

University Relations Committee Minutes

January 29, 2013

Board Room, 18th Floor Patterson Office Tower – 8:00 a.m.

Committee Members Present: Jo Curris, Chair; Stephen Bilas, Sheila Brothers, Kelly Holland, Terry Mobley, and John Wilson

Other Board Members Present: Britt Brockman, Bill Britton, Mark Bryant, C.B. Akin, Keith Gannon, Pam May, Jim Stuckert

Other Guests: Dr. Capilouto, President; Dr. Tim Tracy, Provost  
Tyler Gayheart and Matt McKenzie from the Veterans Resource Center

Chair Jo Curris called the meeting to order at 7:59 a.m.

Ms. Curris opened the meeting with a welcome to guests of the University Relations Committee.

Minutes from the December 11 University Relations Committee meeting were approved.

Ms. Curris introduced, Anthony Dotson, Coordinator, Veterans' Resource Center as the guest presenter, to the Committee, who is to address the **Possibility of Funding from Department of Defense (DOD).**

(Based on her work through the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) in Washington D.C. in support of military families (Campus Friends/Campus Freedom), Chairman Curris had invited Lt. Col. Dotson to provide the committee with potential DOD funding opportunities. It had been her experience in providing programming to over 400 state public universities and colleges presidents and spouses throughout the US and in Puerto Rico, that governing Board members frequently were unaware of the financial significance of Veterans returning to the campuses. Additionally that little was known to Board members about the potential DOD Research dollars available to their campus and the dramatic impact all can have on the institution's bottom line. Because the activities and opportunities through our Veterans' Resource Center can have an important impact on UKY recruitment generally and potentially within the two-year institutions, also retention rates, and branding goals, that the resulting public relations and marketing opportunities might be of interest to the Committee and other Board members.)

Before joining the University in 2009, Mr. Dotson spent 26 years in the Army where he held many leadership positions world-wide and also served as an Intelligence officer. Mr. Dotson also has 12 years in higher education. He was hired by the Provost and opened the first Veterans Resource Center (VRC) at UK in 2009.

Mr. Dotson began his presentation titled: Finding Significant Monetary Support and Benefits for Our Student Veterans and the University through the Veterans Resource Center. Mr. Dotson noted that the message of this presentation is positive. There are always areas in which to do better—but the following topics were gathered from his observations and experiences.

The Mission of the Veterans Resource Center is to coordinate and provide the necessary resources and services to ensure the academic success of the university's student veteran population.

Between 2009 and 2013 there has been a steady increase of veteran enrollment. UK is ranked 12th in the nation as "Best for Vets." The University offers UK101 class for veterans' only, veteran housing, no interest emergency loans and offers priority registration. Mr. Dotson noted that UK is one of the few universities in the country that offer student housing for Veterans.

#### THE UKVRC RECEIVED NATIONAL ATTENTION

The UKVRC received national attention for the play "Bringing It Home – Voices of Student Veterans" (also known as "Civilian"). This unique creative initiative was a collaboration of UKY students from the College of Fine Arts, Nunn Center for Oral History and VRC. It began with a "staging history" class in the Theater Department that chose the topic of our current returning veterans as their theme. They utilized the Oral History Department's video interviews from their Combat to Kentucky project to develop their script. The play met with great success here at UK and was selected by the NY International Fringe Festival for five shows in an off-Broadway. The program was and is extremely therapeutic for our veteran students as well as veterans viewing the production. It is believed there is a huge international market for this program and could be a vital link in the branding of our UKVRC.

Other UK Initiatives with DoD Appeal include:, Kentucky Oral History Program, Military Families Task Force, research on suicide, research on the effects of deployment on families, and the VA Vet Success On Campus Program.

#### VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION HAS OFFERED ONE FREE FULL TIME PERSON

Due to our increase in veteran students, the VA has invited us to participate in its Vet Success on Campus program (VSOC). This partnership would result in a full time VA benefits employee being placed on campus who's primary responsibility would be to service our student veterans and their families. All UK would have to do would be to provide the office space. This is a huge opportunity, not only to vastly increase the services offered our student veterans but also to raise our status as a veteran friendly institution.

#### THE MILITARY PRESENCE IN KENTUCKY IS SIGNIFICANT IN TERMS OF PERSONNEL AND FUNDING

- 58,000 active duty personnel and 14,000 reservists
- Kentucky has the 9th largest military population in the U.S.
- 4th largest Army footprint
- 2nd largest payroll in Kentucky

#### CURRENT MILITARY SPENDING RECEIVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

– GI Bill: \$3,631,675 (422 UK veteran students according to past statistics, but currently approximately 600 veterans at UK). Each Veteran receives: a) full tuition, b) a book allowance, and c) a living (housing) stipend allowance.

Because the new GI Bill is transferable to dependents, we have seen a steady increase in benefit utilization. The dependent usage has increased over 200% since 2009.

– ROTC Scholarships - \$1,106,444 (96 students) receive:  
a) up-to full tuition and fees, b) book allowance, and c) monthly living stipend

– National Guard TA - \$495,658 (75 students) receive: full tuition and fees for all Guard members.

– Vocational Rehabilitation - \$360,474 (45 students) receive: a) full tuition and fees, b) materials, and c) books, and d) stipend. It is employment focused.

– Tuition Assistance at \$4,500/yr - \$152,285 (31 students); a federal program for active duty and reserves; programs can vary.

– Fully funded graduate programs – all services have competitive programs and ROTC graduates can opt for fully funded graduate school.

#### SIGNIFICANT DOD RESEARCH DOLLARS ARE AVAILABLE TO THE UNIVERSITY

Mr. Dotson reported that The Department of Defense Research has a budget of \$11.9 billion for 2013. \$2.1 billion is to maintain basic research (largely university based)--Kentucky currently receives less than 1% of that amount. Great potential is available for expanded UKY research funded through this program.

One of the strategic goals of DoD Research is to preserve and enhance the all-volunteer force. Examples include: provide top-quality physical and psychological care to wounded warriors, ensuring the long-term viability of the Reserve Component; better prepare and support families during deployments, and train the total Defense Workforce with the right competencies. The educational breadth of the University of Kentucky, combined with Kentucky Health Care and the VA hospital could be a fertile field for these research dollars.

#### ADDITIONAL POSSIBILITIES FOR EXPANSION OF UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH THE VRC

There are several additional areas for the University to provide and promote educational opportunities. The University could be more competitive if given an expanded relationship with Fort Campbell and Fort Knox.

Fort Campbell: 38,000 personnel, military families, retirees. Potential UK focus areas include requested help with graduate education; research on PTSD, suicide, and the effects of deployment.

Fort Knox: 18,000 personnel; Human Resources command, Recruiting command, Cadet Command, higher ranks of military personnel. Potential UK focus: active duty looking for best education, executive education programs, energy research.

National Guard: Top 3 in the country, Guardsman in every Kentucky county. Potential UK focus areas include: a follow up from General Tonini's visit with regard to suicide awareness, sexual assault, and resiliency training; College of Ag—Military Families Task Force

UKROTC: was among the nation's Top 10 in the 80's. Potential UK focus areas include: scholarship provider, free instructors (for ROTC classes, DSP classes, KHP classes; on-time graduation rates, relationship with host campus, adding Navy would increase status)

Blue Grass Army Depot: Few active duty; Potential UK focus areas include: internships, shared research, and mining engineering.

Reserves: Over 5,000 in KY. Potential UK focus areas include: tuition assistance.

USS Kentucky: Nuclear submarine, State's namesake, has 15 officers and 140 enlisted personnel, commanded by UK Alum LCDR Jeff Smith. Potential UK focus – public relations, rapport with U.S. Navy. Perhaps an opportunity to showcase online learning.

Veterans in Kentucky: Nearly 350,000 in KY; over 50,000 eligible for educational benefits. Potential UK focus areas include: maintain Top 10 ranking, increased relationships with BCTCS and KCTCS schools.

Mr. Dotson spoke of several ways to reach the potential of a relationship between UK, the Department of Defense and veterans' opportunities:

- Learn what other universities are doing (example: hiring retired Generals to run Military Initiatives programs)
- Increase marketing and recruiting
- Increase retention with policies and programs
- Coordinate efforts within the University and between Deans when seeking DoD research grant opportunities. Currently Mr. Dotson is asked for advice and involvement by different University areas when such grants are being sought

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANDED RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE DOD CAN SUPPORT THE UKY STRATEGIC PLAN

- Responsibility to Kentucky –a greater number of veteran students from every county, can assist in increasing graduation and retention rates, as well as expand the educational base of Kentucky
- Expand opportunities and strategies for attaining national prominence
- Significantly assist in narrowing the funding gap between budget and cost of doing business by increasing access to DOD dollars provided for Veteran tuition, books and living allowances, and through expanding research opportunities

Mr. Dotson concluded his presentation with a recap. The Veterans Resource Center has taken an expanded role acting as a bridge builder, a translator for things concerning the Department of Defense and liaison for military matters, and a representative for the University in Frankfort on military/veterans issues. From this expansion it is clear that the university requires the many additional functions not originally planned for in the design of the VRC. While other schools have hired retired senior level military personnel to fill this role; UK has the advantage of growing this position from within. This ensures buy in from academia, as evidenced by the many collaborative initiatives surrounding the VRC.

He emphasized that there is much to be gained for all through an expanded relationship between the University and the Department of Defense.

At the conclusion of Mr. Dotson's presentation, Chair Curris asked the audience if there were questions.

Please note that each question below was preceded with a thank you for service and sincere appreciation of military service.

Question 1: (Regarding all previously mentioned needs of the Center) Are there any "low-hanging fruits," something simple that would assist you?"

Answer: Space is a priority. The Veterans Center has a proposal in for more space. It is my understanding that the proposal has gone to the right place.

Question 2: As the U.S. closes out of Afghanistan, is there a projection on the number of Vets who may be looking for educational opportunities?

Answer: As the military downsizes through 2017, roughly 30,000-50,000 folks could take advantage of opportunities; the increase comes not only from Veterans but their dependents taking advantage of educational opportunities.

Question 3: What dorms or housing is used for Veteran students?

Answer: Some of the housing is off Alumni Drive, and university housing near the stadium—Greg Page Apartments. The support of the university and its willingness to assist with housing is very welcome.

Question 4: Why is the ROTC program in decline?

Answer: As far as UK—it has nothing to do with the Colonel. The Commander at UK is excellent. The ROTC program as a concept has a bit of a design flaw. The program swaps out Commanders every 2 years. As it takes a year or so to get the program flowing, by the end of the second year, the Commander is leaving. This inconsistency in leadership can cause a disruption. ROTC lives and dies by its relationship with the host campus. When a campus embraces a program you will see bigger programs. So UK could minimize the impact of military turnover by simply creating its own continuity on the academic side.

Comment: Many aspects of the Department of Defense are easily confusing – you have to have people who know how to do this (be a Veterans Resource).

Response: Yes. It is a huge benefit to Veterans on campus to have a person they can go to—and it is very helpful for the Department of Defense to speak with a Veterans employee here who understands the terminology.

Question 5: In regards to the “next steps” and the Community Colleges, what are you doing at the Community Colleges?

Answer: We have a good relationship and presence at BCTCS due to proximity. It takes a relationship and building that relationship (to recruit and transition students to UK).

However as to the other community and two year colleges, you really need someone there on the ground, to target specific UK transfer opportunities and events.

It is a matter of resources and personal contact. Right now it is difficult to visit all those colleges as an office of one person. It is on my to-do list. In 2009 when the Center was developed we had no idea what would happen, how things would expand. Currently my position is not resourced to do other than UK issues.

Question 6: Locally, I see ads every 5 minutes on TV for those places who are in it for the Vet money. What are you doing to advertise around the “for profit” colleges?

Answer: You have hit a strong nerve of mine. Currently we have a national focus on advertising.

\*\*\*Please note that the time for the meeting was called before this answer was expanded.

Chair Curris drew a close to the discussion. She thanked Dr. Capilouto and Dr. Tim Tracy for joining the meeting. Ms. Curris asked if either the President or Provost had a comment or question for Mr. Dotson. Dr. Capilouto thanked Mr. Dotson for an informative presentation.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 a.m.