

Wyoming Community College Commission

2020 Carey Avenue, 8th Floor, Cheyenne WY 82002

Commissioners

Mr. Larry Atwell, Cheyenne
Ms. Charlene Bodine, Sheridan
Mr. Bruce Brown, Devils Tower
Ms. Sandi McCormick, Rock Springs
Ms. Sandra Meyer, Evanston
Mr. Jack Russell, Cody
Ms. Wendy Sweeny, Worland



Exofficio
Governor Matt Mead
State Superintendent Cindy Hill
Executive Director
Dr. James O. Rose

Phone: 307-777-7763
Fax: 307-777-6567
www.communitycolleges.wy.edu

Memo

To: Governor Matt Mead, Wyoming State Legislature
From: Amy Brockel
Date: 11/27/11
Re: Overseas Combat Veterans, Surviving Spouses and Orphans Education Benefit
Annual Report as per Wyoming Statute 19-14-106 (e)--Revised

OVERVIEW:

As a result of the 2006 legislative session, Wyoming Statute 19-14-106 was expanded to allow for free tuition and fees for overseas combat veterans, surviving spouses and orphans. The Community College Commission was tasked to implement the benefit and reimburse the University and the community colleges. During the 2007 legislative session, the statute was amended to include reimbursement for Vietnam veterans.

The following is a report of the program's usage at the University of Wyoming and Wyoming's seven community colleges from June 30, 2010 through July 1, 2011. Also included are the Vietnam era veterans (Aug 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975) for which UW and the colleges were reimbursed starting Spring semester of 2007.

House Bill No. 76 (2006 Session Laws) contained an original appropriation of \$200,000, which was not sufficient to provide educational benefits for the full 2007-2008 biennium. There was a supplemental budget appropriation of \$200,000 added to fund the program through June 30, 2008. The funding still was not adequate to cover the requests from the eight institutions and additional funding had to be supplemented at the end of the biennium to cover the Spring 2008 semester. \$169,000 was added to the OCV budget from another program to fully cover the requests. The appropriation for the 2009-2010 biennium was \$800,000 with a 5 percent budget cut applied to the program. That brought the available funding to \$760,000 which was not adequate to fully fund the program. The program was supplemented by \$172,046. The supplemental funding came from the projected surplus that was in the health insurance fund for the colleges.

The Community College Commission submitted a biennial budget request for \$760,000 and an exception request of \$240,000 to meet the anticipated growth in the program in the 2011-2012 biennium. Both requests were approved by the Governor and legislature, bringing total funding for the 2011-2012 biennium to \$1,000,000. The use of the 2011-2012 biennium funds began with the summer 2010 semester and will continue through the spring 2012 semester. It is projected with the current requests from the seven community colleges and the University of Wyoming that the program will again face a shortfall of funds to finish out the biennium. Approximately \$250,000 will need to be supplemented from another program or surplus health insurance to fully fund the program through the current 2011-2012 biennium.

In total this program has assisted 529 Wyoming veterans since the first semester in the Fall of 2006. This includes the Vietnam Veterans as well as the Overseas Combat Veterans recipients.

SUMMARY:

Vietnam Veteran & Overseas Combat Veteran, Surviving Spouse, or Orphan Tuition Reimbursement Program			
Participants (Veterans Served)	UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING	COMMUNITY COLLEGES	TOTAL SEMESTERS
Fall 10	111	116	227
Spring 11	107	143	250
Summer 11	21	22	43
TOTAL	239	281	520
Average Tuition & Fees per Semester	\$1,562.03	\$900.00	-
Total Reimbursement	\$373,325	\$252,900	\$626,225

Wyoming Community College Commission, July 1, 2011