



Military and Families Education Newsletter

Issue 4

November 4, 2008

NMSU offers military members and their families postsecondary educational opportunities leading to lifelong learning, self- and professional development programs, and services to promote critical thinking and decision-making skills.

Outreach Campaign

Real leadership is being the person others will gladly and confidently follow.

Fred J. Rodríguez, Ph.D.

Military, Veterans and Families Education Summit

The Military, Veterans and Families Education Summit was an exciting and extremely enjoyable event filled with memorable moments. Some 200 participants attended and were welcomed immediately by a sense of exhilaration as all the delegates began to explore the challenges of meeting the post-secondary needs of the expanding military communities. The atmosphere of energy highlighted the conference theme "Transformation: Forming Tomorrow's Leaders Today, Anywhere, Anytime." The goal of the seminar was to bring together legislative leaders, state agencies, and academic and military leader to address these educational opportunities.

What Happened at the Summit?

Beginning the day with distinction was the introduction of dignitaries by Dr. Carmen Gonzales, Vice President for Student Success. NMSU's Provost, Dr. Robert Moulton, discussed the great educational opportunities at NMSU and the chance to strengthen the NMSU and military partnership through this leadership summit. President Waded Cruzado welcomed the delegates and expressed her enthusiasm for the military and educational communities' collaboration.

The general opening session included presentations by Colonel John G. Rossi, the Deputy Commanding General and Chief of Staff, U.S. Army Air Defense Center at Fort Bliss and

Major General Kenny C. Montoya, the Adjutant General of the New Mexico Army and Air National Guard. Colonel Rossi mentioned the rapid growth at Fort Bliss and the challenges of transformation the command faces. General Montoya highlighted New Mexico's Citizen Soldiers.

In the following session Dr. Frank Mayadas, Sloan Foundation, addressed "The Changing Face of Education." The Lunch Session began with a keynote address on veterans' educational opportunities by Deputy Secretary Lou Helwig, Department of Veterans' Services, State of New Mexico. He stated that there are "nearly 180,000 veterans in New Mexico...Only about 3,500 are currently enrolled in universities, community colleges or vocational schools...That's about 2 percent of New Mexico's veterans continuing their education...That's far too low...This summit is an excellent opportunity for veterans to meet the NMSU faculty and see what's available for them."

After lunch, an enlightening Panel Session included Colonel Gary Giebel, Garrison Commander at White Sands Missile Range, Colonel Ed Manning, Garrison Commander at Fort Bliss, Colonel Stephen DiFonzo from the 49th Fighter Wing at Holloman AFB, Colonel Don Gentry, Commandant of the U.S. Sergeants Major Academy and Colonel John Mayer from Joint Task Force at Fort Bliss.

COL Giebel said support for military personnel is critical, and more colleges, universities and the communities they're in need to be more like NMSU and Las Cruces. COL Manning highlighted the importance of community building. COL Gentry stated that "Soldiers are going after college degrees in many areas." COL DiFonzo described the College of the Air Force and the opportunity for NMSU to partner with CCAF. COL Mayer outlined the trends in military higher education that he saw as potential shapers of military collegiate instruction in the future.

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Two breakout sessions rounded out the day's academic activities. J.R. Turner and Virginia Bell from the Las Cruces Veterans' Services Office spoke about vocational, rehabilitation and education initiatives. Michele Spires from the American Council of Education presented the evaluation of educational experience in the Armed Services.

The roundtable discussions throughout the conference sparked a lively dialogue among the participants on a variety of relevant topics, with input from an NMSU faculty member serving as the table host. Table hosts, under the leadership of Dr. Lee Hamilton, met members of the Board of Regents, senior military commanders from local military installations, their spouses, and college deans.

NMSU student ambassadors from the College of Health and Social Services gathered and documented the conclusions. "Something powerful happened here today...Leadership in action and working with our faculty was inspiring," said a young ambassador.

Army and Air Force ROTC cadets played a crucial role in the planning and implementation of the conference by presenting the colors, singing the national anthem, meeting and escorting dignitaries and registration. NMSU's colleges displayed their academic programs. All are to be congratulated for their fantastic work, leadership, and dedication!

Delegates agreed that this conference had filled them with a belief in themselves and in their colleagues. More importantly, they came away with a better understanding of NMSU's initiative of becoming a military friendly university. "Synergism, free thought, the need to take action, and passion" were phrases used to describe the experience. As one scholar stated "I am genuinely proud to be a part of the 'NMSU World'."

Tracking Added Accomplishments

A Community Leader's Conversation: A special group of prominent local businesswomen and civic leaders gathered for the *Military and Community Leaders Conversation*, to focus on

building community across military and civilian sectors. Their sharing ideas and resources brought home the concept of collaborative arrangements through fund raising initiatives to benefit our wounded warriors.

Professional Development ACE Seminar:

As part of the *Military, Veterans and Families Education Summit* a special seminar by Michele Spires, American Council on Education, was held the day before. This seminar on evaluating military transcripts was targeted to academic advisors, faculty, and career counselors.

The attendees agreed that this special seminar had filled them with a belief in themselves and their ability to correctly advise their military students and properly award credit for military education and experience. Many attendees stressed that the concepts presented were "highly valuable from a 'One-University' perspective." Others stated "academic advisors, registrar and admissions will become more proficient in the evaluation of military/ACE transcripts...and by doing so NMSU becomes a more military friendly university."



Where military and educational leadership meet!
Major General Kenny Montoya, CG, New Mexico National Guard
Dr. Garrey Carruthers, Dean, College of Business

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