

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 4, 2015

The Honorable Robert McDonald  
Secretary  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Ave.  
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Secretary McDonald,

We write to you today in support of Nassau Community College's (NCC) proposal to host a VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) counselor. The VSOC program has been a huge success since its start in 2009 and offers a range of counseling services for veterans, servicemembers, and dependents who seek assistance in their educational, employment, or adjustment goals. Long Island boasts a veteran population over 100,000 and the number of beneficiaries utilizing Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits continues to grow. Currently, the only VSOC counselor in New York is located at Syracuse University—275 miles away from NCC in Garden City. As members of the Long Island delegation, we believe that a VSOC counselor is necessary for our local veteran population.

Nassau Community College opened its Veterans Resource Facility (VRF) almost one year ago. The 2,500-square foot center formerly housed military officers before Mitchel Air Force Base was decommissioned. In the spirit of supporting our servicemembers and veterans, NCC converted the space into a center to help student veterans succeed in their transitions to academic and civilian life. The VRF is a comfortable setting for veterans to foster relationships with each other through peer study groups or by participating in the College's Veterans Club. The club hosts educational and community outreach events to ensure that our student veterans are integrated into the civilian student population.

Since its opening, the Veterans Resource Facility has been thriving as a center for student veteran life. One of the criteria for a school to be eligible for a VetSuccess on Campus counselor is an appropriate accommodation for a full-time VA employee on a welcoming campus with strong veteran support services. Nassau Community College's VRF is an ideal location for a VSOC counselor to serve Long Island's veterans and their families. It is new, spacious, and easily accessible for veterans living in Nassau and Suffolk counties.

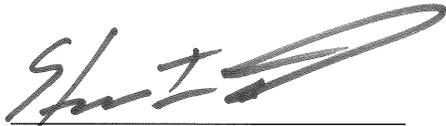
In its mission to serve as the center of Long Island veteran life, Nassau Community College has agreed to partner with Suffolk Community College in its proposal for the VetSuccess on Campus program. By combining the number of GI Bill beneficiaries at both of these excellent schools, NCC surpasses the required student veteran population for a VSOC counselor and would become a centralized location for all veterans and their families on Long Island.

Nassau Community College is the largest single-campus, two-year college in the State University of New York (SUNY) system and is a model for community colleges nationwide. A VetSuccess on Campus counselor at NCC would benefit Long Island's student veteran population and the entire campus community. We strongly support NCC's proposal and ask that you give it your most sincere consideration.

Sincerely,



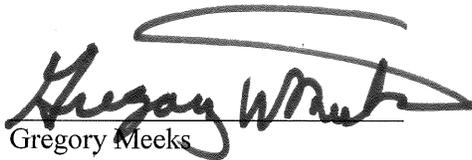
Kathleen M. Rice  
Member of Congress



Steve Israel  
Member of Congress



Peter King  
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