be successful not only here at VUB but in each of the post-secondary institutions that you will attend after VUB.

I would like to offer the same theme for VUB that the university has for this academic year, the theme is PROOF: https://secure.www.upenn.edu/themeyear/proof/ Certainly we each ask ourselves fundamental questions such as how or why something happens or exists. At some point in time don’t we all ask what our purpose is in life, what is my full potential, and how can I realize this? Perhaps you are entering VUB wondering if you can prove to yourself if you can accomplish this program. Some may be asking if you should be here in a classroom setting. How are you going to prove this? How do you know if you are college material? How can you move towards proving to yourself and those around you that you have what it takes to be a successful student?

Truly, the answer is simple: put all fears behind you, bring forth the love you have for yourself, and follow the professional advice and sincere guidance that all of us at VUB will offer you. As we go through life, especially when we enter new experiences, we need reassurance that we are making the right move and that we are selecting correct choices. Know that the decision to improve your life through higher education is absolutely the BEST decision you can make for yourself. Know that at the UPENN VUB we offer a family atmosphere and you will find that there is immense caring and support to help you across all hurdles. Lastly know that no one can take your education away from you, it is yours forever and it is up to you to decide how to use the amazing gift of your education.

The steps to take are equally simple and you have already completed the most difficult step by enrolling into VUB. Other steps to complete VUB are: show up for every class prepared; listen to and follow your instructors direction; go to tutoring; eliminate obstacles to your learning; create peer study groups; and seek advice from your VUB Counselor.

We are excited and honored to have you with us at the TRIO Veterans Upward Bound Program here at the University of Pennsylvania! Let’s have a great year and PROVE to everyone that YOU, the Veteran deserves this opportunity!

Best,

Diane Sandefur

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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.
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”
Veterans Upward Bound was proud to award three deserving graduates each with a $250 scholarship at the 2011-2012 VUB Graduation Ceremony. The scholarship recipients were chosen by instructors and staff for their academic excellence, leadership, attendance, and determination. **David Barber** (pictured left) is currently studying Construction Management at the Community College of Philadelphia. David also received an award at graduation for achieving Perfect Attendance throughout the semester. **Patrick Rutter** (middle) is also currently enrolled at the Community College of Philadelphia, where he is studying Behavior Health. Patrick hopes to one day become a drug and alcohol counselor. And **Eddie Mobley**, (right), intends to study Agricultural Science at Delaware County Community College in January, 2013. Like David, Eddie also received an award for achieving Perfect Attendance throughout the semester. Congratulations to our scholarship winners!

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**Veterans Upward Bound 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 three scholarships annually. The scholarships support TRIO VUB Graduates to offset their college expenses. Every VUB recipient of the scholarship funds is a deserving and successful student.

To make a tax-deductible contribution to the scholarship fund, you may 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

Or go here to make an online contribution:

https://medley07.isc-seo.upenn.edu/giving/jsp/fast.do
and type in TRIO Veterans Upward Bound in the upper right hand select box.
A Visit to Rosemont College
Essay by Carlton Hawkes, VUB Student

On Friday, October 12, members of the Veterans Upward Bound program at the University of Pennsylvania went on a tour of Rosemont College in Rosemont, Pennsylvania, as part of the VET-4-SUCCESS workshop series. Rosemont College was founded in 1921 by the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, with a goal of meeting the wants of the ages. The college is located in the suburbs of Philadelphia, eleven miles west of Center City. The college has two schools: the Undergraduate College, and the School of Graduate and Professional Studies.

We travelled by train to Rosemont, PA, where we were met by members of the Rosemont College staff. The courteous staff members drove us to the college where we were met by members of the faculty. Members of the faculty spoke about the different courses that Rosemont offered, the admissions process, tuition, and financial aid. After the presentation, two Rosemont students guided our group on a tour of the beautiful campus.

I especially liked the small sizes of the classrooms at Rosemont College. The small classes allow you to have personal contact with your instructors and to better get to know them. Also, the small size of the campus makes it easy to get around from class to class. The atmosphere of the college was warm and welcoming. I would recommend this college to anyone looking for a quality education in a setting that is comfortable and student-friendly.
We set a lot of goals and we talk a lot of talk, but I wonder, “Are we really doing what we are saying? Are we following through?” Sometimes I think that if anyone is being fooled, it is us—the person doing the talking. We are fooling ourselves.

I will always remember the time when I was transporting a patient to his appointment at the VA Hospital, and through conversation it was revealed that his grandfather, at the age of 99, received his high school diploma. This person’s grandfather attended school at night and, even more astounding, he finished with the highest grade in his class. In order for him to achieve this goal it took more than motivation and talk. He had to stay focused, manage his time, persevere, overcome obstacles, follow through, and not let anyone or anything stop him from accomplishing his goal of graduation. These kinds of positive traits made him a success, not a talker.

Being a student takes a lot of energy and as we become older little by little began to lose some of it. In fact, there are times when things get in our way: situations arise, things come into play, and all of this can cause someone to lose focus. Things happen in life we are human beings we are not made of stone. The main thing is not letting anything stop you from reaching what we desire most of all, regardless of what it might be.

Interestingly enough, people often say that if he can do it, I see no reason why it cannot be done by you. Only you can make that happen. We are guided by what we feel inside and this direct us in the path to achieve or goal. It changes our behavior and it gives us reasons to act. Strangely enough, this describes why a person does something: for example, to become a student one must be motivated enough to enter a program of study and stick with it. Like V.U.B. and spend the necessary time that it takes to study.

Would you believe that there are certain elements that exist with self-motivation? I will name three of them: commitment, discipline, and flexibility. No one would argue that doing what needs to be done and making it a habit until it’s done and finding ways to make it a part of your life.
Motivation (cont’d)

Normally, being able to stick to your routine does allow a little leeway. Most often at one time or another a day will arrive that you don’t have the time or you’re very tired, but be willing to change. One must always have a backup plan and do what’s necessary and jump right back into the swing of things.

Try to visualize this. To succeed there are a few things that one must overcome and this can make these few things very difficult. It doesn’t have to be this way because it all depends on you. Reaching your deadline and hitting your target and learning new skills on your way and overcoming your fears along the way and being able to meet your failures in a positive way and being able to change your direction when needed. This allows you to pivot, pass, and proceed with your plan.

By now you may be wondering who am I. My name is William Heggs, Jr., VUB Alumnus, Current CCP Student, and the author of this essay. I, too, had a desire. And I’m on the road to success just like you. Stay motivated!
How VUB Has Made it Possible for Me to Pursue a College Education

Essay by Tyrone Williams., VUB Administrative Assistant and Alumnus

Never in a million years did I expect that I would be able to go back to college. I had all but given up on the idea of a post-secondary education. I still find it hard to believe how everything unfolded to give me this opportunity. I actually came across the VUB program by accident, but thanks to the Veterans Upward Bound program, the ideal of furthering my education again, seems like a possibility.

After moving back to Philadelphia from Georgia when my job search didn’t pan out and my unemployment running out, I started networking with the Fatherhood Initiative program. After taking an academic test, I was given the address to the Educational Opportunity Center were I met Ron O’Neal and he pointed me in the direction of the Veterans Upward Bound program. From there, I never looked back. While in the program, my unemployment ran out and I was faced with the decision to continue on with the program or drop it to focus on my job search. I didn’t want to quit the program because I felt that this is where I belonged and I didn’t want this opportunity to pass me by. I was determined to make it work, I would use my tokens to wash my clothes and walk to class and I never missed a class. I spent all of my free time in the library studying, filling out applications and going to job fairs. Everything about the program made me want to succeed, from the counselors, instructors, to my fellow veterans.

After graduating the program, I was rewarded with a part time job as the Computer Lab assistant and was awarded the Steven Garlanger Memorial Scholarship and took a class at Community College of Philadelphia. Unfortunately my student loan was in default and I couldn’t continue on, and I was also evicted from my residence. I was making thirty six dollars a week and child support was taking over half, so I was living on twelve dollars a week. I never gave up; I continued my job search and even took financial training classes at the University of Pennsylvania to increase my chances of being hired. Nine months later, all of my hard work and persistence paid off when I was hired full time. When you’re out of work for so long, bills began to pile up, now that I was working again, everybody wanted what was owed to them. My child support increased, my medical bills were due, and the IRS wanted their back taxes, plus I was diagnosed with new onset diabetes. (continued on next pg.)
I started working on getting my student loan out of default, paying one hundred ninety five dollars a month, and this left little money for anything else, like money for books and supplies. I still do not have a place of my own to live, sleeping on couches between two houses, I cannot afford a place of my own yet, but I know this will come in time as long as I keep working hard and keep going in the direction I am going.

If it wasn’t for the Veterans Upward program, I honestly do not know where I would be right now. This program has opened my eyes to so many possibilities. Because of this program, I am working and will start attending classes at the University of Pennsylvania so that I can obtain my bachelor’s degree. I know that I still have many obstacles ahead of me, but with support from my family, friends and the Veterans Upward Bound program, I am confident that I can overcome them all.

Author **Tyrone Williams**, third from left. With former VUB Counselor **Jere Miller**, former VUB Office Assistant **Ed McNelis**, and former VUB Computer Tutor, **Michael Rothenberger**.
VUB College and Resource Fair

Held on January 9, 2013 in Houston Hall on the Univ. of Penn Campus

On Wednesday, January 25, 2013, over 25 Philadelphia-area colleges, universities, and non-profit organizations gathered for the Veterans Upward Bound College and Resource Fair in Houston Hall. Joseph Davis, a new student for the Spring 2013 semester, said, “The event was informative. The representatives were definitely willing to give you any information that you needed and then some. They were very open, and they all wanted to invite you to their colleges. It was pretty interesting. I definitely dug it.” One of the counselors from Manor College said, “What a beautiful campus and what a terrific event!”

The VUB students were joined by members of other TRiO programs, including Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math-Science, and the Educational Opportunity Center. Overall, more than 100 students and family members from the various programs attended the event. After the fair concluded, the students and staff engaged in a discussion about post-secondary education, and a raffle was conducted through the generous donations of the participating colleges. Many students reported that they now have new college options and that they are thinking about schools and majors that they never thought possible. Participating schools included our VUB scholarship partners Peirce College and Rosemont College. Other participants included Temple University, Drexel University, Chestnut Hill College, and LaSalle University, the Community College of Philadelphia, and many more.
Wharton Students Lend a Helping Hand

Every Fall Semester the approximately 500 newly enrolled Wharton Freshmen are required to work in small groups with community non-profits as part of their Management 100 Class. Projects from each non-profit are presented and the Wharton groups select the agency for which they want to work. The U-PENN Veterans Upward Bound Program has been fortunate to have Wharton groups select projects over the past two years. In Fall 2012 three Wharton groups selected VUB! One group created a Financial Literacy Curriculum and presented this over the semester with a trip to the U.S. Mint in Philadelphia and a pizza party as the end of the semester event. Another Wharton Management 100 group worked with VUB, the Vets@UPENN Committee and Feed Our Vets by collecting non-perishable food from the UPENN and University City community. The event was a huge success and all food was donated to the Feed Our Vets organization. Lastly, a third Wharton Management 100 group organized a “Celebrate Vets at UPENN VUB” by requesting contributions of items such as an IPad, a digital camera, a KitchenAid Standing Mixer, and twenty other items for a silent auction. They also secured a contribution of food and beverages for the event. VUB Students received tickets at the beginning of the event based on their VUB Class attendance and their attendance at special VUB events during the semester. VUB students were able to place their tickets towards the items they wanted for the event. In addition to the silent auction VUB Alum Aaron Blandon, NYU Grad, and Tracey Ragsdale-Mabrey, VUB Math 100 Instructor spoke on their experiences with VUB and offered encouraging and inspirational messages to the current VUB Students. The event was a huge success! Thanks to the Wharton Management 100 students for their support of the UPENN VUB Program!
The Things They Carried

Essay by Drew Bendler, VUB Student

I was impressed with the authenticity of the story “The Things They Carried” by Tim O’Brien. For generations, American soldiers carried heavy military equipment and personal mementos to the battlefield. Lt. Jimmy Cross’s platoon came from various walks of life, but they all had one thing in common: The Things They Carried.

I served in an infantry platoon during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), so I can closely relate to the soldiers in LT. Cross’s platoon. During OIF, the soldiers in my platoon carried over 40 pounds of equipment. We had four 240B machine gunners, four squad automatic weapons, and four 203 grenade launchers. The rest of the platoon carried M4s with 210 rounds each. Most importantly, we carried water, rations, and our mementos from around the world.

In the heat of the Iraqi desert it is easy to want to remove the weight you are carrying, just as it was for the brave men in Lt.Cross’ platoon. After six weeks in country with no combat action, we started to become lackadaisical. Instead of checking my men everyday, I took their word for it that they were ready for combat. Each day they would continue to lighten their loads, dreaming and fantasizing of the world. I would stare at the moon wondering if my loved ones back home were seeing the same moon. I carried a bible in my back pocket for thirteen months. My battle buddy Sgt. Joe Gonzales carried a cross his grandmother gave him. Every soldier carried some kind of memento from the world.

On October 7, 2008, my unit in Baghdad was hit by a 30mm rocket attack. For my men and me, this was the eye opener to war. I felt as if I had let myself and my men down, just as Lt. Cross felt in Vietnam. From that day forward I inspected my men everyday. I conducted pre-combat inspections and pre-combat checks. Every soldier carried the maximum amount of water he could after that horrific day. And of course, we all had our mementos – the things we carried.

Although the battlefields have changed and the weapon systems are different, the things that soldiers carry remain the same. A lucky coin, pictures of loved ones, letters from the world or even a stone from the Jersey Shore. These items are as valuable as your weapon. But as a soldier’s mind plays tricks on him in combat, dreaming and fantasizing of good times or having nightmares of bad times, it is imperative to keep the mission first. As Lt. Cross and I learned the hard way, you must stay focused. God bless the brave heroes who served with Lt. Cross in Southeast Asia, and God bless the United States of America.