



DEC'06 UIVA Bar Crawl T-Shirt design

## UIVA SPRING BAR CRAWL

Planning is underway for the Spring 2007 UIVA Bar Crawl. Right now it is scheduled for **April 20<sup>th</sup>**. The t-shirt has not been designed yet.

Remember how much fun December's bar crawl was?

...yeah, it's kind of hazy for me too. That's how you *know* it was fun.

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## Financial Aid Rep Q&A @ March Meeting

At the UIVA monthly meeting on March 6<sup>th</sup> Kelly Carrell from the [UI Office of Student Financial Aid](#) was on hand to answer questions from student vets.

She fielded several questions and gave advice about ensuring you receive the most financial aid that you can qualify for. Carrell reminded everyone that completing your FAFSA early is only the first step.

### Financial Aid Tips

- After completing FAFSA you should receive a postcard from UI confirming.
- If you receive no postcard confirming your FAFSA, CALL!
- Remember you have to also turn in a copy of your Tax Return *and* a UI 2007-2008 Verification Form for Self-Supporting Students (can be found on ISIS in *STUDENT RECORDS > FINANCIAL AID*).
- Montgomery GI Bill doesn't affect your eligibility for subsidized loans.
- If you have recently separated from Military Service, that counts as *loss of employment* under *Special Circumstances* on #17 on the Verification Form
- Be upfront and honest, if you aren't they can take the money back.

### Independent Student-

As a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces, you are automatically a self-supporting student and are eligible for more assistance.

If you are a National Guard or Reserve member, you are eligible if you have been on active duty for as little as one day. If not, you also qualify if you:

*born before January 1, 1984, enrolled in a graduate or professional program at the beginning of the 2007-2008 school year, legally married on the day you file the FAFSA, an orphan or ward of the court (or have been until age 18), have children who receive more than half of their support from you, have dependents (other than your children or spouse) who live with you and who receive more than half of their support from you, from the date you file the FAFSA through June 30, 200*

## **PTSD** – *No, it's not what your First Sergeant warned you about before liberty in Thailand...*

PTSD stands for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and the estimates of Iraq & Afghanistan veterans afflicted range from 10 to 20 % to as much as one out of every three.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety disorder that can occur following the experience or witnessing of a traumatic event. PTSD is complicated by the fact that people with PTSD often may develop additional disorders such as depression, substance abuse, problems of memory and cognition, and other problems of physical and mental health. These problems may lead to impairment of the person's ability to function in social or family life, including occupational instability, marital problems and family problems

According to the [National Center for PTSD](#), people with PTSD experience three different kinds of symptoms. The first set of symptoms involves reliving the trauma in some way such as becoming upset when confronted with a traumatic reminder or thinking about the trauma when you are trying to do something else (intrusion). The second set of symptoms involves either staying away from places or people that remind you of the trauma, isolating from other people, or feeling numb (avoidance). The third set of symptoms includes things such as feeling on guard, irritable, or startling easily (hyper arousal).

The phenomenon of PTSD in military servicemen is nothing new. It has been recognized in many conflicts and given a variety of names. In the Civil War it was "Soldier's Heart," in World War I "Shell Shock," and in World War II "Battle Fatigue." Long-term psychiatric illness was first formally observed in World War I veterans, but PTSD only entered wide public consciousness after the Vietnam War.

Right now about 631,000 combat troops have served in Iraq. Worst case estimates 1 in 3 with PTSD, which can still develop years after combat.

Two-thirds do not seek help.

## **Where to get help for PTSD:**

- UI Vet Center; Suite C310 Pomerantz Center. John Mikelson can direct you to appropriate help.
- VET CENTER in [Des Moines](#) (515-283-4929), [Cedar Rapids](#) (319-378-0016), & Quad Cities (309-762-6954).
- VA Health Benefits Service Center toll free at 1-877-222-VETS
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255) & 1-800-SUICIDE**
- **If you are in an immediate crisis, please go to your nearest Emergency Room or call 911.**



## **Iowa Veterans Education Benefits *Don't Add Up***

Just finished active duty military recently? Good for you! Come back to school here in Iowa? Awesome! Getting your GI Bill? Good. Getting any other help from the state of Iowa? No. You aren't.

The state of Iowa isn't particularly known for being student-friendly, and it also isn't too helpful to veterans returning from war zones to continue their education.

Wisconsin has the Wisconsin GI Bill, a state program that is completely separate from the federal GI Bill. It waives tuition and fees for eligible veterans and their dependents for up to 8 full-time semesters or 128 credits at any state university.

In Texas, they have the Hazelwood Act, which exempts qualified veterans and qualified dependent children of certain deceased veterans from all tuition and fee charges.

And those are just the two states that I was told about by men whom I served with.

# Iowa's Representatives in the Senate & House on Veterans Issues



**L-R – Tom Harkin, Chuck Grassley, Bruce Braley, Dave Loebsack, Leonard Boswell, Tom Latham, Steve King**

Tom Harkin – D  
 Chuck Grassley – R  
 Bruce Braley – D  
 Dave Loebsack – D  
 Leonard Boswell – D  
 Tom Latham – R  
 Steve King – R

**Navy Veteran**  
 Non-Military  
 Non-Military  
 Non-Military\*\*  
**Army Veteran**  
 Non-Military  
 Non-Military

<http://harkin.senate.gov/>  
<http://grassley.senate.gov/>  
<http://braley.house.gov/>  
<http://loebsack.house.gov/>  
<http://boswell.house.gov/>  
<http://www.tomlatham.house.gov/>  
<http://www.house.gov/steveking/>

Iowa State University  
 University of Northern Iowa  
 ISU & University of Iowa  
 Iowa State University  
 Graceland University  
 Iowa State University  
 NW Missouri State (attended)

\*\*Stepson and daughter-in-law are Marine Corps officers

## Iowa Reps sponsor Vet Legislation

The Joshua Omgig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act was introduced by Congressman Leonard Boswell, and is in honor of Joshua Omgig, a young man from Grundy Center who took his own life after returning home from an 11-month tour in Iraq. Tom Harkin introduced a similar bill in the Senate.

### [SUMMARY AS OF: 1/9/2007--Introduced.](#)

Joshua Omgig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act - Expresses the sense of Congress that: (1) suicide among veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a serious problem; and (2) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs should take into consideration the special needs of such veterans and of elderly veterans who are at high risk for depression and experience high rates of suicide in developing and implementing the comprehensive program outlined in this Act.

Directs the Secretary to develop and carry out a comprehensive program designed to reduce the incidence of suicide among veterans. Requires the program to include: (1) mandatory training for appropriate staff and contractors of the Department of Veterans Affairs who interact with veterans; (2) screening of veterans who receive medical care at a Department facility for suicide risk factors; (3) referral of at-risk veterans for counseling and treatment; (4) a suicide prevention counselor at each Department medical facility; (5) research for suicide prevention and for mental health care for veterans who have experienced sexual trauma while in military service; (6) 24-hour veterans' mental health care availability; and (7) a toll-free hotline.

Harkin is also introducing his Coming Together for Guard and Reserve Families Act. On his website, Harkin claims the bill expands and strengthens the existing family assistance program, expands the VA's Disabled Transition Assistance program to ensure that family members have access to family counseling and mental health services, calls for outreach to professionals who serve children - including school administrators and teachers - to alert them to the special needs of kids in military families, ensure that families receive mental health information six months post-deployment, and creates a family-to-family mentoring program to enable military spouses to serve as peer counselors to other spouses and family members.

“The role of our Guard and Reserve members in defending our national security abroad has significantly increased. In turn, we have an expanded obligation to care for their spouses and children, who are facing tremendous stresses, often alone and with no one to turn to.”

Bruce Braley is sponsoring similar legislation in the House of Representatives, co-sponsored by Boswell and Loebsack.

Representative Tom Latham is also sponsoring several amendments to United States Code in regards to veterans & servicemen: [H.R.1115](#), [H.R.1426](#), and [H.R.1428](#).