

WACRAO Military Connected Services Conference Agenda

Madison College-Goodman South Campus, 2429 Perry Street, Madison, WI 53713

June 11th 6-8pm-Preconference networking opportunity: Great Dane Pub & Brewing Company, 123 E Doty St., Madison, WI - This casual networking opportunity provides attendees a chance to meet and connect before the conference begins. (Attendees are responsible for their own expenses.)

# Thursday, June 12, 2025

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| 7:00-8:00 AM | **Continental Breakfast -Community Room (201,203,205,207)** | | |
| 8:15-9:00 AM | **System Meetings-** **Updates and Announcements**  UW Colleges- Community Room –Moderator: Dennis Rhodes  WTCS Colleges- Room 214 -Moderators: Brandon Trujillo & Colleen Larsen  WAICU Colleges- Room 228 - Moderator: Debra Barrett | | |
| 9:00-9:15 AM | **Welcome**- Dr Keyimani Alford, Associate Vice President | Student Access and Success, Madison College | | |
| 9:15-10:00 AM | **Keynote Large Group** – **Federal Legislative Update:** Learn about pending federal legislation that will impact VA education benefits. (**Virtual)**  Presenter: Dr Jan Del Signore –Legislative Director for NAVPA, National Association of Veteran Program Administrators- MSGT, USAF, Retired  Associate Vice Chancellor of Military Affairs Keiser University | | |
| 10:05-11:00 AM | **Large Group Sesson- WDVA 101& Updates:** Overview of benefits and support that is offered by Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs.  Presenter: Joseph Hoey, Assistant Deputy Secretary WDVA  Overview of all benefits offered by WDVA except WIGI Bill and VORP. Discussion will cover: Veterans Property Tax Credit, Grant Programs, Veteran Homes, Housing and Recovery Program, support to County Veterans Service Offices, Program to Honor and Memorialize Veterans. | | |
| **Breakout Sessions** | | | |
| 11:05-12:00 PM | **WRTP/Big Step - Apprenticeship Pathway Coalition Initiative (APCI)**  Moderator- Brandon Trujillo, WTCS  This session is a training for veteran school officials from UW System, Wisconsin Technical Colleges, Private & Non-Profit Colleges and Universities and Tribal Colleges. The panelists will discuss the vital role of apprenticeships in supporting veterans as they transition into civilian careers. We will explore the unique strengths and challenges veterans bring to the workforce, the opportunities apprenticeships provide for skill-building and career advancement, and how organizations can better support and integrate veteran talent. Moderated by Brandon Trujillo, this conversation will feature industry leaders, apprenticeship program coordinators, and veteran participants who will share their experiences, best practices, and strategies for success.  Panelists:   * Benjamin Stahlecker, Registered Apprenticeship Section Chief, Department of Workforce Development * Lindsay Blumer, Executive Director of WRTP Big Step * Laura Cataldo, Director, Baker Tilly’s Development and Community Advisory Practice * Sebastian Walters, State Approving Agency, WDVA * WTCS Apprenticeship Representative – Waiting on confirmation for this person   **Community Room** | 11:05-12:00 PM | **Supporting Students on Campus Mental Health and Case Management**  Moderator: Colleen Larsen, WTCS & Stephen Pepper, Moraine Park Technical College  Panel: Katelyn Coleman - VHAMAD Suicide Prevention Team  Lori Feuerstein- Waukesha County Technical College  Angela Schmidt- Moraine Park Technical College  **Room 214** |
| 12:00-12:45 PM | **Lunch- Provided – Nacho Bar** -**Community Room**  **Presentation: Folds of Honor Scholarship-**  **Presenter: Bart Garey, Outreach Committee Chair, Folds of Honor, Wisconsin Chapter** | | |
| 1:00-1:45 PM | **Large Group Session – Wisconsin Legislators Panel – WING DMA**-  Moderator: Joe Rasmussen, Director University Veteran Services, UW Madison  Panel: Sen. Hesselbein and Rep. Franklin | | |
| 2:00-2:55 PM | **Large Group Session-WI State Approving Agency (SAA)**  Presenters:  Larry Graves, Education Consultant SAA  Andrew Martin, Education Consultant SAA | | |
|  | **Break Out Sessions** | | |
| 3:00- 3:55 PM | **VA Debt Management and Institutional Debt issues- (Virtual)**  Presenter: Nicole Haselberger, Assistant Chief, Education and External Relations VA Debt Management  **Community Room** | 3:00-3:55 PM | **Heros for Healthcare/CPL Initiatives**  Presenters:  Joan Whitman PhD, Heros for Healthcare  Dustin Schultz- Veteran Specialist, Western Technical College  **Room 214** |
| 4:00- 4:45 PM | **Large Group Session – SCO Best Practices Panel**  Moderators: Elizabeth Serwe-Moraine Park Technical College & Jackie Leon-Western Technical College  Panel:  Mike Panaro- U.W. Madison  Debra Barrett- Marian University  Jackie Sacco-UW Parkside  Ben Baerbock-Milwaukee Technical College | | |
| **Networking Event-** **5:00-7:00 pm** -Pyle Center Rooftop Terrace, 702 Langdon St., Madison, W  Details: An official conference networking event covered by conference fees.  Enjoy appetizers and connect with colleagues in a relaxed setting. | | | |

# Friday, June 13, 2025

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| 7:00-9:00 AM | **Continental Breakfast -Community Room** | | |
| 8:00-8:15 AM | **Welcome-WACRAO Veteran Committee Chair** -Deb Barrett Associate Registrar & Veteran Certifying Official, PDSO for International Students Office of the Registrar  Marian University | | |
| 8:15-9:00 AM | **Keynote- Large Group – Focus Forward Fellowship**- Sheryl L Shipley, PhD, Sr. Education and Employment Specialist  Military Family Research Institute- Purdue University  Women are the fastest-growing group in the U.S. veteran population, yet their service is often underrecognized. Women veterans face unique challenges during and after military service, including identity transitions, access to resources, and a sense of isolation in predominantly male veteran communities.  The Focus Forward Fellowship is a national program designed specifically for women student veterans. It provides identity exploration, leadership development, and communication training—equipping participants with tools to thrive academically and professionally. Most importantly, the Fellowship fosters a strong sense of belonging and connection among women veterans, helping them form supportive networks that last beyond the program. | | |
| 9:05-10:00 AM | **Large Group: VORP Overview and Partnering Opportunities-**  Presenter: Calvin Stammer, Program Supervisor (North) | | |
|  | **Breakout Sessions** | | |
| 10:05-10:55 AM | **Federal Tuition Assistance, (**ArmyIgnited/AIPortal) how do they apply, how is processed, what are the rules and timeline.  Presenter: Jolen Anders- USARMY NG WIARNG in person along with Virtual Presenter  **Community Room** | 10:05-10:55 AM | **USA Jobs and other employment resources for military connected students**  Presenter: Timothy M Donahue, HireherosUSA  **Room 214** |
| 11:00-11:30 AM | **Wrap up-closing Dr Keyimani Alford, Associate Vice President | Student Access and Success, Madison College** | | |
| 12:00 PM | **Army Birthday Celebration at the Capital- Optional for Attendees**  Wisconsin’s America 250 Commission is sponsoring cake cutting celebrations at the State Capitol for the 250th Anniversary of the Army on 6/13, The Commission is also planning a big, combined celebration on Saturday June 14th at the Veterans Museum. | | |