

Special accommodations for vets at LTCC

By Kathryn Reed

A little used meeting space at Lake Tahoe Community College is now a dedicated area for veterans.

“You don’t have to be a student to access these services. We are considering ourselves as a hub and will be able to refer vets to other services,” Aaron Barnett, the LTCC counselor who oversees the center, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We’ve never had a place for them to meet before.”

The South Lake Tahoe school has been helping vets for years, especially with those using the post-Sept. 11 GI Bill. The Veterans Resource Center expands the offerings and gives those who have served a place to call their own.



Lake Tahoe Community College has created a Veterans Resource Center.
Photo/Provided

At any given time LTCC averages about 30 veterans who are enrolled. With the center, it will be easier to welcome non-students into the fold and provide them with help as well.

The center is equipped with computers, printers, copiers, television, comfortable furniture, a fridge (snacks, water and coffee will be provided for free), and other amenities. It's part work space, part lounge.

But it's also a resource center to get information about financial aid, veteran benefits, priority registration, as well as obtain general assistance regarding transitioning back into civilian life.

The state is advocating community colleges have these centers for vets. LTCC started working on this one a year ago. More than half of all veterans who receive education benefits in California's public higher education systems attend one of the 113 community colleges.

Counseling will come in many forms. A readjustment therapist from the Veterans Affairs center in Reno is at LTCC every other Thursday. If the need increases, it's possible he could come every week. Stress management and psychological services are also available.

Greg Hoover, who served in the Marines for 20 years, will be the student worker in the center. By having students who are also veterans work in the center the goal is to boost camaraderie. Barnett and other LTCC employees will be available to work in the center as needed.

The El Dorado County Community Foundation provided money to outfit the LTCC center. El Dorado County dedicates a portion of transient occupancy tax dollars to veterans services. Those are the funds the community foundation is tapping. The college's foundation has also been a player in getting the center started.

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Notes:

· The public unveiling of the center will be Nov. 10 from 12:30-1:30pm. It is located in Room A203 on the second floor of the main building.