



# USI STUDENT

# DECEMBER 2024 VETERAN

## NEWSLETTER

EDITION #2025-4

### STAY INFORMED - USI SVA ON FACEBOOK



Are you following us on FaceBook? Scan the QRC to learn about updates and events we have with our student veterans!



### NEXT SVA MEETING: FEBRUARY 6 - STUDENT VETERAN LOUNGE (ED0114)

Meetings for the Student Veteran Association are held the first Thursday of each month at 1:30 p.m.. Veterans, current serving and dependents of veterans are all welcome!



Local veterans and their sponsors pay tribute to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. for the 10th Anniversary of Honor Flight of Southern Indiana. The fall flight was held on October 12th and honored 87 veterans. The USI SVA along with many supporters welcomed them home at the Evansville Regional Airport later that evening.

### SEMESTER BENEFIT REQUEST FORMS NEEDED FOR SPRING 25

If you are a VA Education Benefit recipient, you must submit a new Semester Benefit Request Form to ensure your claim for benefits can be processed in a timely manner.

This form is required EACH semester you want to claim benefits. It is a good practice to complete this form once you have the next semester scheduled. This ensures that you have completed your requirements and places the task to the Veteran Military and Family Resource Center to complete.

If you haven't already done so, please complete yours today by selecting the link below: [NEW Semester Educational Benefit Request Form \(For ALL VA requests\)](#).

### UNIVERSITY CAMPUS CLOSED FOR WINTER BREAK

The University will close all offices on campus for the winter break from December 23 - January 2, 2005. If you have administrative items that need addressed by any campus office, including ours, please ensure you make an appointment with that office before this date so you can resolve any matters before the closure.

USI staff will not be available during the break so please plan accordingly.

## STUDENT DESIGNS FIRST SVA CHALLENGE COIN

A USI student has designed the first challenge coin for the USI Student Veteran Association.

Read more on the significance of this coin and how it will promote the SVA on campus.

[Read More - Page 2](#)

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA HOOPS FOR TROOPS USA USMC USN USAF USSEF USCG

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY SCREAMING EAGLES VS WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY LEATHERNECKS

JANUARY 18 WOMEN'S GAME 1 P.M. MEN'S GAME 3:30 P.M.

INVETS <https://usiscreamingeagles.com/>

Free Tickets for Veterans and Guests\* \*Proof of military required. \*Seats are limited to the 100 per center and may be picked up the day of the game at 988 Call. Offer valid while supplies last. Offer is on a first come, first served basis. Brought to you by the USI Student Veterans Association.

## 2025 Hoops For Troops - Page 2

USI STUDENT VETERANS ASSOCIATION

2024 HOOPS FOR TROOPS SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 18, 2025

On January 18, 2025 the USI Student Veteran Association will offer FREE tickets to all veterans and military on our campus and in the community for the 12th annual "Hoops for Troops - Military Appreciation Basketball Game".

The Screaming Eagles will take on Western Illinois University Leathernecks in the Screaming Eagles Arena (SEA). The game times are 1:00p.m. for the women and 3:30p.m. for the men.

"This is something we look forward to doing every year. While we would like to see more of our community come out to support the teams, it's just a fun day to see everyone within the veteran community" said Joel Matherly, Assistant Director of the Veteran Military and Family Resource Center.

The event is open to veterans of all eras and includes up to five (5) tickets for all guests. Tickets can be picked up the day of the game at the veteran ticket window in the SEA.

"We have arranged a court-sized flag again this year and will have Honor Flight of Southern Indiana, Rolling Thunder, Indiana Chapter 6, both basketball teams and veterans in the stands help us with the presentation and National Anthem."

The student fan base will be given a free commemorative shirt that is sponsored by INVets which is a non-profit organization that aids in transitioning to civilian life, focusing on job placement and finding the right community for veterans and their families to ensure their success and happiness.

"We hope that the veterans will come out so we can expand on what we can offer to our campus and community," said Matherly. The celebration begins with a court-sized flag in which all veterans are invited to come to the court to participate in.



USI STUDENT VETERANS TO ATTEND THE "NATCON" IN COLORADO

On January 1 - 5, 2005, the USI Student Veterans Association will attend the 17th Annual SVA National Conference "NatCon" at the Broadmoor Resort and Convention Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

"We are excited for our SVA to return to NatCon after a six (6) year hiatus and represent USI on a national stage" said Joel Matherly, Director of the Veteran Military and Family Resource Center. COVID and funding have been an issue with our representation at the conference since 2019. The last group of student veterans participated in a presentation competition where they briefed National SVA leadership and received a 3rd place ranking nationally.

This year's event is boasting a registration of over 2,200 student veterans that will attend this conference. This will give our student SVA leadership an opportunity to participate in the largest student veteran gathering in the world that represent over 1,600 campuses across the U.S. and in several countries abroad. NatCon serves as a focal point in the academic year to share ideas, best practices, and network with veteran and military-affiliated students, their families, supporters, and allies, as well as corporate, government, and nonprofit partners.

If you are interested in representing the USI SVA for future conferences, please reach out to President Andrew Rhoades to discuss how you can be involved in our local chapter.



STUDENT VETERAN ASSOCIATION MEETINGS: FIRST THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH 1:30 PM (1330) VETERANS LOUNGE - EDO114



## VETERAN RESOURCE GROUP RE-BRANDS AND LAUNCHES IN SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY

The former Tri-State Military Resource Network has recently rebranded to the River City Veteran Resource Group. Though the mission has remained the same, the new name more accurately reflects the tie to our community and surrounding counties.

The new format brings a more streamlined agendas, a new webpage for organizations to post upcoming events, and a mailing list to receive monthly newsletters.

The RCVRG meets in person to provide information and further discussion on Veteran related topics including, but not limited to housing instability & homelessness, employment opportunities, accessing health & other benefits, navigating disability compensation, suicide prevention, accessing essential services (food, clothing, emergency shelter), registered service animals, mental health, substance use and treatment, survivor's benefits, and much more!

The website:

([https://echohousing.org/housing/veteran\\_resources/rc\\_vrg/](https://echohousing.org/housing/veteran_resources/rc_vrg/)) is hosted by ECHO Housing and the meetings are facilitated by Ms. Savannah Wood who also serves as the CEO of ECHO Housing.

The meetings are open to all veterans and organizations that have a veteran support factor attached to their business or non-profit.

The next meeting will be held on January 30, 2025 from 10 - 11a.m. at the Griffin Center on the campus of the University of Southern Indiana. Officer Mario Reid with the Evansville Police Department will discuss "How Veterans Can Leverage Restorative Justice".

If you are a Veteran or Veteran service provider and would like to be included in future meetings and correspondence, please email:

Joel Matherly – [jsmatherly@usi.edu](mailto:jsmatherly@usi.edu)

If you have an upcoming event for Veterans or a flyer to promote your services, please send it via email to:

Kim Armstrong – [kim.armstrong@echohousing.org](mailto:kim.armstrong@echohousing.org)

## FOUR FREEDOMS VETERAN'S PARADE HONORS ALL ERAS IN EVANSVILLE

-Jace Caldwell, Channel 14 News

In Evansville, dozens of people headed to West Franklin Street for the annual Four Freedoms Veterans Parade.

The parade started on St. Joseph Avenue and ended on Wabash Avenue. It featured veterans, military vehicles and candy. Event officials say it's a way to honor the debt we owe to the people who have served our country.

The parade is held every year on the second Saturday in November. Gary Holland was one of the people there watching. He says his son served in the Marine Corps and walked in the parade.

Holland says it was an honor to support his son and other local veterans.

"With a father that was in the war too and a son that went to war for our country, it means a lot to me," said Hollard. "It's so heartfelt, we need a bigger turnout. Come out, I mean Evansville has such a great military background from World War II, so I think it's important that everyone comes out and supports our veterans. We're a big family."

The parade started at 2 p.m. and ended around 2:30 p.m. Saturday afternoon but will be back again next year.

Remember the	
30 JANUARY <b>2025</b> 10:00 a.m. - 12 p.m.	 <b>USI</b> Griffin Center (next to Reflection Lake) Enter on the 2nd Floor Take Elevators to the 1st Floor
<b>DATE</b>	 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ENTER CAMPUS AND TURN RIGHT AT THE TRAFFIC CIRCLE</li> <li>2. FOLLOW BENT TWO AROUND CAMPUS TO REFLECTION LAKE</li> <li>3. TURN RIGHT AT REFLECTION LAKE TO CROSS THE CAUSEWAY</li> <li>4. TURN RIGHT INTO THE GRIFFIN CENTER PARKING IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE BUILDING</li> </ol>

## PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH BEGINS WITH RECRUITMENT, APPLICATION IN PROGRESS

The announcement of the 5th president is expected in April.

*-Aracely Chavez, News Editor, USI Shield*

In November, the Presidential Search Committee entered phase two, recruitment and application, for the university's fifth president.

According to the [USI presidential Search web page](#), the Academic Search team and Presidential Search Committee collaborate to receive and encourage candidates to apply.

During phase one, students and alumni were asked to [complete an anonymous survey](#).

The feedback from the survey helped form a search prospectus to show the university's goals and presidential qualifications to candidates, according to Christina Ryan, first vice chair of the Board of Trustees and presidential search committee chair, in an email to the USI campus community.

Applications are accepted until Jan. 27.

Phase three of the presidential search is discussing and interviewing candidates from February through March. The new president will be announced in April and is set to start in July 2025.



**December 1**  
Civil Air Patrol  
(USAF Auxiliary)  
Birthday

**December 7**  
National Pearl  
Harbor  
Remembrance Day



**December 18**  
National Wreaths Across America

**December 18**  
U.S.  
National Guard  
Birthday

## ARMY-NAVY GAME 2024 UNIFORM DRIP: THE SCREAMING EAGLES VS. THE JOLLY ROGERS

*-Blake Stilwell, Military.com*

No matter what happens during the regular college football season, the winner of the annual Army-Navy Game is never guaranteed. What is guaranteed when these two teams meet on the second Saturday in December is that they will both come with new, unique uniforms, ones that honor a significant aspect of their respective services' history. The 2024 Army-Navy Game, the 125th in the series, will be no different.

In late November, Army and Navy, respectively, released what this season's Army-Navy Game uniforms will look like -- and, most importantly, what those new uniforms represent.

When the teams take the field on Dec. 14, the Black Knights will sport black uniforms with white markings that honor the 101st Airborne Division, specifically its World War II actions during the 1944 Battle of the Bulge. The Midshipmen will also look back on World War II, honoring VF-61, the fighter squadron known as the Jolly Rogers, the most lethal squadron in the history of naval aviation.

The Black Knights' Army-Navy Game uniforms honor the memory of the 101st with a helmet that reads "Screaming Eagles," a nod to the 101st's now-iconic shoulder patch. They also feature an invasion star on the right shoulder, the coppered Athena shield, and actual 101st Airborne Screaming Eagle patch and random markings like those used by the paratroopers to identify their units during their D-Day operations.

Navy's uniform also harkens back to World War II, when the U.S. Navy established Fighter Squadron 17 (VF-17), which began its life flying the F4U-1 Corsair fighter, in 1943. Its first commanding officer, Lt. Cmdr. John T. "Tommy" Blackburn, wanted a pirate theme to match his squadron to the fighter ("corsair" is just an old nautical term for "pirate"), so his men came up with the skull and crossbones insignia and called themselves "the Jolly Rogers."

The Black Knights will also be playing to retain the coveted Commander-In-Chief's Trophy, which is awarded to the service academy team with the best record against the other two.

The 125th annual Army-Navy Game kicks off at Northwest Stadium in Landover, Maryland, on Saturday, Dec. 14, at 3 p.m. and will be aired on CBS.

## DR. BLUNT ACCEPTS PROVOST APPOINTMENT

The University has named Dr. Shelly B. Blunt Provost for the University, effective December 1, 2024. She has served as Interim Provost since July 1, 2023.

“Dr. Blunt has a dedicated history of service to USI and has been a longstanding, vital contributor in the Provost’s Office,” said Steven J. Bridges, USI Interim President. “I have made this appointment with stability in mind and look forward to her continued contributions and strategic leadership in our mission of providing exceptional education to our students.”

Blunt has a long track record at the University joining in 1999. Before being tapped for the Interim Provost position, she briefly served as Dean of the Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education after serving as the Interim Dean for the Pott College since January 2023. Blunt also was Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs and two years later Associate Provost for Academic Affairs between 2012 and 2022. She additionally served as Associate Dean for the Pott College for six years. Blunt is a member of the Science Education Foundation of Indiana Board, the Medical Professions Academy Advisory Board, Joshua Academy Board and has served on numerous state-wide committees for the Indiana Commission for Higher Education.

Blunt is actively involved in STEM education and undergraduate advising, has served as a University Advising Fellow and received the Outstanding Advisor of the Year and the Phenomenal Women of USI awards. Other accomplishments under her leadership include the creation of first year advising centers in each of USI’s academic colleges, the successful implementation of a new general education core, the development of a University-wide first-year seminar class (UNIV 101) and the implementation of state-wide articulation agreements. She earned her undergraduate degree at Truman State University and her doctoral degree in chemistry from the University of Iowa.

As part of the appointment, Blunt will assume strategic oversight for University Division which includes the four College Advising Centers and the Center for Exploring Majors, Career Counseling and the Academic Success Center (academic coaching, study skills and tutoring).



## CHANGES IN UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS ANNOUNCED

With the departure of Troy Miller, Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Management, for another professional opportunity, Interim President Bridges is appointing Rashad Smith, Executive Director of Enrollment, to Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Admissions, reporting directly to the President effective December 9. Smith will manage Undergraduate Admissions, Student Financial assistance and New Student and Transitional Programs.

“Rashad Smith has been an integral driver of undergraduate enrollment during his tenure at USI and will continue to do so in this elevated assignment,” Bridges said.

Smith has more than 20 years of experience in higher education and began at USI in April 2016 as the Director of Undergraduate Admissions. Prior to joining USI, he served as the Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness and as the Director of Admissions for Kentucky Wesleyan College. Smith holds a bachelor’s degree in communications from Catawba College in Salisbury, North Carolina.

Overall student enrollment and retention will be supported by a senior committee led by the President and composed of the University’s Vice Presidents, Provost, College and School of Graduate Studies Deans, Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Admissions, Executive Director of Student Success, Director of Student Financial Assistance and Chief Information Officer.