

Supporting Student Veterans

Cornerstone Project Report & Recommendations

July, 2018

We must train and classify the whole of our male citizens, and make military instruction a regular part of collegiate education. We can never be safe till this is done.

Thomas Jefferson in a letter to James Monroe, 1813

Four years before he laid the cornerstone for the University of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson foresaw (in his own archaically sexist way) the importance of integrating the military into a university education. So how good a job is UVA doing today in attracting and retaining veterans of the U.S. military as undergraduate students? How do we compare to peer institutions? And is there more that our University could be doing to serve this important student population, who themselves have done so much to serve our country?

This Cornerstone Project report outlines the challenges undergraduate military veterans currently face at the University and proposes solutions to resolve them. It is the result of 28 in-depth interviews conducted with key University administrators and stakeholders, student veterans, and officials at peer institutions (Appendix I); a review of relevant data (Appendix II); and an examination of federal, state, and University policies, as well as studies and best-practices, related to student veterans (Appendix III).

Overview of the challenges

There are, in fact, only a handful of full-time undergraduate military veterans on Grounds. Since 2012, that enrollment has fluctuated in a narrow band between 16 and 34 (in the 2017-2018 academic year).^{1, 2}

The Commonwealth of Virginia is home to the fastest-growing veteran population in the nation. It has the largest percentage of veterans under the age of 28, and it counts more veterans in the workforce per capita than any other state. Yet Virginia's flagship university lags behind some peer institutions, such as

¹ While the challenges and recommendations in this report also apply to full-time undergraduate students who are on active duty, there are even fewer of those students. In Spring, 2018, for example, there were five such undergraduates. From 2012-2017, there were a total of eight.

² More veterans are enrolled in the University's graduate schools, particularly Darden, Nursing, Education, and Law; in Spring, 2018 the total count of student veterans in all graduate schools was 128. But because those veterans are older and more experienced—usually coming from the officer corps, as opposed to the enlisted ranks—they tend to experience fewer challenges than undergraduates and are therefore not the focus of this report.

the University of California/Berkeley and the University of Michigan/Ann Arbor, in the number of undergraduate student veterans we are enrolling.

Meanwhile, the distinct needs of those undergraduate veterans who do enroll at UVA are not always being met. Efforts to assist student veterans are uncoordinated, opportunities to better integrate them into the University are missed, and, as a result, the student experience for these veterans, as well as their undergraduate peers, is diminished.

To be sure, there are dedicated University administrators and staff in various offices across Grounds who are trying to address student veteran needs. Associate Dean of Students Aaron Laushway, Assistant Dean of Students David Sauerwein, and Veterans Affairs Coordinator Kiama Anthony, to name just three, are each aware of some of the challenges and are working hard to resolve them.

But the biggest hurdle for the University remains a general lack of awareness that these student veterans even exist on Grounds and therefore might be experiencing unique challenges. Professors often don't know they have student veterans in their classes; admissions officers don't know there are national programs to help them recruit highly qualified veterans; the Office of the Provost, as well as many UVA schools and colleges, may not know that student veterans arrive at the University with military coursework that could fulfill prerequisites or merit transfer credit; the housing office doesn't know student veterans are struggling with finding suitable places to live; and the Office of the Registrar only knows about military veterans who are receiving veterans benefits or who otherwise choose to identify themselves as veterans in their University paperwork.

Virginia is America's university. In many ways, we are the birthplace of democracy. How do we make sure UVA doesn't look like a second-class institution for veterans?

Mark Luellen, University Vice President for Advancement

Rationales for addressing the challenges

There are many reasons the University of Virginia should want to attract and better serve student veterans, starting with the straightforward proposition that it's an important public service—and the right thing to do for a unique cohort of students who have sacrificed for our country.

Then there's fulfilling a promise, signed by the University in 2014, to follow the U.S. Department of Education's "8 Keys to Veterans' Success," a voluntary guideline outlining specific ways that colleges and universities can support student veterans (See Appendix III). At UVA, those eight recommendations remain unfulfilled.

Moreover, student veterans offer a number of strategic benefits to the University. Usually their tuition is fully covered by federal veterans benefits, meaning their presence frees up financial aid resources for other deserving students (in FY2016, the University received more than \$11 million in Post-9/11 GI Bill



tuition benefits paid on behalf of veterans and dependents). Veterans are a federally-protected class, they expand the racial and socioeconomic diversity of the student body, and many are working-class, first-generation college students. They are often older and more mature than their 18- to 22-year-old peers, and many hold more conservative political viewpoints, all of which enriches the diversity of the University community and the student experience.

While the University traditionally favors decentralized and student-driven approaches to resolving challenges, experience indicates that a more centrally-coordinated and administratively-driven solution is preferable when it comes to meeting the complex needs of undergraduate military veterans.

Peer institutions can point the way. They have shown that with a focused effort and a modest budget, the unique needs of military veterans can be met, a welcoming climate can be created, and veteran enrollment can be boosted.

Key recommendations

To increase enrollment of undergraduate student veterans and better meet their needs, the University of Virginia should:

- Create a new **Director of Student Veteran Services** position to coordinate veteran-related recruitment and retention initiatives across the University and also serve as a dedicated advocate, advisor, and troubleshooter for undergraduate student veterans. This position should be vested with sufficient authority to engage all parts of the University with a stake in undergraduate veteran enrollment and could dual-report to the University Dean of Students, the Dean of Admissions, and/or the Provost, as senior University officials deem appropriate.
- Establish a new **Student Veteran Services Center** on Grounds that will serve as a central information resource, counseling center, and networking/gathering place for student veterans. One possible location for this office, in Peabody Hall adjacent to Admissions, could signal the importance of student veterans to the University community and prospective students alike.

These two essential components—a dedicated veteran services director and a defined student veteran space—are integral to successful student veteran programs at colleges and universities across the country. At three peer institutions in particular that were the subject of this study—UCLA, Berkeley, and Michigan—officials emphasized the importance of these centralized approaches to provide coordinated services to student veterans and ensure program continuity.

A draft budget for this proposal is included in Appendix IV. Both Mark Luellen, University Vice President for Advancement, and Jenifer Andrasko, President and CEO of the UVA Alumni Association (herself a Navy veteran), have expressed confidence that endowing such an initiative could prove attractive to UVA alums who are also military veterans, meaning it could be funded without having to tap any University operating funds. Moreover, it should be noted that, apart from the creation of a new Director of Student Veteran Services position and a new Student Veteran Services Center, many of the other recommendations in this report can be implemented without the need for additional funds.

Seems to me it's hit or miss for student vets. There have been efforts with good intentions, but there has not been a cohesive effort to pull things together. I'm interested in that. Our society has made promises to veterans that we have not kept.

David Sauerwein, Assistant Dean of Students

Additional recommendations

In the course of our interviews, we discovered a number of institutional, cultural, and systemic challenges that student veterans encounter at the University. A new Director of Student Veteran Services can be expected to advocate on behalf of student veterans for solutions to these challenges and coordinate responses from departments and administrators across Grounds.

Challenge *Low undergraduate student veteran enrollment*

In the 2017-2018 academic year, UVA enrolled 34 full-time undergraduate student veterans—the highest such enrollment achieved since 2012. This number lags 2017 enrollment figures for some peer institutions surveyed, including the University of California/Berkeley and the University of Michigan, although it is higher than some others. Nearly all of UVA's undergraduate student veterans are transfer students, and their two-year degree-completion rates [are generally higher](#) than non-military transfer students.³

University of California/Berkeley	200
University of Michigan	113
University of Virginia	34
Cornell University	24
Stanford University	23
University of Pennsylvania	14
Washington University St. Louis	6
Duke University	1

UVA's undergraduate student veteran enrollment is on track to grow by about 10 students per year over the next four years by virtue of the University's participation in the [Posse Foundation Veterans Program](#), an initiative that helps place cohorts of veterans at top universities across the country. The first cohort of Posse veterans, aged 22-27, will arrive for the Fall 2018 semester. Apart from the Posse Program, however, UVA Admissions does not currently have any recruitment programs focused on military veterans. In the past, the admissions office had a recruiting partnership with the Veterans Affairs office at Piedmont Virginia Community College.

³ Notably, all four of the peer institutions clustered around UVA in terms of undergraduate student veteran enrollment—even Cornell and Stanford with fewer student veterans—have built robust veteran support offices similar to what we propose that UVA should create.

Recommendation *Launch a focused veteran recruitment effort*

UVA Admissions should launch a specific recruiting effort aimed at attracting more full-time undergraduate student veterans, both as first-year and transfer students.

- Set recruitment goals to motivate admissions officers.
- Revive the veteran recruiting partnership with PVCC and establish new partnerships with the Virginia Community College System and education offices on military installations in the state.
- Subscribe to the [VetLink](#) recruiting partnership, a “matching service” that identifies highly-qualified veteran applicants for elite universities. Harvard, Yale, Princeton, MIT, Cornell, and the University of Chicago are among the highly-selective universities currently utilizing this service.
- Offer in-state tuition rates to all veterans regardless of their military status or state of residence.
- Track and analyze student veteran statistics (e.g. admissions, enrollment, completion, academic performance, student satisfaction), via surveys and focus groups. Compare these analytics to other universities to measure progress.

The undergraduates are the most vulnerable. It’s usually socioeconomic. If they went from high school into the military, they’ve been shaped and formed in a way their cohort group has not. They are immediately alienated from their cohort group.

Rafael Triana, UVA CAPS staff psychotherapist

Challenge *Student veterans can feel estranged from the University*

Like other transfer students, undergraduate student veterans can have difficulty “fitting in” to the University, and they miss being part of an affiliated four-year cohort of traditional 18- to 22-year-olds. But veterans also have unique orientation and housing needs that are distinct from other transfer students. For example, transfer students are assigned peer Student Care Advisors to ease their transition to the University, but the gulf in life experience between a 21-year-old third-year Student Care Advisor and, say, a 28-year-old combat veteran impairs the peer-advising experience. Similarly, on-Grounds student housing is not necessarily suitable for a student veteran who may be married with a young family.

Recommendation *Create a tailored veteran onboarding program*

- Waive the \$400 enrollment deposit requirement for student veterans, whose tuition is fully paid by the GI Bill. While they can eventually get the deposit refunded once the

University receives their tuition from the federal government, coming up with the deposit within 15 days of their acceptance in the first place is often a financial hardship.

- Designate a UVA Housing & Residence Life advisor for student veterans to help them find appropriate on-Grounds or off-Grounds housing, which is often a confusing scramble for transfer students because they are notified of admission after first-year applicants.
- Inform first-year student veterans that they can apply to Housing & Residence Life for a waiver exempting them from the requirement that first-year undergraduates must live on Grounds.
- Offer student veterans priority orientation and course registration. Create an orientation module specifically tailored for their needs.
- Pair veteran transfer students with fellow veterans to act as their Student Care Advisors.

Challenge *No specialized counseling or networking services for veterans*

The University offers a range of counseling, career, and networking services to undergraduate students. But many of these services are not adapted to the unique needs of military veterans. For example, veterans face particular challenges when marketing their skills to potential employers and therefore require career counselors who can help them translate their military experience into a civilian resume. In other cases, the University does have specialists ideally suited to the needs of student veterans, but the veterans may not know about them. For example, Rafael Triana, a Vietnam combat veteran, is a staff psychotherapist in Counseling & Psychological Services, but student veterans only tend to discover him accidentally, by word of mouth. Finally, there are three related military groups on Grounds with rich potential for networking and mentoring relationships, yet they have no mechanisms to find each other: undergraduate student veterans, undergraduate ROTC students, and University faculty and staff who are themselves military veterans.

Recommendation *Introduce new veteran counseling and networking services*

- Identify counselors and other health service professionals who have experience working with veterans and communicate that information to student veterans at new-student orientation and via the new Student Veteran Services Center.
- Designate and train UVA career counselors so they have the skills to help student veterans market themselves to employers. UCLA has a “Ready, Aim, Hire!” [employment program](#) that could offer a model.
- Offer veteran-focused academic and financial counseling.
- Utilize the new Student Veteran Services Center and the Director of Student Veteran Services to facilitate networking and mentoring relationships between the various military-affiliated populations at the University. For example, faculty and staff with military experience who are members of the [Veterans Employee Resource Group](#) might be paired with undergraduate student veterans as mentors or advisors, while undergraduate student veterans might in turn serve as mentors for undergraduate ROTC students who are about to begin military service.

Challenge *Uneven consideration of transfer credits*

In 2012, the Governor of Virginia issued an executive order requiring the state’s public colleges and universities to “implement policies for the purpose of awarding academic credit to students for education experience gained from service in the armed forces of the United States.” While the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) acknowledges that ultimately the decision whether to award credit is up to each individual college/university, it nevertheless requires each institution to at least have procedures and policies in place to evaluate military coursework for credit consideration. However, UVA only partially complies with this state requirement; some schools examine a student veteran’s “Joint Services Transcript” to determine whether any military coursework merits transfer credit or fulfills course prerequisites, but others do not, and there is no central enforcement of this requirement from the Office of the Provost.

Recommendation *Utilize American Council on Education guidelines to evaluate military transcripts for potential transfer credits*

Recognizing the challenge of translating specialized military coursework and experience into equivalent university coursework, the American Council on Education has created a comprehensive and interactive [Guide to Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services](#) to help university officials evaluate a veteran’s Joint Services Transcript. The ACE website explains the evaluation process: “All recommendations are based on ACE reviews conducted by college and university faculty members who are actively teaching in the areas they review. The team assesses and validates whether the courses or occupations have the appropriate content, scope, and rigor for college credit recommendations.”

Students have expressed concern over lack of a veteran center, a student veteran group, and other services. Unfortunately, UREG is focused on academic affairs and did not have the capacity to provide those services in the past. UREG’s function is often misunderstood, which can be frustrating for both students and administrators.

Kiama Anthony, Veterans Affairs Coordinator

Challenge *Existing UVA veteran services are confusing*

The University has a position called “Veterans Affairs Coordinator,” housed in the Office of the Registrar, and the incumbent, Kiama Anthony, is a dedicated employee who works hard to assist student veterans. The problem is that the position title suggests to student veterans and other University officials alike that Anthony’s job is to help veterans with a broad array of academic, financial, housing, and other issues, when in fact her primary responsibility is to serve as the “VA Certifying Official” who ensures that more than 700 undergraduate veterans and veteran dependents are receiving their correct tuition benefits

under the GI Bill. The resulting misunderstandings about the Veterans Affairs Coordinator's role are a frequent source of frustration for both student veterans and Anthony herself. Similarly, the Registrar's office convenes regular meetings of a cross-Grounds University Veterans and Military Advisory Council, but contrary to its expansive-sounding name, the committee members are primarily concerned with technical matters related to student registration, records, and tuition, not broader challenges facing student veterans such as those outlined in this report. Finally, there is no single, comprehensive UVA web resource for student veterans where they can locate all the relevant information and services available to them.

Recommendation *Clarify titles and veteran services*

- Rename the "Veterans Affairs Coordinator" title to emphasize the role of the position in certifying veterans' benefits. This will also eliminate confusion between this role and the new Director of Student Veteran Services.
- Rename the "University Veterans and Military Advisory Council" to reflect its actual scope.
- Create a comprehensive UVA web resource for student veterans. [The Office of the Registrar has recently launched a new [Wahoo Warrior](#) guide for military-connected students. This is a good foundation and should be expanded and cross-posted to other relevant UVA websites where veterans visit in search of information.]

We don't seek extra attention, but I sit through a lot of classes where the professor makes jokes about the students not being old enough to drink. You can tell they have no idea they have students in that classroom who are outside the traditional age.

Chris Householder, Army vet/4th year student, College of Arts & Sciences

Challenge *Insensitive faculty*

Faculty are often unaware of the presence of undergraduate student veterans in their classes. This results in missed opportunities to enhance the student experience for everyone in the classroom, veteran and non-veteran alike, because the lived experiences of student veterans offer unique insights and fresh viewpoints that can enhance a range of classroom discussions about history, politics, sociology, psychology, and other subjects. Even when they are aware of veteran students, some faculty can exhibit insensitivity toward their unique challenges. For example, Shawn Lyons, an assistant dean in the College and a Marine veteran himself, recounted an incident where he tried to advocate for a student veteran who is on active reserve and was called to duty. The student missed a project deadline but the instructor refused to extend it.

Recommendation *Offer faculty training*

Colleges and universities across the nation offer specialized training modules to acquaint faculty and staff with issues facing student veterans. These programs range from online training modules to in-person workshops, generally requiring only a few hours to complete. Training could be incorporated into orientation programs for new University faculty and staff and offered on a voluntary basis for existing personnel.

Several programs could serve as models for UVA:

- [VCU Green Zone](#) training for faculty and staff. Virginia Commonwealth University pioneered the concept of such training in 2010 and its program is now offered at more than 100 universities and organizations nationwide.
- [VET NET Ally](#) faculty and staff awareness program. Developed by California State University, it has been presented on campuses across California and other states.
- [University of Michigan](#) faculty/staff training program. A comprehensive program consisting of five modules.

Conclusion

With focused attention, centralized coordination, and a modest annual budget that could be funded through an endowment, the University of Virginia can boost enrollment of undergraduate military veterans and better serve this unique population of students while simultaneously enhancing the educational experience for students and faculty alike.

Recommendations

- Create a new Director of Student Veteran Services position
- Establish a new Student Veteran Services Center
- Launch a focused veteran recruitment effort
- Create a tailored veteran onboarding program
- Introduce new veteran counseling and networking services
- Utilize American Council on Education guidelines to evaluate military transcripts for potential credits
- Clarify titles and veteran services
- Offer faculty training

Supporting Student Veterans

Appendix I – Interviewees

University of Virginia

Jenifer Andrasko	President and CEO	UVA Alumni Association
Kiama Anthony	Veterans Affairs Coordinator	University Registrar
Michelle Ball	Career Counselor	UVA Career Center
Amanda Crombie	Director of Academic Programs	Batten School
Alan Fiorello	Academic Outreach Manager	SCPS
Allen Groves	University Dean of Students	Office of the Dean of Students
Doug Hartog	Senior Associate Dean	Office of Undergraduate Admissions
Laura Hawthorne	University Registrar	Office of the Registrar
Olivia Hessing	Assistant Dean of Admissions	Office of Undergraduate Admissions
Archie Holmes	Vice Provost for Academic Affairs	Office of the Provost
Chris Householder	Army veteran/4th year student	College of Arts & Sciences
Patricia Lampkin	Vice President for Student Affairs	Office of Student Affairs
David Lapinski	Director of Employer Relations	UVA Career Center
Aaron Laushway	Associate Dean of Students	Office of the Dean of Students
Mark Luellen	Vice President for Advancement	UVA Advancement
Shawn Lyons	Assistant Dean	College of Arts & Sciences
Christina Morell	Associate Provost and Director	Institutional Assessment & Studies
Andrew Petters	Assistant Dean of Students	UVA Housing and Residence Life
David Sauerwein	Assistant Dean of Students	Office of Student Affairs
Rachel Spraker	Compliance Director	Office for Equal Opportunity/Civil Rights
Allan Stam	Dean	Batten School
Mark Stanis	Director of Project Services	UVA Facilities
Rafael Triana	Psychotherapist	Counseling & Psychological Services

Other Universities

Emily Ives	Veterans Program Director	UCLA
Philip Larson	Veterans Program Director	University of Michigan/Ann Arbor
Stephen Ross	Director of Military Student Services	Virginia Commonwealth University
Luis Hernandez	Academic Achievement Counselor	University of California/Berkeley
Ron Williams	Director of Veteran Services Center	University of California/Berkeley

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Appendix II – Relevant Data

Statistics

[UVA Spring 2018 enrollment statistics](#)

[UVA undergraduate transfer student statistics](#)

[UVA undergraduate first-year student statistics](#)

[Characteristics of student veterans](#)

[Student veterans: A valuable asset to higher education](#)

Existing UVA web resources for veterans

[UVA Veterans Educational Benefits page](#)

[UVA Wahoo Warrior guide for military-connected students](#)

[UVA Career Center page for veterans](#)

[UVA Resources for Veterans](#)

[UVA Veterans Employee Resource Group](#)

Supporting Student Veterans

Appendix III – Policies, Studies, Best Practices

U.S. Department of Education

8 Keys to Veterans' Success

1. Create a culture of trust and connectedness across the campus community to promote well-being and success for veterans.
2. Ensure consistent and sustained support from campus leadership.
3. Implement an early alert system to ensure all veterans receive academic, career, and financial advice before challenges become overwhelming.
4. Coordinate and centralize campus efforts for all veterans, together with the creation of a designated space for them (even if limited in size).
5. Collaborate with local communities and organizations, including government agencies, to align and coordinate various services for veterans.
6. Utilize a uniform set of data tools to collect and track information on veterans, including demographics, retention, and degree completion.
7. Provide comprehensive professional development for faculty and staff on issues and challenges unique to veterans.
8. Develop systems that ensure sustainability of effective practices for veterans.

Articles

[What admissions officers know \(and don't know\) about military service](#)

[Veterans at Selective Colleges, 2017](#)

[The complicated world of higher education for troops](#)

Transfer credit

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia [Guidelines on Academic Credit for Military Education](#)

ACE [Guide to Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services](#)

[Sample Joint Services Transcript](#)

Veteran recruitment

[Posse Foundation Veterans Program](#)

[VetLink](#)

Studies & best practices

[Key Findings](#): ACE 2016 Service Member and Veteran Academic Advising Summit

[Predicting problems on campus: An analysis of college student veterans](#)

[American Council on Education toolkit for veteran-friendly institutions](#)

Student veteran offices at peer institutions

University of California/Berkeley [Veteran Services Center](#)

University of Michigan [Veteran and Military Services](#)

UCLA [Veteran Resource Center](#)

Cornell University [Student Veterans Advocate Office](#)

Stanford University [Office for Military-Affiliated Communities](#)

Faculty/Staff training programs

[VCU Green Zone](#)

[VET NET Ally](#)

[University of Michigan](#)

Veteran employment

UCLA “Ready, Aim, Hire!” veteran [employment program](#)

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Appendix IV – Draft Budget

Item	One-time cost	Annual Cost	Notes
Director of Student Veteran Services	\$20,000	\$168,000	Salary (\$120K) + benefits multiplier (1.4) + one-time relocation costs
Student veteran employees (part time)		\$14,400	4 students at 10 hours/week at \$10/hour for 36 weeks
Student Veteran Services Center	\$75,000	\$13,400	One-time cost to renovate/furnish 500 sf office; annual \$11K space rental fee + utilities at \$200/month
Equipment	\$40,000		Computers, software, printers
Miscellaneous operating costs		\$54,200	Supplies, events, director travel
Total	\$135,000	\$250,000	
Endowment needed to fund annual cost		\$5,000,000	Assumes 5% earnings on endowment to fund annual cost

Supporting Student Veterans

Appendix V – Project Team

Mutinta Bulanda mb9gq@virginia.edu

School of Medicine



Originally from Zambia, Mutinta Bulanda came to the U.S in 2007. She is an alumna of UVA's McIntire School of Commerce. After graduating in 2012, Bulanda joined the Department of Medicine – Division of Cardiology as a fiscal technician before moving to Gastroenterology in the same role. Currently, Bulanda is a senior finance generalist in the Department of Medicine – Division of Infectious Diseases. She is responsible for the financial operations of the division including budgeting and forecasting, reporting, account reconciliations, data analysis, and interpretation. She is also currently a Master of Health Care Administration candidate at Ohio University.

Susan Lynch scl4d@virginia.edu

School of Continuing and Professional Studies



Susan Lynch is a strategic project manager at the School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS), where she manages a portfolio of projects based out of the dean's office. Lynch has held a number of positions at SCPS over her 11 years with the school, where she started as a temporary worker in the registration office. Prior to moving to Charlottesville, she worked in the development field at progressive organizations in Chicago, Portland, and Washington, DC. Lynch holds an MPA from The Ohio State University and a BA in sociology from Lake Forest College.

Howard Witt hlw6s@virginia.edu

Miller Center of Public Affairs



[Howard Witt](#) is the Miller Center's director of communications. Before joining the Center in 2015, Witt was the editor of the Lafayette (Ind.) *Journal & Courier*. From 2009-2013, Witt was the senior managing editor of *Stars and Stripes*; under his leadership, the military newspaper won a Polk Award and National Headliner Award. Previously, Witt was the southwest bureau chief of the *Chicago Tribune*. For his coverage of civil rights, Witt was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 2007; he also won the Nieman Foundation's Taylor Award for Fairness in Journalism and the American Judicature Society's Journalism Award. Witt started at the *Tribune* in 1982 and during his 25-year career there he was a national correspondent, foreign correspondent, and editor. He earned a BA from the University of Michigan.

Kim Johnson kjj9ze@virginia.edu

Marine Corps veteran/Batten Alumnus



Kim Johnson enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1994 and retired in May 2014 as an E-8 Master Sergeant. She served as an air traffic control communications technician in her initial years, and upon promotion to Master Sergeant in 2009, she was re-designated as an air traffic control systems maintenance chief. In this billet she applied a detailed and working knowledge of all aviation maintenance programs and processes in a high operational tempo environment, thus ensuring reliable air traffic control systems and technically qualified Marines prepared for the rigors of combat. She held various collateral duties, including uniformed victim advocate, equal opportunity representative, assistant security manager, classified material control officer, family readiness officer, and master training specialist. Johnson served two combat tours, in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as an overseas tour in Okinawa, Japan, and multiple tours spanning the U.S. east and west coasts. After retirement, she resumed her studies, graduating summa cum laude with an associate's degree from Northern Virginia Community College in 2016, and then completed her bachelor's degree with distinction from the Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy at the University of Virginia. She is the 2018 recipient of Batten's Trailblazer, Innovator, Pioneer Legacy Award.

Although the term of the Cornerstone Project Team officially concludes in September, 2018, we are all keenly interested in doing whatever we can to help put our recommendations into practice. Therefore, we invite University administrators to call on us for consultation or assistance at any time.