



OREGON DEPARTMENT  
*of* VETERANS' AFFAIRS

# Veterans Educational Bridge Grant, HB 2271

House Emergency Management, General Government and Veterans Committee | 7 February 2023



PRESENTED BY

**Kelly Fitzpatrick, Director**



## VETERAN EDUCATIONAL BRIDGE GRANT – PROGRAM BACKGROUND



**Purpose:** to support student veterans who are unable to complete an academic or training program on time because required courses or training hours are not available.

**Grant Award:** Up to \$5,000

**Eligibility:** Using Post 9/11 GI Bill® and unable to complete an academic or training program on time because required classes or training hours are not available.



## VETERAN EDUCATIONAL BRIDGE GRANT – PROGRAM FUNDING

**2019-21**

**Allocated:** \$300,000 LF  
+ 1 FTE funding

**Total funds awarded:** \$220,961  
*as of June 30, 2021*

**2021-23**

**Allocated:** \$175,000 LF

**Total funds awarded:** \$49,848  
*as of September 8, 2022*

**2019 Regular Session:** HB 2201 established the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant (VEBG).

**2020:** The initial grant launch experienced immediate impact from COVID-19 on the higher education system. School closures left some veterans with gaps in their educational funding. Significant need for this program in summer of 2020.



## VETERAN EDUCATIONAL BRIDGE GRANT - AWARD HISTORY AND APPLICATION TRENDS

- Early 2020 school closures and employer shutdowns created widespread course and training unavailability. ODVA received 49 applications and awarded 43 Bridge Grants in 2020.
- As schools reopened and training hours in apprenticeship programs resumed, grant applications decreased.
- 2022 trends indicate occasional class cancellations, changes to course scheduling, and reduced apprenticeship training hours cause interruptions in academic or training progress, but on a smaller scale than during COVID.



# VEBG – AS OF Feb. 6, 2023

<b>As of Date</b>	2/6/2023
<b># of Applicants</b>	68
<b># of Awardees</b>	58
<b># Not Awarded</b>	10
<b>Total Funds Awarded</b>	\$265,809
<b>Funds Awarded this Grant Cycle</b>	\$49,848
<b>Funds Remaining this Grant Cycle</b>	\$125,152
<b>Average Turnaround</b>	3 Days
<b>Average Award</b>	\$4,897

Month	Applications	Awards	Not Awarded
<b>(2020) June</b>	14	13	1 withdrawn
July	22	22	N/A
August	2	2	N/A
September	3	2	1 withdrawn
October	4	3	1 ineligible
November	3	1	1 withdrawn/1 ineligible
December	1	0	1 ineligible
<b>2020 Totals</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>3 ineligible/3 withdrawn</b>
<b>(2021) January</b>	1	1	N/A
February	1	0	1 withdrawn
March	1	1	N/A
April	1	1	N/A
May	1	1	N/A
June	2	0	2 ineligible
<b>July (New Grant Cycle)</b>	1	1	N/A
August	1	1	N/A
September	2	2	N/A
October	0	0	N/A
November	0	0	N/A
December	0	0	N/A
<b>2021 Totals</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2 ineligible/1 withdrawn</b>
<b>(2022) January</b>	1	0	1 ineligible
February	1	1	N/A
March	1	1	N/A
April	0	0	N/A
May	0	0	N/A
June	2	2	N/A
July	2	2	N/A
August	0	0	N/A
September	1	1	N/A
October	0	0	N/A
November	0	0	N/A
December	0	0	N/A
<b>2022 Totals</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1 ineligible</b>
<b>(2023) January</b>	0	0	N/A
<b>VEBG Totals</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>4 withdrawn / 6 ineligible</b>



## VETERAN EDUCATIONAL BRIDGE GRANT – OUTREACH EFFORTS



### Program Communication to Veterans

- Blog post featuring VEBG released to ODVA website, social media, and email list July 2022.
- Information and link to VEBG application attached to email signatures.
- Ongoing agency web, blog, social and email communication about VEBG
- Redesigned and updated Bridge Grant flyer.
  - Update includes active QR Code directing applicants to VEBG website.



Explore the  
Veterans  
Educational  
Bridge Grant



## VETERAN EDUCATIONAL BRIDGE GRANT – OUTREACH EFFORTS

### Partnerships and Professional Networks

- ODVA Campus Veteran Coordinator Summit: Campus Veteran Coordinators at community colleges and public universities (July 2022).
- School Certifying Officials (SCO) via Oregon Association of Veteran School Certifying Officials (ORAVSCO) conference (May 17-18, 2022), website, and email messaging for distribution to their student populations.
- Partners with BOLI to send out to apprentices and apprenticeship coordinators in their registered apprentice networks.

### Campus Visits and Outreach Events

- VEBG Coordinator visited 24 Oregon Institutes of Higher Learning (IHL) between May 1 – August 31, 2022.
- Outreach tables at Pride events in Portland, Bend, and Eugene.
- Outreach table at Yellow Ribbon events.



## VEBG EXPANDED ELIGIBILITY – HB 2271

**HB 2271 would not change the current purpose of VEBG but would expand eligibility by:**

- Eliminating the current statutory sunset of the grant (January 1, 2024) and making the VEBG program permanent.
- Eliminating the requirement that a veteran's program of training or education be approved for GI Bill® benefits.
- Allowing veterans at any licensed career school, in any registered apprenticeship, or any on-the-job training program with a public employer to be eligible.
- Eliminating the requirement that veterans have entitlement to education benefits based on service (i.e. GI Bill® benefits).
- Allowing veterans to apply for a grant of up to \$5,000 to cover a debt on a student account that is preventing them from enrolling in courses for an upcoming term.





## VEBG FUNDING IN 2023-2025 GRB

- \$400,000 in LF in the GRB
- If HB 2271 and funding are enacted, ODVA will recruit for the existing position to administer the program
- Education is a top priority of the Governor. *“Students need more investment in their education”*
- The VEBG does just that - investing in our Oregon Veterans’ education.



# QUESTIONS