

# VETERAN AFFAIRS:

By Deborah Murph Jacobs

## You Win Some



Chancellor Anderson cuts ribbon during CI-PEP ceremony.



## You Lose Some

The tuition assistance program (TA) has always been a recruiting tool for the Army, Marine Corps, National Guard, Coast Guard and reserves services. On March 1 the TA program came to a grinding halt due to government sequestering. As a result of the cuts to the TA program, many FSU students and other active duty members around the country are outraged and panicked.

"I am very upset because this will prevent me from graduating on time. I can't use the GI bill until I get out of the army," said Celia Mopkins, a local soldier stationed at Fort Bragg.

Fort Bragg is one of the largest Army installations in the United States. Largely, due to its convenience in terms of location, many soldiers attend classes at FSU.

In the past, the TA has funded active duty service members with up to \$4,500 a year for educational purposes. It is not the same as the Post 9/11 GI Bill.

Active duty and National Guard members can still receive higher education funding through the GI bill. However, most use it after they end their contract with the military

Are you a retired veteran or active duty personnel living in the surrounding area?

The Departments of Nursing, Social Work, and Psychology, and FSU/Ft. Bragg Veteran's Center held a welcoming ceremony March 13 for its new Collaborative Institute for Inter professional Education & Practice (CI-PEP).

The institute will provide FREE counseling, FREE massage therapy, FREE acupuncture, and other FREE wellness techniques to veterans, to active duty members and their families.

The CI-PEP was funded by a \$1.1 million, three-year grant, from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), according to an FSU press release.

The institute is designed to promote physical, mental and social wellness with a holistic approach. The inter professional team will include counselors, social workers, psychologists, nurse practitioners and nurses who focus on the biopsychosocial model. The program also provides clinical training opportunities for students pursuing a social work, nursing or psychology degree.

Stacey Washington is the massage therapist for the program. She is also a registered nurse and a proud wife of a Wounded Warrior. She recommended that veterans have a massage before or after their counseling therapy.

"A massage can be very relaxing and we've seen great results for soldiers with PTSD," she said.

Dr. Kelly Gallop, an acupuncturist on staff, said acupuncture is a great way to control chronic pain caused by migraines and physical injuries. Dr. Gallop said, "You can see the difference right away." The number of treatments a person needs will be decided on case by case basis.

The psychological counseling services will include stress relaxation, individual therapy and couples/family therapy. Professionals will also conduct referral services and provide health education.

The CI-PEP is located in the Southeastern North Carolina Nursing Education and Research Building on FSU campus. For an appointment, contact Lisa Scurry, the program specialist, at 672-1966.

because it allows them to maximize educational benefits provided by the Department of Veteran's Affairs.

As a result of the cuts to the TA program, the Fort Bragg Education Center is scrambling to find scholarships and grants for the active duty men and women of the community pursuing education. Sadly, many active duty personnel, like Mopkins, may need to take out student loans in order to finish their education.

There has been an outcry of support to pressure Washington into reinstating the program. According to the Wall Street Journal, the White House has already received a petition with more than 100,000 signatures to continue the program.

North Carolina Democratic Senator Kay Hagan, who is also a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, teamed

up with Republican James Inhofe of Oklahoma. In an attempt to persuade Congress to reinstate the tuition assistance program, Hagan and Inhofe proposed an amendment and hope to have it passed as early as March 27, according to the Fayetteville Observer.

Methodist University, a private school in Fayetteville, will offer four free classes to military members who are struggling with the loss of their TA funding. Those classes will include, Introduction to Psychology, World History, College Algebra and English Composition, according to the Fayetteville Observer.

At this point, there has been no discussion whether FSU, which is under the University of North Carolina state system, has any plans to intervene and offer a program similar to Methodist.