

VFW Announces Service Officer Accreditation Training Scholarship

Humana donation to allow VFW National Veterans Service to reach more trainees

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WASHINGTON – The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is pleased to announce the VFW Service Officer Accreditation Training Scholarship for accredited service officers and claims representatives looking to attend the VFW’s fall training conference in Annapolis, Maryland, this September.

“The VFW leads the way in veterans service,” said VFW National Commander Tim Borland. “Most of those in our nationwide network of VA accredited service officers have accumulated more training hours than required by the VA. This scholarship will help keep our service officers who need financial assistance trained and up-to-date so they can continue to secure the benefits and compensation veterans and service members they’ve earned.”

This year, the VFW will select up to 10 exemplary applicants from around the country to attend service officer skill level accreditation training at the DoubleTree Hotel in Annapolis from Sept. 18 – 23. Each scholarship will cover hotel, transportation, conference fees and per diem for each recipient to attend the conference.

The scholarship is available thanks to a donation from Humana Inc. (NYSE: HUM) during the 123rd VFW National Convention in July. During the joint opening session of the convention, Humana presented VFW National Veterans Service \$25,000 to support the program that helps veterans get their earned Veterans Affairs benefits and compensation. The VFW has chosen to dedicate these resources to help provide quality training to service officers who may not usually have the opportunity to train with the organization, allowing the VFW to reach deeper into communities to provide high-quality, free claims assistance to veterans.

“Through Humana’s generosity, the VFW is able to offer more accredited service officers the

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opportunity to hone their skills alongside some of the VFW's greatest veterans' advocates, making sure veterans have access to highly-trained service officers who can help them file for their hard-earned VA benefits," said VFW National Veterans Service Director Ryan Gallucci. "With the recent signing of the PACT Act, we know veterans will need skilled guidance in navigating their new toxic exposure benefits. We also know that non-accredited claim sharks are going to try and take these hard-earned benefits from veterans who deserve them. Humana is helping us meet these challenges through its strong support to the VFW's world-class training program."

All applicants must be currently accredited with the VFW through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for the purposes of preparation, presentation and prosecution of benefit claims before VA on behalf of VFW claimants. This scholarship will focus heavily on cross-accredited VFW advocates and advocates who cannot regularly attend VFW training. The VFW training offered this fall is one of the ways the VFW satisfies VA Office of the General Counsel's continuing education requirements for its global network of accredited representatives and is subject to periodic audit from OGC.

Nominations should include a brief description of responsibilities that make the service officer an excellent scholarship candidate (e.g., Mr. Smith assists veterans at the Pineland County Veterans Assistance Center. Last year he assisted more than 1,000 veterans in filing claims and appeals with VA. He also assisted veterans in navigating state and county benefits like income tax exemptions and hunting licenses. He is a Life member of the VFW and American Legion. He currently serves as the Junior Vice Commander for the Pineland VFW Post.)

Anyone who is accredited with the VFW and is already included as a mandatory attendee for VFW Service Officer training per the VFW National Veterans Service Policy & Procedure need not apply for this scholarship as their attendance at training is already financed by the VFW.

"We do not recoup \$10 billion in benefits and compensation annually through happenstance," said Borland. "Our service officers are trained, motivated and work tirelessly on behalf of veterans because EVERY VETERAN COUNTS!"

All applications must be submitted by Friday, Aug. 26. Application link and terms of the program can be [found here](#).

Questions regarding the scholarship should be directed to VFW National Veterans service at vfw@vfw.org.