

VFW, SVA Now Accepting 2017 Legislative Fellowship Applications

Opportunity allows 10 student veterans to address issues directly with Congress

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WASHINGTON — The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. and Student Veterans of America are now accepting applications from student veterans interested in participating in the 2017 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship program. Now in its third year, the fellowship offers 10 selected student veterans the unique opportunity to meet face-to-face with their members of Congress during the annual VFW National Legislative Conference, as well as provides additional opportunities for fellows to address veterans' issues in their communities.

Student veterans interested in applying for the 2017 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship must complete an application package that includes a proposal that addresses one of these four specific legislative issues:

- The success of veterans in the civilian job sector;
- The future of VA health care;
- The success of veterans in higher education; or
- The successful transition from military to civilian life.

The essay should discuss why the issue is important to the veterans' community, and how the fellowship candidate plans to address the issue through community-based advocacy. Selected fellows will then be flown to Washington, D.C., to storm Capitol Hill alongside fellow veterans' advocates as part of the 2017 VFW Legislative Conference, Feb. 26 to March 3.

“The VFW has been advocating in Washington on behalf of veterans, service members and their families for more than a century, and we want to share our experience with a new

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111

Office 816.756.3390
Fax 816.968.1157

WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

Office 202.543.2239
Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org
www.vfw.org

generation of veteran leaders through our SVA partnership and our annual Legislative Fellowship program,” said VFW National Commander John A. Biedrzycki Jr. “Last year’s fellows showed me that a new generation of leaders is ready to step up and take action. I can’t wait to see what the 2017 fellowship class brings to the Halls of Congress.”

“Student Veterans of America is proud to partner with the VFW to provide 10 students the opportunity to bring the issues facing veterans from their campus to the Halls of Congress,” said Jared Lyon, SVA president and CEO. “In this the third year of the program, we’re proud to add a more robust academic component to the curriculum, so that our student veterans are receiving academic recognition for their efforts. We thank the VFW for their continued support of SVA and our nation’s veterans, and are excited to work together to help transform yesterday’s warriors into today’s scholars, and tomorrow’s leaders.”

VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship opportunities are open to currently-enrolled student veterans at colleges and universities with active SVA chapters. Candidates must be VFW members, the criteria for which can be found [here](#).

All applications must be submitted by close-of-business Oct. 21, 2016. Selected fellows will be notified before Thanksgiving, with a formal announcement of the fellowship class at the SVA National Conference in Anaheim, Calif., in January 2017. Get full [details about the fellowship and apply](#) [here](#).

Many past fellows earned academic credit for their experience, as well as found internships, accepted additional academic opportunities, and even landed jobs as a result of their fellowship experience.

The VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship is another example of the strong collaboration between VFW and SVA that resulted from a memorandum of understanding signed by the two organizations at the SVA National Conference in January 2013.

-VFW-

About Student Veterans of America: SVA is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit coalition of 1,200-plus student veteran organizations representing 440,000 veterans in higher education. SVA's mission is to provide military veterans with the resources, support and advocacy to ease veteran and active military students' transition into higher education and leverage military experience to launch successful careers in high-demand fields. For more information, visit us at www.studentveterans.org and follow us on Twitter @studentvets.