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Military Student Services [newsletter]

Tonya Archey
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CanDoo joins Military Student Services

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – Lovable furry creatures are common on the WKU campus with Big Red and white squirrels, but you’ll start seeing another one soon. Meet CanDoo, a 2-year-old English cream golden retriever.

CanDoo is a facility dog who is being shared by Military Student Services and the Kelly Autism Program. He came to WKU thanks to support from Terry Scariot and John and Linda Kelly and thanks to his trainers at Smoky Mountain Service Dogs in Loudon, Tenn.

“We are delighted and honored and very grateful to Terry, John and Linda and everyone else who has had a hand in getting him here,” WKU President Gary Ransdell said. “We are delighted to have CanDoo in our campus community.”

MSS to host benefit auction Dec. 7, 2013

Western Kentucky University’s Military Student Services Office is hosting a benefit auction Dec. 7, 2013, at the Augenstein Alumni Center.

The purpose is to raise much needed funds for its “Textbooks for Troops” program which provides free textbooks to eligible active duty, National Guard, Reserve, and veterans attending classes at WKU. Many of our service members, and especially older veterans, do not have adequate educational benefits to help pay for school and scholarship money is very hard to come by. Programs such as this are crucial to their success.

We are currently asking for items to be auctioned off at this event. Appropriate items include: celebrity signed...
Sisterhood grants
Military Student Services $20,000

The WKU Sisterhood awarded Military Student Services $20,000 in support of “Textbooks For Troops” program. The WKU Sisterhood is a group of women with shared values, who enjoy collaborating to advance the mission of WKU. Members pool their financial gifts and award funds to a limited number of university designations to maximize the impact of their philanthropy. To learn more about the Sisterhood, visit http://www.wku.edu/sisterhood/

Military Student Services supports large WKU student community

The VA certifying officials have been busy certifying more than 667 students utilizing GI Bill benefits this semester.

Our WKU military community continues to grow with more than 1,737 students including active duty, National Guard, reserves, veterans, and their family members (spouses & children) currently enrolled in classes this semester. We have many more unaccounted for that are in classes throughout our WKU campus locations. With this number in mind, we would like to see more students participating in the Student Veterans Alliance. The SVA meets monthly in the Veterans Resource Center, TPH 410. For more info visit: www.wku.edu/sva

MSS “Textbooks For Troops” program also grew a great deal this semester. More than 500 books were loaned out to 133 students. These students include the entire WKU military community. New book purchases were nearly $17,000 with an additional $13,000 in books loaned from the MSS lending library. We always need more books. Those wishing to donate their current, gently used textbooks may drop them off in TPH 408 or at one of our donation tables during Finals Week. For more information call Teresa Jameson at 745-2180.
While his main focus will be assisting students in Military Student Services and Kelly Autism Program, CanDoo will provide a taste of home for students who may be missing their own families or pet, according to Tonya Archey, director of Military Student Services.

“CanDoo draws a lot of attention where ever he goes on campus and because of that he is helping to promote increased visibility to the community of the many benefits and programs offered through Military Student Services,” said Teresa Jameson, military student liaison. “He visited the ‘Russia to 1900’ History class Monday and brought smiles from the entire class. With this one visit, several students stated that they felt happier just for getting to pet CanDoo and many asked when he would be back.”

CanDoo is also a welcome addition to the Kelly Autism Program. “He is wonderful with the children,” said Dr. Marty Boman, KAP director. “He was able to stop a child’s screaming behavior on Monday by applying pressure therapy. This diverted her attention and she was so thrilled with the special attention, that she is now determined to have more ‘CanDoo time.’”

College life creates a lot of stress for students—especially freshmen, and CanDoo specializes in helping to overcome stressful situations.

“CanDoo’s disposition is wonderful for this application,” said Mike Kitchens, a WKU graduate and former Hilltopper basketball player who serves as volunteer spokesperson and board chair for Smoky Mountain Service Dogs. “CanDoo is a very laid back dog and he’ll be great with autistic children and with veterans. We see his role as a decompressor who can make everybody feel better.”

CanDoo is the fifth dog – and first facility dog -- placed by the organization this year. The other four dogs are providing mobility assistance and other services to four disabled veterans in Tennessee, he said.

“It’s been extremely gratifying to do this,” Kitchens said of the organization’s work.

Trainers Heather Wilkerson, Derek Blair and Susan Shemwell visited the WKU campus last week to train and certify six WKU employees in Military Student Services and Kelly Autism Program who are serving as CanDoo’s handlers.

Students can visit CanDoo at the Military Student Services Office in Tate Page Hall 408. For information on times, call Teresa Jameson at (270) 745-2180. Come celebrate CanDoo’s birthday Nov. 21, at noon in TPH 2nd floor foyer. Refreshments will be served.

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“**Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.**

- Mahatma Gandhi
memorabilia, store and restaurant gift cards, hotel packages, tickets to concerts, sporting events, amusement parks and other attractions, hand-crafted items such as jewelry, quilts, afghans, shawls, decorative items, etc. Attraction tickets would need to be for the 2014 season. Themed baskets are also a great idea and include scrapbooking, cooking, sewing, sports memorabilia, children’s books, beanie babies, baby items and more. Donations of services are also greatly appreciated. Services can include lawn care, house cleaning or repair, vehicle maintenance, clothing alterations and more.

The auction will consist of a live auction, silent auction and mystery envelopes. In addition, to help raise funds for CanDoo, the new facility dog, a costume contest will be held from noon-2 p.m. Voting for favorite costume will be done through donations. The winning costume will be the person who collected the most donations and all proceeds will go to buying food and supplies for CanDoo.

Proceeds from the auctions will be used to buy textbooks. “One hundred percent of all proceeds will be used to purchase books,” stated Teresa Jameson, Textbooks For Troops coordinator. “This program loaned out nearly $30,000 in free textbooks during the Fall term and we expect to provide even more in the Spring.”

“We have received some really amazing items,” said Tonya Archey, director, Military Student Services. Items have come from all over the United States and include signed celebrity memorabilia from Mark Harmon and the cast of NCIS as well as Josh Dallas of “Once Upon A Time.”

Vehicle maintenance services have been donated by Bluegrass Transmission and B&B Tires. In addition there will be a nice assortment of sports memorabilia signed by members of the Nashville Predators, Peyton Manning and the Tennessee Titans to name a few. There are also
overnight stays at a local Bed & Breakfast and area lakes.

Come see the multitude of gift baskets full of great items from homemade soaps, to handcrafted afghans, shawls, wreaths, picture frames and more. Gift cards from various area restaurants are also available.

How about tickets to local baseball games. Both the Bowling Green Hot Rods and Nashville Sounds have donated ticket packages. Spend the day at Churchill Downs, or take a trail ride at the Jesse James Stables. There is a zip line adventure, tickets to the Historic Rail Park, Muhammad Ali Museum in Louisville, Lost River Cave, Diamond Caverns, National Corvette Museum, Dollywood and the Nashville Zoo, to name a few. In addition, Disney World has donated four, one-day park hopper passes.

For the cooks, there is an assortment of items to help out in the kitchen such as a beautiful three-piece butcher block set and Tupperware.

Artwork from Dan dos Santos and jewelry from local artists are also available while hunters should check out the turkey decoy and hunting knife from Barren Outdoors.

Items are continuing to come in everyday so the list is growing. Those wishing to donate an item can contact Teresa Jameson at (270) 745-2180 or Teresa.Jameson@wku.edu.

This Hot Rods package comes with a chance to throw out the first pitch, a t-shirt, baseball, cap and autographed Turbo Times.

Check out these tickets for Holiday World and Splashin' Safari.

"Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation."
- Walter Cronkite
WKU ranked No. 7 among 4-year schools

WKU is ranked No. 7 among four-year schools in the Military Times’ Best for Vets: Colleges 2014 rankings.

“We are so proud to serve our nation’s heroes and their family members here at WKU,” said Tonya Archey, director of Military Student Services. “In the Office of Military Student Services we are veterans helping veterans and I think our determination to help our students succeed is evident in our growing student population. I would love to see our Army and Air Force ROTC programs grow in number over the next few months, as well as the participation in our Student Veterans Alliance. I highly encourage students to seek out these programs and get involved.”

Military Times, an organization comprising Army Times, Navy Times, Air Force Times and Marine Corps Times, placed a new emphasis on academic rigor this year when conducting and scoring the fourth annual Best for Vets: Colleges survey, a highly respected 150-question analysis of a school’s complete offerings for veterans. The full rankings, released on Veterans Day, are available online at http://www.militarytimes.com/bestforvets-colleges2014

“As with all of the Best for Vets rankings, Best for Vets: Colleges is an editorially independent news project that evaluates the many factors that make an institution a good fit for military veterans,” said Amanda Miller, editor of Military Times EDGE.

Among the programs WKU offers to its growing population of more than 2,000 active duty military, veterans and their family members are Army ROTC, Air Force ROTC, Military Student Services, a Student Veterans Alliance, a Veterans Resource Center, Veterans Upward Bound, Office of Veterans Affairs and programs at WKU’s Elizabethtown-Fort Knox campus.

A new addition this fall is CanDoo, a facility dog shared by Military Student Services and the Kelly Autism Program.

The Veterans Resource Center, located in Tate Page Hall 408, also hosts the Textbooks For Troops program, which this semester has more than $49,000 worth of free textbooks available. The program lends textbooks each semester to eligible military, veterans and their family members. Books are loaned out to students at all WKU locations, or shipped across the globe to our military students taking distance learning courses. A benefit auction for the Textbooks For Troops program will begin at 1 p.m. Dec. 7 at WKU’s Augenstein Alumni Center.

Best for Vets provides service men and women a gauge by which to judge whether a school or degree program will truly benefit them. The rankings factored in service member enrollment, percentage of tuition covered by the GI Bill, and availability of specific programs to help service members.

The extensive evaluation process also factored in statistics commonly used to track student success and academic quality, including student loan default rates, retention rates, graduation rates and student-faculty ratio.

The rankings are published in full in the November issue of Military Times EDGE magazine, the
The Department of Defense currently offers Tuition Assistance to all branches of the armed forces. For those who have exhausted their DoD Tuition Assistance, Western Kentucky University also offers a special tuition rate of $250 per semester hour for active duty military, Guard and Reserve members in both undergraduate and graduate programs. To use this special rate, you must be admitted to WKU, and unless you use GoArmyEd to pay for tuition, your active duty status must be verified through Military Student Services (TPH408) or the Military Programs Counselor (Ft. Knox, Briscoe Hall Bldg. 1174). The cost of the class is the responsibility of the service member.

GoArmyEd Registration Deadlines

Registration for winter term classes opened in GoArmyEd Nov. 6. Registration for regular term and first bi-term spring classes opens in GoArmyEd Nov. 27. The deadline for requesting Federal Tuition Assistance for classes through GoArmyEd is no later than seven calendar days after the start date of the classes.

Students who change or drop a class in TopNet must also do so in GoArmyEd. Those not withdrawing from classes in GoArmyEd may have to pay back the Army for their tuition if they fail to drop their classes in the system. For more information or assistance please call Kent Johnson at (270) 745-4163, or stop by Tate Page Hall 408.

Tuition Rate for Active Duty

GoArmyEd

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We Have Moved

Military Student Services and the Veterans Resource Center has moved to Suite 408 and room 410 respectively, of Tate Page Hall. It is open to veterans, active duty, Guard, Reserve, ROTC and their family members, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The new location has a study room and a separate lounge with microwave, refrigerator and coffee for student use in room 408J. GoArmyEd is located in room 408A and Textbooks for Troops is located in room 408B.
Scantrons & Bluebooks
Active Duty, Guard, Reserve, Veterans and their spouses and children may now pick up scantrons and bluebooks in the Veterans Resource Center, free of charge. The VRC is located in Tate Page Hall, Room 408 and is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. during Spring and Fall terms, and 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. during Summer terms.

Student Veterans Alliance
The WKU Student Veterans Alliance meets the first Monday of every month at 4 p.m., in the Veterans Resource Center! Come down to Tate Page Hall room 410 and check it out. For more information, contact: student.veterans@wku.edu.

SOKY Veterans Council
Meetings are held on the last Wednesday of every month at the WKU ALIVE Center from 3:15-4:30 p.m. For more information contact: rick.wright@wku.edu.

Recognition Cords
Fall 2013 Graduation
Military and veterans graduating from WKU as well as faculty/staff, who are military veterans participating in the graduation ceremonies, are eligible to wear these beautiful red, white and blue honor cords. Stop by Tate Page Hall 408 to pick up your cord before graduation.

Textbooks For Troops
Don’t forget to submit your request for winter and spring term books. Books for these terms should be requested no later than one week prior to the start of classes. Forms can be picked up in Tate Page Hall 408 or online at www.wku.edu/veterans. For more information, contact Teresa Jameson at (270) 745-2180.

Submissions to the newsletter
Does your organization have news important to the military community at WKU? The Military Student Services newsletter is published once a quarter in January, April, July and October. Submissions can be sent to Teresa Jameson at Teresa.Jameson@wku.edu.

We are on Facebook
Military Student Services launched its very own Facebook page earlier this year. Like our page and keep up with all the happenings of the WKU military community as well as CanDoo. Our page is at www.facebook.com/WesternKentuckyUniversityMilitaryStudentServices.

“The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled.”
— Plutarch